



November 6, 2005

Fitting In

We often talk about, and hear others talking about the dangers of peer pressure. I have come to believe that peer pressure is a thing that becomes more of an issue the older one becomes. We often cite, or hear, examples in which another child, teen or adult, is attempting to get someone to do something that they should not be involved with. That would be a good thing to show folks is peer pressure worked that way. The reality is that peer pressure is insidious in it's manifestation, that is, it sneaks in unaware and we then exerts an influence over us. We all have to deal with this on a periodic basis, and, for some, it is a great pitfall. This is not something that is new in the world.

Moses warned the Children of Israel that they should beware of the ways of the inhabitants of the land that they were going to that they were not influenced by the idolatry that filled the region. Moses warns, ***“When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land; Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.”*** (Deut 12.29-31). One of the reasons for the destruction of these nations was because of their evil. God had stated to Abraham that this would happen. God revealed that his offspring would come out of great affliction after four generations and stated that reason for this; ***“But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”*** (Gen 15.16). Many years later, having failed to drive all of the inhabitants out as God had commanded (Judg 2.3), the people began to feel the need to be like everyone else in the world and have a king (1 Sam 8.5). In this God revealed that they had rejected His leadership not that of Samuel. To make a long story very short, the end result was that the people indeed became like the nations about them and God destroyed them.

In the world that we live in we are surrounded by influences that bombard us daily with the need to be like others, the need to experience things that are not right in the sight of God, or to be tempted to give more time to things that will take away time from worshiping God and studying his word. We may be able to withstand the feeling of being different or left out for so long before we begin to question what we are doing with our lives. For the Christian, these are times when our faith is made stronger. We realize that there is a world and life that has not been revealed at this time that we seek and while we have to delay the satisfaction of some needs we find that there is contentment in waiting, building patience and looking forward to that time when we will be able to go home. The influences of the world around us bring about a desire to make more of a place for ourselves here. As Christians we are only here temporarily. Our true home is elsewhere and that is what we are trying to do; go home.

The concept of where we belong is what we tend to lose when we pay too much attention to the world and it's affairs. We are passing through as those who have gone before us were. ***“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.”***

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