

Jesus Was Underwhelmed

It isn't difficult to become overwhelmed in the midst of chaos and crisis.

Imagine the crowd of five thousand men who gathered to hear Jesus speak. The disciple Andrew told Jesus, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" (See John 6:9.)

Jesus was frequently underwhelmed by the faith His disciples showed. The disciples were frequently overwhelmed by the vision of the Lord, particularly in the sea.

I suppose there is not a neutral state to being whelmed. The word means to be engulfed or submerged—as in overwhelmed. Whelmed is an archaic term and serves little purpose in our vocabulary because it means to be overwhelmed.

Yet the truth is that becoming overwhelmed doesn't change much about the situation. The crowd must be fed. Work must be completed. There are feet to wash.

Perhaps becoming overwhelmed is selfish. It seems that Jesus wanted His disciples to be focused on the needs of others—to love others.

We never seem to have enough, yet God always provides.

My friend Rebecca, who has been our office manager at Charisma Media for more than twenty-five years, created a great object lesson for the overwhelmed. She wore arm floaties to work one day. Folklore has it that she wore the floaties all day. In her brilliant teaching manner, she made it clear that flotation devices are available for the overwhelmed.

Sometimes effective leaders will bring laughter into chaos. I think that's the lesson here.

And I believe that a loving leader finds ways to help her team manage the madness.

The Holy Spirit keeps us afloat. Jesus is our Prince of Peace. The Lord is our shepherd; we shall not want.

When the job is too big, budgets are too large, and people are toowhelmed, do what the disciples did.

Do all that you can do, and trust the Lord to help you help your team.