

PEER PRESSURE VS PEER POWER

Ice Breaker _____

Game/activity _____

Some Questions...

- Q We have many influences in our lives, what/who are some of them (list them on paper)
- Q Which ones have the most influence over your life right now

Group Discussion:

How easily could your friends persuade you to:

- Buy things that you really don't have the money for
- Go somewhere your parents would 'kill' you if they found out
- Lie to get someone out of trouble
- Look out for those without friends
- Do something you don't want to do
- Wag school
- Go full on for God
- Read your bible
- Be kind to others
- Try smoking

Some Questions...

- Q Why is it so hard to do the right thing?
- Q Do you think this struggle will ever stop?...and do you think that even really strong Christians would still struggle with doing things they feel bad about?

Paul was probably one of the most influential men of the New Testament after Jesus, let's read what he writes to the Christians in Rome about his struggle to do what's right.

Date you did this study _____

Leaders' Notes

Romans 7:14-15, 21

"We know that the law is spiritual, but I am not spiritual since sin rules in me as if I were its slave. I do not understand the things I do. I do not do what I want to do, and I do the things I hate....V21 So I have learned this rule: when I want to do good, evil is there with me. In my mind I am happy with Gods law. But I see another law working in my body, which makes war against the law that my mind accepts. That other law working in my body is the law of sin, and it makes me its prisoner. What a measurable man that I am! Who will save me from this body that brings me death? I thank God for saving me through Christ Jesus our Lord! So in my mind I am a slave to Gods law, but in my sinful self I am a slave to the law of sin."

Some Questions...

- Q What was the struggle Paul faces and how is it like your struggles today?
- Q What struggles do you see today that are common to all teenagers, and what are some that are more common amongst Christians your age and why?
- Q Why is it easier to make good decisions around some people about your behaviour and at other times we fold to the pressure?

Imagine if we could put on a coat which looked awesome, and it also helped us when we felt weakened by the negative pressure from other people. That as soon as we struggled with decisions, that somehow it helped us remember not to make the same mistake next time we are tempted. There is one catch though, this coat is not invisible and it doesn't work the same unless it's worn where everyone can see it.

- Q Who would want one, (and who would actually wear these coats)?

In the passage we read earlier Paul tells us that it's through Jesus Christ that we have been saved, when we asked Him to be the leader of our lives (salvation) But the great news is that the power of God is available daily so we can keep on being saved, day after day, from the pressures of this world (sanctification); so now we read what Paul wrote only a few chapters later;

Romans 13:12-14

"...Let us therefore put aside the works of darkness and put on the amour of light. Let us behave decently, as people who live in the light of day. No wild parties, drunkenness, sexual immorality, promiscuity, rivalry, or jealousy! Instead, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ (or put on Jesus), and do not obey your flesh and its desires."

Some Questions...

Q So how do you think you would 'put on Jesus'?

(He is not with us physically when we are struggling with pressure from friends, or temptation from the devil, but he did leave us a helper, the Holy Spirit)

Q So how does the Holy Spirit help us with peer pressure? Look at the passage below and talk about the highlighted words and how they apply to the Holy Spirit helping us with peer pressure.

John 16:7

"However, I am telling you the truth: It is good for you that I am going away. If I don't go away, the helper won't come to you. But if I go I will send him to you...He will convict the world of sin, because people don't believe in me. He will show the world what has God's approval, because I am going to the father and you won't see me anymore. He will convince the world that God judges it, because the ruler of this world has been judged. I have a lot more to tell you, but that would be too much for you now. When the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into the full truth. He won't speak his own. He will speak what he hears and will tell you about the things to come. He will give me glory, because he will tell you what I say."

We all struggle with Peer pressure for a large part of our teenage years and often into our young adult years. But as we get older, left unattended, peer pressure can become a monster that demands performance at a great personal cost.

To be 'performance driven' is when everything revolves around what other people think...constantly having to say the right thing, so the right thing, be one person at work to please people and another one at home to please the family, while being someone else with different social groups. In the end the individual loses sight of who they really are. Even in their Christian walk they can feel like they never measure up to Gods standards because He watches all the time, there are great pressures for these people because they can never be real in any setting.

Personal Application:

Make a decision that this week you will resist peer pressure and start to live in freedom as God intends you to? How??????

1. Tell God today that you cant resist this kind of pressure on your own and ask for help every day.
2. Take some time and make a list of things you will promise yourself that you will never do (Try for 10 very important ones, you could get them to list these on a piece of paper in LG). For now we will call these personal standards.

3. Can you list 3 things that you know are a peer problem right now that go against the list you just made at #2 e.g. It might be lying about what you did on the weekend because you don't want people to know you go to church, but your 'personal standard' says that you will always tell the truth even if it gets you into trouble.
4. Now take those 3 things and think about a plan for when those things come up again. E.g. actively look for the right time to tell one of those people that you are trying to impress, maybe a non Christian friend at school, that church was fantastic on Sunday. Make a stand. Start small, but bold, make a moment to walk in peer power instead of peer pressure.
5. Ask the Lord to help you in this change.

Leader:

You could get them to close their eyes and lift their hands to indicate if they are going to do something different this week. Sell them the idea of peer power instead of peer pressure. They can do all things through Jesus Christ who gives them strength.

Close in prayer.

Extra Bible references for the study:

Romans 12: 1-2

Proverbs 2: 24-25

1 Corinthians 5:33