

CRISIS defined

PERSPECTIVE

MANY ECONOMISTS DESCRIBE the present condition in the United States as “the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression.” Even people who have no investments keep an eye on the plummeting stock market. Such looming instability has caused the vast majority of Americans to have significant fears about the future. Just one negative event could cause a succession of calamities.

“Crisis” is an appropriate word for the economic state in most of the world. But some crises cause even more fear than a stock market downturn in America. In many countries, people face the grim prospects of daily survival — either death from starvation, disease or violence. They have no stock portfolios or retirement accounts. Each day is a struggle.

Traditional definitions of “crisis” include “a situation or period in which things are very uncertain, difficult, or painful,” “a time when action must be taken to avoid complete disaster or breakdown,” and “a critical moment or time when something very important for the future happens or is decided.”

In Chinese, the word for “crisis” is a combination of two words — *danger* and *opportunity*. Fear focuses on the danger. But faith sees the opportunity. In the crisis spots of our world, God opens doors of opportunity for us to demonstrate His love and proclaim the message of Jesus.

In God’s foreknowledge and planning, He has positioned us to make an impact on the world for His kingdom’s sake. God has called and placed our missionaries and churches to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. To support them, He has called us to pray and give. In this way, we do our part in accomplishing the good works God has prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10).

This month’s cover story features Executive Director John Bueno’s spiritual and practical insight concerning how we as believers need to understand and practice the right financial priorities in this time of economic crisis. For those who see with eyes of faith, believe God’s Word, and are inspired and led by the Spirit, the danger side of crisis is outweighed by opportunities to advance our Lord’s kingdom and invest in the cause that matters most to our Lord — reaching a lost world and entering into His work of bringing many sons to glory. **tpe**

E-mail your comments to tpe@ag.org.

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