

Storm Advice

December 22, 2007

The Christmas present for readers of “Eleison Comments” will be some practical advice for what looks like a very ugly financial situation advancing upon all of us. The advice comes from a man who worked on Wall Street for a number of years, now retired. Nobody is obliged to take seriously what he says:

1. Maintain at least 1,000 dollars in cash in a safe place inside your home.
2. Consider carefully whether any investments you may have are easily redeemable.
3. If you own securities, make sure you obtain stock certificates documenting your ownership.
4. Do not maintain any bank account in excess of 100,000, and consider carefully just how much faith you have in the government’s willingness or capacity to truly insure your “FDIC-insured” bank account.
5. Consider carefully keeping some funds in a currency such as Swiss francs, or purchase gold or silver coins if you believe these will not be confiscated in the event of a financial crisis.
6. Consider withdrawing from any debt instruments currently yielding less than the present true rate of inflation.
7. Consider withdrawing funds from tax-deferred investment plans, despite any penalty that will be incurred, because a crisis may make such funds in effect inaccessible.
8. Consider just how liquid your stock holdings may be in a crisis, because markets can and have been closed, and your assets can be frozen while they lose their value.

9. Develop a master plan for riding out the storm should there be a disruption of essential goods and services.
10. Do not take out loans under any circumstances.
11. Cut back on consumption. Buy necessities and eliminate purchases of "extras."
12. Increase cash savings. Save no less than 10% of net monthly income.
13. If a major bank fails, seriously consider withdrawing all funds held in savings accounts and all but the bare minimum necessary for current expenses in checking accounts.

Forgive me, dear readers, for adding a 14 – do not ask "Eleison Comments" for financial advice, because "Eleison Comments" is incapable of giving any such advice. It is only capable of recognizing that we have made idols out of our money and our governments, and we are all going to be punished through our money and our governments. God is merciful, but he is also just. The Divine Baby came to Bethlehem to save our souls, not to save our money. Happy Christmas.

Kyrie eleison.