

4 better life and have a better future. As Christians, our actions should reflect our faith in God and His Son. Our lives should be above reproach so that those around you will see God's Son in our lives. You see, as a young person raised in the environment of the church while you are young you need to learn and grow in your knowledge and relationship with God and His Son. You need to know why His Son died on the cross for your sins and why it is important to be baptized for the remission of your sins and walk in a manner that is right before God. As adults, we need to learn to be more mature in our faith with God and quit being a weak Christian because we are too lazy to study God's word or be involved in the work of the Lord. Sin is enticing because it offers a quick route to prosperity and makes us feel like one of the crowd or one of the 'good ole boys'. But when we go along with others and refuse to listen to God's word our own appetites will become our master and we will do anything to satisfy our desire with our so-called friends. We must

learn to make Godly choices, not choices that are on the basis of the flashy appeal or short term pleasures of this life. This will often mean staying clear of those who want to entice us into the activities that we know are wrong before God. As Christians, we cannot be friendly or comfortable with sin and expect our lives to be unaffected by it. That is why we need to be influenced by godly people instead of worldly people. As we go through life the small choices we make will eventually add up to be major decisions in our lives in the future. It's your choice!

Psalms 119:10-13: "With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You. Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes. With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth."

By: Bill Davis

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Faithful Sayings

Olsen Park Church of Christ

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Services

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.
10:20 a.m.
6:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
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Fred Perez
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Slow Change

I Cor. 15:33-34: *"Do not be deceived: 'Evil company corrupts good habits.' Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame."*

with the way we live our lives and the direction our lives go. When we are young we are more susceptible to fall into any number of bad habits or to develop the wrong friends or bad thinking. Have you ever noticed that some young people or even adults never ever think of doing anything wrong or breaking any law when they are by themselves? But when they get around those who have no morals or values, then these same people will just go wild and do or say the most vile words or actions that never seemed to be in their nature. We see young people who were always obedient to their parents and faithful in church, but the minute they went away to college in a different city or state they seem to have

forgotten all that they had learned from their parents. Did this just happen overnight or did this process occur over time? This is why young people in the church must develop their own relationship and faith in God. They cannot rely upon their parent's faith to be strong in the Lord. If they don't grow or develop they will fall into any scheme they see or hear. This is why we as parents need to spend quality time with our children in teaching them God's word as seen in Ephesians 6:4 and in Proverbs 22:6. And we need to begin early helping our children to develop a desire in their hearts to obey God. This is also the reason that teenagers need to build upon the foundation their parents have begun in teaching them God's word. These are the years in which those who have been blessed to grow up in the environment of the church with godly parents can begin their own walk with the Lord. It is the time in life that you will begin making the daily choices of whether you will follow the 'crowd' or follow Jesus. It has often been said, show me your friends who you hang around with and I will show you your destiny. Remember our verse at the beginning, "Evil company corrupts good habits." Those we

choose as our closest friends will influence our choices. (By the way, this is true at any age).

As a young person when we start going to the higher grades in middle and high school we have a tendency to be involved in sports or other school activities, thus we will find that we have very little time for our families and the church if we are not careful. As we get busier and busier we will adopt new friends and new habits. Our families will be less and less a part of our lives and the church will become less and less of a focus in our relationship with God. Usually when this happens we will take on the personality of our new friends. We can begin to adopt their habits, and their worldly ways such as foul language, immodest clothing, drugs, drinking and premarital sex. You see, our so called friends do and will have a cause and effect on the way we think and the way we will act.

We see couples who have been married for many years who seem to have their act together. But as soon as the children leave home we see those who are weak in which one or the other will file for divorce and just live a life of sin or pleasure. As we see this change, did

this change happen just that morning or did it happen over a period of years? I dare say this change had been in the making for over a period of years. It might be due to the demands on a couple's time, while spending time caring for their children and earning a living. This is why as a couple we should develop a strong bond with our mates when we are young and love each other more than ourselves as seen in Ephesians 5:22-29. As a couple raising a family or going through the years of working up the corporate food chain ladder, we can and do become less and less available for our family. When this happens we can be less sensitive or caring with our family. We will just go with the crowd we work with. Usually this means a divorce or hard times in our marriage. Our co-workers can and will have an effect on our lives if we become weak and this will then affect our relationship with our mate and children. One may ask, "how can this affect me as a Christian?" Think about it. As a Christian we need to spend time with God in prayer and Bible study. When we spend quality time with God and study His word we can then be strong when the devil tries to persuade us to do wrong. Ephesians 5 has a lot to

say about being an imitator of God and what we need to avoid.

Ephesians 5:1-7: "Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them."

If we are weak in our convictions and our relationship with God we will imitate those around us who are worldly and evil. As children imitate their parents, we should imitate God and His Son, Jesus Christ. The love Jesus had for us led Him to sacrifice His body so that we could live a