

shovelling smoke!

It is staggering to see the amount of medication we consume in the western world to help us cope with worry and stress. We spend billions of dollars on all sorts of lotions and potions to help us cope with all sorts of things we stress and worry about.

My family used to own an old Ford station wagon and I was working on doing up the brakes. I managed to get the job finished so I could go out that night. Well I met up with some friends and then was heading home late when I noticed the brakes were getting softer and softer as I pressed the pedal. I realised I had obviously made some sort of error in putting the brakes back together and suspected I was leaking hydraulic fluid.

I wanted to get home, so I made the decision to keep going despite the problem with the brakes. So I put the car in low gear and rolled down what was a steep road and some ten minutes later breathed a sigh of relief as I turned into our home drive. However, I then went into “automatic mode”, turned into my parking bay, went to brake, and couldn’t stop in time to avoid hitting a tree that dented the front fender and broke the front headlight.

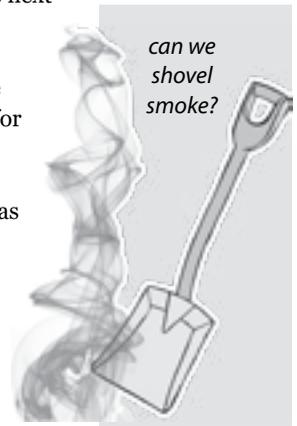
PRAISE the Lord for:

- ★ The May edition of Challenge being produced. Our printing firm is still able to operate
- ★ Safe arrival home of a number of staff from overseas and Eastern States
- ★ A number of encouraging emails and calls from people sharing how useful and easy it is to give out papers at this time
- ★ The increased opportunities we have to share Jesus with our family, friends, work colleagues, neighbours and even strangers

I remember that night worrying how I was going to tell my folks what had happened. As I stressed and worried my way through the night, I hardly got any sleep. The next morning I told my folks what had happened and they responded very kindly. I was able to repair the brake problem and replaced the headlight for very little cost. As I thought through all the stress and worry of what “might” happen to me, I realised it was unnecessary.

One writer has stated that worry is like shovelling smoke. It will give you something to do but you will not achieve anything. Another writer said this; worry is like sitting in a rocking chair. It will give you something to do but you will not go anywhere.

The experts tell us that 90% of what we worry about never happens. Now I may be speaking to someone who is going through a



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very difficult time with all that is going on with the coronavirus. Philippians 4:6-7 are very encouraging verses for you to read. Paul in his epistle is writing to a church going through all sorts of issues and his overwhelming advice is to be marked by joy.

Now you might say that is ok for Paul, but he is not going through all the struggles you are at the moment.

Well Paul was in prison chained to a Roman soldier and facing the prospect of death, and yet some sixteen times he makes reference to joy. So what was his secret to living such joy while being in prison? We get a glimpse in these two verses when he says; *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”*

Therefore, we are not to be marked by worry. The Greek word for anxiety means to be pulled in two different directions; between fact and fiction, especially when 90% of what we worry and get anxious about never happens.

Therefore, we are to be anxious about nothing but we are to pray about everything. I have had a number of occasions when I have had an issue and thought I did not need to pray about this, as it is too small to bring to God. Well before I realise it the small issue has become a major crisis because I did not bring it to God in prayer. There are no exceptions here in what Paul is telling us. Bring EVERYTHING to God in prayer.

Now this raises another problem when it comes to prayer. I have heard Christians say they do not have a regular daily devotion time, and so may I suggest that bringing any thing to God in prayer is a non-event. So is it any wonder we are marked by stress and anxiety. We must see and understand that prayer is how we move the burden of our problems to God and leave them with Him. If that does not happen, we try to carry that burden ourselves and so often we collapse under the strain. God never intended us to carry this burden, which is one of the main reasons He gave us the distinct privilege of prayer.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

PRAYER needed for:

- ★ The ongoing financial needs of our ministry both local and overseas as we endeavour to keep our offices operating
- ★ Our partner paper in UK (Good News) as they have had to cease production until June (at this stage) due to printing firm lockdown
- ★ The ongoing health of our team locally and overseas
- ★ Churches and individuals to continue to use the paper rather than cancel/postpone at this time

{ CARL CARMODY
EDITOR CHALLENGE }



MY RESPONSE

Post to: Challenge Literature Fellowship, PO Box 978, Cloverdale WA 6985

Name: _____

Address: _____ Post Code: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

With God’s help I would like to be a partner in supporting the ministry at Challenge financially:

Monthly Quarterly Yearly One time contribution of: \$50 \$75 \$100 \$200 Other: \$ _____

To be used for _____

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