

# Casting our Cares on Him

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[ 0 : 00 ] I do have that part of God's word open in front of you as we look at it together. Thank you Lucy for praying, Emma for reading.! What do you do with your worries, I wonder? Where do you put them? In a box somewhere? Hope they don't break out?

Come and get you. Maybe you take the approach that some people do, which I've often done, which is you kind of worry about them and you hope that if you worry about them enough, your worries will die.

It doesn't work, does it? Here's Dr. Google's top five ways to deal with worrying. Practice deep breathing. Set aside worry time.

It's great, isn't it? Use the worry tree. I hope it doesn't look anything like that. Practice mindfulness. Limit your alcohol and caffeine intake. There's one.

Some of that's helpful, isn't it? Some of it. The trouble is that at the end, even if you did all of those things, I think your worries would still be just that. Yours.

[ 1 : 24 ] We're at the end of 1 Peter and he comes to the end of the letter and he touches again, you probably notice, on lots of the things actually that he's already talked about.

Submission, leadership, standing firm in suffering, God's calling, choosing of his people, the way that we're to love each other as his family, the invisible war that's being fought all around us.

You'll be relieved to hear we're not going to talk about all of those things all over again. But it's good to try and spot them because they're there. And all of those things are important for doing life well. But actually, Peter wraps up by coming back to the one thing that we need to do. And that is this. We need to humbly trust the God of all grace by casting our cares on him.

The traditional three points. We'll start with Peter's reminder. Peter's reminder to us is dress right, basically. Do you remember this during COVID times?

[ 2 : 34 ] People were on their Zoom calls and it was later revealed that only their top half was appropriately dressed. Bottom half was PJs or maybe not even PJs.

You can see how we got there, can't you? First, we had dressed on Fridays and then don't worry about wearing a suit. Just smart, casual is fine. Until when you wear a suit, you're actually at risk of being mistaken for a Mormon.

It's just that unlikely. I'm not saying that relaxing is all bad. I don't think it is. But the point is, what you put on makes a difference, doesn't it, to your mentality, your attitude.

Somehow it does, whether it's suiting and booting or whether it's glamming up for the night outs. And Peter's reminder here is dress right.

Dress right for the life that we have. We want to get through that little while that we were hearing about to the end. Then here are the attitudes and expectations we need to put on.

[ 3 : 36 ] The ones he's already introduced us to. Be humble, submit to each other, verses 5 and 6. Be awake enough to pray. Be alert to the attack that will come, verse 7.

Be ready to suffer, verse 8. Stand firm by faith. Not by thinking my faith is great, I'll stand firm. But by the object of our faith.

Faith in the Lord Jesus, right? Verses 9 and 12. Don't mistake that for the to-do list. That's not what this is. These are the clothes we put on before we come to the to-do list, right?

Because they will affect how we do that. And right at the heart of that is this, verse 6. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

Right at the heart of putting on the right attitude is submitting to God's will. That's so hard, isn't it? I think that's a lifelong struggle for any human being to say that somebody else is king, actually.

[ 4 : 43 ] Not me. To hand control back. But look where it leads. Verse 6. That he may lift you up in due time in the end.

And we think, yes, and if I do all of that, what about me? Who will care for me if I live that way? So, second, here's Peter's reason. Look at verse 12 with me. With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly. Here it is.

Encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Peter says, this stuff that we're talking about, this is real grace. God's undeserved favor on us. This is how we know God is smiling on us.

This is the main thing, the whole message. The heart of the eyewitness testimony that I'm sharing with you. It's the only thing you really, really need to know. And here it is, verse 5. In the same way, you who are younger, submit to your elders.

[ 5 : 53 ] All of you clothe yourselves with humility towards one another because God. Let's stop there a moment. Because God.

Because these two words are the good news. Because God is the gospel in two words. Right? Not because me. Not if only this. Not when you've done that. Not but first these things.

