

Companionships

A STUDY FROM ECCLESIASTES ECCLESIASTES 4:8-12

Companionships

*"There was a certain man without a dependent, having neither a son nor a brother, yet there was no end to all his labor. Indeed, his eyes were not satisfied with riches and he never asked, 'And for whom am I laboring and depriving myself of pleasure?' This too is vanity and it is a grievous task."
(Ecclesiastes 4:8)*

Companionships

*"Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart."
(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)*

Companionships

- Our companions (associations) influence our behavior.

*"Sorrow is better than laughter, for when a face is sad a heart may be happy. The mind of the wise is in the house of mourning, while the mind of fools is in the house of pleasure. It is better to listen to the rebuke of a wise man than for one to listen to the song of fools. For as the crackling of thorn bushes under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool; and this too is futility."
(Ecclesiastes 7:3-6)*

Companionships

- They can snare us in deceit, and cause misery and pain.

*"I tested all this with wisdom, and I said, 'I will be wise,' but it was far from me. What has been is remote and exceedingly mysterious. Who can discover it? I directed my mind to know, to investigate and to seek wisdom and an explanation, and to know the evil of folly and the foolishness of madness. And I discovered more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, whose hands are chains. One who is pleasing to God will escape from her, but the sinner will be captured by her."
(Ecclesiastes 7:23-26)*

Companionships

- There are people we should avoid who scheme evil with a word or a look.

*"A **worthless** man digs up evil, while his words are like scorching fire. A **perverse** man spreads strife, and a **slanderer** separates intimate friends. A **man of violence** entices his neighbor and leads him in a way that is not good. He who **winks his eyes** does so to devise perverse things; he who **compresses his lips** brings evil to pass."
(Proverbs 16:27-30)*
*"He who conceals a transgression seeks love, but he who **repeats a matter** separates intimate friends."
(Proverbs 17:9)*

Companionships

- We can have our morals corrupted by some we have chosen as friends. And we can be deceived into believing that we will not be affected.

"Do not be deceived: 'Bad company corrupts good morals.'"
(1 Corinthians 15:33)

Companionships

- Some we've chosen as friends can mislead us with bad advice.

*"The king answered the people harshly, for he **forsook the advice of the elders** which they had given him, and he spoke to them according to **the advice of the young men**, saying, 'My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.'"*

(1 Kings 12:13-14)

Companionships

- Can lead us into a self-indulgent lifestyle, prioritizing pleasure and laziness over duty and responsibility.

"Woe to you, O land, whose king is a lad and whose princes feast in the morning. Blessed are you, O land, whose king is of nobility and whose princes eat at the appropriate time – for strength and not for drunkenness. Through indolence the rafters sag, and through slackness the house leaks. Men prepare a meal for enjoyment, and wine makes life merry, and money is the answer to everything." (Ecclesiastes 10:16-19)

Companionships

- Friends can lead us into foolish behavior.

"Dead flies make a perfumer's oil stink, so a little foolishness is weightier than wisdom and honor."

(Ecclesiastes 10:1)

"Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to judgment for all these things. So, remove grief and anger from your heart and put away pain from your body, because childhood and the prime of life are fleeting."

(Ecclesiastes 11:9-10)

Companionships

- Can influence us to be angry without cause, or to become gluttons & drunks.

"Do not associate with a man given to anger; Or go with a hot-tempered man, Or you will learn his ways and find a snare for yourself."

(Proverbs 22:24-25)

"Listen, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way. Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine, or with gluttonous eaters of meat; For the heavy drinker and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe one with rags." (Proverbs 23:19-21)

Companionships

- Virtuous Friendships Yield Benefits

○ Sharing Our Load

"Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor." (Ecclesiastes 4:9)

"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?"

(2 Corinthians 6:14-15 NKJV)

Companionships



http://www.history.org/Foundation/journal/Spring08/oxen_slideshow/images/8.jpg

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Companionships

• Virtuous Friendships Yield Benefits

○ Support

"For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up." **(Ecclesiastes 4:10)**

"Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ."

