

# Casting Our Care Upon Christ

by W.A. Criswell

<b>TITLE:</b>	Casting Our Care Upon Christ
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<b>OBJECTIVE:</b>	The late Dr. W.A. Criswell delivered the message "Casting Our Care upon Christ" on February 17, 1974 at the First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas. Though not preached as a sermon for the New Year, this message speaks to the path of pride that must be forsaken and the path of peace that must be embraced in order for us to live the proper Christian life in 2009. (This message was taken directly from a tape of his sermon. You can read more of his material at <a href="http://www.wacriswell.com">www.wacriswell.com</a> .)

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## Introduction

You are rejoicing with us in the First Baptist Church in Dallas. This is the pastor bringing the message entitled Casting Our Care Upon Christ. It is a message from the fifth chapter of 1 Peter. In our preaching through this epistle of Simon Peter last Sunday, we stopped at verse 4 in chapter 5. This Lord's Day we begin at verse 5 and preach through verse 7: "Yea, all of you be subject unto one to another, and be clothed with humility..." Then he quotes Proverbs 3:34; a Proverb that is quoted by James — the preceding epistle — in James 4:6: "For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Humble ye therefore yourselves under the hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."

The verse that he quotes out of Proverbs is so dynamically stated here, as the apostle wrote it in that Greek language, "God resisteth the proud."

"Tasso" means "to arrange"—to appoint, to determine, to set oneself— "tasso."

Antitasso means "to arrange oneself against — to determine against, to set oneself against" — it is a strong, strong word. God "antitasso" — sets Himself against." The whole order of God's universe is arranged against the proud.

Isn't that an unusual thing that God should take such a dislike, show such deep disfavor for soul-emptying, self-destroying pride; and yet it is a natural concomitant of our fallen natures? We like to be

lifted up; we like to be received; we like to be advanced; we like to live in ourselves, and we like for all of life to revolve around us. We like to be ministered unto; we like all of the plaudits of the galleries. We love being the center of attention, made over. Pride: it is natural to the fallen man, like weeds grow up in a watered garden, or like the reeds and the rushes grow up on the side of a pond, so pride is a characteristic of our fallen natures. When we kill it, it has a thousand lives. When we try to bury it, it bursts forth out of the tomb. It takes on a thousand shapes. And when we think we have captured it, it eludes our grasp and mocks our pursuit.

## I. The Need Of Humility

Pride is a God-defying sin. It arraigns the justice of God, as did Cain. It confronts God and challenges Him to combat, as did Pharaoh: "I don't know Jehovah. Who is He, that I should obey His voice?" It even shapes itself into a god, as in the days of Nebuchadnezzar.

If I have any sensitivity to the Scriptures at all, I think it says that Satan fell, Lucifer fell because of pride; he lifted up his spirit and would be God himself. God "antitasso" — He arranges Himself, He sets Himself — the whole universe is against pride. "But God giveth grace to the humble, humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may lift you up in due time."

How would it be that a man humbles himself before God? May I mention about four things?

### A. Rejoicing In God's Service

Here's one: a man would humble himself before God if he receives the most menial, lowest offices in Christ as though they were opportunities of great honor such as being a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord; such as speaking a word to a little child. That's not beneath the dignity of a saint of God, to talk to a little child about our precious Lord, or such as washing the saint's feet.

I have been in services of those old, primitive, foot-washing Baptist people. They cry—their tears fall into the pans—as they wash each other's feet. I wish I knew something to do in the church like that, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God." Doing little things that we might do great things; being obedient in order that we might be rulers in His kingdom.

How would you depict a real, and glorious, and great Christian? How would you draw him? Well, here are some things I can suggest: a king, keeping the door of God's house; a prince, feeding little lambs; or better and best still: the Son of God—clothed in the garment of a servant, a slave—washing His disciples' feet.

