



The Pressure's Off: There's a New Way to Live

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There are two basic approaches to lifeâ?"two pathways. One creates pressure, the other provides freedom. In the Old Way of life, as best-selling author, psychologist, and spiritual director Larry

The Pressure's Off: There's a New Way to Live Details

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Sarah says

I found myself thinking there was nothing really new in this book. But when I thought about it, I realized that is exactly right. It is not new; it is the gospel retold for today, especially for those of us who struggle with legalism and forget that the gospel really is good news. Larry Crabb directly attacks the "prosperity gospel" and points us back to the true gospel, which is that we can know God. His presentation of the gospel reveals the particular ways we in American society get sidelined by seeking a "better life" rather than God.

Abby says

A refreshing read. Being someone who has been trying to make life work by my own efforts, I'm often left puzzled as to why I was never fulfilled and satisfied (or why God never fulfilled or satisfied me) in spite of my best efforts. Larry Crabb conjectures that when we try and make life work on our own, there is something deeper underlying that: our desire for our own happiness (i.e., "a better life") trumps our desire for the Almighty God. He goes on to explain that many of us, including Christians (mm hmm), try to obey God without any desire to draw near to Him, to know Him and to be known by Him. Many of us obey God only because we want and desire His blessings over God Himself. His book will speak volumes to modern day Galatians, who have fallen away from grace and not lived according to the truth of the Gospel - still thinking that our works will justify us before God, when actually, it is entirely by the work of Christ that we can draw near to God and know Him, our Supreme, highest and deepest joy.

Kim Haring says

This book challenged my thinking.

Robert Federline says

Larry Crabb gets it right. Our problem in relating to God is our problem. The first sins of both Satan and Adam were sins of pride. We want what we want. We ignore God. We want the pleasures and joys of a temporal world, instead of the lasting joy of true relationship with God.

We pray to a talismanic god, rather than the All-Powerful, All-Loving Lord of the Universe.

We need to be in a relationship with God. This means we are not using Him. We approach Him with love and respect for who He is, and not just for what He can do for us.

EmilyDressner says

The main point of this book is to challenge Christians to exchange "the better life of blessings" for Knowing Christ deeply and to eradicate the idea that in our walks with Christ, A+B=C (i.e. we are not promised that raising children according to God's principles will always produce children who grow up to love and serve him, but we ARE promised that in all things God is inviting us to know in him more intimately even if our children are wayward, our marriage is struggling, or our ministry failing). Great kids, a loving marriage, and a successful ministry are all wonderful things but Dr. Crabb would label these as "second things" in light of the "first thing" of knowing Christ. Many times when people struggle the first thing that comes to mind is, "what have I done?", have I not prayed hard enough or been obedient?" This type of thinking takes us back to linear life of A+B+C, making us the active agent and God the passive agent. Ultimately we have it backwards. As with most Christian books, there were a few things that I didn't completely agree with, and I did feel that the book was rather redundant. Overall I agree with Dr. Crabb's main idea and think this is a timely message for the American church today.

Harold Cameron says

"Breaking Free from Rules and Performance"

“Relax!” “Take a load off and set down and relax a while.” Those words offer much needed comfort to us as believers because we live in a sinful high stress-filled, rules-related, and performance oriented world. And unfortunately far too many Christians fall prey to following a certain set of religious rules and performing in a certain manner so that they can achieve favor with God and get and keep things right in their lives. Dr. Crabb’s encouraging message in his book is that “When you seek God and nothing else, the pressure is truly off you.” And I do wholeheartedly concur.

The revised edition of Dr. Crabb’s book The Pressure’s Off contains a new 8-week workbook that correlates with the material he shares in his book and it is ALL good. In his book Dr. Crabb contrasts living a rule-following, performance driven “Old Way of Moses” type of Christian life to a God Centered, living by faith in Christ and with love and a vibrant and liberating “New Way of Christ.” And the new way is much better as it is a way that leads to our “discovering grace”, “experiencing rest” and ultimately living under “the Law of Liberty.” Dr. Crabb has not written another “pie in the sky” it will be all better by and by easy believism spiritual living book; but rather, he is careful to inform us that there are things we need to do in order to live the life God has intended for us. It’s just that by living the “New Way” the pressure’s off of us and we can actually enjoy our Christian lives, living out our faith in Christ before others in such a way as they want to believe and follow Christ.

