

Peace Under Pressure

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MAIN VERSES

[Joshua 5:14](#) • [Joshua 6:1](#) • [Romans 12:2](#) • [2 Corinthians 10:5](#) • [2 Corinthians 1:8](#) • [Matthew 25](#) • [Philippians 4:6-7](#)

The Pressure Cooker

You guys know what this is? It's a pressure cooker. Fascinating little invention. What a pressure cooker does is it takes the pressure on the outside from the burner and uses it on the inside to create something good, something better. They're generally on the stove top—this one's electric. And I find that fascinating because a lot of us have pressure in our lives, don't we? A lot of us go through times where we have pressure on the outside, but maybe we don't do so well on handling or managing when it gets on the inside.

See, if you know how to use this contraption, then you can do some fascinating stuff. You can can jars, you can cook something that would normally take hours and hours in a crock pot, 30, 45 minutes, an hour. If you don't know how to use something like this, then you may have an explosion. There we go. Something like that. How many of you guys have this happen to you when you have pressure in your life? You know what I'm talking about. I want to talk about pressure today. We're going through a season where a lot of people are under different types of pressure. It could be pressure at work, it could be pressure at home, it could be pressure with your family around this time of year. All kinds of pressure.

How We Handle Pressure

And some of us work very well under pressure. Who works really good under pressure? I mean, you're playing sports, right? All the bases are loaded, you're up to bat. You're going to send them all home, right? You're going to knock it out of the park. And then everyone else, some of us fail when we have pressure in our life. Anybody fail when the pressure's on? You can do something a thousand times, but if everybody's watching, you just got to make this count this one time. Nope, ain't gonna happen. Too much pressure.

For those of us that do fail under pressure, whether we explode or implode under pressure, we need to learn how to use pressure more efficiently in our life, effectively in our life. Because how many of you guys know that when you get older, pressure doesn't go away? It may change in its form. It may change from which circumstances it comes from. But pressure is always happening. And I feel like we could take a lesson from this contraption right here to reevaluate how we handle pressure. Maybe we can actually use pressure to make something good in our lives instead of that.

Pressure on Teens and Marriage

You guys know that our teens are under pressure every day. Teens are under pressure to be cool. Your teens are under pressure to live like the world. Your teens are under pressure not to remain pure. Your teens are under pressure not to follow that narrow path. It's pressure. If you're married, there's always pressure in your marriage. It doesn't always come from your spouse.

How many of you guys who are married look at your marriage and compare it to other people's marriages? Anybody ever done that? All right. Whether it's a TV show that you watched that imprinted what a model marriage is supposed to look like, or maybe it's your neighbor who walks outside and puts on a mask about what their marriage looks like. Maybe that's what my marriage is supposed to be. Always pressure to feel like you're not good enough. And in reality, you love your spouse very much. They love you. You work good together. You're raising kids together. Everything's fine. You have an okay marriage. It's a normal marriage that has imperfect perfection, just like everybody else's marriage.

Maybe you have pressure at work. Got to get that deadline done. Your bosses are maybe questioning the integrity of your workload. Pressure. Pressure. Pressure to be a mom. Something that I'm learning. We have a 14-month-old now. I'm watching my wife on how she's raising Ben and how she's so concerned over these things that I didn't know you should be concerned about. And I know that moms compare themselves to other moms. And I know that some women are mean and judgmental, and that puts pressure on other moms. The pressure to stay at home, to homeschool your 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10 kids, if you're Hebrew roots. The pressure to maintain the house. The pressure to take field trips. The pressure to eat GMO, crunchy, gluten-free snacks all the time. And then walk out the front door, and try to look like that Instagram mom you follow. Pressure.

The Pressure We Put on Ourselves

How many of you guys use Pinterest? A couple of us. You guys realize that you are pinning pressure in your life. You know what I'm talking about. How many of you guys have ever looked at Pinterest and then looked at your house and felt pressure that you need to redo your entire house? You need to make it look like Pinterest, all these Photoshop makeovers. Let me show you the reality of Pinterest. You stay away from that stupid website. Here's the reality of Pinterest. Here's a hedgehog cake that you can make on Pinterest. A normal person can make this cake according to Pinterest. It's a beautiful little cake with hedge, and it's a red velvet cake on the inside. Yeah, I didn't mind. The reality is, nailed it, nailed it. Pressure, the pressure that we put on ourselves.

