



Does Jesus Care?

*Does Jesus care when my heart is pained
Too deeply for mirth and song,
As the burdens press, and the cares distress,
And the way grows weary and long?*

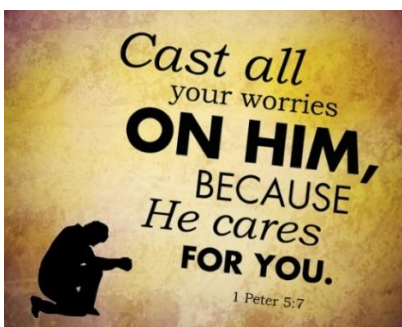
*Does Jesus care when my way is dark
With a nameless dread and fear?
As the daylight fades into deep night shades,
Does He care enough to be near?*

*Does Jesus care when I've said "goodbye"
To the dearest on earth to me,
And my sad heart aches till it nearly breaks
Is it aught to Him? Does He see?*

Chorus:

*O yes, He cares; I know He cares,
His heart is touched with my grief,
When the days are weary, the long nights
dreary,
I know my Savior cares.*

Words: Frank E. Graeff (1901)
Music: J. Lincoln Hall (1901)



CONCRETE PRAYERS

Sometimes things of great value are hidden from sight, like treasures to be revealed at just the right time.

Such were my sister's prayers. Our mother was very sick. Although the word was never spoken among us, she had cancer. Breast cancer. My sister, Elaine, was ten years older than I. I was twelve; she was twenty-two.

Mama had been in bed most of the fall of 1967. I would come home from school and ask, "How are you, Mama?" And she would say, "Oh, maybe a little better." I did not know my mother was in a struggle for her life.

I also did not know about my sister's prayers. Elaine worked for my father in his office. Every day when she came home for lunch, she would quietly go down to our mostly unfinished basement. There she placed a small rug to lie face down on the concrete floor and pray for our mother.

Our mother survived the breast cancer. She told me many years later, "I asked the Lord for ten more years, and He gave me more than thirty." As she told me this, I thought of King Hezekiah and his request in 2 Kings 20:1-11.

I remember praying with Mama. One day, I walked into the bathroom that adjoined my parents' bedroom, and there was my mother on her knees, her elbows on the vanity stool. She asked me if I would like to pray with her, and I kneeled with her and she prayed.

But I did not know until fifty years later that my sister was praying, on her face, down in our basement. When Elaine told me, I was struck by the simplicity of it and the trust and the hope. No one knew but Elaine and the Lord. And Elaine carried on, and the Lord carried on. And, wonderfully, Mama carried on.

To have a praying sister is quite something. I have one, and I hope you do, too.

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” James 5:16

Jenna Frank, Labadie, Missouri

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Faith

By William Arthur Dunkerley (John Oxenham)

*Lord, give me faith!--to live from day to day,
With tranquil heart to do my simple part,
And, with my hand in Thine, just go Thy way.*

*Lord, give me faith!--to trust, if not to know;
With quiet mind in all things Thee to find,
And, child-like, go where Thou wouldst have me go.*

*Lord, give me faith!--to leave it all to Thee,
The future is Thy gift, I would not lift
The veil Thy Love has hung 'twixt it and me.*

"I will!"

Say once again Thy sweet "I will!"

In answer to my prayers.

"Lord, if Thou wilt!"--

--"I will!"

Rise up above thy cares!"

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Pick Up Your Cross

There is an old story (and I can't remember the author) that a man was complaining to God. "Lord, I can't handle this; this struggle is too hard for me. Please take this burden away."

After repeated requests, God finally answered his prayers and brought him into a room filled with crosses of all shapes and kinds. They all seemed huge with rough wood and many scars; but there was one, stacked behind the others that wasn't so scary and appeared smaller than the others. "Okay God, I'll take this one," the man said. "But son, this is the one you came in with."

Fast forward to a conversation I had a few months ago with a co-worker. She was finally announcing to everyone that her son was gay and that she hadn't said anything because she thought that some people (looking at me) would be judgmental and unkind about it.

