

## **Sermon Outline**

### **OUR CARES ARE IN HIS CARE**

Text : 1 Peter 5:6-7

Message : Because God cares for his people, we are to entrust our anxieties to Him

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Peter writes this short letter to 1<sup>st</sup> century Christians, both Jews and Gentiles scattered in Asia Minor or Western Turkey of today
- B. The letter's purpose is about "...exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it."(5:12).
- C. Hence Peter's offer of consolation, encouragement, and guidance to live out faithfully their Christian witness based on divine principle of "true grace".
  - 1. God has established their salvation,
  - 2. He has given them their identity – chosen (1:2),
  - 3. He has confirmed their present-day calling, (1:2-3), and
  - 4. He has secured their future inheritance. (1:4)
- D. Christian life is no less difficult in 21<sup>st</sup> century. How do we conduct ourselves when we are under pressure?
- E. In 1 Peter 5, Peter's closing words for the entire Christian community beginning at v 5, points us the way.

#### **II. Because God cares for us, we can be free from our anxieties**

- A. In its immediate situation, the 1<sup>st</sup> century Christians in Western Turkey were sitting on a time bomb in an oppressive climate of persecution.
  - 1. Waiting for the ripples of persecution from Rome, the centre of the Roman Empire to sweep through empire wide.
  - 2. Peter's readers were already experiencing various kinds of trials that were causing them varying degrees of grief and suffering. (1:6)
    - Politically, they are scapegoats and made an example for any wrongs in society.
    - Socially, they were suffering because they were living by different priorities, values, and allegiances than their pagan neighbours.
    - As a minority, they were convenient targets that can be sacrificed.
- B. The final onslaught came when Emperor Nero ascended the throne.
- C. Under such circumstances, you can imagine the anxieties the Christian community in Asia Minor was put through, notwithstanding their present persecution because of their new found faith in a hostile world. ( 1:6)

- D. They were as Peter puts it in the letter, sojourners and exiles.
1. This world is not their home since they resolved to follow Jesus.
  2. The one and only Lord distinctiveness of their faith were affronts to Rome's religions and way of life.
- E. As such, new Christians faced loss of friends, social status, livelihoods or life itself – each of which, could bring about anxiety.
- F. It was into such a scenario that Peter wrote the advice in v 6 -7.
- G. Fast track to 21st century, Christians faced similar anxieties. Perhaps in a less oppressive climate, yet the nature of our anxieties is the same.
1. We are anxious about our future, our health, our busy work schedules, our contract, our children and their education, our marriage or singleness, our church and its development, etc.
  2. We are also worried about our past and its implication on the present with regard to relationships with people and what people say or not say about us... and the whole list multiplies..
- H. But what is the issue with anxiety that Peter is concerned with.
1. Jesus tells us not to be anxious. ( Mat 6:25-32)
    - *"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?(Mat 6:25)*
  2. The root idea in the word used here for “anxiety” is that of “distract” or “divide”.
  3. Mark in his gospel relates in the parable of the sower by Jesus says it is one of the hindrances that chokes and makes unfruitful God's word. Mar 4:19
    - *And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. (Mar 4:18-19)*
  4. Anxiety can erode and deplete our trust and reliance on God and His promises to His covenant people.
- J. In Luke 10, beginning at v 38, we have an illustration of what anxiety can do to us.

### III. Because God cares for us, we are to cast our anxiety upon Him (5:7)

- A. First of all, Peter acknowledges that we all have anxiety.
1. We can't just ignore or deny their existence.
  2. Neither can we run for them and not talk about them.
- B. The apostle Paul admits to having anxiety.
- *And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.(2Co 11:28)*

- C. It is possible to be anxious and not sin if we deal with it properly.
- D. They are to throw away or cast their anxieties that have come upon them.
  1. That word “casting” literally means toss or hurl or fling usually with some force.
- E. But we don’t cast our anxieties just anywhere, hoping that it will all be taken care of, somehow.
- F. “All” our anxieties has the idea the whole of their worries, not of every worry that comes along, not bits and pieces, but casting the whole burden of anxiety.
- G. Peter explains that the reason for doing so is because the Lord cares for us.
  1. That phrase, “He cares for you” actually means “for it is a care to Him concerning you," or "for you are His concern." Put it reverently, God makes you His customer.
  2. Or as one paraphrase puts it contemporarily - You can throw the whole weight of your anxiety upon him, for you are his personal concern.
- H. But we note that it is anxiety and not troubles, circumstances or conditions that cause anxieties that are cast upon the Lord.

#### **IV. Because God cares for us, we are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God (5:6)**

- A. Having said all that about throwing or casting our anxiety on the Lord, we can only do that if we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.
  1. The word in v 7 is “casting”, meaning it is a subordinate clause to a main verb. English teachers will tell you this is an adverbial clause. Therefore v7 is directly connected or associated with the main verb or instruction in v 6 ie humble.
  2. In other words, if we are to cast our anxiety upon the Lord we need to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.
  3. And in turn when we humble ourselves as v 5 informs, we receive from God grace.
  4. Putting it all together, casting all our anxieties upon God is all of grace.
- B. You see grace at work more clearly when we see the verb translated "humble yourselves" is in the passive voice, which means that “you”, the subject of the verb is passive in the hands of God and is acted upon by Him. The exhortation is, "Be humbled," or "Suffer or let yourselves to be humbled."
- C. Further there is close relationship between humility and anxiety. There are many practical illustrations of these:

- D. Unless we let the Lord be in the driving seat of our journey of life completely, we will consciously or subconsciously refuse to cast our anxiety upon the Lord.
- E. The awkward thing is that we were humbled enough to repent and bow before God and His almighty hand to be converted and become a Christian. But as we go on in our Christian life, we lose our way in the humbling process and the sight of a transcendent God who cares for us to the minutest detail because of our pride and egocentricity.
- E. Peter here speaks from experience with regard to humility. Peter himself illustrates God's grace to the humble. He doesn't have that of himself.
- F. Peter speaks here in v 6 of a transcendent God and not a god who is pushed to one obscure corner of our life to be at our beck and call. He is God transcendent. Our times are in His hand .
1. He knows everything about us and everything we are going through.
  2. And He is concerned with what we are going through because you are His personal concern 24 x7.  
*My times are in Thy hand;  
 Why should I doubt or fear?  
 My Father's hand will never cause  
 His child a needless tear.*
  3. Hence, Psalm 121 tells us
    - *He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. (Psa 121:3-6)*
- G. Anxiety is a contradiction to true humility..
- H. Anxiety is a pervasive issue. Health surveys reported that anxiety is the most common of all mental disorders. And it affected about one in 13 people. Mind you this based on clinical cases. Imagine what is below the iceberg.
- H. Anxiety will continue to plague us unless man is humbled enough to bow before God and say our hearts are restless until it finds rest in you. That was actually St Augustine's observation right back in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Only then would he be able to know where to cast his anxiety.

## V. Conclusion

- A. But brethren, of all the peoples of the earth, we can do this because God of all grace ( 1 Pet 5:10) cares for us. This is not misplaced confidence. It is to be experienced by all believers in Jesus Christ who have humbled themselves under the mighty hand of God.

- B. Until we do so, all other measures to rid ourselves of anxiety are temporary and symptomatic treatment. The root cause of our anxiety is still there – the lack of humility to humble ourselves under God’s mighty hand.
- C. Why do we worry therefore, if we are His concern. He is more concerned about our welfare than we could possibly be. This is our distinctive that pertains to the Christian gospel. The humble receive this given grace only because of the redemptive work of Christ in his death and resurrection.