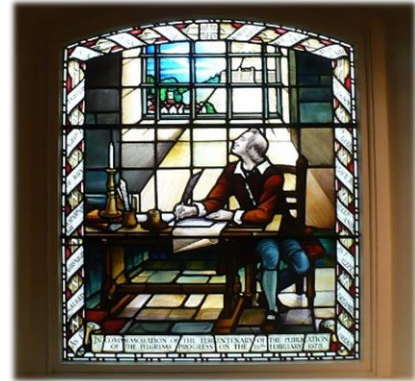


June 9, 2020

Good Morning, Everybody.

Well, actually it's no longer morning. I began this around 9:00 earlier today, but . . . I'm sure that you know how it goes sometimes (smile). Once I heard someone say that she tries always to be *flexible in the Holy Spirit*. It's a blessed posture to cultivate. A kind of sacred agility.



I wanted to mention to you that tomorrow night during our mid-week prayer meeting, we'll work on our memorization of Psalm 91. Perhaps I can share with you a few testimonies of how various ones within the congregation have experienced the very kinds of protections that the psalm proclaims. And I'll show you a few pictures of our own family's experience during the recent tornado.

But I've been wanting to send a couple of pictures that people have sent of their discovering "the stump and the shoot" concept out in nature. This first one was found by David Lowry on the Foothills Trail last week; a small sprig growing out of the side of a fallen log. Life springing from death?



This second picture was taken by Annabel Holmes. When I saw it, a different concept came to mind. This beautiful, bright green



shoot looks dominant within a little world that it appears to have all to itself. Kind of like a Christian family or a church that appears to be holding its own really well in a community if you view it only within a narrow frame. But take a look at the same shoot within its larger context in the picture on the following page.



Very same shoot. Very same context. But much more of it now visible.

All of you going through the evening “Use of the Psalter” series will understand my feeling that it illustrates a different concept than “the stump and the shoot.”

You look at a picture like this, and the little shoot looks hopeful, but ohhhhh(!), soooooo fragile and vulnerable!

It’s much more like the reality of a family or a church in the world; not at all dominant or secure. Like the concept of the “psalm 1 man in a psalm 2 world.”

The Lord called us, *little flock* (Luke 12:32). That would be a good scriptural expression for dads to explain and to remind their families about. And for pastors to remember; this church is a *little flock* in a world of cares, carnality, and open-jawed hostility. Were it not that we are *kept* (John 17:15), we most surely would be swallowed whole.

The Puritan, John Owen, who had for a season been one of the most influential religious voices in all of England, ended his days pastoring a small church of disenfranchised non-conformists in the heart of London. On the day before his death, he wrote to a dear Christian friend: *I am leaving the ship of the church in a storm, but whilst the great Pilot is in it, the loss of a poor under-rower will be inconsiderable.*

Live, and pray, and hope, Owen continued, and wait patiently, and do not despond; the promise stands invincible, that He will never leave us nor forsake us.

Lord willing, we’ll gather “virtually” tomorrow night. And we’ll pray together. The family that prays together has the most possibility of staying together despite the world. As does the church that prays together.

I Prayed for You This Morning,

Pastor Minnick