Her son is in high school and is the valedictorian; and she is very proud of him and his boyfriend that he has had for a while. I felt very sad that she thought because I am a

Christian I would be hateful to her. I was upset and went into my response as I have thought about this many times. There is nothing more wrong with being gay than being a drunk or a drug abuser or an adulterer or a thief. God says that sin is sin, and all of it separates us from Him. Her response was, "I talk to God, and I believe in Jesus. I just want my son to be happy, and I am not going to turn my back on him because of this. Is it ideal? No, but I love my son."

What a sickness in the world if we can only see the short-term 'happiness' without the long-term consequences. I was so frustrated by her attitude I couldn't say anything. Tears just rolled down my face.

The point of my argument, though I was unsuccessful in getting it across, is that each person has a burden or sin that we bear, and each of us must carry our own. No one's life is perfect, no matter how it may seem. Everyone has struggles, some that we can see and many that we cannot. The point is that we are not supposed to give in and revel in our sin but to bear that burden, to carry it, and to serve God through it even though it is difficult—so that someday we may receive a reward and be able to see Jesus and live with eternal joy rather than momentary happiness.

So pick up your cross and follow him.

Kim Parker, Rolla, MO

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SHE WHO WORRIES

Worry may not sound like too hard of a struggle with which to deal, but let me tell you right now—it is. Overthinking is one thing I have excellent skills in. Whatever the problem is—waiting on an unanswered prayer, keeping up with responsibilities, or the world ending—you name it, and I'll worry about it!

The answer seems easy enough; simply decide to not think about it. Unfortunately, my brain cannot leave a problem unsolved.

It chews and gnaws at the back of my head till I finally give in. Like a scientist with a



microscope, I examine the problem, hypothesize about all the possible outcomes, and look for any solution.

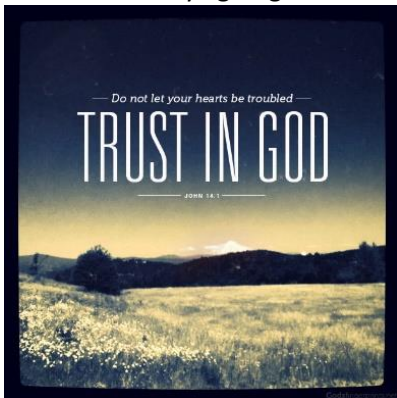
It probably comes as no surprise that I also don't cope well with stress. And there is *always* something to stress about. It's as if I'm constantly bouncing back and forth

between one task and another. From homework, to work, to cleaning house, to cooking, to preparing for company, then back to homework—the list is ongoing and is never finished.

It's during these times of stress that I get overwhelmed and my focus turns inward. All I can think about is what has to be done and how much time and effort it's going to take. Selfishness and self-pity silently creep in, further stealing my joy and distracting me from what is really important.

My mind had begun to believe that I couldn't be truly happy till the storm passed. Then I grew up, and I realized, there will *always* be problems. Some are worse than others. Some may have happy endings while the others don't, but they will always come and go. If I were to wait to find joy till after they were fixed, I would miss out on my life.

For a Christian, the opposite of worry is trusting in God. It's easier said than done and doesn't always mean things will work out the way we want. That being said, it doesn't mean we're always going to have a bad ending.



Even when God's answer was a no, when my greatest fears happened, and it seemed like my life would never be the same, I still survived. The sun eventually peeked through the clouds, and I found joy again.

We can trust God because no matter what, He is with us. Spending eternity with Him is the *only* thing that matters. Praying and thanking him for the good things we have in life are ways to shift our focus off ourselves and onto Him. Sometimes God's peace is immediate in our hearts; at other times it takes some work, but we will find it.

One of my favorite verses in the Bible is Proverbs 3:5, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding." My dad taught me this verse when I was a child. It wasn't till I grew older, that I really understood what it means. God was preparing me for my struggles before I was even old enough to understand them yet. How amazing is that?!

Don't be afraid to give all your baggage to Him. He loves you more than you could imagine and is already working on your behalf. Remember, there is no problem too big for the Being who created the universe!

