

CHAPTER 5

Friends and Companions

In our study of Proverbs we have already seen that we need a COMPANION as we travel down life's road (see Chapter 2 of these notes). Who should this COMPANION be (Proverbs 3:13-18; 8:1-12)? _____ Everyone needs a close friend and companion. There is a need to find someone whom we can trust and spend time with and talk to and confide in and relax with and share those things that are on our hearts. In this chapter we want to think about our friends in light of God's Word. We also we want to ask ourselves, "What kind of a friend am I?"

Avoid the Wrong Companions

The choice of who our friends and companions should be is very important. Most people give very careful thought and consideration as to who their life companion should be (husband or wife), but sometimes they think that it does not matter very much when it comes to choosing other friends and companions. The book of Proverbs makes it very clear that it does matter and that our choice of friends is *very* important.

Should a Christian walk with sinners and join them in their sinful ways (Proverbs 1:10,15)?
_____ Where do their feet go (Proverbs 1:16)?

_____ If you walk with them, then where will your feet go (Proverbs 1:16)? _____ Should we choose our friends from among this group? _____

Before you decide to spend a good deal of time with someone, you must first decide what kind of a person he or she is. What kind of persons are described in Proverbs 24:1?

_____ Should you desire to be with them?
_____ Why not (Proverbs 24:2)?

Why is it important to *avoid* being with certain kinds of people? If you spend time with them how might this affect you and influence you?

What kind of person should you **not** choose as your friend and companion (Proverbs 13:20)?
_____ (remember what we learned in the last chapter!) If the one who walks with the wise is wise (Proverbs 13:20), then what do you think is true of the one who walks with the foolish?
_____ We need to make sure we walk down life's pathway with the right kind of people.

What happens when you walk with a person and spend time with a person? Think of your own close friends (or friend) that you have walked with for weeks and months and perhaps even years. Do you ever find that you begin talking like your friend? Do you find yourself thinking as he (or she) does? Do you find yourself acting like your friend in certain ways? Have you followed your friend or copied him (or her) in certain ways? Have you been influenced by your friend? Overall, has this been a good or a harmful influence? Has your friend become like you in

certain ways? Have you influenced him or her? In what ways?

If we want to be WISE, what kind of friend should we choose (Proverbs 13:20)?

The question is: How can I get that kind of a friend? How can I attract a wise person so that he or she will want to be my friend? The answer is very simple: wise attracts wise! To attract a wise person I must *be* a wise person! If a person is wise then he too will be looking for a wise person (because he realizes the truth of Proverbs 13:20). I need to be the person he (or she) is looking for!

What is another kind of person who should be avoided as a friend (Proverbs 22:24)?

What is another kind of person who should be avoided as a friend (Proverbs 28:7)? _____ [Note: The term "riotous" means "gluttonous" and refers to one who eats too much and lacks self control.] What is yet another kind of person who should be avoided as a friend (Proverbs 23:20)?

If we join in with these kind of people and establish a close friendship with them, what will happen? Will we begin to imitate them and copy them and be like them? The general rule is this: *WE BECOME LIKE OUR FRIENDS.*

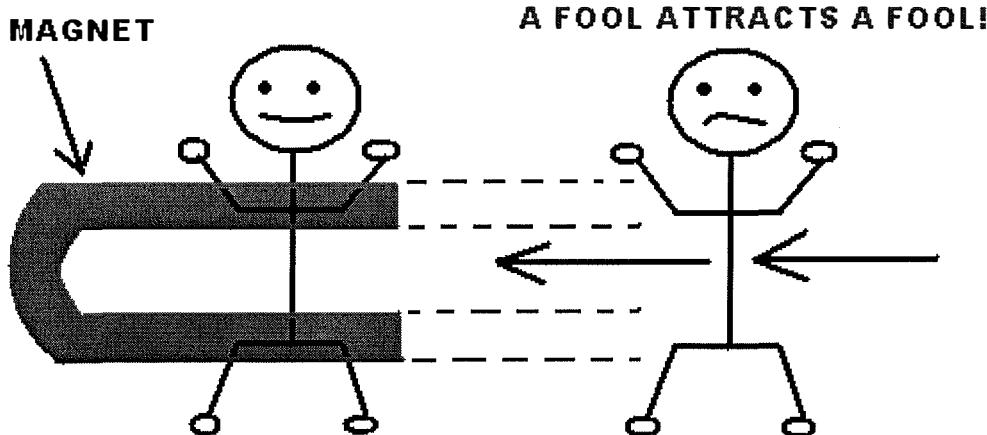
Avoiding certain people as friends does not mean that we are to be unfriendly or unconcerned towards anyone. God has a love and a concern that reaches out to every person (John 3:16; Matthew 5:45; etc.), and we ought to reach out in love and concern to every person. In a good and healthy way we should be friendly towards all, but we should become close friends and companions only with the wise (Proverbs 13:20).

