

## Time to Panic? By Bryan Gibson

The economy has dominated the news lately, and the news has not been good. No need to rehash the details here -- the media has done a good enough job of that. Like everyone else, I'm not happy about it and it has already had adverse effects on me. But, knowing that "one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses" (Luke 12:15), I don't plan to spend too much time stewing over it. Wall Street may be in a panic, but I'm not, and here are just a few of the reasons why.

Let me first say that I don't buy into all the doom and gloom forecasts for the economy. I do believe the economy will rebound, but let's just say for arguments' sake that things get worse, perhaps even far worse. I'm still not going to panic because I know God will provide me with the things I need -- IF I seek first the kingdom and His righteousness (Matt. 6:33). David said, "I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread" (Psalm 37:25).

Secondly, if I am reduced to the necessities of life, my attitude must be one of contentment, not panic. "And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content" (1Tim. 6:8). Hopefully, I will learn, as Paul did to be content "in whatever state I am" (Phil. 4:11). Perhaps I will even learn the lesson so eloquently expressed by the prophet Habakkuk: "Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; though the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls -- yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Hab. 3:17-18).

Thirdly, economic hard times may turn out to be good for me spiritually. If I can't buy as many things, if I can't go as many places, I may just give more attention to the things that matter most. Many of us have seen our stocks decline in value but there are other riches that are not subject to the ebb and flow of the market -- the "exceeding riches of His grace" (Eph. 2:7), or the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8). In other words, I'm not going to panic if I become poor, because I will still be rich (Prov. 13:7). I'm very aware of what the Bible says about the uncertainty of material riches (1Tim. 6:17; Prov. 23:5), but it's hard to think that way when my investments seem secure. Believe me, I understand now just how insecure they can be, and maybe, just maybe, that will cause me to put more trust in God.

"Trust in Him who will not leave you, whatsoever years may bring... build your hopes on things eternal, hold to God's unchanging hand" (Hold to God's Unchanging Hand, Jennie Wilson, EL. Eiland; Via The Exhorter, Sept/Oct 2008)

## Tyndale's Crime

William Tyndale was born in A.D. 1494, near the middle of the Dark Ages. The times were dark because the Scriptures had long been kept from the people by the Roman Catholic Church. Church leaders believed that only members of the clergy should read the Scriptures. For that reason, the Word of God was neither taught nor made available.

Tyndale devoted his life to changing all of that. He built on the work of John Wycliffe, a man who died a hundred years before Tyndale was born. Wycliffe risked his

life on a daily basis to translate the Bible from Latin to English, then to have handwritten copies distributed to the people. Wycliffe was so hated for making the Bible available that several decades after he died, his enemies condemned him for heresy, dug up his body, burned it, then threw the ashes into a local river.

Tyndale built on the foundation Wycliffe laid down, except that Tyndale bypassed the Latin version entirely and translated the Scriptures from the original Hebrew and Greek, directly into English. Because his work was so violently opposed in England, the land of his birth, he fled to Germany. In answering a priest who criticized his work, Tyndale said, "If God spare my life, ere many years, I will cause a boy that drives a plow to know more of the Scriptures than you do."

Like those in the time of Josiah, the people did not know the Scriptures, but neither did the priests. Most of them were ignorant of the Bible. Their source of "truth" was the Pope.

One bishop in Tyndale's time did a survey of the 311 priests in his diocese: 168 of the priests couldn't repeat the Ten Commandments. 31 of the 168 had no idea in where in the Bible the Ten Commandments could be found.

41 could not locate the "Lord's prayer."

31 of the 41 could not name the author of the Lord's Prayer.

When Tyndale completed his translation of the New Testament in 1525, more than 15,000 copies were smuggled back into England over the next five years. Officials did their best to stop the distribution. They delighted in burning Bibles whenever they discovered any. In May of 1535, Tyndale was finally captured and thrown into prison. Approximately one year later, he was burned at the stake. And why was he burned in the flames? Because he was committed to the idea that average people should be able to read the Bible. That was his crime. (Steve Farrar, from KneEmail)

### A Moments Wisdom

A man is in hot water when his tender heart becomes hard-boiled.

A man who says just what he thinks should be sure he thinks before he says.

No man is strong enough to carry a grudge all of his life.

You don't need references in order to borrow trouble.

Some people develop eye strain looking for trouble.

The man who forgets he was once a boy is the man whom boys dislike.

Lies, like chickens, come home to roost.

Some people are like rocking chairs — full of motion, but they make no progress.

A half-truth and a whole lie are congenial companions.

It is good to be wise, and it is wise to be good.