

“Surviving the Economic Meltdown”

(Phil. 3:8-11)

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I. Introduction

A. My dad and the Great Depression

1. As a ten-year old
2. Delivering milk at 5 a.m. before school
 - a. Two-mile walk to get horse and cart
3. Delivering papers after school
4. To help the family afford food

B. Could it happen again?

1. The current economic meltdown
2. Conversations with people
 - a. They're scared
3. Is this a sign of the “end times?”
 - a. Will a Messiah rise up to fix everything?
4. Could we be headed for another great depression?
5. How would you cope if you lost everything?
 - a. House
 - b. Job
 - c. Retirement (401k)

6. Has worry begun to darken your spirit?

C. Let's hear from a guy who lost everything

1. Had a brilliant career ahead of him (Phil. 3:4-6)

2. Willingly gave it all up! (v. 7-8)

a. What a sacrifice!

b. Or was it?

3. The benefits of what he received in return

D. If you lost everything next week...some things to remember

II. Things to Remember...

#1 You're not in it alone

a. Garth Brooks' "I've got friends in low places"

b. The benefit of having influential friends

1. I know some real rascals

a. "I've got low friends in high places"

2. But, I've also got high friends in high places

a. We watch out for each other

b. Aware of each other's needs

c. I don't forget a favor done for me

d. Joe's question, "What can I do for you?"

c. You have a personal friendship with the most important person to ever walk this earth

(Philippians 3:8-9)

(8) What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ (9) and be found in him,

d. What it means to “know” Jesus

1. Most people know **about** Him
 - a. Visiting Europe during Easter
 - b. All acknowledge
 - c. Yet only 10% even go to church!
2. Rather— “know” as a deeply personal friend
 - a. “*gnosis*”
 1. An intimate knowing
 - b. Adam knew Eve and she conceived
 1. More than knowing **about** her
 - c. Jesus “knows” you (John 10:14-5)

“I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. ¹⁵ As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.”

3. A personal relationship...rather than a distant acquaintance

e. ***“to gain Christ and be found in Him”.....Phil. 3:9***

1. Used 164 times by Paul
2. ***“in Him”***
 - a. Inexorably intertwined
 - b. Can’t tell when Paul stops and Christ begins
3. People see you and see Christ
 - a. One and the same

d. So what does this mean to you.....You’re not in this alone

1. ***God knows what you are going through....and cares deeply***

(Luke 12:27-31) *Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. (28) If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! (29) And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. (30) For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. (31) But seek his kingdom, and there things will be given to you as well*

- a. Bottom line....God knows and cares

2. God has the resources to get you through

- a. Question regarding Darrel
 - 1. “He’s got a partner with deep pockets”
- a. When Wachovia was purchased by Wells Fargo
 - 1. A partner with deep pockets
- b. You’ve got a partner with “deep, deep pockets”
 - 1. The unsearchable riches of God

3. God doesn’t want you to worry

- a. Call from Dave re: bookmark

(Jeremiah 17:7-8) *“But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him. (8) He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when the heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”*

- b. The drought on the surface is irrelevant
- c. The roots are drawing life-giving water from deep below
- d. Put your confidence in God...not the stock market
 - 1. **“But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him.**
- e. You may need to go through this
 - 1. Some have placed their confidence in the wrong place

2. This may draw you back to God
 - a. Fred's comments
3. God can take care of you in an economic crisis
- f. This may draw America back to God
- g. This may be part of God's plan for the end times
- h. Prayer should be your first response to crisis
 1. Your job
 2. Your house
 3. Your possessions
 4. Your retirement
 5. Your worries
- i. This is strengthening some prayer lives

#2 You're debt free!

- a. Dave R.
 1. "The borrower is slave to the lender"
 2. "Debt Free Fridays"
 - a. "I'm debt free!!!"
- b. The agony of dodging people you owe money
 1. Credit cards
 - a. 40 years if you just pay the minimum
 2. Many see no way out
- c. Wouldn't it be great to be free of all debts in one instant?
 1. What if somebody were to offer to pay it all off

- d. Paul owed an enormous debt of sin
 - 1. We all did
 - 2. “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God”
- e. The moment Paul’s debt got “covered”

(Phil. 3:9) and be found in Christ, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

- 1. ***the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.***
- 2. Jesus covered all of his debts
- 3. Jesus paid a debt he did not owe...for those with a debt they could not pay
- f. What it cost God
 - 1. ***Standing where the fire has already burned***
- g. To be declared righteous is to be set free from the debt of sin
 - 1. ***“through faith in Christ”***
- i. God looks at you and sees his son, Jesus
 - 1. Paid in full!

