

He could have jumped up impatiently and angrily stopped the storm and then told them off. BUT he didn't. He hushed the storm and gave us all a wonderful insight as to how He does care. All too often the disciples question "*Don't You care?*" sadly is our question too.

It is a timeless question, some time or other literally everyone asks it. Does God care? Where is God when we hurt? Well if you must know -He is right there, listening, healing, helping and above everything else saying "*Cast all your cares on Him ...*" Did you pick up the emphasis "**ALL** your cares" - we cannot say that some of our situations are outside the scope of this verse. We cannot hand things over to the Lord piecemeal - once and for all we must give ALL of our cares - past, present and future - to the Lord. Tough times and tough things have been happening everywhere. It is time to remember the invitation never changes, never alters, never gets exhausted, is never withdrawn.

3. JESUS IS IN THIS VERSE. "*upon Him ..He cares for you*"

Do not forget WHO He is.

Just think for a moment of His birth as angels announced the event to the shepherds and how a star led the wise men to come and worship Him. Thousands heard His teaching and discovered Jesus was always available as the telling phrase in Acts 3:26 states" *God, having raised up Jesus, sent Him to bless you*" Don't miss out on God's blessing for your life today. The day came when quite openly at Calvary nailed to a cross suspended between heaven and hell and for all the world to see He gave His life as a ransom for sin, so He could be our Saviour and Lord. After He rose from the grave, the tomb stone was rolled back - not to let Him out but to let the whole world look in.

It is more than knowing just facts about Jesus, or even knowing all about the church or even being familiar with the Bible. It is all about that personal relationship with Him as Lord and Saviour. No one understands you like Jesus. Is there pain in your heart because of what you have encountered - He cares. Are you weary, worn out because of the struggles you have faced - He cares. Are you disillusioned, dejected, feeling just like those two disciples trudging their way back to Emmaus - they found and you can find in situations like that - He cares. If you wonder does He really care for and about you just go and spend a few minutes at the Cross. It is who you know and not even what you know that makes all the difference. "*He cares for you*"

DPS

ROCHFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Welcome to

CHURCH AT HOME

Sunday 16th May 2021

WHAT TO DO WITH LIFE'S CARES

Read through this outline and join with everyone else at 11 am

HYMN

When upon life's billows you are tempest-tossed,
When you are discouraged thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done.

*Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;
Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your many blessings, see what God hath done.*

Are you ever burdened with a load of care?
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?
Count your blessings, ev'ry doubt will fly,
And you will be singing as the days go by.

When you look at others with their lands and gold,
Think that Christ has promised you His wealth untold;
Count your many blessings, money cannot buy
Your reward in Heaven, nor your home on high.

So, amid the conflict, whether great or small,
Do not be discouraged, God is over all;
Count your many blessings, angels will attend,
Help and comfort give you to your journey's end.

(Johnson Oatman Jr (1856-19220)

(It would be good if you said this prayer out aloud)

O God our gracious, glorious Heavenly Father
Enable us this morning to worship with a renewed
sense of Your presence and power

Will it ever end we wonder, life has become so
confusing at times - we are so glad You never change..

Help us Lord, remind us of Your love. Help us to
discover again the joy of knowing You and serving You.

AMEN *(You may like to say the Lord's prayer also).*

BIBLE VERSE FOR THE WEEK

WHAT TO DO WITH LIFE'S CARES

"Cast all your care on Him, for He cares for you"

1 Peter 5:7

Is this a favourite verse for you or is it one of those verses we say because we know them, yet sometimes, maybe even often, then ignore them? Recall last time I wrote I used the phrase the *"cares of this life"* as I reflected on all the issues we have faced and are facing. Each day has its own cares and concerns. It is what we do with them that matters. They can weigh you down, we can allow them to choke the very life out of us. So we have this amazing statement *"cast all your cares on Him"*.

Is it being practical and pastoral then when I take you further down to read what Peter has to say a moment or so later. *"After that you have suffered a while, (He shall) make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you"* (1 Peter 5:10) Life can be so confusing so much a pressure that we really do not know what to do *"as we suffer awhile"*. To help and encourage you the answer could be **"Try being patient"** (Hebrews 10:35,36 insists *"you have need of patience"*). Try being **prayerful** (Philippians 4:6) *"In everything by prayer ... let your requests be known unto God"*. Try being **positive** the list is set out (Philippians 4:8 *"things of good report ... think on these things"*

Several years ago I came across a down to earth book *"More than Sparrows"* by Mary Welch written for teenagers (in her words USA high schoolers) about worry and anxiety in which she devised a game they could all play. It went like this. Instead of saying *"I'm worried"* stop and say *"The Lord is my Shepherd"* THEN add *"so I am worried to death"*. The students laughed at the idea but they all promised to play this new *"peace of mind"* game. Later Mary Welch received a phone call from a young woman telling how the game had helped her as paralysed by worry about

an examination she had to take. Frozen with worry she had remembered to say *"The Lord is my Shepherd so I am afraid and I am going to fail."* She said *"I laughed at myself and just as suddenly I felt the strangest peace of mind"* She also passed the examination !

We are talking about **more than** a mind game. There is a Biblical truth and principle here. In the hustle and bustle of life. When everything seems ready to fall apart, you can stop, sit down, read a portion of Scripture, quieten your heart with a prayer and tell your heavenly Father about your anxieties and turn them over to Him. One of the most significant things Jesus said time and time again was *"be of good cheer"* (Matt.9:2,22; 14:27; John 16:33; Acts 23:11) The NIV translates it as *"Take heart"* -- my challenge for you is that you do just that *"take heart today"*

So to our text for the week.

"Cast all your cares on Him for He cares for you"

1. YOU ARE IN THIS VERSE *"YOUR cares"*

Remember this - God knows you.

In this impersonal world we live with credit cards, product codes, scanners, smart phones, computers, e-mails that can cross the world in seconds and we are all too often just a number rather than a person. Incredible to know that God does not need some kind of cosmic computer to keep track of His world *"He knows our frame, He remembers we are dust"* As you read the Gospel accounts you can only marvel how Jesus spends time with those thought to be unimportant, unattractive, unacceptable. Zaccheus hides up his tree and goes home to have tea with Jesus. A desperately sick woman just manages to touch the fringe of His cloak and is instantly healed. No matter who you are, where you are, anybody and everybody in need He is there for you.

Remember God - has time for you.

You count ! And God has time **just** for you. You are in this verse.

2. YOUR CARES ARE IN THIS VERSE. *"your CARES"*

One day the wind howled and the sea raged, the disciples in their boat were frightened. In a state of terror and fear they screamed at Jesus who was sound asleep *"Teacher don't You care if we drown"* (Mark 4:38). Jesus could have gone on sleeping. He could have told them to shut up. He could have jumped up impatiently and angrily stopped the storm and then told them off.