

PROVERBS, USER MANUAL FOR LIFE IN CHRIST CHOOSING YOUR RIGHT FRIENDS

PAGE 1

Prov 1:10 **My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them.**

ONE OF THE VERY FIRST WARNINGS SOLOMON GAVE HIS SON WAS TO STAY AWAY FROM THE WRONG FRIENDS. FRIENDSHIPS SHAPE OUR LIVES IN WAYS WE CANNOT IMAGINE. I BELIEVE IT IS JUST AS IMPORTANT FOR ALL OF US TO FORM THE RIGHT FRIENDSHIPS AS IT IS FOR US TO FIND OUR RIGHT SPOUSE. GOD HAS PROVIDED THIS "CANOPY OF BLESSING" OF FAMILY, FRIENDS, EVEN OUR GOVERNMENT¹ IS ORDAINED BY GOD TO SERVE HIS PURPOSE AND TO BENEFIT US, HIS SAINTS.

IF WE HAVE BEEN SURROUNDED BY GOD'S BLESSING, WHY WOULD WE WANT TO LEAVE IT BY CHOOSING WRONG COMPANIONS WHO SERVE ONLY TO DESTROY OUR LIVES. LET US CONSIDER THE HOLY SPIRIT'S REVELATION TO US AS WE SEE HOW IMPORTANT OUR "RIGHT FRIENDS" CAN BE TO US.

A FRIEND WITH MORAL CHARACTER BLESSES OUR LIVES

THE LOUD NOISE OF A FOOL

Prov 13:20 **He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.**

HERE'S AN INTERESTING CONTRAST. THE EMPHASIS HERE IS ON THE ABILITY TO LISTEN, TO LEARN. WALK WITH FRIENDS WHO HONOR THE LORD AND ARE INTERESTED IN APPLICATION OF HIS WORD IN THEIR LIVES AND YOU WILL BECOME SKILLFUL, ARTFUL ABLE TO PICK UP ON THE SUBTLE - THOSE SKILLS OF FRIENDSHIP THAT YOU CANNOT LEARN IN A CHARM SCHOOL OR OUT OF A BOOK.

BY WAY OF CONTRAST, THE COMPANION OF FOOLS WILL **SUFFER HARM BECAUSE OF A LOUD NOISE**. PLEASE PERMIT ME TO BUILD ON THE ORIGINAL A LITTLE. THE HEBREW WORD IN THIS TEXT FOR "HARM" IS *ruwa*. IT MEANS A LOUD NOISE. SOLOMON IS USING A LITTLE IRONY HERE COMPARING THE LOUD NOISE OF FOOLS WITH THE SOUND OF A TRUMPET SOUNDED JUST BEFORE BATTLE, WHERE THE ENEMY IS DESTROYED.

ON ONE HAND RIGHT FRIENDS ARE WISE IN THE LORD AND ARE SUBTLE IN THE SENSE OF KNOWING HOW TO BE A "RIGHT FRIEND" - TO BRING THE LORD'S BLESSING INTO OUR YOUNG MAN'S LIFE. ON THE OTHER HAND, FOOLS, THE SILLY, THE GODLESS, THE THOUGHTLESS COMPANIONS ONLY SOUND A LOUD NOISE IN THE EARS OF OUR YOUNG MAN AND SHOULD SERVE TO ALERT HIM TO IMPENDING HARM.

THE FILINGS OF FRIENDSHIP

Prov 27:17 **As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.**

I'VE HEARD THIS VERSE USED IN REFERENCE TO GOOD FRIENDS HELPING TO SHAPE THE LIVES OF THEIR COMPANIONS- AND IT'S TRUE. ONE OF THE BENEFITS OF A GOOD GOD-FEARING FRIEND IS THAT HE HELPS TO "SHARPEN" YOUR GODLY CHARACTER. MANY OF US FORM FRIENDSHIP WITH THE UNSAVED BUT THERE CAN NEVER BE THE COMMON GROUND THAT ONE CAN HAVE WITH A SAVED FRIEND.

THE BRUISES OF FRIENDSHIP

Prov 27:6 **Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.**

THIS WOUND IS A SORE NOT A PIERCING. CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS CANNOT HELP BUT BRUISE. FLATTERY AND "KISSES" OF THE WRONG KIND OF FRIEND ONLY SERVES TO PROMOTE SELF-DECEPTION. THERE ARE TIMES WHEN A PERSON NEEDS THE BRUISE OF A FRIEND. TIMES WHEN OUR YOUNG MAN IS WRONG IN SOMETHING HE IS DOING OR ABOUT

¹ Romans 13:1 **"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God."**

**PROVERBS, USER MANUAL FOR LIFE IN CHRIST
CHOOSING YOUR RIGHT FRIENDS**

PAGE 2

TO DO. THE WRONG FRIEND MIGHT EVEN ENCOURAGE HIM TO DO WRONG².

"FAITHFUL" IN THIS TEXT MEANS THAT THESE BRUISES ARE TO BE VALUED, TRUSTED. INTERESTING - GOD'S WORD TELLS US TO ACTUALLY VALUE THE TIMES OF UNPLEASANTNESS IN A GOOD FRIENDSHIP- THESE BRUISES BLESS US.

THE ANOINTING OIL OF FRIENDSHIP

Prov 27:9 **Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of one's friend springs from his earnest counsel.**

SOLOMON IS USING INTERESTING COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ANOINTING OIL USED IN TABERNACLE SERVICES WITH THE PLEASANT DISCOURSE BETWEEN FRIENDS. THIS FRIENDSHIP BECOMES AN ANOINTING UPON EACH OTHER AS THEY BUILD EACH OTHER UP IN THE LORD.

A RIGHT FRIEND IS LIKE A BROTHER

(HE STAYS WITH YOU EVEN WHEN YOU ARE IN TROUBLE)

Prov 17:17 **A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.**

NO MATTER HOW HARD WE TRY TO AVOID ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES, GOD'S PLAN INCLUDES TIMES IN OUR LIVES WHEN WE MUST SUFFER ADVERSITY. SOMETIMES THESE ADVERSITIES ARE OUR OWN DOING, OTHER TIMES THEY ARE "UNDESERVED³." THIS SPECIAL BLESSING GOES BEYOND PAUL'S COMMAND OF 2 COR 2:5-11 OF MERELY FORGIVING AN ERRANT BROTHER AND RECEIVING HIM AS A LOVED ONE⁴.

² Prov 1:11 "If they say, "Come along with us; let's lie in wait for someone's blood, let's waylay some harmless soul;" Romans 1:32 "Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them." A picture of the wrong kind of friend.

³ 1 Peter 2:20 But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. Peter is teaching that there is both deserved and undeserved suffering. The latter is preferred over the former. However, Christian brothers do fall and we are to forgive them and receive them with open arms (Rom 14:1).

⁴ Rom 14:1