

Give all your worries and cares to God (Morning Message)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 25 January 2020

Preacher: Michelle Leask

- [0 : 0 0] Such a wonderful presence of the Lord here this morning. It's a real privilege to be here. I was sharing with Mandy when I came in about two years ago. I actually attended this event.
- And I sat right in the back there. And I was actually going through a really bad time. It was probably one of the worst times I've ever been through in my life. But I was sat right at the back. And you know what? It was just amazing when I stood here and just this beautiful church and the sweet worship that was coming.
- And just being here was just enough to begin just this refreshing and this healing to start in my life. And so when I got the invitation to come, I was like, wow. Lord, you know what? God really works in amazing ways, doesn't he? So I'm truly, truly grateful and quite humbled actually to be here this morning to come and to share the word of God with you. Yeah, I am South African, as you can all hear.
- Make apologies for that now already in case I offend anybody with my blunt speaking. So please forgive me. However, if it is truth, just receive it and ask the Holy Spirit to help you get over it, okay?
- [1 : 0 5] But I know South Africans can be like a bully in a china shop. And well, I've lived here in the UK. God called my husband and I to come here in the year 2000. And we've been serving in, well, before then I was already serving in church.
- We were doing all sorts of things in church. I've been in church all my life, literally. I think I was born into church, hey-ho, in more ways than one. And so we came to this country in 2000.
- We really believe that God called us here. I believe we are here under God's direct instruction. And we've been serving in a church. One in Bristol and now we're in Swindon. And we've been involved on every postural level.
- A connect group. We run a fantastic connect group. We have the most amazing discussions. I'm married to the most handsome man in the whole world. Sorry, ladies. He is. He's six foot four.
- He's as hulk of a man. He's as gentle as a giant, though. He's got the most incredible heart. He's an incredible gifted teacher. So he's always correcting me. Thank you, Lord. I need to be corrected many times.
- [2 : 0 6] And I have two daughters, beautiful daughters. One is Jessica. She's 25. She's in the most gifted worship leader. And I'm not being, not because of my daughter, but it's the real honest truth. She studied university.
- She did a degree in music. And when she sings, it's like warm chocolate just flows in the room. I love chocolate, by the way. But no, it's just really the presence of God is just really doing something in her.

I have another daughter. She's just like my husband. She's constantly correcting me. Her name is Dominique. She's busy studying theology, of all things, at Moorland's Bible College. She's so bad that she actually tells me what to wear in the morning.

So if my outfit doesn't suit you today, because I know she would have said to me, Mom, you look like the mayor with that necklace on. So she's my little correction. So she's always telling me what to do.

I miss her like crazy. This is my first one sort of out the house. The other one still lives with us. So that's me. What's more personal? My birthday is on Friday next week. So hey-ho. I'm almost 50.

[3 : 03] Not there. Almost. Literally, I'm scraping up there. I'm excited to turn 50. Come on. You know, they say life begins at 40, and that's true. I don't know what's going to happen after 50, but anyway, bring it on.

So yeah, that's me in a nutshell. But what am I passionate about? I am passionate about women. I know that sounds really weird. I promise you there's nothing other than women's growth and women's spiritual maturity.

And I've run mentoring groups for many years, one-on-one working with women. And I just love it. And I believe that's what God's called me to do, and such a privilege, once again, just to be here this morning and to share it with you.

So I'm going to just read you a little story that I found, just to kind of make me feel less nervous, and you're a little bit more at ease. And I found this little story, and I read it to my husband this morning.

Do you mind if I put this down another level? That's okay. I like to be amongst the people and bring this down just a tad. If I can. Oh, no. Let me roll. Don't mess with it. Okay. And so I found this story, and it says, a doctor, a lawyer, and a little boy, and a priest were out for a Sunday afternoon flight on a small private airplane.

[4 : 11] I mean, I don't know who does that, but these people did, okay? Suddenly, the plane developed some engine trouble, and in spite of all the best efforts of the pilot, the plane started to go down. Finally, the pilot grabbed the parachute, and he yelled to the passengers that they'd better jump out, and then he bailed.

Great pilot, yeah? Unfortunately, there were only three parachutes left. So the doctor grabbed one, and he said, I'm a doctor, and I save lives, so I have to live, and he jumped out the airplane.

The next thing, the lawyer said, well, I'm a lawyer, and I'm very clever, and I need to help, and I'm the smartest person, and I have to live. So he jumped out the airplane. Anyway, and the priest was sitting there, and he looked at the little boy, and he said, look, my son, you're young.

