

Choose your Associates Wisely (pt 1)

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A person's friends can affect him in many ways. It may be in bad actions or habits, but worse than this, is to set in bad personality traits (being the formation of your synapse construction). If you throw out food into the garden will you get the squawking, fighting starlings or milder and more controlled thrush.

You get birds of a feather flocking together.

Are these person's influences good or bad?

Prov. 13v20 He who walks with wise men becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

The Hebrew and Greek word for Stupid (= foolish) means beyond all moral sense = Godless.

King David knew about bad associates. He had to keep away from them - you had to choose between good or bad men!

Psalm 26v1-5 Vindicate me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the Lord without wavering. Prove me, O Lord, try me; test my heart and my mind. For thy steadfast love is before my eyes, and I walk in faithfulness to thee. I do not sit with false men, nor do I consort with dissemblers; I hate the company of evil doers, and I will not sit with the wicked.

The kidneys often represent the deepest emotions by being deep inside a person (see also Glossary for further detail). It means nothing held back and we should do the same thing. Put our efforts in helping each other through love. We ask for wisdom from God to help us to choose our associates.

Prov. 23v15-16 My son, if your heart is wise, my heart too will be glad. My kidneys will rejoice when your lips speak what is right.

God feels the same happiness and joy if we follow what God Desires us to do.

We need to try and develop this association with God and good people who wish to follow His ways.

Psalm 111v1-10 All my heart goes out to the Lord in praise, before the assembly where the just are gathered. Chant we the Lords wondrous doings, delight and study of all who love Him. Wise evermore are you who follow it, yours the prize that lasts forever.

Many people in Paul's day said that the second resurrection had occurred (and worldly Christian leaders still promote this lie today!), while those who listened carefully to the apostles said it had not.

Who do we wish to be with?

Do we wish to feed at the rubbish tip - like the gulls?

Or do we come together and feed on the good food at the table.

Job 38v4 From what vantage-point was you watching, when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me, whence comes this sure knowledge of yours?..... That the wicked ones might be shaken out from it? It transforms itself like clay under a seal, and things take their station as in clothing. And from the wicked ones their light held back, and the high arm itself gets broken.

God wants wholesome, loyal associates; some did not want to be, they rebelled.

2Pt. 5v8-9 Be sober, and watch well; the devil, who is your enemy, goes about roaring like a lion, to find his prey, but you, grounded in the faith, must face him boldly; you know well enough that the brotherhood you belong to pays, all the world over, the same tribute of suffering.

Wild life programs show how lions start the herds running, and then they are able to pick out a weak one. We must learn to be good runners. Satan tries to isolate us from the Christian congregation of God. God can read our deepest thoughts - nothing can be hidden. However we are fortunate that we are protected from Satan's prying into our minds. However Satan is quite able see how we react to physical circumstances around us. He is able look at our outward appearances, what we do - are we open to certain advances, then he moves in for the kill!

2Tim. 2v20-22 A great house, besides its plate of gold and silver, contains other objects made of wood and earthenware; those for noble, those for ignoble uses; it is by keeping himself separate from these that a man will prove the object of his Lord's regard, hallowed, serviceable, and fit for all honourable employment.

Thus it is a congregation who seeks out spiritual wisdom that is strong.

Paul was writing to help a younger man Timothy.

1. How much more are we 'younger and weaker'. We must look to these True Christian people for guidance.

2. People who we work with. We must spread the word of The Bible; take its council and direction.

Prov. 2v1-9 Here, then, my son, is counsel for thee; take this bidding of mine to heart; ever be thy ear attentive to wisdom, thy mind eager to attain discernment. Yes if you cry out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of God. Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path.

Associations with Wrong Doers.

We notice the positive and negative effects that associations can bring on people.

It may be the influence of this world from its god being Satan or The Word of the Bible from Yahweh God.

1Cor. 5v6 This good conceit of yourselves is ill grounded. Have you never been told that a little leaven is enough to leaven the whole batch?

Same with associations, they can easily entice us into bad ways. This can affect anybody.

