



Reflections and Revelations Newsletter
(September 28, 2007)

HARD PRESSED - WHY AND WHAT DO I DO?

2 Corinthians 4:8 - 12 (NKJV): “⁸*We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— ¹⁰always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. ¹¹For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹²So then death is working in us, but life in you.*”

I remember years ago, my life scripture became **Hebrews 11:6:** “⁶But without faith *it is impossible to please Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (NKJV). It was my diligent search that first led to me becoming acquainted with verses 8-9. I indeed felt “hard-pressed on every side,” so it was comforting to find out I was “not crushed.” It was also comforting to know that even while the circumstances of my life perplexed me greatly, I did not have to be in despair. And, in His goodness, God did not stop there. He went on to reassure me that even if I felt persecuted and struck down, I was not forsaken, nor was I destroyed. I cannot begin to express how those verses encouraged me to keep moving forward even when it seemed like I had missed God and things around me were falling apart.

Well, today, as I was in studying, verse 8 came to my heart. At the time, I could not remember what it said, but as soon as I looked it up, I was reminded of when I first encountered it. Although I had been saved many years, I was still very much a babe in Christ, wanting things my way and expecting God to answer my prayers the way I wanted Him to. But, when I finally decided to seek His will for my life, without even realizing it, I came face-to-face with what the enemy will do to stop the Lord’s blessing in our lives. But, being the babe I was, God did not teach me about spiritual warfare; He taught me about faith. In addition to 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, He also gave me:

- **Romans 16:20 (NKJV):** “²⁰And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.”
- **Romans 14:23 (NKJV):** “...for whatever *is* not from faith is sin.”

These three scriptures (Hebrews 11:6, Romans 16:20, and Romans 14:23) became the sustaining forces in my life. I now knew if I diligently sought the Lord, He would reward me. And, believe it or not, I was not looking for material rewards; I was looking for peace in my life and in my relationships. That is why I was encouraged to know the God of peace would soon crush Satan under my feet. I knew that if I could just keep my eyes focused on what I felt Jesus was telling me to do, sooner or later, things would work out according to God’s plan.

Realistically, I have had to move in these same principles of diligence, peace, and faith many times in my life. There are times when the things I do may not make sense to

Reflections & Revelations Newsletter
(September 28, 2007)

others, but to stay in faith and not be in sin, I have to follow what the Lord is impressing upon my heart. In those times, I have to remember that in order to have faith, I must know that God is and that He will reward me if I diligently seek Him. I must also know that things are never how they look or feel. Furthermore, I must know that God's will brings peace and that Satan belongs under my feet, not wrecking havoc my life! But, in order for Satan to be under my feet, I must be walking in the will of the God of peace! So, today, I want to take a moment to encourage every person that is feeling hard-pressed, crushed, perplexed, persecuted, and struck down to know there is a reason for it.

See, all those years ago, when I first saw these verses, everything after verse 9 was like reading a foreign language--it did not make sense! Today, the light bulb came on, and I now see these verses are yet another place in the Bible that tells us our difficult moments are so we can learn how to take up our cross and follow Jesus. Imagine how Jesus must have felt before He willingly died on the cross for us. We didn't deserve it. We hadn't done anything to earn it, but He died that we might live. Thus, to "always [carry] about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body," we must be willing to die to self and learn to live for Jesus. Dying to self and living for Jesus means, by His grace, we extend His mercy and His compassion to others even when they don't deserve it. It means that we do His will just as He did the Father's will whether it feels good to us or not. It means we avail ourselves to Jesus for Him to continue His ministry here on the earth through us--His body!

So, whenever we find ourselves feeling hard-pressed, let us know that once we have been crushed, the anointing of Jesus will flow through our lives. For we can only get olive oil once the olive has been pressed! If we find ourselves perplexed, seek God's wisdom and not that of man. If we find ourselves persecuted, know that Jesus Himself was persecuted. By the way, most of what Christians today consider persecution is merely our flesh screaming against the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives! And, if we find ourselves, struck down, ask God if He is trying to work some area of pride out of our lives. You know, I wonder if Paul was thinking principles similar to these and that is what led him to know everything was indeed alright according to God's plan, despite how things looked.

Are you in a difficult time right now? If so, ask God, "What in me needs to die so more of Jesus can live in me?" Often times, my personal answer is I am trying to do things my own way. Sometimes, I can be a wee bit on the strong-minded side and think I know what is best. I can also be a wee-bit on the controlling side and try to make that thing I know to be best a reality. However, what God has been teaching me is the power of prayer! When I stop trying to control everything and learn to return to Him and rest in the truth of His Word, He takes care of the things that need taking care of. If I see something is out of order but find I cannot fix it, if I lift it up to Him in prayer and then trust His judgment above my own, I find I have the peace in my life I was looking for all those years ago.

Reflections & Revelations Newsletter
(September 28, 2007)

Now, I can hear someone ask, "What does it mean to return and rest in Jesus?" Maybe that's me I hear. Quite honestly, I've been asking God that question for fifteen months as I have contemplated Isaiah 30:15 and "A God of Justice."¹ Therefore, I thank the Father for what He revealed today, which is this. Every path we take will either lead us towards Jesus or away from Him. When I am feeling hard-pressed and all those other things, most likely I have taken a path that is leading me towards Jesus. Not only is my flesh kicking and screaming, because it does not want to die, but I also have to contend with the resistance the devil will bring to keep me from glorifying God which is my true reward. In order to disarm the enemy's efforts, we must learn how to return to Jesus--keep our eyes focused on Him and not on our circumstances. We must also learn to rest in Jesus--allow Him to work out that which is beyond our abilities. In so doing, we find salvation (deliverance). In addition, if we allow our spirits to be quiet before the Lord, we can hear as He directs our path. Knowing He is the One directing our path will give us confidence. Thus, by being quiet before Him and confident in Him, we will find the strength we need to push through whatever fight our flesh and/or the enemy is waging against us. Thus, "in returning and rest [we] shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be [our] strength (**Isaiah 30:15 NKJV**).

With that verse, I want to close by encouraging every soul who reads this with two thoughts. First, Isaiah 30:15 is how we get past our struggles. Second, know every struggle we encounter is for a purpose. God may be trying to get rid of an idol in our heart. He may be testing our faith to take us to a new level. He may be trying to birth a ministry or something new in us. And, the list goes on. Whatever the case is, know that when we are hard-pressed, crushed, perplexed, persecuted, and struck down, the purpose is for us to die to self and live for God! Will you join me in this journey? By the way, when I first encountered 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, I had not missed God. I fulfilled His will in that area of my life. My struggles came because I tried to do things my way and not His. Just a little food for thought to leave each of us with.

If you have questions, comments, or concerns about information contained in this document, or would like to be added to or removed from the email distribution for the meeting notes, please email us at wow@wow2women.com or complete a Contact Form on our site, www.wow2women.com.

¹ *A God of Justice* is available under the year 2006 on the website at <http://wow2women.com/reflections.html>.