

“Casting” Problems regarding Anxiety

No, this isn't another article comparing “fishing for men” with “fishing for fish”... OK, there might be one “fishing for fish” comparison, but what I really wanting to address is “**casting**” anxieties in a spiritual context. Let's consider 1Pet.5:6-7 to get the whole sentence, but v.7 will be our focus, “*Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, **casting all your anxiety on Him**, because He cares for you.*”

Throughout the NT, the words “cast” and “casting,” used mostly in regards to “casting out demons” or something or someone being “cast” into the sea or hell, are translated from the basic Greek word “ballo,” and means exactly what one would assume- to throw something. Apparently, *ballo* sometimes also includes the idea of “to throw or let go of a thing without caring where it falls” (Enhanced Strong's Lexicon), as in its usage in the first part of Matt.18:8, “*And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and **throw** it from you...*” Such total disregard for the thing being cast/thrown is interesting, and certainly has considerable implications and applications spiritually there and in other passages, but...

“*Ballo*” is NOT the word used in our passage of primary concern right now. 1Pet.5:7 employs the Greek word **epirrhipto** (the prefix *epi*, a directional preposition + the primary verb *rhipto*, to cast/throw or place). I hear you saying, “So what?” Here's what: *epirrhipto* doesn't have exactly the same meaning as the basic *ballo*, and thus also carries with it distinct implications and applications. Please bear with me a moment longer on this. Because *epirrhipto* includes the directional preposition *epi*, there is a much more deliberate component to it. The object may still be cast or thrown, but it is done so with much more care and intent with *where* it lands. Remember that *ballo* is usually not so concerned with such. Note Matt.15:30 where the “*lame, crippled, blind, dumb, and many others*” were “**laid**” at Jesus' feet. They weren't haphazardly thrown/cast from the door or window of passing car like discarded trash! They were *intentionally* and *considerately placed*. Here's where we need an additional component to *epirrhipto*'s definition, “to make responsible for, put responsibility on” (Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek NT). Get it? These *disabled* and *afflicted* people weren't merely cast aside, they were taken to, and **placed before/with** Jesus for Him to do with and for them what those so *placing* them could not: heal them! This is *epirrhipto*.

Now, if you've been following closely thus far, firstly “Thank-you,” and secondly, think carefully about the implications/applications these things should have for us with regard to “*casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you*” from our text of 1Pet.3:7...

- This “casting” is NOT merely the “unloading” of our burden of anxiety just to “get rid of them” without regard for where they go or fall (as in *throwing* trash out of the car widow).
- It is *deliberately* placing them with the One (Jesus) able to *handle* and *heal* what we cannot (remember Matt.15:30!).

- Please don't misunderstand, "*casting*" our worries and anxieties on Jesus **should** include our "release" of them (*i.e.* us "letting them go"). But what often happens is that we "*cast*" them on Jesus like we "cast" a fishing lure... with a string attached that allows us to constantly "reel them back in"! This is NOT what *epirrhipto* means. It is, instead and as we saw above, the **placing** these anxieties with the One able to "heal" them. But it DOES require us to "**let them go**" and STOP worrying about them! Note Jesus' admonitions in these regards from Matt.6: "*Do not be anxious for you life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall eat; nor your body, as to what you shall put on,*" v.25; "*Do not be anxious then... for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things,*" vv.31a,32b; "*Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow,*" v.34a.

So why do we continue to "worry" and be consumed with "anxiety"? Likely because: 1) We're not properly understanding what "*casting*" really means- hence this article; and thus, 2) We're not truly "*casting*" our anxieties on Him- we're doing it with a string attached to them like a fishing lure and thus don't really "let them go"; and/or and obviously related to the previous, 3) We don't really trust that He "*cares for us*" (1Pet.3:7b) or that He both can and will "handle" them (at least not the way we would like). If we have this particular kind of "trust issues," we need to remember exactly *to Whom* we're committing our anxieties, "*For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need,*" Heb.4:15-16. If, however, our problems with anxiety due to "*casting*" problems (of understanding or application), I hope this article will help.