You've got your whole life ahead of you. You take the last parachute, and you just jump out and live, and I'll be okay. And the little boy looked at the priest, and he took the parachute, and he gave it back to the priest, and he said, don't worry, father.

No, the smartest man in the whole world just jumped out of the airplane with my backpack. So I thought, yeah, that's a good one.

[5 : 22] Okay, so this morning, I love teaching the Word of God, and so I'm going to teach this morning. I love the scripture, 1 Peter chapter 5 and verse 7. What a great scripture, and it says, and I'm going to use, you've used the New Living Translation Testament, and it's give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you.

But I'm going to use it from the New King James Version, and it says, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Now, I want to say to you, one thing we're all going to have in common, other than the fact that we're human and we're woman, is we're all going to have worries and cares.

Anybody in this room never have a worry in their life? Guys, please, please tell me, please tell me. Anybody, somebody, no one, you see? So we all have, at some point of our lives, we would have had worries or care, or perhaps some of you might have even had anxiety issues.

I don't know where you've been, but that is something we all have. And you know, when Peter wrote this, he had this in mind, because they were going through some church issues in that book, and I want to get into the whole context.

But he was trying to encourage them by saying, don't worry about what's going on, but give it to the Lord. And so, what is this feeling of care and worry actually mean? Anxiety.

[6 : 33] And it's kind of this feeling of worry, of nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome. You're not sure of yourself. You know, you're not sure what's going to happen.

You're not sure what's going to happen with your kids. Things are not going so well with your finances. Maybe a job you worried about something that's going wrong at work. Maybe one of your children aren't going through a good time.

Whatever it is, it's this feeling of unease, or this sense of worry that you have. Now, can most of us identify with some feelings like that? Yeah, well, I certainly can.

I'll just put up both my hands and my feet and my hair, everything. Because you know what? I've been there. We've all been there. And you know, I'll probably be there tomorrow. Because I'm human. And something will happen tomorrow that'll cause me to think, oh, what's going to happen if that goes wrong?

You know, that's how we are. And yet, I feel in the Word of God, there's so many things that we can use to encourage ourselves. You see, another definition I've found of anxiety is anxiety at a base level implies not only some distrust of God's providence, but also some kind of belief that we may be able to manage better for ourselves.

[7 : 45] Now, that's quite an indictment, actually. You know, when I begin to worry and carry cares, it's actually what I'm saying is, I can do a better job than God. And so when I read that, I was really just before the Lord, you know, and I said, God, is that what I'm really doing?

So when I come before you, am I really saying that actually I'm better at dealing with my problem than what you are? And actually, that just boils down to pride. And so I really had a good time with the Lord on this issue, and I'm hoping that as I speak today, that God is going to minister to your hearts about how our attitude and what you're dealing with at the moment, and is it because you're trying to deal with it in your own strength?

Is it some element of unbelief that you have? Do you not believe that God can take care of you? Because these are the sort of things that cause anxiety and worry and concerns to come, you know, and sometimes bad experiences happen.

And from that bad experience, we begin to build fears into our lives, you know? I hope my friend doesn't mind, but I'm going to share with you this morning. We were driving here, and this lovely, beautiful woman that I know, her name's Vicky.

She's come with me today. And she sometimes has a bit of anxiety. Is that okay for me to share just a little bit? And I'm sure she won't mind. She can beat me up on the way home. It's okay. I'll take her from you.

[9 : 01] And we were driving in the car, and I think I'm a good driver. I tend to stick to the speed limits, and I always maintain a good distance. And as we were driving, straight away, I could just tell.

She was, oh! And I said, hang on a minute. I said, hey, in my South African way that I do, I said, Vicky, don't be a nervous passenger, please. She says, oh, but it's not because I don't believe in you.

Listen to this. She says, it's because every time I've been in a car accident, it's been because someone else was driving. So I'm like, you don't believe I'm a bad driver, but you're nervous because I'm driving.

So I couldn't go to. And that's kind of like what I see, how we are with the Lord. Lord, I really do believe in you. But suddenly I need 500 pounds to pay my tax bill. How much do then we do we believe in God?

And how much then do we pick up the anxiety of trying to figure out, well, I'm going to phone the bank, and I can get a loan, I can send my overdraft. Maybe I'll pick up the phone, I'll phone my mom or my dad, or, you know, I'll work extra shifts.

[10 : 05] Do you understand what I'm saying? And so this is where we can be with the Lord, this place of lack of faith and mistrust. Now, it's not an indictment against any of us, because I believe sometimes we go through these things so that God can increase our faith, and that God can grow us.

And so these cares that we have are really real, you know? They're real issues that we face every single day. You know, we worry about our children, we worry about the husbands, the money, the food, whatever that comes.

