

# "The Definition of Peer Pressure"

*Text* - Exodus 23:1-2, 24, 32-33

**INTRODUCTION:** Many teens, if asked, would say that they are not influenced by peer pressure. Yet those same teens use phrases like, “*everybody else is doing it*” and “*I’m not going unless you are.*” In fact, all people are influenced to a certain degree by the people around them. Teens are especially influenced and often don’t know it. They don’t understand what peer pressure is and how it works. They don’t know that giving in to peer pressure can change who they are. All teenagers need to understand this powerful force that affects their choices and their life.

According to a recent (9/10/2007) Barna report, when asked to identify the most significant or challenging issues facing their teenagers, **the #1 answer given by parents was peer pressure** (42%). This far exceeded any other answer, including performance in school (16%) & substance abuse (16%).

Peer pressure is nothing new. Even in the time of Moses, God warned of the problem of the negative peer pressure that the Israelites would face as they entered the Promised Land. He forbids giving into peer pressure, and He tells of some steps they should take to minimize peer pressure. This morning I want to deal with the subject of peer pressure. This problem was bad when I was in High School, but it is far worse today.

## *What Is Peer Pressure?*

Peer pressure is the **influence** of your **friends** on your **decisions!**

### Some Biblical language for peer pressure.

1. Conforming to and loving the world. Rom. 12:2 I John 2:15-17
2. Pleasing men, rather than God. I Th. 2:4
3. Fearing man, rather than God. Pr. 29:25
4. Being influenced by the ungodly. Ps. 1:1
5. Associating with ungodly companions. I Co. 15:33
6. Joining a wicked mob or a gang. Ex. 23:2 / Prov. 1:10-14, 16-19

### **THE TRUTH ABOUT PEER PRESSURE**

**(1) It impacts everyone.** Proverbs 13:20

**(2) It's both good and bad.** I Corinthians 15:33 Hebrews 10:24-25

**(3) Like attracts like.** Amos 3:3

**(4) Different levels of friendship create different levels of impact.**  
Matthew 11:18-19 & I Corinthians 5:9-13 Mark 3:13-19

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## **The Influence**

Peer pressure is a powerful force, especially in the life of a teenager. Every teen needs to be aware of what peer pressure does.

### **1. It causes us to do what we normally would not do**

Friends can make an idea we never thought of sound good. That can be positive and negative.”

### **2. It allows others to think for us**

God wants every person to think about what they do since each one will stand before Him someday. God has given everyone a mind, and He expects us to use ours (Rom. 14:4-5, 12).

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### **3. It promises a false acceptance**

Many teens give in to peer pressure because they don’t want to stand out. They want to blend in and feel accepted by the crowd. However, just because you give in to peer pressure doesn’t mean you will be truly accepted. Many times teens put pressure on others just to see if they will cave in. They know if you’ll do what they say, you can be used to do what they want.

### **4. It removes our focus from what God wants in our lives**

Your friends might tell you that your hesitation to perform a certain action is unnecessary. You should do what feels right, they say. Your fun and happiness are all that really matter in life. If you’ve spent any time in God’s Word, you realize that God says something quite different. His Word tells you who He is and how He behaves. Anything you do that is contrary to God’s character is sin.

If your friends don’t know God or don’t want to please Him, the things that they pressure you to do are based on what pleases them best. You must decide whether your life will please the infinite God of the universe who truly cares for you or the finite people of this world who always care most for themselves.

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