

PIONEER PERSISTENCE #4  
PIONEER DISTRESS  
**2 Corinthians 6:4–7 (NKJV)**

Pioneering is hard work, but it is rewarding work. We are going to continue our series Pioneer Persistence, in this series Paul *highlights* his setbacks in ministry, but how he remains persistent by staying focused even in the face of various adversities.

**2 Corinthians 6:4–7 (NKJV)** But in all *things* we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in **distresses**,<sup>5</sup> in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings;  
<sup>6</sup> by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love,<sup>7</sup> by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left-

### I FEELING SQUEEZED

**A-** Ministry will have its share of distress!

1. The word distress means: CONSTRICTED ... A NARROWNESS OF SPACE...
  - a. Its this idea of being pressed or squeezed... *Anyone deal with Claustrophobia?* We don't like that feeling!

**B-** We will feel this distress from a range of sources;

1. People Distress: sin decisions (moral failure morning of big outreach), rebellion, slander...
  - a. People's crisis, trauma, loss... *What do I do!? How can I help? How do I change?*
2. Money Distress: Money to do the will of God. Money for needs. Money for pioneers. Money for outreaches.
3. Fruitfulness Distress: *When you can't pay someone to pray!* You feel like you have a plague, no one wants to be around you!
4. Building Distresses: Building leases, CAM fees (NM \$13K), Lease Renewals, Insurance, Maintenance...
5. These can really bring the pressure on us!

### II DISTRESS RESPONSE

**A-** Q: How do you respond to distress? The constricting feeling!

1. Some POP: They explode in emotion at their church, disciples, wife, kids... B/c I'm distressed.
2. Some Question: Where's Jesus? Where's the help? WHY? How could they? Men mentally wander with questions!
3. Some SHOOT at God: blame God, get angry with God, threaten God,
4. Some are Crushed: The pressure does them in, they shatter in the distress... I quit: ministry, marriage, morals...
5. Some turn to God! Which is the right response-

a. Jesus was in great distress when facing the cross... he knows what you are feeling... **Luke 22:44** And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground...

- i. Yet he stayed the course even through the distress... He can supply you with that!

### III WORKING THROUGH THE PRESSURE

**A-** Important to remember: Theres always a way through the distress! *Even when it doesn't feel like it!*

1. Bible holds a record of distressed people that God made a way through the narrow, constricting space-
  - a. Hebrews faced the Red Sea: The sea, The army, The wilderness... and God made a way through!
  - b. When God's people were surrounded by the enemy, and Elisha's servant asked Alas my master what shall we do?
    - i. God made a way through their enemies!

2. God is the same and God can make a way through for us-

- a. Text speaks of 9 divine enablements; **2 Corinthians 6:6–7** by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love,<sup>7</sup> by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness
- b. Jesus can handle our Distress; **1 Chronicles 16:11** Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually!
  - i. We have to turn to him and make him the source of our strength!

**B-** God can give you the strength to handle and shoulder the distress-

1. **Philippians 4:13** I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

- a. **All things!** You can handle more pressure with God! You can handle heavier loads as God increases your strength!