

Panic Buying and the Christian

For the second time now in a 12 month period I have witnessed empty store shelves here in “the land of plenty”. First, during the warning of a world-wide pandemic, grocery stores were emptied of bottled water and toilet paper (which is still somewhat humorous). Next, during the severe winter storm here, almost all of the fresh food, bottled water, dry goods and fuel were all consumed just in a matter of days. Photos of bare shelves in major retail stores appeared regularly on social media. If such “panic buying” takes place during a situation that may only last a couple weeks at best, what would happen in a major disaster lasting much longer? In a country that boast of being the greatest country on earth, can we now say that it is also the greediest nation in the world?

When it comes to consumer anxiety, how should the Christian respond? One must certainly turn to the scriptures for guidance in such situations. First, notice what Jesus said during the model prayer, “Give us this day our daily bread.” (Matt. 6:11). What He did not pray for was a week or months’ worth of food. Later in the same chapter He taught us not to worry about our needs (6:25-34) and God will provide for those who seek Him. To be greedy and store more than we need is sinful (Rom. 8:5-8; Phil. 2:21) and is never to be part of the Christian character. We are to be “rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share” (1 Tim. 6:18) and always look out for others as well as ourselves (1 Cor. 10:24; Phil. 2:4).

Christians should be wise and make plans for the future (James 1:5; Prov. 6:6-11) so they can provide for themselves and their family during times of crisis (1 Tim. 5:8). Just remember that the rich farmer of Luke 12:16-21 died with his barns full of harvest and it would be sad if the Lord at His coming found us with a closet stuffed full of toilet paper.

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