Choose The Right Companions

Actually, choosing the right kind of person as your friend is not as difficult as it may seem. It is very easy to get rid of the wrong kind of friends. All I need to do is to concentrate on being the right kind of person myself. For example, would a fool want to be a wise man's companion?

Would an evil men want a righteous man for a companion? _____ Would Cain want Abel for a companion? _____ Would the Pharisees want the Lord Jesus for a Companion?

When it comes to forming friendships, fools attract fools, wise men attract wise men, evil men attract evil men, righteous men attract righteous men, etc. Also wise men will usually REPEL fools. The fool will not normally want to be in the company of a wise man. What kind of friend are you attracting?



According to Psalm 119:63, there are two things to look for when choosing a COMPANION:

1. THE PERSON SHOULD _____
2. THE PERSON SHOULD _____

How can I tell if a person really fears God? How can I recognize a GOD-FEARER? If a person really fears the Lord, then the following will be true:

1. Proverbs 3:7 and Job 28:28
He will _____
2. Proverbs 8:13
He will _____
3. Exodus 20:20
He will _____
4. Nehemiah 5:15
He will _____
5. Deuteronomy 5:29
He will _____

In view of these verses, are *you* a God-fearer? Remember, the same kind attracts the same kind! Are your friends God-fearers?

What does it mean to KEEP GOD'S PRECEPTS (Psalm 119:63)? It means to take God's Word seriously and do what it says. It means to pay attention to what God says and carefully obey His Word. Think of your friends. Do they do what God says? Do they obey God's Word? What about *you*?

What is a Real Friend?

What kind of person has *many* friends (Proverbs 19:6)?

_____ Many are willing to become his friend because they expect to receive benefits! What would happen to all these friends if Mr. Gift-giver suddenly became poor? _____

In Proverbs 14:20 we read, "the _____ hath many _____" See also Proverbs 19:4. Is it possible to "buy" friends? _____ Think of a person who is a candidate for political office. Does it help to have money? _____ Wealth makes many friends, but how much are these friends worth? _____ What happens to these friends when the money runs out?

Are these true friends? _____

Is the Lord Jesus Christ a "poor man's friend"? _____ Does a person need to be loaded with money in order to have the Lord Jesus as his Friend? _____

We learn something else about a true friend in Proverbs 27:5-6. How many friends do you have who will tell you the truth (wound you) even though it may hurt? How many friends do you

have who will dare to say anything to you when your life is not right? When is the last time you had a friend rebuke you in a loving way because they were concerned about you and did not want to see you heading in the wrong direction?

"A (true) friend _____ at all _____" (Proverbs 17:17). Here is a faithful friend that you can count on at all times! Here is a friend who does not change and who does not withdraw his love even though circumstances may change. Most people are "fair weather" friends. As long as things are going well and the sun is shining, they are your friends. But as soon as bad weather comes, they dump you! Have you ever had friends like this? Have you ever been "dumped"? Have you ever "dumped" someone else? Why?

There is nothing more precious and wonderful in life than having a close friend and companion who is a faithful and true friend at all times! "there is a _____ that sticketh closer than a _____" (Proverbs 18:24). Most people are very close to their brother, but a true friendship can be far better than even the tie that binds brother to brother.

Can you think of those in the Bible who enjoyed very close friendships? Complete the following:

David was a close friend of _____
(1 Sam. 18:3).

Paul was a close friend of _____
(2 Tim. 1:1-2).

Shadrach was a close friend of _____
(Daniel 3:12).

Moses was a close friend of _____
(Deut. 31:7).

Elisha was a close friend of _____
(2 Kings 2:1-2).

Who is the GREATEST, BEST, MOST LOVING and MOST FAITHFUL Friend of all?

We sing the Hymn, "What a _____ we have in Jesus!" He was even a friend to Saul of Tarsus, a man who was His bitter enemy! He was known as the "Friend of...S _____" (Matthew 11:19)! What did He call His disciples (John 15:15)? _____ Are you His friend (John 15:14)? _____

If someone is your best friend, do you love to spend time with him (her)? Do you love to talk with him (her)? Do you share common interests? Do you enjoy his or her company and presence? Do you try to please this friend? How do these things apply to your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ?
