

Part 4 Biblical Foundations, Truths and Principles

Clarifying and honing your convictions for a time of crisis

Christians need to know what the Scriptures teach since they are the foundation of our faith and convictions. Pray not only for godly wisdom and discernment, but also your courage to respond appropriately to God's Word. Consider studying aspects of this section with other Christians. Read the Scriptures and discuss your thoughts together on the topics presented.

During a crisis, Christians need to avoid acting impulsively out of fear. Come to your own convictions, but don't force others to accept them as the only Christian response. Remember, *God still reigns, even if everything disintegrates!* Times of crisis may be the most significant times you will ever have to provide a bold witness as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Be prepared to step into the gap.

How is it that we tend to get more serious about our faith at times of crisis? Throughout the centuries, Christians have suffered hardships, persecution and crises, sustained by their faith and hope in the promises of God's Word. Your daily walk with Jesus should prompt you to learn more and more that He is Lord of all. May your desire be to follow Him regardless of your life situation.

The Joseph Principle *

This principle is based on the biblical story found in Genesis 41. Briefly, when Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, he recommended that they store up one-fifth of the grain from the 7 years of plenty in order to have a reserve for everyone during the 7 years of famine (verses 25-37). In this case it was a God-inspired plan.

The principle, then, is that **in times of plenty** it is a good thing to store up or to set aside a percentage of one's abundance for the future **if** it is for the right purpose, such as being prepared to feed or care for the needs of yourself and others in a future crisis. The stored grain of Egypt was enough for the Egyptians and for surrounding peoples who came to buy grain during the extended famine (verses 56-57).

Proverbs 6:6-8 and 30:25 – The **ants** are an example of creatures that store up in times of plenty. Today we might use the example of **squirrels** in the Fall as they prepare for winter. The difference is that **ants** are storing up for the benefit of the colony, but **squirrels** hide their provisions for themselves, which is why we have the phrase, "to squirrel away."

Remember the parable in Luke 12 (verses 16-21) about the wealthy farmer who planned to build bigger barns to store his abundance? He was called a "fool" because he did not know that he would die suddenly and someone else would acquire his wealth. Jesus concludes the parable with these words (v. 21): *"So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."*

The rich farmer's purpose was all about himself and his wealth with no regard for others.

Consider, though, that the biblical principle of **storing up in times of plenty** for yourself and others is very different than trying to accumulate necessities when the demand is exponentially greater than the supply, when everyone is competing to acquire what they need from limited resources.

For instance, you have probably seen news clips of people rushing to the stores when they knew a severe storm was coming, whether a blizzard or a hurricane or some