

The Difficult Choice

Peer pressure is typically a term used to refer to an experience that adolescents go through in middle and high school. In light of my sermon on August 23 on the reality of the Moral Law—something that is determined by God and not by any human group or tribe—I'd like to suggest that we change our perception of peer pressure and break it free from something only adolescents go through and which then mysteriously stops in young adulthood.

Merriam-Webster defines peer pressure as a feeling that one must do the same things as other people of one's age and social group in order to be liked or respected by them. Researchers at Western Kentucky University have a similar definition. For them, peer pressure is when we are influenced to do something we normally wouldn't do because we want to fit in with other people or be accepted by our peers. They go on to define a *peer* as is someone you look up to like a friend, someone in the community or even someone on TV (and to which I add that the person or figure may not in fact be a friend in the literal sense of the word). The fact that a university is addressing the issue of peer pressure, plus the general definition in and of itself, breaks peer pressure out of the adolescent scene and at the very least brings it into the college scene. I think it extends much farther in life.

On Sunday I mentioned a quote from C.S. Lewis in the third chapter in ***Mere Christianity*** on the reality of the Moral Law in which he describes us as being haunted by the Moral Law. The accompanying text box contains the opening lines of the chapter so you can see his use of that interesting verb *haunted* in context. The verb suggests that what we ought to do in terms of decency or fairness is unnatural, and that is quite the case. The Moral Law is *supernatural*. It is of God. It is above and beyond anything that humanity cooks up in terms of how we should behave with each other, regardless of whether we consider the “other” as a peer or as an enemy. If you watched our service this past Sunday, you hopefully heard me mention in the sermon that the gospel of Jesus Christ—the good news of salvation and redemption in God's Son given to us—is how the Moral Law has been handed down to us who have chosen to follow Jesus, and that as disciples of Jesus we provide the refuge, the fortress, described in Psalm 91 for others. That is also C.S. Lewis' argument later in ***Mere Christianity***, and why he became a Christian in his early 30's after a some 20 years as an atheist, which began with the death of his beloved mother at the age of 10 and included his time on the Western front as a British soldier in World War One where he witnessed the horror of what humans can do to each other and was wounded in battle.

So, what does the reality of God's Moral Law have to do with peer pressure? We endure peer pressure well into adulthood. You and I face it every day, and it is certainly not something confined to our younger years. Thus, peer pressure can be a key means of failure to obey the Moral Law, and chronological age does not protect us from its negative influence.

Consequently, we are left with a choice every day of our earthly existence, and it is also why Christian ethics needs to be a part of congregational life and teaching. On the one hand, we can choose to follow the crowd, or be influenced by key individuals, in order to be liked or respected by them. Without a doubt, that gives us a sense of comfort and belonging, even to those influencers that we don't personally know. That comfort or belonging is also why it is such a temptation and can lead us to behave in ways that are contrary to the Great Commandment and the Golden Rule.

On the other hand, we can take Jesus' teachings to heart and mind, and, despite our imperfection that Christ makes perfect through his cross, and by the power of God's grace available through the Holy Spirit, use his rules for human interaction as THE guide for our behavior. That, however, may put us in disagreement, or maybe outright conflict, with our peers.

I illustrated this moral choice we all must make on what seems like a daily basis with my closing story this past Sunday of my fight with a neighborhood bully when I was nine years old. The bully was picking on a new girl who lived across the street from me, and I landed a few good punches on him and chased him off. I endured the consequences of my action by way of my father's belt and the lecture that followed. The lesson I learned, with great difficulty and pain, was that my behavior, however justified in my mind because of what the bully was doing, was immoral. It was not in accordance with what I now understand to be the Moral Law, no matter what reasons or excuses I conjured up.

"I must go back to what I said at the end of the first chapter, that there were too odd things about the human race. First, that they were haunted by the idea of a sort of behaviour they ought to practice, what you might call fair play, or decency, or morality, or the Law of Nature. Second, they did not in fact do so. Now some of you may wonder why I call this odd. It may seem to you the most natural thing in the world. In particular, you may have thought I was rather hard on the human race. After all, you may say, what I call breaking the Law of Right and Wrong or of Nature, only means that people are not perfect. And why on earth should I expect them to be? That would be a good answer if what I was trying to do was to fix the exact amount of blame which is due to us for not behaving as we expect others to behave. But that is not my job at all. I am not concerned with blame; I am trying to find out truth. And from that point of view the very idea of something being imperfect, of its not being what it ought to be, has certain consequences."

--C.S. Lewis, **Mere Christianity**



From that day on, I have chosen to strike a balance between justice and morality in what I choose to do, or not do, as a believer in my risen Savior.

Tom-Pastor

Urgent

I need your help!!!

I am updating the directory and need for everyone who still hasn't sent in their updated information and a photo to me, please do so asap. The directory is a key part in helping Pastor Tom get familiar with names and faces and also keep everyone informed of contact information for our church family. The directory will be sent to everyone as a PDF. This will give you the opportunity to download it to your computer or print it off. Nothing will be made public and no one other than church attendees will see this information. I am excited for everyone to see it, but I can't complete it if I don't have everyone's help. Please send your photo via my email and update all information that has changed since the last directory.