(Galatians 6:1-2)

Companionships

• Virtuous Friendships Yield Benefits

○ Compassion

"Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone?" **(Ecclesiastes 4:11)**

"He who separates himself seeks his own desire, he quarrels against all sound wisdom." **(Proverbs 18:1)**

"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." **(Proverbs 17:17)**

"A man of too many friends comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." **(Proverbs 18:24)**

Companionships

• Virtuous Friendships Yield Benefits

○ Compassion – Ruth & Naomi

"But Ruth said, 'Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the Lord do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me.'" **(Ruth 1:16-17)**

Companionships

• Virtuous Friendships Yield Benefits

○ Compassion – David & Jonathan

"When the lad was gone, David rose from the south side and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed three times. And they kissed each other and wept together, but David wept the more. Jonathan said to David, 'Go in safety, inasmuch as we have sworn to each other in the name of the Lord, saying, "The Lord will be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever."' Then he rose and departed, while Jonathan went into the city." **(1 Samuel 20:41-42)**

Companionships

• Virtuous Friendships Yield Benefits

○ Compassion commanded by the Lord

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." **(1 John 4:7-11)**

Companionships

• Virtuous Friendships Yield Benefits

◦ Compassion commanded by the Lord

"Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much." **(James 5:16)**

"My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins." **(James 5:19-20)**

Companionships

• Virtuous Friendships Yield Benefits

◦ Strength

"And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart." **(Ecclesiastes 4:12)**

"Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." **(Proverbs 27:17)**

"... and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith ..." **(1 Thessalonians 3:2)**

Companionships

• Marriage

◦ Enjoy life.

"Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun." **(Ecclesiastes 9:9)**

"An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who shames him is like rottenness in his bones." **(Proverbs 12:4)**

"An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life." **(Proverbs 31:10-12)**

Companionships

• Marriage

◦ Enjoy the Lord's blessing of a wife.

"He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord." **(Proverbs 18:22)**

"Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; Be exhilarated always with her love." **(Proverbs 5:18-19)**

Companionships

• Marriage

◦ Enjoy all that God has provided, yet do so with wisdom.

"For whoever is joined with all the living, there is hope; surely a live dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know they will die; but the dead do not know anything, nor have they any longer a reward, for their memory is forgotten. Indeed their love, their hate and their zeal have already perished, and they will no longer have a share in all that is done under the sun. Go then, eat your bread in happiness and drink your wine with a cheerful heart; for God has already approved your works. Let your clothes be white all the time, and let not oil be lacking on your head." **(Ecclesiastes 9:4-8)**

Companionships

• Marriage

◦ Husbands and Wives.

"Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her ..." **(Ephesians 5:22-25)**

"So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church..." **(Ephesians 5:28-29)**

Companionships

• Jesus

- Laid down his life for his friends (disciples)

"This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you." **(John 15:12-15)**

Companionships

• Jesus

- By His love we may have confidence!

"Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world." **(1 John 4:15-17)**

Companionships

• Jesus

- Knowing Him is necessary to be saved.

*"**We know** that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him. **We know** that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. And **we know** that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so **that we may know Him** who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."* **(1 John 5:18-20)**

Companionships

• Jesus

- Knowing Him is necessary to be saved.

"By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked." **(1 John 2:3-6)**

Companionships

• Jesus

- We are all one in Him.

"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." **(Galatians 3:26-28)**

God's Plan of Salvation

• We must hear the word of God

"Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls." **(James 1:21)**

"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." **(Romans 10:17)**

God's Plan of Salvation

- We must believe in Jesus Christ

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16 NKJV)

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies ...'" (John 11:25)

God's Plan of Salvation

- We must repent of our sins

"I tell you no, but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." (Luke 3:33)

"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

God's Plan of Salvation

- We must confess Christ as Lord.

"Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 10:32)

"... that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation." (Romans 10:9-10)

God's Plan of Salvation

- We must be baptized for forgiveness of our sins.

"And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.'" (Mark 16:15-16)

"Peter said to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" (Acts 2:38)

God's Plan of Salvation

- We must be remain faithful, obedient servants of the Lord.

"Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven will enter." (Matthew 7:21)

"And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation ..." (Hebrews 5:9)