

# Relieving Peer Pressure

## Introduction:

- A. A woman who had reached the age of 102 was discussing her longevity.
  - 1. She commented, “Well, at least I don’t have to worry about peer pressure.”
- B. Peer pressure is a very real problem today, particularly among young people.
- C. Teenagers are constantly under pressure to conform to those they hang around with.
- D. All of us, regardless of age, face pressures from our peers.
  - 1. The clothes we wear, the cars we buy, etc... are as a result of what others like.
- E. How does “peer pressure” work?
  - 1. Jn.12:42,43– We go along with the crowd out of a desire for the glory they have to offer.
  - 2. 1 Pet.4:3,4– We follow the crowd because we don’t want to be thought strange or different.
    - a. Also, we don’t want to risk having others talk bad about us.
  - 3. Here is the power and danger of peer pressure: that we will base our actions on what people think rather than on what God thinks.
- F. Peer pressure can cause young Christians to lose interest in God and spiritual things because such things are not popular; their friends are not interested; or their friends may ridicule them.h.
- G. What can we do to relieve the pressure of our peers?

## I. Don’t Follow the Crowd.

- A. God warned his people not to follow the crowd – Ex.23:2.
  - 1. While God was giving Moses the instructions not to follow a crowd on Mt. Sinai, Aaron was doing that below in the camp – Ex.32:7,8.
    - a. Moses wanted to know how things got so out of hand.
      - 1) Ex.32:21-24 – Aaron had gone with the crowd.
    - b. Results – cf.Ex.32:26-35.
- B. Often the reason people succumb to peer pressure is because “Everybody’s doing it.”
  - 1. Prov.4:14– *“14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, And walk not in the way of evil men.”*
- C. Just because everyone is doing it doesn’t make it right.
  - 1. My parents used to ask me, when I would give the excuse that everyone was doing it, “If everyone was jumping off a bridge, would you do it too?”

## II. Avoid Evil Companions.

- A. To relieve peer pressure, change your peers.
  - 1. Prov.1:10– *“10 My son, if sinners entice thee, Consent thou not.”*
  - 2. Prov.1:15– *“15 My son, walk not thou in the way with them; Refrain thy foot from their path:”*
  - 3. “Go down to the fish market and look into the crab barrel. They never have to put a lid on it because if one crab starts to crawl out, the others will grab onto him and pull him back down. That’s what negative peer pressure does. And that’s what you must fight against” (Ben Carson, MD, Johns Hopkins University neurosurgeon who grew up on the streets of Detroit).
    - a. Be careful what barrel of friends you get yourself into.
- B. Avoid:
  - 1. The Fool – Prov.14:7; 13:20.
  - 2. The Angry Man – Prov.22:24,25.
  - 3. The Drunkard, the Gluttons, and the Slothful – Prov.23:19-21.
  - 4. Those Who Teach Sinful Ways – Prov.4:14,15; 1 Cor.15:33.
  - 5. The Adulterer – Prov.5:8.
- C. Even among Christians peer pressure can affect and influence for good or evil.
  - 1. Paul warned about the influence of one man in sin – 1 Cor.5:6.
  - 2. Avoiding evil companions may involve physically fleeing – Gen.39:12.

### III. Choose Good Companions.

- A. Who you choose as your friends is a most important choice – 1 Cor.15:33; Prov.13:20.
- B. Our friends should be those who respect God – Psa.119:63; Prov.13:20.

### IV. Do Not Conform To The World.

- A. To avoid peer pressure quit trying to be like the world – Rom.12:2.
  - 1. This is the reason peer pressure is a problem in the first place.
- B. Christians are to be nonconformists when it comes to this world.
  - 1. We are not to act like the world – speak like them, dress like them or think like them.
  - 2. We are to break out of that mold; we are to stand up and stand out for good, truth and righteousness.
  - 3. Eph.4:22-24.
- C. Rom.8:29– We are, rather, to be conformed to the image of God’s Son.

### V. Be a Good Influence.

- A. You can relieve peer pressure by becoming a light for good for others – Matt.5:16.
  - 1. Don’t let your friends influence you to wrong—you be strong and be an influence for good on them.
  - 2. Phil.2:15.
- B. Remember that you are special as a child of God and you should act like it.
  - 1. 1 Pet.2:9– You are chosen, you are royalty, you are holy, set apart – You are special!
    - a. You belong to God, not to the world, not to your friends, not even to yourself.

#### Conclusion:

- A. Don’t allow your peers to pressure you and pull you down.
- B. Always remember the example of Jesus who, despite the mocking, taunts, jeers, and even the blows, did not bow or give in.
- C. 1 Pet.2:21 – Follow HIS example.