

University Heights Church  
of Christ  
445 Columbia Ave.,  
Lexington, KY 40508  
(859) 255-6257  
www.uheightschurch.com

**WORSHIP SERVICES**

**Sunday**

Bible Study: 9:45 AM

Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM

**Wednesday**

Bible Study: 7:30 PM (This is  
immediately followed by a  
short worship period)

**First Friday of Each Month**

Singing: 7:30 PM

**LEADERSHIP**

**Elders**

David Collins  
John Thompson  
Troy Antle

**Evangelist**

Adam Litmer

**Deacons**

Richard Brundige  
Matt Thompson  
Adam Litmer  
Bill Morelan  
Jim Parsons  
Pat Seabolt  
Adam Daniels  
Jamie Powell

**IN NEED OF PRAYERS**

Bill Osborne, Jim Parsons, Rachel  
Thompson, John Thompson,  
Larry Billator, Karen Spivey, Sandra  
Russell, Jeff Howerton (also his  
aunt), Janet Brundige, Rhonda Boyd  
(and her sister, Dorothy), Paul  
Atkisson, Julia-Ann Dixon, Ed Allison,  
Dwight Antle, Keia Burton, Robert  
Brundige, Valerie and Barry Boyd,  
Janett's mother, Sandy Driver, Erlene  
Young, Larry Sells, Evelyn Damron,  
Jean Gartland, John Blessing, William  
Roberts, Paul Lyda, Pete Soro, Mattie  
Johnson, Elijah Epling, Sandra  
Queen, Linda Moore, Sheila Johnson,  
Virginia Gordon, Glenn Lake, Annie  
Allen

# University Heights Messenger

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## Overcoming Common Temptations--Peer Pressure

Adam Litmer

I received a request to discuss overcoming teenage temptations. Lord willing, this will be the first in a number of articles on the subject.

So many of the sins adults are deeply involved in began in their teenage years. A 2008 study issued by the Brattleboro Police Department stated that 15.7 years is the median age at which people begin drinking. Many who engage in casual sex started in their teens. Often those who abuse their bodies with nicotine, narcotics, and various intoxicants started as teenagers. While it is not an easy task to identify temptations indigenous to teenagers because the same sins are being committed by teens and adults alike, it is easy to see how so many of them began in the teenage years. If one can develop good spiritual habits early they put themselves in a much better position moving into adulthood.

Peer pressure is sometimes spoken of as primarily a childhood problem. It's not. Wars have begun and ungodly laws have been passed, at least in part, because of peer pressure. Congregations have accepted error and divided because of peer pressure. No, this is not just a teenage problem. Even so, peer pressure *does* tend to rear its head for the first time in those years. Wisdom dictates one learn its dangers early.

The wise man took pains to prepare his son for the spiritual pitfalls of peer pressure. Indeed, some of the first instruction he offers deals with the subject. *My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent.* (Proverbs 1:10) Nine simple words that so many children have failed to heed to their own ruin! Habits are learned early. Teenage Christian, do yourself a magnificent favor and learn to refuse the pressure of sinful peers now. The longer you choose to give in the more difficult it will become to unlearn the behavior, or even to desire to. I know it is not easy but never forget the end result of unrepentant sin. *For in vain is a net spread in the sight of any bird, but these men lie in wait for their own blood; they set an ambush for their own lives.* (1:17-18)

God's people of old struggled with peer pressure, even though God had warned them against it. *You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice.* (Exodus 23:2) As we come into the New Testament, Peter, perhaps recalling a time when he succumbed to pressure himself (Galatians 2:11-12), sought to prepare Christians for pressure from the outside to conform to a worldly pattern. *For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.* (1 Peter 4:3-5)

Being maligned is often a very difficult thing for teenage Christians. Their classmates can be cruel and the pain of hurtful words and social ostracization tends to be acute in teens. Adults sometimes find it hard to recall their own teenage years, yet it is wise to make the effort. It helps us to be compassionate and patient with teenage Christians facing strong peer pressure for the first time in their lives. Without the experience and spiritual wisdom years of life and faithful service to the Lord provide, they need mature Christians to help them.

We help by keeping them around faithful saints as often as possible. Don't skip these opportunities! Great spiritual wisdom is found in the simple statement, *Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.* (2 Corinthians 6:14a) While in the home, a teenage Christian's ability to heed Paul is largely dependent upon their parents. They go where they're taken and associate with whoever their parents allow. Help them with peer pressure by making sure many of their peers are Christians. And teenage Christian, you are not entirely helpless in this. You cannot help but be around all sorts of people at school, but you can help whom you choose to befriend. Make sure your spiritual well being is the chief determination.

We help by being honest about what they will face. Ungodly people will behave in ungodly ways. The Christian striving to be faithful will be maligned, insulted, joked about, and sometimes ostracized. (2 Timothy 3:12) This is true whether the Christian is a teenager or an adult. Forewarned is forearmed. Teenage Christian, be prepared to be mocked and insulted because of your faith. It happened to Jesus, it will happen to you. Remember the wonderful blessing involved in facing it with faith intact! (Matthew 7:11-12)

We help them by always being there with an ear and a shoulder. A teenager is not equipped to be very emotionally stable. That comes with years and experience. Just because they know insults will occasionally come does not mean they are not painful when they do. Be there when they need to talk, need to cry, and need help rallying their faith. Teenage Christian, there is no need to internalize your pain when so many are prepared to help you bear it, God foremost!

Peer pressure is a very real challenge. It is unhelpful to downplay its power to influence and intimidate. Instead, take hold of the One whose power created the world. He is on your side!



