

Peer Pressure: Peter & Pilate

Bible Verse

Pilate wanted to please the crowd. So he set Barabbas free. Then he ordered his soldiers to beat Jesus with a whip and nail him to a cross. (Mark 15:15)

Teacher Enrichment

This is the fifth lesson in the LENT series which explores the last days of Jesus' life. Understanding the events leading up to and including Jesus dying on the cross helps us grasp the magnitude of Jesus' sacrifice for us. As we prepare to celebrate Jesus' resurrection at Easter, each week will examine the significance of an event and the actions of the people involved.

The crowd's sentiment for Jesus had changed quickly. Only a few days earlier, Jesus had rode into Jerusalem to the tune of loud praises and palm branches being laid at His feet. Now He had been arrested and was facing death. Two men would confront the fury of the crowd and both would make a decision to cave to peer pressure. Peter, Jesus' disciple, would deny knowing Jesus out of fear of his own punishment. Pilate, Jesus' arrestor, would go against his better judgement and sentence Jesus to death at the direction of the crowd. Both of these men knew they were making the wrong choice. Hours earlier, Peter had even adamantly stated he would *never* deny Jesus. But we all know peer pressure can be a powerful force. Our own fear and desire to be liked can lead us into situations we just *knew* we would never end up in.

This lesson will teach children to turn to God for strength when faced with peer pressure. Children will explore peer pressure situations and formulate tools and scripture verses to help them stand up, follow their own path and make Christian decisions.

Before Class Begins

- ◆ Place the Sign In sheet and a pen where parents can see it upon arrival.
- ◆ Place the Joy & Concern cards, Time & Talent cards and pens where students can see them upon arrival.
- ◆ Check that you have supplies for this lesson:
 - Arrival Activity, Peter activity sheet – 1 per child
 - Peer Pressure Large Cards
 - Pocket Chart
 - Peer Pressure small cards – 1 set per child
 - Binder Rings – 1 per child
 - Hole punch
- ◆ Place an arrival activity at each place on the table.

Welcome

SUPPLIES: Sign In sheet, Joy & Concern cards, Time & Talent cards, Attendance chart, stickers, Peter activity sheet, pencils/pens

- ◆ Greet each child individually as they arrive. Introduce yourself by name.
- ◆ Help children find or add their name on the attendance chart. Provide each child with a sticker to place in today's column on the attendance chart.
- ◆ Encourage children to complete a Joy or Concern card if they have a particular joy or concern they would like to express. Collect completed Joy & Concern cards.
- ◆ Encourage children to complete a Time or Talent offering card if they gave their time to God or used their talents to serve God or others during the previous week. Children should keep their own completed Time and Talent cards.
- ◆ If children bring monetary offering, they should keep it with them.
- ◆ Direct children to complete their **Peter activity sheet**.
- ◆ Encourage conversation among the children and with you! Get to know the children in your classroom by asking about their week including school, activities and families. Introduce new children to each other and encourage friendships.

Children's Worship

SUPPLIES: Sign In sheet, Joy & Concern cards, Time & Talent cards

- ◆ Arrive at Ruth Hall at 9:20 or 11:05.
- ◆ Bring the Sign In sheet and completed Joy & Concern cards to Ruth Hall. Hand the Joy & Concern cards to the Children's Worship leader as you arrive.
- ◆ Have children bring their completed Time & Talent cards and any monetary offering.
- ◆ If additional children arrive while in Ruth Hall, have parents complete the Sign In sheet and remind parents that pickup is in Room 105.
- ◆ Encourage children to participate in Children's Worship and provide re-direction if necessary.
- ◆ Assist the Children's Worship leader as needed.
- ◆ At the conclusion of Children's Worship, have children line up and return to Room 105.

The Lesson

SUPPLIES: Peer Pressure large cards, Pocket chart, Peer pressure small cards, binder rings, hole punch, scissors, crayons/markers/colored pencils

- ◆ Gather all the children in a circle on the carpet. As you are able, sit on the floor with them or use a chair as part of the circle.
- ◆ Place the Peer Pressure large cards in the pocket chart with the peer pressure taunts facing out.

