

OUR CARES AND GOD'S CARE

A verse that we all should commit to memory and upon which we should ever rely is the following: "Casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7). When we learn to trust this promise, it will bring us great consolation and courage.

There was great anxiety among the brethren to whom Peter wrote because of persecution. They were being "put to grief in manifold trials," and their faith was being "proved by fire" (1: 6–7). There was a "fiery trial" among them (4:12). Peter gave numerous indications that these brethren were undergoing great sufferings for the Lord. Opposition and persecution brought great anxiety to their hearts. Peter told them how to deal with these anxieties.

The "anxiety" of this passage refers to those things about which we worry and about which we are unsettled or undecided. It reminds us of Paul's familiar exhortation: "In nothing be anxious . . ." (Phi. 4:6). The Lord made a lengthy statement on this subject in the Sermon on the Mount:

Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.... Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof (Mat. 6:25-34).

If there is a difference in the exhortations of the Lord, of Paul, and of Peter, perhaps it is this: The Lord and Paul urge us not to be anxious in the first place. Peter tells us what to do when we nonetheless become anxious and worried.

The antidote for worry is the promise of God's care and concern for His children. The word Peter used for God's "care" refers to His interest and concern and implies both the will and the ability to meet our needs. If God cares for the sparrow and the raven and adorns the expendable grass of the field, does He not much more care for those who are His children (Luke 12:6, 24, 28)? If He knows the very number of the hairs on our heads, He knows and is concerned about all of our far more important needs (Luke 12:7).

The promises of God and His Son that they are ever with us are many. God's promise to Israel in this respect applies to us:

I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me? (Heb. 13:5–6).

Our Savior promised that He would be with His people as they do His work "always, even unto the end of the world" (Mat. 28:20). Peter's words are an echo of Psalms 55:22: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Therefore, let us fret less and trust and pray more.

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