

Principles from Proverbs: Friendship, Part II

Introduction: Solomon repeatedly warned young men about their associations. There are some people with whom a Christian should neither be friends nor partners. It is vital that believers be familiar with the types of people they should purposely avoid.

C. Beware of friends who can do you harm, continued...

4. Dishonest Daisy

“Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul...” (Proverbs 29:24)

- a. It is always wrong to join in partnership with anyone who does not share your core values and beliefs (II Cor. 6:14-18).
- b. Partnership for the accomplishment of a wicked endeavor is particularly egregious (Proverbs 11:21—“Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished...”)
- c. Partnership with dishonest individuals may influence one to participate in their dishonesty. Never underestimate the power of influence—for good or for ill.
- d. Our friendships have a spiritual element. Note that the “soul” is damaged by illicit associations. The soul includes the mind, will, and emotions. Running with the wrong crowd will cause brain damage, influence your actions, and taint your emotions.

5. Foolish Ferdinand

“Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.” (Proverbs 14:7)

- a. The Bible commands separation from certain types of people. It is not “unchristian” to avoid individuals who would waste one’s time in foolish, morally questionable talk.
- b. Separation and avoidance should not be obvious or self-righteous. You need not declare publicly your decision to remain at a distance from someone. Silence is golden.
- c. Obedience to this principle requires one to pass judgment on another. Remember, in judging another one is not condemning him eternally; but rather, one is discerning his character.
- d. The speech (“lips”) of an individual is the basis for discerning his character. Jesus said, “...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” (Mt. 12:34, see also vs. 33-37)

6. Immoral Isabel

“Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth his substance.” (Proverbs 29:3)

- a. Wise children receive instruction and warnings from their parents. In acting upon that instruction, their lives prosper—bringing happiness and pride to their parents.
- b. The foolish engage in immorality and waste their resources on sensuality. Those who associate with the immoral will engage in immorality—always a costly pursuit.
- c. Note that a woman who is morally loose may always be classed as a *harlot*. When a woman gives herself sexually to anyone except her husband, she is doing so for some benefit—whether emotional satisfaction, financial gain, to maintain the “relationship,” etc. Anyone woman, therefore, who engages in sexual intimacy apart from bonds of marriage is a harlot. She has sold herself cheaply.

7. Sinful Sylvester

“Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them. For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief. (Proverbs 24:1, 2)

“My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. If they say, ‘Come with us...cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse’ My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path.” (Proverbs 1:10-15)

- b. Beware of envying evil men. Our society glorifies men that God’s Word condemns. Do not become enamored with celebrities. Trouble always starts in the heart.
- c. Do not desire association with the wicked, no matter how appealing it may be. Remember, the Devil’s crowd is always the “in” crowd. Not only should you avoid the wicked, but your heart should not desire association with them.
- d. Guarding the desires of the heart means controlling the content upon which your mind and spirit feed. Psalm 37:3-5 explains the steps to God’s giving us the desires of our hearts. Note that God gives us the “desires,” not the things we want. God can fix a broken “wanter!”
- e. In Proverbs 1, Solomon warns particularly about the propensity of young men to affiliate with the wicked for the promise of financial gain. Be very careful about whom you partner with in business. If a man has a wicked heart, it will be revealed in his business practices.