



## Part 4 | Providential Relationships

If you are like most people, you can't tell your life story without referencing people who played significant roles along the way. The same is true of your faith story. In this message, we will explore the role that providential relationships play in the development of our faith.

**Bottom Line:** My relationships with people impact my relationship with Jesus, for good or for bad.

### Discussion Questions

Begin by reading Proverbs 13:20 & 1 Corinthians 15:33

1. Looking back, are there people you feel God providentially brought into your life at crucial times? Who? How did God use them? If you have children, have you seen God providentially bring someone into one of your children's lives?
2. Is there a time when you feel God brought someone across your path that could have helped you, but you resisted the relationship?
3. Are there those in your circle of relationships that would say YOU are someone God providentially dropped into their lives?
4. In Proverbs 13:20, what is the promise to those who "walk" with the wise? What is the consequence of being a companion of fools? How have you seen these principles at work in your own life or someone else's life?
5. 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? What is the significance of that distinction? Why didn't he say, "He who walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools becomes a fool."

6. Was that true for you when you were in school? Is it still true or as true for you now that you are in a different stage of life?
7. What has been the most helpful or encouraging thought/idea from the message this week? How has that thought/idea helped you?

## Your Time with God

### Week 3 - Day 1

Proverbs 13:20

Regular companions inevitably influence each other, for good or for ill. In this verse we see that it is not those who we just know that influence us but those we “walk” with, spend time with, or “do life” with. Who do you know and then who are you spending time with on a regular basis? Who truly influences you? And are they wise? Or are you a “companion of fools?” The people who influence you will determine the direction and the quality of your life.

Prayer: Father, show me who the influencers in my life are.

### Week 3 - Day 2

Proverbs 27:17

“Another” literally reads, “the face of another” in the original Hebrew language. Since the word “face” can refer to the edge of an axe or sword, the image is that interaction with a good man (both as he encourages and corrects) hones one’s skill in handling challenges. Who are the people who help you handle the challenges that inevitably come in life? Choosing those people wisely will grow your faith!

Prayer: Father, lead me to the people who will sharpen me, and whom I can sharpen.

### Week 3 - Day 3

Proverbs 22:24-25

A bad attitude toward life and people is contagious and deadly; therefore the wise will choose their friends carefully. Once again Proverbs makes the point that we become like those with whom we spend the most time. We actually learn their ways. Relationships can either grow our faith or weaken it.

Prayer: Father, give me wisdom in choosing my friendships.

### Week 3 - Day 4

Proverbs 27:5-6; 28:23

Open rebuke affords a person the chance to reflect on the course of the path he or she is walking, where hidden love perceives but fails to communicate the possibility of such a need. The wounds of a friend are meant to cut to the heart for the good of the person, whereas, the kisses of an enemy are devised to appease the heart in order to hide the hurt that has or is to come. Do you have friends who will tell you the truth even when the truth is hard to hear?

Prayer: Father, help me to value the friend who will be truthful with me.

### **Week 3 - Day 5**

Proverbs 27:9

This verse suggests that it is good to have friends for the occasional party, but it is better yet to have a friend willing and able to give good advice. We are told to “acquire wisdom” in Proverbs chapter 1. Seeking out those friends who are willing and able to give good advice is one of the best ways to acquire it.

Prayer: Father, please grow my faith through wise relationships.