

(1 Peter - Part 34): Casting All Your Cares Upon Him

by A.W. Tozer

God is personally concerned about each individual and is able to handle our enemies and troubles, so we must make a firm act of the will to transfer our burden to Him.

Duration: 25:53

Scripture: Matthew 18:12, 1 Peter 5:7

Topics: "Care"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the presence of various challenges and hardships in the world, such as illness, accidents, loss of jobs, betrayals, separations, bereavements, and war. The preacher emphasizes that these difficulties cannot be ignored or wished away, as they are a part of life. However, the preacher reassures the audience that God is personally concerned about each individual and is aware of their struggles. The preacher encourages the audience to trust in God's guidance and to not worry, as God will handle their challenges and protect them.

Transcript

And we'll talk a little about casting our care upon God, since God careth for us. Now this is addressed, as you will read in the first verse of the first chapter, to the elect, and it's to the elect only. Those who have been renewed by the work of God in the new birth, and have been brought out of darkness into light, they are the elect, through sanctification of the spirit and to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Those who are begotten again unto a living hope of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, they are the ones addressed. Now I emphasize this a little in passing, because I have noticed the common error of applying promises to persons not included in the promises, that God did not have in mind when he made the promises. For instance, it would be totally impossible to think of God saying this, "...cast all your care upon him, you who are dead in trespasses and sins, who walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, you who walk in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the deflation of the mind, and are by nature the children of wrath." God couldn't possibly say in the same breath, "...cast all your cares upon me." He couldn't do it, and he doesn't do it.

It's always a mistake to take a verse that doesn't belong to you and apply it to you, or a verse that applies to anybody who meets a certain condition, and you apply it to yourself if you haven't met the condition there of the error. For instance, if a letter came to your house, and you opened it up rather carelessly, and then you noticed that you had become heir of a hundred thousand dollars, there would, I suppose, be a lot of human delight with the knowledge that you were now relatively well off, as men count such things. But then you looked a little more closely, and you noticed that the letter had been opened by mistake.

After having been delivered by mistake, it belonged to a man with the same number but another street. Well, you couldn't possibly apply for that money. It wasn't you.

It was a mistake. You got the wrong mail. And so when God says to certain ones, "...cast all your cares upon me," you've got no remains.

To whom is he addressing this? He's addressing it to the humble, and the repentant, and the believing, and the obedient, and the renewed, and the elect. Now, the Father's promises are for the Father's children, and we ought to keep that in mind. When the Jews in Jesus' day claimed certain promises for themselves because they were children of Abraham, Jesus said, that's where you're mistaken.

If you were children of Abraham, you'd act like your father Abraham. But you're not children of Abraham, and all the promises made to Abraham were invalid and did not apply to these who were the descendants of Abraham, but not the seed of Abraham according to the Spirit. I only mention that because I notice how politicians and newspapers and all the rest are always coming through with tender quotations from the Bible when they're putting themselves by their living in a place where the Bible quotations cannot apply to them.

Now, this text is for God's children. Not for their prominent children of God only, nor are they gifted, nor are they successful. Lots of good Christians aren't successful, and lots of good Saints aren't prominent Saints, and lots of wonderful people aren't gifted people at all.

God has given his gifts as he sees fit, sovereignly through nature and grace. We tend to laud the gifted and the prominent and the successful. I don't know that God does.

It's only faithfulness and love that is mentioned in the scriptures, and the willingness to give all to him. Apart from that, there's not much mention made of success or prominence. So don't imagine this doesn't apply to you, just because you humbly say, Well, I'm not prominent, nor gifted, nor successful.

I'm just one of the plain Christians. Well, so am I. And after all, so are we all, really, before our Heavenly Father. And the weak and the struggling and the obscure are just as dear to God as are the prominent and successful.

Now, look a little at the presence of care in the world. He uses that word care, c-a-r-e, and of course that means anxieties, carried to the point of hidden fears, anxieties and fears, their care. Now, fears and anxieties have a reason for existing.

