

UNCLE LOUIS AND THE STOCK MARKET

"A person's life does not consist in the abundant possessions he has."

- Jesus in Luke 12:15

"I know what it is to be in need and/to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength. My God shall supply all your needs. "

(Paul- From Prison, Phil. 4:12-19)

I had a colorful uncle by marriage from the North Georgia mountains. He loved to tell tall tales and trick city slickers who came there to hunt. He did not have running water or an indoor bathroom, and all I ever saw him wear were overalls. After much persuasion he was talked into visiting Atlanta. When he returned and was asked how he liked it, he said, "***I didn't see nothing I needed***".

Paul, who wrote Philippians from prison, was like that. Sadly, we are not. Far too many in the church today, worship material things; and this week on Wall Street, their god was knocked to his knees and the referee started counting to ten. I don't have a lot in retirement, but it is all I have; so I was afraid it might disappear. Then the fear subsided, and I said, "So what?" Art Linkletter once said, "I will never worry about material things as long as I have the strength to dig a ditch and put food in my family's stomach and a roof over our heads."

I know the economy is complex, but I also know we could all get by on less. I had joy as a boy, when we had no car and walked to the grocery store on Saturday; and two pair of blue jeans and four or five shirts, lasted all year. People today would call that "poor", but it wasn't close to poor. You can only eat one mouthful of food at a time; wear one pair of jeans at a time; and live in one house at a time. When you are loved at home you are a millionaire.

If we had to go back and live like that, some blessings would come. Maybe *we would be closer to God*. Jesus said, "It is as hard for a rich person to get into Heaven as it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle" (Matt. 19:24). This should scare most of us, because compared to other people of the world, we are rich.

We might be healthier. Merle Haggard could be right,

"Are the good times, really over for good?

When a man could still work and still would!

When a girl could still cook and still would!"

Our children, living on fast food and creating health problems ahead in their forty's, would be better off eating green beans and peas grown in the back yard.

Maybe we would *slow down and enjoy life more*. In the late 70's, "Life Magazine" did a study on the thousands of executives and professionals who lost

their jobs, but found manual labor jobs. When the recession passed many chose to stay in them. One New York veterinarian stayed on the loading dock, and when asked why, said, “I am sleeping all night for the first time in 20 years.”

“If you put your nose to the grindstone rough,
and leave it down there long enough
These three will your world compose
You, the stone, and your ground down nose”

Maybe we could *take more time for each other*. I heard a preacher tell this story. The racers at the starting line were ready. Eyes were on the track, muscles were taunt, and hearts were beating fast. The gun sounded and off they went, running as fast as they could. Suddenly, one runner fell flat on his face, and blood poured from his face, knees and elbows. The other runners, every one of them, stopped, went back, and helped their fellow runner up and then finished the race.

When I heard this I thought to myself, “Yea, right! The preacher telling this story needs to get out in the real world. You will never see this in our dog eat dog, rat race where it’s every man for himself.” Then the preacher said, “Maybe this is why they call it the ‘Special Olympics’.” Then I knew he was right and the story was true. – Bob Marcaurrelle, 2009