



CASTING CARES

Week 5 | Casting Cares

Exercises

Exercise 1- Identifying Cares

"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts." - Psalm 139:23 (NIV)

Take a few moments to rest in God's presence and ask Him to fill Your mind. Pray the above verse: "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts."

Often, we are not even aware of our anxieties or the ways our souls are not quiet, but the Holy Spirit is. Ask the Spirit to help you take an objective look at your life over the past few days and weeks. Consider: What is actually going on in my heart these days? What are some ways that my soul feels restless? As the Spirit brings these things to mind, resist the urge to try to fix them or make sense of them yourself. Don't try to interpret them, just identify them, sit with them for a while, and ask the Holy Spirit to meet you in those needs. This is not a psychological self-analysis; it is asking the Spirit to reveal cares that you have been hiding--perhaps even from yourself.

The next two exercises will focus on bringing these cares to God. Over the next few days, pay attention to the cares that you have identified in this exercise. Notice when you feel these tensions--whether it's anger toward someone, a desire to be known or noticed, comparison, a small day-to-day stressor, or a long term anxiety. Ask Jesus to meet you in your need when you feel yourself carrying these burdens.

Exercise 2 - Casting Cares

"Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved." - Psalm 55:22

Create for yourself a quiet and distraction-free space and set aside about 15 minutes to be alone with God. Ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of the cares you identified in the previous exercise. Ask Him if there are any other burdens you are carrying that He wants to take from you. Take your time and wait on the Holy Spirit. Ask the Father to reveal to you how these cares show unbelief, where you don't believe the Father will care for you.

Jot down and list these anxieties/fears down on a piece of paper. Take a few minutes to reflect on what you have written. Pray and visualize yourself with the Father, and then, one by one, imagine giving (handing) each anxiety to Jesus.

This exercise should create a mental snapshot of Jesus doing exactly what He says He will do (Ps. 55:22; Matt. 6:25-26). By handing Jesus your anxieties you are expressing your trust in His ability to take care of you. Once you've given all of your anxieties to Jesus in prayer, rip up each anxiety you wrote down and throw it away. This symbolizes that the anxiety has been given to Jesus and that you are now released from the weight and responsibility of the burden.

Exercise 3 - Transforming Cares

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."

1 Peter 5:6-7

In the last few exercises, you have identified your cares, and taken them to Jesus (although casting cares on Jesus is likely something you'll need to repeat consistently). Now, take a few moments and ask God to reveal to you what He wants to fill your life with instead of these burdens.

If you are feeling undervalued in a relationship, He may want you to understand the value that He has placed on you. If you are worried about controlling a certain situation, He may want to remind you of His sovereignty and power. If you are angry towards someone, He may want to cause His grace and love to overflow in your life and cover that offense.

Ask God to transform your heart to be open to receive what He wants to offer you.