

One of the realities you will face in ministry, or any leadership position is People Pressure. Learning how to navigate it is not only a skill, but there also needs to be an inner security to being able to make the necessary stands.

In our story, we see Aaron's struggle with people pressure.

Exodus 32:21-24 (ESV) And Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought such a great sin upon them?" ²² And Aaron said, "Let not the anger of my lord burn hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil. ²³ For they said to me, 'Make us gods who shall go before us. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' ²⁴ So I said to them, 'Let any who have gold take it off.' So they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf."

I PEOPLE PRESSURE:

A- In ministry and any form of leadership you will deal with pressure from people.

1. But pressure is a reality on all of life: As teens this is called Peer Pressure, but it doesn't end there; Its in the workplaces, family, friends, media...
2. We also find it in leadership/ministry... just because you are "in charge" doesn't mean people will willfully follow
 - a. Pressure effects even leaders: **V21** And Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you... **V22** You know the people... Moses goes up to meet with God, Aaron left in leadership finds people pressures!

B- So, we need to think: WHY is there pressure from people?

1. Will: People want what they want! And they will attempt to exercise their will on you.
2. Pride: People in pride want to lead/think they should lead... so they work hard to lead from the passenger seat
3. Rebellion: Some people will not submit to any leadership... they are rebels...
 - a. I pastored a church where 3 previous pastors put up with a rebel, and 2 surrounding churches tolerated them...
4. No matter the why, Pressure is going to be there, you need to have room in your thinking for it.

II STANDING UNDER PRESSURE:

A- The key is to know how to stand under pressure:

1. In our story Aaron caved to the pressure: **V22** And Aaron said, "Let not the anger of my lord burn hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil... *The people are set on evil, and make it very difficult to stand...*
 - a. Really that's weak leadership... so, how do we avoid that, and remain standing?
2. The first has to do with whats inside you: Confidence and Strength in leadership starts in you- 2 words: Security & Identity
 - a. Security: Must come from God. He is who I trust in all of life. My source of Trust is HIM, not people.
 - i. If I know I can trust God and His word, then when people try to distract from that, its filtered through that security lens.
 - ii Then you can avoid making incorrect decisions or even sinful ones! (Like our story, people pressure led to gross sin)
 - b. Identity: Also comes from God... He says who I am, and in that what I am to do.
 - i. If I know my identity, then when things come that don't line up with it, I can easily pivot from it.
 - c. Aaron didn't have these 2 foundations: Which is why he couldn't trust God, and why he didn't remain in charge!

B- These 2 foundations help you wisely navigate People Pressure:

1. Because of Security and Identity you won't react emotionally or irrationally -
 - a. Most leaders that do this are insecure and defensive...
2. These Healthy heart attitudes enable you to maintain a posture strength, while speaking in a gracious manner.
 - a. **Luke 23:3** So Pilate asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And He answered him, "It is just as you say."
 - i. Jesus on trial, facing the cross, and he has absolute security and identity of himself. Navigating the pressure.

III LEADERSHIP LESSONS:

A- So; One day it will be Pastoral ministry where you will face the People Pressures... Of course I am just scraping the surface-

1. But how are you responding today to the people pressures?
 - a. In Marriage, with Children, in Ministry, with Family, with Friends,
 - b. How do you respond to Carnality, Rebellion, Gossip, Division
2. The lessons are being learned today... The Convictions are being established today.
3. How you are responding today is a good indicator of how you will respond tomorrow.
 - a. Think Where do I need healing: Security? Identity? ... So I can make Leadership Decisions today.