Joshua and the Battle of Jericho

I want to talk about someone who was under pressure in the Bible, and that person was Joshua. You're familiar with the story. Joshua had to learn to deal with something outside of his control without losing control. Anybody know what that's like? Good, we have a story that can relate. I'm speaking about Jericho and the battle thereof.

See, in the 1950s, an archaeologist by the name of Kathleen Kenyon went and excavated the ancient city of Jericho. Now, when you dig up ancient cities, you're not just digging up one city. I mean, the city has been there for hundreds or thousands of years. Lots of people have lived in it over the years. And when you're digging and you discover a city, it doesn't automatically date back to the time of the Bible. It could be earlier or later than the biblical account and everything. And she found this city that she dubbed City 4. And it was fascinating because it looked like an earthquake had hit it and the walls had cracked and fallen down. And the only issue was the dating of the City 4 was around 1500. It was about the mid to late Bronze Age, more mid Bronze Age era, which is a couple hundred years before most scholars believe the attack of Jericho took place. But regardless, when she dug up this city, she found that it was built on a hill and it was heavily fortified. And this is an actual picture of what was excavated.

On the outside, you have this earthen rampart right here. And then at the very top of this sloped defensive stone wall, you have another wall that goes up about 15 feet tall. There's a man standing there. It's about five and a half feet tall right there. And what she discovered is that beyond this wall was kind of like a couple homes and a couple houses and whatnot. But then you hit another large wall, and the top of it was about 45 feet above ground. Jericho was heavily fortified. Joshua, you're going to take on that city. So God told Joshua to lead the Israelites into Jericho, which is not a big problem except for these big old walls.

I want you to imagine yourself as Joshua right now. This is your first time that you're going to attack a walled city. You don't have any siege works. You don't have any catapults. You don't have none of these big machines. You have some spears, toothpicks, and you have some slingshots, maybe some arrows. And your job is not just to lead Israel into battle. Your job is to tell Israel that they're going to go into battle up against this walled city. You and I are going to go attack that big old walled city over there. How do you think Israel responded to that? Can you imagine the tweets and the Facebook posts after he made that announcement? He just said, we're going to walk around it a couple times and blow some horns. The most fortified city in all of Jericho. Here's how the Bible puts it in Joshua chapter 6 verse 1. Now Jericho was shut up inside and out because of the Israelites. No one came out and no one went in. And the Lord said to Joshua, see, I have handed Jericho over to you along with its king and soldiers. You shall march around the city, all of the warriors circling the city once. That's it. That's all you got to tell the Israelites.

The same Israelites whose forefathers died in the desert came back with the report in Genesis chapter 1 verse 28 and said that the city walls reach to the skies and there's no possible way even with God's help that we can take them. You got to tell their kids we're going to march in there. Do you think Joshua was under a little bit of pressure? Just think about it. Do you think he was under a little bit of pressure? Now it's really easy to look back and know what happens and be like, I mean he should have had faith. Tell that to yourself with the pressure you're going through right now in your life. We should have faith. We should trust God. It's not always easy because we're wrapped in this junk called flesh. No doubt Joshua had some pressure on him. If God's intervention didn't happen during battle, this would be impossible. Joshua would be shamed. He'd look like a fool. Those who did not believe in the God of Israel think Joshua just made them up, obviously, and all of Israel would be mocked. Hopefully you heard right from God. Hopefully it wasn't a spicy burrito indigestion. I mean, you actually heard the voice of God. At the end of chapter 5, the chapter right before this, we see Joshua going around to check out the city before God gives the marching orders.

