

Our Contributors.

Bible Readings.

Be Careful For Others.

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Foundation text. Phil. 4 : 6, 7.

Refer to the Revised version and notice the change in the wording, as bringing out the true thought of this command, "In nothing be anxious." It is not meant to teach *carelessness* but *care without anxiety*.

Notice the word "nothing" as covering all possible grounds for anxiety both inward and outward. We are continually tempted to think it is our duty to be anxious about some things. Perhaps our thought will be "Oh yes, it is quite right to give up all anxiety in a general way and in spiritual matters of course anxiety is wrong; but there are things about which it would be a sin not to be anxious—about our children, for instance, or those we love, or about our church affairs and the cause of truth, or about our business matters. It would show a great want of right feeling not to be anxious about such things as these." Or else our thoughts take the other tack, and we say to ourselves, "Yes, it is quite right to commit our loved ones and all our outward affairs to the Lord, but when it comes to our inward lives, our religious experiences, our temptations, our besetting sins, our growth in grace, and all such things, these we ought to be anxious about, for if we are not, they will be sure to be neglected."

To such suggestions, and all similar ones, the answer is found in our text "*In nothing be anxious.*"

There is no getting away from this upon any subterfuge whatever. All the "seemings" may call for an apparently rightful anxiety, but God knows, and he says "nothing," and that settles it forever.

Our Lord develops this, and shows us the reason why we are not to be anxious, in His sermon on the mount.

Matt. 6 : 25-34.

The illustrations here used are such as we cannot misunderstand. The birds and the flowers are before us continually, as living examples of what real truth is. With them of course it is an unconscious trust, but with us it must be an intelligent and conscious act. One who has learned this lesson thus writes concerning it.

"Long years ago I was in the act of kneeling down before the Lord my God, when a little bird in the lightest, freest humor, came and perched near my window, and thus preached to me, all the while hopping from spray to spray. "Oh thou grave man look on me and learn something. Thy God made me and if thou canst conceive it He loves me, and cares for me. Thou studiest Him in great problems which oppress and confound thee, and thou lovest sight of one-half of His ways. Learn to see thy God, not in great mysteries only, but in me also. His burden on me is light, His yoke on me is easy, for I have only to submit to Him and trust. But thou makest yokes and burdens for thyself, which are grievous to be borne, because thou wilt not submit nor trust. I advise thee to follow my example, as thy master commanded thee to do. Consider that the bird and the flower are as really from God as thou art, and that their lives are figures of something which

He wants to see in thee also. Behold the fowls of the air, they sow not neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; but your Heavenly Father feedeth them."

I Peter 5 : 6, 7.

We all know the relief it is to lay off a care or a burden upon an earthly friend whom we trust. And just like this only infinitely greater, is the relief that comes to the soul that has "cast all its care" upon the Lord. Ps. 55 : 22.

Most Christians act like the man in the story who was walking along a road bowed down under a heavy burden, and was invited to ride by a kind friend, passing in a wagon. He accepted the invitation, but still kept the heavy load upon his shoulders, and when asked by his friend why he did not lay it on the floor of the wagon replied: "Oh, it is a great deal to ask of you to carry me. I could not think of asking you to carry my burden too!"

Ps. 89 : 19.

That is, He, upon whom our cares are to be cast, is able to bear them, no matter how great they may be. And yet we, who trust our choicest things often to our fellow men and feel no fear are afraid to trust Our Lord.

Isa. 35 : 3, 4: Isa. 41 : 10-14.

Think of the blessed confidence with which children cast their cares off upon their parents, without a fear, and recall how the parents love to have it so. How often a mother, when her child is tempted to be anxious or worried over the carrying out of a plan, will say, "There, darling do not worry; leave it all to me and I will attend to it. Only trust me and do as I say, and all will come right. The only thing that a mother asks of her child is that it will yield to her care and obey her voice, and then she will take charge of the rest. And just so it is with us and our God.

Isa. 1 : 19. Deut. 5 : 27-29. Jer. 42 : 5, 6.

No mother can make things go right for a disobedient child, and neither can God, in the very nature of things.

Ps. 81 : 11, 12.

If we carry our own cares, and manage things in our own way, and walk "in our own counsels" sorrow and suffering cannot fail to be the result.

Prov. 3 : 5, 6.

A little girl I knew, once brought a bag without a string to her mother to have one supplied. The mother agreed to do it, and threading a bodkin with a string, began to push it through the hem. The child had expected her mother to sew the string on at each end of the bag like a handle, and when she saw the bodkin and string both disappearing inside the hem she was puzzled and distressed, she watched it a moment, and then said plaintively, "I think my mamma might put a string to my bag when she said she would." The mother looked up from her work re-assuringly and said, "Do not be troubled, darling, I am putting the string in all right." The child watched silently for a few more moments, and still no sign of the string appearing, as it was a little difficult to push through the narrow hem, the tears began to gather, and again the plaintive voice whispered, "I thought my mamma was a good mamma, and knew how to put on strings!" This time the mother saw there was a real need of comfort and she explained more fully. "See, darling," she said, "I do

know how to put a string to a bag, and this is the best way. Just trust me and wait, and it will all come out right."

The child waited, and in a few moments the string was pushed through, a knot tied and the bag hung triumphantly on the little arm. The child looked thoughtfully at it, and then said "Oh I see. It is just like Jesus. We give Him something to do and, He don't seem to be doing it right, and we are just going to worry; and then we think 'Oh! Jesus knows how'; and we just trust Him and wait, and it comes out all right at last.

Ps. 127 : 1, 2.

All our care is vain unless the Lord shall take the care also. And our worry is all a waste if He does not take it. If a mother sits up late and rises early in order to bear her child's burdens, it is that the child may rest; and it would grieve her sorely to have the child also try to carry the burdens as well.

John 14 : 1, 27.

Here the master *commands* us not to be troubled or afraid, so that every time we yield to anxiety or fear we are disobeying Him.

There are three instances recorded where our Lord rebuked the little faith of his disciples; and yet in each case the circumstances were such as to make anxiety seem the natural and proper thing. They were such as would cause great anxiety in many christian hearts now.

First it was a storm at sea.

Matt. 8 : 24-26.

Their fear led them to cry to Him, and yet He rebukes it. They ought to have known that with Him aboard, they could not be other than safe, and they ought to have rested in quiet confidence through the storm. The second instance was when Peter found himself sinking in the water.

Matt. 14 : 29-31.

The third was when the disciples were troubled because they had no bread.

Matt. 16 : 8-10.

Here Jesus refers them to past experiences when He supplied all their need, as a reason why they should trust Him now. And I am sure He was grieved at the doubts of His disciples, just as we are grieved when those whom we love and whom we are trying to serve, are anxious and fearful about the things we have undertaken to do for them.

Three lessons from the old testament will illustrate our lesson. The first is the story of Hagar when she was sent out from her home into the wilderness, apparently to die.

Gen. 21 : 14-19.

The second was when Elijah went during the time of famine, to the house of the widow.

I Kings 17 : 12-16.

The third was when the army of Syria encompassed the city where dwelt the man of God.

II Kings 6 : 15-17.

The causes for anxiety were in each of these cases very great, but God was in each instance behind the scene with His perfect supply, and those who were afraid only needed to have their "eyes opened" to see it, and be delivered from all their fears.

Matt. 6 : 31-33.

Our part is to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. That is, we must make it the first object of our lives to accept his will and do it under all circumstances, and then simply trust Him for all the rest. No one can, in the very nature of things, be "careful for nothing" who is not fully surrendered to the Lord; for unless we are satisfied with His will, we cannot trust