

But When the Economic Rope Unravels

By Dr. Winfred Omar Neely

A little over a year ago, on the cover of the 2009 March edition of Time magazine was an image of a rope unraveling with the caption "Holding On For Dear Life." At the time the words "Holding On For Dear Life" summed up the quiet and vocal desperation of many people as the recession continued to unravel the economic rope on main street. In that edition of Time, a journalist wrote an article entitled House of Cards. He noted:

We have entered the one-strike-and-you're out era. One lost job. One medical emergency. One bad risk or misjudgment of the heart. "I've seen more people lose their houses in the past year than in the previous nine years put together...If you lose a job, you're going to have a hard time finding another one that pays as much. Or maybe you need to move to find that new job, but you you're stuck with a house you can't sell.....In the one-strike economy....trouble stretches beyond the province of liar loans, condo-flipping and the collateralized debt obligations that no one fully understands. A hard rain now falls on the just as well as the unjust. Consumers have stopped spending, factories have stopped operating, employers have stopped hiring, and home values continue to fall. For millions of people, the margin between getting by and getting buried is becoming as thin and as bloody as a razor blade.

During the last year I met a good number of the just who have felt the hard rain of the recession. Some godly Christian businesspersons that I know lost their businesses. Some Christians who were planning to retire will have to wait a few more years because the recession devoured a hunk of their retirement pie. Friends in Canada, England, and Ireland have talked to me about the impact of the global recession in their countries. They also know people who have lost jobs, and they have family and friends who are experiencing everything that goes along with such loss. Now of course, some economic experts say that the recession is over and that we are in the recovery phase, others assert we are still in it. Be that as it may, everyone who is listening to my voice has felt or is feeling directly or indirectly the choppy waters of our troubled economy. Did you notice that God did not exempt the church from this experience? Did you also notice there is glaring pulpit silence concerning how godly people are to live in times like this? I asked a room full of evangelical pastors if any of them preached a message or heard a message about how Christians ought to live in a recession and only one raised his hand. Yet, the Bible calls us to faith in the LORD. The Bible talks about how the LORD can take our meager resources and work miracles with our scant means. The Bible talks about how the LORD meets the needs of his people in famine. Granted sometimes God provided in unusual ways and from unexpected sources such a temporary brook, a raven, or a poor widow. According to the Bible, a recession or an economic famine in the land is no obstacle to God's

provision. I want to encourage you read again the book of Ruth, I Kings 17, and Matthew 6:19-34. In the process maybe we learn to pray again, "Our Father who is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread." These are some of my thoughts in our troubled economy times and I am Winfred Neely for Prime Time America.