And Joshua, even though he had experience as a military leader, he had never assaulted a walled city like this before. And at the end of chapter 5, it talks about him walking around and looking up at the walls of the city. He was approached by a man with a sword, if you remember the story. Now, the man with the sword is no ordinary man. [Joshua 5.14](#) reveals him as the commander of the armies of the Lord. God's presence manifests in this messenger. And as he approaches him, Joshua asks this question to him. He says, hey, are you for us or are you for the enemy? Joshua shows a little bit of vulnerability here. Because it's obvious that Joshua wants to

hear this man, who is the commander of the armies of the Lord, say, yeah, man, I'm on your side. I'm for your side. I'm with your side. Man, let's do this. Let me light my sword on fire, man, just for effect. We just take them all out. Come on. That's not what the man says. The man looks at him and says, neither, neither. Joshua asked the wrong question. The question shouldn't have been, whose side are you on, you angel of the Lord? God's presence manifest before me. Whose side are you on? God, are you for us or are you for our enemies? The question that Joshua should have asked himself in this time of pressure, looking at these big walls, should have been, whose side am I on? Am I on the Lord's side? Am I going to walk in the Lord's will? Am I going to follow the Lord's commands? Am I going to fight for the Lord or not? If Joshua had asked this question, then there should be no doubt. There should be no vulnerability. There should be nothing standing in his way where he feels pressure because if he's on God's side, then there's no reason not to trust God. There's no reason not to stand there and question if God is going to fight for you.

Neither. Whose side are you on? The Jericho that's before you. Are you asking God, God, are you with me in this situation or against me? You should be asking yourself, am I with God in this situation or am I against him?

Whose Side Are You On?

We know that's what Joshua did. A couple of things I wanted to talk to you guys about pressure. Because I go through times of pressure every once in a while, just like you do. Pressure with family, pressure with work, pressure with marriage, pressure with kids, pressure with whatever. And I wanted to share a few things with you today on how we can help take the pressure that we have in our lives to make something effective and to make something that tastes good.

Number one, first principle of pressure. Pressure itself is a good thing. Repeat after me. Pressure itself is a good thing. Of course it is. The reason why you have running water in your house? Because of pressure, right? Pressure makes toothpaste come out of the tube. Never realized that, huh? Yeah, fresh breath, pressure. Pressure forces power into or onto an object to yield results. Pressure is also used to test the integrity of certain items. If you test the soil or concrete, you've got to pressure test it. Know where the breaking point is. It's how we obtain knowledge to know how much something can stand in a situation. If we can build on it enough, if this concrete mixture can withstand so much pressure, then we know that we can put more on top of it and that we can make a bigger building and that it can hold more so that the plans that the engineer wrote out will come to fruition.

Pressure Itself Is a Good Thing

Pressure's a good thing when it happens, but we don't think about pressure like that most of the time. Did you guys know that brain research shows that every single conscious thought that we have is recorded onto an internal hard drive called the cerebral cortex in your brain. So when you have a thought, the thought runs down the cerebral cortex and it makes a little itch in it. Itty bitty bitty itch, like an Etch-a-Sketch, right? And the more you have this thought, over and over again, the more this same pattern is followed and this original etch becomes deeper and deeper and deeper ingrained. It's called a memory trace. This develops until you have found yourself in the same types of thinking routines, having the same thoughts and reacting to the same situations over and over again.

Memory Traces

Case in point. Let's say you're one of those people — there's not many of them, no one does this — but when you have pressure in your life, you yell. If that's a reaction that you had at some point in time, guess what? The next time that pressure hits your life, hey, that path is already carved in your brain. How do you think you're going to respond? Subconsciously. This is how responses are created in our mind. Thoughts triggered by memories revived by pressure. What your thoughts are determine what your response will be. What you're thinking about when you go through times of pressure will determine how you will respond to that pressure.

If every single time you look at something in your life that causes a little bit of stress as the worst thing that's happening in your world, Armageddon's coming, everything's going to end, guess what? Guess how you're going to respond to that? Like you're drowning. Okay, well that's how I want to respond. You know what happens most of the time when people are actually drowning with others around them? When they panic, they start grabbing other people and dragging them down with them. We do the same thing when we panic. Water or no water. Men, if you're panicking over pressure, guess what? You're dragging your wife down. You're dragging your family down because they're looking at you to lead your family. Guess what? If you're panicking over pressure, walking around your job, you're affecting your coworkers.

