

Godly Relationships

**Embry Hills Church of Christ
Fall 2020**

Godly Relationships

Friends and Co-Workers Lesson 6

Influential Exiles

A common message of the New Testament is that Christians should recognize they do not belong to this world. A full acceptance of this fact gives us strength to overcome the influences and temptations of this life. An example of such teaching is the description of Abraham and other heroes of faith (Hebrews 11:13-16) who are said to have *“died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. ¹⁴For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.”*

And yet we are repeatedly told we must balance this attitude with a recognition that we have to live among the unbelievers of this world (I Corinthians 5:9-10), and set an example for them that would draw them to Christ. This would be especially applicable to work situations – or any place we spend most of our time – where our godly behavior is expected to be a stark contrast to those who live self-indulgent lives. But there is an application for our friendships – carefully ensuring that they do not unduly pull us toward the world, but rather that we are lights of godliness to all of our associates.

1. Read Philippians 2:14-15.
¹⁴Do all things without grumbling or questioning, ¹⁵that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world
 - a. How is the world described?
 - b. What is our responsibility in the world?
 - c. What is said of the actions we are to take and the character that we are to have?
 - d. Would this behavior and character stand out in your workplace? Would it be noticed by friends who are believers in Christ?
2. Read I Corinthians 15:33 and II Corinthians 6:14
³³Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.”

¹⁴Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?
 - a. In the context of I Corinthians 15 (cf. vs. 12-19) how might bad company affect our morals?
 - b. What are other ways that ungodly friendships can have a dangerous effect on our morals?

- c. Does II Corinthians 6:14 teach that we should not work alongside ungodly co-workers? Explain why or why not:
 - d. Be prepared to explain II Corinthians 6:14 in light of the Chart on Godly and Ungodly Influences:
3. Read I Peter 2:11-12.
- ¹¹Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹²Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.*
- a. How does Peter make it clear that we both live in the world and live apart from it?
 - b. What kind of conduct must we have among unbelievers (Gentiles)? How would this conduct be seen by others in your workplace? What would friends notice?
 - c. What may be the initial result of our example? Why do you think the example may be more powerful over time? If this is true, what trait is being required of us?
 - d. What may the ultimate result of our example?

Lessons from the Sermon on the Mount

1. Read Matthew 5:14-16. Here again we see the theme of living in, but different from the world. *¹⁴"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*
2. Based on the passage, what does it mean to let your light shine? What will be the result in the lives of those who see this?
3. Given the context of this passage, it seems clear that our good works, which are to be seen, are to result from possessing the character described in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12). For each of the eight beatitudes be prepared to explain how possessing that character would have an impact on friends or co-workers: