

PRESSED OUT OF MEASURE

TEXT:

2 Corinthians 1:8-9:

⁸ For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:

⁹ But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God Who raiseth the dead:



Introduction: If you have been observing trucks on our highways you will notice there is a load capacity rating for each truck clearly marked. Also, the ships on our waterways and on the ocean also have a weight tonnage level water-line clearly marked on the bow of that ship. On a pick-up truck, there is a tonnage rating, also.

QUESTION: Why are these load-ratings posted?

ANSWER: There are regulations to prevent the truck, boat, and pick-up from breaking down or the ship from capsizing on the waterway. It all depends upon the size of ship, as to the amount of tonnage it can carry.

This same principle should also apply to the Christians. Whether you are a parent, or preacher, teacher, officer, coach, in management, Christian or non-Christian; there is a certain amount of pressures which we can bare, and none of us are capable of carrying the identical loads.

EXAMPLE: Gideon was a strong warrior, proven as a veteran captain of the armies of Israel. In his conquest of Canaan, before it became the Holy Land, he was winning one major victory for God after another. One day he tried to transfer this

same capability to his own son, Jether, his first-born. The young man feared and would not venture to accept the challenge, because he was a youth.

Jude 8: Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

Jude 20: But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy Faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

Gideon meant well in wanting to see and prove the capabilities of his son for leadership, but he got ahead of schedule. He learned that: *You don't send a novice to do a veteran's job.* It isn't wise to attempt to put a five ton load on a three quarter ton truck.

There is a limit of stress and strain. Yes, there is also a breaking point. Paul experienced it.

2 Corinthians 1:8: . . . WE WERE PRESSED OUT OF MEASURE, ABOVE STRENGTH, in-so-much as we even despaired of life.

What is he going to do now?

LISTEN:

2 Corinthians 1:9: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God Who raiseth the dead:

Have you ever said: "I've had it?" "I just wish I could die, and get out of it all." "I just can't take any more of this stress". You know that these are very familiar complaints. We know that pressure is a very unwelcome part of life. Some Christians think that God has abandoned them to carry this load alone. But this is not the way it really should be, though.

Why did God tell us to cast our cares on Him?

1 Peter 5:7: Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.



Psalms 55:22: Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

Paul is expressing the fact that he was exhausted - *“pressed out of measure, above strength.”* Our Lord Jesus was exhausted when He went to the stern of the ship and lay down upon a pillow and went to sleep. Even the storm which was pitching the ship about didn't awaken Him. So the distressed disciples cried out: ***“Master carest Thou not that we perish?” Mark 4:38.*** Of course Jesus cared, but it's hard to show it when He was asleep.

John the Baptist couldn't stand the stress of being in prison all cooped up and out of circulation. He had been raised in the wilderness, and was used to freedom and liberty. This closed in quarters got to him. He was terribly distressed and sent to Jesus two of his disciples with the question in ***Luke 7:20: “Art Thou He that should come, or look we for another?”*** He felt that Jesus should have gotten him out of this prison menace, and was disappointed to the point of doubting Christ's deity.

Jesus answered John:

Luke 7:22-23:

22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, “Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached.

23 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me.”

Isaiah 40:29: He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.

MAN'S EXTREMITY is GOD'S OPPORTUNITY

In great trials, pressure, testing, suffering of all kinds that we are called to bear; God would not permit these things to come to His children unless there was some *Great Wise Loving Purpose*. Thru every test borne by a saint spoken of in the Lord, they were made richer in Christ and God became more real to those who trust Him.

Paul's experience is - **pressed out of measure that the Power of Christ might rest upon him.**

Note that some of the pressures which are brought to bear upon the soul happen in order to bring us closer to God.

THE PRESSURE OF SIN

This principle explains the necessity of real conviction of sin, in order to lead to the message of salvation to the lost. It is a work of The Holy Spirit to convict one of their sins, but it is ours to preach and teach and witness by the Word of God.



The unsaved are made to realize and feel pressure of their lost estate and are driven to Christ by repentance and saving faith.

With Backslider David, after his awful sin with Bathsheba – the pressure of God that was brought upon him made him glad to confess his sin.

God brought pressure on Saul the king and on Saul of Tarsus.

Pressure of Circumstances . . . God can never do much with the Christian until, thru pressure; God drives him to the end of himself. Then in utter extremity, he is glad to throw himself upon God.

THE PRESSURE OF TEMPTATIONS

Terrible pressure approaches us in most alluring forms, and strikes at the weakest point. It tests the strongest wills, promising everything to satisfy the desires of the flesh and the mind.



It enlists the hate of enemies and love of friends in league to destroy our power with God. If yielded to become an iron chain like Delilah who betrayed Samson, she was not satisfied until she had her victim helpless and hopeless.

Why God should permit any such force as this to play upon the soul is a mystery that few understand; but **if we are to have any stability it must come through taking grace and strength from God and resisting evil because we hate evil.**

No pressure need be too great - - temptation:

1 Corinthians 10:13: There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Some Christians are like hot house plants, over-tender, have little resistance to evil. **The way to have more power is thru more pressure.**

Paul became a power for God through many pressures both human and satanic.

2 Corinthians 4:7-10:

⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

⁸ We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

⁹ Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

¹⁰ Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

THE PRESSURE OF SATAN

Satan comes and pushes himself on us with lying words and suggestions.

Ephesians 6:12: For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.



Ephesians 6:11a: Put on the Whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

We do not know what it means to pray for the lost soul unless the Holy Spirit puts upon that soul the feeling of being lost.

Genesis 17:1b: I am the Almighty God [El Shaddai] walk before Me and be thou perfect.

We should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead.

ABRAHAM

As if to say to Abraham, 'You have walked before Sarah and Hagar, now walk before Me.

Genesis 17:1: And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, "I am the Almighty God [El Shaddai]; walk before Me, and be thou perfect."



Lift your vision above and walk with the One Who is God, Who is Enough.

God commands, "Be thou perfect" and most of us take this as a slap in the face. God demands perfection.

MOSES

With Moses – there was a feeling of weakness and unworthiness. Through the Lord, he found strength. In Exodus 33, The Lord, through a cloudy pillar, talked to Moses in the Tabernacle:

Exodus 33:13-14:

¹³ Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, shew me now Thy way, that I may know Thee, that I may find grace in Thy sight: and consider that this nation is Thy people.

¹⁴ And He said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

Later, Moses spoke these words to all Israel:

Deuteronomy 31:3a, 6:

^{3a} “The LORD thy God, He will go over before thee, and He will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them:

⁶ Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, He it is Who doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”

JOSHUA

Joshua said to the men of Israel:

Joshua 10:25b: “Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.”

JEREMIAH

The weeping Prophet Jeremiah cried to the Lord:



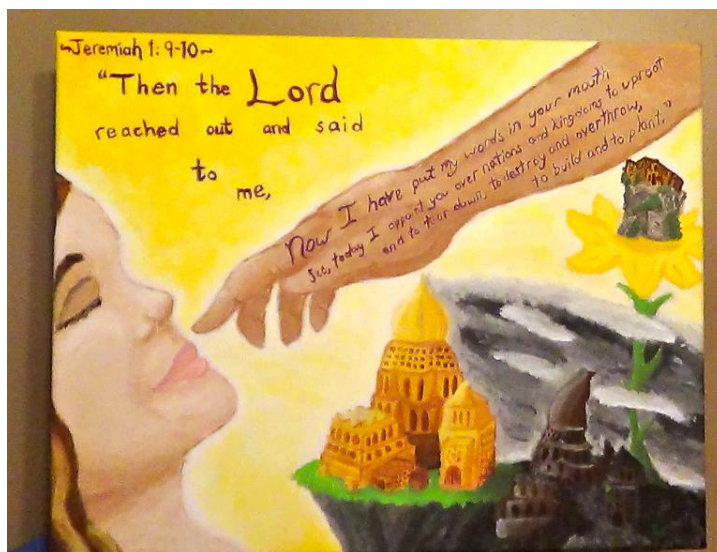
Jeremiah 1:6-9:

⁶ “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.”

⁷ But the Lord said unto me, “Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

⁸ Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee,” saith the LORD.

⁹ Then the LORD put forth His Hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, “Behold, I have put My Words in thy mouth.”



PAUL'S EXPERIENCE

Acts 27:23: For there stood by me this night the Angel of God, Whose I am, and Whom I serve,



The Lord God wants our fellowship.

He is THE GOD of LOVE.

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