

Bad Influences

Objectives

- ❖ What influences affect our thoughts, feelings, beliefs, behavior, and personalities?

References

- ❖ <http://mobile.coptichymns.net/index.php?module=library&func=viewpub&tid=1&pid=563>

Scriptural Verse

- ❖ “Do not be deceived: Evil Company corrupts good habits.” (1 Corinthians 15:33)
- ❖ “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)

Lesson Outline

We live in a culture, where so much immoral behavior is taken for granted. The standard for what is considered “obscene” in TV shows and movies has completely changed. Not only has censorship decreased, but the very nature of the programming, the situations that arise, the kind of humor employed, and the clothes that are worn all send a message to the viewers about what is acceptable. When we see casual funny interesting people that seem to always be in a good mood talking and acting immorally, it becomes much harder to label it as evil behavior because it seems on the surface as good natured fun that is appealing and provocative.

Those who are absorbed in popular culture, tattooing, ear piercing, music, TV, and movies have been so conformed to it that they can no longer objectively identify the danger they are in, and how much God disapproves of things they are exposing themselves to.

The Holy Bible warns us from such behavior

- ❖ “I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you ...They shall not dwell in your land; lest they make you sin against Me” (Exodus 23:31-32)
- ❖ “Can a man take fire to his bosom and his clothes not be burned?” (Proverbs 6:27)
- ❖ “For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God“ (2 Timothy 3:2-4)

Should we stay away from people around us?

St. Paul answered this question in 1 Corinthians 5: 9-13

“I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner not even to eat with such a person. For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those

who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore, put away from yourselves that wicked person.”

What about sins that we take lightly

Lying:

“Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds”
(Colossians 3:9)

- ❖ Big lies - Unfaithfulness
- ❖ White lies – No one will know
- ❖ Cheating
- ❖ Lying about our motivations to make excuses for ourselves
- ❖ Friends (St. Peter denied the Lord Jesus Christ when he was with the wrong people)

Fear/Worry

“Then He said to His disciples, “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing” (Luke 12:22-2). “In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?” (Psalm 56:11)

- ❖ What feeds our fears?
- ❖ Misunderstanding God.
- ❖ Fear of death.
- ❖ Fear of life.
- ❖ Conversations with other fearful people.
- ❖ Being absorbed by the world.

Hate

“For us we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another” (Titus 3:3).

- ❖ Pride – My rights have been injured.
- ❖ Pride – Believing we know better than others.
- ❖ Impatience – intolerance with those around us.
- ❖ Being with other people that hate.
- ❖ Watching hateful things.

Departing from the true faith

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron“ (1 Timothy 4:1-2).

- ❖ Idle conversations about hypothetical matters.
- ❖ Not being firmly rooted in the Bible.
- ❖ Studying philosophies in a wrong way.
- ❖ Setting worldly goals.

Selfishness

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself” (Philippians 2:3).

- ❖ Sitcoms that show selfish behavior that is accepted by others and applauded by a fake audience.
- ❖ Looking out for number one mentality.

Types of influences

- ❖ Media (Television/Movies/Music)
- ❖ Internet
 - Things that waste time
 - Pornography
- ❖ People
- ❖ Philosophies

How to avoid bad influences?

- ❖ **Be Alert:** Think first. Don't assume the activity you or your friends are planning is appropriate just because it is “normal” and everyone does it. "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves” (Matthew 7:15).
- ❖ **Flee:** When faced with a situation that you know will be a bad influence on you. “Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body” (1 Corinthians 6:18). Remember Joseph the righteous.

Conclusion

Keeping ourselves holy is not an easy job. We have to struggle against all evil deeds and to sacrifice our pleasure and our rest so that we will be worthy to meet the Lord; always remember that our adversary the devil “walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8) and also “You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin” (Hebrews 12:4).

Activities / Discussion Points

Divide the group into 2 groups “with” and “against” the different types of bad influences; let them get what they have and support the groups with Bible verses.