SAY: Today we learned about two men who faced peer pressure and did not make good choices. Peter was one of Jesus' best friends, but he denied even knowing Jesus. Pilate knew he should let Jesus go free, but he followed the crowd and sentenced Jesus to death.

SAY: Peer pressure can be hard to resist. We are going to look at different kinds of peer pressure and come up with some ways to resist them. These cards each list a type of peer pressure and a "taunt" someone might use.

SAY: Take a look at the cards and read them. We are going to take turns coming up and choosing a card. You can either share a time you experienced the type of peer pressure

on the card and what you did OR what you think you would do if you were faced with that type of peer pressure.

SAY: Once you've given your ideas, we'll look at the back of the card and get some good responses and also a scripture verse that could help us when faced with that type of peer pressure.

- ◆ Allow students to take turns selecting a card.
- ◆ Have students share a time they experienced that type of peer pressure or had someone taunt them with the phrases on the card.
- ◆ If students do not have a personal experience to share, they can state what they would do in the situation.
- ◆ Once the student has shared, have them read the back of the card.

SAY: I think now we have some good ways to resist peer pressure! We are going to make a craft to help us remember the responses and the scripture verses.

- ◆ Show children the sample craft.
- ◆ Have children move from the carpet to seats at the table.
- ◆ Provide each child with a set of Peer Pressure small cards.
- ◆ Direct children to cut out the cards and decorate the cover page.
- ◆ Help children hole punch the cards in the corner and attach a binder ring.

Closing

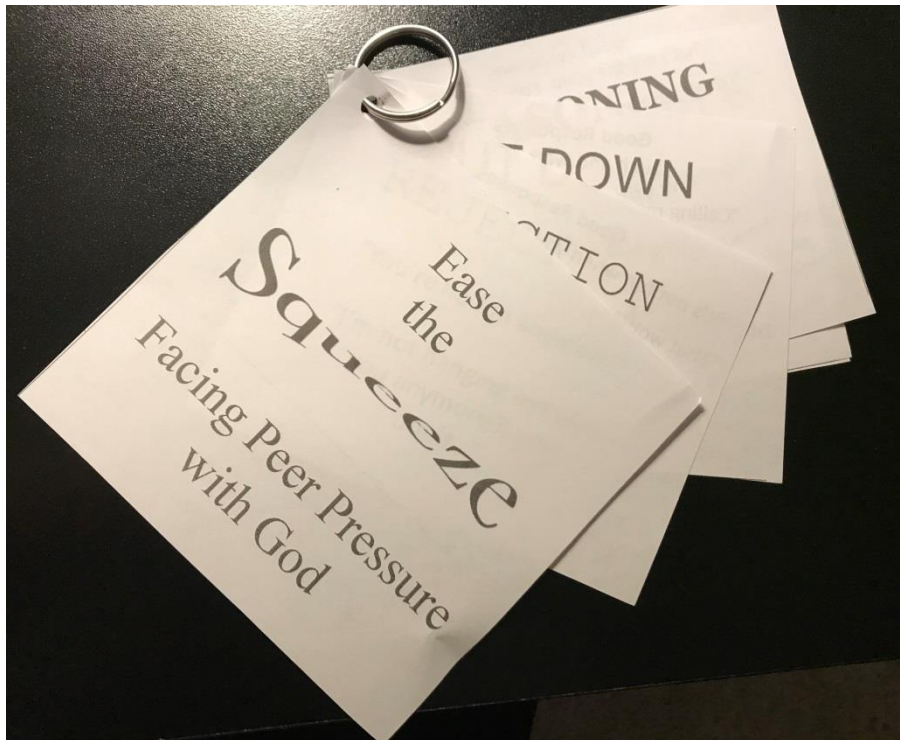
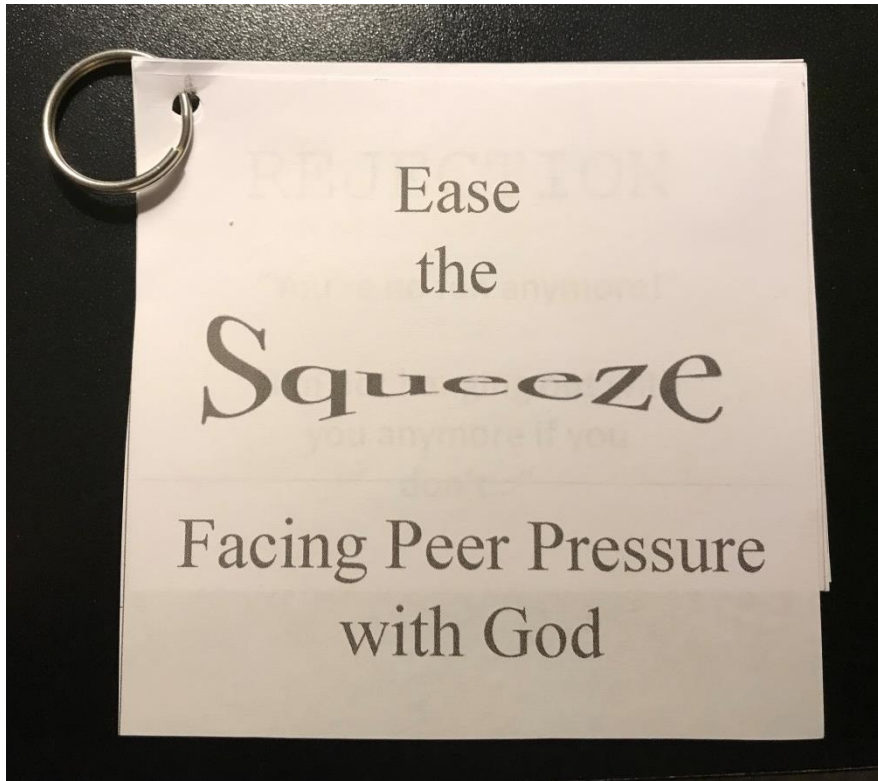
- ◆ Lead the children in a closing prayer. You may say your own prayer, ask one of the children to say a prayer or use the one below.