Every day we are confronted with potential issues that we can carry that God never intended us to carry. So these weights, these cares are weights, they can pull us down, they can make you feel low, they can make you feel depressed, they can cause us to lose objectivity.

That sounds really morose, but don't worry, I'm getting to the good stuff, okay? All right? There are distractions. You know, I was sharing with Mandy beforehand, I have, my youngest daughter has what we call, well, juvenile idiopathic arthritis, and so she's had it since she was very young, and she often struggles, her joints swell up, she struggles to walk.

At one point she was really bad, she couldn't use her arms. At one point she couldn't walk properly because her ankles were so stiff and tight that she used to shuffle like an old woman. When they look at her bone density, they actually say it's a bone density of a woman of 50 years old.

[11 : 28] That's just what she struggles with. I mean, looking at her, you'd never say, because she's a strapping girl, she's amazing me. And we thank God for the miracle that he's actually kept her, and she could be a lot worse. But the reality is every time my husband and I would get into a place of trusting God for something, or into a place of ministry, guess what would happen?

Dominique could get sick. And then Dominique can't walk, or she's got to go for joint injections, or this was happening, and that was happening. And so there was this constant distraction all the time that was kind of making us lose focus.

You know, when God has told us one thing, and yet there's this thing that keeps pulling us away, well, that's kind of what our cares and anxieties do to us. They keep distracting us and pulling us away from what God wants, or even what God says about us.

And so this morning, what I always like to do when I'm in this, I always like to find a Bible story that's relevant. So I want to read to you this morning. It's a very common Bible story. It's somebody that you're all very familiar with.

But from that, I'm going to draw some parallels, and we're going to see how she handles some things in her life. So I want us to turn together to 1 Samuel, and it's chapter 1, and we're going to talk about Hannah this morning.

[12 : 38] You all know the story about Hannah. That's Samuel's mom. We cannot find Samuel. And I'm going to just read the passage, because I like to read the word. Hopefully I can change this translation.

I'll read it in the New King James translation. All right. So this is how it starts. From verse 1, it says, Can you imagine if we still introduced ourselves like that?

This is Michelle, the daughter of Elaine, the daughter of Roland, the daughter of Esther, the daughter, I mean, can you imagine? We've gone forever. Anyway. Anyway, so, and he had two wives.

The one name was Hannah, and the other name was Penaniah. Penaniah had children, but Hannah had no children. This man went up from his city yearly to worship and sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh.

Also, the two sons, Eli and Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there. And whenever that time came for Elkanah to make an offering, he would give portions to Penaniah, his wife, and to all her sons and daughters.

[13 : 48] But to Hannah, he would give a double portion. For he loved Hannah, although the Lord had closed her womb. And her rival also provoked her severely to make her miserable because the Lord had closed her womb.

So it was year by year that when she went up to the house of the Lord that she provoked her. Therefore she wept and did not eat. Then Elkanah, her husband, said to her, Hannah, why do you weep?

Why do you not eat? Why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons? So Hannah arose after she had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle.

And she was in bitterness of soul and prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish. Then she made a vow to the Lord and said, And as it happened, as she continued praying before the Lord and Eli watched her mouth.

Now Hannah only spoke in her heart, but only her lips moved and her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk. So Eli said to her, How long will you be drunk?

[15 : 07] Put your wine away from you. But Hannah answered and said, No, my Lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have neither drunk wine or intoxicating drink, but I have poured my soul before the Lord.

Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaints and grief I have spoken until now. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace.

The God of Israel will grant your petition which you have asked of him. And she said, Let your maidservant find favor in your sight. So the woman went her way. She ate and her face was no longer sad.

What an incredible story. You know, when you begin to really unpick this. But I'm really just going to focus on Hannah for now. And she was a childless woman. And in those times it was a great shame.

It was a great shame. You know, and I also know what it's like not to have four pregnant. It took me seven years between one child and another not to have a child. I cannot tell you the reason. I don't know why, but we waited seven years.

[16 : 08] There's a seven year gap between my girls. So to have that feeling of not being able to have a baby. This woman was a shame for her. She was mocked. She was persecuted.

Even the priest had a go at her. So she wasn't in a great place. She had crowded in a marriage. She had this other woman in the marriage. There was two of them. The one was bearing all these babies and she had nothing.

She was desperate. She stopped eating. She was distressed. She was worried. She was anxious. And she was unfulfilled. Now at some point in that story and some of the things I've listed, I'm sure some of you will have found yourself somewhere there in life.

