

ISSUES:**Turning Pressure Points into Praise Points**

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 1:2 *Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Lesson: Read 2 Corinthians 11:16 – 12:10

- How do the pressure points that Paul faced compare to your own pressure points in life?

We face real life issues every day, but when you read what Paul went thru your perspective begins to change! What about the pressure points that Jesus faced while He was here?! I certainly would not want to change places with Paul, but that doesn't make my struggles any less real or meaningful to me. John 16:33 says in this world we WILL have trouble. There is no question about it. The point is not to compare our struggle with someone else's but to focus on God and allow Him to handle our issues. John 16:33 goes on to say that He has overcome the world. My stuff may not compare with what Paul went thru, but God can handle Paul's stuff and mine. He has overcome the WORLD! Praise God!!!

- Did Paul's pressure points ever go away? Will ours?

Not only did Paul's pressure points not go away, but he was given a thorn in the side – a messenger of Satan! When he asked God to remove it he was told "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." I don't think that verse in John indicates any kind of temporary situation. As long as we are in the world, we will have trouble. We can expect it, but maybe we can learn to rejoice in it as well.

- Why does God allow these pressures? Does He not care or is He incapable of relieving them?

He does care so very much and He is certainly capable of removing all the pressures in our life, but then would we appreciate his peace? How can we appreciate salvation if we never recognize that we were lost without Jesus? Luke 7:47 says "He who has been forgiven little loves little." Does that mean sin more so we can appreciate forgiveness more? Romans 6:1-3 "Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?" Don't we let our children go out and experience life even when we know they are going to get hurt – and we could protect them from that hurt? We have the power and we do care, but locking them up at home is not always what's best for them.

- Look at the first few verses of Paul's letters. Why does he begin each letter with "Grace and peace"?

I think Paul is just reminding us that he knows we are suffering and hurting, but wants us to focus on the grace and peace that can ONLY come from Jesus Christ. In spite of all we are going thru, God's grace is sufficient and the peace that passes human understanding allows us to rejoice even during the storms of life.

- What should our response be to pressure points in life?

1 Peter 5:7 "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." Pressure may not be something we caused but as Mom always said "Our Response is our Responsibility." (See Sermon Notes for responses to pressure). Pressure Points should not be the focus. God should be our focus and the pressure just fades away.

***Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face.
The things of Earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glorious grace.***

Daily Devotional Reading:

- Day #1: Galatians 1
 - Focusing on God and responding to His Word:

- Day #2: Galatians 2
 - Focusing on God and responding to His Word:

- Day #3: Galatians 3
 - Focusing on God and responding to His Word:

- Day #4: Galatians 4
 - Focusing on God and responding to His Word:

- Day #5: Galatians 5
 - Focusing on God and responding to His Word: