

**Read: 1 Peter 4:12-17; 5:6-11**

## Why Worry When You Can Pray?

### **1 Peter 5:7,10,11**

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you... And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

A familiar sight on weekends this time of year is baseball and softball fields full of kids. Imagine you have a game this Saturday morning. Things couldn't have started any worse. First, you forgot your glove and had to borrow one that was too small. In the first inning you had two errors and struck out. Then everything changed. You ended up hitting four home runs, made five catches in center field, struck out all six batters in your two innings of pitching, and your team won the game 26-1. Would you say that was a bad game or a good game?

The apostle Peter tells us throughout our life on earth we will suffer because of our faith in Jesus and our desire to live for him. Peter saw and experienced the terrible suffering of Christians in the early church. They were persecuted by the Roman Empire.

That may make you pray, "Dear Jesus, don't let bad things happen to me!" But the truth is, you will face challenges in your life. What might that look like for a 5-, 9-, or 13-year-old? Maybe it is being made fun of by others because you don't watch certain shows or take part in behavior that God says is wrong. What if you missed a ballgame or overnight at a friend's house because you went to church with your family? Are you afraid you might be looked at differently?

These challenges often cause us to worry or be anxious. Peter provides helpful advice to handle worry. He encourages us to "cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." It means this: Everything that makes you wrinkle up your forehead with worry lines... hurl it like a baseball in the Lord's direction. God will catch it. Why? "Because [God] cares for you." When another round of "Oh, no" leaves your lips... it's so nice to know that those are the very moments God feels concern for each one of us. You are not just a "spot" in the universe. He knows and he cares!

A line in the hymn "Amazing Grace" says that when we've been in heaven for 10,000 years it will feel like we just arrived. We may suffer for a little while now, but it's not going to last! May God give us strength to face challenges here on earth until that day when he calls us to our real home in heaven.

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- What is something that makes you sad/scared?
- What did today's devotion tell you to do with anything that makes you sad/scared?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Have you ever faced challenges because you are a Christian? What did it look like? How did it make you feel?
- If Jesus was able to take care of our biggest problem called sin, what does that mean for the problems where we ask for his help?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being "not well" and 5 being "very well"), assess how you handle problems that come your way. Based on today's devotion, identify one thing you want to do to better handle them (i.e., prayer, etc.).
- How does knowing our time here on earth is so short compared to the eternity we will spend in heaven help you deal with challenges you face?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear Risen Savior, help us to cast all our anxieties on you. We thank you for doing everything needed for us to be saved, and may we find comfort knowing one day we will live with you forever in our real home, heaven. Amen.