

Summary

This sermon focuses on the concept of pressing forward through difficult times, using Jesus's experience in the Garden of Gethsemane as the primary example. Pastor Chris explains how Gethsemane was a place of crushing pressure where olives were pressed to produce oil, drawing parallels to how God uses pressure in our lives to produce spiritual anointing. The message emphasizes that Jesus experienced four different pressings - at Gethsemane, before Pilate, at the scourging post, and at Golgotha - each serving a divine purpose. The sermon teaches that we cannot skip the pressing and still carry out God's purpose for our lives, as oil only comes from olives when they are pressed. Just as there would be no promises of Golgotha without the pressing of Gethsemane, believers must endure seasons of pressure to receive God's anointing and fulfill their calling.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today with open hearts and minds, ready to receive what You have for us in this time together. Just as Jesus pressed forward in the Garden of Gethsemane, help us to press forward in our faith and trust in You. Lord, we ask that You would speak to each person in this group according to their need. Open our hearts to understand the lessons You want to teach us through Your Word. Help us to be vulnerable with one another and to support each other through whatever pressing seasons we may be facing. We surrender this time to You and ask for Your Holy Spirit to guide our discussion. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What's one skill or hobby that required you to practice or 'press through' difficulty before you got better at it?

Key Verses

- Philippians 3:14
- Matthew 26:36-46
- Romans 8:26
- Luke 22:44

Questions

- Pastor Chris mentioned that 'you cannot skip the pressing and still carry the purpose God has for you.' What do you think this means in practical terms for our daily lives?

- Jesus experienced emotional overwhelm in Gethsemane, even sweating drops of blood. How does knowing that Jesus experienced such intense pressure encourage you in your own difficult times?
- The disciples fell asleep when Jesus asked them to watch with Him for one hour. When have you felt like your support system failed you during a difficult time? How did you handle it?
- The sermon described four different 'pressings' that olives went through - for temple use, medicine, cooking, and cleaning. How might God use different seasons of pressure in our lives for different purposes?
- Jesus separated Himself from the crowd to pray alone. Why do you think solitude with God is important during times of pressure or decision-making?
- Pastor Chris said 'pressure narrows your circle.' What do you think he meant by this, and have you experienced this in your own life?
- How can we better support fellow believers who are going through their own 'Gethsemane moments' or seasons of intense pressure?
- The message emphasized that 'oil is produced in isolation.' What spiritual benefits or growth have you experienced during times when you felt alone or isolated?

Life Application

This week, identify one area of your life where you're experiencing pressure or difficulty. Instead of trying to avoid or escape it, spend time in prayer asking God how He might want to use this pressing season to produce spiritual 'oil' - His anointing, character development, or ministry preparation - in your life. Commit to spending at least 15 minutes each day in solitude with God, following Jesus's example of going 'a little further' in prayer.

Key Takeaways

- Gethsemane represents the necessary place of pressure that comes before God's promises are fulfilled in our lives
- We cannot skip the pressing and still carry out God's purpose - oil only comes from olives when they are pressed
- Jesus experienced four different pressings: Gethsemane, before Pilate, at the scourging post, and at Golgotha
- Pressure often leads to isolation and the narrowing of our circle, but this can be God's way of refining us
- Sometimes we must separate ourselves from crowds and even close friends to get alone with God and receive His anointing

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the example You set for us in the Garden of Gethsemane. Thank You for not avoiding the pressure but pressing through it for our sake. Help us to embrace the

pressing seasons in our own lives, knowing that You are producing something beautiful and purposeful through them. Give us the strength to go 'a little further' in prayer when we feel overwhelmed. Help us to support one another during difficult times and to remember that You are always with us, even when we feel alone. May we come forth as gold from every trial, refined and ready to serve You with greater anointing. We love You and praise You for Your faithfulness. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.