

A Word of Advise

The Father

My child! Improving and refining your character and manners is more important than learning a trade or a skill and it is of more value for you than an education. I say so because an education without a good character to accompany it, and a skill in the absence of a good nature are just useless! My child! Arm yourself with good morals and pay as much attention to your conscience as to your physical appearance. My child! Do you wish for me to be like a mirror for you to tell you about your good and bad deeds? And your good and bad qualities?

And if I ever tell you of them, will you then stop the bad ones? And will you keep up with the good ones? And will you better yourself in this way? How nice it would be if you decide to do so. My child! Stay away from associating with evil-natured people. Avoid mixing with them, as it will destroy you. Many celebrated youth who kept company of unsuitable people became misguided: and many corrupt individuals who associated with the virtuous became virtuous themselves. [1](#)

My child! If you do not learn from my advice, nature itself will teach you! The life's hardships and difficulties will punish you. The common everyday problems in life will knock you off your feet. Only then, you will realize that we have always had your interest and well-being in mind. And so far, all we have shown you has been a straight and safe path – and not a slippery one. And what we have warned you against has been a slippery path – and not a straight and safe one!

The Child

What an honour and pleasure for me that you be my tutor to bring to my attention my good and bad characteristics through honest criticism. So if you see any wrong doing in me, please first make me aware of it. And then show me the solution and how to correct myself. If I am corrected, it would be only because of you and if I am not, please do not persist in correcting me. And do not turn away from me and please do not set me free on my own.

1. According to famous Iranian poet Sa'di whoever associates with bad people will see no good. If an angel associates with a demon He will learn from him fear, fraud and hypocrisy. Of the wicked thou canst learn only wickedness. A wolf will not take to sewing jackets. (The Gulistan (Rose Garden) of Sa'di, p. 246). Also there is a famous verse from Molavi as follows: The son of Prophet Noah associated himself with bad people; because of that his family tree was lost forever. On the contrary, the dog of the companions of the cave (Ashab -eKahf) Sura 18 of the Holy Quran, by associating himself with the righteous people, acquired human characteristics. (Tr)

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