

# Church doesn't have to be complicated.

## onechurch bigIdea small group discussion

There is an often-ignored principle that determines the quality and direction of our lives. While we are quick to recognize the importance of this principle in our children's lives, as adults, we feel like we can disregard it. However, the truth is that we are just as impacted by the power of this principle now, as we were when we were younger. Today, we will discuss how we can become intentional about harnessing this principle for our spiritual development.

**Simple.**

**BIG IDEA: Christianity isn't about solo. It's a Team Sport.**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about a person in your life who has kept you from making a bad decision.
2. Looking back, are there people you feel God providentially brought into your life at crucial times? Who? How did God use them? (*If this is a couples' group, ask if anyone has seen God providentially bring someone into one of their children's lives.*)
3. Looking back, is there a time when you feel God brought someone across your path that could have helped you, but you resisted the relationship?
4. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read and discuss Proverbs 13:20.*

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.

5. What is the promise to those who "walk" with the wise?
6. What is the consequence of being a companion of fools?
7. 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?
8. Why didn't he say, "He who walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools becomes a fool"?
9. As you look back, how have you seen this principle work itself out in your life?
10. Chris shared the principle that ***Your friends determine the direction and quality of your life.***
11. Was that true for you when you were in school?
12. Is it still true or *as true* for you now that you are in a different stage of life?

### FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Judging by the people you spent time with last month, what kind of company do 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. *Read Proverbs 27:6.* 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

Who has access to your life? Who has permission to pull you back on course when you drift?

#### 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 Cor. 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.

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?

If you would like more information about getting into a community group, contact [Patrick@onechurch.tv](mailto:Patrick@onechurch.tv)

#### CHANGING YOUR MIND

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

# Simple.