

Morning Star

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, TARRYTOWN, NY

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Financial Crisis – A Route to Success

By Daniel Hoster

Do you know what caused the financial crisis? One day analysts looked at the balance sheet of some financial institutions again and discovered that on the left side there was nothing right and on the right side there was nothing left. Let's face it, the financial and economic crisis is not a joke, it is a serious challenge. Many of us are confronted with serious questions: What if my savings are lost? If I will lose my job? If my children don't find a job? If the whole system breaks down? If my insurance breaks down? If I am sick and have no healthcare coverage? If I lose my home? If I end up a failure? What will happen?

I want to clearly state that there is a lot of exaggerated panicking going on these days which I do not support. I want to take a different perspective here: This crisis challenges us to revisit our lifestyles, our values, our priorities. So, please don't waste this opportunity.

Here is another positive twist. As one bailout program is chasing the next, and cash is king, let me remind you of the secret treasure chest that you have in your house. I am talking about the Bible. **THIS BOOK IS A TREASURE BOX** for wisdom, comfort, inspiration, encouragement, guidance, and for clear instructions how to live our lives on a daily basis.

Let's look into this treasure box and learn from Jesus. In Philippians 2:5-11, we read the most beautiful executive summary of Jesus' life, his mission, his accomplishment, and his attitude. This is a very crisis relevant passage. And it starts with a request that all Christians should know and follow very naturally: "Your attitude should be the same that Christ Jesus had" (Philippians 2:5). Could it be that in the years of economic growth and well-being, we have forgotten about Jesus request?

I. Crisis is a wakeup call: what's my attitude? Let's make an honest analysis: is my attitude like the one Jesus Christ had? We measure economic condition by looking at the stock index, the consumer confidence index, the ISM manufacturing index, and measuring the GDP or CPI. In the same way, let's measure the attitude and faith condition against the benchmark Jesus set. He did not cling to his rights, he made himself nothing, he took the humble position, he practiced full obedience to God, he was willing to give up everything, including his life. I am humbled when I see his love that motivated him to do all this

for me. Now, if we want to analyze our attitude, let's calculate on a scale from 1 – 10, our (1) expectations index; (2) materialism index; (3) humility index; (4) obedience index; (5) giving index? How is your spiritual growth? Maybe, we have to determine that there is not only a financial crisis, but much more a faith and attitude crisis. While God has blessed us with material blessings, we have exaggerated our expectations. **THE GOD MODEL**



The Hoster family with their new baby daughter.

would have been to thankfully accept the blessings and freely give up parts of it. But instead, we adopted **THE WORLD MODEL** which is to benefit and maximize the benefits only. We have indulged and overindulged ourselves with worldly attitude, comfort, and pleasures. Please read Revelation 3:17-18 where God calls for wakeup. We have to recognize the severity of the crisis: Yes, mammon and success have become our idols; those idols have crashed. We have bet on gold that was not gold but plastic; we have invested our money, time and desire in **SUBPRIME-BONDS**. Materialism is a cul-de-sac with a trap; and the crisis is a wake-up call to return.

Financial Crisis (continued from page 1)

II. Crisis is what Jesus experienced

In Philippians 2, I read that my friend, my Lord, and my role model, Jesus, experienced the worst crisis I could even think of. Looking at Jesus story, I learn that he chose the complete life and death crisis, because he recognized the much bigger, eternal crisis we were in. Jesus humbled himself, gave up luxury and comfort in order to serve. He gave up his pursuit of happiness in order to suffer our financial, emotional, spiritual, and eternal crisis. Here is the Jesus Model: He chose the crisis -- as a route to success. He is now calling us to follow him: There is NO OTHER WAY to eternal success than the JESUS MODEL. The opportunity of this current financial crisis is: we have a second chance to look at Jesus and revisit our lifestyle.

III. Crisis brings sense of urgency

While in normal circumstances, our society has a tendency to discuss each and everything, the need for talking changes into a need for action immediately in case of a crisis. Crisis brings a sense of urgency, and we search for quick imperatives. I want to give you four imperatives to handle this crisis, and I hope these will prove useful for you.