***Thanks in advance for your participation,
Tonia***

Thank you to everyone who has giving to our Tarsney Lake Mission, we were able to give \$50.00 Back To School gift cards to 7 of the wonderful children at Tarsney.

Please keep all of these children in your prayers, as they go back to school in such trying times.

BACK
TO
SCHOOL

Alice,

Wow I can't believe it is that time of year already— BACK TO SCHOOL!! I know this year has been full of changes and a lot of confusing things have happened, but please know that all of your friends at Lake Lotawana Community United Methodist Church are here for you and pray for your wonderful future. We have missed our time together this summer, but want to give you this gift of a \$50.00 gift card to go and pick out your school supplies or needed items, to get you back to school in style. If you ever need anything please contact Ms Tonia at 816-578-4544 and remember we love you and pray this school year is the best ever.

Love
LCCUMC

Best of luck in the new school year,

Your friends at Lake Lotawana Community United Methodist Church

GO FOR IT !



GOOD LUCK !





On Going: Larry Bergman, Les Case, Wade Davis, Roger Grable, Richard Fuerst, Winnie Fuerst, Harvey Geary, Michael Hatfield, Linda Koleiny, Shane Miley, Nancy Rowe

Comfort and Peace: Connie Brown & Family, Family & friends of Jean Horner

Strength and Healing: Ken McDaniel, Mike McMillin

Missions: Kenyan G-Marc Project (Chics for Chicks), Hillcrest Transitional Housing, Harvester's Food Bank, Lazarus Ministries, Tarsney Lake Families, Congregation de Mellier, Heart and Soul Children's Learning Center

Please contact the office to update or add prayer requests



Collecting Now
through September 6th



The Merida Foundation will give these glasses to the poor, visually impaired Mayan people living in the rural villages in the state of Yucatan.

Place your unused
Rx and Reading
eyeglasses in the
basket found in our
Connect Area

2020 ELECTRONICS / METALS RECYCLING

LAKE LOTAWANA COMMUNITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

28901 NE COLBERN ROAD LAKE LOTAWANA, MO 64086

SAT, SEPT 12th 9:00 AM - Noon
Computers - TVs

Large & Small Appliances
Car/Boat Batteries & MORE

PLEASE NOTE: Social distancing guidelines will be in effect and the wearing of masks will be required.

Acceptable items: working or not, basically anything that has a cord or battery; computers and all of their accessories, networking and telecommunications equipment, phones (home and cell), clocks, TVs, VCRs, DVD players, stereos, A/V equipment including cable and satellite boxes, home electronics, rechargeable batteries, fax machines, adapters/chargers, household appliances and lawn and garden equipment (lawn and garden equipment **MUST** have oil and gas removed).

Fees to be collected by MIDWEST RECYCLING CENTER:

- ☐ CRT Monitors - \$5 each
- ☐ CRT TVs 26" or less - \$30 each
- ☐ CRT TVs 27" or greater - \$50 each
- ☐ LED/LCD/Plasma TVs - \$20 each
- ☐ Wood Console and True Big Screen/Projection TVs - \$50 each
- ☐ Any Freon containing unit - \$10 each

Payment: cash or check payable to Midwest Recycling Center

**DRIVE-THRU
DROP-OFF**

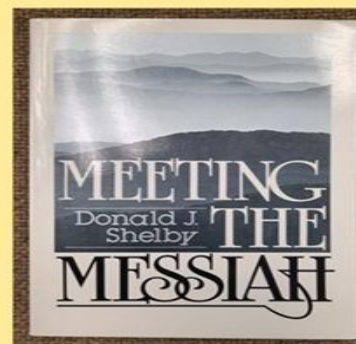
**See complete list
and fee schedule
at lcumc.org**



**We invite you to join us at
10:00 a.m. for a virtual service
of prayer and proclamation
at www.facebook.com/llcumc**

**NEW SERMON SERIES at LAKE LOTAWANA COMMUNITY
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Our new sermon series begins on August 30th using the title of a book by Donald Shelby (pictured), "Meeting the Messiah" (printed in 1980). Shelby writes about the inspiration for the book in the Forward. *"Having experienced some harrowing brushes with death which had reawakened his desire for a greater faith, a young Navy pilot came to me with questions and yearnings. He wanted to meet Jesus in a personal encounter, for his acquaintance was only secondhand from listening to and reading the testimony of others. In unhurried moments of conversation, we talked about how one meets the Messiah and where."*



Isn't that the yearning for most of us—to have a personal encounter with Jesus, particularly during difficult times? Rev. Statler will examine what scripture says about meeting the Messiah and mix his own thoughts and experience with that of the author, using the following chapters of the book as an outline.

When Feelings Are Real (August 30)
When We Want Proof (September 6)
When False Expectations Fail (September 13)
When It Is Yes or No (September 20)
When You Pray (October 4)
When Loneliness Does Not Go Away (October 11)
When We Are Easter People (October 18)

August/September

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
23 Services Online 10:00	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 Services Online 10:00	31	1	2 Nominations Committee Mtg. 7:00pm	3 Nominations	4	5
6 Services Online 10:00	7	8	9	10	11	12 Recycling Event 9:00-12:00
13 Services Online 10:00	14	15	16	17	18	19