

Secure living

by JO

Funnily enough, I've never really liked change. I hate moving. I like being able to plan in advance. But the life that God has given me is not like that. By the time you read this, I'll have finished college. I don't know where I'll be living. I don't know when I'll find work. I've been making a lot of jokes about being homeless and unemployed. Most days the jokes are fun (ask me about my plan to build a fort out of my moving boxes!), but some days I really don't feel like joking.

You see, I'm scared. When I was working, I always tried to be really conscious that my security did not come from my pay going into my bank account regularly. My security comes from the God who enables me to earn that pay. But it's easy to take the

money for granted when it's there, and to assume that there'll always be more where that came from. That's fine, until it stops. Then you really work out what it is that you put your trust in.



For me the pay stopped by choice. I resigned. But it doesn't always work like that. Sometimes it's an illness or an accident. Or a redundancy. Sometimes there's plenty of warning that a change is coming (I've always known that college was going to end some day), but often the biggest changes happen in an instant. We need to be prepared for life to change.

I'm not saying that we should always worry about what comes next, making contingency plans for every possible scenario we can dream up. Far from it. I'm saying that we should pre-

pare by putting our trust in the one who never changes, who never fails us. If my security is in my pay, whether from a job or from Centrelink, then it can be taken away from me. If my security is in my possessions they can be lost or stolen or broken. If my security is in Jesus, then no one can ever take it away from me.

But I'm also not saying that we can't enjoy the good things God has given us now. In the book of Ecclesiastes, the Teacher asks "What does man gain from all his labour at which he toils under the sun?" (Ecclesiastes 1:3) He's looked at the world and seen that we work so hard, but if what we want to do is make a gain, eventually we lose it. As the old saying goes, you can't take it with you. But later on the Teacher concludes "when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work—this is a gift of God." (Ecclesiastes 5:19) We can't look for a gain. But we can thank God for his gifts. When our security is in him we can thank him joyfully for the good things he gives us. And we

can cry out to him in the bad times.

The last word on this topic comes from Jesus. He said ""Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?... So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6:25-27, 31-33)

So I don't need to be scared, and nor do you. Our Heavenly Father loves us, and he knows what we need. He is our security and we can trust him.