

Overwhelmed and Underdone – The Six Things

Graham Nelson – LMC – 05/10/2025

- **We are** now three weeks into our new theme – “Overwhelmed and Underdone”.
- Over the last two Sundays we have heard from Andy, Cass and Nic.
- Andy introduced the series explaining the burden we carry due to Adam & Eve’s disobedience to God’s instructions. He shared stats on how we use our time and the stress that comes from our lack of Godly purposes, which is one of the major causes of feeling “Overwhelmed and Underdone”.
- Cass continued on at the evening service sharing from her experience as a Mental Health Practitioner. As Cass shared it became very obvious to me that the lack of hope has produced and is producing a lot of the mental illness we see impacting society today. Cass went on to share on the outworking that comes from inviting Jesus into our lives and circumstances.
- Nic, using the lives of David, Elijah and Jesus explained how they coped with being overwhelmed in body, soul and spirit.
- As I sat and listened to Andy, Cass and Nic one thing became obvious.
- If we are to break free from being “Overwhelmed and Underdone” we have to take ownership of our situation or circumstances which requires us to be willing to be “honest, real & raw”.
- James 5:16 says:

James 5:16 confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.....

- This morning, I thought I would be “honest, real & raw” and share a personal testimony that goes back to 1995 when I, as one of the Pastoral staff, became overwhelmed, resulting in questioning my call and much of life in general.
- In sharing as I will today, I want you to see that we all have the potential to go through the same issues, which means we also must go through similar processes if we are going to see breakthrough.

- In about 1995, thirteen years after coming onto the fulltime pastoral team at LMC I went through a dry patch which could have resulted in me becoming disillusioned in the call that God had on my life.
- Looking back, I think the main reason for the dry patch was primarily caused by my insecurity resulting in trying to please man and being task focused more than God focused.
- Once I realized I was in trouble I firstly had to come to the conclusion that walking away, shutting up shop, becoming a pew warmer was not an option.
- I had to fix the mess that I was in which required getting back to my “first love” experience.
- Obviously, the process I am going to unpack was conditional on me firstly having a desire to breakthrough.
- It is important to remember that what I share was a step-by-step process, being obedient to what God showed me to do over nearly a two-year period.
- So often, we want an instantaneous answer, remember God’s ways are not our ways, His ways and thoughts are so much higher than ours.
- When God revealed to me something – I obeyed, and then when God thought I had learnt what I needed He then showed me the next step until I broke through the fog some two years later.
- I called the things that God showed me **“The Six Things”** – they changed my life regarding the way I walk with God and to this day I still practice them.
- Stephen Covey has a best seller called: “The seven habits of highly effective people”. I call what God took me through “The six habits of a highly effective Christian”
- I think that I am one of a rare breed: over my 43 years in pastoral ministry, I have watched many pastors in many churches come and go.
- Granted, some probably were not called to be Pastors, however there were many who I would say, allowed themselves to be robbed from the call that God had on their lives.

- I grew up in a Christian home and therefore have been a believer all my life. I made a commitment at the 1969 Billy Graham tour and then made Jesus Lord of my life at Mill Valley Ranch in 1974.
- I went through LMBC in 1975 and then served in a volunteer capacity in the years that followed until joining the LMC fulltime ministry team in 1982.
- So, if you do the math's, Kris and I have been at LMC 52 and 51 years respectively, and I have been on the fulltime pastoral staff for 43 of those years and in the Senior role for the last 27 years.
- About 10 years after joining the LMC ministry team I went through a time where I was tired - I had lost my zip and joy in ministry and really was questioning many things.
- Some might now call it burnout; I wouldn't use that as the excuse – looking back I would honestly say, I had opened the door for the enemy to rob me as I had taken God off the throne and was working in my own strength.
- I have watched many claim burnout, without being tough or judgemental I think burnout is caused by operating outside of our giftings or doing something in our own strength.
- I didn't doubt God or His Word; however, I knew that I had to do something, or I would become another one of the statistics.
- As I cried out to God, He gave me a prescription over the following 2 years of what I had to do if I was going to get out of the hole I was in.
- God showed me these **Six Things** to do.
- They weren't new or groundbreaking, they were what God knew I had to do to refocus and rebalance my life.
- The **Six Things** are:
 - 1) **Practicing the Presence of God.**
 - 2) **Participating not Spectating.**
 - 3) **Giving not just Getting.**
 - 4) **Listening not Telling.**
 - 5) **Obeying not Ignoring.**
 - 6) **Letting Go & Letting GOD.**

- Over the months God led me through these points, one by one. I didn't get to the next point until I had passed the test of the one before.
- I am not exaggerating when I say they changed my life in both attitude and the way I walked with God.
- I'm not trying to overstate the effect that the principles of what I share today can have on you – notice I said principles, not method – very different things.

1) Practicing the Presence of God (over a year)

- As we tap into the anointing, it's out of that anointing that all things will flow
- That anointing comes from spending time in God's presence.
- It's interesting that it was only as David came into the presence of God that his perspective changed – I was obviously operating from outside of the sanctuary of God.