Imperative #1: Trust Jesus

A practical way how to put your trust in Jesus is described in Revelations 3:20. It talks about opening the door of the heart and inviting Jesus to come in. And it describes what will happen then: Jesus will come in and feast with you. What we need is joy beyond pleasure, joy beyond the here and now, joy that is deep fulfilling and lasting. We can get this joy by trusting Jesus. So, trust Jesus. Give the financial crisis a timeout: Choose the best party ever, forever.

Suggested Action Points

- Fold your hands and invite Jesus into your heart
- Follow Jesus with all your passion
- Fellowship with other Christians
- Find safety and assurance in Jesus not in Dollars / Savings / Income

Imperative #2: Humble yourself

For too long we have felt self-sufficient, independent and in charge. Like a rebelling child, we claimed that we didn't need a God or any other authority to tell us what to do and what not to do. The moral code that has emerged was this: Do what you think feels good for you. The crisis reminds us that we are vulnerable, weak, and worrisome. God gives us an urgent imperative: humble yourself (1. Peter 5:5-7). The humble person will find mercy but God will withstand the arrogant. Humility and submission are not en vogue. But this is what we need. One helpful concept to check your attitude and humility is to think of the "Submission Zone". The goal

is to do at all times what God likes and what God directs you to do. Like an ambassador who at all times is in synch with the president and represents him well. Whatever you do, check if this is inside the Submission Zone or outside, and you will master both crisis and success.

Suggested Action Points

- Accept that God is right (Romans 9:20). Don't worry + don't complain.
- Allow God to determine what you do – in all aspects, ask what he likes
- Don't be afraid of drastic lifestyle changes if that's what Jesus prefers.
- Re-establish your identity: child of the king = servant of the Lord
- You don't have to impress with your achievements, income, club memberships; you can be a proud child of the King.
- Start thanking God for everything
- Always have a praise to God on your heart
- Make it a habit to study God's word so that you learn about HIS plans
- Resolve to create fixed prayer times through your day
- Be the one in your household who serves the others
- Remain positive. God will continue to provide good things.

Imperative #3: Be ready

The Bible gives us a clear indication that at the end of the days there will be a major judgment day. Whenever we experience a major crisis some people start speculating if this might accumulate into the end of the world. However, our job is not to speculate. Our job is to be ready (Matthew 24:44) and recalibrate our priorities (1. Peter 4:1-3). The crisis invites us to be prepared for judgment day at any moment. Do I have the right priorities? Is what I do sustainable beyond the here and now? One key learning from this financial crisis is that it's time that we focus on the THERE a little more than on the HERE. Eternity counts (2. Corinthians 4:16-18).

Suggested Action Points

- Take stock of your life: what is pleasing to God, what is not (check your checkbook / budget, your daily schedules, your weekend plans)
- Ban everything from your house and life that might not please God (any books, CDs, movies, magazines; any habits, language, or disputes)
- Stop doing anything that you would not want to be doing when Jesus enters the room
- Make peace with everyone
- Finances: reduce spending + increase giving; Invest in the kingdom - Give more to church, to missions, for outreach, for social causes; Downscale your own lifestyle – spend more for good

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The Bright and Morning Star is seeking contributions for the next issue on any topics of interest which glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. Please send articles to: The Bright and Morning Star Newsletter at the address above.

Remembering Black History Month

By Luanne C. Clark



To the youth and young generation which is our future of tomorrow. What does the "Celebration of Black History Month" mean to you? Well, to first of all to start off with a tremendous accomplishment goes out to our first black President, Mr. Barack Obama, who is now the 44th president of the United States of America. Always remember and respect our ancestors because they represent the middle passage, as well as crossed the shores where Miss Liberty stands today brave and strong. Our heritage, our destiny, one love, peace and prosperity. We must also, young people, remember to thrive and survive those obstacles that may seem hard and difficult for us to accomplish. Do your very best each and every day in school, church, with your parents on a daily basis. "Keep the Faith" and be strong as well as a proud black African American young person. May God continue to bless you all.

