

No are evil, must find  
some attraction



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

No one expects to find a religious man constantly associating with and taking delight in the company of those who scoff at religion. Their views, on a subject which to him is sacred and all-important, must be extremely galling; their sneers, their ribald jokes and sinful ways must constantly wound. On so many occasions he cannot go where they go, do what they do, or think as they do, and very little pleasure can come from their companionship. Parents can have no hesitation in feeling that a son, who is continually in the society of evil companions, is succumbing to evil influences. He, who deliberately chooses friendship with those that are evil, must find some attraction in evil. However good he may be to begin with, he is sure to deteriorate. A boy may have been brought up to scorn a lie and to look upon dishonesty with contempt.

If he is associated with those who habitually lie and steal, who treat his scruples with contempt, and by their vicious practices often gain an advantage over him, he will find it exceedingly difficult to resist their influence. For both boys and men are imitative by nature, and like to be in sympathy with those around them. Just as bad companionship degrades, so good companionship is an ennobling and elevating influence. The friendship of a good man is one of the greatest blessings that this world can give us. It is an inducement to live cleanly and honestly, to act charitably and to think purely. It is a consolation in time of sickness and sorrow, and a source of added joy in time of happiness.

Considering, therefore, the injuries that accrue from bad associates and the benefits to be gained from worthy friends, it is clear what care should be exercised in the choice of companions. Every one should aim at making

friends with the best possible men. We should not take them on trust, relying on appearances only, but consider the way they talk, and the way they act before admitting them into close intimacy.

When they have been put to the test and not found wanting, we should cling to them faithfully, with a feeling of gratitude to Providence for having provided us with one of the most valuable of all human possessions a true friend.