

Fresh Fire Ministries
The Expository Teaching Ministry of Jay Duane Driver

“The Company That You Keep”

“Do not be deceived; evil company corrupts good habits.” I Corinthians 15:33 (NKJV)

We have all heard several of the old adages such as, “Birds of a feather flock together.” “Association brings about assimilation” or, “You get like the company that you keep.” While obviously not biblical, these sayings are very similar to the Apostle Paul’s admonishment to us in our devotional passage. However, there is one very marked difference. Paul voices this warning or caution within the backdrop of his treatise on the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is the transforming power of the empty tomb that resurrects our dead nature, gives us new hope, and the opportunity for eternal life. If we have indeed experienced the power of the risen Savior, not only will it change our nature but it will also change our associations and the fellowships that we partake in.

We need not fool ourselves. Even though we have been, and are being transformed we must renew our minds each day in order to continue the transformation process and not fall into conformity with this world system and those who can potentially have a negative impact on our walk with the Lord. **“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Romans 12:2 (NKJV)** We must take heed to our conduct and our conversation, because what we believe in and who we believe on always determines our behavior. Simply put, Paul is saying in essence that we need to avoid being involved with a “shoddy” fellowship. From the historical perspective many of the Corinthians had not only embraced the teaching that there really was no resurrection, but they had fallen also into the lax moral lifestyle that such a denial would encourage.

The word “company” in the passage can also be rendered as “communication” which can be defined as associations. As saved as we might be and loving God as much as we all do, there is a corrupting danger and influence that impacts us if we are in fellowship with evil associates. It is a case of light and darkness. Light always has an indelible effect on darkness. But if the power of the light is diminished to any degree it allows the darkness to resurface in a very subtle and seductive manner ultimately regaining its influence. As a result, our “good” habits are corrupted and many times we can’t even explain how it happened. That is why Paul says “don’t be deceived.” **“Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.” I Corinthians 15:34 (NKJV)** Paul further solidifies his argument by warning us not to fall asleep at the wheel, but stay focused on righteousness. Wake up! Many of the associates of the Corinthians and even some that we may have did not even have knowledge of God. What a shame.

There will be times of ministry that God will lead us to share with those who are of different persuasions and lifestyles but only at His request or leading. Some people need to be loved and prayed for from a distance in order to protect our witness and the integrity of our relationship with God. Yes, people still judge us by the company we keep. **“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather expose them.” Ephesians 5:11 (NKJV)**