No. Because God. Verse 7. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

How do we know? How do we know? God cares for us. Well, we heard John 3.16 referred to earlier. Here's the other John 3.16. One John 3.16.

[ 6 : 52 ] This is how we know what love is. Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. Because God came at Christmas.

Because God died and rose at Easter. Because God freely offers this eternal life that he paid for with his blood to you. And because he will bring you home.

If you follow him. And woven into this passage is exactly what that means for us. First of all, God is Lord.

How do we know? Well, he opposes the proud. Verse 5. Verse 6. He is the one with the mighty hand. Verse 10. He's the one who does the calling.

Who does the power belong to? Verse 11. It belongs to him. Who does the choosing? Verse 13. He does. He is Lord.

[ 7 : 50 ] And he's the savior. Because as we've just seen in verse 6. He will lift us up. Verse 10.

He will restore us. He will make us strong. He gets the eternal glory for the rescue mission. And he shares it with us. He is the savior.

Believing that. Agreeing that yes. It's because God. Not because me. That's what allows us to stand firm in the faith.

We can stand firm. Because God is the rock. We can humbly submit. Because Jesus came to earth. And died.

Submitting to his father's will. We can endure suffering. Because he suffered on the cross. We can be alert. Because Jesus. Was the only one who stayed awake.

[ 8 : 51 ] To pray. In Gethsemane. We can resist the roaring lion. Because we have the lion of Judah fighting for us. So who will care for you?

God will. Verse 7 says so. Doesn't it? How though? How can I walk that road? That's the question that many of us ask every day.

How can I practice submission? For instance. Give control back. When I'd rather not. How can I walk into the subtle suffering that we've been thinking about all the way through the book?

When I'd rather just be comfortable. And safe. How can I stand firm in the face of a relentless energy. Excuse me. Not energy. Enemy. When I feel ready to crumble.

How can I do that? I was walking along the Farnborough Road. This week. I'd just dropped the kids off to school. And it was raining.

[ 9 : 50 ] And I had the dog with me. And she didn't really want to be there. And I didn't really want to be there. I was just living my best life. Walking along the road.

And 35 miles an hour. Along comes a car. And you guessed it. There's a puddle. I'm soaking wet. I can tell you that I thought an uncharitable thought.

At that moment. That's it. Here's me. I'm supposed to be leading the church. And all it takes to reduce me to a hot mess.

Is somebody driving along in their car. And soaking me wet. So how am I supposed to do this? How is any of us?

Here's Peter's recipe. Peter. Peter who saw Jesus die. Who lived through a suffering that's much worse than a soaking. Dies on a cross himself.

[10:51] Most likely. He says. This is what the enemy does not want you to know. This is how you navigate all of that. Verse 7.

Cast all your anxiety on him. Because he cares for you. I think lots of us. Whether we're Christians or not.

Actually live a proverbs-y kind of life. What do I mean by that? I mean I think we kind of get along by thinking. If I basically. If I do the right thing.

Most of the time. Then the right thing. Will happen. Usually. Right? And by God's goodness. And his common grace. Usually. That's true.

But if you think that that is all there is to life. Then there's a nasty shock waiting around the corner. Isn't there? The truth of the world.

[11:47] And the way to live a life of joy and meaning. Is not. Because I did the right thing. Is it? It's because God. And therefore we cast all our anxieties.

Not on ourselves. But on him. Isn't that a better way to live? Casting anxieties on him. It's just worth a word of clarification.

I don't think Peter is talking about anxiety here. In a clinical sense. Although clearly there are links to worry. There aren't there. I think he's talking about the cares we normally carry. Which give us heavy hearts.

And worried heads. I think he means. The anxiety that's produced by circumstances. Like the subtle suffering. That we've been learning about in 1 Peter. When they affect the things that we love. The people that we love.

Like our faith. Our family. Those kinds of worries. I think is what he is talking about here. Do you notice what Peter does assume though? Let's go back to verse 7 again. Cast all your anxiety on him.

