

HOW SHOULD A WISE CHRISTIAN RESPOND TO UNFORESEEN CRISIS ?

(I strongly recommend that you "search these Scriptures" in order to understand the foundation on which your life must be built.)

1. Be ready for problems! Expecting "trials & testings" is not pessimistic, but realistic in a fallen and sinful world where God's timetable for eliminating sin and suffering has not taken place, yet! Just because one may be a child of God does not exempt them from difficult times.

Eccl.9:12, Job 1, Gen.37 (Joseph)39-50, Ps. (David), Jn.16:33, 2Tim.3:1,12; 1Cor.10:13; 2Cor.11:23-12:10 (Paul); Js.1:2-12; 1Pet.4:12-19; Rom.8:36-39

2. Be right with God! Many think they are Christians but when they stand before the Lord, He will say, "I never knew you" (Mt.7:20-23; 25:12). So "examine yourself to see whether you are in the faith" (2Cor.13:5; 2Pet.1:10). Have you really put your trust in Christ's finished sacrificial work on the cross for your sins? (2Cor.5:21; Jn.3:16; 1:12; Rom.5:8, Rev.3:20, Jn.5:24). It is not by your works or performance (Eph.2:8-9). Jesus said that He was the only way (Jn.14:6). He also said, unless you repent, you will likewise perish (Lk. 13:3).

3. Are you really a disciple/follower of Jesus Christ? Evaluate yourself on the basis of these Scriptural evidences:

Mt.10:32-33,38; 7:16-27; 16:24-27; Lk.9:23-26, 57-62; Jn.8:31, 13,:35, 14:15,21; 1Jn. 2:6,28-29; 3:7-9,14,23-24; 4:6-7,13-15 5:1-5,11-13,18-20; 1Pet.1:22-23

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"-Lk.9:25. You can make all the necessary preparations in the world, but if you are not "in Christ" it's all for nothing in terms of eternity! (If you need help in this area, please see me).

4. You must deliberately see everything that happens to you within the framework of the sovereignty of God!

Rom.8:28-29; Dan.4:17,25,35; Isa.46:8-11; Prov.16:4, 21:1, Ps.115:3, Job 14:5, Gen.45:5, 50:20; Ps.103:19

God is sovereignly in control predetermining, as well as, allowing things to take place in this world to accomplish His perfect plan and purposes. If He chooses to permit tragedies or not restrain evil, we are still responsible to trust Him either way (Hab.3:17-19).

5. You must reflect on God's good purposes in trials, difficulties and testings. Jer.29:11-12, Js.1:2-12, 1Pet.1:6-7, Ps.119:67,71, 2Cor. 1:3-6, 12:7-10

6. You must trust in God's promises. Build your faith now!

Get into God's Word and let it get into you! "If you faint in the day of adversity your strength is weak" (Prov.24:10). It doesn't have to be, we have some time to prepare ourselves. Now is the time to "draw near to God" (Js. 4:6-10).

7. Do not fear, worry or panic! But pray and take action. Isa.41:10; 2Tim.1:7; Mt.11:28-30, 6:25-34; Jn.14:27; Phil.4:6-9. Start praying! Jesus said, "men ought always to pray and not lose heart" (Lk.18:1).

8. Ask God for wisdom (Js.1:5) regarding what to do and then do it! Ps. 37:3 gives us the balance "trust in the Lord and do good. James 2:14-26 instructs us that "faith without works is dead!" So to be a responsible Christian implies clearly that we need to "put legs to our prayers". In fact, James also tells us that we must be doers of the word and not hearers only, lest we delude ourselves (1:22-25)! Furthermore, "to him who knows to do good and doesn't do it, to him it is sin (Js.4:17). So then, you must discover what God wants you to do and do it. (2Pet.1:3; 2Tim.3:14-17; Col.3:23). Remember "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil.4:13).

9. Plan and Prepare. Think through the possible scenarios and take an inventory of what you regularly use and would need. Of course Phil 4:19 promises that "God will supply all our needs", but that doesn't remove our responsibility as wise stewards to prepare in advance. It wasn't raining when Noah began to build the ark! Joseph prepared for 7 yrs. before the famine (Gen.40-41). The early church also prepared and planned for a famine that would come (Acts 11:28-30). Prov. 6:6-8, 30:24-25, 20:18, 27:12, 22:3, 16:1,3,9, 24:3-4 We must obviously not trust in ourselves or our provisions and preparations, but in the Lord and His will (Js.4:13-17). It is wise to have insurance; even though we may not use it, one is glad that they have it, just in case.

10. Prepare to help and serve others by sharing:
a. this information with your family, neighborhood, church and community (Ezek.3:17-18).
b. your provisions with those who God providentially brings across your path. Lk.10:30-37; 1Jn.3:17-18; Lk.6:30-34;
c. the gospel of Jesus Christ! This will be an excellent opportunity to evangelize. When people's lives are in turmoil, we should, all the more, be "light" and a witness that points to the true Light & Hope who is "the stability of our times" (Isa.33:6).

Finally, if your life is built on the words of Jesus Christ and you're acting on them, you are the wise one with a rock solid foundation. And when the storms come (and they will), you will stand victoriously. But if you do not act on what you hear, then Jesus said you're like the fool who built his house on the sand and when the storms came -- it all fell apart and he lost it all (Mt. 7:25-27). Which one are you?

Now Build your faith now! You must trust in God's promises.