

Conversation Starters

- Who are some of your favorite superheroes?
- Why?

Discuss

If you want to make a bad decision, give in to pressure. The pressure from the world and the people around you, whether we are younger or older, can be tough and lead us to make some bad decisions. In the Bible, Samson (who could be described as a superhero) gave in to pressure from his wife, Delilah, and it led him further away from God.

She [Delilah] tormented him with her nagging day after day until he was sick to death of it. Finally, Samson shared his secret with her. "My hair has never been cut," he confessed, "for I was dedicated to God as a Nazirite from birth. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as anyone else."...Then she cried out, "Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!" When he woke up, he thought, "I will do as before and shake myself free." But he didn't realize the Lord had left him. (Judges 16:16-17, 20 NLT)

- Can you think of any pressures around you right now?
- Are there any pressures to do something you otherwise would not do?
- Would the pressure bring you closer to Jesus or further away?

Who we surround ourselves with largely shapes who we are. The people around us help us make decisions, motivate us, and shape our thinking. Therefore, it is important to consider who we allow into our orbit, especially when it comes to our spiritual lives.

- Have you ever considered the amount of influence others have on you?
- Do you have people around you that are helping to shape you spiritually?
- Are you shaping anyone around you spiritually?

To overcome pressure, you need only to be as strong as or stronger than the pressure around you. This is where the importance of your spiritual development helps – a continued investment in your relationship with God.

Obviously, I'm not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ's servant. (Galatians 1:10 NLT)

- How would you describe your spiritual life?
- Is there anything that often pressures you away from God?
- In what ways can you begin investing more in your relationship with God?

Next Steps

Do an inventory this week of the people influencing your spiritual orbit:

Very Influential People (VIPs) – people that mentor, invest, and motivate (positively) you.

Very Neutral People (VNPs) – people that feed off yours but do not really add much to yours.

Very Draining People (VDPs) – people that bring you down.

Here are some ways to invest in your spiritual life:

1. Have a Regular Quiet Time (start with 7 minutes!)

30 Seconds: Prepare your heart and mind for reading. Say brief prayer asking for help preparing.

4 Minutes: Read the Bible. A good place to start is in Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.

2.5 Minutes: Pray with reflecting on the text you read in mind.

2. Check out one of these upcoming classes:

Learning to Pray

When: Every Monday, from 04/08/2019 to 04/15/2019, 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Where: North Charlotte Campus, 8335 Browne Road Charlotte, Charlotte, NC US 28269

Registration: <https://www.mecklenburg.org/event/804009-2019-04-08-learning-to-pray/>

Exploring the Bible

When: Every Monday, from 04/29/2019 to 05/20/2019, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Where: North Charlotte Campus, 8335 Browne Road Charlotte, Charlotte, NC US 28269

Registration: <https://www.mecklenburg.org/event/855439-2019-04-29-exploring-the-bible/>

3. Pick up a great book at The Grounds Bookstore, 8335 Browne Road, Charlotte, NC 28269.

Further Reflection

See Judges 13:2-5, 24-25; 14:6,9; 15:14-15; 16:4-21 and Galatians 1:10 NLT.

Pray

God, you are greater and stronger than any pressures around us. Thank you for offering us strength and direction for our life. Help us to stand strong against any pressure or temptation facing us right now that will lead us away from you. Give us wisdom and the opportunity to surround ourselves with people that push us closer to you.