[12:52] Because he cares for you. Peter assumes that we have anxieties. That we all have them. The burdens we can't carry. This is our reminder.

This is our reminder that it is okay that you're not okay. It's assumed in fact that you're not okay. In fact it's been assumed in the whole Bible. Right from Adam and Eve.

That you're not okay. That is exactly why Jesus came. I think we often resist handing over worries to other people.

Anybody. Because partly we think. Well then they'll be carrying those things. And somehow I'll have to worry about them. As well. And what difference would it really make anyway.

If I do that. What can they do about it in the end? Jesus has interesting words to say. I think he would turn our question back on us.

[13:52] Luke chapter 12 verse 25. Who of you by worrying. Who of you by worrying. Can add a single hour to his life.

So Jesus says. What can you do about it really? You see these are exactly the lies.

That the enemy wants to feed you up with. Before he devours you. He wants us to believe. That we are all alone in our suffering. While the truth is that believers around the world.

Are going through the same thing. That's what the passage says isn't it? He wants us to believe the lie. That it is all up to us. The devil wants to keep you. In a state of constant worry.

And upset. So that we fall. Into. Pride. What do I mean? Worrying is a way of saying. What? That it all depends on me.

[14:51] Right? Not God. The only person I can totally trust. Is not God. No. Because he allows all these difficult things to happen. That I would prevent. I can.

prevent. No. The only person who's totally trustworthy. Who's really qualified. Is me. And that's pride isn't it?

And it's believing something that we know is ridiculous. As if we can prevent all of this. Above all. The devil does not want you to believe.

Verse 7. That God cares for you. It's been his mission since Adam and Eve. To convince people that God does not love people best. Hasn't it?

The fact that God cares for you. For the devil. Is the most dangerous truth of all. Because it is the foundation of our identity. It is the foundation of our dignity.

[15:50] It is the foundation of our eternal destiny. It is the foundation of the gospel. We know God cares for us. Because God came to save us from ourselves.

And the devil too. We know God cares for us. Because he died. That we might live. But the devil does not want you to believe that. So he'll bring suffering from outside. And lies and worries inside. He doesn't want you to believe. That the sovereign God cares for you. He wants to frighten you out of believing that. Don't. Let him. How do we do that? Back to verse 6. Humble yourselves therefore under God's mighty hand.

That he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him. Because he cares for you. We resist the devil by submitting to God.

[16:48] In hopes of being lifted up. By casting our cares on him. And how do we do that? If you know your Bibles. You'll know there is an answer.

Philippians chapter 4. Verses 6 and 7. It says this. Do not be anxious about anything. But in every situation. By prayer and petition. With thanksgiving.

Present your requests to God. And the peace of God. Which transcends all understanding. Will guard your hearts. And your minds in Christ Jesus. God. Guard you. Guard you from the attacks of the evil one.

That we're reading about here. We pray. Do you remember that was the reason for being alert. Back in 1 Peter 4. Verse 7. And whether we feel it or not.

When we pray. God does stuff. In us. For us. Just think of the prayers that God has answered in your life. Just one will do.

[17:44] Now tell me. After you had prayed that prayer. Immediately after. Did you feel different? Did you feel different? I don't think I usually do. I don't usually feel different immediately after I've prayed a prayer.

But then later. The clear answer comes. We pray. God moves. One of the commentators says. The very act of casting our cares upon the Lord often changes them.

I think that's true. Again. Again. I just want to be careful. We are not saying that all anxiety is a lack of trust in God. Right? Some of it. Is clinical.

Chemical state we get into. And we find it hard to get out of that. Without. You know. Medication. And careful counseling. And yet. The Bible says that more cares will be lifted.

If we look more to God. And less than ourselves. And maybe that's more true than we think is convenient. To admit. I want to tell you the story of this man.

[18:50] Up on the screen. He's called George Muller. He's a Christian. Who lived in England in the 19th century. And you probably know some of his story. But he became famous for running large orphanages in Bristol.

