

Future Security

(Sermon Notes)

By Warren Zehrung 7/23/2016

In our lifetime we have in the United States enjoyed the highest living standard of any nation in all the history of mankind. No country or people have ever lived so well. No one goes hungry or starves to death.

Bible prophecy tells us why we have enjoyed this unmatched wealth and prosperity. We like to think that we did it all ourselves, but it is all because of God's promise to Abraham being fulfilled after 2520 years. World economic and power dominance began in both Britain and the United States around 1800.

Britain leapt into material greatness first. By 1804 London was the financial capital of the whole world. The British had secured large parts of entire earth.

Prior to World War One the British Empire had risen to become the greatest in material wealth, and power, in all earth's history. In those years the U.S. grew, much through the Louisiana Purchase, from its original 13-colony status to a major nation.

Today, things are changing, and things are changing rapidly. England today is a shambles compared to her former glory and might. We should have learned from the mistakes of our sister nation. In the same way Britain has lost her empire, and is no longer a major world power, the United States is following right in her tracks. There are reasons we are no longer respected.

Few people remember the Dust Bowl days that greatly impacted the USA during the 1930s. I think that most of Oklahoma got blown into Kansas 😊

The severe drought came in waves from 1934 up to 1939. My folks sure remembered those days.

At the same time, the entire Western industrialized world was undergoing the little understood economic **downturn** known as the Great Depression (1929-39). Those were curses for disobedience to God's way of life. Read about the blessings and curses in Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28.

When most banks failed during the 1930s, many people lost their life's savings, and that sent the country into an economic collapse. A lot of people never trusted banks again.

In schools today, our children today are being taught that those things will **not** happen again because we've become too smart. They are told that we know how to manage agriculture, and we know how to control the money supply and the economic climate. Brethren, do not believe it.

My sermon today is about **Future Security**. How much should we save for our retirement? That is an interesting question.

Down in Louisiana, my grandparents never had a new car in their lives. My grandfather did not live long enough to draw Social Security – but my grandmother did. Though she never paid a cent into Social Security, my grandmother began receiving survivors benefits for a retiree's spouse when she turned 65. She went out and bought herself a brand-new Chevy sedan in 1955.

Social Security was a good retirement in the beginning – and my grandmother lived well into her 90s! Social Security is not enough to live on these days. Some people have fantastic retirements and future security. They buy motor homes and go on Caribbean or Mediterranean cruises every year. But the **majority** of people have no retirement or pension at all.

I saw a piece of property the other day that was selling for two million dollars. I wish that I had bought it when I first saw it for sale. In 1964 I could have picked it up for only \$10,000.00. Two million dollars would have been a terrific return on my investment.

There was only one reason that I didn't buy that commercial property back then – and it is because I did not have \$10 dollars left over at the end of each month. Between house note, children, pick-up truck note and rice and beans – my entire check was used up.

In 1964 I did buy a brand new pick-up truck off the showroom floor for \$1920.00 – tax and all. (They cost over \$40,000.00 today) That's because of inflation! I did buy a brick home in 1967 for \$13,500.00. Because of inflation, the price of that home doubled in ten years.

I mention these numbers – because the economic picture is only going to get worse – much worse – and much faster.

We should have learned many more important lessons as a result of the Stock Market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression than we did.

It would have never happened had our nation followed God's rules and regulations with regard to the Jubilee years. Tragically, we haven't learned from our mistakes. I say, "Tragically," because it is about to happen again – except this time it will be much worse!

Jeremiah 30:7 Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of **Jacob's trouble**; but he shall be saved out of it.

Oh, for sure there will be momentary and temporary reprieves in our economic picture – but they are not to be counted on. Yes, we know that billions upon billions are set-aside in retirement funds. But, when the **Jacob's Trouble** crash comes – no matter how much retirement you have set aside – it is not going to be nearly enough.

