

THE PROVING GROUND

TO BE TRUSTED IT MUST BE TESTED

The Pressure Test

Pastor Brad Howard - June 16, 2024

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

James 1:2-4 NLT

God has things prepared for you that you are not yet prepared for.

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

2 Corinthians 4:8-10 NIV

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life. 9 "I know your tribulation (crushing pressure) and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.'

Revelation 2:8-11 ESV

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Isaiah 53:5 NIV

1. PRESSURE PROVES THE STRENGTH OF YOUR FAITH.

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith--more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire--may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:6-7 ESV

Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but the LORD tests the heart.

Proverbs 17:3 NLT

"God never uses anyone greatly until He tests them deeply."

- A. W. Tozer.

2. PRESSURE PRODUCES SUCCESSFUL RESULTS

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Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.'

Revelation 2:10b-12 ESV

"Before every blessing, there is a testing. God tests you with stress before he trusts you with success."

2 MAJOR TYPES OF PRESSURE

- FAITHFULNESS PRESSURE

Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Revelation 2:10 ESV

When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who watch over my way. In the path where I walk people have hidden a snare for me.

Psalms 142:3 NIV

- SIN PRESSURE

My guilt overwhelms me--it is a burden too heavy to bear.

Psalms 38:4 NLT

Don't agree to guarantee another person's debt or put up security for someone else.

Proverbs 22:26 NLT

So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

James 4:17 ESV

3. PRESSURE IS NOT TO BE MANAGED, IT'S TO BE SURRENDERED.

Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you.

1 Peter 5:7 NLT

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

1 John 5:4-5 ESV