

INSIGHTS

THE MORE **PRESSURE**
APPLIED, THE MORE WE

MULTIPLY!

BY VIKKI BURKE

NO ONE CAN DENY that 2020 brought unprecedented pressure—from a tumultuous political arena, to a world-wide pandemic, to an economic rollercoaster, to unrest in the streets. But times of pressure shouldn't surprise us. Paul spoke to Timothy about these days, calling them "...perilous times of great stress and trouble [hard to deal with and hard to bear]."¹ Although the times may be hard to bear, they are not impossible to bear—because with God, nothing is impossible!²

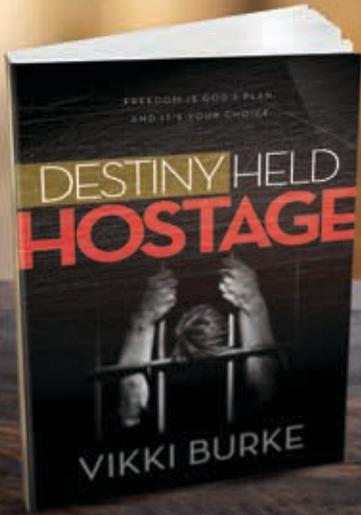
Pressure and persecution are nothing new to God or His people. When the kingdom of darkness applies pressure to believers, the outcome is deliverance and multiplication. The truth is, the kingdom of darkness is terrified of God's people.

For instance, when the inhabitants of Jericho heard of

the works God had done for the Israelites, the report terrified them. Consider Rahab's words to the spies: "I know the Lord has given you this land," she told them. "We are all afraid of you. Everyone in the land is living in terror... No wonder our hearts have melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight after hearing such things."³

Then when God's people lived in Egypt, Pharaoh said, "...The Israelites are too many and too mighty for us..."⁴ (That statement is true of God's people today, although the media would like you to think that Christians are a minority.) Pharaoh put pressure on Israel, but the more the Egyptians pressured them, the more they multiplied and spread.⁵ Then Pharaoh decided to slaughter babies to stop their growth. (Does this sound familiar?) But they "...continued to multiply, growing more and more powerful."⁶

Wherever Paul preached, the kingdom of darkness got stirred up—yet the Church kept growing. After one preaching event, a mob formed and Paul and Silas were



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thrown in a dungeon and bound with chains.⁷ But the two men didn't complain like many would; instead, they sang praises to God while the other inmates listened. And their singing resulted in an earthquake that shook the prison's foundation and caused the prison doors to fly open! The event was so supernatural that the jailer asked, "...What must I do to be saved?"⁸ And that very night, he and his entire household were born again.

When true believers are pressured, the Church grows!

Peter wasn't intimidated by pressure when 3,000 were saved after the first sermon he preached. In fact, so many were being converted that the city officials forbade Peter from preaching about Jesus. When they imprisoned him, he was guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. I guess the authorities didn't think that was secure enough because they fastened chains between Peter and two soldiers. They were terrified Peter might escape.

And what did Peter do while shackled and imprisoned? He slept. And just as the officials feared, an angel appeared to facilitate Peter's prison break. It's revealing that Peter slept so soundly, the angel had to strike him to awaken him. During great persecution, Peter didn't fear or complain—he slept like a baby!

All of these events establish a pattern that shows us what God will do for those who put their trust in Him alone. The authorities cannot stop the Gospel from multiplying, no matter how much pressure they apply. When a governor recently made it illegal to sing in church, believers took corporate worship outside the four walls of the church and into the streets.

That's exactly what we did during the Jesus Movement of the 70s—we took the Gospel outside the Church to reach the lost.

When the "shelter-in" order was first issued, I said to

habit of listening to the world's voice. Then we won't see what God is doing.

One of my favorite scriptures makes this very point: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land which is not inhabited."⁹

You may say your heart hasn't departed from the Lord. But if you're looking and listening more to the world's report about current events than to what the

"If you're looking and listening more to the world's report ... than to ... the Word of God ... you won't even see good when it comes!"

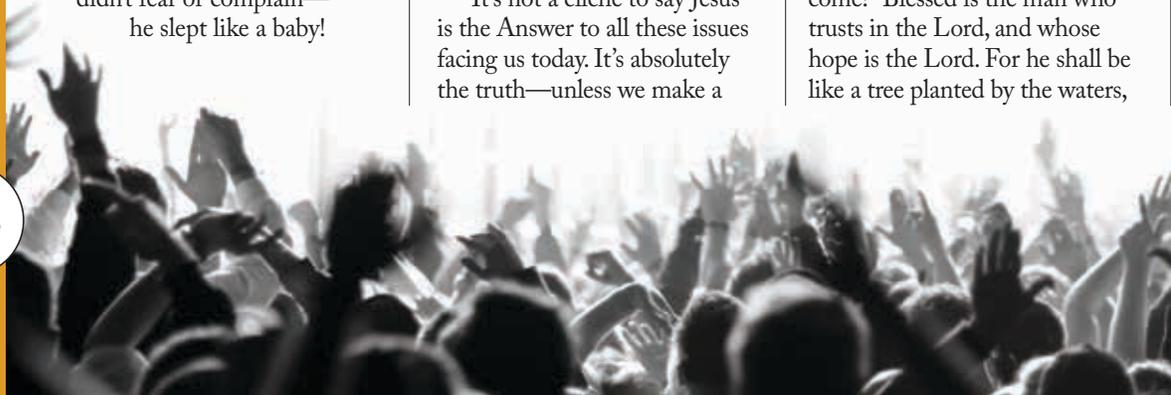
Dennis, "I've been 'sheltered in' the secret place of the Almighty for 50 years!" I thought it was great that the unbelieving world was using words the Church could agree with. Then I said, "This is our finest hour. When the world has gone completely crazy with fear, hopelessness, and despair, we have the answer!"