I think that's what the apostle had in mind, by using one of the most unusual Greek verbs that you could ever stumble across: "egkomboomai." Isn't that a heavy, multisyllabic word, "egkomboomai?" Well, you'd look at that thing in reading this Greek text and say, "What in the earth does that word mean?" It's used nowhere else in all God's Bible. And yet, He uses it here. So you go to a lexicon, a dictionary—"I don't know what it means!"—you look it up in the lexicon; and the word means bind on yourself the clothing, the garments, of a slave.

That's the word he uses here when he says that we are to be clothed with humility, we are to bind on ourselves the clothing of a slave. And I think Simon Peter had in mind that never to be forgotten moment, when the Lord took off His clothes and girded Himself as a slave to do the menial task of a household servant. There was nobody there to wash the feet of the guests, so the Lord took off His garments and girded Himself in the clothing of a slave and He washed feet. You think that's great? God says it is, that's the way to be exalted! "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time." "We stoop to conquer:"

What does this mean: "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God"?

### B. Yielding To God's Discipline

For a second thing: not only the acceptance of a menial assignment in the name of Christ, but also the yielded surrenderedness to the disciplines of God.

"Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth." And there's no one of us that escapes the rod, the disciplines of God. And to bend before the will of God, as a reed bows before the wind; to be yielded before the will of God, as soft wax will take the imprint of the seal; thus to receive from God's hands God's disciplinary providences is to humble one's self before the Lord—not fighting against God, not hating God. As our Lord, in Gethsemane, He kissed the rod that beat Him and prepared for heavier strokes. So the things that come in our lives—over which we have no control—to receive them as from God's hands and to be grateful for them.

There was a little boy I read about who was very crippled. He hollered at the streetcar conductor as the streetcar stopped at the corner: "Wait up, mister! Wait! Wait for me, I'm coming! Wait!"

The streetcar conductor kept the streetcar door open, and the little, crippled boy clambered in and found a seat by a man who looked at the little fellow in amazement. The boy was so bright—though so terribly crippled—and so cheerful. And the man couldn't help but exclaim to the lad, "Son, you seem so happy, and so bright, and so glad. How do you be that way when you are so crippled?"

And the little fellow brightly replied, "Oh, sir," he said, "Oh sir, my father tells me that God always gives us what is best. And don't you think I ought to be happy with the best?"

Whoever was the father of that little boy was a great man! He had found the answer. What God gives us is what is best and to receive the disciplines of life—the circumscriptions of life—as from His hands is to be blessed; humbled that you might be exalted.

## C. Bowing Before God's Lordship

What is this, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God?" Not only the acceptance and honor of a menial task, an assignment in Christ and not only yielding in gracious submission to the disciplines of God, but coming to God in God's way — gratefully, gladly, humbly coming before the Lord — not in our way, but in His. Not in some self-chosen, reasoning persuasion that we have decided upon, but as God shall invite us, so we come into His presence. Maybe coming full of wonder, bowed down — weighted down with wonder that God should love us and that He should invite us — astonished, overwhelmed that God should have paid so great a price for us. Just in amazement, "That God should have chosen me, should have invited me!" Coming to God in God's way; not arguing with God, "Now, God, I think of it like this, and here's the way I think I ought to be saved. And here's how I think I ought to come." No, but doing it God's way!

When God says, "Look and live," I shall look! When God says, "Believe and be saved," I shall believe. When God says, "Trust," I shall trust. When God says, "Wash and be cleaned," I shall wash. When God says, "Confess," I shall confess; when God says, "Be baptized," I shall be baptized. When God says, "Join yourself to His people," I shall join myself to His people, humbly, coming before the Lord in God's way not mine.

## D. Emptying For God's Spirit

What does it mean "to humble oneself before the Lord that He might exalt us in due time? Why, I think it means emptying ourselves of us, and being filled with the divine fullness of God. Even God cannot fill a cup that's already filled. Even God can't come into a man's heart when he's full of himself: all he thinks about is himself; all he talks about is himself; all he dreams for is himself; all his whole life revolves around is himself. How can God do anything for a man like that?

