

A BIBLICAL STUDY ON FEAR

LESSON NINETEEN: GIVE YOUR ANXIETY TO GOD

by Sandy Harber

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." I Peter 5:7

One more verse that ties into our study on worry or anxiety is I Peter 5:7. The Greek word translated "care" in this verse is "merimnao," which means "to have a distracting care; anxious." This is the same Greek word that was translated "careful" in Philippians 4:6 (see lesson 17). And, in Matthew 6:25-34, which we looked at in lesson 18, "merimnao" is translated "thought" multiple times. Philippians 4:6 tells us that prayer will banish our worries or distracting cares, whatever they are. In Matthew 6:25-34, Jesus advised His disciples to seek God's kingdom and His righteousness first, and God would provide for their needs. Therefore, they did not need to worry or be anxious about where their food and clothes would come from.

Peter advises believers to get rid of their worries by "casting" them on God. The Greek word translated "cast" specifies this action involves a definite act of the will. Peter wants us to deliberately put our burdens on God's shoulders and let Him assume responsibility for our welfare. At the same time, we must stop worrying. If we are still concerned, then that proves that we have not fully relinquished our cares into God's hands. We can't have it both ways. Either God carries the burden or we do. Do we trust God fully or do we think that He needs a little help from us?

Peter further asserts that we are to cast all our worries or cares upon Him. That means everything. The sum total of our distracting care. This includes all the stuff that we worry "might" happen even though it hasn't happened yet. It's that 99% of things we worry about that never really happens. Turn that anticipatory fear over to God and stop thinking about it.

Someone defined worry as "fear in search of a cause." Worry is a form of fear. It's that persistent, nagging feeling that something bad is going to happen. Very often that bad thing never does materialize and we have worried for nothing. That kind of worry is really fear looking for a reason to justify its existence. Turn that worry over to God and forget about it. Nail it to the cross and walk away.

Why cast your care on God? Because He careth for you. Interestingly, the Greek word translated "careth" here is not "merimnao," which was used earlier in the verse. This "careth" is "melo," which means "to be of interest to (i.e. concern)." The implication being that it matters to God. He is interested in you and concerned for your welfare. Your well being matters (is important) to Him. Isn't that amazing? The all-powerful God of the Universe is concerned about little old you! He cares that you are fearful, even when He knows that fear is groundless. It matters to you, so it matters to Him.

Peter is actually quoting from the Psalms. Psalm 55:22 tells believers to cast their burdens on the Lord and He will sustain them. The Hebrew word translated "sustain" means "to keep in; to maintain; to make provision for." Give your worries and cares over to God's keeping. He will provide whatever you need. God loves you. Someone once said, "If God had a refrigerator your picture would be on it; if He had a wallet your picture would be in it." That's how much He loves you. You are His child.

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psalm 55:22