

What is Your Security Blanket?  
(Rev. Dr. John Bartol)

*“I don’t want to own anything that won’t fit into my coffin.” — Fred Allen*

Canadian author Leonard Griffith tells of a survey that was conducted around this question: “What do you consider to be your most important goal in life?” The most common answer by far was, “I want to prepare for a secure future, both for myself and my family.”

Certainly no one would deny that, in the best sense of the word, security is a good thing. The problem is that many of us are looking for it in the wrong places. We tend to look for security through the accumulation of earthly goods — real estate, bank accounts, pensions and every kind of insurance and savings plan available. However, with material things as our sole security, we never seem to have enough. Furthermore, with so much uncertainty in today’s world, temporal goods don’t offer any kind of permanence. Fire, theft, decay, death, terrorist attacks or even nuclear war can instantly wipe out our possessions.

Now, I am not suggesting that it is wrong to provide for the future or to possess some of the finer things in life. But it is certainly an illusion to think that any amount of money or accumulation of things can provide real security or happiness. We cannot buy security. Having money might make life easier at times, but when we are staggering under the terrible blows that life can bring, such as terminal illness or forced termination of career, what can material possessions offer of any real value?

In 1845, Sir John Franklin set out from England with two ships and 129 men in search of the Northwest Passage. They took a number of things they did not need, such as a library with more than 1,200 volumes and sterling silver ware. In contrast, each ship had only a small amount of coal for fuel and modest proportions of food. The final months of this expedition are shrouded in mystery. However, there is evidence that when the ships became entrapped in ice, supplies were running low. The men became victims of hypothermia and/or starvation. There were no survivors. Their priorities were all misplaced. By being low in essentials and high in non-essentials, they had contributed to their own demise.

Truly, we can all learn a lesson from this tragic story. We have needs this world cannot meet or satisfy. If all our values are material ones, then in the end we will lose everything.

In my search for security, I found that I needed outside help. This enabled me to discard my ‘security blanket’ and find in God a peace and security beyond anything this world could offer. My prayer for all of us is that we may be found in the circle of God’s love, the centre of His will and the hollow of His hand. Real security is only found in what never can be taken from you.

*Jesus said, "And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?"(Matthew 16:26 NLT).*