But, if a man will empty himself, "Nothing of me, Lord, may it all be of Thee." That man can be filled with all of the fullness of the triune God. "Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon Him for He careth for you."

## II. The Path To Serenity

Now if we will do the verse 6, "Humble ourselves unto God," there are a whole lot of cares that we won't be burdened with in verse 7, "Casting all of your care upon Christ." Oh, there are so many

things that burden us, and weigh us down that we bring on ourselves. They don't come from God; they come out of us. There are some men who are grasping; they are ambitious, and they are never satiated with self-preferment. The more they have, the more they want. The more publicity given them, the more they eagerly seek it and desire it. The more advancement that they make, the more they want to be advanced. The more famous they are, the yet more famous they want to be. They are never satisfied; the more money they have, the more they want to get. And they are filled with the cares of this world — seeking themselves, presenting themselves — and they are unhappy in their hearts, they are weighed down with themselves!

There are some cares, I say, that we bring on ourselves: troubled about tomorrow, worried about the morrow, filled with anxiety about the morrow. God says there's enough trouble in any day we live in besides borrowing tomorrow's trouble. Just trust God for it, just believe in God for it — that's a care that we don't need to bear—just turn it over to God; every tomorrow. There are cares that come upon us that we bring upon ourselves.

One of the strangest things about big men is that they can be vexed and upset over such little things. Jonah was a great man. Jesus pointed him out and said the greatest revival preacher of all time, there never was a man that had such a result in his preaching as Jonah, Jesus said so! The entire great, world, ancient capital of Assyria—the entire city of Nineveh from the king clear down to the lowest servant—repented at the preaching of Jonah. He was a great, great prophet of God and a mighty revivalist.

Now I want you to look at him, he's over there on a hill, sitting under a gourd vine pouting, pouting! You know what he is pouting about? At first, he started off about what God might do about Nineveh. But this pouting I'm talking about was over a cucumber vine—it was over a bower of melon leaves; it was over a gourd—that grew over his head and a worm cut it down and it made Jonah mad! "I'm mad!" And, not only did it make him mad, but he said: "I want to die!" All over the wilting of a gourd vine; that's Jonah, and that's you!

I know a man that lost his entire fortune and never thought anything about it; he just lost his whole estate. And he got furious with his wife over a button that wasn't sewed on his shirt. We can be that way; we vex ourselves over little inconsequential minutiae!

## A. Spiritual Cares

Now these are the cares that he's not talking about; if we live under God, and as unto the Lord, none of those will ever come upon us. But what are these cares that Simon Peter is thinking of: "Casting all of our cares upon Christ"? What are those cares? Well, I can name several of them. Here's one: spiritual cares. And by spiritual cares I mean, "O God, dear blessed Jesus, what if my life fails? Lord, what if I don't make it to heaven? Lord, what if I fall into hell? Lord, what if my soul is not ultimately saved? What's going to become of me when I die and in the great judgment day, O God, am I going to be saved?"

Why the Lord says to me, "Why is it in the inspired the Apostle Paul, the first chapter in Philippians, he says, 'He that began a good work in you, He will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ to the great consummation of His coming'?" He says in the last chapter in the Book of Hebrews, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." And He says in the tenth chapter of John, "I give unto you eternal life; and you will never perish..."

What more can He say than to you He hath said,

You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled.

[“How Firm a Foundation”; Selection of Hymns published by John Rippon 1787]

That is one care I can take to Jesus. Lord, am I going to make it? Am I going to be saved? Really, God, will I be in heaven some day? When they call the roll up yonder, will I answer, Here, Lord, here I am? God says, "Yes! You turn that over to Me, I'll see you through. All the devils in hell can't get you; and all of the sin in the universe can't sink you, can't destroy you, because where sin abounds, My grace overflows, it more abounds."

I can take that my cares to Jesus - "Am I going to make it? Am I going to get to heaven? Am I going to

be saved?" — I can take it to Jesus.

