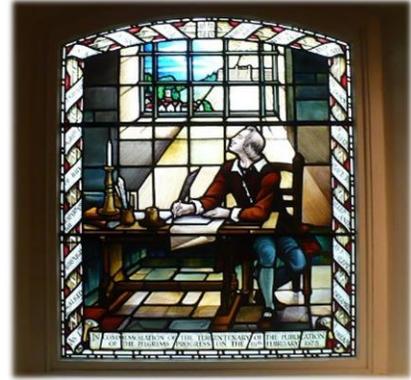


May 20, 2020

Good afternoon, Everyone.

I hope that there were no emergencies at your house during the night. There's some flooding of the Reedy River parking lot and elsewhere at church this morning, and some seepage through one outer wall into the church music office. Shirley, Pastor Jones, Nathan Dion, Josh Moye, Aaron Houtz, and a couple of professionals are up, out, and stemming the flood; literally. The last word was that all is pretty much under control (smile).



Blessings by the Level

We have so much to be thankful for—always. If you were to begin to count your blessings this morning, on a **flooding day**, what would be their levels; most basic level (ground level), next level up, next level up, etc.?

Here's ground level for every one of us; *Rejoice because your names are written in Heaven* (Luke 10:20). *The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord* (Romans 6:23). *Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift [Jesus Christ Himself]* (II Corinthians 9:15).

Next level? *God my exceeding joy* (Psalm 43:4). . . . *I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation* (Habakkuk 3:18). . . . *We exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ* (Romans 5:11).

What's the next level up? *I have loved you with an everlasting love* (Jeremiah 31:3).

*Neither death, nor life, nor angles, nor principalities, nor things present [including flash flooding, racing sump pumps, brimming basements, or leaking roofs], nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from **the love of God**, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Romans 8:38-39).

And the next level? *The gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also (Acts 10:45).*

And the next? *God's Word! Our Bibles! . . . more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb (Psalm 19:10).* . . . *Our Bibles that teach us of the Lord and His ways!*

Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not a mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me. . . (Jeremiah 9:23-24a).

Well . . . you'll have to layer the levels on top of these and count them up one by one. Somewhere, embedded into one of them, you'll finally come across twentieth-level or fiftieth-level things like, *a roof over our heads that didn't leak last night. . . a basement that didn't flood. . . a car that didn't wash away in a dam break while we slept. . . the power was still on this morning. . . the yokes didn't break when I flipped the eggs over easy awhile ago. . .*

Not exactly superlative *spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ* (Ephesians 1), but certainly unmistakable kindnesses and mercies new again this morning (smile). None should be overlooked. *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ* (Ephesians 5:20).

An Apology!

Dear church family, I've been just completely overwhelmed by all your gracious notes and encouragements since I started sending these letters. Thank you ***especially*** for sharing many blessings about the special spiritual exercises that you've undertaken during this break in our regular routines. The memorization and Bible studies and work on the catechism and family worship and writing music and reading good books and getting loved ones and friends to watch the live streaming, and on and on. . . . It's just really wonderful.

I'm so sorry that I'm not doing well at keeping up with getting responses back. Please, please don't think that a note you've written went unread or unappreciated! They're all **greatly** appreciated. And Lord willing, I'll respond to each one. Some of you have assured me that you don't expect a reply. That's very kind, but I really **want** to do so. One of these days you'll open your e-mail and be shocked to find that I've *finally* gotten a note back to you (smile). Thank you for your long suffering!

Tonight

This evening is our weekly prayer service. Four of our men will lead us in praying again this week. It's been strengthening to be led in this way from week to week. I've been looking forward to it all morning.

Praying for You Today,

Pastor Minnick