

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXI

February 20, 2011

No. 8

For What Are You Working?

(Jerry Fite)

Jesus said, “*work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life. . .*” (John 6:27). The day before, Jesus had miraculously fed over 5,000 people having only five loaves and two fishes. As the multitude arrives in Capernaum, Jesus reveals the intent of the crowd: “*Ye seek me not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate the loaves, and were filled*” (John 6:26). The crowd, instead of viewing a miracle pointing them to Jesus as possessing the authority of God, they saw only the benefits of food satisfying their physical hunger. They were guilty of a misplaced emphasis.

If we are not careful, we too can place more emphasis upon the physical instead of the spiritual. It is a matter of setting our priorities and acting accordingly. Jesus is not saying we should not pay attention to food, for without food we cannot live. He is helping us see what is more important. Physical food perishes when consumed, but the spiritual food Jesus offers “*abides unto eternal life*”. Jesus is the “*true bread*” coming “*from Heaven*” (Jn. 6:32). He is the “*bread of life*” (Jn. 6:35).

With Jesus’ teaching in

mind, let us ask ourselves some important questions. First, do you put more emphasis upon your secular work than upon attending worship services? A good way to answer this is by observing your habits. Which do you usually forgo first, an opportunity to put more time in for work, or the opportunity to meet with the saints and worship God? Jesus wants you to consider the eternal nature of spiritual things in helping you set the right priority. When your life is through, or probably sooner, when your employable skills are lessened, you will only have that which perishes. The weekly work of feeding and encouraging your spirit and soul for your eternal home in Heaven will have been forfeited for what? At best, a few years of leisure before eternal separation from God in Hell!

Have you not paid attention to Christ and your spiritual well-being because you feel you must put food on the table for your family? God certainly is pleased with one providing for the physical needs of one’s family. Paul writes, “*But if any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever*” (I Timothy 5:8). But in such a godly pursuit, one is not

to overlook what truly is important, the spiritual food which strengthens the souls of your family members unto eternal life.

Every day the food you provide for the table is consumed and according to Jesus, perishes. Daily, you start over again having to provide food. In the end, what do you have? At best, you enjoy having a well-fed family, not having to endure the pains of hunger. But your soul and the souls of your family are lost!

Many today define their importance by their work. A good job brings prestige, and a feeling of self-worth among one’s peers. But if your work producing that which eventually perishes is what defines you, what have you gained. Jesus says if you lose your soul, you have profited nothing, even if you gain the whole world (Matthew 16:26).

You invest time and energy in every endeavor in life. Jesus exhorts us to make wise choices. Directing our energy to obtain the food which perishes while neglecting eternal life is not wise. For what are you investing your time and energy to pursue? Is it eternal, or does it perish? Work for the eternal food!