

TRUTH & RIGHT

the journal of the Wellsburg church of Christ

WELLSBURG
CHURCH OF CHRIST



www.wellsburgchurchofchrist.com

Volume 15 Issue 4

January 26, 2020

CAN YOU STAND THE PRESSURE?

Parents are concerned about their children and the “peer pressure” they face at school, when they’re on the internet, on “social media,” etc. Our young people can be swayed to do things out of character for them. Sometimes this happens because they are in a large group of peers who are urging them in the activity. At times, it’s because a close friend, a boyfriend/girlfriend, or a spouse, urges them. They need our support and encouragement to do what is right (Rom. 12:1-2). Have we instilled our children with the confidence to do what is right, and respect the teaching they received at home, even when it means standing alone (Eph. 6:4)? Peer pressure doesn’t go away when we receive a high school diploma. Regardless of our age, we have peers! We

have people who want us to speak and act the same way “everyone else” does in order to fit in. Therefore, we need to be able to stand and be faithful to God, even when it means standing alone! I hasten to add that there are times when the “pressure” can be positive. Encouragement from our peers, a boyfriend/girlfriend, or a spouse, to do what is right is the exact thing we need (Heb. 10:23-25; 1 Pet. 3:1-6)! There are some folks who, no doubt, have helped us because they were standing as sources of encouragement at a time when we needed to make a hard decision. There are many in the Bible who, I believe, could say, “Yes, I have experienced the positive and negative sides of peer pressure!” Two from the book of Esther show us what it means to stand for God even

when it means standing alone. They are Mordecai and Esther! Mordecai faced negative pressure, while Esther had encouragement to do what was right when she met a hard choice. Let's study these events in detail. Mordecai stood literally and figuratively for his principles. In Esther 3:2-4, Mordecai refused to bow down to the king's "second-in-command," Haman. We aren't told his reasoning but are told that he refused to bow and refused to yield even after others came to him and spoke to him "daily" about his refusal. Mordecai had made up his mind, and he would not give in to the pressure he faced even when this meant death! What a model for us. It would've been much easier for him to have given in and bowed, but he refused. Esther stood in another fashion. She entered bravely into the king's presence when uninvited (Est. 5:1-2). In Esther, chapter four, we learn why this was an act of bravery. It's because it was a capital offense to approach the king uninvited (Est. 4:11). She was genuinely taking her life in her hands to approach Ahasuerus when he didn't call for her. Yet, the situation demanded it – her nation was going to die if she didn't (Est. 3:12-15). It would've

been much easier for Esther not to approach the king's throne, but because of Mordecai's encouragement, she did it anyway (Est. 4:16-5:2). Examine your past decisions (II Cor. 13:5). When faced with serving God or making friends mad, did we give in to those who pressured us to sin? Did we stand and refuse them (Jas. 4:7)? Have we ever been the encourager to one who needed encouragement to serve God? We will not get out of this world alive, nor will we get out of this world alone (Rom. 14:7)! Let us face the pressure Satan puts on us with dignity and let us help others who are feeling this pressure. Let us help one another to fight the good fight of faith (Jas. 1:14-15; Matt. 10:42; I Tim. 6:11-12). – Jarrod Jacobs

It is common for someone to oppose what Scripture clearly says on baptism. A common argument used against baptism is, "you believe works save us!" I want to dive deeper into this argument by seeing what God has to say on the matter. We must consider that if we oppose something God says, we're not arguing with men, but with God Himself. Jesus says in Matthew 28:18, "*all authority is given unto Me in*

heaven and on earth.” Jesus has all authority in every realm. We cannot go anywhere and escape the power of Jesus. This same Jesus says in Matthew 28:19, *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”* We also must keep in mind that in the end, it only matters what God says. It doesn’t matter what any self-proclaimed prophet, a priest, pastor, etc., says. We will be judged by the words of Christ on Judgment Day (Jn. 12:48-50; Matt. 7:21-23). First, let’s deal with this idea that believing in baptism means works save you. Many will fight tooth and nail against baptism because they believe baptism is a work in which we somehow earn salvation. Scripture speaks against the possibility of a man earning his salvation (Tit. 3:5; Eph. 2:5-8). If we read John 6:28-29, we see a conversation between Jesus and some Jews. Jesus says believing in Him is a work. The text reads: *“Therefore they said to Him, what shall we do, so that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said to them, This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent”* (Jn. 6:28-29). Jesus says faith is working the works

of God. What does scripture say about baptism? Titus 3:4-5 speak about how God saved us by His kindness and His mercy. Verse 5 tells us how God saves us by His mercy. Titus 3:5 reads, *“He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, **by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.**”* Notice God’s mercy saves us. How does His mercy save us? By the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit. This is a clear reference to baptism! If you go to John 3:3-5, Jesus says we must be born of water and the Spirit to enter God’s kingdom. This is the same new birth spoken of in Titus. One is born again when He is baptized into Christ. When one follows the pattern laid out in Romans 6, he puts to death the old man, is buried with Christ and raised up a new person. Let’s take a step back and consider a couple of things. The Bible expressly says that believing in Jesus is a work. The Bible also says that we receive God’s mercy when we submit to Him in baptism and are forgiven of all our past sins (Acts 2:38, 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). Man decides to flip it around and say faith is God’s mercy and baptism is work. Do you see a problem here? We need to submit to God’s teaching on what we must do to be saved. Will you receive God’s mercy by submitting to Him in baptism? - Jordan Lawson

BIBLE TRIVIA

C H A L L E N G E

DIRECTIONS: After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. Hearing of Cornelius' conversion, they rejoiced that God granted the Gentiles also the _____ that leads to life.

- a) Secret
- b) Repentance
- c) Milk
- d) Bread

2. Once in Antioch, Barnabas left for Tarsus to look for _____.

- a) Peter
- b) John
- c) James
- d) Saul

3. A prophet named, _____, indicated there would be a great famine.

- a) Agabus
- b) Rhoda
- c) Elymas
- d) Tim

4. When Peter knocked on Mary's door where disciples were praying for him, a servant-girl named _____ answered.

- a) Agabus
- b) Elymas
- c) Tim
- d) Rhoda

5. When Herod spoke, the people cried out, "The voice of a _____ and not of a man!"

- a) God
- b) Woman
- c) Child
- d) Warrior

6. Because he did not give God the glory, Herod was eaten by _____ and died.

- a) Lions
- b) Minstrels
- c) Giants
- d) Worms

7. Barnabas and Saul had _____ as their helper on their preaching journey.

- a) Peter
- b) Matthew
- c) John
- d) Agabus

8. Paul made _____ the magician blind, calling him "son of the devil."

- a) Agabus
- b) Elymas
- c) Simon
- d) Tim

9. At Lystra, the crowds thought Paul and Barnabas were gods, calling Barnabas, "Zeus," and Paul, "_____."

- a) Artemis
- b) Poseidon
- c) Hermes
- d) Dionysus

10. Paul and Barnabas encouraged disciples saying, "Through many _____ we must enter the Kingdom of God."

- a) Doors
- b) Accolades
- c) Cheers
- d) Tribulations

- 1) B, Reference: Acts 11:18
- 2) D, Reference: Acts 11:25
- 3) A, Reference: Acts 11:28
- 4) D, Reference: Acts 12:13
- 5) A, Reference: Acts 12:22
- 6) D, Reference: Acts 12:23
- 7) C, Acts 13:5
- 8) B, Acts 13:8-11
- 9) C, Acts 14:12
- 10) D, Acts 14:22