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Article:

Can You Take the Pressure?

Do you sometimes feel like the pressures of life are too much and that if one more thing is put upon you that you will collapse? How are we supposed to bear up under this pressure? How are we supposed to face all the things that we encounter without being crushed under it?

The Apostle Paul exhorts us in I Corinthians 10:13, “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”

“Beyond what you can bear” and “stand up under it” are interesting phrases. The word “bear” means to support the weight of or to put up with without giving way to the pressure. So, how are you bearing up under the pressure?

I recently learned a few things about submarines that have really helped me spiritually. Did you know that in order to float or submerge, submarines use ballast tanks? Ballast tanks are located between the interior and exterior walls of the submarine and can be alternately filled with air or water. When the tanks are full of air, the submarine will float. But if the tanks are filled with water, it will sink. The depth of the submarine is gauged by how much air or water is allowed into the ballast tanks. In order to move air or water in or out of the tanks, the crew uses a series of valves to isolate different areas and create more or less air pressure inside. If the air pressure in the tank is greater than the water pressure, it forces the water out. But if the air pressure in the tank is less than the pressure exerted by the water, the water comes pouring in. ***The pressure inside the submarine must be greater than the pressure outside the submarine to keep the water out and to stay afloat.***

The interesting part to me is that even when a submarine is at the bottom of the sea it already has everything inside it that it needs to rise again. The crew just needs to open the valves that are keeping the pressurized air in one compartment and release it to flow freely into other areas that have been allowed to be overcome by the pressure of the water. If they open the valves, the pressurized air will immediately go to work and push out the unwanted water, allowing the submarine to rise up once again.

1 John 4:4 states, “You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is IN YOU is greater than the one who is in the world.” In other words, the enemy cannot place any pressure or weight upon us that we cannot handle, because Christ-In-Us is stronger or greater than any external pressure that Satan can put upon us.

So why do Christians sometimes collapse and go down under pressure? The answer is this: If we have restricted the Holy Spirit to certain areas of our lives and have compartments that the Holy Spirit is not allowed to flow into, we are operating upon our own strength and will be overcome. However, with Him *in* us, we have everything we need to bear up under the pressures being exerted against us. And, even if we have allowed ourselves to be overcome by the pressures around us and have sunk, we have everything, (Him) in us that is needed to rise again.

Every area of your life that you fill with Him can withstand any pressure. But if there are areas of your life that are not filled with Him, but are instead “puffed up” by your own knowledge and understanding, they will not be able to bear the pressure. Instead, they will collapse under it. 1 Corinthians 8:1b tells us that “Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.” When we try to reason and figure things out on our own,

we are like Adam eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. We find ourselves empty and without life. But if we eat from the Tree of Life, Jesus, we are filled with Him and we have not only life, but abundant life.

You don't get more of God, God gets more of you. He is already *in* you. Are you feeding off of Him, the Tree of Life, and allowing Him to fill every area of your life? Or, have you compartmentalized Him and have areas of your life where you are still trying to do things on your own?

If you are just focused on fighting or holding off the temptations or pressures of the enemy, you will lose. You will lose because it becomes about your strength, power, or ability to pull things off. The only way to bear the pressure and stay afloat is to focus on making sure that every area of your submarine is properly pressurized. **You don't focus on fighting against the one who is applying the pressure to you; you focus on filling yourself with the one that is greater than the one that is putting the pressure on you.** When we are filled with Him, we can withstand any pressure that the enemy can put upon us.

Finally brothers, "I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted (*drawing sustenance from*) and established (*being built upon*) in love (*that builds up*), may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge (*which only puffs up*) – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."

"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." Ephesians 3:16-21 (emphasis added).