

BE ANXIOUS FOR NOTHING - 1 Peter 5:7

May 30, 2021

We are going through 1 Peter, and one of the major subjects in this book is that of suffering. And this subject is relevant for our lives as Christians, and as we look at our country and what's going on, it's obvious that it's becoming increasingly relevant. No longer do we live in a religious country, and in a country that accepts and tolerates all religions, especially Christianity, but now it's more secular, and it's becoming increasingly ungodly, and with that, increasingly intolerant of Christians.

1 Peter 5:7. We're looking at just this verse today, but we need to see it in its larger context.
- 1 Peter 4:12-13. We see 3 things here: 1) don't be surprised when you suffer; 2) Christ is your #1 example of one who has suffered; 3) suffering for Christ results in eternal rewards.
- 1 Peter 5:1-4. In this context of suffering, we read about the elders of the church, and they should be praying and caring for those in the church who are suffering.

1 Peter 5:5. This epistle talks about humbling ourselves before others, specifically those who are in authority over us – like citizens to rulers, workers to employers, wives to husbands, and here we see, young believers to the elders of the church. What we need to know is that there is a protection, a safeguarding of our lives as we submit to those God has placed over us. And these authorities are like an umbrella of protection, for as we submit to them, they can protect us from the harmful elements of life, from problems we don't need to be concerned with. Children – young to old. And as we suffer, and are with other Christians, and are humble before them, then there'll be this element of protection, of being safe, because fellowshiping with others, learning from them, and being encouraged by them, are all means of protection.

1 Peter 5:6. But most importantly, we're to be humble before God, knowing that He wants to watch over us, for that's His desire and His responsibility. 1 Pet. 2:25, 4:19. And as we submit to God, then He will bless us and give us a great and glorious future.
- 1 Peter 5:7. And so in this context, when it says we are to cast our anxiety on God, then what do you think Peter is telling us? That when we are suffering, we are to be humble before God, we're to look to Him and give Him our problems, knowing that He will care for us, He will watch over us, and He will protect us. Psalm 23:4-5
- Casting our anxiety upon God means we're trusting Him to help us, to protect us. And so what we are talking about here relates to faith – to relying on God and depending on Him to care for us when we are suffering, when we are hurting.

1 Peter 5:8. The suffering we go through also comes from the devil, and the fact that his attacks are aimed at us. Eph. 6:16 – Again, we see this truth about faith, that we need to trust God when we suffer, specifically when the devil is targeting us.
- 1 Peter 1:5-6 – During our time on earth, we go through trials, we suffer and we are protected by God through our faith, as we trust Him. 2 Tim. 4:18

Apart from Christ, the best example we have of one who suffered is David.

The book of Psalms gives us many examples of how he humbled himself before the Lord, of how he asked God for help, how he trusted God when he suffered.

- Psalm 3:1-4. We see that the Lord answered David when he was crying out to Him.
- Psalm 7:6-11. We learn that God was a shield to David in his times of distress.
- Psalm 18:3. David sought the Lord and was saved from his enemies.
- Psalm 27:1-6. David has all these enemies, and in the day of his trouble, he goes to the Lord, and the Lord defends him, protects him, and keeps him safe.

Psalm 55:1-7. Again, David is being attacked by his enemies, and he is really going through it, and you can tell it's really hard for him. And so he prays to God.

- Verse 22. Peter was thinking about this verse when he wrote 1 Pet. 5:7, for it's similar.

Verse 23. Again, we see that it comes down to faith, for David trusts the Lord.

- Many other Psalms that speak about David's suffering, how he was in trouble, how he was being attacked by his enemies, but he seeks the Lord, he cries to the Lord, he casts his burden upon the Lord, and the Lord saves him. Indeed, the Psalms are helpful for many reasons, but a major reason is that they help us in times of trials, of suffering, when we're going through hard times.

1 Peter 5:7. Now I want to look at this verse much more closely, and that's because it is extremely relevant for every one of our lives. Now I've said that the immediate context is suffering, but I want to broaden it a little bit, and talk about how this verse relates to all areas of our lives, and not just suffering. The reason I can say this is because the 1st word in the sentence, in the Greek, is the word "*all*." All your anxiety, all your cares, are to be cast upon the Lord.

Let me share with you some of the other ways it is translated:

- The NIV says, "*cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.*"

- The KJ says, "*casting all your care upon Him because He cares for you.*"

- The Living Bible says, "*let Him have all your worries and cares, for He is always thinking of you, and watching everything that concerns you.*"

- The Amplified Bible says - "*casting the whole of your care – all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all – on Him; for He cares for you affectionately, and cares for you watchfully.*"

But what does the word anxiety mean? The word anxiety is a noun, but the verb form literally means to "*draw in different directions, to distract.*" Therefore, anxiety is referring to, is speaking about those thoughts, things, situations, or people which lead to you being drawn in a different direction. That is, it is that which causes you to be distracted. And there's no question that anxiety gets your eyes off of God, off the word of God, and off the purposes He has for you.

