



*When you  
pick up  
your cross  
remember,  
there are no  
padded ones.*

followers of Christ 

16 Morrell Street  
T.B. Costain/SC Johnson Community Centre  
Brantford, Ontario N3T 4J2  
519-758-5673  
info@followers.ca ~ www.followers.ca

Sunday Classes at 10:00 am ~ Sunday Worship at 11:00 am ~ Wednesday Bible Study at 7:00 pm

worry about everyday life — whether you'll have enough food and drink, and clothes to wear... Look at the birds... your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?"

Noting that God takes care of even the wildflowers, Jesus drove home the point that "he will certainly care for you [so] why do you have so little faith?... Your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he'll give you everything else you need." (Matt. 6:25-33)

In other words, when we put first things first, we can trust God to be aware, to care, and to share. Not just material things but emotional necessities, too — like love, sin-and-all acceptance, and complete forgiveness. When experience backs up our faith and we see our trust in God is well-founded and not just wishful thinking, it lifts an incredible burden. We can face both uncertainty and sin with courage and the conviction that we're going to be okay.

But faith doesn't excuse us of responsibility. Though God will do what we can't, he always expects us to do what we can to help ourselves and others. Our Father is responsible to us, not for us. Yes, he sometimes intervenes in a miraculous way but, more often than not, he provides for us by giving us the means, resources and opportunities to get what we need. Prayer is not a labour-saving device. Faith is no substitute for action. If we truly believe God is there and actively concerned about us, we'll pray for help then act on that, take some risks, and trust him to come through.

We'll trust him to deliver us from need and from sin. When we make mistakes, we'll refuse to let fear and worry paralyze us because God promises not only to erase those sins but to change us from the inside out as we become more like his Son. As guilt gives way to gratitude, and helplessness becomes hope, we learn from our mistakes and accept the Holy Spirit's help so we don't make them over again. Jesus is into heart-washing, not brain-washing. So put your mind at ease.



RICK GAMBLE

~ sharing Jesus and the journey ~



VOLUME 36, NUMBER 34

September 11, 2011

## Mind, Control

According to researchers, those who stress God more, have less stress, more or less.

In studies first reported in 2009, scientists at the University of Toronto concluded that trust in God helps block anxiety and minimize turmoil. They found actual brain differences between believers and non-believers.



In a couple of studies led by Assistant Psychology Professor Michael Inzlicht, volunteers were asked to do a Stroop task — a well-known test — while wearing special equipment that measured their brain activity. When results were compared, people of faith showed a lot less anxiety when mistakes were made.

In fact, the more zealous their belief in God, the less their brains responded with anxiety when they messed up and, in turn, they made fewer mistakes than non-religious people. "You could think of this part of the brain as [an] alarm bell that rings when an individual has just made a mistake or experiences uncertainty," Dr. Inzlicht said.

"We found that religious people, or even people who simply believe in the existence of God, show significantly less... activity in relation to their own errors. They're much less anxious and feel less stressed when they've made an error."

That conclusion stood up even when researchers made allowances for differences in personality and thinking ability. The scientists concluded that faith has a calming effect which makes believers less likely to worry about making mistakes or having to face the unknown.

But Dr. Inzlicht also cautioned that anxiety is a "double-edged sword" that's sometimes necessary and beneficial. While too much worry can paralyze people with fear, a proper amount alerts us when we're making errors and gives us an incentive to change our behaviour so we don't make the same mistakes over and over.

That's exactly what the Bible says, too. Jesus said: "I tell you not to