

CASTING CARE RECEIVING CARE

Some would argue that the best predictor of future success is past behavior... *Why?*

When we're faced with something new, we instinctively lean on past experiences to guide us. This reality sheds light on many of our successes and failures.

Do you see the implications of this truth for the Christian life? To the extent that we've relied on self-effort in the past, we will naturally default to self-effort in our attempts to grow as Christians. **However, God has not asked us to try to perform Christ's life and perfection. We have Christ— with all of His perfection— dwelling in us.**

Yet, when we're living with a distorted perspective, discouraged, or pressured, it can feel as though the full responsibility of life rests on our shoulders. In those moments, we often convince ourselves that we must hold everything together and solve every problem. Yes, it is God's will that we learn to persevere but He never intended for us to attempt life independently from Him.

For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. Philippians 2:13

Disruptive emotions—such as fear, anxiety, insecurity, discouragement— are often signals that we're shouldering loads God never meant for us to bear alone.

Romans 8:6 gives us a clear contrast between two very different life experiences:

The mind governed by the flesh [living independently from God] is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.

Life and peace naturally grow in the person who allows God to govern them.

What if the help we've needed from God has been right in front of us all along, but we've been too preoccupied with managing our lives to notice?

Hardship doesn't just test us—it reveals us.

"When circumstances force us to make an active, practical choice between God and our own self-interest, scripture refers to these occasions as trials. These trials of His are not for His information, but ours; therefore, we ought to make use of the information they provide us." Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*

Step 3 of this renewal journey is about discovering how to move away from distortion, self-reliance, and emotional overload—and move toward a life of surrender, trust, and lasting peace in Christ.

Casting Care and Receiving Care

"Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will sustain you." — Psalm 55:22

This verse carries a profound promise, and also a clear exhortation. It suggests that to fully experience the care and provision of Jesus, we must learn to cast our cares upon Him. **Could it be that simple?**

In a biblical context, this idea echoes James 4:2: **"You do not have because you do not ask."** Our lack of provision may be directly connected to our failure to trust God as our provider. Alternatively, we may not experience relief from our burdens because we refuse to let go of them.

How, then, do we begin this process of learning to cast our cares on God?

Hebrews 4:14–16 offers us essential guidance, revealing Jesus as a compassionate and understanding Savior—One who was tempted and tested in every way we are, yet without sin. Because of this, we can come boldly to Him in prayer, bringing every care, every need, and every struggle, and confidently **"approach the throne of grace... so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."**

Fully understanding this invitation begins with a clear view of the true meaning of grace. As Dallas Willard suggests, grace is *"God doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves."* With that in mind, what is this passage truly inviting us to do? It's an invitation to approach the throne of 'I will do it for you' in prayer, to receive mercy and help in our time of need.

The Counseling Work of the Holy Spirit

In John 16, Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit to live within every true Christ follower. Our ability to understand, believe, and apply Scripture depends on His

presence and power within us. Even our desire for God—and the strength to live according to His good purposes—is the result of the Holy Spirit working in us (Phil. 2:13).

Another vital aspect of the Holy Spirit's role in our renewal journey is His commitment to personally counsel, guide, and lead us into all truth (John 16:13). God never intended for us to live independently of Him. Instead, He desires that we grow in confidence—not through our own strength, but through the life-changing power of His Word and the ongoing, specific guidance of the Holy Spirit. Yes, God is still speaking, and as Jesus promised, we can hear His voice (John 10:27).

Prayer

Prayer is a primary way we draw near to God—where we speak honestly from our hearts, listen for His voice, and conform our will to His. It produces both closeness with God (Psalm 62:8; John 15:7) and dependence upon Him (Philippians 4:6; Matthew 6:9–13). Prayer must be rooted in faith that He hears and responds (1 John 5:14–15). It is not about persuading God to do whatever we want, but joining in His purposes, acknowledging our need, giving thanks, and interceding for others (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18; James 5:16). ***(To discover more about prayer, use the QR code on page 19 to access further resources).***

Bringing It All Together

In a short time, you've done significant work—examining the relationships that have shaped your life, identifying core distortions, and building personalized frameworks to guide you toward healing. **Now, the next step is crucial: using prayer as the means of bringing all that we've discovered about ourselves before a God who wants to counsel us and transform our lives.** He doesn't just offer guidance—He offers Himself. And as we pray, and cast our cares upon Him we will begin to be impacted by the transformational investments only He can give.

Encouragement

In a world where many are talking about transformation—but far too few are genuinely experiencing it—it's easy to treat the following prayer guidelines as just another program. Another thing to do. Another good idea that won't pan out. But this prayer strategy is a way to apply God's Word—His counsel—to our lives. Be encouraged—hundreds of Christian leaders have successfully applied this very simple method of approaching God in prayer, with tremendous results. **Come, cast your cares on the Lord, for He truly cares for you**