

# Herd Mentality

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as  
**STEP 1** 

**Lesson 1****Focus:**

Rejecting God to follow the crowd is a bad idea.

**Lesson 1****Bible Basis:**

1 Samuel 8:4-10, 19-22

**Lesson 1****Memory Verse:**

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.  
—Proverbs 3:5-6

**Students will view an example of herd mentality in animals as they discuss peer pressure and how following the crowd can have disastrous results.**

**Materials:**

- Internet access

When your students arrive, share the following video [1:16]:  
this drone footage captures sheep herding patterns from above  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WA5fqO6LUUQ>

- **What impressed you the most about this video?** (Answers will vary; students may express their surprise at the behavior of the sheep or the ability of the sheep dog to herd them.)
- **What made the sheep behave this way?** (Accept all reasonable answers.)

**This video gave us an example of what’s called “herd mentality” in the animal kingdom. Although that term is applied to humans, too, a more common term for people following the pack is “peer pressure.”**

**In the clip, the herd behavior was beautiful and mesmerizing to watch. But frequently in nature, herd mentality can cause an entire herd of sheep to plunge off of a high cliff to their death or a group of whales to swim up onto the beach and die.**

- **Can you share about a time when you experienced peer pressure for good or bad?** (Allow several students to share.)
- **What made you follow the crowd in that situation?** (Answers will vary.)

**Today we’re going to talk about a time when Israel demonstrated a “herd mentality.”**

**Let's see what happened as a result.**

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

middle school



Lesson 1 / September 3, 2023

# Herd Mentality

for use as  
**STEP 4** 

## Lesson 1

### Focus:

Rejecting God to follow the crowd is a bad idea.

## Lesson 1

### Bible Basis:

1 Samuel 8:4-10, 19-22

## Lesson 1

### Memory Verse:

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### Materials:

- Internet access
- Pieces of paper (1 per student)
- Colored pencils or markers

Before class, make sure you have enough pieces of paper and colored pencils or markers for each student. If your class is meeting online, invite students to bring supplies to class.

**We watched an example of “herd mentality” in sheep earlier—now let’s watch an example of how the “everybody’s doing it” mentality can affect people in dangerous ways.**

Share the following video with your students [1:53]:

'I burnt my hand': TikTok challenge gone wrong

**\*WARNING\*** Some images may be disturbing. Preview the video and use your judgement of your students before showing the video to your class.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-d6citWkiTU>

Jeslin learned the hard way that just because a lot of people are doing a TikTok challenge or trend doesn't mean it's safe.

- **Have you ever tried a challenge like this? How did it go?** (Answers will vary.)
- **How might you respond if your friends encouraged you to try a challenge that was potentially dangerous?** (Answers will vary.)

Ask your middle schoolers to think of a few areas where they find it hard not to cave in to peer pressure. This could be watching inappropriate movies or TV shows because everyone else is doing it, ignoring someone at school during lunch because everyone else is shunning them, etc.

Invite students to write, “I can resist peer pressure!” on their papers. Then, have your students draw symbols on their poster that represent each of these peer pressure trouble areas. Emphasize that the symbols don’t have to make sense to anyone but them because it’s their personal reminder to stand strong in these areas. They might want to hang it at home where they will see it frequently or inside their locker at school.

**Peer pressure, or herd mentality, is a powerful force. And it can be a good thing. But if it causes you to reject God and His ways because “everybody’s doing it,” you are in trouble. Let this poster help you make the decisions you know are right and to stand strong against the pressure of others.**

Close with prayer.

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