

30. WHAT'S YOUR LIFE WORTH? (JOHN 6:25-29) 10/14/12
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, ATCHISON, PASTOR LEE HENDON

THE VALUE OF A LIFE HAS GONE UP IN THE PAST FEW YEARS. THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY SET THE VALUE OF A LIFE AT \$9.1 MILLION LAST YEAR, UP QUITE A BIT FROM THE \$6.8 MILLION FIGURE THE AGENCY USED DURING THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION. THE FOOD & DRUG ADMINISTRATION SAYS THAT A LIFE IS WORTH \$7.9 MILLION LAST YEAR, ANOTHER INCREASE OVER AN EARLIER FIGURE IN 2008 OF \$5 MILLION. THE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY SETS ITS SIGHTS A LITTLE LOWER, QUOTING VALUES OF AROUND \$6 MILLION FOR A LIFE. WHEN I READ THE ABOVE, I THOUGHT TO MYSELF, I HAD NO IDEA A SINGLE LIFE WAS REALLY WORTH THAT MUCH. THAT IS, NOT UNTIL THE MOMENT COMES & WE SHOULD REALIZE THERE IS NOT ENOUGH MONEY IN THE WORLD TO REALLY PLACE A CASH VALUE ON A LIFE ITSELF.

A VERSE I FREQUENTLY USE AT FUNERALS IS THIS:
A PERSON'S LEGACY READS: DATE - (DASH) - DATE
WHICH STATES FROM HIS/HER BIRTH ... TO HIS/HER DEATH.
BEGINNING TO END. FIRST COMES THE DATE OF BIRTH ()

THEN THE DATE OF DEATH ().
BUT WHAT MATTERS MOST OF ALL IS THE DASH BETWEEN THOSE YEARS. FOR THAT DASH REPRESENTS ALL THE TIME SPENT ALIVE ON THIS *EARTH*...
WE EACH DETERMINE WHAT THAT LITTLE DASH IS *WORTH*.
FOR IT MATTERS NOT, HOW MUCH WE OWN; THE CARS, THE HOUSE, THE *CASH*. WHAT MATTERS IS HOW WE LIVE & LOVE & HOW WE SPEND OUR *DASH*.

A PERSON'S DASH IS WORTH MUCH MORE THAN WE MIGHT THINK. OUR LIFE VALUE IS MUCH, MUCH MORE THAN THE WORTH OF OUR PHYSICAL BODIES. A GREAT NUMBER OF PEOPLE HAVE SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF RESOURCES CALCULATING THE VALUE OF THE HUMAN BODY AT A WHOPPING \$4.50. OUR BODIES ARE MOSTLY WATER WITH SOME TRACE ELEMENTS. OUR FLESH & BLOOD AIN'T WORTH SO MUCH!!! \$4.50!

JESUS WANTED TO USE THE FEEDING OF THE 5,000 AS A VERY IMPORTANT OBJECT LESSON FOR THOSE THUS FED, AN OBJECT LESSON FOR US AS WELL. THEY APPARENTLY DID NOT GET IT - DO

WE? - JESUS IS PRETTY MUCH MOST OF THE TIME ON AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT EXISTENTIAL/SPIRITUAL LEVEL THAN MOST PEOPLE ARE - THERE IN IS THE CHALLENGE - WE MUST MAKE THE CONNECTION SO THAT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THRU JESUS IS QUICKENED & DEEPENED. LET THE LORD DRAW CLOSER TO US & WE TO HIM!

JESUS PRONOUNCED THEY HAD BECOME *JESUS FREAKS* & WERE DESPERATELY SEEKING HIM BECAUSE HE HAD FED THEIR PHYSICAL HUNGER - FILLED THEIR BELLIES - **FREE LUNCH!** THEY WERE DESPERATE FOR JESUS BECAUSE OF WHAT JESUS COULD DO FOR THEM. OFTEN TIMES WE ARE LIKE THAT TOO. THE PHYSICAL REALM IS VERY CAPTIVATING TO US: SEX & MONEY ARE THE BIGGIES, THEN THERE ARE I-PHONES, I-PADS, CARS, MOTORCYCLES, HOUSES, FOOD, TOYS, TOYS, TOYS.... WHICH LEADS US TO CONSUMPTION, CONSUMPTION, CONSUMPTION....GOTTA HAVE MORE & NEWER, MORE & NEWER. GUILTY I AM & GUILTY ARE MANY OF YOU. JESUS, FILL OUR BELLIES, OH BLESS MY SOUL!!! WE CAN BE SO EARTHBOUND!

