

Running On **EMPTY**

Part # 2: The Pressure of Life

September 20, 2009

Gerald Thurman & Wes Porter

Even though more and more demands are placed on our time, very few seem concerned about **overload**. Sometimes simply saying **no** to the things that drain us, and allowing ourselves to slow down to **refuel** serves as a simple solution.

The truth is, the things that overload us can keep us continually **overwhelmed**.

Increasingly we find ourselves overwhelmed by the **pressure** of life.

Central Point...

There are many stories in the Bible about people under pressure and how they dealt with it. One of the best is about Martha, Mary and the day Jesus came to visit...

Luke 10:38-42 *As they continued their travel, Jesus entered a village. A woman by the name of Martha welcomed him and made him feel quite at home. She had a sister, Mary, who sat before the Master, hanging on every word he said. But Martha was pulled away by all she had to do in the kitchen. Later, she stepped in, interrupting them. "Master, don't you care that my sister has abandoned the kitchen to me? Tell her to lend me a hand." ⁴¹⁻⁴²The Master said, "Martha, dear Martha, you're fussing far too much and getting yourself worked up over nothing. One thing only is essential, and Mary has chosen it—it's the main course, and won't be taken from her."*

Pressurized Truth #1: Those overwhelmed by the pressures of life convince themselves that they have no **choice**.

Pressurized Truth #2: Those overwhelmed by the pressures of life assume God doesn't **care**.

Pressurized Truth #3: Those overwhelmed by the pressures of life blame others for being **irresponsible**.

Pressurized Truth #4: Those overwhelmed by the pressures of life believe the solution lies in others being as **pressured** as they are.

Jesus clearly tells Martha that the pressure she is under is the direct result of her...

1. Misguided **attention**.
2. Misguided **priorities**.
3. Misguided **choices**.

Key Truth:

Jesus refuses to help her in her pressurized state. God will always honor our **choice** to be as overwhelmed by the pressures of life as we want to be. He will not insert Himself in the middle of our wrong choices.

He did, however, leave open the option for Martha to change her **perspective** and in so doing have her pressures relieved.

God's Depressurizing Perspective

Proverbs 3:5-6 *"Trust GOD from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for GOD's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track."*

Focal Point...

Choosing to Relieve the Pressure

Pressure can result from a variety of factors, but the most common cause is simply a lack of **planning**.

The Bible is clear about the importance of planning in the outcome of life...

Proverbs 21:5 *"Careful planning puts you ahead in the long run; hurry and scurry puts you further behind."*

The further behind we fall the more pressure we **invite** into our lives.

When we **mis**manage our time we complicate or pressurize our lives in at least four specific ways...

1. Mismanaged time flows toward our **weaknesses**.
2. Mismanaged time comes under the influence of **dominant** people in our lives.

3. **Mismanaged time is surrendered to seeming emergencies.**

4. **Mismanaged time results in procrastination.**

Planning to Depressurize

To relieve the pressure in our lives we must plan, to plan we must manage our time and to manage our time we must...

...accept our **limitations**.

Mark 6:30-32 *The apostles then rendezvoused with Jesus and reported on all that they had done and taught. Jesus said, "Come off by yourselves; let's take a break and get a little rest." For there was constant coming and going. They didn't even have time to eat. ³²⁻³⁴So they got in the boat and went off to a remote place by themselves.*

...maximize our **effectiveness**.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 *"There's an opportune time to do things, a right time for everything on the earth."*

...discipline our **thinking**.

Ecclesiastes 10:2 *"Wise thinking leads to right living; Stupid thinking leads to wrong living."*

...budget our **time**.

And remember the ultimate depressurizing truth...

Proverbs 16:9 *"We plan the way we want to live, but only GOD makes us able to live it."*

Turning Point . . .

When we make trusting and listening to God our priority rather than ourselves we can rely on the **promise** that God will protect us from being overwhelmed by the pressures of life.

Psalms 32:2-10 ² *Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of sin, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!* ³ *When I refused to confess my sin, I was weak and miserable, and I groaned all day long.* ⁴ *Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat.*

⁵ *Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the LORD." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.*

⁶ *Therefore, let all the godly confess their rebellion to you while there is time, that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment.*

⁷ *For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory.*

⁸ *The LORD says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you.*

⁹ *Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control."*

¹⁰ *Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the LORD.*

Our challenge...

Seekers –

To invite Christ into your heart, you can simply pray . . .

*"Heavenly Father I **admit** that I have left you out of my life, but this morning, I **believe** that Christ is your Son and that He died for my sin of rejecting you and that you raised Him from the dead. I **confess** Him to be my Lord and Savior. In Jesus' Name, Amen*

Believers – **simply ask God,**

Heavenly Father, "How am I doing in dealing with the pressures of life?"

*you raised Him from the dead. I **confess** Him to be my Lord and Savior. In Jesus' Name, Amen*