Psalms 73:17 *.....until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end.*

- At the time I wouldn't have thought it, but God obviously knew that I needed to refocus and make Him my priority again.
- **God** showed me how to use the picture of the Tabernacle to help me come into His presence in my own quiet time.
- Every part of the tabernacle reveals different aspects of the ministry of our Lord Jesus, and this includes the furniture.

a) The Brazen Altar.

- Speaks of the cross, where a sin offering was made for us. Christ allowed himself to become a sin offering for us.
- Condemnation etc – I was on an inward spiral, had to refocus on the work of the cross in my life.

b) The Laver.

- Speaks of cleansing power of the LJC through his word.

- Forgiveness is easy, accepting cleansing is a lot harder

c) Table of Shewbread.

- Speaks of the living bread, sustenance, God's provision. I had to get back into the Word.

Ps119:11Thy Word have I hid in heart

Ps119:104Thy Word is a lamp unto feet

d) The Candlestick.

- Jesus the light of the world.
- As light casts out darkness, and Sin cannot enter the presence of God, I ask God to reveal anything that I might not be aware of.

e) The Altar of Incense.

- Indicates Jesus as our intercessor, and prayer.
- Friend in high places.

f) The Veil.

- Speaks of Jesus Flesh, the barrier removed, a pathway on which I can boldly enter God's Presence.

g) The Ark of the Covenant.

- Jesus our mercy seat, the freedom to boldly come into God's presence without the thought that I am in trouble or going to get into trouble.

2) Participating not Spectating.

Hebrews 12:1-7a,11 *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith*

- One of Satan's strategies it to get us to withdraw and isolate ourselves.
- God challenged me on becoming a participator not a spectator – I realized that over my time of doing church I had become a spectator – if something wasn't happening or it didn't impact me then I was bored

– it was time to become a participator again – time to focus on joining in and actively getting involved.

- Church is not some sporting event watching from the stands; we are all in God's Olympic - all different events, reaching all types of different people in all types of circumstance for one crown, eternal life for those who are lost.

3) Giving not just Getting.

- Taking self-off the throne – I had to learn it's wasn't about me – I was to go to events, church, life groups, prayer meetings etc to give not get.

Luke 6:38 *Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."*

Acts 20:35 *'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'*"

4) Listening not Telling.

- God challenged me to make it my habit to inquire of Him, learning how to listen, be still, and recognize God's voice.
- Not only the big things, right down to the everyday items – which is why the peace spoken about in Isaiah 26:3 (I will keep you in perfect peace whose mind is on me...) and Colossians 3:15 (.. let the peace of God rule in your heart...) are so important to my everyday walk.
- Joshua & Saul.

Joshua 9:14 *The men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the LORD.*

1 Chronicles 10:13-14 *Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD; he did not keep the word of the LORD and even consulted a medium for guidance and did not inquire of the LORD. So the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse.*

Proverbs 19:21 *Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.*

- David and the Philistines

1 Chronicles 14:10 & 14so David inquired of God: "Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you deliver them into my hands?" The LORD answered him, "Go, I will deliver them into your hands." so David inquired of God again, and God answered him, "Do not go directly after them, but circle around them and attack them in front of the poplar trees.

- Be still – easy to say, hard to do when you think that you must please man, that you have KPI's to achieve.
- Church is not a business – the freedom that came when I realized it was God's job to grow the church, mine was just to make sure we fed His people with a healthy diet.
- One of the things that God showed me to do to create habit patters was to put a daily Appointment into my diary called "God's time"

5) Obeying not Ignoring.

- Obedience brings forth blessing.
- This one was all about "prompt obedience" doing what God told me to do without fear.

1 Samuel 15:22 But Samuel replied: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.

6) Letting Go & Letting GOD.

- God wanted my absolute trust and confidence. This was all about coming to the realization that God knew the big picture for my life.
- His picture far outweighed my wildest dreams; I had to learn with confidence that I COULD TRUST HIM.
- The key was being secure in who I was with and in God.

Isaiah 55:8-9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Conclusion & Challenge

Remember what I said at the start:

- I needed a fresh encounter with God.
- It wasn't quick, I had to get desperate and humble myself before God could help me and it needed ongoing obedience on my behalf.
- **My** time with God reshaped the way I worshipped, I am not exaggerating when I say the "Six Things" changed my life
 - 1) Practicing the Presence of God.
 - 2) Participating not Spectating.
 - 3) Giving not just Getting.
 - 4) Listening not Telling.
 - 5) Obeying not Ignoring.
 - 6) Letting Go & Letting GOD.
- Notice that #1 & #6 focus on God and they sandwich the other 4
- I can absolutely guarantee that:
- If you will learn these six things and apply them until they become part of your nature.
- They will change your life in a very fundamental way, for good.
- As we come to a close, it would be good to make opportunity to pray with any who can identify with what I, Andy, Cass or Nic have shared on so far in the Overwhelmed and Underdone series.
- It might take some courage to respond; you might need to get real with yourself but remember it's as we humble ourselves and cry out to God that we get the ball rolling.

---oo0oo---