

Psalm 55:16-22

“As for me, I will call upon God, And the LORD shall save me. Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, And He shall hear my voice. He has redeemed my soul in peace from the battle that was against me, For there were many against me. God will hear, and afflict them, Even He who abides from of old. Selah Because they do not change, Therefore they do not fear God. He has put forth his hands against those who were at peace with him; He has broken his covenant. The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, But war was in his heart; His words were softer than oil, Yet they were drawn swords. Cast your burden on the LORD, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.”

Careful Casting

A farmer and his family were on their way to the market with a truckload of produce when they came upon a man carrying a heavy load. Taking compassion on him, the farmer invited the man to ride in the back of the truck. Arriving at the market sometime later, the farmer was surprised to find the man still straining under the heavy weight, for he had not removed the burden from his shoulders. This story from the Philippines demonstrates the dilemma of many Christians who, though they have accepted Christ as Saviour, are still shouldering their own burdens. Peter makes a very clear appeal to every believer: "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7 NIV).

In using this word cast “επιρριπτω” (epi-riptow), Peter explicitly declares that the believer's anxieties are to be thrown down as one would toss aside cumbersome clothes in order to seriously undertake any task. This, although it sounds easy enough, takes careful and prayerful thought. Lawrence Crabb in his book "The Marriage Builder" suggests that the first step in casting aside anxiety is to distinguish between personal desires and personal goals.

Personal desires are those legitimate wishes each of us have regarding people, events or happenings that we have absolutely no control over. With these wishes the believer is exhorted to "Be anxious for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." (Philippians 4:6 NKJ).

To find the peace promised next in this passage the Christian must be determined to hold onto nothing outside of direct personal ability to achieve. The attitudes, decisions and activities of others, although influenced by us, and important to us, are outside personal final choice. Therefore these desires are to be "cast" on the Lord by prayer and thanksgiving, with reliance on and trust in Him for the outcome.

Personal goals are God given responsibilities that are within our power to personally achieve. Even in these the Christian is not to be anxious but is, by prayer and daily obedience to the Word of God, to give these tasks to God in commitment to His will. Christ was able to accept the responsibility of bearing the sins of man. He gave the task over to God in a deeply meaningful, yet simple prayer: "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22:42 NIV).

Paul, in casting His care upon the Lord also found strength to succeed: "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength." (Philippians 4:12-13 NIV).

Christian friend, why carry a burden that the Lord is willing to bear, start casting and begin to enjoy the journey.

What is my response:
