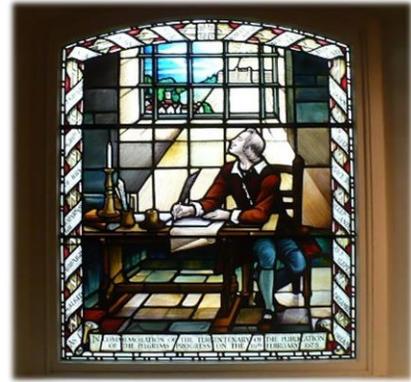


March 31, 2020

## Good morning, Everybody.

Today is cloudy. Don't let it cloud your spirit too!

I've been thinking about you and those missionary biographies. Have you gotten one down off of your shelves? You're missing out if you haven't (smile). *Consider the result of their conduct, imitate their faith* (Heb. 13:7).



About a year after Linda and I had left the University and I'd become senior pastor at the church, I was bedridden for several weeks with a strange kind of illness. I would wake each morning with a fever. As the day went on it would subside, and I would feel fairly normal. But the next day I'd be feverish again.

The previous year (1989), Mrs. Jack Hill (Martha) had urged me to read Elisabeth Elliot's new biography of Amy Carmichael, *A Chance to Die*. Not sensing my sufficient interest, she'd finally purchased it for me as a kind of gentle "push."

During the first few days of the illness that book seemed to call to me, so I finally picked it up and started to read. What happened was truly amazing. I've never forgotten it. But when I finished the book, my illness disappeared as suddenly as it had come. The whole experience was so remarkable that I've thought ever since that the whole reason for that strange illness was to constrain me to read that book!

There were two really necessary lessons (I came to realize fairly soon) which the Lord ministered to me during that time. They're not important to this letter, but what is important is that it was a time of Divinely constrained inactivity. And it included my being pretty much isolated, not only from the church, but even from Linda and the girls (just Abigail and Esther at that time). For several weeks I was cooped up in a small bedroom for most of every day.

Here's the point. We don't want to let this time of crisis slip through our fingers. Our church has never been in this position before; neither have most of us individually. Surely the Lord has lessons in it for each of us. Perhaps especially for

those of you who are truly isolated and almost entirely alone. Pray for His voice; *Speak, Lord, in the stillness*. Then open your Bible and that missionary biography (!) and read.

And here's a great example of how to deal with our situation.

On one of the steamer ships carrying Amy from one port to another on her long voyage from Britain to Japan, she discovered that the cabin to which she was assigned was already occupied by rats and cockroaches.

*This was a matter for prayer first ("We sent and told Jesus"), followed by action ("then we spoke to the steward"). Amy printed a card with the words, "In everything give thanks," decorated the corners with the initials of their chief woes [the rats and cockroaches], and hung it in the cabin.*

Maybe you can apply that in some burden-lifting way!

Praying for You Today,

Pastor Minnick

P.S. A little extra: Amy was seasick; but *peacefully seasick*, she wrote to friends.

How can anybody be *peacefully* nauseated?! Ohhh. Truly a remarkable woman.