

Proverbs 13:20

Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.(ESV)

When we were children, our parents often warned us to be careful about the friends we kept. Their reasons had nothing to do with outward appearances such as skin color, height, or health — but with character and moral conduct.

If a child was disciplined and excelled in school, our parents encouraged us to spend time with them, knowing we would pick up their good habits. But if a child was unruly or disrespectful, we were punished even for simply playing with them. At the time, we thought it was unfair. But as we grew older and saw how those children's lives turned out, we realized our parents had been protecting us from a dangerous influence.

The same principle is true in the spiritual realm. God's Word is clear:

Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm

(Proverbs 13:20, ESV).

Who Are the Wise in God's Eyes?

The Bible teaches that true wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord:

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight

(Proverbs 9:10, ESV).

In other words, the “wise” are those who have repented of their sins, put their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and live in obedience to His Word.

Such people are worth keeping close because their lives reflect God's truth. Spending time with them will:

Stir your heart to pray (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Encourage you to fast and seek God more earnestly (Matthew 6:16-18).

Help you grow in the love of Christ (John 13:34-35).

Increase your knowledge of the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Ignite a passion for evangelism (Mark 16:15).

Even Jesus Chose His Company Wisely

Our Lord Jesus, though fully God, also walked in perfect human wisdom. While He received divine guidance from His Father, He was intentional about the company He kept.

When He visited Jerusalem with His parents for the Feast of the Passover at the age of twelve, He could have spent time with other boys playing games, roaming the streets, or engaging in idle talk. But

instead, He positioned Himself among those who could sharpen His calling — the rabbis and teachers of the Law.

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers

(Luke 2:46-47, ESV).

From childhood, Jesus demonstrated that spiritual growth is fueled by being in the right environment and learning from those who walk closely with God.

The Power of Influence

Paul the Apostle warns,

Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals

(1 Corinthians 15:33, ESV).

This means no matter how strong you think you are, the people you spend time with will shape your thinking, your desires, and ultimately your destiny.

Some Christians say they struggle to pray, to witness, or to fast — yet they spend the majority of their time with unbelieving colleagues, casual friends, or worldly companions. Faithful believers and ministers of God are only seen briefly on Sundays, and even then, conversations about spiritual matters are often avoided. Yet they expect to be spiritually “on fire.” That is self-deception.

We are called to encourage one another daily (Hebrews 10:24-25). You cannot grow in isolation; the Christian life is not meant to be lived alone.

Practical Application

SHOW ME YOUR FRIENDS, AND I'LL TELL YOU YOUR CHARACTER

- Walk with those who pray — and prayer will become natural to you.
- Surround yourself with soul-winners — and you will catch their burden for the lost.
- Sit with teachers of the Word — and you will grow in understanding and sound doctrine.
- Spend time with those who love God's presence — and your heart will yearn for more of Him.
- Anything less, and the world will begin to conform you to its pattern (Romans 12:2).

Final Word:

Ask yourself today — Who are my closest companions? Do they draw me nearer to God, or do they pull me toward compromise? Your relationships are either a bridge to your destiny or a barrier to it.

May the Lord bless you, sharpen your discernment, and place the right people in your life.

SHOW ME YOUR FRIENDS, AND I'LL TELL YOU YOUR
CHARACTER

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