But you know what I love about this is the place you find Hannah is at the altar praying. And so this scripture that we have here, it says 1 Peter chapter 5 verse 7.

There was two things that I saw out of the scripture that I want to share with you in context of Hannah's life and in what we do today that hopefully will encourage you just a little bit this morning.

[17 : 13] So the first thing I saw in 1 Peter, it says, So the first thing is there is an action that is required.

God requires an action of us. You see, like Hannah, who was so desperate and so miserable and so depressed and so full of anxiety, she had to do something to move out of that place and into the place where, when she walked away, her face was no longer sad.

Because that's a profound part of the story. She walked away and her face was no longer sad. And so the action required here is we need to cast. And I believe prayer is the place where we cast.

Casting means throwing away, giving away. But not just a case of giving, it means throwing. Oopsie, sorry. Am I losing my medals here today? So now I want to share with you, and I told him I was going to do this.

My husband is a very keen fisherman. And I mean keen. You go into the garage and he's built racks. And he's got things for the flies. I mean, this man loves fishing.

[18 : 22] Always going fishing. I mean, he's got specialized bait. I mean, did you know that some fish like strawberry essence? I mean, I asked the question, how does the fish even know what a strawberry is?

Anyway, let's not go there. We've had endless debates about this. And so my husband owns, and I'm not kidding, 42 fishing rods. 42.

Now this morning, I just wanted to check my facts. So we were sat in the lounge and I said, I said, babe, can I just ask you, how many fishing rods? Sorry, I'm going to laugh because this was hysterical.

How many fishing rods do you own? And he went, I'm not kidding. He went, wow. And he literally began to use his fingers and tell me he's got a rod for this and a rod for this and a rod.

Do you know, it was so, you had to be there. But I wasn't hysterical. He said to me, why are you laughing? I said, because you are such good material. I said, I'm going to laugh about you today. You know? And yeah, he's got 42 fishing rods.

[19 : 20] I mean, really, how many fishing rods does a person need? I mean, you're only going to catch two maybe at a time. Anyway. So, and the other side of the joke is I go fishing with him very rarely.

But when I do go, I always end up catching the bigger fish. So I tend not to go. It's better for his self-image that I don't do that. Anyway. And so now what he does, and I saw this analogy, is one afternoon I came home from work.

And this man was standing in the garden. And I just, I actually couldn't believe what I was seeing. But anyway, he got this new fly rod, which I think I bought him. And he was standing in the garden.

And he was just practicing. Just on the cross. Wachoo! Wachoo! Just doing this whole fly fishing thing. And I was like, Lord, is this man deluded?

What is happening to him? Has he just gone mad? And I says, what are you doing? He says, no, I'm practicing my cast. I said, really? I said, but you're not going to know what you hit.

[20 : 17] He says, no, there's a technique. I've got to know how to cast. Because if I'm casting, then I will get the right place. And I'll be able to release the bait in the right way. And I said, wow, that's actually quite profound.

Regardless of the fact that you look a bit silly on the front grass. But actually, it's really good. And I think the analogy that I see here is this is what Hannah was doing. She goes, because she went year by year.

She went where? To the temple. So year after year, she was going. And every time she went, what was she doing? She was casting. She was throwing.

She was getting onto the altar. And she was practicing until she got it right. Until she got to that place where she heard from the Lord. Where she received the word from the Lord.

And she no longer had to be anxious. And so God requires that of us. You see, when we're casting, what are we doing? We are moving from self-reliance into God-reliance.

[21 : 19] That is so important. Because as human beings, especially women, because we just make things happen. We've got kids, we're happy, we do, we do, we do. We've got to move from that place of trying to work it out in our own strength to allowing God to do it for us in His way.

The second thing I see is that there is an action from the Lord. You know what? God always comes through for us. There's an action. And He says, what does it say?

Casting all our cares upon the Lord, for He cares for us. So the action from the Lord is He cares about you. That's why I loved that little video clip today.

I was like, oh, that's just so spot on. You are not insignificant. You are not unheard. And you are not beige. Okay? Beige is my least favorite color. Beige.

You're not boring. You are who God made you to be. That means whatever you are going through, whatever you are facing, whatever you have faced, God is right there in the midst of that situation with you.

[22 : 20] A few years back, we went through a really, really tough time as a family. And there was mornings I used to get up off my bed and crawl into a little ball and just cry out to the Lord.

Just cry out to God. God, where are you? Why did this happen? I don't understand what this is all about. Just like Hannah. I was distressed in my soul.

Unfortunately, like her, I didn't stop eating. I did not eat. I ate. Because I'm a comfort eater. So bring it on. More cake, you know. But you know what? That's because I was trying to understand it in my way.