Melissa Lybyer, Rolla, Missouri

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A LOVE LETTER

I wrote you a letter. It is long, with many words and wanders through many tales that I think will give you insight into how much I love you. Mostly, I want you to know that I am a faithful friend; someone you can count on.

Hidden in the words of this letter are secrets that unlock the path to joy, peace, and eternity. If I didn't love you, I would not have sent you this letter because it describes how, in order for you to live, part of me had to die. It speaks of redemption and hope. How you respond to my letter is up to you. After all, it does ask that you return my love by denying yourself and taking up a cross, a burden that you do not understand—and may never understand—this side of eternity.



Please read my letter as often as possible, and you will know that everything will be alright. The struggles you are facing today will be brief in the light of eternity, but you need to be strong to face the evil which lies ahead. Read my words. Hear me. I love you. Never doubt it. Never forget it. The power of love can save you.

Chuck Hicks, Searcy, AR

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CONSIDERING THE "ROAD NOT TAKEN"

Perhaps the easy way was for another
One who did not have my strength
My courage to take control
And chart my own course

There is still a sad little girl
Who lives inside my heart
And wants kisses and cookies

But she has become strong and straight
And is blessed to have grown up
The Hard Way

Peggy Bailey, Crosby County, Texas

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NO BIRD SOARS IN A CALM

Recently, I was given a book of my favorite genre (other than the Bible), American history. This one was written by one of my favorite historical authors, and it is about the Wright Brothers. Neither Wilbur nor Orville had a college education, but both were inquisitive and well read on a variety of subjects from art to music to the sciences. Both were intrigued, possibly obsessed, with the idea of man being able to fly; and both were very skilled mechanically.

Bicycles were a new and popular invention, and the brothers opened their own bicycle construction and sales shop in Dayton, Ohio. They pored over all the scant material then available on flying. As they began to test their own theories, they rejected much of the thinking of the day. Their obsession with flying spurred them to improvise, manufacture, and constantly improve their own “flying machines” in their “spare time.”

While pursuing their dream on the Outer Banks of North Carolina, they studied birds and how they flew. As they observed birds, they learned that they



exerted much more energy flapping their wings when there was little or no wind. When there was wind, however, the same birds soared effortlessly by tipping one wing down and the other up as needed. Wilbur wrote, “No bird soars in a calm.” It takes the resistance of the wind for birds to soar and glide.

In some ways, we are like birds. Sometimes we spend a lot of time flapping and struggling with everyday situations. Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you feel like you have absolutely no strength, no control of your own, and

you have no idea how to “fix” your situation? Perhaps it is an unwanted divorce, a cancer diagnosis, the loss of a spouse or a child... Those are times when we relinquish all control and let God carry us. The “resistance” of the calamity is the wind that makes us relinquish control to God who carries us through what we cannot fix. That’s when we spiritually soar...when we totally depend on Him. No one soars in a calm, just as no bird soars in a calm.

Otto Lilienthal of Germany also did a lot of early work and research on the possibility of flying. He is quoted as saying, “It must not remain our desire only to acquire the art of the bird. It is our duty not to rest until we have attained a perfect scientific conception of the problem of flight.

... THOSE WHO HOPE IN THE LORD WILL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH THEY WILL SOAR ON WINGS LIKE EAGLES; THEY WILL RUN AND NOT GROW WEARY....
ISAIAH 40:31

The Wrights were undeterred by their many failures. After each failure, they moved on and tried the next approach, such as totally redesigning wings. In each of our failures and each calamity, we must look to God. His love and forgiveness enable us to leave failures behind, move on, and improve. The prophet Isaiah wrote,

*Those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint – Isaiah 40:31*

Evelyn Waite, Rolla, MO

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Sunrise
The Newsletter For Women By Christian Women

Sunrise is a monthly newsletter written and/or assembled by members of the Rolla Church of Christ. All previous issues can be accessed by going to <http://www.seekgrowserveandlove.org>. Click on the Resources tab, then on Sunrise Newsletter. You will find the current issue plus all previous issues.

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