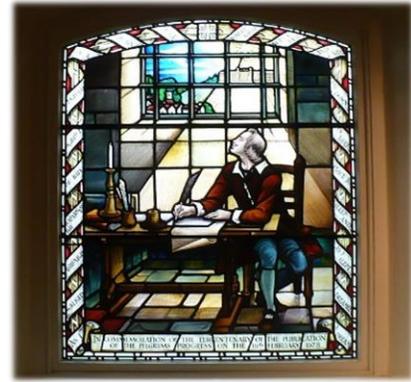


April 9, 2020



Good morning, Everybody.

I was thinking early this morning of how some of you are feeling overwhelmed. Overwhelmed under the enormous weight of bad news, by anxious thoughts about the future, with trying to adjust to having all your children at home rather than in school, or if you live alone, with being so much *more* alone, etc.

Almost all of us identify with these feelings. What to do?

Here's what begins to help; to recognize that our having that feeling of being overwhelmed is God's doing. It's not just that the crisis is God's doing. It's that our *feeling overwhelmed* by it is God's doing as well.

I know that may not be what we want to hear. But if that's the case, then it's probably exactly what we need to consider; that God Himself is swamping our feelings.

L. E. Maxwell's classic, *Crowded to Christ* (think for just a second or two about the spiritual insight of that title.),

Did you do it? Did you think about the title? Then that may be all you actually need to give you hope this morning (smile).

But I'd like to include more than just Maxwell's title. I'm a little concerned, though, that someone may react to it in the flesh and not the Spirit. Sometimes it's just best not to tell people everything they need to hear until the time finally comes when they're willing to accept it. But here it is, and I trust that the Lord will give you grace to embrace it as the first necessity for bringing relief to your spirit.

Many persons keep themselves in a perpetual foment through hoping they will get into a situation where they can enjoy a better life. They feel enclosed in a net of circumstances which they cannot accept. They are so wearied and baffled and beaten by the continuous

pressure about them that they wish and itch for things to be different, quite sure that if things were only different Christ would be more real. It has never dawned on them that at the heart of these circumstances they are to find Christ, find His grace sufficient, find the life more abundant.

Why the perpetual perils, the hot pursuits, the unrelenting pressure? Why the long unending succession? Is it mere incident and accident? No! The purpose is "that the life of Jesus might be made manifest." Unless Paul be in peril, how can he experience God's escape? Unless exposed to danger and death, how can he enjoy God's deliverance? Unless he be pressed out of measure, how can he appreciate relief? Unless battered down, how can he be lifted up in the life all-divine?

You can see the point. It lies at the very root of what is truly a Christian kind of life. *Unless a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die. . .*

"In spite of care and prayer," do things go wrong day after day in never-ending succession? Are you desperately holding out against the process, praying that the thorn may be removed—only to be crowned with more? Worst of all, you know that you can neither manage nor control the forces arrayed against you. Why then not just settle down and settle in? Accept the fact that this is your lot for life—and neither accidental nor incidental. Cease hoping for things to be otherwise, and cease itching to be elsewhere; for you are not moving on, not moving out. This is life; this is "home." You may just as well unpack. In your weariest and weakest and most bewildered moment, simply say, "Now, Lord, here is my chance, and Thine—my chance to die, Thy chance to manifest the life of Jesus."

I wish that I could say more about this, but that's probably enough for today. But please know that every Christian has troubles and cares. Every heart has its own sorrows. And every care and every sorrow is God's doing for the purpose of crowding us to Christ. It requires the pressure of His weighing down our spirits, often to an overwhelming degree, to constrain us to stop fondly dreaming about the "relief" of more of this or more of that. Nothing but *a bountiful supply can*

answer our emergency. . . . He only waits for an empty vessel, into which to pour His supply (Charles Bridges).

Praying for You Today,

Pastor Minnick