## B. Kingdom Cares

What are these cares that He's talking about, that I can take to the Lord? Here's one of them: kingdom cares, kingdom cares. Now, what do you mean about "kingdom cares?" I mean the foreboding that sometimes fills our hearts about God's kingdom in the earth. You can look around, and you read, and see, and visit, and it seems as though the kingdom of darkness is going to swallow up the kingdom of light. Why there are whole great nations of the earth—and one-third of its population—that is under stated state atheism; darkness, like midnight, like you can cut it. And even in Christendom, there's a great apostasy and falling away, in empty churches, all over this earth.

"Lord, what is going to become of Thy kingdom?" That's a care I can take to God. He presides over His own. Even on the cross light shined from the cross that the darkness could not quench—could not put out, could not drown—and some of the most brilliant rays that have ever flooded the darkness of this world have come from the shining of the fires that have burned the martyrs at the stake. I can take it to Christ. He's able; and He presides over this universe.

Upon a day when I first came here to Dallas, I sat by Mrs. Truett and talked to her about her great husband, pastor of this church 47 years. She said to me—to my great surprise—that sometimes the great preacher, George W. Truett, would be despondent; he fell into despondency. She said it was at a time when he felt he had failed and she said to me, "I said to him, 'George, when you have prayed and asked God to bless you; and you have done the best that you can, then leave it to Jesus, leave it to God.'"

It is for us to dig the well; it is for God to send the rain and the water. It is for us to plant the seed; it is for God to make it to sprout and grow. It is for us to cultivate the field; it is for God to give the harvest. It is for me to witness; it is for God to give the increase, to save the soul. That's a care I can take to Jesus. When I've done the best I can then God must do the rest, and He will.

## C. Business Cares

Casting all our care upon Christ: what are these cares that the apostle speaks of? I think they are cares that attend our business life: "O Lord, I must make a living for my wife and my children, and I must support my home and I must win daily bread. Lord, I have staked everything I have into this business. O God, what shall become of it?" That's a care that I think a man can legitimately, and rightfully, and pleasingly to God, take to Christ. Make Him your partner; He'll bless you and He'll see you through.

Queen Elizabeth, of the 1600s—Queen Elizabeth I—called in a merchant man in London and asked him to go on a mission for her across the seas, a long time to be absent. And he replied, "But Your Majesty, but Your Majesty! What shall become of my business when I'm gone? It will fail! It will go bankrupt! I cannot leave on so long a mission, Your Majesty, I cannot go! What will happen to my business?"

And the Queen said to that prince of merchants, she said, "Sir, you go on my business, and take care of my business; and while you're gone, I'll take care of yours."

The merchant went abroad, stayed, did the work of the Queen, came back, and to his amazement—under her patronage, and her tutelage, and her care and guidance—his business had flourished and quadrupled. That's what God will do for you, if you'll make a partner out of Him and take it to Christ.

I want to show you that I'm not just saying words. Look, look out of the Book! The Lord Jesus said to Simon Peter who was in the fishing business—he and the sons of Zebedee's were partners in the fishing business, that's what God's Book says—they were partners in the fishing business. So the Lord said to Simon Peter, "Simon, I want your boat. Simon, I want your boat. You see these people, I want it for a pulpit to preach in. I want to borrow your boat."

And Simon Peter could have replied, "Lord, Lord, you don't understand. Lord, that's my livelihood!"

That's my business! I can't give you my boat, I don't have any other way to fish. I don't have any other way to make a living but to fish. Lord, I need the boat—you can't have it!"

But what does the Book say? Simon Peter gave the Lord the boat and the Lord used it to preach the gospel. Then when the message was done and the sermon was finished, "Simon Peter," said the Lord Jesus, "Simon, launch right out there." And when he got out there, the Lord says, "Now, let down your net." And he got a haul, a catch of fish. Under Jesus he caught more fish in ten minutes than he had ever caught in the previous ten months of his life.