Psalm 1:2. *“His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law, He meditates day and night.”* As Christians, we are to meditate on God’s word, we are to be thinking about His truth, His commands, and His promises. But oftentimes, we’re not meditating and thinking about God’s word. We’re thinking about other things, and in fact, are often worried and anxious about other things. And worries keep us and prevent us from thinking about God’s word and about God Himself and therefore, keep us from doing what He wants us to do.

Let’s look at two different examples of this:

- Matt. 6:25, 31 – this word “*worry*” is the verb form of anxiety. Now we have three examples of worrying. We can worry about what we eat, what we drink, and the clothes we wear. And worrying about things like this distracts us, gets our eyes off of God, and off the purposes He has for our life.
- Matt. 6:33. Now seeking God’s kingdom is one of our primary purposes in life, and if we’re worrying about our food, drink, and clothing, then we won’t be seeking God’s kingdom. You see, worries keep us from doing what God wants us to do.

Luke 10:40-42. Martha was worried, was anxious about all these things she was doing. Now she was serving, and serving the Lord in fact, and serving in and of itself is a good thing. But she was worried about it, and therefore, *“she was distracted with all her preparations,”* and she wasn’t thinking about the Lord, and in fact, wasn’t then spending time with the Lord like her sister Mary was. And so Martha’s worrying kept her from being with the Lord and learning from Him. This is a classic story, because being with the Lord, being focused on Him, is always our #1 priority – and here we see that worrying about other things, things that may seem good and important, keep us from our #1 priority.

Here’s another verse that talks about a result of our worries. Luke 8:14 - *“The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way, they are choked with the worries, riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity.”* And so worries spiritually choke our lives, and keep us from doing what God wants us to do, and from being fruitful for Him.

- Phil. 4:6 – *“be anxious for nothing...”* This verse says you should not worry about anything. You should not worry about your job, your finances, your bills.
- You should not worry about the traffic, the weather, the storms, or the hurricanes.
 - You should not worry about your children, your parents, or your relationships.
 - You should not worry about your health, your looks, hair, weight, or the virus.
 - You should not worry about all the problems in our country, and around the world.
 - You should not worry about your trials, suffering, or any other problems in life.
 - And you should not worry about the past, or worry about the future. Matt. 6:34

And so there's not one single thing you should worry about. And why should you worry? Does it do you any good to worry? No. Do you feel better when you worry? No. Does it help anybody when you worry? No. Do you solve any of your problems when you worry? No. - Matt. 6:27 - "*Who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?*" When you are driving someplace and you're running late, does worrying get you there faster? No.

The point is that worrying doesn't do you or anyone else any good. But it is harmful, for it keeps you from God, it keeps you from carrying out His purposes, and it keeps you from loving people. You're thinking so much about your own problems that you aren't thinking about others, and aren't loving them and helping them with their problems. Not only that, but when you are worrying you aren't experiencing the love, joy, and peace of God. When you worry, you miss out on all that God wants to give you. And one more thing – worrying is bad for your health. Many studies have shown that worry, anxiety, and stress contribute greatly to a person's health problems.

And so what are you to do? You are to cast your anxiety upon the Lord. And this word "*cast*" literally means to "*throw something on someone or something else.*" When you cast something, you are letting it go, and it's not yours anymore. You cast your anxieties upon the Lord because He cares for you, and because He wants you to cast them upon Him, and because He's the only One who can help you. You see, God is God. God is your heavenly Father. Jesus is your Shepherd. The Holy Spirit is your Comforter. And They are all knowing, all powerful, all loving, all caring.

You are to then cast all your anxieties and burdens upon the Lord. You're to give them all to Him. You are to have faith and believe that God will really take them, and deal with them and help you to get rid of them. It's not that He'll take the problem away per se, but He'll give you the grace and peace so you can deal with them.

Phil. 4:6 -Another key to not being anxious is being thankful. Be thankful to God for the particular problem. When you're thankful, you're being humble, for you're recognizing that God is involved in your life, and that He's good, that He cares, and is sovereign; and you're being grateful to Him that He is in control and that He can help you. 2 Cor. 12:9-10 - And you are to pray - you are to pray about the situation. With regards to your situation, to your anxiety, you are to ask God for His help, His grace, His peace. Psalms 140-143

You see, when you're anxious, you're trying to deal with the problem on your own. But God wants to be involved in every aspect of your life, and you get Him involved when you thank Him, and ask Him for help, and trust Him instead of trusting yourself. Jer. 17:5-8 - And so don't worry about your life, or any aspect of your life. Be humble, admit to God that you need His help, and give to Him every worry, every fear, and He will help you, He will give you all the grace and peace and strength you need. Phil. 4:6-7, Matt. 11:28-30