Abraham Lincoln was the 16th president of the United States of America, and he had a special meaning and purpose. As we celebrate Lincoln today as "The Great Emancipator," and several schools in the Westchester area are named after him. Don't forget his Emancipation Proclamation speech which gave African Americans legal equality through the struggle. President Lincoln was also very prestigious and popular, he loved mysteries, and was a self-taught poet through the spoken word which is poetry. President Lincoln endured cars as well as the Lincoln Logs that were toys to him. These were tributes to President Lincoln. In memory of Abraham Lincoln there is a society and a museum called the Lincoln Depot in Peekskill, New York. ★

Jesus Made Me a Goodie-Two-Shoes

By Aaron C. Velez

One day I stopped by my friend's office at work unannounced as I do from time to time. My friend was talking with another friend and as soon as I walked in, my friend shushed the other one and gave me a guilty look similar to the one Sylvester the cat would give after he tried to eat Tweety bird. We are all good friends so I asked, "What's the deal!? Why are you shutting up right when I walked in the room?" My friend said to me, "I don't want to tell you cause I know your going to say that we shouldn't be talking about this. I mean, Aaron, you're a goodie-two-shoes!"

My work friends know that I am a Christian and I am sure that is why they stopped talking. Regardless, it made me laugh (even though I was kind of annoyed) when I heard that I was considered goodie-two-shoes because I NEVER considered myself that! Usually, it was the other way around. I was the guy who gossiped about others and cursed like it was going out of style. I was the guy who partied all night and broke a lot of rules. And I was definitely the guy who encouraged others, especially the goodie-two-shoes, to do the same.

Eventually, I did learn what my friends were talking about, and they were actually correct, their conversation was not one I wanted to participate in because it was a lot of gossip about another co-worker and my faith, or what my friends would call my goodie-two-shoe-ness, tells me to avoid gossip. But, even though my friends were right, I wondered how did I and I think Christians in general pick up this moniker of being goodie-two-shoes? I like to think that I am an average, normal, easy-going type of guy. Not particularly goodie-two-shoe-y and definitely not someone you would need to watch what you say around for fear of some brutal tongue-lashing I'd give them in the name of God.

I decided to do some intense and deep research on the origins of the term "Goodie-Two-Shoes" (let's call it GTS from now on). I searched high and low and found, in a little site called Wikipedia, that GTS was actually a children's fable written in 1765 presumably by a man named Oliver Goldsmith. The story is about a poor orphan girl named Margery Meanwell. Margery lived her entire life with only one shoe until a very wealthy man

saw her and noticed her one-shoe dilemma. Out of his compassion and love, the rich stranger buys Margery a brand new pair of shoes. Margery is so happy with this gift that she tells everyone who will listen of the generosity of the stranger and that she now has two shoes. She is given the nickname GTS by the townsfolk and eventually grows up to become a teacher, marries a rich man, and lives an abundant life.

So the term GTS, although viewed today as someone who is uncommonly good almost to the point of insincerity, actually began as a humble orphan who was given a gift out of compassion, wanted to tell the world about it and in the end, found wealth that she never knew before. Doesn't this sound like a very familiar story? Simply replace some of the pieces. Let's say the generous rich man is Jesus, the pair of shoes is the promise of eternal life with God, we are Margery, non-believers are the townsfolk who we want to tell about the generosity of Jesus, and the marrying of the rich man is the fruition of eternal life with God. Ok, maybe I'm reading into it and I'm sure Mr. Goldsmith didn't intend for his story to be used in such a way but still, it seems to work.

I know that I need to be more like Margery Meanwell when she got her new shoes and tell everyone who will listen of the awesome gift that God has given me. Ok, everyone is a lot of people but, at least I'll commit to telling at least one person. After all, it starts with one conversation with one person. And while that conversation can be a scary and nerve-wracking experience, how amazing would it be when that one person that you took a chance on comes to know Jesus Christ.