1Cor. 5v9-11 In the letter I wrote to you, I told you to avoid the company of fornicators; not meaning everyone in the world around you who is debauched, or a miser, or an extortion, or an idolater; to do that, you would have to cut yourselves off from the world altogether. No, my letter meant that if anyone who is counted among brethren is debauched, or a miser, or an idolater, or bitter of speech, or a drunkard, or an extortion, you must avoid his company; you must not even sit at the table with him.

Good brothers must not mix with bad brothers.

Jesus Christ lived within this world and mixed with all people, but chose his associates wisely and carefully.

We must be wise people and fear God.

Bad people do not fear God, they do not understand His teachings and so do not understand why they should!

However they shall be taught righteousness to fear God in The Millennium during the 2nd part of their life

Activities that may lead to difficulties:-

Children are subject to severe pressures nowadays. Drugs, smoking and immorality. They may be encouraged to do activities, which are physically good for their body, but you have to be careful where this may lead to.

Too much dancing, sport, music, etc that may lead to worldly (immoral) associations. It may take too much time away from Bible study that strengthens the synapse construction in fulfilment of Yahweh's Desire.

Adults at work are subject to parties, reunions, office parties, etc. may lead to some getting carried away especially if there is too much drink.

Families are subject to bad material from the communication channels, television, newspapers, radio, movies, etc.

Colos. 3v5-10 You must deaden, then, those passions in which belong to earth, fornication and impurity, lust and evil desire, and that love of money that is idolatry. These are what bring down God's vengeance on the unbelievers, and such was your own behaviour, too, while you lived among them. Now it is your turn to have done with it all, resentment, anger, spit, insults, foul-mouthed utterance; and do not tell lies at one another's expense. You must be quit of the old self, and the habits that went with it; you must be clothed in the new self, that is being refitted all the time for closer knowledge, so that the image of God who created it is its pattern.

We do not want to go back to that old personality. You actually practised that, but now you must leave it all behind.

Newspapers will pay anything to increase circulation to gain more money.

Soap operas.

How can they affect you?

They influence us in a bad cause.

We become absorbed in the lives of these fictitious characters, rather than caring about our own real lives and the real lives our families – because our time is taken away from our real lives leaving less time for reality! Our heart becomes involved, moulded with these characters as ourselves. A writer has classed these programs as the most powerful because they can hold an audience for 25yrs or more every other day! Become part of the family, loose track of reality, people have been known to write letters to the character, or attack and injure off-stage performers!

The addictive nature of these programs is designed in. The writers wish to keep their jobs indefinitely, be paid by the audience rating, etc. This illustration now becomes circular – thus back to the 'love of' money, thus loving mammon!

A woman states how she left the congregation, left the household duties, family responsibilities, and Bible study.

Children missed school to watch these at that time. Totally a waste of time.

Should they take an honest view of the use of our time?

Television effects behaviour and thinking. Become a character extension of their lives, never wishing to miss the next episode. We have companies spending million of pounds to advertise products, clearly they would not spend that sort of money unless they knew that television did effect peoples actions.

Apostate literature. Be careful with 'other belief' literature. It may lead you astray!

2Cor. 11v13-15 Such men are false apostles, dishonest workmen, that pass for apostles of Christ. And no wonder;

Satan himself can pass for an angel of light, and his servants have no difficulty in passing for servants of holiness; but their end will be what their life has deserved.

They will do anything to break that link with God.

Examples of this in the Bible would be:-

Gen 39. Potipher's wife with Joseph.

Not only was this a sin against Potipher (her husband) but also a sin against God.

Heb 11.27 Moses

David always wished God to be at his right hand.

If we do this then our gain would be:-

A loving relationship with God and fellowship with a True Christian Organisation.

Our aspirations to be wise would be realised.

Receive privileges of the Holy Spirit.

Meeting with the right people.

2Cor. 6 Widen our associates with a Godly outlook on life enables us to join with people:-.

Who want to worship God.

Able to edify our brothers and sisters.

Leads to the friendship of God.

And gives us a promise of lasting life in Paradise.

With the correct associations we can say that we are birds of a feather!