



# THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

## PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

### **PRESSURE COOKER**

#### **Pressure Series, Part 3**

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A pressure cooker brings food to proper tenderness through the high temperature and pressure maintained within. However, when the pressure is not released properly, it may cause an explosion. Similarly, many people suffer tremendous stress and intense pressures that inevitably cause nervous breakdowns, suicides, road rages, irrational thinking, drug addiction, or alcoholism. Some even reach the point of "exploding" because they have not released the pressures built up in their lives. Despite the apparent effects of life pressure(s), God has designed these, which result in our spiritual growth.

#### **1. All will encounter trials.**

1.1 The word "*peirasmos*" means temptations, trials or tests of faith. We should not be surprised if trial(s) by fire happen to us (1Pet. 4:12). Suffering is not a choice but a part of life.

1.2 Consider it joy whenever we face all kinds of trials (Jm. 1:2). When we are attacked or ambushed by trials that threaten to rob us and beat us down, we are to confront it with courage.

#### **2. Our attitude is important.**

2.1 St. James encourages us to consider it pure joy when we encounter trials. Likewise, St. Paul tells us "Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice!" (Phil. 4: 4). It is easy to say you are happy when everything is happening smoothly, but it is difficult to rejoice during troubles. Only through God's grace can we endure trials.

2.2 Job is a man worthy of emulation. He suffered greatly, but still held on to his faith. He had kept His way and not turned aside nor did the word of God depart from his (Job) lips and in his heart (Job 23:11-12). By focusing on the Word of God, we should deliberately decide to concentrate on the Word of God to experience joy in times of trials. Our outlook determines the outcome, and our attitude determines our action.

#### **3. Trials develop faith, perseverance and patience.**

3.1 The testing of our faith produces perseverance which should be perfect & complete (Jm. 1:3-4). The depth of our character is seen on how we react under pressure because we are being perfected by the Fatherly Hand of God.

3.2 He wanted us to mature spiritually. Let us not waste the opportunity that God is giving us. Let us try to be perfect and complete since this is God's plan for us.

#### **4. Ask for wisdom.**

Let us ask wisdom from God to be able to understand the purpose of our trials and why He allowed these in our lives (Jm. 1:5). We need to seek God's will in our lives.

#### **5. Ask in faith.**

We should ask in faith for the person who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind (Jm. 1:6). If we have faith, we have the confidence that our loving God will hear and answer us when we pray.

**CONCLUSION:** Pressures in life are part of God's plan to mold us. So, instead of complaining, let us view our trials as opportunities for growth. When we allow God to complete His work in us, a prize awaits us: the crown of life. (Jm. 1: 12)

#### **REFLECTIONS:**

1. How's your perseverance and patience?
2. What is God working in you?
3. What are the weaknesses that are challenging and what are strengths that need to be strengthened ?
4. What attitude needs changing?

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