Dr. Crabb’s book consists of A Parable, an Introduction, 4 individual parts, an Epilogue and Afterword along with an 8-week workbook. Part I is entitled, “There’s A New Way To Live, I Think We’re Missing It” with 3 chapters of which one chapter, the first is titled, “Rules To Live By.” In Part 1 of his book author Crabb contrasts the “Old Way” from the “New Way” so that we understand the difference between the old and new way as well as what it means to live the “New Way” of Christ” in our lives.

Part 2 of the book is appropriately titled “The Weary Generation, The New Way: What It Isn’t.” It is in this section of his book in chapters titled, “A Worm in the Apple, What’s So Wrong With What We Want,” “Blinding Deception” and others that he shares with us what the new life definitely is not. Then in Part 3

titlled "Can You Feel The Wind, The New Way: What It Is," in chapters titled "Behind A Door marked Private," "Coming Dirty and Dancing," "The Immanuel Agenda," "The Story of God" and others he informs us what the new life is. And then in part 4 titled, "Let the Revolution Begin, The New Way: How to Live It" in chapters such as "Enjoying God," "Five Building Blocks of the New Way of Living," "God Is In Control-Of What?" and "The Papa Prayer" and others Dr Crabb shares with us how to truly live and enjoy the new way of life...and yes we can if we will just let go of our old tendencies and behaviors and walk in newness of life and practice, and thus experience this "new" life Dr. Crabb writes about and Christ wants for us to live and enjoy as his disciples.

I personally found the message of "The Pressure's Off" to be spiritually and practically insightful, helpful and liberating. Being a performance driven, rules following type of person God used this book to open my eyes to the reality that the pressure indeed is off and that as I learn how to live my life in the "New Way" I will discover more of God's grace, experience more of His rest, and enjoy greater liberty. And that is something I do want to experience and I know that if you are reading this review you do as well. So get yourself a copy of the book and learn how and then begin to live out "The New Way of Christ" in your life and discover His grace, experience His rest and enjoy a greater degree of liberty as you live for him.

About the Author: Dr. Larry Crabb is a well-known psychologist, conference and seminar speaker, Bible teacher, author, and founder-director of NewWay Ministries. His many popular books include Shattered Dreams, The PAPA Prayer, SoulTalk, Inside Out, Connecting, and his life work, 66 Love Letters. He currently is scholar in residence at Colorado Christian University, visiting professor at Richmont University, and serves as spiritual director for the American Association of Christian Counselors. Dr. Crabb and his wife, Rachael, live in the Denver area. For additional information visit www.NewWayMinistries.org.

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Todd Stockslager says

Too much psychologizing or mystifying of the great and mysterious yet rational and explainable relationship between man and God. Its not a NEW way, its God's old way.

On p. 42, Crabb says we need "one-on-one or small-group conversations where our lives are laid open in the presence of a person gifted to discern the workings of our inner life". Hunh? We need less talking to human beings and more talking to the one High Priest, Jesus Christ Himself. We need no human confessor. I totally disagree with that statement.

Finally, in chapter 6 he gets into Scripture, and it becomes clear, as I had suspected, that what he is calling the Old Way vs. the New Way is really living under grace instead of the Law. Nothing new about that. Not that its easy, mind you, and he makes good points in this chapter, but why act like its some new mysterious thing?

His language and writing style really make me distrust this book, even though I did end up agreeing with him except where noted above. He is correct that most Christians prefer the blessings of God rather than the

presence of God, and that our real prayer should be to know Him better, not get better blessings. This is a crucial and non-trivial distinction, so Crabb's words need to be said.

Just wish he didn't sell it in such an off-putting way.

Kathryn Jones says

Great book! I was surprised at how easy Larry Crabb was to read. I struggled getting through Inside Out. It just was way over my head. I wonder if I went back and read it again if I would have the same experience. Have I changed, or has the author?

