

06-21-2015

Message: Christ Cares to Calm Our Anxiety

Text: 1 Peter 5:5-7

Introduction

- A. The past 3 Sundays we have been blessed to hear God's Word from former resident members of TRB who have been sent to the nations to proclaim the gospel of Christ. I was happy to hear that they also have felt blessed while among us by our loving and investing in them. Well done church.
- B. Today we continue to seek God's blessing from His Word and Spirit's presence among us as we continue where we left off 4 weeks ago in 1 Peter 5:1-7, where God calls all of us to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of Him Who appoints our sufferings as Christians for Christ's sake.

1 Peter 5:5 ... **all of you**, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.⁶ Therefore **humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God**, that He may exalt you at the proper time,

- C. We observed that the purpose of the instructions to elders/pastors in 5:1-4 was not detached from this context, but the "therefore in 5:1 links it to the call to suffer faithfully in 4:19. Church leaders will naturally be targets of persecution, yet are called to nonetheless fulfill their God-given ministry and to be examples to the flock as to how to share in the sufferings of Christ by doing from the heart what is good in God's eyes.

1 Peter 4:19 Therefore, **those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.**

5:1 **Therefore**, I exhort the elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed,² **shepherd the flock of God among you**, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of* God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;³ nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but **proving to be examples to the flock.**

- D. But humbling ourselves under those sufferings appointed by the will of God will require that we do something with the anxieties, worries, fears that typically accompany the threat and experience of suffering, anxieties that obstruct our willingness to submit to the will of God while suffering.
- E. 4 weeks ago we ended our message, noting that humble faith is the antidote to anxiety. It is on this point that we want to drill deeper today.

1 Peter 4:19 Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

1 Peter 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time,⁷ casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

I. All Christians experience anxiety.

1 Peter 5:7 casting all **your anxiety** (merimna) on Him, because He cares for you.

- A. There is not one of us that does not experience anxiety. We all own anxiety - casting "your anxiety" upon Him
- B. The Greek word "merimna" used by Peter here can be translated by "anxiety," "worry," "concern."
- C. There is a godly concern that comes from faith-produced love versus ungodly anxiety that comes

from self-serving unbelief.

1. God's Word commends to us concern for others rooted in a love that comes from God.

Philippians 2:20 For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely **be concerned (merimnao)** for your welfare.

2 Corinthians 11:28 Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of **concern (merimna)** for all the churches.²⁹ Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern (being set on fire)?

2. Yet God's Word also commands us not to worry or be anxious.

- a. be anxious for nothing

Philippians 4:6 **Be anxious (merimnao)** for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- b. Jesus would have us dispel this ungodly worry, which He attributes to a lack of faith in God.

Matthew 6:25 "For this reason I say to you, do not **be worried (merimnao)** about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. ...²⁷ "And who of you by **being worried (merimnao)** can add a *single* hour to his life?²⁸ "And why are you **worried (merimnao)** about clothing?...³⁰ "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of **little faith!**³¹ "Do not **worry (merimnao)** then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' ...³⁴ "So do not **worry (merimnao)** about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

3. So the love-rooted concern God commends is not to be confused with the worry and anxiety God condemns, because such worry is rooted in unbelief, and whatever is not of faith is sin.

Romans 14:23 ... **whatever is not from faith is sin.**

Psalm 38:18 For I confess my iniquity; **I am full of anxiety (LXX: mermna) because of my sin.**

Mark 4:18 "And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word,¹⁹ but the **worries (merimna)** of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things **enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.**

4. We are filled with ungodly, unbelieving anxiety when ...

- a. We don't believe God exists, or if He exists ...
- b. We don't believe He is in control, or if He is in control ...
- c. We don't believe He is wise in His control, or if He is wise in His control ...
- d. We don't believe His intentions toward us are kind and loving, or if He is kind
- e. We don't believe His intention to be our treasure is more satisfying than our present treasure on earth.

- D. Worry, rooted in unbelief, creates a tempest in our minds. We feel tossed, turned, overwhelmed, unsettled by the constant "noise" in our minds. Did you ever know someone constantly worried and full of

turmoil and anxiety, and say to yourself, “Wow, it must be torture living in that person’s mind.” Did you ever know yourself to be that person? There is an almost endless list of things over which people worry:

1. Natural disasters
2. Wars, terrorist attacks
3. Crime, government oppression, loss of liberty
4. Inflation, higher prices, shortages of essential goods
5. Career, job security, advancement, retirement, schooling, scholarships
6. Health, disease, injury, accidents, aging, diminishing beauty, athleticism, strength
7. Relationships, marriage, singleness, loved ones, success for self or family members
8. Popularity, fashion, acceptance, praise of others
9. Basis necessities - food, shelter, health care

II. Christ cares to carry our burdens and calm our anxieties.

- A. The good news of the gospel of Christ includes the truth that if Christ can calm the tempest in the sea, He can calm the tempest in our minds of those who trust in Him.

