

"IRON SHARPENS IRON"**Introduction**

1. These Proverbs put truth pithily
2. We need this practical emphasis
3. This is the way to practical godliness

1. WE ALL NEED FELLOWSHIP WITH GODLY PEOPLE

- 1) The text speaks of companionship, fellowship
- 2) Two kinds of friend:
 - (i) foolish
 - (ii) wise, as here
- 3) The problem with foolish friends:
 - (i) They give no benefit. Solomon's advice
 - (ii) They promote Atheism: Ps. 14:1
 - (iii) They are worldly: Luke 12:20
 - (iv) They promote bad feelings: See v.3 here
- 4) The best friends are God's people:
 - (i) This seen in early Church: Ac. 2:42f
 - (ii) Godly friendship is strengthening: Jonathan
 - (iii) They know each other: Mal. 3:16
 - (iv) They protect one another: fellowship / prayer
APPLICATION: To isolate ourselves is dangerous

2. THERE ARE GREAT ADVANTAGES TO SUCH COMPANY

- 1) **ILLUSTRATION**: "iron sharpeneth...". Explain.
- 2) What advantages does it bring? Many.
- 3) Advantages of godly company:
 - (i) These are God's "saints". They are different
 - (ii) They are pilgrims – their view of life

- (iii) They are wise – often at God's Word
- (iv) They love truth + hate lies
- (v) They love God and are in union with Him
- (vi) They know + seek to keep God's Law
- (vii) They are saved – and have a testimony

- 4) To have godly company "sharpens" us:
 - (i) it gives us light on God's Word. Luke 24
 - (ii) it exposes to us our ignorance
 - (iii) it stirs us up with zeal to witness
 - (iv) it reminds us of the duty to read
 - (v) it corrects our faults. **ILLUSTRATION**: Dr. Bain
 - (vi) it encourages us to go on: **ILLUSTRATION**: Waldenses
APPLICATION: What a blessing to have godly friends!

3. LACK OF FELLOWSHIP IS HARMFUL TO US

- 1) **ILLUSTRATION**: a blunt knife: it will no longer cut
- 2) The Disadvantages of neglecting fellowship:
 - (i) we grow wise in our own conceits
 - (ii) we become narrow. **ILLUSTRATION**: a miniature
 - (iii) we may allow ourselves in 'sin'
 - (iv) we drop out of people's prayers
 - (v) we do not like to be corrected in our faults
 - (vi) we lose the gift of edifying speech
 - (vii) we become spiritually blunt
APPLICATION: Do we realize all this?

APPLICATION – to learn these lessons:

1. Try to sharpen by your example
2. By your conversation – not just "the weather"
3. By your love of one another

CONCLUSION

The Psalmist: "Let him that righteous...me smite"

PSALM

122: 1 – 9

119: 57 – 64

141: 3 – 5