

## Beyond the Great Crash

Amazing how quickly institutions can crumble, how quickly savings can evaporate and careers come to a halt. Surprising how that which we considered to be our security proves in fact to be our vulnerability.

Reading through some accounts of people in the banking industry that lost their jobs, their savings, and their way of life, we are all confronted that what has been built over years can disappear in a moment. It makes you think. In fact, it demands an honest evaluation of our values in work and our way of life. Katherine Bucknell, partner of a city banker reflected honestly in the Times this week. Let me quote from the account of a 'desperate City wife',

"How did we become so undisciplined? What allowed us to say to ourselves "you deserve it" when we knew full well that people elsewhere were ill or starving or working in sweatshops?"

Besides her frank admission she also clearly sees a silver lining to this cloud.

"But perhaps we will all discover some of the kind of wealth that cannot be measured in monetary terms. If this is the Great Crash, we will need to draw on the strengths we often attribute to our parents and grand parents to get us through".<sup>1</sup>

While the resilience and strengths of former generations undoubtedly need to be exercised at present, I suggest we go back further in time, to the first century in fact. When we then look at the teachings of Jesus we find age-old wisdom that relates to our current affairs, truths that will build our lives on something that cannot be shaken.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Mt. 6:19). In his parable of the talents (Mt. 25:14-30), those who applied their talents not only generated fruitfulness but also saw an increase in their responsibilities. For, their stewardship served God's purposes and developed his created order for good. Reflecting something of God's image in the world, they became part of God's happiness. "I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness.'

Based on the teachings of Jesus, the apostolic texts calls us to be "rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share" (1Ti 6:18).

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<sup>1</sup> "After Lehman Brothers: desperate City wives" The Times, 17 Sept. 08.  
[women.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life\\_and\\_style/women/the\\_way\\_we\\_live/article4769062.ece](http://women.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/women/the_way_we_live/article4769062.ece)

If this is the Great Crash, I too hope the experience will stimulate us to critique our life style, to build on solid ground, to fill our lives with a different kind of wealth, to develop our society with a greater compassion and to serve the common good with that which has been entrusted to us.

This is not merely a silver lining to this dark credit cloud; this can be the very foundation that brings *shalom* to each person and family, and true wellbeing to our worldwide human society. While at the same time, we store up riches in heaven.

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