

The Ultimate Lie

18 - 1 Peter: A New World & A New Way
Church on the Park I Sunday, 27 JAN 2013

Text: 1 Peter 5:5-7 (cf. Psa. 55:22)

Intro: What is the ultimate lie? In our passage today, Peter combats the epitome of lies with a truth that will change how we think and live.

The ultimate lie: God doesn't really **care** about you. The serpent implied this in his first temptation to Eve. He reasoned with her: "God doesn't care about you and he's been lying about the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. If you eat it you'll be better off; you'll be like God himself. God's holding something back from you, something that will actually help you." (Gen. 3:1-6) (There's a better way)

Main Point: When we are in the fire of hard times we can easily think God does not care for us. Peter's whole letter assures us that God really does care about us.

- Peter **assures** us in our passage that God cares for us. Actually, his whole letter reminds us of how God cares for us. And it would be good for us to remember what he says:
 - We are **chosen** by God (1:2)
 - We have been given a **new birth** (1:3)
 - We have an **eternal inheritance** through Jesus' resurrection (1:4)
 - We are **shielded** by God's power (1:5)
 - Through faith, hope and love God fills us with **joy** unspeakable and full of glory (1:8)
 - We have been **redeemed** by the precious, imperishable blood of Christ (1:19)
 - We have been given the **eternal Word of God** (1:23-25)
 - We have tasted that the Lord is **good** (2:3)
 - We are being **built** into a house for God's presence (2:4-5)
 - We are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession (2:9)
 - Jesus is our **shepherd** and the overseer of our souls (2:25)
- But Peter **didn't always** have confident assurance of God's care.
 - Mark 4:35-41 - The disciples drowning
 - "Don't you care..."
 - When it seems like Jesus is sleeping, realize he is teaching you a lesson in faith.
 - Luke 10:40ff
 - When people are not helping us we think Jesus doesn't care
 - The opposite of the biblical Greek word 'care' is neglect. Painful times can make us think that God is neglecting us. In those times we need to see God is working overtime.

- Psa 95:6-7 - We are the flock under the Lord's care
- "The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares [yada - to know, to give careful attention to] for those who trust in him" (Hos. 1:7).
- God knows what your going through. He feels your pain. He likes you and wants you to be blessed.
- Even though God is **invisible** it does not mean he is absent. He is like the **wind**— you can't see him, but you constantly see his effects.
- Why is **trust** so important? Because when we are not trusting God, we fight against what he is doing. He wants to bless us, but unbelief causes us to walk away from our Lord.
 - What happens when we **don't trust**? We get **proud**; we do things our way rather than God's

In today's passage we see four ways God cares for us:

1) God cares for us by giving us shepherds (v. 5)

- If we work against these shepherds we work against God's care for us.
 - Our response: ὑποτάσσω hupotássō; fut. hupotáxō from hupó (5259), and tássō (5021), to place in order. To place under in an orderly fashion.
 - "In the same way" - willingly, zealously and authentically
- God's compassion motivates him to give us shepherds

2) God cares for us by putting us in his community (v. 5)

- If you are born again, you are part of the **largest family** in the world
- Submission is not just for sheep—it's for everyone
 - Our response: **humility** toward one another
- **Humility** is the pathway to **receive** God's care
- When you stop thinking that God cares you start getting **proud**. You **can't see** what God has done, what he is doing and what he will do.
- Pride blinds us and causes us to resist help. Moreover, it causes God himself to oppose us. (Prov. 3:34)

3) God cares for us by giving us his mighty hand (v. 6)

- God's mighty hand **covers** and **protects** us
- Our response: Again, **humility**. Humility causes us to hide under God's hand. Pride causes us to be exposed to the devil's schemes.
 - The grammar of the Greek passage connects humility with casting your cares on the Lord (lit. 'casting' not 'cast'). It implies that worry and pride are brother and sister.
- Here's the good news: When we humble ourselves, God will lift us up in due time.
- Remember, God's waiting for the **right time**. The time most beneficial for his Kingdom and for us.