There is a new realization in financial and governmental think-tanks that the Western world has passed the point of no return and entered the beginning of a non-recoverable crisis. That is what I think as well – we've entered the beginning of a non-recoverable crisis. I based that view on the fact that the US federal government's ever increasing debt is optimistically estimated to be \$20 trillion.

And the debt is increasing at a rate that we cannot fathom. That does not include private debt which is much higher. It is not only that many personal loans and mortgages are underwater and will soon be in default; it is the fact that nations are overextended beyond recovery. Trillions upon trillions of dollars of mounting debt are insurmountable.

No one is even thinking of how to bring spending under control. Over spending has become too much of the norm. In abject selfishness, our government grows itself and its government programs - while neglecting the needs of the next generations – heaping impossible debt of the shoulders of the yet unborn.

Let me make a prediction about our next president of the United States. Someone will be elected right after the Feast of Tabernacles. The next president will be **rich, vindictive, corrupt** and **lawless**. There are two candidates for president and they have many bad characteristics in common. The U.S. constitution - which has been a harbor of protection, is being cast aside for their expediency.

Matthew 24:12 And because **lawlessness** will abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

2Timothy 3:1 This know also, that in the **last days** perilous times shall come.

2Timothy 3:2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

2Timothy 3:3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

2Timothy 3:4 Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

2Timothy 3:5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Brethren, that is no way to run a country – let alone the Church of God. The State of our nation is plummeting. Unemployment is going to skyrocket.

Retirement plans of giant corporations and individual States will lose their liquidity and have to be bailed out – but you can only bail out so many without a total collapse of the entire economy. Most families will be left financially destitute.

What is the answer? Where is safety? Where can security be found? What is our refuge?

Title: Where is our Future Security to be found?

Gold is the answer!

Only gold is good for safekeeping.

I'm not talking about the precious metal that is supposed to be stored in Fort Knox – but has long since been depleted. That medium of exchange will soon be worthless.

Ezekiel 7:19 They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their **gold shall not be able to deliver them** in the day of the wrath of the Lord: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumbling block of their iniquity.

Conditions on the earth will be so bad that there will be no place to hide or trade gold for survival. There will be no **physical** solution at all.

Isaiah 2:19 And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he arises to shake terribly the earth.

There is however a spiritual answer and a spiritual solution. There is another kind of gold that the Bible speaks of – that is what we should hoard. God said:

Revelation 3:18 I counsel thee to buy of me **gold tried in the fire**, that thou may be rich; and white raiment, that thou may be clothed.

That gold is the **character** of God—the true gold. That gold is **Godliness**.

The Bride of Jesus Christ will be clothed in **righteousness**.

Revelation 19:8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the **righteousness of saints**.

That **gold tried in the fire** is the **righteousness** of the saints (Revelation 19:8) which is the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

That is the gold we are supposed to stockpile – the character of God—the true gold of Godliness.

2Corinthians 5:21 [God the Father] has made [Jesus Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that **we** might be made the **righteousness of God** in Him.

King David had to think about the subject of Future Security. He said, “I have been young, and **now am old**.” As David was in what we would consider his **retirement** years, God wanted to relay to us what David had learned, He said:

Psalms 37:25 I have been young, and **now am old**; yet have I not seen the **righteous** forsaken, nor his children begging bread.

What David is explaining in this verse is that the values and principles of God's word have long term effects – not only on us and our families, but on society around us.

Jesus tells us to seek the **righteousness of God** for our future security. God has a **Retirement Plan** for His followers. He knows better than anyone what will be needed in retirement years.

Matthew 6:8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your **Father knows what things ye have need of**, before ye ask Him.

Matthew 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

Matthew 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

That does not mean that we should not work hard and save for a rainy day – our retirement years... It means that we are not to place our **full confidence** in banks, annuities, interest bearing certificates of deposit, derivatives, futures, options, stocks, bonds **or** investments in Wall Street and of the world. God clearly tell us not to rely on those things – but to rely on Him.

