

Devotional Blog

Sunday 19th July 2020

I don't know if many of you take an interest in the stock market. The news bulletins often refer to FTSE 100 and whether the closing figure is higher or lower than the previous day. This index is often used as a barometer for the financial wellbeing of the nation.

Before the lockdown was enforced on 23rd March the FTSE index was showing that the top 100 companies share value was looking quite healthy. Then with one announcement from our Prime Minister, these same companies were worth hundreds of millions of pounds less.

Some of you may have shares in a company that you worked for, or a financial institution when it was sold off. Each year you look forward to receiving a dividend payment, the value of which depends on the value of the shares at the time the dividend is due.

But when times are hard those that hold shares in a company have a responsibility to help bail them out and may be asked to give them some money to see them through the difficult times.

As children, I guess many of us were taught to share the things we have with others. This may have been our toys, or a bag of sweets. We were taught to share the good things we had. We were never asked to share the nasty things that happened, like a cut knee or broken bike.

Sharing can also be a costly business. In John's account of the feeding of the 5,000, in chapter 6, a young lad had 5 barley loaves and 2 fish. This was his lunch!! We are not told how willing the lad parted with his food, but this small investment paid a great return.

This investment was in the right hands. The lad shared all that he had and watched on as Jesus fed the vast crowd.

When the stock market is having a rough time share-holders will often be advised to "ride the storm" and wait for the financial climate to improve, rather than cut their losses and sell up.

This can be a lesson for us in our Christian lives. Do you and I feel like “selling up” when things are tough and not going your way. You may be facing redundancy, ill health or relationship difficulties, your “share value” appears to be falling through the floor and you are really suffering. But our Lord and Saviour knows a thing or two about suffering, so we are in good company!!

Paul, in his New Testament letters, refers to suffering on several occasions, but is often accompanied with upside. For example, Romans 8:17 We share in His sufferings in order that we may also share in His Glory.

We can be certain that if we invest our lives in following Jesus we can be sure of a glorious return when our final “dividend” is paid out!!

Amen

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