

"Overcoming Worry" -1 Peter 5:7

This morning I would like to teach you on 1 Peter chapter 5, verse 7. I'd like to deal with one subject; one of the areas I believe that God really wants us to understand. And I pray that, as I minister, it would really make sense to you. And it's on that area of 'overcoming worry'. How to overcome that worried spirit. And so in (1 Peter 5:7), he talks about worrying and anxiety and stress. And we live in a society that is filled with so much stress. And we have to confess that every one of us at some time or another has worried. And the question is: Is it sin? Is it sin to worry? And the Bible says: Absolutely, it is sin when I worry. And so I want to challenge you, in a very biblical perspective, that if you have this problem of 'worrying about worrying', then you need to pay attention because I believe that God's word is pretty crystal clear. And all of us need to begin to grow.

Last week we mentioned David, and how David in one moment of his folly made a horrible mistake. How that he turned Ahithophel against him. And then you remember he committed adultery with Bathsheba. And then he killed Uriah and he caused the children of Israel to go contrary to his own counsel. And we find there in the life of David, that on his public side it was a pretty impressive ministry, but in his personal life it was pretty much of a disaster. And sometimes as we read through the Psalms we see David, as we saw today, crying out, **"Oh God, where art thou? How long do I have to search for You?"** (Psalm 77) And you find David in this horrible state of insecurity and fear and constantly worried about where he's at with the Lord. And that's not where God wanted David to be, but because of David's sin, because of David's shortcomings, he found himself not right with God.

And when you're not right with God and you're not trusting God, then you're going to have to worry. And you should worry about the world in which you live in. You should

worry about all the things that are taking place. But if you know Christ and you love the Lord with all your heart, then the Bible says that you're not to worry about anything. (Matthew 6) You're not to be anxious; you're not to be terrified in anything. And Jesus begins to lay this out in a wonderful way. And He said that if you don't come apart, you're going to fall apart. And so we find today concerning this incredible story of David: How he worried about his own position because he had sinned against the Lord. And maybe today, in our hearts, that we have to confess that we worry way too much, way too concerned about things - and we're not giving them to God.

So you need to give this Iraqi war to God. You need to give the terrorist attack unto the Lord. You need to give everything you do unto God. And He will guide you, and He will lead you, and He will direct you in the ways that He wants you to go. And sometimes we have a ministry in the outside that when people look at us they see tremendous strength. But if they knew how much we worried about things: about the children, about what's going on, about the finances, about the relationship of marriage or being single or not being married or being widowed. If they knew how much we would worry about things, it would be a whole different thing. And so we find this word, 'worry' in a very interesting way. The biblical perspective, very simply, is that we're not to worry; we're to trust the Lord. And Jesus said, you remember, in (Matthew 6:25), **"Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; or yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not life more than meat, and the body than clothing?"** In other words, what He is saying, Jesus, on the 'Sermon on the Mount', is that - let me take care of my responsibility.

So when you worry, or when you are filled with anxiety, or you're fretting, you are pulling the responsibility away from God; and you are now assuming that relationship or that responsibility that you have in your own life. God made a commitment to you the day that you came to know Him - that He would be your God and that you would be His people. That He would be the Lord of your life and that you would be His servants. That He would be the master and that you would be the slaves. And that you would

have no need of anything; that God would take care of you very carefully. That is, He knows every sparrow that hits the ground; and He knows every hair upon your head. In my case, He's erasing them, and he's putting them out my ears. So it's kind of...I don't understand that personally, but it's kind of like...just when you get old...your hair grows everywhere you don't want it to, but it happens. But He knows exactly what's going on. And if I pull back and I begin to worry about my day or about tomorrow or about yesterday, then I am basically taking things out of His hand.

We see also that Jesus said in (John 14:1), "**Let not your heart be troubled.**" And in the *Greek* it means: *Let not your heart be terrified.* And He was saying to the disciples, that they were concerned about what was going to happen. And He is saying to them: Don't be troubled. Don't be terrified. Garnish your heart. Protect your heart. Put your heart back upon the Lord. In this world, you're going have persecution. But in Me, "**Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.**" (1 John 4:4) And God is encouraging you, that you would put your heart in Christ and that you would never allow your heart to become terrified. There are going to be moments, and there's going to be fears that are going to pop up; but you need to give those things to God, as quick as you can.