How We Think Determines Our Response

How we think determines what our response will be. In order to change our response to pressure, we need to renew our mind with thoughts that will allow us to use pressure to produce something powerful instead of an explosion.

You guys, I had an amazing thought this past week about pressure. And it was something I'd probably never thought about before. Maybe you never did either. Did you guys realize that the things that you're going through in your life right now — go ahead and think about them — whatever they are: workload, fighting with your family, whatever's happening this time of year. Did you know that if the worst case scenario happens that I'm sure you've thought about, the world will not end. It will not. The world will not end. The world will keep rotating. I was talking to Jason about this the other day. We always think the worst case scenario is death, everything's happening fast, the whole world's gonna end. If I pass away tomorrow, it'll be a funeral. And then everybody's gonna wanna ask where the chicken is at the buffet. And guess what? The world will keep on turning. Everything will keep going.

God Gave You an Ability

Sometimes we overthink situations and we make them more dangerous by giving them power that they don't have. You are able to take the pressure that's going on in your life right now. It is not going to kill you, and the world is not going to end because of it. You are able to manage this. God gave you an ability to manage this. It's called prayer and faith.

God also gave you the ability to change how you think about situations. Do you know that? God tells us about this in Scripture. Why wouldn't he? He created your mind, right? This is a foundational principle in Scripture about how you think about things, how you observe things. This is what Paul writes. [Romans 12](#), 2, you've read it a bajillion times.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

You have the ability to renew your mind by the way that you think. For what purpose? So that you may discern what is the will of God. Whose side are you on in the situation that you're in that's causing you pressure in your life?

Scripture also teaches us that we have the ability to accept or refuse thoughts. Do you know this? See, all thoughts come and they knock at the door of your mind. They do. They do. And you have the ability to say, come in or go away. This is what Paul writes about, [2 Corinthians 10](#), 5.

We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ.

You have that ability. Whose side are you on? Pressure is a good thing. And we'll get into that in just a moment.

What Are You Here to Learn?

When you're going through pressure, when I go through pressure, even though it's a very difficult question to ask, I always ask it. I force myself to ask it. I am here to learn something. What am I here to learn? Going through this situation in my life, what am I here to learn? Not to suffer. What am I here suffering for? Why am I here to suffer? God, are you for me or against me? Not valid questions. Not valid questions. What am I here to learn? And then I remember this little Bible verse that tells me I count it to joy to face trials. I don't like to talk about that one. Let's talk about it. [James 1, 2](#). Consider it pure joy. Pure what? We just did a whole series on joy. You guys got it, right? My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces suffering, produces nothing edifying, produces stress and anxiety, produces suicidal thoughts — produces, oh, everything that is not good in my life. It's not what it says. It says, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

Do you know what that means? It means that if you're able to regulate the pressure in your life, not let it explode and spew everything everywhere, but if you're able to figure out how to keep it inside, to nurture the things that it's supposed to nurture, to edify the things it's supposed to edify, then you will learn perseverance in your faith.

Pressure produces power. If we can learn how to manage pressure, it'll give us the ability to have power in situations in our future.

You've Been Here Before

Number two. You've been here before. This is familiar. It's one of the things I tell myself whenever I feel like the pressure is on in my life. I've been through this before. This is familiar. It may be a different situation. I felt pressure before. This is familiar. Maybe a different time period. I felt pressure before. This is familiar. Maybe someone else causing the pressure. Doesn't matter. I've been through pressure before. You have been through times of pressure in your life before.

Oh Matt, it's not the same. It's the same. It is pressure. It doesn't feel like the same because you're not recognizing it as the same. You've been through this pressure before in your life. You

will go through this pressure again in your life. If you can figure out how to endure it, then your faith will become hardened and strengthened with perseverance.

What does that mean? That means the next time God says, "I want you on my side and we're going to go walk through those walls before you," you won't have to walk around the city ahead of time and look up. You say, "All right, I've been through this before. I can do this."