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Invest in Godly stock. Is our heart fully set upon the things of God? Do we really look to God for our **future security**? Could we kiss all our Retirement Plans goodbye and rely totally on God without being shaken to the core?

This world is not dependable when someone saves all his money for his old age – only to have the lawyers and the courts take it away from them by declaring him incompetent to handle his own affairs...

The time may be coming when everything we planned for evaporates, is confiscated, is taxed away - leaving us with nothing. Nothing that is except the **reliance** we have placed in God. We see in this next verse that there must be a **spiritual** component in our Retirement Plan if our **future** is to be **secure**.

Matthew 6:20 But lay up for yourselves **treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

How do we do about making periodic deposits in our heavenly bank account? Jesus get serious here: He says that it is impossible to fully rely on our investment plans, And rely on God too. So we must ask ourselves , “On whom do I rely?”

Have we ever actually said to God – while on our knees – I could lose everything I have saved – and still I would serve you, praise and worship your sacred name – even if I didn’t know where my next meal was coming from?

Matthew 6:24 No man can serve two masters [God and the Stock Market]: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

We must never think, “I did it all myself.” I’ve taken care of myself – I’ve insured and indemnified myself against every eventuality – I’ve taken care of myself. “I’m covered for the future.” God wants – demands – that we learn to rely totally upon Him. Do we depend on God with full trust, faith and confidence? Let’s look at the faith Jesus is calling for:

Matthew 6:25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Matthew 6:26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are ye not much better than they?

Matthew 6:28 And why take ye thought for raiment [why do you worry about your clothes]? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

Matthew 6:29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Matthew 6:30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Strong words! Sure, you develop skills, study, learn work, advance yourself – but ultimately, God wants us to look to Him and rely on Him, depend on Him.

Matthew 6:31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? [why do you worry about where your food and sustenance will come from]?

Matthew 6:32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knows that **ye have need** of all these things. [before you ask Him, verse :8 again]

God knows! We come to the most important verse in today's sermon.

Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and **His righteousness**; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 6:34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

The evil this world is going to encounter is going to be overwhelming – much worse than the Dust Bowl days, or Great Depression: Could America survive a **Great Depression** - style crash? America is not the same nation that entered the Great Depression:

During the 1930s, people had fruit trees, gardens, animals and savings. Today we have much less contact with agriculture and horticulture which means that the next crash will be far more excruciating than most people can imagine.

With its vast resources, America was the world's biggest lender, and was a major manufacturer, producer and exporter. Today, we are saturated with debt and unemployment. Yes, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." We certainly have enough to worry about – and we brought it all on ourselves.

I remember in January 1980 when Herbert W. Armstrong said, "Prepare to greatly reduce your standard of living. I took him to heart. I had already tried moving back to a self-sustaining farm-like living with wind-power and organic gardening. But I had: 4 kids getting to college age, 6 cars - one each person with different needs, a business to run and the Youth Opportunities United (YOU) to direct. To reduce my standard of living at all, I'd have had to sell one of my children for cash! ☺ Just kidding – but we tightened our belt as much as possible.

What else could we have done without? Insurance, electricity, water, home??? It was impossible to cut back any more – and still be a part of modern society.

The question we are considering is this: Would we lose all our physical, financial, and collective security; would we lose it **all** – like the Martyr Stephen did in Acts 7:55 – and still **look** to Jesus Christ and **trust** in God?

Acts 7:55 But [Stephen], being full of the Holy Spirit, **looked up** steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

God tells us – whatever you do – do not become **envious** of those men in power... Those with the big retirements; Those with the large slush funds;

Those who are friends with the courts; Those who are not held accountable. Do not seek to be one of them. When it looks like the bad guys are getting the upper hand and having the last word, we need to remember that God's truth always prevails in the end.

Psalm 73:1 Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.

Verse 2 is the specific purpose statement:

Psalm 73:2 But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

“my steps had well nigh slipped” is an idiomatic expression meaning that someone had been sidetracked from the way of God into an evil lifestyle.

