

Living For God Among Our Peers

Introduction

1. **Although all will benefit from this morning's lesson, it is primarily designed for our young people.**
2. **Our young people will have to deal with peer pressure.**

WHAT IS A PEER? A "peer" is a person of the same rank, value, or quality. It is a person whom you consider to be your equal (Webster's New World Dictionary).

- A. **Our young people that are devoted to their Lord will hear things such as: "You think you're better than anyone else." "What's the matter, are you chicken?" "You're weird because you're different from us."**
- B. **Those of our young that are not devoted to their Lord will say things like: "Everyone else is doing it. Why shouldn't I? I'll be the only odd ball in the crowd!"**
 - 1) **Either way they will be dealing with pressure from their peers.**
 - 2) **But if a thing is wrong or even tends toward sin, the excuse "Everyone else is doing it" is not logical or valid.**

Is it Right?

1. **Right and wrong cannot be decided by MAJORITY vote.**
 - A. **When Adam was scolded by God for his sin, he could have said truthfully, "Everyone else was doing it!"**
 - 1) **That still would not have made it right.**
 - B. **What if Noah had done what everyone else was doing?**
 - 1) **We would not be here today!**
 - C. **A majority of Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery.**
 - D. **A majority of the Israelites rebelled against God and Moses in the wilderness.**
 - E. **A majority transgressed God's laws in the days of the prophets.**
 - 1) **The faithful were often referred to as the "remnant".**
 - F. **A majority crucified Jesus!**
 - 1) **If you had been there, would you have "got in on" what "everybody else was doing?"**
2. **Just because everybody has sinned (Rom 3:23) does not excuse sin.**
 - A. **Every moral issue must be decided by principle, not by vote nor deed. True morality MUST be based on God's word!**

1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 Test all things; hold fast what is good. **Abstain from every form of evil.**

Is Everybody Doing It?

1. **Even if everybody was doing wrong, God still wants YOU to do right. But the fact is --- everyone else IS NOT doing wrong.**
 - A. **Do all smoke?**
 - B. **Do all drink alcohol?**
 - C. **Do all gamble?**
 - D. **Do all cheat?**
 - E. **Do all swear?**
 - F. **Do all dance?**
 - G. **Do all use drugs?**
 - H. **Do all dress immodestly?**
 - I. **Do all drive recklessly?**
 - J. **Do all disobey their parents?**
 - 1) **There are many wise teenagers that don't want to be tempted or lead others into temptation that disapprove of these things and other ungodly behavior!**
2. **Joseph was faithful to God even when he was far from home (Pharaohs house).**
3. **Daniel overcame temptation and hardship.**
4. **Esther bravely pleaded for her people when others were trying to destroy them.**
5. **There are many other godly young people in the Bible and there are many today who place truth and righteousness above pleasure and popularity ---- BECAUSE THEY LOVE GOD!!**
 - A. **Now the question is:**

Will You Stand up for Christ?

1. God knows there is much sin in the world. There always has been and there always will be (this is the majority).
 - A. But God demands that His people be separate.
2 Corinthians 6:17-18
2. He called Abraham away from his background and family in order to develop the Jewish nation out of his descendants.
3. He called the Jews out of Egypt to live in their own land separate from pagans and infidels.
4. Christ called His disciples out of worldliness into righteousness.
 - A. The word "church" means "called out".
 - B. Christians are in the world, but we are not of the world.
 - 1) That means if the whole world sins, we are not to follow the world - We are to follow Christ.
1 Peter 2:9-10

Ephesians 4:1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to **walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,**

5. Are you willing to stand up for Jesus even if others do not?
 - A. Are you developing the Christian Grace of Virtue (Courage) to be a Christian - even when all others are determined to do wrong?
 - B. Are you mature enough to bear a cross of loneliness or rejection if you have to in order to live as Christ would want you to?
 - C. Being RIGHT is a thousand times more important than being in the "majority".
Romans 12:1-2

Coping with Peer Pressure

1. Here are some suggestions that will help you deal with peer pressure:

A. Don't wait until the "heat of the moment" to decide what you will do, in a given situation.

1) We sin because we choose to - we are not forced to.

