

The Best Plan for Breaking Out of Your Pressure Cooker

Ever feel overwhelmed with life, society, dysfunctional relationships, let alone the foreboding knowledge of coming wars and rumors of wars? Along with many other prophetic voices, I declared that 2020 was a dress rehearsal of things yet to come.

To describe the emotional impact of the last several months, I would call it: “living life in a pressure cooker!”

So how do we navigate life in the midst of chaos and times of uncertainty? Sometimes we try to go it alone, or we run away from the very people that we need. When we get overwhelmed, we may tend to become fearful or wrestle with feelings of rejection, as though we are looking from the outside, longing to be let in.

These are the very times we need to run toward community and not away from it. These are the very times we need to run to worship and the Word instead of callusing ourselves against it. I have felt rather overwhelmed at times this last year, and instead of running away from accountability and trusted key relationships, I have chosen to run to trusted leaders.

Run to Jesus, Our Older Brother

I run to Jesus! Who do you run to? Jesus is so much more than a doctrine, as the Son of God. Jesus is my Savior, my friend and my older brother. He is the one who has gone before me. I often go back to the old hymns I grew up on to help me find solace for my unsettled soul such as, “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.” I may sing it softly, or I may loudly sing in declaration, “How Great Thou Art, How Great Thou Art!” But I sing it from my heart because my heart needs to be connected.

Jesus announced to the world that He was the one who had come to set the captives free. Jesus was and is “despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief” (Isa. 53:3, NLT). Jesus was overwhelmed! You can relate to Him. You can run to Him.

Jesus Himself came among us as a servant. He told us that the greatest among us is to be the servant of all: “He who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves” (Luke 22:26, NKJV). Sometimes that may mean dropping your title, letting go of your need to be recognized and instead serving cups of water to your brothers and sisters.

Walk in Forgiveness

I had to learn how to walk in forgiveness and how to conduct myself as a son of a perfect Father. In that process, I learned that I did not have to reach perfection in my own strength. I learned not to fear retribution. Our heavenly Father loves us simply because He made us. We are His; He said our names are inscribed on the palms of His hands (see Isa. 49:15-16).

God’s healing touch manifested itself over time for me. He healed me from feelings of rejection I received from growing up with verbal abuse. Sometimes the process came in dramatic ways, and sometimes the healing came as part of my concerted effort to establish His truth in my heart. I learned (and I’m still learning) how to trust Him all the way, all the time.

As a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, each of us needs to be like a rhinoceros—thick-skinned but with a big, sensitive heart. For too long I have been thin-skinned with a big heart. I have learned the hard way about feeling rejected because of my prophetic sensibilities, and the primary lesson I have learned is that my flow of revelation will slow to a trickle if I do not get up when I have been knocked down.

I have learned that I always need the main and plain truth of the gospel more than I may think. The way of the cross leads home, and through Jesus we each have a personal place of belonging.

It's the Gospel Truth!

The truth is that Jesus was punished for our sin that we might be forgiven (see Isa. 53:9-12). He was wounded for our sicknesses that we might be healed. "By his wounds we are healed" (Isa. 53:5, NIV). He became poor for our sakes that we might have His wealth. Our Lord died so that we might have His life. (Read all of Isaiah 53—the ringing declaration of the divine exchange.)

We have been accepted, adopted and cared for. God does not only tolerate us, He fully embraces and loves us (see Eph. 1:5-6, 3:14-15; John 1:12-13). After all, He created us. He always has time for each and every one of us.

Accept the fact that you are fully accepted in Christ. Lay down your bitterness and forgive those who have rejected you. Instead of returning evil for evil or withdrawing to lick your wounds, sow a blessing. Search out Scriptures that reinforce the fact that you are accepted in Christ, loved with an everlasting love that does not depend upon your performance.

Let the Spirit of God transform your mind. Accept yourself. Recognize that "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

We belong to our Master, Jesus, and He suffered utter rejection. We know because He said, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matt. 27:46, NKJV). By comparison, anything we suffer is insignificant. Turn to Jesus! He loves you so much!

That sounds like a good plan for when you feel overwhelmed,

right?

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Dr. James W. Goll is the founder of God Encounters Ministries. He is an international bestselling author, a certified Life Language Coach, an adviser to leaders and ministries and a recording artist. James has traveled around the world ministering in more than 50 nations sharing the love of Jesus, imparting the power of intercession, prophetic ministry and life in the Spirit. He has recorded numerous classes with corresponding curriculum kits and is the author of more than 50 books, including *The Seer*, *The Prophet*, *The Discerner*, *The Lost Art of Intercession* and *Praying with God's Heart*. James is also the founder of GOLL Ideation LLC, where creativity, consulting and leadership training come together.

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