

Hard times. What do we do? Cheat and steal to get money? Suicide when we lose a job? Hope the government will raise our investments, get us jobs, make our house payments?

When the President was inaugurated in January, he spoke of the hard times for our country due to economy and war. He told us government would help us through it, but he and we both know the government can't do it for us. We have duties, he said. We have to help. He said our success depends on old values. What are they: hard work and honesty, courage and fair play, tolerance and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism. He said we have duties to use these values. God calls on **us** to shape an uncertain destiny.

If we wait for government to fix the problems, they won't be fixed. We have to do it, too. Hard work means looking for another job when we are laid off, not waiting for the economy to get better. Honesty means refusing to cheat on taxes or shortchange customers, just because we are short of money ourselves. Tolerance is respecting those who differ in religion or culture, even while we offer a better way. Curiosity will help us find ways to get our needs met without money.

How did the people of the Bible show it? Do you have a favorite character in the Bible? How did he or she use the old values?

Work,

(story of carpenter)

"People should eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of their labor"

Ecclesiastes 3:13

Honesty

Courage Elijah showed when he stood up to the prophets of Baal

Fair play

Tolerance

Curiosity

Loyalty

Patriotism

Courage of Abraham to leave his home and step out in faith.

Fairness of King Solomon in ruling his subjects. Fair play of Zaccheus who came down from the tree and told Jesus he would pay back anyone he had cheated in taxes.

Hard Work of Jacob to win his bride

Curiosity of the boy with a lunch to see what Jesus would do with it.

Tolerance of Jesus with the woman with five husbands and foreign religion.

Loyalty of Queen Esther to save her people

We have temptations to use some other values. Survival, hoarding, hiding from those who need us. Taking care of ourselves and our families only. We don't have the power to use these old values when the going gets tough.

Christians have Holy Spirit power to stick to those old values in a weak economy. Louie Bock's sermon last week spoke of God's call to each of us. Did you decide what God

has called you to do? God calls on us to use these values to shape the future of our families, our community, our country and world.

Old values

Keep putting them into practice, Paul says in Philippians
I don't mean the old ways of doing things. If we did things only the old ways, we'd be like the Amish. If we didn't use new medicines, some of us would be dead. If we didn't do our job the new way, we wouldn't have a job. I'm not talking about doing things the old way. I'm talking about old values. The ones that have been tried and true for centuries.

Last month was the funeral for Norman Weis. Afterward people thanked me for speaking about how he lived his faith. His loyalty to family and friends, his hard work and honesty were produced in his life through the power of the Holy Spirit. He lived his faith. Is that what the preacher will say about you at your funeral?

God promises: "I will shake not only the earth but the heavens also." (from Hag. 2:6)
This means that all of creation will be shaken and removed, so that only unshakable things will remain. Heb. 12: 26-27
Earthly and material things can be shaken. Retirement investments, jobs, houses can be shaken. When earthly and material things are shaken, we find out what is real, what is of lasting value, what will endure forever.

God's love is real and cannot be shaken. Isaiah 54:10 says "though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken.

"Your heavenly father Father already knows all your needs and he will give you all you need from day to day if your live for him" Matt. 6: 31-33"

How does he do that? By giving us the Holy Spirit power to stick to the old values. When the going gets tough, Christians get going.

Morality has the same relationship to a nation's life as the heart has to the body. When the heart slows, we get sick, or die. When the old values get put aside, the nation gets sick and maybe dies. It happened in the Old Testament and it can happen to us.

(The Boy We Want)