

“Amnon Had a Friend!”

2 Samuel 13:1-6

Intro. – Hollywood, CA branch of the American Cancer Society decided to hold a benefit in conjunction with a professional tennis tournament. What could have been a good thing turned out to be a most embarrassing situation. A major tobacco company was the sponsor of this tournament. Officials of the American Cancer Society found out too late that they had committed themselves to selling tickets to an event named: “The Virginia Slims Tournament of Champions.” To add salt to the wound, the publicity sent out with the American Cancer Society’s seal/logo on it showed a young woman with a tennis racket in one hand and a cigarette in...

How fittingly this illustrates the idea of rubbing elbows with the wrong crowd. The choosing of friends has more ramifications than any of us can ever know. The old saying “if you sleep with the dogs you will smell like the dogs” has Biblical origin. It was Paul under God’s inspiration in 1 Corinthians 15:33 who wrote: “*Do not be deceived: bad company corrupts good morals.*”

That’s the purpose behind this message. Our text concerns one individual who illustrates this point to a tee. His name is Amnon. His story is worthy of our frequent review. Amnon had a friend, our text says. This, I trust will be an arresting statement to you by the end of this message if not already. Had it not been for this friend, Amnon probably would not have committed the terrible act he did. But, Amnon had a friend! That sentence tells the story of many who have disappointed not only the hopes/dreams of those who have loved them, but, also it describes many who have disappointed their own hopes/dreams.

Purpose: to better understand our need to always choose friends wisely

Many a young and older person has been sucked into doing something and being something they had no intention of doing and being simply because they had “friends”. Amnon is but one example of this. The fact he had a friend that encouraged/urged this sin in his life, led to a tragic outcome for his life. Let this serve as a lesson to each of us today:

I CONSIDER THE SOCIAL PRINCIPLE OF FRIENDSHIPS

- want to begin recognizing God’s powerful, built in principle
- A. People Need People
 1. It’s been said God made mankind *individuals* so that all might enjoy the friendships of each other.
 2. Illus. – old song sung by Dean Martin “Everybody Loves Somebody Sometime” = isn’t too far off... Why? God made us this way!
- B. God is Not Alone
 1. Even the Godhead demonstrates this social principle.
 2. Father, Son and Holy Spirit (3 fold manifestation of divinity) demonstrates that God neither dwells nor works alone.
- C. Part of Church’s Purpose
 1. This social principle is found in the heart of the Church’s purpose.
 2. Not only win the lost but also build up (encourage/fellowship). This is the way it has been from the beginning of our Lord’s Church...
 3. This social principle is the chief channel through which forces of both good/evil work out issues. Amnon had a friend. He needed friends like us; however, his choice was less than desirable!

II CONSIDER THE DYNAMICS OF FRIENDSHIPS

- A. Friendship is Giving
 1. One can love those who do not love them:
 - Illus. -- Lady Kinnaird to her daughter, “I do not ask you to like them, for you cannot like people at will, but, you can love them.”

2. Friendships demand *reciprocity* or “giving, as well as, taking” returning what one has received!
 - Illus. – British Consumer magazine *Which* recently rated fourteen kinds of pets (from gerbils to horses) on the following basis: price, maintenance, cost, durability, ownership satisfaction and daily enjoyment. Here are what the results said:
 - 1) dogs – despite high annual maintenance (\$290-\$390) and a tendency to foul sidewalks... dogs’ durability (avg. of 10-11 yrs) and the giving of 4 hrs of enjoyment a day...
 - 2) horses/ponies
 - 3) cats – classed often destructive and barely beat out canaries and parakeets...
 - 4) last? – tortoise/turtle – though low in cost and high in durability turtles were ranked dead last because “they just don’t return love.”

