

This Frowning, Emptying Providence

by Anne Dutton

The sermon emphasizes finding strength and comfort in Christ amidst the trials and losses of life, viewing them as part of God's providential care.

Topics: "Suffering And Comfort", "Christ's Love"

Description

Anne Dutton preaches about finding strength and comfort in God during times of deep sorrow and loss, emphasizing the importance of humble submission, patient endurance, and joyful acquiescence to God's will. She encourages focusing on Christ as the ultimate source of satisfaction and solace, even in the midst of trials and afflictions, highlighting the eternal and transcendent nature of Jesus' love and care. Dutton reminds listeners of the preciousness of Christ's sacrifice and the depth of His love as the Lamb who was slain for His bride, urging them to live in constant communion with Him.

Transcript

Dear Madam, I am at this time sorrowful, on account of a letter I have received, "That the ship in which my dear husband sailed for England has, in all probability, foundered at sea." This stroke, Madam, is so great that it was almost ready to overcome my weak nature. But, glory to my dear Lord, His strength has been, and is, made perfect in my weakness. Precious cordials have been given me when ready to faint, and mighty supports when ready to sink. My weak, willing spirit longs to glorify God my Father, and the Lord my Redeemer, under this sharp trial, by humble submission, patient endurance, and joyful, thankful acquiescence.

Most surely the Lord, my own God, has done all things (and this) well--well for His own glory, and for my advantage--so well that it could not have been better than it is. And shall I not receive evil at the hand of the Lord, as well as good? Yes, by His grace assisting, I do and I will receive the evil of this affliction meekly and thankfully. Evil, indeed it is, as it is very grieving and trying in itself and its circumstances; but good it is for me to be thus grieved and tried, as this affliction flows from, is managed by, and shall end in the display of infinite goodness to me.

This very providence, the Lord tells me, is towards me goodness; and what I know not now, I shall know hereafter. I shall shortly see, with the veil cast off, all the mysteries of providence, opened in all its windings and turnings and cross-appearances, in a consistent light and glory with the exceeding great and precious promises, as having been all subservient to their fulfillment in my salvation and bliss, even when they seemed to thwart their accomplishment, and crossed my expectation and desire.

And until sight comes, it is good to live by faith. I dread casting such a dishonor upon the Son of God, by over-much heaviness for the loss of a creature, as if He, the Creator, who is God, blessed forever, and mine in the nearest relation and in an indissoluble union, was not in Himself an object sufficient to satisfy and solace me through all times, and unto all eternity. Emptied I am, indeed, of a creature-comfort, of a near relative that was dear, and a blessing to me, but God has given me Christ, in whom all fullness dwells, never to take Him from me.

I am in widowhood, yet, glory unto God in the highest, I am not a widow. My Maker is my Husband and my Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts is His name. Creatures die, but Jesus lives--lives as my Husband, in all the kindness and care, the tenderness and faithfulness, of that near and dear relation, and will show the same in a superlative and transcendent manner, far above the utmost that can be expected or found in the best of creatures. Yes, Jesus lives, as my life, in soul, in body, in grace, in glory, through time and to eternity.

I have lost the shadow, but I have the substance--the stream, but I have the fountain, the immense ocean of all my bliss. And oh! for grace to behave under this frowning, emptying providence, as a soul thus satisfied with favor, and full with the blessing of the Lord.

You see, Madam, how precarious and uncertain all things here are! Live beside the creatures while you have them--let Christ be the all of your enjoyment in them--and then, when they fail, and your own heart and flesh too, Christ will be your all in Himself--the strength of your heart, and your portion forever--an all of bliss and glory, ineffable and eternal. Value your own Lord Jesus. Let His price (His worth in your esteem) be far above rubies, and all creatures and things, desirable and desired. The all-beauteous Godhead is in Him. He is the mighty God, as well as the Man Jesus, for you. Emanuel is His wonderful, glorious name. His personal and relative glories are, and shall be, the wonder and praise of men and angels unto ages without end. Look upon His lovely face--there is not another such a beauty in both worlds! See, Madam, this is your Beloved, and this is your Friend. This is He who has loved you, and given Himself for you; that laid aside His glory and joy, who was the adoration of angels, and the darling of the Father's bosom, to clothe Himself, His matchless Self, with your sin, shame, and sorrow, that He might raise you from the ash-heap of sinful nature to inherit with Him the joys and glories of the upper world; yes, to set you with Him upon His own throne! Oh, dear Madam, you are the Lamb's bride, even you, who come unto God, as the God of peace, only by and through the sacrificed Lamb. Admire the Lamb's love--the Lamb who was slain for you, that has wooed and won and betrothed you to Himself forever. Live upon Him, live to Him, and long to live with Him.

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, is my hearty desire.

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