

The Power of Pressure

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as

STEP 1

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

The popular way
may not be God's
way.

Lesson 1**Bible Basis:**

I Samuel 8—10

Lesson 1**Memory Verse:**

Show me your ways, LORD, teach
me Your paths. —Psalm 25:4

Students will experience the reality of peer pressure and recognize that following God's plan often requires that we don't follow the crowd.

Materials:

- None

You will read the following imaginary scenario aloud to students.

Imagine that you were running a few minutes late to class today. After all, sometimes it can be really hard to get up in the morning! Now imagine you came into class, sat down, and found a blank piece of paper on the table in front of you.

You look around and notice that your neighbors have all written "I hate kittens" at the tops of their papers in big, bold letters. Now, you don't hate kittens. The class is in the middle of a discussion, which doesn't seem to be related to kittens. You don't want to interrupt the teacher to ask what you should do with your piece of paper.

➤ **How would you decide what to do with your piece of paper?** (Answers will vary.)

Discuss with your students how they might have responded in that situation.

➤ **Raise your hand if you think you would've written "I hate kittens" on your paper. Why?** (Answers will vary; students may share that they didn't want to be left out, or they may have assumed that writing on the paper was the right thing to do.)

➤ **Raise your hand if you think that you would have left your paper blank. Why?** (Answers will vary; students may answer that they don't think kittens are gross, it didn't seem to have anything to do with the lesson, they would want instructions from the teacher, they didn't want to do the wrong thing, etc.)

This is an example of peer pressure. If you came late to class, you would've had to decide what to do. You wouldn't be sure what everyone else had done with their papers or whether you should do the same.

Peer pressure is a feeling that someone (or a group) is pushing you to make a certain choice, good or bad. When you see people around you doing something, we often can find ourselves wanting to do the same thing—or feeling like we should be doing the same thing. We feel pressure to fit in with our peers. Sometimes peer pressure results in us doing the wrong thing, but peer pressure can be positive as well if what we are following is beneficial. Peer pressure can also result in us doing things that don't really make sense, but we do them anyway because we want to fit in.

Isn't it amazing how quickly we decide to join in with those around us? Sadly, there are plenty of situations in life when we see others doing things that aren't right, and still we want to join in and follow the crowd.

Let's watch an example of how peer pressure can lead to doing things that are dangerous or that we know are wrong.

Share the following video with your students [1:34]:

Warning issued over risky TikTok 'door-kick challenge'

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

The teens who were arrested or taken into custody probably knew it was not right to participate in this viral challenge. They learned the hard way that just because a lot of people are doing a TikTok challenge or trend doesn't mean it's safe or won't have lasting consequences.

➤ How might you respond if your friends pressured you to try something that was potentially dangerous? (Answers will vary.)

In our Bible study today, the people of Israel are faced with the reality of peer pressure. They saw something that other nations around them had, and they wanted it too. Let's find out what the people of Israel decided to do, and how peer pressure affected them.

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

Lesson 1 / September 6, 2026

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STEP 4 **Lesson 1****Focus:**

The popular way
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way.

Lesson 1**Bible Basis:**

I Samuel 8—10

Lesson 1**Memory Verse:**

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me Your paths. —Psalm 25:4

Materials:

- “The Power of Pressure” printout (1 copy per student)
- Pens/pencils

Before class, print off enough “The Power of Pressure” worksheets so that each student has a copy—the template can be found at the end of this step. If you are meeting online, send the template for families to print ahead of time. Invite students to bring printouts and pens/pencils to class.

Today, we saw how easy it can be to follow the crowd, to want what others have or what they do, and to make the choice to ignore God’s plan and go with our own. Many of you have probably, at some point in your lives, said to your parents, “But everyone else has one!” or “But everyone else gets to go!” That’s how the Israelites felt about wanting a king. They were so caught up in what they saw in the nations around them, they didn’t want to think about God’s plan for them.

Have your students think about their daily lives at home, at school, or with friends. Ask them to think about a time when they experienced peer pressure. Ask them to analyze if it was a positive situation—one when they were pushed to make a good choice. Or, was it a negative situation, when they found themselves making a wrong choice and doing something that most likely went against what God asks of us?

Distribute supplies (or invite students to have them ready at home). **This worksheet will help you think through and reflect on how you feel and what you do when you are faced with peer pressure. Read through the options listed and mark any that describe how you feel when you experience peer pressure; if you respond in ways that aren’t listed, there is space to write those down.**

There is also a checklist of things as a challenge for you to do this week to follow God, especially when you are feeling pressured to ignore God’s plan for you. Check off the things you want to try to do this week to ensure that you are doing your best to live His way.

Allow students to find a quiet place in the room to reflect and fill out their checklists.

This week, as you interact with your parents and siblings at home, as you go to school and interact with your friends and classmates, and as you spend time after school at sports practices, doing homework, and even playing, think about the things you checked off regarding peer pressure and following God. You've recognized how you respond to peer pressure, especially when that peer pressure is negative. You've also thought about and chosen some ways that you can strive to follow God. Do your best to keep this list in mind this week; share it with your parents, so that they can encourage you to make good choices and follow Jesus.

Close in prayer.

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THE POWER OF PRESSURE

Check any of the following responses to the sentence starters.

When I experience peer pressure, I...

- ☐ Get nervous
- ☐ Feel angry
- ☐ Want to fit in
- ☐ Try my best to do the right thing
- ☐ Forget to think about doing the right thing

This week, I can follow God by...

- ☐ Reading my Bible
- ☐ Praying
- ☐ Singing a praise song
- ☐ Being obedient to my parents
- ☐ Focusing on things that are pleasing to God