And then we find, very simply, we see that Paul said in (Philippians 4:6), "**Be anxious for nothing...**" Listen to what he's saying: "**Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer, supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God.**" So we're not to be anxious for anything in our life. Now this is kind of cool. Number one, we're not to worry about ourselves. Number two; we're not to be worried about the things going on. Don't let your heart over panic or become filled with anxiety. Don't be terrified. And then here, Paul was saying, "**Don't be anxious for anything.**" In other words, if that car is yours, it's going be there. If that wife is going be yours, she's going be there. God's going to hold things together until you figure it out. He knows that you're not all there, and so He's going help you. He's going put things together. He's going make sense of your life, but you have to see Him as the 'master plan of your heart'. And then you remember, as I mentioned in (1

Peter 5:7), **"Casting all your cares upon Him because He cares for you."** In other words, you're not to hold on to anything in your life. You have not been given the ability to hold on to things; you have to let them go. And great people who can do great things for God are those that 'let go'; they delegate, they facilitate. But the moment you begin to hang on, trying to become the 'savior' of the world: Worried about your kids, and worried about your marriage, and worried about this. You need to give those things to God. You're not to hang on.

And then lastly, we see what David said in (Psalm 55:22), **"Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He will sustain thee; He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."** In other words, He'll take care of the emptiness. He'll bring you to a point of security and He will sustain your life. So in a nutshell before we dive in, very simply God is saying, in a very profound way, according to the word of God: That you're not to worry about your life; that's God's responsibility. Whatever you need, He's going take care of. Whatever your relationship might be, or your need of a relationship, God's going take care of it. As He does the sparrows, He's going take care of you much more. He said, **"He gave you His son, how much more will He give you all things freely."** (Romans 8:32). You're not to be terrified in your heart. God desires that your heart and your mind will be at peace. And if your mind is stayed upon the Lord, you're going to have peace in your heart.

And then it says, **"That you're not to be anxious, not to be worried, and not to fret."** (Philippians 4:6) In other words, it's going to work out. **"All things work out according to God's will."** (Romans 8:28) **"And everything is made beautiful in His time."** (Ecclesiastes 3:11) But you have to give God time. He said to Ruth, you remember through Naomi, **"Sit still my daughter till He has done the work."** (Ruth 3:18) In other words, you sit still - and God will do the work. You are silent - and God will speak. You stand - and God will move. God wants you to know - that He's going to do it. **"And then you need to cast everything upon Him."** (Philippians 4:6) And then you need to relax, and drop everything upon Him.

And that's what I want to talk to you about this morning. Three simple things, I think, that can really help in this area, in all of our lives, myself included. Number one: 'What' are we to do? What are we to do with this type of worrying? And then number two: 'How' are we to do it? How are we to do it? And then number three: 'Why' are we to do it? So 'what' are we to do? And then secondly, 'how' are we to do it? And then number three, 'why' are we to do it? And I want to explain very simply: So number one: What are we to do? What in the world are we to do? And there are two scriptures we want to look at. First of all, in (1 Peter 5:7): What are we to do? **"We are to cast our cares upon Him."** Notice in (1 Peter 5:7), he says, **"Casting all your cares upon Him for He careth for you."** So Peter now begins to give us a picture of what Christ was talking about in (Matthew 6:25-31). And Peter helps us, and gives us an illustration of what we're to do with the burdens of our life, with the problems. And the word he uses, in the *Greek*, "to cast" is kind of a unique word: It means to 'pick up and throw at'. So in other words, I'm tired of the burden in my life. I'm tired of this pressure, and I want to get rid of it, but I don't know who to give it to. And Jesus is saying through Peter, **"Give it to Me."** (1 Peter 5.7) And Peter is using a word: "cast it" – *throw it to Me*. He says also: Place it before Me. In other words, "Place it right before Me, Steve." And then he says: To scatter it. In other words, throw the burden right at My feet. So that's the exhortation that Peter is saying: Take this problem, take this anxiety, take these kids, take this husband, take this job, take this church - and we throw it at Your feet. That's a good thing to do. And the reason why is because you're not capable of carrying this problem. You've lost your joy. You've lost the peace. There's no longer the voice of God alive in your heart, because you have been hanging on for dear life; and God doesn't want you doing that. And somehow we feel that we have to hang on to this problem. And so we hang on to our kids and we will not let them go, and because we hang on, we lose our kids. The moment you're willing to let your kids go to God, you're going to get your kids back. And God is a better parent than you are. And God can work inside of their hearts. And God can get down to the very bottom of the issue. We see on the outside. We hear what we hear, but God knows the intent and the motive of their heart. And when I'm willing to cast my kids before the Lord, throw this situation before God - then God

begins to work in a wonderful way. And I want you to start casting your sin of the past before God. "Lord, I have been carrying this sin. I'm tired of it. Lord, you know what I've done. You have forgiven me. Here is my sin." And I think you need to cast the present to God. "Today, whatever happens in my life, God, I want to give it to you." **"As my day is, so shall my strength be."** (Deuteronomy 33:25) And then concerning the future: If the terrorists hit, things happen, and we go to war, "God I have to believe that You're going help me get through the day for the glory of God." So I want to start throwing the past, the present and the future to Jesus Christ.