Isaiah 53:4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried;

Isaiah 26:3 "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, **because he trusts in You.**

Psalms 131:2 Surely **I have composed and quieted my soul;** Like a weaned child rests against his mother, my soul is like a weaned child within me.

- B. Notice that regardless of external circumstances, the psalmist (David) is quiet inside. Are you and I? This quietness of mind is not the result of, to quote Christian counselor David Powlison, *Stress*, p.4, "...unruffled detachment or stoic indifference. It's not about having an easygoing personality or low expectations. It's not retreat from the troubles of life or retirement to a life of ease. It's not the quieting of inner noise that a glass of wine or a daily dose of Prozac produces. ... Psalm 131's inner quiet comes in the midst of actions, relationships, and problems."
- C. The question is not whether anxieties will come upon us - they will. The question is, "What will we do with them when they come (even those godly concerns)?"

III. Faith in Christ delivers us from our anxieties and quiets our souls.

1 Peter 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, **7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.**

- A. Cast all (godly and ungodly) your anxiety on Him.

1. The word "casting" is used only one other time in the NT - in Luke 19:35 where Jesus's disciples threw their cloaks over the colt(s) on which Jesus rode.
2. By faith we must release/relinquish to Christ that over which we are worried. Example of throwing a garment without loosening our grip - we end up keeping it. We cannot cast our burdens/anxieties upon the Lord without relinquishing title to what we are worried about losing or not obtaining in this life.
 - a. E.g., God gave us our jobs, houses, material possessions. We worry about losing them when we are unwilling to relinquishing them to the will of God. God has a right to take away every temporal blessing He has given to us in this life. When we worry that He will, we are holding on to our lives too tightly, and claiming as our own what is His.
 - b. The example of Job when he lost his herds, servants, children. We, like Job, must hold loosely and be willing to let go of all of the earthly things God has given us in hope of inheriting

heavenly treasure - the Lord Himself in all His glory, the glory of God.

Job 1:21 He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there.

The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."

²² Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.

c. Christ's stress level caused sweat to pour off of him like drops of blood, but having committed Himself to God, He quietly and resolutely went to the cross, all the time doing what was good in God's eyes. In doing so He provided an example of faith and the power of His death and resurrection that we might die to ungodly anxiety and live in the righteous quietness of soul.

1 Peter 2:21 For you have been called for this purpose, since **Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,**²² WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH;²³ and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but **kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;**²⁴ and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

B. Release what is not promised and receive the promises of God, which are all "yes" in Christ.

2 Corinthians 1:20 For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes;

1. Release to God what is not forever promised and receive by faith that which is promised in His Word.

2. Am I am tempted to worry when ...

a. ... I feel overwhelmed?

Psalm 55:22 Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.

Psalm 94:19 When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Your consolations delight my soul.

b. ... I feel powerless to accomplish what is asked of me?

2 Corinthians 12:9 And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

Isaiah 41:10 'Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

c. ... I am facing opponents?

Romans 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

Psalm 118:6 The LORD is for me; I will not fear; What can man do to me?

d. ... I face injury, disease, deterioration of health?

2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.¹⁷ For momentary, light

affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

e. ... I face important decisions about the future?

Psalms 32:8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.

f. ... I face obstacles to my meeting my deadlines?

Psalms 103:19 The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all.

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.

g. ... I face getting old?

Isaiah 46:4 Even to your old age I will be the same, and even to your graying years I will bear you! I have done it, and I will carry you; and I will bear you and I will deliver you.

Psalms 92:14 They will still yield fruit in old age; They shall be full of sap and very green,

h. ... I face being left alone.

Psalms 94:14 For the LORD will not abandon His people, Nor will He forsake His inheritance.

Matthew 28:20 ... lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

i. ... I don't know if I'll have enough money to survive?

Luke 12:29 "And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying."³⁰ "For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things."³¹ "But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you."³² "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.

Philippians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

j. ... I worry that my faith might fail?

Philippians 1:6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

John 10:28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

k. ... I face the challenges of a new job, school, social environment?

Psalm 18:29 For by You I can run upon a troop; And by my God I can leap over a wall.

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

1. ... I fear my efforts will fail to be useful and productive?

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

Conclusion

Isaiah 26:3 "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You. ⁴ "Trust in the LORD forever, for in GOD the LORD, we have an everlasting Rock.

1 Peter 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, ⁷ casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.