Initially, when I was called a GTS, even though they were half joking, I was ashamed and kind of annoyed that I was thought of like this by my friends. But, when I took a step back, I realized that I am a GTS. In this world a GTS is someone who doesn't have to stop what they are saying just because someone else walks in the room. A GTS is humble and happy with what the Lord provides for them. A GTS wants to share the good news that they have been blessed abundantly by God. Seriously, it doesn't get any goodie-two-shoe-ier than that! ★

Outreach is Alive at FBC

By Aaron C. Velez

On May 2nd, the church hosted its 2nd annual Spring Brunch in the Fellowship Hall. No sun, no parking lot, no problem! Our congregation treated our guests to a great morning of fellowship and fun. Approximately 70 people attended and half of them were our guests. We enjoyed a fun icebreaker game, live music from the worship team, a special song by the worship team featuring Yolanda Johnson. We gave away the goldfish centerpieces (sorry parents who now have to explain that the goldfish is at some point "going to the doctor"), ate an amazing breakfast put together by Jennifer Polimeno and Christopher Herrmann, heard a very special message by Pastor Torrey and Katie Cowart shared her beautiful testimony. Fun was had by all and we can't wait to do it again next year.

Fortunately, you don't have to wait until next year to get

involved with the next church function! This summer will offer plenty of opportunities to get involved and invite your friends, family and neighbors. There is the upcoming youth work camp from July 5th – 10th, the Senior's Luncheon on July 18th, the return of the Summer Olympics on August 1st, VBS August 10th – the 14th, and do not forget Movie Night's on the lawn every third Friday in the summer! I'm sure there is a Reunion BBQ somewhere in there as well and I heard that there may be a sports Saturday. Looking forward to it!

I want to encourage you to take a chance and invite one of your neighbors to come to one, some or all of these events. We love meeting new people and are always seeking new and exciting ways to spread the Word of God.

I hope to see you at the next one! ★



Some of the many people who enjoyed the 2nd Annual Spring Brunch at FBC

Get Inspired...

Bestselling Christian Books:

Experiencing the Spirit: the Power of Pentecost Every Day,
Henry Blackaby and Melvin Blackaby, 2009

3:16: The Numbers of Hope,
Max Lucado, 2007

Walking with God, John Eldredge, 2008

Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God, Revised and Expanded
Henry Blackaby and Claude King, 2008

Experiencing the Words of Jesus—Workbook,
Max Lucado, 2009

Living the Christian Life Bestsellers:

Cast of Characters,
Max Lucado, 2008

Faith & Doubt,
John Ortberg, 2008

The Life You've Always Wanted,
John Ortberg, 2008

In Step with God: Understanding His Ways and Plans for Your Life,
Charles F. Stanley, 2008

Knowing God,
J. I. Packer, 20th Anniversary Edition, 1993

Bestselling Christian Book on Prayer:

The Power of a Praying Wife,
Stormie Omartian, 2007

Best Selling Christian CDs

1. In the Hands of God
by Newsboys

2. Hello, Love CD
by Chris Tomlin

3. WOW Hits 2009 CD
by Various Artists

4. MM 10 CD/DVD
by MercyMe

5. You Are My Hiding Place: 50 Classic Maranatha Praise & Worship Songs, 3 CDs
by The Maranatha Singers

6. Passion Talk Series, 4-DVD Set, Louie Giglio My Paper Heart, CD
by Francesca Battistelli

7. While I'm Waiting CD
by John Waller

8. Over and Underneath CD
by Tenth Avenue North

9. A New Hallelujah, CD
by Michael W. Smith

10. Crash CD
by Decyfer Down

Top DVDS

1. Love Takes Wing, DVD Fireproof, Special Collector's Edition DVD
starring Kirk Cameron

2. Behind the Mask, DVD
starring Matthew Fox

3. Awesome Bible Adventures: 5-DVD Set The Second Chance, DVD
starring Michael W. Smith

4. Faith Like Potatoes, DVD

5. Come What May, DVD

6. Abe and the Amazing Promise, VeggieTales DVD

7. Thicker Than Water, DVD
starring Melissa Gilbert

8. Flywheel:
Director's Cut DVD

Our Testimony of Faith

By Amy and Dan Mark

My wife, Amy, and I have recently shared our faith with everyone at First Baptist Church through our baptism this past January. We were both raised in the Lutheran church and were baptized as infants, but being baptized again was the perfect way to declare our rediscovered faith in Jesus.

