

# PEER PRESSURE

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Daily devotions written by Pastor Thomas Smith

“Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment.”

Exodus 23:1, 2

Most people realize that the temptation to do wrong can be easily compounded by the presence of others. Most of us have done things when we were in the company of others that we would not have considered doing had we been alone. That is one reason it is so important that we be selective about our associations. We are warned in the Scripture to “put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.” We are not to lend our voice to the wicked to give a false witness nor are we to “follow a multitude to do evil.”

Both of these verses have to do with a very familiar term: peer pressure. Peer pressure describes the influence of friends or peers on our decisions or actions. Peer pressure is a term most often used with young people and the pressure they sometimes experience to go along with the crowd. We all want to be liked and accepted. That desire to belong can cause people to follow others into mischief even when they do not necessarily agree with what is being done.

Although peer pressure is usually associated with youth, it can be just as real a problem with adults. How many have been a listener to critical or slanderous comments only to end up contributing to the negative conversations? The crowds in the gospels repeatedly cried out “Crucify Him” when Pilate was trying Jesus. Surely some of them were the same people who had followed Him, witnessed His miracles, and heard Him teach. What caused the change in their opinion? Part of the reason is explained by the power of peer pressure. There were those who were working the crowd and manipulating the people.

By nature, sheep are followers. That is why God gave them shepherds. Sheep following other sheep can be good if they are all following the Shepherd. However, sheep following other sheep can be fatal if those sheep who are leading are going in the wrong direction. Unwise sheep have made the tragic mistake of following other sheep that were not following the Shepherd. We need to be careful that

God's Spirit and the truths of His Word, not peer pressure, are influencing us in our decisions.

## **Let's Pray**

Dear heavenly father, thank you for your word today. I pray that this devotional has blessed the person reading this and that the Holy Spirit will continue to speak to his or her heart. I ask this in Jesus name. Amen