

Why You're Under Pressure

I spend several days a week lifting heavy weights and doing all sorts of crazy new exercises. Sometimes I forget to stretch and end up with muscles so tight I can barely walk two days later, then I want to skip the next workout. You might say my muscles are weary in well-doing.

Lately, I've found myself in God's gym—lifting heavy spiritual weights and doing all manner of uncomfortable new exercises. I don't have to worry about the stretching part. He's doing that too. God's stretching is sometimes painful, but it leaves you with a spiritual capacity great enough to move into the next season He's ordained for you.

These words from the Lord, which I recorded in my devotional *Mornings With the Holy Spirit: Listening Daily to the Still, Small Voice of God*, helped me understand God's heart in the stretching: "Will you fully yield to Me? Will you submit to My will even when it looks contrary to your will? Will you allow Me to stretch you in this season? I want to enlarge your capacity to hold spiritual things, but that means letting go of carnal things to make more room for Me. It means cultivating a new harvest of My fruit in your heart. I want to let My gifts flow through you, but that means you must release the things that hinder My love. Will you allow Me to stretch you? Will you decrease so Jesus can increase in your heart?"

There's pressure from the inside—what I call Holy Ghost pressure—and pressure from the outside from people, places things (some of which include devils). It's easy to resist God in the name of resisting the devil because you don't like what's happening and assume the assignment came from the pit of hell. I've seen others let the devil walk all over them in the name of yielding to the Holy Spirit. Don't do that! Ask the Spirit to show you what is of Him and what is against Him. Yield to God; resist the devil.

Whether it's from the hand of God or from the enemy, if you'll just keep pressing through, you'll not only gain strength, but the pressure will eventually let up. Don't give up. God knows how much you can handle. You are building strength and character that will serve you well in the next phase of your journey.

Know that God is stretching you so you can hold more of His power and gain more of His wisdom, more of His character—more of Him. He wants to increase your influence and enlarge your territory.

This is my prayer in times of pressure. Maybe it will help you too.

“I say yes to You, Holy Spirit. I say yes to Your will and Your ways even when I don't understand Your work in my life. I ask You to enlarge my spiritual capacity, to enlarge my heart to love You more and to help me surrender all that is getting in the way.”

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