I enjoyed this book immensely. I'm going to have to buy it at some point because I hated not being able to underline and highlight. So many little gold nuggets in this book. I can't believe how much the prosperity gospel had seeped into the little cracks of my every day life. Larry Crabb helps us to spot it and tells us there's a new way to live!

Sara Diane says

A co-worker lent me this one, and because I wanted to know more about what she found challenging, I read it. I would have quit after the first chapter had it not been for that fact. Crabb's idea isn't new, and he spends over 120 pages harping on a single (and easy to grasp, in my opinion) idea. Then, just when I thought he might have some true insight, he pops out yet another formula on how to get close to God. How very disappointing!

I can see how this book might resonate with the "Martha" types out there--those who are constantly doing, constantly striving, who are in the kitchen washing dishes while Mary is sitting at Jesus' feet. My co-worker (very much a Martha, and Type A to the hilt) fits this, so I'm not surprised that it challenged her. For me, very much a Mary, I knew a long time ago that being a child of God did not mean that God was a vending machine I could push buttons on, nor is there anything I could ever DO to gain blessings. Because of who I am, and because of the journey I've been on, this book had very little to say.

If you are a Type A Martha, go ahead and read it--it might help you break out of your deeds-focused mind-set. Otherwise, I'd skip this one.

Derek says

I read this book at an incredibly stressful time of life. Given my situation, this book was life changing. It runs a little long and repetitive at the end - but if you're a Christian struggling with anxiety, it's probably at the top of the list of books I'd recommend.

Becky says

I read this in the depths of depression and it was a lifesaver tossed out to me. Please read if you are worn out, exhausted, miserable and angry with God. We weren't meant to live the abundant life with any sense of self-control. Control is illusion and grace is our lifeline.

Kinky Transitions, says

This book is very piercing and honest. I love the author's vulnerability. I'm drawn in at each read as due to the author's non-pretentious, Christianese. Although, at times, I lose him but he pulls it together to provide me hope. You definitely need to be patient as you read and re-read some concepts because the book can sound and feel like a subtle promotion of asceticism. But when you consider the indisputable unpredictability of life--this book is dealing with reality and not the man-centered type Christian messages we receive.

Mary Ann says

At first this book seemed a bit too simplistic to me. But as I have read further, I am enjoying it. Living life, experiencing deep pain, disappointment & loss have already taught me that doing A in order to be blessed with B is not the point of the christian life. This type of linear thinking is the "old way" of the Pharisee's. Knowing the God of the Universe and drawing closer to Him is the point. Living a happy, successful, comfortable life would be nice but the gospel is not about that. I'm only halfway so i will reserve my rating until I finish:)

Montana Madden says

" The Pressure's Off " was a book my dad made me read. At first i was kind of upset like dad why are you making me read this weird book about pressure in my life. I dont even think i have pressure in my life right now and yet i still think that this book helped me. I think it was just God's word mostly.

If you are one that is struggling and trying to make certain things work in life this is a great book to read. I would never see myself reading this book. I am one that likes romance and mysteries, not knowing how to fix my life or more likely and lesson to learn. This book is all about following God's word and trying to figure out what is right from wrong when you dont know who to turn to. If your at a religous stand point in your life and you dont know what to do thats why this book is called the pressur's off, because it helps you realize and go for what you've been looking for this whole time.

For me this book taught me stuff i dont think i could have ever really figured out just in life. This book really did show me whats right from wrong in life and im really glad my dad made me read this book, may look lame. But if you read this i promise you will not regret it. You'll have a great life lesson, taught. Even if your not religous i recomend it.

Jaye says

Amazing, extraordinary and soul-changing! If I could give it six stars, I would. A must read for any Christian. Re-centers the energy and prioritizes relationship with God, spiritual honesty and growth via the Holy Spirit and deep community with others. Yes, the pressure is definitely off as we move away from a work-centered, religious-minded, blessing-demanding life and move into the joy filled, Spirit-led life! I loved the Papa prayer. Just reading it brought me into a closer union with Him :)