It's not a cliché to say Jesus is the Answer to all these issues facing us today. It's absolutely the truth—unless we make a

Word of God has to say, this verse says you won't even see good when it comes!

Great things are happening right now during these times of unrest and uncertainty. Can you see the good things God is doing, or are you too focused on the problems you're facing?

In contrast, those who rely on God have quite a different outcome! "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters,



And what did Peter do while shackled and imprisoned? He slept. **And just as the officials feared, an angel appeared to facilitate Peter's prison break.**"

which spread out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes, but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit."¹⁰

Look at the results of those who put their hope in God. They flourish even in a drought! Rather than not seeing when good comes, they don't see when the heat comes. Instead of being like shrubs inhabiting parched places in the wilderness, they are like trees with deep roots planted near the river that never stop yielding fruit throughout times of heat and drought.

What a way to live! If that's not what you're experiencing, it certainly can be.

As Christians, we must not get caught up in what the current-day doomsdayers are saying. We must recognize the unrest, hatred, and antichrist spirit for what it is: a fearful response of the kingdom of darkness. This level of disturbance in the natural realm reflects the activity in the spirit realm as Satan's forces seek to thwart the plan of God and disrupt the great last-days outpouring of the Spirit that looms on the horizon. When there is the level of unrest in the natural that's on full display in this present hour, you can be sure there is much activity in the spirit.

These times can be somewhat likened to the decade of the '60s. Up to that time, there had never been so much turmoil concentrated in one decade in the United States.

- **Four prominent assassinations: John and Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X**
- **Watts riots and looting**
- **The forming of the Black Panthers**
- **The Cuban Missile crisis**
- **Civil rights protests**
- **Freedom riders**
- **Drug and hippy movement**
- **Peaceful protests turned violent**

- **The Vietnam war—unlike any other war in history**

All of that disturbance on the earth was a reflection of the disturbance in the unseen realm. The kingdom of darkness was seeking unsuccessfully to prevent what was about to take place—a revival that would sweep the earth during the late '60s and into the '70s called the Jesus Movement.

The current unrest mirrors

that tumultuous period of time in the '60s. We are on the precipice of the greatest awakening the world has ever experienced. The media can't stop it, and it can't be legislated away. The more pressure that is applied, the greater the Body of Christ multiplies.

So don't be concerned or distracted by the opposition. Instead, stay focused on God's Word, and let God deal with those who resist His plan. He

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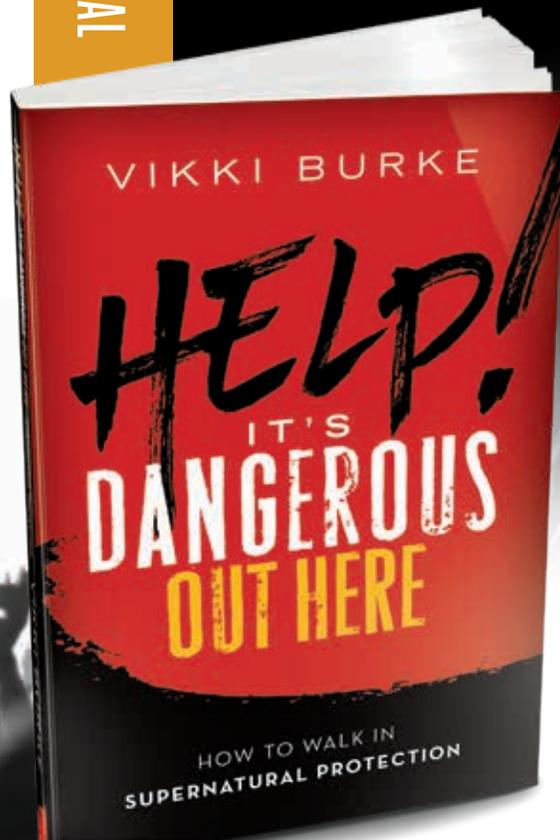
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promises that those who set traps for us will end up falling into those traps themselves.

- **“Let them all stumble into their own traps while I escape without a scratch!”¹¹**
- **“Go ahead, set a trap for others—and then watch as it snaps back on you...!”¹²**
- **“He who digs a pit will fall into it, and whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent.”¹³**

When our eyes are fixed on Jesus and His delivering power, the opposition can make attempts to thwart us, but we'll escape

without a scratch!

Don't be among those who feed more on the world's report than on God's report. Those who do that are filled with fear and discouragement and trapped in a negative mindset that always finds something to complain about. But for those who fit that description, their discouragement is self-inflicted.

Let me ask you, “Whose report will you believe?” Will you join the fearful—the complainers who echo the world's doom and gloom? Or will you be like the believer who declares, “...We are certainly not those who are held back by fear and perish; we are among those who have faith and experience true life!”¹⁴

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¹ 2 Timothy 3:1 AMPC, ² Luke 1:37, ³ Joshua 2:9,11 NLT, ⁴ Exodus 1:9 AMPC, ⁵ Exodus 1:12 NLT, ⁶ Exodus 1:20 NLT, ⁷ Acts 16, ⁸ Acts 16:30 NLT, ⁹ Jeremiah 17:5-6 NKJV, ¹⁰ Jeremiah 17:7-8 NKJV, ¹¹ Psalm 141:10 TPT, ¹² Proverbs 26:27 TPT, ¹³ Ecclesiastes 10:8 NKJV, ¹⁴ Hebrews 10:39 TPT