B. Amnon is a Perfect Example

1. Want to know what kind of influence comes from the wrong kinds of friends? Look at Amnon!
2. Yes, he entertained this desire in his heart knowing full well of its wickedness, but there were obstacles: his conscience, Tamar’s appeal, dad brothers and other sisters and certainly God...
3. But, Amnon had a friend. What a phrase, a phrase that says it all!
4. Note: like all of God great blessings, the gift of friendship can be abused and misused.
5. Jonadab, Amnon’s friend, is a perfect example of what results in the influence of bad friends

III CONSIDER THE RESULTS OF FRIENDSHIPS

A. Friendships Do Influence Us

1. Book of Proverbs is filled with illustrations of this very point:
 - a. Proverbs 22:24-25 *“Do not associate with a man given to anger; or go with a hot-tempered man, lest you learn his ways, and find a snare for yourself.”*
 - b. Proverbs 25:19 *“Like a bad tooth and an unsteady foot is confidence in a faithless man in time of trouble.”*
 - c. Proverbs 27:17 *“Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”*
2. 1 Corinthians 15:33 *“Do not be deceived. Bad company corrupts good morals.”*
 - Illus. – farmer was being bothered by crows... He also had a “sociable” pet parrot. One day the parrot got in with the crows. That same day the farmer went crow hunting... Guess who got winged in the process? Found his pet parrot ruffled up, but alive. He took the bird home. The kids asked, “What happened?” Before the dad could explain the parrot said, “Bad company, bad company!”
3. Whether we want to admit it or not, the company we choose to keep greatly influences us!

B. Character is a Key

1. On the Day of Judgment, there will be a strict accounting of what? One’s character!
2. Few matters contribute to character more than the influences of our chosen friends. It has been suggested by several commentaries that on the Day of Judgment the one question God will be asking is, “Who were your friends?”
3. Hastily formed or ill-chosen friendships are one of the greatest perils each of us face today!

IV CONSIDER SAFEGUARDS IN FRIENDSHIPS

A. Know Your Friends

1. Do they lack virtue and an understanding of God’s truth?
2. What of their character, does it pass the test of God’s truth?
3. Proverbs 18:24 *“A man of many friends comes to ruin, but, there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”*
4. Be careful, be very careful to whom you give of yourselves in friendship!

B. Have No Regrets

1. Understand Biblical principles:

- a. the person who hasn't made up their mind as to what is right and wrong... is the one most vulnerable to evil friendships...
- b. evident is the need to teach coming generations the TRUTH... get heads screwed on!
- 2. Don't be afraid of loneliness
 - a. Spirit led people will find the right friends... What a friend we have in Jesus...!
 - b. whenever choosing friends or a mate best to wait patiently rather than get mixed up with the wrong person(s)...
 - c. any friend that causes compromise or discourages faithfulness to God not worth calling friend
- 3. Remain loyal to Christ
 - a. loyalty to Christ must come at all cost – yes, even refusing those who would have us think they were our friends!
 - b. any person who encourages you to go contrary to the will of Christ IS NO FRIEND!

Remember, Amnon had a friend and look what resulted!

Conclusion: Olivia Langdon came from a Godly home... She fell in love with a man who made no profession of faith in Christ and His Church. His name was Mark. He was a nice guy, but had nothing to do with Christ and His people. In spite of this, Olivia married Mark. At first, her life made a deep impression on his. He regularly asked the blessing at mealtime and joined her in worship on Sunday. But gradually these practices faded and one day Mark announced, "Livy, I don't believe in the Bible." In the months that followed, his unbelief subtly eroded her confidence in God. Later during a particularly difficult time of sorrow, Mark tried to encourage his beloved wife by saying, "Livy, if it comforts you to lean on the Christian faith, do so." But she could only reply, "Mark, I can't." Olivia's once vibrant and alive faith had become so weak and powerless all because she had a friend – her husband. Oh, by the way, Olivia's husband was famous and remains famous to this day for you see Olivia Langdon, the young girl who was raised in a Godly home, married Samuel Clemens, a.k.a. Mark Twain!