

# The Lakeview Lamp

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."* – **Psalm 119:105**

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## *Peer Pressure*

Bob Waldron

Much of God's covenant with Israel of old dealt with human relations. Various and sundry laws pointed out how the Jew was to conduct himself among his peers. One of these admonitions was, "*Thou shall not follow a multitude to do evil*" (**Exodus 23:2**). This was a very important decree; it showed the danger of peer pressure and pointed out very explicitly the dangers of being led astray by evil men. Peer pressure was an important factor in their lives; it has been from that time to the present. And perhaps as never before, peer pressure is an issue we have to wrestle with.

A leading educator noted that peer pressure is the strongest influence on young people today. He stated that in most cases it is twice as strong as the influence of home and family, and yields a far greater influence than religion. I share this educator's convictions. All young people want to be accepted by their peers. And if to do so means disobeying parents and selling out personal convictions, some are willing to do so just to be a part of the bunch. In dealing with young folks and their problem of peer pressure, we often quote and expound on **1 Corinthians 15:33** – "*Evil companionships corrupt good morals.*" I contend this is a very important verse dealing with this subject. This admonition does caution against the dangers of peer pressure being exerted by those who are void of spiritual convictions and virtues. Let us continue to warn our young people of the dangers of their associates that rob them of their virtues.

But is all peer pressure centered in young people? Does this pressure cease when we become adults? Well, certainly at all stages of life there are peer pressures put on us by those with whom we mix and mingle day by day. The Bible is not silent on this matter. Men and women of God have always faced immense pressures in dealing with their peers. And when God has spoken, He has always done so with a stern warning against letting our associates rob us of our moral integrity.

One of the most striking examples of this occurred in the life of Peter. Peter is one of our favorite Bible characters. He was truly one of Christ's more ardent followers. We hear him saying, "*Even if I must die with thee, yet I will not deny thee*" (**Matthew 26:25**). We hear him

declare, “*Lord, with thee I am ready to go both to prison and death*” (**Luke 22:33**). But on that fateful night of the arrest and mock trial of the Lord, Peter “*followed afar off*” (**Matthew 26:53**); he stood with the wrong crowd, the enemies of the Lord (**Matthew 26:69**). And upon being asked of his allegiance to Christ, he cursed, swore, and denied that he even knew Him (**Matthew 26:69-74**). Peter, when alone in a crowd of unbelievers who were the enemies of Christ, relented to peer pressure.

What a lesson for the Christian today. I contend that when we are alone, with the wrong crowd, those with no regard for the Lord nor spiritual values, we are at the most vulnerable moment of our spiritual life. And so often, like Peter, the pressures from our peers lead to our downfall.

There are numerous other examples in the New Testament on this subject. Peer pressure played a leading role in the rejection of Christ by the rulers of the synagogue (**John 12:42-43**). The Scriptures tell us they believed on Him, “*but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. For they loved the glory that is of men more than the glory that is of God.*”

Likewise, peer pressure was the deciding factor in the heinous crime of Herod (**Matthew 14:1-12; Mark 6:23**). Herod feared and respected John, but his oath, along with “*them that sat at meat with him*” (his peers) prevented him from backing down on his promise, and resulted in the vile deed of having John the Baptist put to death. In this we see the influence and power of wicked men and the insidiousness of peer pressure.

But there is another side of the coin of peer pressure. Not all the characters of the Bible collapsed under the pressure of their associates. Many stood, often alone, in the face of severe pressures put on them by others.

Let us ever be aware of the immense pressures put on us by our peers, especially those with no regard for God and spiritual values. And let us profit from the mistakes others make and redouble our efforts to not yield to these peer pressures as they did.



# News and Notes

- \* The teaching seminar with Ken Weliever has been rescheduled for May 1-3. Mark your calendars and plan to be here.

## Members:

- \* Virginia Bryant is doing better with her knee and should be able to start driving this week.
- \* Cotton Read had some rough breathing problems this past week.

## Friends and Family:

- \* Jesse Roy, son of Mike and Carol Roy, was baptized last night.

Absent: Neighbour family (Lexington, KY).

New Reports: None known.

## *Too Straight?* author unknown

When people are determined to serve Jesus Christ in their lives, adhering in the strictest sense to the Scriptures, they will be criticized for being “too straight-laced,” too exacting. But, that depends upon the way one looks at it. If one believes that Jesus meant what He said in His Testament, then it would be impossible to be too right. Is He not better pleased with those who seek to know His will and then strive to carry it out in their lives than He is with those who profess to love Him but fall so inexcusably short?

Listen, would a teacher assign a class to draw a page full of straight lines and then jump on that student who was doing such a good job and say to him, “You’re making them too straight?” Or would a group that had hired a sculptor to make a statue criticize him as he worked, saying, “It looks too much like the man”?

Had we better not, then, disregard the talk of those who suppose that we need not adhere to the Bible so rigidly and strive even more to do all things that He has commanded?



*“Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His godly ones.” – Psalm 116:15*