

Worshiping in a State of Emergency

Hurricane Florence made landfall near Wrightsville Beach early on Friday September 14, 2018, striking the North Carolina coast. Lynn Strum and her daughter Alyssa drove one hour to the Carey, NC congregation they attended, no knowing if the roads would be open all the way or not. The preacher said he never expected them to be there that morning coming from an hour away. Then he said, "I have a confession to make; I thought I would be preaching to just a few people this morning. And look around; the building is full! There were some from the coast line who came to Carey to stay with members of the church. And there were members from the coast who came to stay in hotels. This is God's children, coming together from all over the state and worshiping together in a state of emergency situation."

I never cease to be amazed and delighted to see Christians in crisis, not merely rise to the occasion, but excel in astonishing ways and go beyond expectations. It reminds me to turn my attention away from the copout Christians and eloquent excusers and to believe in the potential we all have to shine and show the glory of God in our lives transformed by the Gospel. Paul commended the extreme generosity of the poor Christians in Macedonia who put to shame the wealthier Corinthians who promised to give, but were delaying their offering.

2Corinthians 8:3-5 - "For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God."

You go above and beyond the expectations of others and even yourself when you have given yourself to God. And therefore, if you are struggling with rising even to minimal expectations, it is because you have yet to give yourself to God.

Micah 7:8 - "Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me."

Ezra 10:4 - "Arise, for it is your task, and we are with you; be strong and do it."

Prov. 24:16 - "For the righteous falls seven times and rises again, but the wicked stumble in times of calamity."