

BIBLE STUDY #6

Peer Pressure

One of the primary influences on your life will be your peers (friends and other people of your own age). The temptation to be like those around you is strong. As a result, peer pressure is something that must be addressed. This does not intend to convey the message that all peer pressure is bad. On the contrary, depending on whom you choose to have as peers, this pressure may be a positive influence.

On a scale of 1-10 (10 being best), how do you think you do in handling peer pressure?

What would have to change about your life for this score to be higher?

CONFORMING VERSUS TRANSFORMING

Read **Romans 12:1-2**. What does this passage say about conforming and transforming?

List some ways you could become transformed by the renewing of your mind?

We must choose transforming over conforming. The consequences of conformity have far-reaching effects. For example, if you allow peer pressure to convince you the guy you like is the one for you (in spite of what you know to be right), you may soon see devastating consequences related to that choice.

Read **1 Corinthians 15:33**. Why do you think this verse does not say, "Good company will fix bad morals"?

What can we learn from this verse?

"A man is known by the company he shuns as well as the company he keeps." – Spurgeon

Read **2 Timothy 2:22**. What are we told to flee, and what are we told to pursue?

You cannot chase both in life. It is not possible to pursue the "evil desires of youth" while also chasing after "righteousness, faith, love, and peace." In order to be transformed into what God desires us to become, we must not conform to the standards of the world.

Ephesians 5:6-7. What advice is given in this passage?

Read **Proverbs 13:20.** What would you list as some differences between wise individuals and fools?

Read **Galatians 1:10.** How would you answer the questions asked by the first part of this verse? Explain.

How well do you think your lifestyle relates to the answer given above?

SPECIFIC PEER PRESSURES

Much about peer pressure can be focused on specific issues. Peer pressure is often linked to sex, drinking,

drugs or other mind-altering substances, or rebellion against authority or God's Word.

In what area of your life (perhaps those listed above, or perhaps something not listed) do you face the most peer pressure?

Read **Ephesians 5:18.** This verse states that getting drunk is clearly wrong; instead, what does it say we should be "filled with"?

The implication of this verse is that you cannot be filled with both wine and God's Spirit. There is simply no way to have some of both in your life. The verse implies we must choose what we want to "be filled with."

Read **Proverbs 20:1.** What lesson is stated in this verse?

Proverbs 23:29-35. List the consequences of those who "linger over wine" as listed in verses 29, 32-33.

These effects can also be caused by more than just wine. Drugs and other substances can also produce the same effects.

The pressures that specifically come your way in life will be unique. They will come in many forms and across many years.

"If you find yourself loving any pleasure better than your prayers, any book better than the Bible, any house better than the house of God, any person better than Christ, any indulgence better than the hope of heaven -- take alarm!" –Thomas Guthrie

PEER INFLUENCE

In addition to the question of how you handle peer pressure in your own life, we must address what kind of peer you are to others.

Everyone is an influence to those around them. You are either a positive influence to others or a negative influence.

On the following scale, mark how you influence your peers.

1 _____ 5 _____ 10
(negative) (positive)

Read **1 Peter 2:11-12**. What does this passage say about why we need to live good lives?

How does your life measure up to this verse? Explain.

Read **Ephesians 5:8-11**. What does the second part of verse 11 command us to do?

How might this be accomplished in your life?

Read **Ephesians 5:15-16**. What does verse 16 command?

How could you strengthen your peer influence?

Read **1 Timothy 4:12**. What are some examples we are to set for others?

Standing alone against a group of powerful peers can be very difficult. It will be important for you to associate with as many Christian friends as possible. In so doing, you will find the encouragement and strength you need to be a positive influence to others around you.

Read **Deuteronomy 31:8**. What encouragement is offered by this verse?

Peer pressure is a double-edged topic. You must resist negative peer pressure. At the same time, you must attempt to positively influence your peers toward the things of God.

Overall, what do you think/feel God is saying to you through this lesson?

ASSIGNMENTS

- ____ 1. **Scripture Memory: Galatians 1:10 (NIV)**, "Am I now trying to win the approval of men or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men I would not be a servant of Christ."
- ____ 2. **Bible Study: #6**
- ____ 3. **Quiet Time:** Have at least five quiet times this week.
- ____ 4. **Sermon Notes:** Take sermon notes.
- ____ 5. **Other:** Carefully evaluate your life this week at school. List several ways you are a positive/negative influence to your peers. Plan to share your list with the group next week.