James 1:14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.

2) By deciding right now that you are not going to do things like drinking alcohol, have sex before marriage, cheat, curse, dance, etc.

a) Satan will make them look attractive - but be committed to do the right thing!

B. Be convicted (A firm belief that some things are right and some things are wrong).

1) A disciple of Christ **MUST** say **NO** to some things. That is self-denial (Christ's approval).

Luke 9:23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, **let him deny himself**, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

2) Convictions come through knowledge of God's word - as does faith (Romans 10:17).

a) Most know right and wrong. It is simply a matter of acting on our convictions!

C. Have confidence in your relationship with God.

1) **Peer pressure is hard to overcome because we want to be liked and accepted by others.**

a) **But we MUST seek to please God first.**

Matthew 6:33 **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,** and all these things shall be added to you.

b) **If God is pleased - it doesn't matter what others might think.**

2) **Sometimes you will be forced by the majority to choose between the Lord or the world.**

Galatians 1:10 For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? **For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.**

3) **When you gain confidence in God you'll have courage to stand alone and boldness to do right.**

Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

Hebrews 4:16 **Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace,** that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

D. Never compromise.

1) **Once you give in to pressure, it is hard to reverse the trend. Sin starts small and grows.**

Matthew 12:30 **He who is not with Me is against Me,** and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

James 4:4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? **Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.**

E. Choose the right friends.

1) Good friends is one of your greatest assets.

a) Solomon did not (foreign wives).

1 Kings 11:4 For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David.

2) All that love you will be concerned with the friends you keep.

Proverbs 13:20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

The Road to Eternal Life

1. **Christ called His disciples to enter the "narrow gate" and the difficult way that leads to heaven.**
 - A. **Other ways are easier and more pleasurable, but they DO NOT lead to eternal life - but destruction.**

Matthew 7:13-14 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

2. **Christ never promised that it would be easy to get to heaven.**
 - A. **He said it would be a life of self-denial and dedication to His will.**
3. **Christianity is not for the cowardly - it is for those who strong enough to do right and to trust in God even against ALL odds!**

Conclusion

1. **Can you meet the challenge young people - even if "everybody else" is doing otherwise?**

1 Corinthians 10:31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

2. **Peer pressure is a real challenge. It is never easy to do right especially when others around you are encouraging you to do wrong.**
1 Corinthians 15:33
3. **Don't ever give up. God will bless you if you run the race with Him until the very end!!**
Hebrews 12:1

The Life You Live

The best lesson you teach is the life that you live,
It's one of the greatest gifts you can give.
An example for other sis what you may be,
So much is learned by what others see.
They see in the daily walk you take,
If you love the Lord or His teachings forsake.
Someone sees you, they know what you do,
The example they are following may just be you.
Remember – right now, there's a way you can give,
The best lesson you teach is the life that you live.

Just Like My Friends

I wanted so much to be liked by my friends,
That I was constantly giving in.
It's only one drink, one them said,
One became four and it went to my head.
Come on lets dance – they pulled me out on the floor,
I tried it once and danced some more.
I felt my influence slipping away,
I told myself I'd fix it another day.
I talked like them and laughed at their jokes.
I was acting just like other folks.
I knew I wasn't living a godly way,
But I wanted to go along just one more day.
I kept giving in just to belong,
Now I am singing a mournful song.
I was like by my peers so very well,
That alas, for eternity, we're together in hell.

Help Me Lord

Lord help me I need you I'm so very weak and
I know that my struggles you'll share.
I read of your Son who gave His life,
it tells me how much you care.
Sometimes I feel so unworthy; I don't deserve such love.
I try so hard to be deserving of a home in heaven above.
Satan attacks me from all sides, in weakness I give in.
I take my eyes off your glory, that's when I falter and sin.
I get discouraged when I look at myself
and see that I fall so short.
I yearn so much to do what's right,
it's a struggle of the greatest sort.
Look down on me Lord, a sinner so base,
Guide me now as I run my race.
Open my eyes, help me to see,
All the things that are wrong in me.
Give me the courage it takes to change
and walk in the way that is sure,
Help me to rid my life of sin and walk in a way that is pure.