

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRESSURE AND POWER

Stress, pressure, feeling squeezed, all three describe the results of living at the dizzying pace our world sets for us. We live in this world, but we also are part of God's kingdom and in His perfect economy He wastes nothing and doesn't want us to waste anything either, even the pressures that we encounter serve us if we can respond to them with perspective and purpose.

PRESSURE AND POWER

- When the devil is the source of the pressure, "Submit yourself to God and resist the devil and he will flee." (**James 4:7**)
- Pressure comes from people:
 - Through their words

³"My words are *from* the uprightness of my heart, and my lips speak knowledge sincerely. ⁴"The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. ⁵"Refute me if you can; array yourselves before me, take your stand.

⁶"Behold, I belong to God like you; I too have been formed out of the clay.

⁷"Behold, no fear of me should terrify you,
nor should my pressure weigh heavily on you.

Job 33:3-7 NASB

- Through their presence

Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret;

Luke 5:1 NASB

- Through their schemes

Give ear to my prayer, O God; and do not hide Yourself from my supplication.

²Give heed to me and answer me; I am restless in my complaint and am surely distracted, ³Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the pressure of the wicked; for they bring down trouble upon me and in anger they bear a grudge against me.

Psalms 55:1-3 NASB

For it is not an enemy who reproaches me, then I could bear *it*; nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me, then I could hide myself from him.

¹³But it is you, a man my equal, my companion and my familiar friend;

Psalms 55:12-13 NASB

NOTE: Pressure comes through people and through many sources, but it is vital to see that pressure comes to produce **power** in our lives. God wants us to find the **conversion factor** that will bring as much **power in our life** as there is **pressure on our life**.

- Jesus: the perfect example of pressure and power.
 - Jesus was tempted in every way we are tempted, and yet He did not sin. (**Hebrews 4:15**)
 - Jesus knew what was in the heart of every man.

²⁴ But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, ²⁵ and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man. **John 2:24-25 NASB**

- Jesus knew that one of His twelve closest followers would betray Him.
- Jesus wept and felt the burden of His own kinsmen rejecting Him.
- He sweat drops of blood about His impending crucifixion and separation from God.
- How did Jesus **convert** this **pressure** to **power**?
 - By strong crying and tears!

In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. **Hebrews 5:7 NASB**

- Pressure became His ally not His enemy.
- Pressure produced power and piety instead of frustration and failure in Him.
- Paul is a wonderful example of pressure being converted to power.

⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; ⁸ *we are* afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. ¹¹ For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹² So death works in us, but life in you.

¹³ But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE," we also believe, therefore we also speak, ¹⁴ knowing that He

who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you. ¹⁵For all things *are* for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God. ¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. **2 Corinthians 4:7-18 NASB**

²³Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. ²⁴Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine *lashes*. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. ²⁶*I have been* on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from *my* countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; ²⁷*I have been* in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. ²⁸Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure on me *of* concern for all the churches.

2 Corinthians 11:23-28 NASB

- The pressures:
 - Labors
 - Imprisonments
 - Beatings
 - Death threats
 - Whippings
 - Stonings
 - Shipwreck
 - Sleeplessness
 - Hunger
 - Thirst
 - Exposure to the cold
 - The pressure of the churches
- What was the conversion factor?
 - Pressing in and pressing on.

- The treasure of God's Spirit in Him. (**2 Corinthians 4:7**)
- An eternal perspective. (**2 Corinthians 4:18**)

NOTE: Paul learned to trust God who allows pressure that pressed life out of things so that He can resurrect them.

- The illustrations: a wasted opportunity
 - Is the pressure in your life being utilized or wasted?
 - Rightly responding to pressure is important: a Holy Spirit governed response will produce a Holy Spirit result.
 - Our natural response is to avoid the pressure and miss the opportunity to harness the power.
 - The Spirit-directed response is to find the **conversion factor** and see the pressure produce something Godly in you or for you.
- The boiler illustration: converting pressure to power
 - Fire creates pressure on the water
 - The water's volume increases 1600 times as it is **converted** to steam.
 - 1600 times! Now that's pressure...can you relate? No one by looking with the natural eye would dare believe they could increase by 1600 times simply by seizing the pressure being brought on them.

²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, ²¹ to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3:20-21 NASB

- The refried beans scenario
- The purpose of pressure is enlargement...expansion
- This 'expansion' process works when we submit to these four things:
 - Heat...fire...pressure
 - A compressed area (a small, tight place).
 - Time (in the proper place, under the proper pressure, with the proper release valve).

- Conversion/transformation
 - Temperature applied over time and released with timing results in **power!**
 - Pressure takes time for a long time but upon God-given release it saves time for the rest of time.

NOTE: Pressure becomes power when it shuts us into God and not way from God. When we allow God to sovereignly put the lid of His timing on His dealings with us, spiritual maturity and power are the inevitable results

PRAY THIS: God, I'll allow the convicting, convincing, searching, revealing work of Your Spirit and the cutting and exposing work of Your Word to press me into a place of **abandonment** so I can be propelled into a place of **obedience**. Amen



