

The emperor moth

IAN SWYERS | MAY 13, 2018

Often, L.B. Cowman was a missionary to China in the early 1900s. Her missionary service was cut short when her husband became very ill, causing them to return to the United States. She cared for him for more than six years before he died.

In her devotional book, Streams in the Desert, she writes about an experience she had during this time of keeping an emperor moth in a bottle-shaped cocoon. She cared for the moth for almost a year until it began to break out of the cocoon:

I happened to witness the first efforts of my imprisoned moth to escape from its long confinement. All morning I watched it patiently striving and struggling to be free. It never seemed able to get beyond a certain point, and at last my patience was exhausted. The confining fibers were probably drier and less elastic than if the cocoon had been left all winter in its native habitat, as nature meant it to be. In any case, I thought I was wiser and more compassionate than its Maker, so I resolved to give it a helping hand. With the point of my scissors, I snipped the confining threads to make the exit just a little easier. Immediately and with perfect ease, my moth crawled out, dragging a huge swollen body and little shriveled wings! I watched in vain to see the marvelous process of expansion in which these wings would silently and swiftly develop before my eyes. As I examined the delicately beautiful spots and markings of various colors that were all there in miniature, I longed to see them assume their ultimate size. I looked for my moth, one of the loveliest of its kind, to appear in all its perfect beauty. But I looked in vain. My misplaced tenderness had proved to be its ruin. The moth suffered an aborted life, crawling painfully through its brief existence instead of flying through the air on rainbow wings.

Cowman goes on to explain she didn't know the pressure applied during the moth's struggle to break-out of the cocoon forces fluid into the wings enabling them to fully develop. It's a natural human response to find a way out from under the challenges we face in our lives, or even to rescue others from the trials in their lives. However, Scripture shows us some of our challenges are God-directed for the development of our faith, making us mature and complete.

When we are faced with difficult situations or others we're serving are faced with challenges, it is important to prayerfully consider our response. Is our response an attempt to shortcut the God-ordained pressure of the situation? Perhaps the challenge we're facing is part of how God is forming us into the new creation he wants us to become.

>>> Continued >>>

"Consider it a sheer gift, friends when test and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way" (James 1:2-4, The Message).

"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all" (2 Cor. 4:17, NIV).

May 27, 2018

Memorial Day Weekend

Sermon Notes: Ephesians 5:25

Romans 5:6-11

1. Our impossible _____

- A. "Utterly _____"
- B. "While we were still _____"
- C. "While we were still _____"

2. God's incredible _____

A. He went was beyond what we would do

B. He did was we would never do

3. Our infinite _____

A. We are _____ by His blood

B. Our _____ is restored by His death

C. We are _____ by His life

Hebrews 7:25

Reflection: What is one new thing you believe God spoke to you today as a result of worshipping at FOCUS? Do you have peace and joy in your heart and life because of what Christ Jesus has done?

The Word of God directs us as we consider what the *next step* is for our lives. What is your next step?

Challenge: This week I will pray for the following branch of service men and women and their families:



FOCUS

WESLEYAN CHURCH

Communion at FOCUS

Every Sunday at FOCUS we celebrate the **Lord's Table, also known as Communion.** We have open communion which means all are invited to receive. We receive communion elements by intinction. Tearing off a small piece of the loaf of bread, dipping it in the communion glass of juice, and then consuming it immediately. Please note, upon your request, we also have gluten free elements for those with gluten and other major food allergies.

30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World

Beginning May 15, and ending June 14 is Ramadan this year. During that same time frame, there is a world-wide call to prayer for Christians on behalf of Muslims around the globe. Our prayer is this, while Muslims are seeking to have encounters with Allah, that they would encounter Jesus. Will you join with us in prayer?

FOCUS Youth Group - tonight 6:30 - 8 PM

Wednesday Night Meal

We would like to invite you and your family to join us for supper this Wednesday. The meal will be served from 5:30-6:30 PM. All ages are invited and welcome!

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MEMORIAL DAY

We Will Never Forget