And then also I find, the second verse, in (1 Peter 5:7), the second one is in (Psalm 55:22). **"He says not only cast your cares but cast your burdens."** And this is so important, and it's part of the study, and I want you to listen very carefully. In the *Hebrew*, the word "cast" here means: *To let go*; it means *to relax*; it means *to drop*. And what I believe that David is trying to say is that: Sometimes you don't have the strength to give it to God; and you don't know how to do it, and you are carrying this weight. And the best way I can explain it is: When a weight lifter picks up the weight and he understands that he is in trouble. His legs are beginning to buckle. His knees are beginning to come out of the joints. He knows that he's in trouble. What does he do? He lets go. And the weight just rolls off his hand. He doesn't have the ability to throw that to Jesus. He doesn't have the unique understanding to cast it at His feet. The second word means: Give your burdens to God. In other words - let go, relax. Let the thing roll off your back. "God, these kids, this marriage, this business, Lord, I can't bear it no more." Then let go. And the moment you let go, God's able to pick it up. And no matter how you let go, when you let go, or how you let go, it doesn't make a difference; He'll pick it up instantly before He even reaches your hand. It begins to roll off your hand and your fingers and God's right there. He picks it up and puts it down. And that's what you need to understand: When you have the ability to cast - throw it to God. "God, this attitude, this mood, this woman who cut in front of me at the store..." My wife, bless her heart. Bless her heart. I'll tell you, she is a great woman. Because I would have killed this woman - not my wife, this other woman; I would have killed her right there. Because I just know me, I just come from a different

background. She, both of us were 'hippies' but she really was a 'flower child'. I was kind of a drug addict, you know. But she had that that little flower and long hair, when I saw her. And she had that big smile and the tie-dyed. And I remember seeing her in 1970, she was all 'hippy', bell bottoms, beads, the whole shot. And all of sudden, she's at Pet Mart, the other day, she told me this story. And she said, she had this cart and she turned around to grab the bag and someone took her cart. Now, that to me is like war. I mean let's go grab that cart and run over that person in Jesus' name. Pick it up...slam them...you know? And then ask forgiveness...you know? Taking the cart...you know...whatever...I... "Don't touch my cart!" That's sad, but that's me. She, bless her heart. She says, she walks up to the gal, and she says, "Is that your cart?" And the woman says, "Well, no. Is it yours?" "It's mine." And then she said, "Would you like to share our cart together?" And she, the woman said, "Are you about ready to check out?" And Gail says, "I am." She says, "Well, would you mind?" "No. We'll share the cart together." And so she pushed it up, and all of sudden she rang it. And then the woman who took the cart (I hope you're not here right now) had two teenage boys and those two teenage boys carried that bag of food out to my wife's car. You see how God works that out. I would have been in prison. Gail gets them carrying bags. I mean that's the difference between us. Wonderful story.

So what do you do? You have to cast it and God turns it around. And God does a work; and so I need to learn to cast it, or drop the burden. Give it to God. "Lord, they stole my cart. How can I turn this thing around for the glory of God?" She did it. And I think God honored her for that in a wonderful way. And so the idea of relaxing.

So number one, what are we to do? We're to cast the burden and we're to cast the cares. But number two: How are we to do it? And that's important. I can tell you all day you need to cast it. "Okay, Steve, I'll throw it to God. And Steve, I'll drop it right now. But, how do I do that?" Well, it tells us in (Philippians 4:6), exactly what to do. How are we to do it? Paul says, in (Philippians 4:6), "**Be careful** (or be anxious) **for nothing but in all things by prayer**, (here it is, this is "how" you're going to cast your burdens, and you're going to cast them in) **prayer**, (in) **supplication with**

thanksgiving, let your requests be known unto God." So very simply, he says: by praying, by supplication and by thanksgiving. **"And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your heart and your mind through Christ."** And all I want to say is this: You need to start talking to God. You need to start telling God how you feel. You need to tell God what's going on in your heart. You need to tell God how upset you are about a situation. You're good at telling everybody else. And you're good at destroying everybody else. But I believe that you need to come to a point that you can look God in the face and say, "I am not happy with this whole situation." It won't be a problem for God. Martha said, very simply, to Jesus, "Where were you?" I would have...if I were Jesus...she'd be smoke... That's why I'm not God, you know. All of a sudden, Martha says, "Where were you? If you would have been here, my brother would not have died." Jesus said, "Martha, Martha. Bless your heart. I'm the "Resurrection and the Life." "Well, where were you?" "Martha, where's Lazarus?" "He's dead. He stinks." "Martha, do you believe?" "Well, yes." "Roll away the tomb." "But Lord, he stinks." "Martha, I thought you believed?" "I do but he still stinks." "Martha, roll that thing away. Lazarus, come forth." And he comes forth.

