

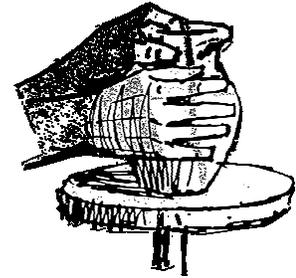
His Workmanship: Westside

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."
—Ephesians 2:10*

Vol. XXIV

April 26, 2015

No. 17



Isaiah 64:8

Anxieties: to be Cast, not Carried, by John Piper

The opposite of boldness is fear or anxiety. It's not surprising then that God not only calls us to be bold for Christ and His kingdom, but He also makes a provision for us to get rid of our fear and anxiety. Giving us courage and taking our fear are two ways of doing the same thing. 1 Peter 5:5-7 is not a direct call to boldness. It's a call not to be anxious. And so it's an indirect call to boldness and courage.

The Threat of Humility? But there is something very unusual about this text. The threat in 1 Pet 5:5-7 that tempts us to be anxious is not explicitly prison or injury or slander or plundering of property or loss of money. The threat is humility. Or to put it another way, the reason Peter deals with the problem of anxiety is because he is dealing with the problem of humility. Somehow the command for humility makes the command to cast our cares on God more urgent, more needed.

The Thought Flow. Notice this in the flow of thought from vs. 5-7. The chapter starts with a word to the elders of the church to shepherd the flock willingly and eagerly and without being motivated by money. Then the focus turns to the others in the church.

"You younger, likewise, be subject to your elders; [then to all the church] and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time..." Now right here comes the connection between this call for humility and the command to cast all our anxiety on God. The command for humility seems to cause anxiety to rise, so Peter deals with it.

The Sentence Punctuation. The NIV and RSV put a period at the end of v. 6 and make v. 7 into a new sentence. *"Humble yourselves... Cast all your anxiety on Him."* But that break obscures the connection in the original Greek. The NASB and the KJV don't have a period because v. 7 does not start a new sentence in the original Greek. It is part of the sentence in v. 6 and continues with a participle: not, *"Cast all your anxiety on Him..."*, but, *"...casting all your anxiety on Him."* Thus, *"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you."* Not: *"Humble yourselves. And cast your anxiety."* But:

"Humble yourselves...casting your cares."

Casting Your Anxiety on God Is Part of Humbling Yourself.

The point is that casting our anxiety on God is somehow part of humbling ourselves. Casting our anxiety on God is crucial if we are going to humble ourselves under God's hand and clothe ourselves with humility toward each other. Casting our anxiety on God is not simply a separate thing that we do after we humble ourselves. It's something we do in order to humble ourselves, or in the process of humbling ourselves.

There is something about humbling ourselves under God's hand and humbling ourselves before other people that makes casting all our anxiety on God necessary. Or to say it another way, there is something about casting our anxiety on God that makes humbling ourselves under God and before others possible.

It looks like humility is a threat that causes anxiety. And if we are going to be humble with God and with each other, we are going to have to cast our anxiety on God. That's the connection between v. 7 and what goes before.

"Clothe yourselves with humility toward each other, and humble yourselves under
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“Cast your burden on the LORD, and He shall sustain you...” —Psalm

the mighty hand of God by casting your anxiety on God.”

Why Does Humility Create Anxiety?

But why does humility create anxiety? Why does humility take courage? Why do we need someone to take our anxiety away in order for us to be humble? We can see the answer easily if we just start thinking of some examples of humility. What does it mean to be humble? It means, when you've made a mistake, admitting it and saying you're sorry. It means, when you are weak or sick or inadequate for a task, not being too proud to ask for help. It means doing some ordinary jobs and spending time with ordinary people and being indifferent to accolades. In other words, in all its forms humility is the risk of losing face. Humility is the risk of not being noticed, not being appreciated, not being praised, and not being rewarded. Lowliness runs the obvious risk of being looked down on. And being looked down on is painful. Being unnoticed and unappreciated is painful. Losing face is painful. Being made little of is painful. And therefore humility causes anxiety. And the command to be humble under God and to be clothed with humility toward each other makes us anxious.

We Have to Solve This Anxiety

Problem. So if we are really going to be humble, we have to solve this anxiety problem. If we are going to have the courage of humility and the boldness of lowliness, someone is going to have to take our anxiety away. That's the point of v. 7: *“Be humble by casting all your anxiety on God.”* The secret of humility is being able to cast your anxiety on God. Note the connection between humbling yourself under God's mighty hand in v. 6 and casting your anxiety on God in v. 7.

God is the focus in both verses, and the connection is this: before you can put yourself humbly under God's mighty hand, you have to put your anxiety confidently in His mighty hand.

There is a fearful cowering under the mighty hand of God for the rebellious and the proud. But that is not what Peter is calling for in v. 6. The humility Peter commands under God's hand is the peaceful, confident humility that comes because we have cast our anxiety on God with the confidence that He cares for us. Don't you love these two images side by side: humbled and lowly under the mighty hand of an infinitely holy and powerful God, and confident and peaceful because that very God cares for us and carries our anxiety. Before you bow down and step under Him, cast the burden of your anxiety on Him!

