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A Three Ring Circus

Some time ago I came across a story one lady told about a frustrating experience which she described as *a three ring circus*. She lives in an area where toll roads are common.

She tells us that one day heading out to see someone she discovered she did not have enough cash to pay the last toll, which was 70 cents. So she got a slip at the toll booth to show what she owed. Later she tried to pay it remotely, but after many efforts with no success she went in and paid the 70 cents in person. All was good and done.

Not quite. Later she got a “toll violation” notice in the mail for the 70 cents plus a \$13 administration fee. She was upset, but her family told her not to worry, and simply call the authorities and explain. She called, but was told they had no record of her payment. They said there was nothing they could do.

In frustration and desperation she went down to the office. An administrator was there. She explained her situation. He made a copy of her toll notice and called someone. Then he said, “I can dismiss this for you. You don’t need to do anything. Here’s my card. If you get another notice, just call me.”

When she told her family they said, “You shouldn’t have worried!” To her that seemed easy for them to say *because they didn’t have this three ring circus problem!*

Whatever your age or stage of life, I don’t need to remind you that you along with all the rest of us have situations like that. How do you handle your three ring circus situations?

Whatever they are, you can frame them with a *three ring circle* of God’s truth.

First, God your heavenly Father knows what you need. Jesus tells us in Matthew chapter 6,

I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is life not more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the sky, that they do not sow, nor reap, nor gather crops into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more important than they? And which of you by worrying can add a



single day to his life's span? And why are you worried about clothing? Notice how the lilies of the field grow; they do not labor nor do they spin thread for cloth, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! Do not worry then, saying, 'What are we to eat?' or 'What are we to drink?' or 'What are we to wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you. So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (25-34).

Remember this. Frame your frustrating experiences by this. God knows what you need.

Secondly, since God knows, cares and acts, rely on Him by asking Him to take care of you, your frustration and anxiety, as well as the overall situation. God tells you through the apostle Peter to

"humble [yourself] under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time, having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you."

(1 Peter 5:6-7)

Again, God tells us through king David,

"Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken" (Psalm 55:22).

Thirdly, remember and rely on God's promise to give you the wisdom you need. Casting your anxiety on God does not free you from responsibility, from the need to make good, wise, God-honoring choices. Obey the familiar command from James chapter 1,

"if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting" (1:5-6).

God promises to give you wisdom, to enable you to see things as He sees and knows them to be, and then to choose to act in line with that as you walk through your three ring circus times.

Handle your three ring circus experiences with this three ring circle of God's truth and He will enable you to conquer over them, not be defeated by them.

Pastor Lyle