Let us remember that. They have a reason for existing. All optimism is irresponsible and unrealistic.

Nobody can possibly be a sound judge of human affairs and be optimistic. All schemes to conquer fear by ignoring their cause, they're deceptive, and those who would follow them would be living in a paradise of fools. They would be ignoring the causes of our fears.

The causes of our fears are here, and we've got to admit their presence. There is illness, for instance. Illness.

I just read somewhere, I don't recall now, than the last day, that there are four million people a year that die of malaria alone throughout the world. I think it's a higher figure than that yet. Not many alone die of malaria.

So there is illness everywhere. Throughout the whole wide world there is illness. And accidents occur.

They do occur. They occur among the good people. Mrs. Sandrock's a good woman.

She's walked with God these many years. She's a good woman, but she's had her accident. Accidents occur, occur.

Accidents and illness and loss of jobs and betrayals and separations and bereavements and death and war, these things are loose in the earth. Isn't it rather a touching thing that the newspapers came out with big headlines when the truce in Indo-China went into effect, and saying that for the first time in how many years, I've forgotten, I guess twenty, there's no war anywhere in the world. No war anyplace, the first time in so many years, more than a decade.

My friends, these things are present in the world. And the response of the human organism to this is anxiety and apprehension, or plain downright fears. People are afraid.

Well, the world is full of all this, I say, and people are anxious and apprehensive, and we react variously when we are apprehensive. When we get scared, some people get very hard and turdy. They develop a shell over them like a turtle, hoping that they can keep away the dangers they're afraid of, and they'll retire within that shell.

Others drive themselves to what they call success, and they become opulent, hoping they can buy their way through. It was said of John D. Rockefeller before he died that he'd have given millions of dollars for a good stomach. He lived on milk and crackers and a few little easy-to-digest things, because his stomach wouldn't take good food.

And a colored sharecropper down in Tennessee can eat anything he can chew and swallow. And the great man with all his millions couldn't get himself a stomach as good as a half-grown colored boy in the boglands of Alabama. Now, some people would go on and on and believe that they can stand off these fears by succeeding, that you can succeed and have plenty, and still these fears creep in.

And the reasons for them are here. You can't buy off illness. You can't buy off accident.

Nobody can be so successful that he won't feel the war. Nobody can possibly be so high up in the world that he won't be a victim of betrayal, of bereavement, and finally of illness and death. And of course, pleasure-seeking is nothing else but a reacting to fear, eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.

And the idea that tomorrow we die was what gave rise to the eat, drink, and be merry. If I'm going to die tomorrow, I might better make good of it while I can, and make what I can of life. So eat, drink, and be merry today, for tomorrow that deadly thing appears, that fearful thing, death.

That's the way some people react. They go wild. They do not want to face the anxieties, so they go out and scatter the anxieties for a little time by worldly pleasures.

That's why you can always, if you can think of a new thing to please the people and make them play, you can be sure of a lot of money. And then some people become nervous, wrecks, and have mental disorders of all kinds. All because we're scared.

Friends, is there someone, is there someone that can meet our enemies that I have mentioned here, and a thousand I didn't mention? Illness and accidents and loss of job or possibility of it, betrayal, separation, bereavement, death, all these things. Is there somebody that can meet these enemies? Somebody has to do it. They won't go away.

Ignore him and he'll go away, is the humorous remark made about a lot of things, and a lot of people. Ignore him and he'll go away. But these things don't go away by ignoring them.

Illness doesn't go away when you ignore it. In Beulah Beach last week I heard my wife and I of a woman we knew years ago, a very fine woman, mother of four children, active in the Alliance Church. She died last week, or recently at any rate, died of cancer.

Relatively young, she wasn't an elderly woman, though she certainly wasn't a girl anymore, but she died of cancer. And if you can't ignore that and say it'll go away, it won't go away. Neither will death go away, neither will war go away, neither will accident go away.