Relying on God Who Raises the Dead

2 Corinthians 1:8. It's a great verse because Paul starts out the letter stating that, "We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of the affliction we have experienced in Asia." Ephesus area. "For we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death."

Now Paul's talking about all these things that he went through. And there's this one particular affliction or pressure that he felt that really caused him to be afraid for his life. We're not exactly sure which one that is. I mean, it could have been the beast that he fought in Ephesus or the climax of the riots in Acts chapter 19. Paul doesn't tell us or the Corinthians what kind of pressure he was going through. Do you want to know why? It didn't matter what was causing it. It didn't matter. It was pressure. It's all the same.

Paul also understood how to get through it because of his past. If we read the text clearly, you see this word despaired. It's incredible because in the Expository's commentary, they say that that word means or implies the total unavailability of an exit. I came to a point where there was no exit available and I felt like my life was going to end.

Paul understood something. Despite the pressures that he went through and he was so utterly crushed and he had this pressure all around him and he didn't feel like there was an exit anywhere, he felt like he had received the sentence of death. But he realized that he should not rely on himself, but on the God who raises the dead.

Paul understood very simply that when he was going through his perils, the God that raised Yeshua from the dead was still on the throne.

Repeat that. Paul understood that when he was utterly crushed and he thought everything was gone, there was no exit before me. No exit available before me. But if I'm relying on myself, that's true. But I'm relying on my God, my God who raises the dead. And last time I checked, he's still on the throne.

"From so deadly a peril will continue to rescue us. On him we have set our hope that he will rescue us"—what? "Again and again and again."

Why again? Because he's not going anywhere.

Training Under Pressure

You guys realize why firefighters train? They train under pressure. Jay, when you train, you wear your whole suit. Even though there wasn't any fire going on outside, you'd still put your suit on and run around. Gas mask on, oxygen mask and everything, right? Under pressure when you're training.

The reason why you would get suited up and run around in the hot weather is because if you train under pressure, then when you're really under pressure, you'll understand what to do. You'll be placed in a position where you've had experience. This is familiar. I've been through this before.

Police train for high stress situations. Why? Because the first time a bullet goes past your head, they don't want you to think, "Oh, I've never been in this situation before. What do I do? I got such despair. There's no availability." No. This is familiar. We trained for this.

Soldiers, why do they train? So when they're out in the battlefield under pressure, it will not be something new. I've been here before. This is familiar to me.

I've Been Here Before

At the hospital, we used to have mock downtimes. So they would simulate the entire informatics system going down. They'd sometimes simulate the power going down. Simulate everything breaking. And during these simulated mock downtimes, each of the department heads would have to create downtime procedures. Right? What do you think those were? These were procedures on what you do when nothing works the way it's supposed to.

Director would come by and I had to make downtime for pretty much radiology—how all the PAC systems and x-ray systems send their reports over to the ER and how they take pictures of patients and get the pictures where they're supposed to go. A lot of stuff, a lot of important stuff.

My director, my supervisor would look over my shoulder. "What's your downtime procedures? Everything's down right now. What are you going to do?" Pressure. I don't want to look like an

idiot, right? "What about this, this, this?" And they would audit it and they would say, "What about this situation?"

My director, man, she was all, "What about, what if this happens? What if that? What if a meteor hits the hospital and that plan is scrapped? What's your next plan?" I don't know! Lots of pressure to make sure that I had a solid downtime procedures plan.

Sure enough, one morning, my pager went off at 2:00 a.m. in the morning. The server room went down. The ER had people coming in—car accidents, whatever, fall out of bed, hit their head. CT scans, head x-rays, chest CTs, all this mess. But the doctors in the ER were not able to view the images and they weren't able to view the report. So the patient is lying there dying and the doctor's sitting there saying, "I need to see the pictures in the report. How am I going to see everything?"

And guess whose shoulders that fell on? I could have walked in there and yelled and screamed. I could have walked in there and sat in the corner and rocked back and forth and cried. I knew my downtime procedures and I implemented them. Why? Because I've been here before. This is familiar. This will pass. I will get through this. I know how to get through this.