And one day the Lord said to me, Michelle, I am Emmanuel. God with you. That was my word. Just like Hannah.

She had a word from the Lord. That day the priest came and he said, I will bless you with the sun. And that was my word from God. And I stood up and I was like, okay, Lord, you are with me.

[23 : 23] And you know what? I have seen God's hand in my life in the most amazing ways over the last few years. Hebrews chapter 4 verse 14 to 16 says, Seeing then that we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession.

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Therefore, let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

You see, when Hannah went to that altar, she knew that that was a place of need. That was her place of need. But she also knew that was the place of grace.

You see, I believe that God's grace is sufficient for every care that we carry. I believe that God's grace is sufficient to help us with our anxieties.

It is sufficient to help us come through whatever situation that we may be facing this morning. And why do I say that? Because the Bible tells us this morning he cares about us.

[24 : 34] Now that's a very simple message. And that's okay. Somebody here today needs to know that God really cares about you. He really, really cares about where you are, who you are, and where you're going.

God cares. And so, we see that as she cries out to the Lord, God comes through. And so, how are some of the ways that we can know that God cares about us?

Well, we have the Word of God. The Word of God is full of promises that He cares about you, that He has thoughts towards you, that He's thinking about you.

Matthew chapter 6 talks about if God cares for the wildflowers, how much more will He care for you? We have people in our lives, just like Hannah, her husband came and said, you know what, I love you.

It doesn't matter whether you have that child. Am I not enough for you? Unfortunately, men don't understand that desire for a woman to have a child. It's a very difficult one for them to understand. But yet, in that way, He was still trying to comfort her, trying to help her.

[25 : 46] We have one another. That's how we know God cares. And the fact that I'm standing here today, speaking and saying to you that God cares, is because God cares. And so, this morning, I really just want you to think about what I've been saying.

Firstly, the action is, you need to cast. You need to cast this care. You need to take that care. You know, that care is like a bait. It's like a bait. It's like a trap.

So, something happens and you fall into this trap. And it's like your mind is going around and around and around and around and around. And you just can't seem to find a way out of getting out of this care or concern.

You know, you wake up with a sense of panic sometimes in the morning. I don't know where you're at. But it's a bait that the devil wants you to take, like a fish, and just go. And then you hook, line, and sinker, and you're stuck in a place of depression and defeat.

And that's not what God is saying to us today. He says, you don't have to take the bait. You don't have to carry the care. It is not yours to carry. It is not your weight.

[26 : 53] He is more than able to do and to carry that weight for you. Ephesians says, now unto him who is able. God is able this morning to turn the situations around.

God is able this morning to bring healing to your body. God is able this morning to bring provision into your life. God is able this morning to bring that unsaved family member back into your life.

He's able this morning. And that's our place of faith. That's our promise that we have to stand on. So when we leave here this morning or this afternoon, you can say, you know what?

I don't magically feel, magically like it's a magic wand, but I do have one thing, and I have a word from the Lord. And the Lord cares about me. That's the word.

You see, I'm a real woman of the word. I've been a Bible teacher for many, many years. And I just love the word of God. I was reading, in fact, my husband was showing me a video this morning, and they were talking to a Christian counselor, and they said, a person that spends one day in the word, reading the Bible, not much difference on the radar.

[28 : 10] I think they were testing the heart rate. I didn't catch the whole thing because I was trying to get ready to come. And then he was saying, and if you spend two days in the word with this heart monitor or something, there was a slight difference. By the time the person is spending four days reading the word of God and confessing it over their life, there was a distinct difference in their lives.

There was an improvement in their health, in their relationships, in their well-being. Now, this morning, I've come and I've delivered the word of the Lord to you. What have I said?

That you can cast your cares upon him, for he cares for you. He cares for you. And he is able to carry that weight.

You know, in due course, Hannah did have that son. And she did exactly what God promised. She gave him back to the Lord. Samuel became one of the most profound prophets in Israel in that time.

So that's my encouragement to you this morning as I come to the close of this first session. Where are you with the Lord this morning? I want you to sit down and just where you are and just close your eyes.

[29 : 20] And I'm going to just read a passage of scripture. And then we're just going to see as the Holy Spirit leads us this morning. If you decide to live, if you decide for God, living a life of God worship, it follows that you don't fuss about what's on your table at mealtimes or whether the clothes in your closet are fashionable.

There is far more to your life than the food you put in your mouth, in your stomach. More to your outer appearance than the clothes you hang on your body. Look at the birds, free and unfettered and not tied down to a job description.

Careless in the care of God. And you count far more to Him than the birds.