We were both raised in loving, Christian families, but somewhere along our path to adulthood, we wandered from our faith. We had known Jesus but had forgotten him. It was plainly obvious to the both of us that we were missing something in our lives. A year after our marriage, we attended the wedding of Amy's brother, and the event was filled with people who spoke openly about Christ in their lives. There was something that was starkly different between those people and our own friends. They all portrayed contentedness, peace, and love that seemed rare. After a lengthy discussion, we decided that main difference must be the presence of Jesus in their lives. If we did have a moment in which we were saved, that was it. From that point on, we made a concerted effort to reinvest our lives to God.



Amy and Dan Mark

We grew a lot during the next year, but we were still not able to leave our comfort zones. I think I would have been perfectly fine slipping into and out of church without getting involved at all. Looking back, we needed to be pushed outside that level of comfort. That push came when I found out that I was accepted to the M.D. program at New York Medical College; Amy left her family, home, and career; and we uprooted to Westchester. We knew that God had something planned and decided to open ourselves completely to this new opportunity.

We arrived in Ossining in late July, and started looking for a church. We walked into First Baptist and were welcomed immediately. The music was inviting, the people were warm, and the presence of God was undeniable. Ken and Debbie Ocheltree intercepted us before we could slip out, and they invited us to lunch. This seemed like a place that could be a new home for us. We came back to First Baptist the next week, then the week after, and thereafter, the whole time growing in our faith. We feel so blessed to have been able to find a family like First Baptist Church.★

The FBC Parking Lot is Complete!

By Lauren Zaccaria

To the Glory of God and the awesome support of our church family, our sister church - the Spanish Congregation, regular parkers and visitors to our property First Baptist Church is honored to have a newly paved, lined and Belgium Block edged parking lot. In addition, through the efforts of all we have a new drainage system, Elizabeth Street entrance and side walk and carriage arching front driveway. This endeavor has been put off many times over the past years and was a growing concern and need. The costs were reduced due to successful negotiations with Brazilian Pavers by Rick Zaccaria, our newest Trustee.



Financial Crisis (continued from page 2)

- Determine your wake-up time ("If you want to wake up spiritually, it often starts with determining your wake up time in the morning...")
- Every night when you go to bed, check that you are ready for God

Imperative #4: Confess the name of the Lord Jesus

All our moral and legal shortcomings are enough to separate us deeply from peace with our creator. The Bible says that the result of sin is death, eternal death. Recognizing this deep crisis, Jesus stepped in and died in my place. Jesus has given his life for you and me so that we now can have eternal life if we believe in him. – This is the gospel, the good news. It's so phenomenal that everyone who knows this can't help but share the good news of hope. The imperative is: We can't be ashamed of this good news as this is a hope and a power (Romans 1:16-17), exactly what we need these days. If you hear the cry for another bailout package, respond to the crisis by sharing your spiritual wealth. It's a fact: today people suffer from fear and some are in danger of suicide because they have no hope. It's like a spiritual famine going around the globe. Friends: when we have food, and others are starving – it is outrageous and irresponsible not to share the good news.

Suggested Action Points

- In your prayer time, make it a habit to kneel down before Jesus as a visible sign that you recognize his majesty and authority as Lord
- Make a list of your closest contacts: neighbors, relatives, colleagues and check who of them might not know that you belong to Jesus
- Think of people who don't have Jesus yet – and share the hope;
- Make a list to pray, share, and follow up in a thoughtful, loving way
- Pray for Government

Let me summarize. The financial and economic crisis is breathtaking. And I wish for all of you that you will come through safely and well. But even more importantly, I wish for all of you that you will not miss the opportunity to see the crisis as a road to success if you follow the famous four L's: 1. Look at Jesus and experience comfort and healing. 2. Love Jesus and rekindle your passion. 3. Learn from Jesus and restructure your lifestyle. 4. Let Jesus govern and guide you so you have a fresh purpose and determination. In ten years from now, we will hear wonderful stories of how the crisis has triggered people to choose the route to true success. What will your story be?★

Not Just Another Meeting

By Pastor Torrey Robinson

When does history happen? It can be argued that history happens every second that goes by. In this sense, history is simply time now past.

