

No. 40 **Avoid What Erodes Loyalty (Symposium)**
 -Bad Associations

[PLEASE NOTE: This talk includes a video]

HOW DO BAD ASSOCIATIONS ERODE LOYALTY? (3 min.)

While Christians live near, work with, and attend school with people who do not serve Jehovah, they should avoid unnecessary association with them

We do not consider ourselves too good to associate with others

Rather, we accept the inescapable fact that we become like those with whom we associate

[Read Proverbs 13:20; then isolate the following expressions]

"Walking with" suggests ongoing association (lv 25 ¶2)

"The stupid" refers, not to those who lack intelligence, but to those who ignore the wise counsel from God's Word (w10 9/1 5)

"Will fare badly"; association with unbelievers can lead to sharing in unscriptural activities

Long before that happens, however, bad associations will cause us gradually to absorb some of the world's disloyal attitudes; this weakens our attachment to Jehovah

We could begin to sympathize with the world's view that there is no point in remaining in a difficult marriage

We could find ourselves adopting the world's tolerant view of immorality, including homosexuality

We could become preoccupied with material pursuits, hobbies, and recreation

HOW TO AVOID BAD ASSOCIATIONS (1 min.)

We seek association primarily with those who have strong love for Jehovah and spiritual matters and who have a positive effect on our faith (2Ti 2:20, 21; g05 8/22 26-27, subheading "Friendships Among Fellow Christians")

While not shunning any of our brothers as if they were disfellowshipped, we should limit association with fellow believers if their conversations frequently revolve around material things, are negative and critical, or in other ways reflect the spirit of the world (1Co 15:33)

In the following dramatization, note the effect that bad associations can have on a Christian's attitude

[NOTE to speaker: When introducing the video, do not reveal that the setting is during the great tribulation]

VIDEO (5 min.)

WILL YOU AVOID BAD ASSOCIATIONS? (1 min.)

At this point in the video, it is now clear that Robert, Karen, and the others are deep into the great tribulation

Had Karen not previously made the needed adjustments in her associations, she may have lacked the strength to remain loyal during the great tribulation

May we exercise the greatest care regarding our associations now so that we will remain firmly loyal to Jehovah in the future

Brother _____ will now consider the final part of this symposium, "Avoid What Erodes Loyalty-Fear of Man"

TO BE COVERED IN 10 MINUTES