They cut it down a little by being careful. The law of averages says so many machines will break, so many people will fall asleep, so many reckless men will be on the highway. So these things won't go away.

Somebody has to face them and conquer them. Who's going to do it? You can't do it. Is there somebody else that'll take them on? Is there somebody else that will dispose of them? Is there someone that'll say, Now listen, child of God, you're in the midst of a deadly world.

Death walks on every hand. Error, accident, mistakes, diseases, mental breaks, all these things walk up and down the land, but I'll take care of them for you. I don't promise you won't get into any of them, but I promise you don't have to be scared.

I'll get you out of them, and I'll make them work for you, and I'll turn your evil to good. And I'll walk before thee, and I won't let one thing happen to you that isn't good for you. When you need it, I'll let it happen.

But I'll watch over you as a physician, over each patient. I'll watch over you as a nurse, over her. Is there somebody that will say, You don't have to be an optimist and ignore things.

You can be a realist and admit their presence. And you don't have to collapse and be sent to an institution. I'll handle them for you.

Yes, there is somebody. Cast all your cares upon him, for he careth for you. Now, that is the sum of the Lord's word to us on that subject.

It's not all he has said, but it's sort of a summation of it. That same theme runs through the Old Testament, and it runs through the New Testament, and it is taught by the Savior, and it is taught by all the apostles. It is simply God is personally concerned about you, you, the individual, not the mass.

We think in masses now, blocks. It is common to see these graphs or these charts in the news magazines in which it will show a little figure standing there in silhouette, dark outline. It will say, Each of these stands for five million persons, thinking in a block.

The Lord never thinks in blocks, in masses. He thinks in individuals. He thinks of his one sheep, of his one child.

So that's the teaching of the scriptures, God's personally concerned about you. Lecture 11 Justification and Sanctification 2 God is not too high and lofty to remember that his children are in a land where illness is prevalent, where there are accidents happening every day, where there are loss of jobs and financial worries, where people get betrayed by their closest loved ones, where there is separation, as, for instance, when the boy who has been close to us so many years shakes hands with a grin that isn't quite real and walks down the sidewalk and waves at the corner on his way to report to the military service. Separations come, some never come back.

God knows it and says, Now I know that's the kind of world you live in, but I have laid hold on you forever, and I know every detail of your trouble and all your problems, and I'll anticipate every act of the enemy, and every act of every enemy. I'll go before you, and not only so, but he accepts our enemies as his enemies. I will be an enemy to your enemies.

Have you read that in your Bible? I will be an enemy to your enemies. That can only mean the one thing, that if an enemy turns on me, God turns on him. And if I'm partly in the wrong, God will let that enemy through to me, enough to chase me, but he'll never let him destroy me.

He'll never let a blow fall that I don't deserve. The old grandmas out home where I was born used to say, good-naturedly, and some great big strapping fellow would say, Mother, you spanked me an awful lot when I was a boy. And the old grandmother used to dismiss it by saying, you never got to lick the mess.

That was an old-fashioned expression, you never got to lick the mess. In other words, I never whipped you once too often. Here were five great big handsome sons, doctors and what have you, all around sitting at a homecoming, and here sat the mother presiding like a queen in the middle of it.

They had all gone to college, they all had modern ideas, but they all still loved home and the old folks and Mother. They were discussing how severe she was with them when they were boys and how she gave them the worst occasion. And a great big friendly doctor said, Mother, don't you think after all that you punished us a little too often? She straightened up and said, Young man, when you've raised five such fine boys as I have, come back and talk to me.

That was the answer. And God never strikes a lick to mess, and he never lets anything happen to you if you're trusting that isn't good for you. He says, Now I'm handling this, and you take your hands off and stop your worrying.

This won't go away, but I'll handle it. And I'll look after you because I am personally concerned about you. And every enemy you have is my enemy, too.