I'm just telling what's in the Book. I never made that up! That's in the Book! You're in a business? Make Jesus your partner. Take every problem and every decision, take it to Jesus and see what happens to you and your business. "Casting your care upon Him for He careth for you."

## D. Home Cares

Oh, where does the time go? One other, the cares of the home, of the children: "Does the Lord know my name? Does He know where I live? Does He know what I do?" Listen, He cares for ants as well as angels; He cares for worms as well as whales; for He cares for sparrows as well as for cherubim; for butterflies as well as for battalions of angelic hosts. And He knows all about you, and your cares, and your children.

A Mother

"The Master has come over Jordan,"

Said Sarah, the mother, one day.

"He is healing the people who throng Him

With a touch of His hand," they say.

"And now I shall carry the children,

Little Rachel, and Samuel, and John.

I shall carry the baby, Miriam,

For the Lord to look upon."

The husband looked at her kindly,

As he shook his head and smiled:

"Now who, but a doting mother,

Would think of a thing so wild?

If the children were tortured by demons,

Or dying of fever 'twere well,

Or had they the taint of the leper,

Like men in Israel."

But the mother replied, "Nay, do not hinder me, Nathan.

I feel such a burden of care,

If I carry it to the Master,

I know I can leave it there.

If He lay His hand on the children,

My heart will be lighter I know,

For a blessing forever and ever

Will follow them as they go."

So over the hills of Judah,

Along by the vine rows green,

With Miriam asleep on her bosom  
And Rachel her brothers between,  
Among the people who hung on His teaching,  
Or awaited His touch and His word,  
Through the royal, proud Pharisees listening,  
She pressed to the feet of the Lord.  
“Now why shouldst thou hinder the Master,”  
said Peter, “with children like these?  
See'st thou not from morning to evening  
He teacheth and healeth disease?”  
Then Christ said, “Peter, forbid not the children,  
Permit them to come unto Me.”  
And He took in his arms little Miriam,  
And Rachel He sat on His knee.  
And the heavy heart of the mother  
Was lifted all earth care above,  
As He laid His hands on the brothers  
And blessed them with tenderest love.  
And He said of the babes in His bosom,  
“Of such are the kingdom of heaven,”  
And strength for all duty and trial  
That hour to the mother was given.  
[“Christ and the Little Ones”; Julia Gill]

### III. Conclusion

Do you believe that? Do you think that's true? God says it's true! “Forbid them not.” In my study, to the left, and I look at it hours every day, right there in my study, to the left, is a magnificent painting by a Yugoslav artist, painted a century ago, and the title of it is “Forbid Them Not.” And Jesus is there, standing in a white, beautiful robe and He has in His arms a little baby, and the children are at His feet. And Simon Peter and the others are trying to send the mothers with their children away, but Jesus is holding up His arm like that, saying: “Forbid them not to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

Casting all your care upon Him; take to Him anything; take to Him everything—and biggest, and best, and “most-test” of all—take to Him yourself, your house, your home, your heart and your life, your children, and your every tomorrow. Would you? Accepting, receiving, opening your heart to the Lord as Savior, or putting your life in the fellowship of the church?

This week someone said to me: “When you give that invitation, would you explain what you mean when you invite people to come to the Lord?” Here's what I mean: “Lord Jesus, I open my heart to Thee. Forgive my sins; come and dwell in my soul. Write my name in the Book of Life in glory; stand by me in this life, and in the hour of my death, and in the world to come. I want God as my Savior!”

And the second invitation: “I want to give my life to God in the church—my membership some other place, but I've been saved and I've been baptized—and I want to come and fellowship with the church.” Or maybe a third: “I would just like to give my life again unto you, and unto the Lord, and I'm coming. I want to pray with you.”

For whatever reason the Spirit shall press the appeal to your heart, in the moment that we sing this hymn of appeal, come. Answer with your life; make the decision now and when you stand up, stand

up coming. God bless you! Angels attend you in the way, while we stand and while we sing.