God,

Help us resist peer pressure. Help us to always make good choices that follow your will.

Amen

- ◆ If time remains before parents arrive, encourage children to return to their Peter activity sheet if they did not complete it. Also encourage conversation between children and with you. This is another opportunity to build relationships with the children in your classroom!



REJECTION

“You’re no fun anymore!”

“I’m not hanging out with you anymore if you don’t...”

PUT DOWN

“You’re such a baby.”

“You’re so weird.”

“You’re such a teacher’s pet.”

REASONING

“Why not? Nobody will tell!”

“Nothing’s going to happen.”

THE EXAMPLE

“Everybody’s doing it.”

THE HUDDLE

“Why would you hang out with her?”

“You’re not cool.”

Peer Pressure Cards

Good Responses

“It’s not fun when you make these choices.”

“That would make me sad. I hope you change your mind.”

Scripture

If God is for us, who can be against us.
(Romans 8:31)

Good Responses

Laugh and walk away.

“Calling me names doesn’t hurt me.”

Don’t call them names back.

Scripture

Don’t make a fool of yourself by answering a fool. (Proverbs 26:4)

God will bless you when people insult you and say cruel things about you. (Luke 6:22)

Good Responses

“That’s not the point. I don’t want to.”

“I don’t believe that. Something bad could happen.”

Scripture

If you do the right thing, honesty will be your guide. (Proverbs 11:3)

Don’t let anyone trick you with foolish talk. God punishes everyone who disobeys him and says foolish things. So don’t have anything to do with anyone like that. (Ephesians 5:6)

Good Responses

“Everyone minus one.”

“It’s still wrong.”

Look around at your friends and classmates. Is everyone *really* doing it?

Scripture

Do not follow the crowd when it does what is wrong. (Exodus 23:2)

You must follow my example, as I follow the example of Jesus. (1 Corinthians 11:1)

Good Responses

“I like her.”

“We should be kind to her.”

“My true friends think I’m cool.”

“I think I’m cool enough.”

Scripture

It’s stupid to say bad things about your neighbors. (Proverbs 11:12)

Love your neighbor as yourself. (Mark 12:31)