You're on my side and I'm on your side, and the enemy is on the other side. And God will always handle the enemy. Cast all your cares upon him.

What are your cares? I don't know what your cares may be. I have given an outline of them here. None of them may touch you at all.

It may be something else I don't know about, worries that I haven't even notion you feel. But the Bible says, Cast all your cares upon him. Now, this must be done at a given time by a firm act of the will.

We don't just ooze into this or grow into it. If you were walking along and you had a great burden, and I said, Let me carry that a while, you wouldn't shift that gradually over onto me. You'd either give it to me or you would keep it.

And the act of transfer from you to me would be a crisis, an exact crisis. It would happen at a given moment. One minute you had the burden, the other minute I had the burden.

My father, when he was a young man, in later years he told this on himself. He said he and his friend, some friend of his, had somewhere to go and he only had one horse. He had long miles to go and only had one horse.

So my father's name was Jacob, calling him Jakey. And he said, I'll tell you what we'll do, Jakey. I'll ride a while, you can walk.

Then when you get tired, you can walk a while and I'll ride. And my father, innocently, country boy that he was, agreed to that, and that's the way it worked. The other fellow rode a while and Jakey walked.

And after a while Jakey said, my father said, Don't you think it's about time we ought to change off? Oh, sure. Getting tired? He said, Sure, we'll change. Now you can walk a while while I ride.

Now, I don't introduce anything humorous in here, if that should be called humorous. My father thought it was. But I will say this, that there's an awful lot of that same kind of arrangement among us Christians.

We let God carry it a while, we think, but he doesn't. We walk a while and then we walk some more. And all our transfers are stymied, they don't go through, we don't make a complete transfer of our burden.

The old man that carried the 300-pound bag of grain on his shoulder while he was riding his mare, somebody said, Why don't you put the wheat or the grain on the front of the horse's neck ahead of you? And he said, She's got burden enough without carrying that, too. I'm a heavy man, he said. We carry our burden and God carries us and our burden.

Why not be sensible and roll the burden off on God? Now, we've got to do this at a given time by a firm act of our will. Why don't we do that this morning? We came in here trusting, but under a heavy load. Why don't we just now roll that burden over onto the Lord? Don't you want to do that? If you're walking with the Lord, if you're a humble person trusting in his grace and you know you're his child, then this promise is to you.

Why should we not do that, then? Roll our cares upon him. Let us for a moment, now while we pray. Lord, we are a company of Christian people, and we have said yes to thee and no to the world.

Thou hast given us eternal life, and we are blessed, but we confess, Father, that we are in a deadly, dangerous world. We're like the tiny rabbits of the woods, or like the deer of the forest. We live by staying alert.

We exist only because we're watchful. This works on us to make us nervous and anxious. It fills us with apprehensions and fears.

It isn't pleasing that it should be so. Thou wilt look after us, thou art around us and beneath us and before us and behind us. Help us, we pray thee, to cast all our cares upon thee.

This morning we would cast on thee fear of war. The greater the world point to half a dozen or more dangerous spots where war would leap out like a fire in a moment. Father, we can't anticipate and suffer through a war that hasn't yet happened.

Help us to roll the next war on thee. And then, Lord, depressions and losses of jobs men have deep apprehensions that they don't talk about. Father, we're all right now, so we pray thee, help us to trust thee for tomorrow and next year and all the years to come.

We roll upon thee industrial fears and domestic fears. Some are worrying about their children, they're growing up, and they're worrying about what they'll do and where they'll go when they're no longer under the parental care. My God, thou hast these thousands of years seen the generation grow up.

Parents have wept and grieved over their growing children because they were soon to go out from under their care. My Lord, help us, we pray, that we may roll the future of our children over on thee. Help us to roll over on thee fear of disease, polio, and all of these devilish things.

Save us, we pray, from all these fears. We would roll our cares upon thee. We would take the whole miserable, back-breaking load of apprehensions and anxieties.

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