

# Daily View

*“But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today’” Hebrews 3:13*

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September 21, 2020



He walked in the way of sinners and led many astray. Emperor of Rome, Gaius, better known as Caligula (AD 37-41).  
Cruel, bloodthirsty, vain and immoral in every way imaginable. [Photo: I took this at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (The MET), New York, October, 2008]

## Lessons from Proverbs

### Keeping Sin(ners) at Bay

I'm not proud of this, but when I was nine years old a couple of kids ambushed me and beat me up and took my lunch money. So, what did I do? I became friends with them. You know, “if you can't beat 'em, join 'em.”

These two boys personified I Corinthians 15:33, “evil companions corrupt good morals.” I'm pretty sure that was my mom's favorite verse. Unlike the Folsom church, there were not 25-30 good kids in my general age group at church. In fact, there was not even one, most of the time. So, I found my friends in other places. Some of them were not very well-behaved. They sought to entice me to sin.

Proverbs 1:10 says, “My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent.” In v. 15, it says, “my son, do not walk in the way with them; hold back your foot from their paths.” Seems clear enough, but I didn't want to get beat up again so I walked in the way of those two sinners for awhile. And that put me in some situations that played havoc with my conscience.

On one occasion, they were going to shoplift some stuff from the Alpha Beta store in Costa Mesa. I said, “I'm not doing that” so they said, “OK, you stand outside the store and watch in case the police come.” You have to picture this: a nine year old boy standing outside a huge supermarket

watching for the police. Even if I saw them, I wasn't sure what I was supposed to do since the two bad boys were inside the store and I had no idea where they were. But I did it and I didn't like it.

With “*evil companions...*” ringing in my ears, almost constantly, I finally broke free from those “sinners” and found more wholesome friends. But that experience taught me that evil friends can make life uncomfortable. They entice you and put you in situations that could get you in trouble. “*For their feet run to evil...they set an ambush for their own lives...*” (Proverbs 1:16a, 18b).

If you've ever followed the cases of people who get in trouble with the police, 9¾ times out of 10, they have put themselves in “the path of sinners.” Psalm 1 warns,

Blessed is the man  
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stands in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the seat of scoffers...

My mother tried hard to keep me from walking in the way of sinners and she was successful most of the time. The few times I walked in that way I proved the truth of Proverbs 1:7b — “*fools despise wisdom and instruction.*” I finally decided that I didn't like being a fool.

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