

May 19, 2014

Pursuing That Which Endures

John 6:27 (NASB), ***“Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.”***

Everyone has to eat and everyone has to pay their bills. This verse is not a call to ignore the realities of life, but it *is* a call for the Christ follower not to allow the pursuits of this life consume them.

We live in a consumer and pleasure driven culture here in the United States. Never in the history of mankind have there been a people who are so unbelievably prosperous. Most Americans live like nobility compared with much of the rest of the world. As Americans we have been taught the “American Dream” which is to have a good job, make good money, get married, have children and be successful. These are the trappings of the supposedly happy life.

We spend our time in the pursuit of this dream, the “American Dream.” We work hard, we work long hours, and we sacrifice time with those we love in order to have more stuff. As Americans we also want our families to meet the cultural definition of success as well. This means that we (at increasingly earlier ages) get our children involved in all sorts of activities; soccer, baseball, softball, tennis, golf, 4H, basket weaving... and the list could go on and on. We work not only for food but we work to achieve the cultural definition of success for ourselves and for our families.

What alarms me as a pastor is not so much that this is what characterizes non-Christian culture, it' the increasing number of Christian families who are falling into this trap. I believe that Satan uses two deceptions in our world today: success and busyness. Often times they are one and the same and are part of the same flawed and sinful philosophy. Many American Christians sincerely believe that part of being a good witness for Christ is that one meets the American definition of success for both themselves and their families. I mean if you don't live in a big house and drive a nice car how can you possibly witness to others about what Christ can do for them?

As Christians though we are called to have an eternal perspective on this life; whether or not I make a lot of money in the end will not matter. Whether or not my children are successful as the world defines success in the end will not matter. What matters is: Am I pursuing the things of God which never run out and are my children pursuing that same goal and living lives that honor and glorify Him?

In John 6:26, after Jesus has just fed the 5000, He observes that the crowds that were following Him were following Him for purely selfish reasons. He says, ***“Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.”*** These crowds had just been fed and so they were thinking of only one thing and that was their belly.

This is why He says to them in verse 27 to work “for the food which endures to eternal life.” Food does not last but a relationship with Christ is for eternity. I was reminded of this fact just today as my wife opened the refrigerator and took out some milk that had spoiled. In Isaiah 55:2 it says, **“Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy?”**

The things of this world, the trinkets we accumulate, the accolades that we hear in our ears eventually “perish” but the **“food which endures”** is for all of eternity. In John 4:14 as Jesus meets the woman at the well he says to her, **“but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”** How do we have this **“living water”** by believing in Jesus Christ. John 6:47 says, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.”** John 10:28 says, **“and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.”**

Eternal life is the most important thing that we must concern ourselves with in this life. This requires us to have an eternal perspective on this life. This morning I did my final chapel for the year for Calvary Baptist School and I told the students that eternal life only comes through repentance of our sins and belief in Jesus Christ. Here in John 6:27 Jesus says in reference to eternal life, **“which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.”** Jesus Christ is the *only* way to salvation and once we have been saved by His shed blood, His burial, and His resurrection; He will never let us go.

Friends, I want to encourage you to place your trust in the one thing in this world that will never fade, perish, disappoint or spoil and that is Jesus Christ. We all pursue things that are very temporary in nature but let us pursue that which pleases God and is of eternal value.

If you have any questions about what you have read today please contact me at pastotra@centurylink.net. You also may contact me on Facebook or on Twitter at @Adamspastor or just call me here at Calvary Baptist Church at 970-824-5222.