

### **The Bag** [entirely instrumental]

Originally written as the setting for a meditation about our dependencies on the physical aspects of our lives, and handing all aspects of our life over to God, which has been used in church and home groups. I've enclosed this meditation, but it could be used for any gentle meditation or guided visualisation.

*Bill*

### **Meditation**

If you would like to join me now in a short meditation where we can consider the importance to us of our earthly trappings. Let's sit quietly and if you like, close your eyes.

[Music starts]

Relax and picture yourself in a favourite place, sitting comfortably, feeling very relaxed. Sit peacefully and enjoy this oasis, and savour a feeling of joy and contentment at being in this place that you love. Leave all the worries and cares of your life outside this place – they can wait for you to return without harm in a few minutes.

An angel of God is before you, smiling at you, and says "Do not be afraid. Peace be with you, and blessings from God the Father."

You notice that this angel is very lovely, and is holding a beautiful ornate bag in outstretched hands which appears to have some sort of swirling colourful light inside it. The angel says:

"Cast all your cares on the Lord, for He will sustain you! Put all your earthly concerns in this bag, and I will take care of them for you."

So you look at the bag, and see the swirling beautiful light twisting inside, and you put into the bag first your name, and all it means for you, and how it feels to you.

Then you put in your clothes, your whole wardrobe, and what they all say about you. Your hairstyle, any makeup you may wear, and the statements they make about you. You watch them all swirl around in this bag in front of you.

But you are still you, and the Lord cares about you and He will sustain you.

So you continue to put all the things you care about into the bag – your furniture, your home, your possessions, your car, what they all say about you, your phone, your job and any work you do, along with any ideas that you are what you do, and your mind itself and any inner voices.

They all go into the bag and swirl around, and you can see them there. Some of them catch your eye, and you think about them a bit further.

You watch as you put in your personality, your dreams, your fears, your beliefs about money, men, women, race, politics, God, ideas about life and death, your family and

friends. They all swirl around in front of you in the bag. Then you put in everyone you've ever hurt, and all your complaints and prejudices, people or things that you've ever felt are good or bad, right or wrong, all your judgements, difficulties and hopes, accomplishments and failures, and your reputation. All the opinions anyone's ever had about you go into the bag, and you can see them all there, whirling and turning before you, safe in the hands of the angel. And you watch them all for a minute and think about what they mean to you.

But you are still you, and the Lord cares about you as you are, and He will sustain you.

[Part B of music should be starting around now]

You look around for anything you might have forgotten, and then put in all your habits, addictions, needs, desires, refusals, the need to justify what you do, all your current problems and everything that holds you back and could possibly get between you and a perfect relationship with God.

They're all in there, and you look at the contents of the bag and all the things that define you on earth, and have a final think about anything else you might have overlooked, and put them in the bag. And you finally put your body in there, and all your attitudes to it, and watch all this stuff swirling in this bag.

[wait for part A of music to start again here]

But you are not in the bag. You are here, looking at the bag and all the things in the bag. You are still you, and the Lord God loves you and cares about you as you are, and will provide for you and sustain you.

You can now look at all the things in the bag, and choose what you want to take back, for you can use many of these for the good of the Kingdom. Look carefully and decide what you want, and the angel will let you take them back now.

Then you can ask the angel to take away everything else and free you from them all. You bid farewell to the angel, and the remaining things in the bag, and you watch as the angel takes their leave of you, taking all these unwanted earthly trappings, and leaving you free of them.

[music starts to fade around now]

Watch them go, getting smaller, that swirling light receding into the distance, being carried away, until they're a tiny spec, smaller and smaller, and then they disappear. And you are here, and God loves you and cares about the real you that is you just as you are.

**Cast all your cares on the Lord, trust in Him, for He sustains you and loves you, and let us take care to use His gifts to us wisely Amen.**

6'00

5'10" fade starts