Implemented downtime procedures, took the reports over to the ER. ER doctors had really no idea that system was down. They had everything that they needed.

You've been through pressure before. You got through pressure before. The world did not stop turning during the times of your pressures past. The world will not stop turning again. You will get through this. You know how to get through this. You've trained for this.

Soldiers Have to Train

You guys realize that situations that are placed in your life—I truly believe this, especially for believers, and you may like this and you may not like it, but I want you to listen to this and then you can ignore the rest. That's fine. Just listen to this.

As a believer, you're supposed to be an ambassador of Christ, right? Scripture goes on to tell you that you're going to be a soldier of Christ. Okay? Soldiers got to train, right? Yes, soldiers have to train. Pressure has to be put on them. Why? So when they face a time of high pressure, they understand that their director knew that this was coming and they know how to handle this. They know how to get through this.

Situations are not placed in your life to kill you. You are placed in situations so that you can overcome them. I believe that from the bottom of my heart.

Is God for me or against me? Invalid question. Irrelevant. Am I with God? Yeah. Am I for God? Yes. Am I willing to do whatever it takes to get through this situation if it's God's will and God's plan? Yes. Then why despair?

I Am Being Molded

Number three, I am being molded. I'm being molded.

See, this isn't the first time that you've ever had trouble paying bills at the end of the month. This isn't the first time that you've ever gotten scared because your teenagers are running amok. This isn't the first time that you've ever gotten in a fight with your spouse. This isn't the first time that you've ever gotten threatened at work. Maybe you got written up or maybe your performance isn't up to par. Maybe you're scared of getting fired.

This isn't the first time that any of these things are happening in your life. They're placed there for a reason, guys.

You guys realize that the statue of David—that's what I'm talking about—17 foot tall statue, naked man, statue of David carved by Michelangelo. Did you know Michelangelo was the third artist, I think, to attempt to finish it? Big 19 foot slab rock abandoned twice before Michelangelo got a hold of it. Took him several years, two or three years. They said that he slept beside it, wouldn't leave its side, always working on it.

And when he finally finished it, people went up to him and they said, "Hey, how did you do this? 17 inch naked man, 17 foot naked man. How'd you do this, Michelangelo?"

He said, "Oh, it was easy. I saw David in the rock and I just chipped away everything that wasn't David."

In order for the chisel to knock that piece under David's armpit that shouldn't be there, a hammer has to hit it. And this creates pressure so that the things that are supposed to not be around David, around you, can be knocked out, can be smoothed over. All those rocks that got in the way of David's abs, pressure—nice big abs now.

Guys, this is what pressure does. There's someone in scripture that reminds me a lot about the statue of David—Simon, named Peter. Peter was a pretty cool guy. Went on to become the pope. He was a good guy.

Peter was a man that needed to be chiseled by pressure a lot. Peter was the man that had the boldness to jump out of the boat. Oh, you! A second later, a wave comes. He almost dies,

drowns. Yeshua's scolding him. I mean, he was the only one that jumped out of the boat, and now Yeshua's scolding him for having a lack of faith. You moron! Why don't you have faith? I mean, I was right here. You looked away.

Peter was the one that drew his sword in the zealousness for how much he loved his king in the garden and chopped off the ear of the high priest servant, and seven verses later denied Yeshua three times. That's who Peter was. Peter needed to be chiseled. Yeshua saw something more in Peter. He didn't just see a rock. He saw a lively stone of God. That's what he says after the whole incident.

Pressed by the Master

You remember eating a fish breakfast, and Yeshua comes up to Peter and he says, "For they had finished breakfast, and Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" And he said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." Got it, check. He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Then tend my sheep." He said to him a third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved. I never noticed that before. Peter was grieved.

Pressure. What are you trying to tell me? Stop repeating yourself. I got it the first time. Peter was grieved with this because he had said it a third time. Do you love me? And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you."

Peter went through a very tough time being chiseled by the master. We see the final work of God in Peter later in Acts when Peter boldly stands up. He had gone from a fickle-minded man of faith to a bold preacher who called 3,000 to repentance in one afternoon. That's what pressure does. That's what happens when the power of pressure is used the right way.

