

## Hindering Others

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**“YOU RAN WELL. WHO HINDERED YOU FROM OBEYING THE TRUTH?”  
(Galatians 5:7)**

It is so sad to observe the spiritual decline of those who once were dedicated and faithful Christians. Paul had the same feeling about the Galatian brethren. In their case, Paul knew who had hindered them, and seemed to be speaking rhetorically to get the churches of Galatia to realize that the Judaizers in their midst had caused them to accept a perverted gospel (**Galatians 1:6-9**). Their teaching added elements of the old law to the new covenant of Jesus Christ and had caused the Galatians to fall from grace (**Galatians 5:1-4**). Error hinders!

If you find yourself engaged in spiritual slippage, it might be good to ask yourself, “Who has hindered me?” Others do influence us. We empower certain people in our lives either to influence us toward Christ, or away from Him. Paul warned that “EVIL COMPANY CORRUPTS GOOD HABITS” (**1 Corinthians 15:33**). It is equally true that good, solid spiritual companionship can influence us toward a higher plane of service and faithfulness, if we choose them as friends (**Philippians 3:17-19**). Have you allowed worldly friends to corrupt your spiritual intentions and determinations to live for Christ? No one should be given such power over us!

We should also consider this question, “Am I a spiritually positive or negative influence in the lives of others?” You are either helping others, or hindering them, in their desire to reach Heaven. Husbands and wives influence each other (**1 Peter 3:1ff**). Many husbands discourage their wives by refusing to participate in the Christian life. Wives who become worldly and disinterested have held back many a man in Christian service, too.

What kind of a spiritual friend are you? Many hinder others through their constant negativity and defeatism. They criticize everything and everyone associated with the church, and cause others to think negatively about the church. Our attendance at worship services is also either a help or hindrance in the lives of others. The epistle to the Hebrews makes this very point in **Hebrews 10:22-25**. If we “HOLD FAST THE CONFESSION OF OUR FAITH,” and exhibit zeal and faithfulness in worship attendance, we “stir up” others to love and good works. But, the opposite is also true. By non-attendance and non-involvement we dampen the enthusiasm of others for worshiping and serving God. It is obvious that others allow the disinterest of some to influence them in regard to Sunday night and Wednesday night attendance, for example. So, ask yourself whether you are a hinderer or a helper of others spiritually. You can HELP others run well, and save both yourself and others!