

Cross Words

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**Take Out the Trash!**

***Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.***

***1 Peter 5:7***

If you were asked to write down your top-ten favorite places, it’s hard to imagine “a landfill” making anybody’s list. There’s nothing pretty about a landfill. There’s nothing attractive or inviting about a place where trash is piled high and deep. It’s no fun to be at a landfill; all you can do is watch the pile get bigger. And you certainly wouldn’t want to take home any souvenirs!

But in 1 Peter 5:7, God is inviting us (if it can be said this way) to treat him like a landfill. “Pile it up!” he says. “Keep it coming! I can take it! Cover me with it!”

What kind of trash is God asking us to cover him with? *Anxiety*. Worry about the future. Stress of the present. Burdens from the past. All the things that pile up and make life feel like an endless slog through a murky, mucky swamp. All the things that press hard and cause pain, on the inside and the outside.

God says, “Throw it all on me!” He wants to take away all those burdens. He wants to remove the guilt from the sins of the past. He wants to hold us up under the stress of the present. He wants to show us the way into the future.

But, as ugly as it sounds, he wants to do that by taking those burdens onto himself. In fact, he already has taken those burdens when Jesus Christ bore the sins of the whole world. He carried all of them when he died on the cross. He didn’t drop anybody’s burden of sin. He didn’t leave anybody’s out so that now they’re stuck carrying their own.

Do you know people who help others so much that they hardly have any time left for themselves? You can marvel at how much they give of themselves, how many burdens they carry for other people. But if you would ever ask them how they can possibly do so much to help others, the answer might come back so plainly, “I just love them.”

God’s attitude toward you is so full of love—so overflowing with love—that no matter how many of your burdens you pile on him, his love will still spill out for you through Jesus. So take out the trash! Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

**Names of Wondrous Love**

JESUS

His name Jesus brings us thoughts of heaven

 “What are we going to name him?” asked my wife when our second son was born. In those days before ultrasound, we had been hoping for a girl and had girl names picked out. But, surprise!—Jim was a boy! How different with Mary’s baby. She knew her firstborn was going to be a boy and even knew what his name should be. The angel had told her nine months earlier, “You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus” (Luke 1:31).

 Did that name fit? It wasn’t chosen by his human parents but by a loving God in heaven. Jesus came from heaven and so his name was given from heaven. He also came to do the work that only heaven could do, save sinners. And he’s going to take people to heaven to be with him eternally. His name Jesus brings us thoughts of heaven. Moreover, it’s shining brightly with God’s wondrous love.

 Does any Christian today not know what his personal name Jesus means? Blind Bartimaeus knew. Sitting that day by the roadside outside Jericho, he begged, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” (Mark 10:47). The penitent thief hanging next to Jesus on Calvary also knew. He prayed, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom” (Luke 23:42). By God’s grace, we know too. Jesus means “helper.” Jesus means “Savior.”

 Best of all, Jesus is my Savior. Do my daily sins give me alarm? There’s my Jesus with his promise of full and free forgiveness for every one of them. Does my conscience nag me with some sin of the past? There’s my Jesus with his assurance that he has not only paid for it but has erased it from his memory. Do I wonder about the day I must step before the judgment seat of a righteous God? There’s my Jesus with his robe of righteousness to dress me for heaven. Talk about the help I need—nothing can beat what my Jesus offers!

Jesus is what he’s called. Sometimes in mockery, when people shake their fists at him. Sometimes thoughtlessly, when people say “Oh, Jesus!” about almost anything. But so thankfully by you and me. That’s my Jesus, my Savior. What a name of wondrous love!

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