Imagine that you lived in a town where 9 out of 10 homes were occupied by active, genuine, Christian families. Wouldn't it be easier for you to live pleasing to God in that society—because of the strong influence for good?

Unfortunately, for most of us such a society is not the reality.

**Society, Even of Family and Friends, Can Fail**

Judas did not respond to the influence of Jesus and the apostles his companions.

He failed even though he was counted among the disciples, shared their ministry, and accompanied them over the entire period that Jesus associated with them (Acts 1:16-26).

It's also true that family and friends can turn against you and treat you wickedly.

This is the opposite of Judas’s problem above. There the influence was good but Judas resisted and rebelled. When, on the other hand, the influence is bad, we have to fight against that influence (Mt 10:36).

*Note:* Whether your family and friends are good or bad, although they influence you, they cannot force you.

In the day of Judgment, they will not give account for you, or instead of you.

You must give account of yourself (Rom 14:10-12). So you are responsible to choose the good influences, and refuse those that are evil (1 Th 5:21-22).

**Seeking Good Social Influences**

We should respect, appreciate, imitate, and seek the company of those who teach and influence us to obey God, (Heb 13:7).

We should seek to build each other up in the body of Christ through love (Eph 4:17).

Avoid foolish and unwholesome talk realising that words have a strong influence on us (Eph 4:15,29, 5:4).

Seek good company and fellowship among those who love truth and right (Eph 5:5-14). Remember, "Friendship with the world is enmity with God" (Jas 4:4).

*There is a tension here between trying to influence the worldly, and trying not to let them influence us.*

On one hand we must not isolate ourselves so much that we cannot influence the lost. On the other hand, we must not let ourselves become vulnerable to the influence of the world (Eph 5:15-16).