

The Hidden Opportunity Outward Pressure Offers You

My fellow believers, when it seems as though you are facing nothing but difficulties see it as an invaluable opportunity to experience the greatest joy that you can! For you know that when your faith is tested it stirs up power within you to endure all things. And then as your endurance grows even stronger it will release perfection into every part of your being until there is nothing missing and nothing lacking (James 1:2–4 TPT).

Outward pressure is always an opportunity to be inwardly transformed.

An experiment was done in the Arizona desert called Biosphere 2. The goal was to create perfect growing conditions for trees, fruits and vegetables, as well as humans. A huge glass dome was constructed to house an artificial, controlled environment with purified air and water, healthy soil and filtered light.

For many months at a time, people lived in the biodome and everything seemed to be going well—with one exception. When the trees grew to a certain height, they would topple over. It baffled scientists until they realized they forgot to include the natural element of wind. Trees need wind to blow against them because it causes their root systems to grow deeper, which supports the tree as it grows taller.

Who among us doesn't long for a perfect growing environment for ourselves, with no disruptions from outside influences? Often, we attempt to create a controlled environment, striving to avoid any form of adversity or challenge. When confronted with hardship, the normal tendency is to find the quickest route of escape—choosing rather the path of least resistance.

However, what if our trials and challenges were working *for* us rather than *against* us? With this consideration, listen to what the apostle Paul had to say on the matter:

“Our light affliction, which lasts but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor. 4:17).

If trees could talk, would we hear them complaining whenever the wind blew against them? When you carefully consider how a tree gracefully bends and sways when the wind blows against it, you will notice it does not stand rigid, resisting the flow of energy. It does not push back. The tree accepts the strong wind as a gift that helps it grow stronger while its roots dig deeper. If we allow the winds of adversity to work for us rather than against us, God can use the adversity to develop our character and deepen our spiritual roots. When our roots grow deep, we can remain standing. Just as the trees which grew in the biodome toppled easily once they reached a certain height, likewise, without a strong foundation of godly character, we too can experience a great fall.

Remember, outward pressure is always an opportunity to be inwardly transformed. {eoa}

Lisa Bevere's *authentic, passionate, and witty teachings weave profound biblical truths with practical application. A New York Times best-selling author, her books are in the hands of millions worldwide. Lisa and her husband John, who's also a best-selling author and teacher, are the founders of Messenger International.*

This article originally appeared at .