Yeshua Under Pressure

Remember when Yeshua was under pressure? He was under pressure a lot, specifically in the garden. Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." And he took with him Peter and the sons of Zebedee and began to be grieved and distressed.

This is Yeshua. Began to be what? Pressure. He began to be put under the pressure of what was about to happen to him. And he said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death.

Remain here and keep watch with me."

See, later on he goes into the garden and he begins to pray to his father. And he says, God, I'm going to do this. I got this. I know I was sent here for a purpose. Give me the strength to get through it. I'm doing it. No, wait. If there's any way, Father, take this cup from me.

Anybody ever been there? Let's be honest. God, if there is any way you can take this pressure off of me, give it to someone else, not me. Take this cup from me. Sweat became his blood dripping. Yeshua didn't want to. He didn't want to die on the cross. He didn't want to be whipped. He didn't want his skin to be torn open. He didn't want to be hung naked on a cross. He didn't want to be spat on before the whole world. He didn't want to be shamed. He didn't want to be nailed to a cross.

Not my will be done, but your will, Father.

So Yeshua wasn't asking the question, God, are you on my side or their side? He showed us an example of what it takes, what it looks like to be under pressure as a believer. Your will be done. I'm on your side, your plan, your will. And if this is what it's going to take, if your will is that I'm going to go and I'm going to die as a loyal, faithful servant, I'm going to die, your will be done.

How many of us are willing to follow that example? God, I am on your side despite the situation I'm going through, despite the situation that feels like it's the end of the world, despite the situation that causes me stress and anxiety, even though it shouldn't. Not my will, Father, but your will be done. I am on your side.

The Olive Press

You guys know what Gethsemane means? It means to squeeze olives or an olive press. So appropriate. So appropriate. Because you take an olive and in order to get the oil out of the olive, you have to squeeze it. Pressure has to be put on.

How appropriate. What if Yeshua couldn't take the pressure? Does that give us a standard to go by as followers of him? Not just the pressure of dying on the cross. I'm talking about the pressure to perform a miracle just because his mama wanted him to. The pressure from a mother. Come on. "Go make some wine, boy." "It's not my time yet, mama." "Go make some wine." It's not my time yet. Pressure.

The pressure to feed the 5,000 because none of the disciples bothered to bring any packed lunches. I gotta feed, I gotta make a bunch of fish sandwiches, feed all these people. The

pressure to raise Lazarus from the dead while he's being criticized for not being there. The pressure to get to Jairus's house to raise up this girl that's dying. But there's so many people around that want your attention, the pressure to be challenged by the Pharisees over and over and over again in the public eye. And their only goal is to trip you up and make you out to be not the son of God, not a follower of God, but a heretic, akin with Satan himself. That's what they're trying to do to you. And depending on what you say next will determine whether you honor God and represent God's kingdom or you look like a fool.

Could you handle that pressure? That was the pressure that Yeshua was under. Like it was nothing. Why? Because he knew whose side he was on.

Faithfulness Under Pressure

If you can't handle a little bit of pressure, just like we were talking about with the cement. The cement block can't handle a little bit of pressure. It's not going to be used to build things up on.

If you cannot handle a little bit of pressure, you will not be entrusted with the greater things of God's kingdom. Did you get that? If you cannot handle a little bit of pressure, if Paul couldn't handle the pressure, you think he would have gone out and established all of those congregations? I would have flopped on the first one. Pressure. Barnabas? Pressure. All the apostles? Pressure.

Paul knew he was going to die one day, thrown in jail, beaten over and over and over again. So it talks about how he was beaten with a rod multiple times. Paul writes about this in 2 Corinthians, right? And it's interesting because I looked it up. Roman citizens were not allowed to be beaten as a form of punishment in the Roman Empire with a rod like that. Paul was a Roman citizen. That was against the law of Rome. Beaten over and over again. What if Paul had just given up? Paul was entrusted much because he demonstrated that he can take pressure without blowing the kitchen up.