And at the beginning. He was just completely overwhelmed. With the burden of providing for these children. Food. Shelter. Enormous. Constant need. And he writes in his journals.

That he experienced intense anxiety. And sleepless nights. Running out of funds regularly. Feeling of enormous responsibility. And he eventually makes a deliberate decision.

He said. I will stop relying on my own ability. To control every outcome. And instead. Hand over the entire burden of provision to God. While still doing all the work. That was required of him.

And he said. That's not passivity. That's not doing nothing. It's just a shift. In who carries the weight of the care. He continued working. But he gave up the internal pressure.

[19:46] To solve everything by his own strength. He was responsible for the effort. And the outcome. He turns over to the Lord. Now if this was Santa.

Not George Muller. Then the story would go. All the circumstances miraculously changed. And you know. He got the request of 10 million pounds. Which never ran out. And he did all the work that he needed to do. That's not what happened. The circumstances didn't magically change.

But his state of mind changed completely. He writes in his journals again. The burden has been taken from my shoulders. I am at peace.

I am free. And you look at his circumstances. You think you're not free. You've got to care for thousands of orphans. You've got no money. I am at peace. I am free.

And if you know the story. Then you'll know for the next 60 years. He goes on to care for over 10,000 orphans. Never once asking for money. Never once running out of money either. Here's how Muller explains it in his own words.

[20:48] I handed over my care. And the care no longer crushed me. I think I want to grow up to be like George Muller. I wonder how Peter did this.

You ever thought that? Peter's talking about casting his anxieties on the Lord. How does he do that? Quite a hot-headed and driven individual, Peter, if you read through the Gospels. But I think he was probably quite thoughtful about how he did this, having arrived at this conclusion. I think he probably had a rhythm. Maybe something even you could call a ritual to do that. I wonder, do you? Are you thoughtful? Deliberate? About handing over your cares to the Lord? Do you have a place you do that? A time? A way?

We're going to have a go in a moment, together, at handing over our cares to God as we respond to his word. But I'd love to encourage you, if you haven't already done this, to do just one thing over Christmas.

[ 21 : 49 ] And that is to take time to find your recipe for casting your cares on God. Whatever that looks like. Instead of holding all of our cards and our cares and all the control close to our chest like this, isn't it better to cast it all on Christ?

Who do we think is going to do a better job of carrying those things? For all of us who are willing to humble ourselves under God's mighty hand, trusting that he will lift us up in due time, casting all our anxieties on him, because he cares for us, for all of us who are willing to do that, here is what the end of Peter's letter tells us that the end will look like.

Verse 14. Peace. Peace to all of you who are in Christ. Amen.

We're going to have a go, like I said, responding to the Lord Jesus. I'm going to invite us to read together the words that come up on the screen. There's three sections. We'll just do a brief pause between each one.

If this is new to you and you don't feel comfortable doing it, that's fine. Don't. That's fine. If you don't want to read it out loud, you just want to read it in your heart, that's fine too. Let's read together.

[ 23 : 23 ] Lord, we confess our desire for control. We confess our inflated self-respect, which you call pride.

We confess we don't want to endure suffering. We fear it. We feel ready to crumble in the face of everyday things.

And we tremble at the thought of a powerful, invisible enemy attacking us. And we confess that often we have no peace.

Just a moment of silence. Let's read this together.

Lord, we come to you. And in this moment, in our hearts, we cast Peter's fishing net, with all our cares caught in it, on you.

[ 24 : 27 ] Let's take a moment to do that in your heart. And finally, Lord, we thank you that you oppose the proud and that you have the power.

We thank you that you give us grace to deal with all difficulty. We thank you that though we may feel low, you will lift us up by your mighty hand.

We thank you that you will make us strong, firm, and steadfast. We thank you that in a little while, you will restore us completely.

We thank you that in Christ, you have chosen us and called us, not to the grave, but to eternal glory. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

Amen.