You see God was willing. And I think sometimes we think the power of the story is in 'the Resurrection'. It is. But I think the power of the story, is that He listened to Martha griping and complaining and making accusations, but here's the wonderful thing: Martha was 'talking' to Jesus Christ. And God wants you to talk to Him; and God wants you to complain to Him. And God wants you to pour your heart out to him. "God, I don't understand. We've raised the kids the right way. We've done this. What in the world is going on?" And God will speak back. And He'll tell you, exactly what you need to hear; and so by prayer, and by supplication.

I remember early in my life, God said "Pray for this car." I said, "I can't pray for that car. I'm a pastor, I can't pray for carnal things." But we were in 29 Palms, making 25 dollars a week. First church I ever pastured. And God said "Pray for this car." Finally, I prayed for that car. Within eight hours, this guy knocked on the door. He said,

"You've been praying for a car?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Here's the keys." Brand new car... He said, "There's one condition." In my mind, I thought, yeah, always a condition... I said, "What is it?" He said, "You need to drive me home. I have no way home." I said "Oh God, forgive me." But you know what I learned? Here's what I learned. Ready for this? God's in the car business... God's in the car business... How many of you have bought cars this year? You don't have to raise your hands. You know I'm going to embarrass you. I won't do that. Did you ask God to give you a car before you bought it? No? Well, **"You have not, (help me out) because you ask not."** (James 4:2).

You see, you need to learn to 'talk to God'. You need to ask God: "Lord, I'm going go here, here, and here, and I'm going to spend Your money buying clothes for the kids. God, I need a sale." You can talk to Cheryl, she has great connections, Rob's wife. She knows where all the sales are. "God, show me the sales. Lord , I want to get more out of my money." God would love to do that with you. In fact, He'll go shopping with you. He'll have a wonderful time. Then you start complaining about your weight. "I can't fit in. Lord, help me lose weight." "Steve, I'd love to help you." You see we don't let God into our lives. Oh, we love God. We worship God, but we don't have time to 'talk' to God. I want you to know that you need to cast, you need to share the burden, and you need to start talking to God in prayer. "Lord, here are my kids. God, here's my wife. God, here's my church. God, here's the finances." And I believe that's so important within your lives; and watch what God's going do.

And lastly, this is my favorite. What I said in the very beginning...I love this one...what are we supposed to do? We're to cast our cares, and we're to cast our burdens. And then, how are we to do it? We're to begin to talk to God. But this last one, I think is for me. Why are we to do it? I'm one of these guys that I need to know why. Why, do I do it? And here is the answer I think for my life. Very simply go back to (1 Peter 5:7). Number one: Because God cares. He says here in (1 Peter 5:7), **"Casting all your cares upon Him (and underline) for He careth for you."** Now I'm going tell you, point blank, sometimes in your life, you don't like yourself. Sometimes you don't

like looking in the mirror. Sometimes you don't like the way you think or the way you're acting, and you're probably right. Your attitude probably really stinks. You're not really friendly. You're really nasty, and you're all selfish, and all these things are going on. But I want you to know, that in the midst of all that, God cares. And what He's saying is that "If you don't care, I do care. So give me it." "Well Lord, no one wants this." "I do, give it to me." And you begin to look at yourself and you say, "Well, no one cares...no one cares in this church." Listen, God does care. And because He cares, I'm willing to give it to Him. And there are moments in my life that I get discouraged. I get depressed. I become overwhelmed. I don't know what to do with my life. Is it time to move? Is it time to stay? What am I to do? And I begin to say, "Well, I just don't know what to do anymore. I'm just...the pressure's too great." And then, I hear this voice, "Steven, you don't care right now about anything except you. But I care about your future, about what you're doing here. You need to give Me back the church." And I give it back to Him, and all of a sudden He's the one who really cares for my soul. So, you know something? When you find a friend that cares, you'll give Him everything. And when Jesus Christ, becomes the one who cares, He said **"Give it to me I care."** (1 Peter 5:7)