4) God cares for us by listening to our prayers (v. 7)

- The Rugby ball getting caught in the top of a tree with Alli and Eva
- The word for cast is to throw, to get rid of.

- **Write a list** of all your cares and anxieties
- (God spoke to me, “Help out others with their problems and I’ll help you with your problems.”)
- **Write** down all your cares and worries. Now **pray** and ask God to take care of them. Now **crumple** them up and **throw** them toward the altar.

Conclusion: The ultimate lie is that God does not care for you. When we start to believe that lie we take matters into our own hands rather than trust God and humble ourselves before him. Peter’s letter clearly shows that God cares for us and our passage today reveals four ways he does: 1) Through shepherds, 2) By putting us in his community, 3) By giving us his mighty hand, and 4) Through listening to our prayers.

END NOTES

ἐπιρίπτω ἐπί: (an idiom, literally ‘to throw upon’ or ‘to cast upon’) to cause responsibility for something to be upon someone—‘to put responsibility on, to make responsible for.’ πᾶσαν τὴν μέριμναν ὑμῶν ἐπιρίψαντες ἐπὶ αὐτόν ‘put upon him all responsibility for your cares’ or ‘make him responsible for all your worries’ 1 Pe 5:7. For another explanation of this expression in 1 Pe 5:7, taking τὴν μέριμναν ἐπιρίπτω ἐπί as an idiom, see 25.250.

5:7 The NIV begins v. 7 with a command, “cast all your anxiety.” The Greek text, however, uses the participle “casting” (*epiripsantes*), and hence the NASB represents a better translation, “casting all your anxiety upon him.” The participle should be understood as an instrumental participle,⁹⁴ and it explains *how* believers can humble themselves under God’s strong hand. Seeing the relationship between the main verb (“humble yourselves,” v. 6) and the participle (“casting all your anxiety upon him,” NASB) is important because it shows that giving in to worry is an example of pride. The logical relationship between the two clauses is as follows: believers humble themselves *by casting* their worries on God. Conversely, if believers continue to worry, then they are caving in to pride. How can anxiety and worry be criticized as pride? We can see that it might be a lack of faith, but does it make sense to identify worry as pride? Worry is a form of pride because when believers are filled with anxiety, they are convinced that they must solve all the problems in their lives in their own strength. The only god they trust in is themselves. When believers throw their worries upon God, they express their trust in his mighty hand, acknowledging that he is Lord and Sovereign over all of life. As Goppelt says, “Affliction either drives one into the arms of God or severs one from God.”

Peter wrote this to a church afflicted by suffering and distress, and hence he realized that they faced anxiety. Casting one’s worries on God would not bring comfort if he were unable to afford assistance in times of distress.⁹⁷ Nor would anyone tell his worries to those who are cruel or apathetic, for those who are hateful and indifferent mock our worries by their lack of concern. Giving our anxiety to God makes eminent sense “because he cares for you.” God is not indifferent, nor is he cruel. He has compassion on his children and will sustain them in every distress. Peter’s words here remind us of Jesus’ exhortation to avoid anxiety (Matt 6:25–34), and some even see an allusion to

Jesus' words. More probably, the allusion is to Ps 55:22. Psalm 55 fits nicely with Peter's theme, for the psalmist implored God to help him because the wicked were attempting to destroy him, and even his close friend had turned against him. Verses 4–8 express the anguish and torment he felt in the midst of such opposition. Again we see evidence that Peter considered the thematic context of the Old Testament when he alluded to it. We find the allusion in v. 22 (Ps 54:23, LXX), "Cast your anxiety upon the Lord, and he will sustain you" (*epiripson epi kyrion tēn merimnan sou, kai autos se diathrepsei*).¹

Hos. 12:13 - God cared for his people through a prophet

¹ Schreiner, T. R. (2003). *Vol. 37: 1, 2 Peter, Jude*. The New American Commentary (240–241). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.