



The Good News

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Dealing with Negative Peer Pressure

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“Peer-pressure” is a term that many people associate with a problem that only affects young people. The fact is that adults are just as susceptible to peer-pressure as young people. Some give in to peer pressure because they want to be liked, to fit in, or because they worry that others may ridicule them if they don’t go along with everyone else. Others may go along because they are curious to try something new that others are doing. The idea that “everyone’s doing it” is a concept that adults deal with just as often as young people and it can cause some to leave their better judgment behind.

As Christians, we all face peer pressure in some form or another, no matter how old we are. It is tough to be the only one to say “no” to something we know to be wrong, or to that which a God-loving person ought not to be involved. Yet, we know that to truly be pleasing to Him we must stand against these influences and stand for what is right. Solomon says in **Proverbs 1:10**, “*My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.*”

The early Christians dealt with peer-pressure, as evidenced by what Peter says in **1 Peter 4:4**, “*In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.*” To this, almost as an encouragement to the saints, he says in **v.5**, “*They will give an to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.*” These brethren had escaped the sinful lusts mentioned in **v.3**, and they were being persecuted because they had changed their conduct. Yet, we should take courage that people did notice the godly conduct of these saints...it did not go unnoticed. Peter goes on to say in **v.14**, “*If*

you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.” Those around them saw the change of conduct, and God most certainly knew the strength of their faith to endure persecution by worldly people.

The major strength of peer-pressure is influence. Worldly people suppose that influence is power. If one can influence another's actions and words, then they hold power over them. Godly people, however, are not only to be beyond the influence of the world but should themselves be a power to behold by being their own influence. Jesus tells the disciples in **Matt. 5:16**, “*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*” Our influence is to be such that those around us will see our “good works” and godly example and will themselves be influenced to seek after God.

What kind of “power” do we project in our lives? If influence is power, then surely the Christian, whose power of influence comes from Christ Himself, should be able to be a power to behold in this life. Will we allow our light to so shine? Let’s make this our goal this week and every week as we seek to please God and do His will.