#3 You wield enormous power and influence

(10) I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection

- a. The power of the resurrection.....
 - 1. The ultimate confrontation
 - a. Satan vs. Christ
 - b. Jesus alone
 - c. Satan and his cronies
 - 2. Had to stop him

- a. If he loses?
 - b. No second chance
- 3. Power vs. power
 - a. Not even close!
- 4. Satan has always wanted to be God
 - a. The 40 days of temptation
 - 1. “Worship me just once”
 - b. Resurrection proved the infinite gulf between him and God
- b. Watching old westerns
 - 1. Fist fight spills out of the tavern
 - 2. The battle with evil has spilled into the streets
- c. The battle with Satan has spilled out into our lives
- d. You have incredible power...The power of his resurrection
 - 1. Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world
 - 2. Eph. 3:20 *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,*
- e. And that includes our power over death itself
 - 1. Dealing with death this week
 - 2. “Did David make it to heaven?”
 - 3. I Cor. 15:55-57 *“O Death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory? ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

#4 You have an advisor who is never wrong

(10) I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, (11) and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

- a. *“The fellowship of sharing in his sufferings”*
- b. We never need to suffer alone—
 - 1. Jesus is always there with us
 - 2. ...and He’s already experienced it
 - 3. His advice is always right
- c. Finding a stockbrokers who is always right
 - 1. Good luck
- d. Jesus has been through it
 - 1. He’s been poor
 - 2. He’s had no place to sleep
 - 3. He’s been tested in every way we have or will be
- e. He’ll never give you bad advice
 - 1. Even though at the time it may not seem to make sense
- f. And that’s not all
 - 1. A church full of people to “share in the fellowship of his suffering”
 - 2. Joy of suffering together
- g. General Norman Schwarzkopf

“I’m frequently asked if I miss the Army. I suppose the answer would have to be yes, but what I miss the most is the camaraderie of those who have suffered great adversity. This is the bond that links all old soldiers. Not surprisingly, it is also the bond that links successful people. Success without adversity is not only empty...it is not possible.”

- h. The camaraderie of the Great Depression

#5 Your investments are doing better than you realize

- a. Watching your assets get hammered

1. Stock market
 - *Quarterly reports
2. Value of your house
3. No safe place to invest

b. I beg to differ

1. My investments are getting spectacular returns

(11) and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

c. Matthew 6:19-21 *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. (20) But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. (22) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

d. Where the market never drops and the banks never fail

1. Where you home's value will increase for all eternity
2. Where there is full employment

#6 *You don't have to worry about death*

(11) and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

a. Death is the ultimate mystery

1. Everybody has an idea
2. Examples
 - a. Egyptians
 - b. Hindus
 - c. Ariel's friend
3. Only a fool would ignore the question

b. Article on "out-of-body-experiences"

1. Scientific attempts to prove

2. Experiment with “near-death experiences” in trauma centers
3. The shelf above the head of the patient
 - a. Triangle visible to patient
 - b. Complex drawing on the top side
- c. The fear of not knowing what will happen
 1. After your last breath
 2. What if there really is a Hell?
 3. What if there really is a Heaven...and you miss it?
- d. We are promised life after death
 1. For the Christian, death does not end with a period or a question mark. It ends with a comma...
 2. I Thessalonians 4:13-18 *Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. (14) We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. (15) According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. (16) For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (17) After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. (18) Therefore encourage each other with these words.*
 3. Absent from the body is to be present with the Lord

#7 And you even get a new body thrown in

(10) I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, (11) and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

- a. What did Jesus look like after the resurrection
- b. Is your body wearing out?
- c. Fear not

III. Summary

A. The suffering of the great depression

1. Could America fall into another great depression?
2. How would you handle it?

B. I've seen people with nothing

1. Ethiopia
2. Poland
 - a. Young Marine Corp Officer
 1. Damien and Jennie
 - b. Missionaries to Poland
 - c. How I got there from Ethiopia
 - d. The night I got there after two days
 - e. What they lost
 1. Living in "the projects"
 2. The coldest nights I've ever experienced
 3. Visiting Auschwitz
3. The slum of India and Egypt

C. Are you worried?

1. This is a test for each of us
 - a. Easy to have confidence when things are rosy
 - b. But what about now
2. Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (7) And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

3. Do you have “the peace that transcends all understanding?”

4. While all around you people fall into worry

*and put their faith in the government