BAD INFLUENCE

And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, 1 Kings 12:10 (KJV)

 Today’s text refers to Rehoboam, Solomon’s son who instead of taking the advice of the elders, listened to his boyhood friends. The wrong advice cost him much of his kingdom. He lost ten of the twelve tribes of Israel. It is not hard to be influenced in the wrong way.

 When I was a child, my dad worked on an egg farm. It was different from today’s egg farms in that all the hens had nests. They ran around in the chicken house and would lay their eggs in these nests. We gathered eggs in baskets. If I remember correctly there were two rows of nests that were set up the length of the chicken house. They were not on the ground but sat on platforms and the bottom row was about shoulder high for a boy my age (about seven or eight). The top row I could not see in very well so most of the time I just reached in and felt for the eggs.

 On the particular day that I am thinking of, my dad had told me to gather the eggs in one of the houses while he washed and graded eggs that had already been gathered. The owner of the egg farm had a son who was a couple years older than me and so we began to gather the eggs. Not long after we started I noticed the other boy was jerking some chickens out of the nests by their heads and throwing them on the ground. I asked him what he was doing and found out that if he ran across a setting hen, which was a hen who was protective of her eggs, he would just jerk her out and get the eggs. I must say that I thought that was a great idea for many of these setting hens would peck you and it did not feel very well. In fact it down right hurt. There are times when it would cause me to bleed, and well, me and blood don’t get along well, especially when it is my own. So, I started jerking a few hens out and throwing them on the ground myself.

 In the meantime my buddy went home and left the rest of the eggs for me to gather. Most of the chickens were good with you reaching under them and robbing of them of their prizes but a few would literally ruffle their feathers and threaten me and when they did out they would come and be cast to the ground. Hey my friend’s dad owned the farm! This had to be an okay practice! After jerking six or seven chickens from their nests something struck me across the seat of pants. Oh My! My! What pain seized my body? My dad had slipped up behind me and was observing my egg gathering practice. Needless to say he was not impressed with the chicken jerking part. He had found a small piece of two by four and began to get my attention. I had allowed myself to be influenced in the wrong way and it cost me.

Sad to say but bad influence can cost us a lot more than a blistered rear. People are sitting in jail because of bad influence. There are some who are in detox facilities because of the wrong type of advice. Some have lost their souls because of the bad influence of false prophets, wolves in sheep’s clothing, and people who are selling the world as the climax of life. I am trying to say that bad influence can lead you straight to hell!

 Be careful who and what you allow to help direct your life. If your friends are only about having a good time, you may need new friends. Life is more than fun and games. When your deeds and even your fun do not match up with the Bible’s way of living, your practices need to change. Give your heart to Jesus. Read His word and let his words influence your life.

Yours in Christ,

Brother Randy Burtram