Still, history has a more specific meaning. Truly historic events are those that shape the future. We are aware of many such occurrences when they happen. The collapse of the Berlin wall, 911, and the election of Barack Obama were events that almost immediately began to cast their shadows on the future.

But many events that shape history are not immediately recognizable as significant. Many important happenings never make the news headlines. Their real significance becomes evident in time. Only the future can judge what is truly historic today.

I wonder if the years ahead will show that an historic event took place on January 27, 2009. Do you remember that date? Probably not, but that was the night of a significant Leadership Circle gathering at First Baptist Church. At that meeting we began to work out the details of our outreach goal.

25-250-2010 may appear like an inverted Social Security number. However by now you probably know that these numbers represent a bold step of faith we are taking together as a church family. We're trusting God to see 25 people come to faith in Jesus Christ and to see the Sunday morning church attendance grow to 250 by the end of 2010. This goal is a tangible expression of our faith that God will transform hearts as we share his love and hope with friends and family members.

At that meeting in January we began to develop a sim-

ple strategy to help people come to know Jesus and to grow as Christians. With the input of ministry leaders and other key individuals in the church we discussed the formation of classes to give people the biblical foundation for spiritual growth. We have already completed the first two of these classes 101 and 201. Next fall we plan to take a new group through Class 301 to help Christians find out where God wants them to put their talents and spiritual abilities to use.

The Leadership Circle discussed the importance of finding a leader for the Doorkeepers ministry. Since you never get a second chance to make a first impression, the Doorkeepers have a vital function. They are the usually the first people to greet visitors when they come to church on Sunday morning. Already Yolanda Parker-Johnson has stepped forward to lead this crucial ministry.

We now have a banner to hang in the sanctuary. This banner with the numbers 25/250/2010 is both a statement of faith and a silent reminder of the goal before us. Thanks to Ed Phillips opening his home on Tuesday afternoons we have increased the number of people gathering to pray for God to work as we trust Him to grow His church.

January 27, 2009 could be only a forgotten date on a useless old calendar. But I encourage you to circle that date in faith. Join with me in praying that January 27, 2009 may turn out to be a truly historic event. For if God chooses to bless our efforts that Leadership Circle meeting back in January could turn out to be the start of a great work of God.★

Spiritual Renewal

Obedience, discipline, humbleness and sincerity.
In essence of the “Spiritual Rebirth” which is the maker of
blue sky mornings, eternal love and children’s laughter,
I become preoccupied with having worldly goods,
focussing beyond the words “me” and “mine”.
What is “Spiritual Rebirth,” surpassing the scope of my wisdom and growing ego
that become the colors that I wear?
I will pause and remember that this is your universe, your world, even my flesh is your flesh.
And I am just an invited spirit with a free lease on life and living.
My soul cries out in praise of you, for you are the Word and the Flesh,
the Thought and the Presence, the Light and the Way.
You are the Power and the Glory, forever and ever, Amen.
To God be the Glory, Great Things He Has Done.

– Luanne C. Clark (Aminah)



Today's Christian Music

Please call the Church office for more events and times 914-631-6372 or visit www.fbctarrytown.org

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF TARRYTOWN

With God's help we seek to be "A Community where God is at work, lives are changed, broken hearts are healed, hopes are real, and people are on fire for God and His Word."

56 South Broadway, Tarrytown, NY 10591-4011

Phone: 914-631-6372; Fax: 914-524-0503

E-mail: office@fbctarrytown.info

The Bright and Morning Star

First Baptist Church of Tarrytown
56 South Broadway
Tarrytown, NY 10591-4011

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