Secondly, I find because 'God sustains'. Notice the reason why is because God cares, in (1 Peter 5:7); but in (Psalm 55:22), the very last portion, **"Cast thy burden upon the Lord (and underline) He shall sustain thee."** In other words, when you're empty, and you're out of the ball game, and there's nothing left in your heart to give, and there's no longer the ability to love your spouse, or to go that second mile with your kids, or get up and go back to work again; God wants you to know that He is your strength. He'll sustain you. He'll satisfy you. He'll put the longing in your heart. He'll put the need deep within your life. "God, I can't go one more day." "Steven, I know that, but you know something? I care, and I'll be your strength. I'll sustain you. I'll fill your cup." "Lord, I've been in sin." "Steve, I'll fill your cup, because I love you. And my love is so committed to you, that I care for you; and I'll sustain you and I'll fill you up." **"As your day is so shall your strength be."** (Deuteronomy 33:25) And God

will get you through that day. And you'll go to bed and think, "How did I get through this day?" You didn't. He did. He'll sustain you.

And lastly, before we close, is the third thing: Because God 'keeps'. Notice he says here in (Philippians 4:7), **"And the peace of God which passes all understanding (underline) shall keep your heart and your mind..."** The 'keeping power' of God - and sometimes, we want to walk away, don't we? Sometimes we want nothing to do with the pressure, and we have been taught to walk away from things. We don't know how to face issues. We don't know how to deal with problems. And so we run from problems. We will not face situations. And we're so worried that everything is going to turn bad in our life. But let me ask you the question this morning: How in the world can we think this way, if we have a God who cares, and a God that sustains, and a God that will keep you? In other words, what in the world can go wrong? And I read statistics the other day that 85% of the things that you worry about will never come to pass. It is Satan robbing you of your joy. So here's what I want you to do this morning. I want you to almost make a commitment before God: "Father, today, I will learn to cast my cares and let go of my burdens at Your feet." You can do that. "So God, take everything that is robbing my joy, and killing my flesh, and destroying my life. God, you take it because I'm not capable. I'm losing heart." And then secondly, "I want to start talking to You. I want to tell You what's going on in my heart. I need You to tell me it's okay." David said, **"How long are You going be away from me God?"** (Psalm 13:1) I love David. **"God, if you kill me, the dust is not going to praise You. So lift me up, so I will praise you. God, get me out of this mess and I'll praise You."** (Psalm 30:9) When David was on the wrong side with the Philistines, they were ready to kill him and David said, **"Can I just remind you that I'm your next king and I shouldn't be over here but I'll get over here but don't kill me because we need to do a work in my life."** God says, **"Okay, now get going."** In other words, David was able to encourage himself; on the wrong side, out of God's will. "Lord, You have called me, I know that; thank you for this moment of checking. I'm on my way back."

And then lastly, "God, You do care. You will sustain me; and You will keep me in the midst of my problems. So no more worries. I'm going trust You."

Closing Prayer:

Well, Father we thank You. We thank You, Lord, for Your goodness. We thank You Lord, for Your word. We pray that we would come to a place that in the midst of our worry, in the midst of our anxiety, so concerned about things that we would learn to cast, and that Lord we would learn to relax and let go, and watch You catch it in mid air, and solve the problem. And Father, we need to learn how to talk to You, not disrespectfully. But even the disciples, they woke You up and they said, **"Don't you care that we perish? Jesus rebuked the winds and told His disciples, "That they had little faith, and went back to bed."** (Matthew 8) And the story is so simple. How can a ship go down when Jesus is inside that ship? And I want to tell Your people, how can they go down, when God, You're in their heart? How can they walk away, when, Lord, You filled their life?

And so Lord, in the moments that we don't like ourselves, and the times that we become so dissatisfied with our lives. We want to throw things away and just walk away. Lord, would we hear Your voice so crystal clear: "My son, my daughter, I care. You might not care right now but I do. Let me have it. My son, my daughter, I will hold you together. I will sustain you. My son and daughter, I will protect you. I will keep you in the eye of the storm."

Closing Prayer: Well Father, we are so thankful that there's a reason why we are to give You our hearts. And this morning, while our heads are bowed and our eyes are closed, maybe some of you are at that place in your life that you're willing to cast your burdens upon the Lord. And you're willing to say to God today: "Lord, I need my life back." And God will give you that life. If you'd like to ask Christ to come into your heart, to rededicate your life, this is that moment that God wants to take care of your life, sustain you and to watch over you.

Well Father, we thank You. And I just thank You. I thank You with all of my heart, that God we can come to a point that we can give you the sadness; and God You will give us joy in the morning, that You will take the heaviness and You will give us hearts of praise. In Jesus' name. Amen.