The Parable of the Talents

Yeshua talks about a parable in [Matthew 25](#), the parable of the talents. Remember, it's a parable about a master, and he's leaving, and he's going on a journey, and he has three servants. He entrusts one servant with five talents, another with two, and another with one. Just to put it into perspective, a talent is about five golden coins—that's what we think of with a talent. According to IVP and Zonerman commentaries, they believe one talent was about 20 years of wages, five talents 100 years of wages. He entrusted them with all this money until the time he

returned. He was gone a very long time. Then he returned and went to the servant to whom he had given five talents. The servant said, "Master, I have your five talents. And look, I invested the money. I traded the money. And look, I have five more for you." Master said, "Very good. Well done, faithful servant. You have been faithful over little. And now I will set you over much."

Imagine yourself being that servant. Listen, I know you only get paid like 10 bucks an hour, but I'm leaving to go on a trip for a couple months. And I'm going to leave you with 100 grand. This is my money. Don't spend it. I'm going to entrust you to take care of this money. And I'm going to watch you and see how you manage this money. Depending on how you manage this money will determine whether you get more responsibility as my servant. You get paid more, more responsibility. You get a status change. You get to move up. Okay, bye. And these are the briefcases.

Do you think any of these servants felt some pressure when the master left? What am I supposed to do with this? Then he goes to the servant to whom he gave one talent. One talent. I gave you a little bit. How'd you manage this little bit of pressure I put on you?

I couldn't take it, so I buried it. I buried the money. Here it is. It's got dirt on it. Here you go. I gave you a little bit of pressure. Didn't give you five talents. Didn't give you two. One talent. You could have put it in a bank. Let it earn that 0.5% interest rate. Whatever. You could have done something. But you couldn't take the pressure, so you buried it in the ground until the time I would return. You wicked servant. You worthless servant. What good are you? Why are you even in the position that you're in? Get out.

Guys, I'm convinced that when we have pressure in our lives, it's there for a reason. It's there for us to remember what side we're on. It's there for us to understand that we are being used by God. We are being trained by God. We are being molded, just like Peter was. Just like the disciples. Just like David. We're being molded because that's what pressure does. Can we manage the pressure, learn from it, gain experience from it? So maybe a point in the future when there's real pressure put on our family, when there's real pressure put on our lives, we know what to do because this is familiar. Or are we going to refuse to learn how to handle pressure and just blow up every time, fall apart, spew that chicken all over the ceiling?

Paul writes in [Philippians 4:6-7](#), "Do not be anxious about anything, do not be stressed about anything, do not think that the end of the world is going to happen for anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to

God." When the pressure is on, remember what side you're on. Remember that pressure is good. And be in prayer to God during your time of pressure.

When You're Under Pressure

Remember we talked about Daniel? We talked about Daniel being under pressure. And Daniel went and prayed and gave thanks to God. When you're under pressure, there's a prescription. You give your request to God. Father, if there's any way, here's an example. If there's any way this cup can pass from me, let it pass. But I thank you for the opportunity to be involved in your will and your plan for my life. I'm just going to model after Yeshua's incident in the garden of pressure. Let your request be heard with thanksgiving to God.

Then something very important happens. Then and only then the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. That's how you get peace under pressure: by understanding whose side you're on and that pressure is good. Pressure is molding. Pressure prepares you for something greater.

If you guys don't leave today with anything else, remember the story of the talents. If you're faithful with a little, if you can take on just a little bit, if you can be responsible through a little bit of pressure, then God will entrust you with more. If you're constantly blowing up, would you cook in a pressure cooker that kept blowing up? No, why? Why not? Because you can't depend on it. Amen?

Trials in the Movement

There are a lot of trials going on this time of year, specifically for families in the movement, specifically from friends or family that don't understand why we do the things we do or we don't do the things that we do. Remember this message. Remember what Paul said. Remember what Yeshua taught during times of pressure. You've been through this before. The world's not going to end, and you're being molded. How you respond to pressure will dictate what mission you will be put on in God's kingdom. If you fail basic training, you're never going to be sent out to the field to do the real work. Peace under pressure.

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