We have the same sayings today. I got off track... I fell off the wagon... I lost my footing... I was thrown off balance... I lost my way...

Psalm 73:3 For I was **envious** at the foolish, when I saw the **prosperity** of the wicked.

They are above the law – their crime never catches up with them.

Psalm 73:4 For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm.

Psalm 73:5 They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.

Psalm 73:6 Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment.

Psalm 73:7 Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.

Psalm 73:8 They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily.

Psalm 73:9 They set their mouth **against** the **heavens**, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

They blaspheme God and the things of God.

Psalm 73:12 Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

It makes you want to say, “What am I being good for? They get all the breaks.”

Psalm 73:13 Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence.

Psalm 73:14 For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

I know that I’ve got to set a right example...

Psalm 73:15 If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should **offend** against the generation of thy children.

But, “It’s just not fair that they **get away** with everything.”

Psalm 73:16 When I thought to know this, it was **too painful** for me;

Psalm 73:17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then **understood I their end**. [how they end up - destroyed]

Psalm 73:18 Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.

Psalm 73:19 How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.

Psalm 73:24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

Psalm 73:25 Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. [there is our common theme]

“Seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness.”

Psalm 73:26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.

Psalm 73:27 For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.

Psalm 73:28 But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.

David looked for evidence that God's way works.

Let's look at what David said - - and try to picture yourself today without looking to government for your security, or to banking institutions.

It is a matter of **faith** that we know and believe from the very core of our hearts that God performs what He says He will do.

Psalm 37:1 A Psalm of David. Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

Psalm 37:2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

Psalm 37:3 Trust in the LORD, and do good [do righteousness]; so shall thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shall be fed.

Psalm 37:4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and **He shall give** thee the desires of thine heart. [that is more than our needs]

Psalm 37:5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

Psalm 37:6 And he shall bring forth thy **righteousness** [there it is] as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

Psalm 37:7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. [as we just saw in Psalm 73]

Psalm 37:8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

Psalm 37:9 For evildoers shall be cut off [just consider how they end up]: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

Psalm 37:10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

Psalm 37:11 But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. [Jesus said it before]

Psalm 37:12 The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

Psalm 37:13 The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.

Psalm 37:14 The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation.

Psalm 37:15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

Do not envy the rich – but be happy and satisfied with our lot in life.

Psalm 37:16 [The] little that a **righteous** man has is better than the riches of many wicked.

Psalm 37:17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous.

Psalm 37:18 The LORD knows the days of the **upright** [Righteous]: and their inheritance shall be **forever**.

Do not be concerned about Jacob's Trouble and the tribulation.

Psalm 37:19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

Psalm 37:20 But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.

Therefore be generous...

Psalm 37:21 The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: **but** the righteous sheweth mercy, and gives.

Psalm 37:22 For such as be blessed of Him shall inherit the earth [Kingdom of God in the Millennium]; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.

Psalm 37:23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

Psalm 37:24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.

Again we see I context:

Psalm 37:25 I have been **young, and now am old**; yet have I not seen the **righteous** forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

Psalm 37:26 He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

Psalm 37:27 Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.

Psalm 37:28 For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh **not** his saints; they are preserved **forever**: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

Psalm 37:29 The **righteous** shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.

Psalm 37:30 The mouth of the **righteous** speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of judgment.

Psalm 37:31 The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.

He will not lose his spiritual footing – as the evil of Psalm 73.

Psalm 37:32 The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.

Psalm 37:33 The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.

Psalm 37:34 Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.

Psa 37:35 I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.

Psalm 37:36 Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

Psalm 37:37 Mark the perfect man, and behold the **upright**: for the end of that man is peace.

Psalm 37:38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

Psalm 37:39 But the salvation of the **righteous** is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble.

Do we look to God as David does?

Psalm 37:40 And the **Lord** shall help them, and **deliver** them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and **save** them, because they trust in him.

God's righteousness must be of the highest priority in our lives – the rest will take care of itself.

End: Future Security