

Watch week 5 of Starting Over here (<https://youtu.be/6OJjXT5khlM>) or on the oneChurch.tv App (<https://subsplash.com/onechurch/app>)

## STARTING OVER, PART 5: PROXIMITY OF YOUR REGRETS

Have you ever met someone that later you wish you'd never met? Is there a person you wish your husband, wife, son, or daughter had never met? Sometimes people are our greatest regrets, because they influence us to ignore what we know to be true, and eventually we become just like them.

**BIG IDEA:** Our biggest regrets are connected to people we've met.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever met someone that later you wish you'd never met? Share with the group.
2. Talk about a time when you saw someone suffer because of his or her relationships. What happened?
3. During the message, Chris said, "*Judgmental* is when I draw a harsh conclusion about you. *Good judgment* is when I draw conclusions about myself based on wisdom." To what extent has not wanting to be judgmental drawn you into unhealthy relationships in the past? How do Chris' definitions of *judgmental* and *good judgment* change your perspective?
4. Moran Cerf a—neuroscientist from Northwestern University—said this...

*"The more we study engagement, we see time and again that just being next to certain people actually aligns your brain with them. Over time, they'll naturally pick up on those desirable attitudes and behaviors."*

—Moran Cerf

5. What Cerf is saying is that *Your future will be impacted by the people you spend time with*. How have you seen this played out in people's lives?
6. Now, interestingly enough? 3,000 years ago? Before we were able to look inside at our brain? King Solomon—the wisest person who has ever lived—made a statement that Moran Cerf discovered. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Proverbs 13:20.*

*Walk with the wise and become wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.* Proverbs 13:20 (NIV)

*Biblically speaking, a fool is someone who knows the difference between right and wrong but doesn't care. A wise person is one who knows the difference and seeks to do what is right. Fools see life as disconnected. They live as if today's decisions will have no impact on tomorrow. A wise person understands that life is connected and that today's decisions have the potential to create tomorrow's reality.*

7. What is the promise to those who "walk" with the wise?
8. Chris said, "*Friends who aren't careful with their life won't be careful with your life.*" What is the consequence of being a companion of fools?
9. Based on your experiences, why do you think Solomon highlights what a person *becomes* (i.e., "wise") in the first half of the verse, while he highlights what will *happen* (i.e., "suffering harm") in the second half?
10. Why didn't he say, "He who walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools becomes a fool"?
11. As you look back, how have you seen this principle work itself out in your life?
12. Who is a person in your life whose wisdom you rely on? In what ways have you seen his or her wisdom rub off on you over time?

13. Chris shared the principle that ***Your friends determine the direction and quality of your life.*** Was that true for you when you were in school?
14. Is it still true or *as true* for you now that you are in a different stage of life?
15. Who are you walking with right now? Who are you doing life with right now? Who in your life are you surrounding yourself with that is going to hold you accountable? Who in your life with is going to keep you from making bad decisions and talk to you from driving the car off the cliff, like *Thelma & Louise*?

*“True friends will go over the cliff with you.” Yeah, okay. True friends stay true to you during difficult times. But true friends keep you from making stupid decisions like driving off a cliff and screwing your life up!*

## FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Judging by the people you spent time with last month, what kind of company to you keep? By contrast, whom did you used to hang out with 5,10, 15 years ago?
2. Parents: If you could pick friends for your kids, who would you pick and why? What would be their characteristics of these friends?
3. ***Your friends determine the direction and quality of your life.*** We talk about this to our children and teenagers all the time. The problem comes when as adults, we think we’re immune. Why do we tend to ignore our own advice?

We think that because we don’t have pimples and we have our own convictions, this doesn’t apply to us. We couldn’t be more wrong. Marriages have ended because of this principle. People’s faith has been shipwrecked because they allowed the herd—the people they hung out with and did life with—to determine their values or lack of values.

4. Specifically, who have been some of the biggest spiritual influences in your life? How did they influence you?
5. Who have you influenced this past week? Has it been a positive influence? Negative influence?
6. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Proverbs 27:6.*

*Wounds from a friend are better than kisses from an enemy!*

*Proverbs 27:6 (TLB)*

7. If you were writing this verse in today’s language, how would you say it? How do you know if you’re around a true friend? Why is it so important to have real friends that tell us what we *need* to hear and not what we *want* to hear?

## THINK ABOUT IT

Friends influence the direction and quality of your life. Is your core group moving in the direction you want your life to move? Can you be yourself with that core group, or do you have to pretend you are someone you’re not? Do you often feel pressure to compromise?

## MOVING FORWARD

The promise from Proverbs 13:20 can be read alongside a similar warning from the New Testament: *Bad company corrupts good character* (1 Corinthians 15:33). The Bible makes it clear that certain relationships are pivotal in our spiritual development, while others can lead us in directions we never intended to go and cause regrets.

But we don’t live in a vacuum. We’re surrounded by wisdom and foolishness from all sides. Is it possible to completely ignore the companionship of fools? Should you? How do you balance the relationships in your life that strengthen your faith and the relationships that could inhibit your spiritual growth knowing full well that these relationships could also be the pivotal for others to draw closer to God?

## WEEKLY READING

This week, spend some time reading and reflecting on *Hebrews 3:12-14, Proverbs 13:20, 1 Corinthians 15:33, Proverbs 27:17, Proverbs 27:6, Proverbs 17:17, Ecclesiastes 4:9-10*