How Do You Cast Your Anxiety on God? What does it mean to cast your anxiety on God? How do you do that?

Help from the Same Word in Luke 19:35. This word “*casting*” in v. 7 occurs one other time in the New Testament—in Luke 19:35—in exactly the same Greek form, *epirrhupto*. It was the Sunday before the events of the cross, and the disciples had been sent to get a donkey for Jesus to ride on. Then *“They brought it to Jesus, and casting their garments on the colt, they set Jesus on it,”* v. 35. So the meaning is simple and straightforward: it means to fling, to cast upon; if you have a garment on and you want an animal to carry it for you, you “cast” the garment upon the animal. In this way you don't wear it—you don't carry it anymore. It's on the animal, not on you. The donkey works for you and lifts your load. [In the Old Testament, the word for cast is *shalak*, “to throw (literally or

figuratively):—, cast (away, down, forth, off, out), hurl, pluck, throw.” It is used often (121 times), sometimes with the idea of throwing away or discarding, as our sins or burdens are cast away like refuse or dead bodies (cf. Ps 22:10; 51:11; 71:9; Is 38:17; Jer 7:15, 29; 22:19; Ezek 18:31; 20:7-8; Mic 7:19).]

God is willing to carry your anxieties the same way a donkey carries your baggage. One of the greatest things about the God of the Bible is that He commands us to let Him work for us before commanding us to work for Him. *“Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,”* Mt 11:28. *“Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will sustain you,”* Ps 55:22. *“Even to your old age I am He, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry and will save you,”* Is 46:4. *“For since the beginning of the world men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, nor has the eye seen any God besides You, Who acts for the one who waits for Him,”* Is 64:4. God wants to be a burden bearer because it demonstrates His power and puts Him in a class by himself among the so-called gods of the universe. *“No one has seen a God besides You, Who works for those who wait for Him.”* So throw the garments of your anxiety onto Him. He wants to carry it.

How Do You Do That in Practice? You do it by trusting the second half of v. 7 very specifically in relation to your specific anxiety. The first half of v. 7 says, *“...casting all your anxiety on Him...”* and the second half of the verse says, *“...because He cares for you.”* Here is where the rubber meets the road. How do you make the anxiety transfer from your back to God's back in real life practice? The answer is: trust that He cares for you. Believe this promise.

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Exposing current thoughts & trends *sexual morality*

Obama Administration Sex Scandals, by Tony Perkins

The latest sex scandal involving federal law enforcement officials has claimed its first high-level victim, with Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) chief Michele Leonhart resigning after a Department of Justice Inspector General's (IG) report documented that DEA agents in Colombia had participated in "sex parties" with prostitutes—in some cases hired by the very drug cartels the agents were supposed to be fighting. This comes after a similar well-publicized scandal in Colombia (where prostitution is tolerated) involving Secret Service agents, but the IG report covered problems of sexual harassment and misconduct not only in the DEA, but also in the FBI, U.S. Marshals Service, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Meanwhile, the Defense Department continues to struggle with problems of sexual assault and pornography in the military.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest insisted, "*The president ... maintains a very high standard for anybody who serves in his administration.*" Perhaps, however, President Obama needs to engage in some soul-searching about his party's unqualified affirmation of the values of the sexual revolution—namely, sex without boundaries (such as homosexuality) and without consequences (hence the necessity of abortion). If it is not permissible for the society or culture to demand sexual self-restraint from anyone, it inevitably makes it harder to demand such restraint even in the professional context of the military or law enforcement, which by now, should be very evident.

Beginning Wed, 5/27, through 7/31, Payton Miller will work with Westside teaching/preaching for us during the PM services on Sunday and teaching a youth class on Wednesday nights. Jim will mentor Miller through the summer.

from p. 3 God is sovereign over our anxieties and is wise enough and caring enough that we can entrust ourselves to Him.

- Prayers for humility and for more of the Spirit of the lowly, servant, risk-taking Christ (Phil 2:3–8).
- Prayers for more faith in God's promises and that every binding obstacle to joyful trust would be overcome.
- Prayers for God to call people to service; that we would cast our anxiety on God and hear His call.
- Prayers broadened to other churches—pray for the prosperity of God's kingdom in every fellowship where Christ is truly named; for courage and humility in evangelism.



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Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

• **adult Bible class**, "*Marriage Boot Camp: Basic Training in Communication*," "*What's It All About?*" Jim Reingrover

• **Sermon**, "Cliffhanger," Steve Walker

Sunday afternoon

• **Bible Questions Answered**, Jim Reingrover

Feeding on His Word Reading

Everyone is invited to an open Bible reading of 1 Corinthians Friday evening, May 1, at 6:30 pm, light supper beforehand, at Judy Sartin's house. See **Joel Walker** for schedule.