JESUS SAID TO THEM, "YOU DID NOT SEE THE SIGNS, YOU ONLY WANT THE FOOD." JESUS FED THE 5,000 AS A SIGN, A MIRACLE EXCLAIMING THAT HE WAS INDEED THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD. WHO ELSE COULD HAVE DONE SUCH A THING? IT WAS A SIGN TO SHOW THEM THE POWER & GLORY OF GOD'S SON - JESUS. LIKE WE USE ROAD **SIGNS** TO SHOW US THE DIRECTION TO OUR DESTINATIONS, THE MIRACLE BANQUET WAS A SIGN TO SHOW THEM & US THE GLORY OF GOD & LEAD THEM & US TO BELIEVE IN JESUS AS GOD'S SON. JESUS HAD NO INTENTION OF BEING THE ANSWER FOR DAILY FOOD - NOT A FAST FOOD RESTAURANT. THEY WERE CALLED TO LOOK INTO THE DEEPER MEANING OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED - "THE SIGN, A GLIMPSE INTO THE VERY NATURE & POWER OF GOD." THAT NATURE & POWER OF GOD IS MADE MANIFEST IN JESUS.

YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW **DISAPPOINTED** THEY WERE. THEY RUSHED TO FIND JESUS AGAIN BECAUSE, YOU GOT IT, THEY WERE HUNGRY AGAIN. JESUS WAS NOT GOING TO CONTINUE TO SERVE UP A BANQUET - GOD HAS GIVEN PEOPLE THE ABILITIES & RESOURCES TO PROVIDE FOR THEMSELVES. THE PROBLEM OF THE WORLD IS **NOT** HOW TO FEED OURSELVES - GOD HAS ALREADY GIVEN US ALL THE RESOURCES & MORE TO DO JUST THAT. THE

PROBLEM OF THE WORLD **IS** TO NOT HAVE A SAVIOR. **JESUS IS THAT SAVIOR!**

THEN JESUS SAID, “DO NOT LABOR FOR THE FOOD WHICH PERISHES BUT FOR THE FOOD WHICH ENDURES TO ETERNAL LIFE.” **WHAT ARE OUR LIVES WORTH?** WE MUST DECIDE HOW WE ARE TO USE UP OUR LIVES - HOW TO DIRECT OUR EFFORTS, ENERGY & TIME. WE EACH HAVE THE SAME 24 HOURS, 1,440 MINUTES, 86,400 SECONDS PER DAY - NO MORE, NO LESS. WE MUST USE THEM WISELY. JESUS IS GIVING US THE SIGN TO USE OUR LIVES IN GODLY PURSUITS & JESUS SHOWS US THE WAY.

WE ALREADY KNOW ABOUT THE FOOD WHICH PERISHES - 3 SQUARES A DAY, EXERCISE & THE PURSUIT OF GOOD HEALTH, EDUCATION - JOBS - CAREERS, HOUSES THAT FALL INTO DISREPAIR, CARS THAT BREAK DOWN, BANK ACCOUNTS & INVESTMENTS THAT DRY UP OVER NIGHT, FAMILIES THAT BECOME DYSFUNCTIONAL.... ON & ON. GOD HAS GIVEN US GOD-GIVEN TALENTS, GIFTS, ABILITIES & RESOURCES TO OBTAIN THESE - SUCH IS LIFE.

JESUS CALLS US TO LOOK MUCH DEEPER TO DISCOVER & LIVE OUR LIVES FOR GODLY & ETERNAL MATTERS - FOUND IN HIM - JESUS. JESUS GIVES US FOOD FOR ETERNAL LIFE. LOOK AT IT THIS WAY, WE HAVE BECOME MASTERS AT HOW TO USE OUR LIVES UP FOR THESE PHYSICAL BODIES OF OURS VALUED AT **\$4.50** - JESUS WANTS TO GIVE SHAPE, MEANING & PURPOSE TO HOW WE USE THE PART OF OUR LIVES WORTH THE OTHER **\$9.1 MILLION**. WE ARE TO TAKE ALL OUR HURRIED, RUSHED, RAGGED, TIRED, WORN-OUT SCHED-ULES TO PUT THEM AT THE FEET OF JESUS & SAY, “HERE, JESUS, USE THESE - NOT FOR OUR GLORY BUT FOR YOUR GLORY.” NOW WE CAN READ THE SIGNS - **BELIEVING IN JESUS** GIVES SHAPE TO HOW WE USE UP OUR LIVES. WE PRETEND IT DOESN’T MAKE A DIFFERENCE BUT, INDEED IT DOES, INDEED IT DOES!

I WILL ALWAYS ADMIRE THE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL QUARTERBACK WHO YEARS AGO REFUSED TO PLAY THE STATE PLAYOFF CHAMPIONSHIP GAME BECAUSE IT WAS ON HIS SABBATH. WOULD I HAVE HAD THE GUTS TO DO THAT FOR JESUS? WE TOO EASILY, TOO EASILY RATIONALIZE IT AWAY TO SAY THAT IT DOES NOT MAKE A DIFFERENCE, WHEN, INDEED, IT DOES MATTER & DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!! CHOICES LIKE THIS WILL INCREASINGLY BECOME AN ISSUE FOR CHRISTIANS AS WE MOVE MORE & MORE INTO AN UNCHURCHED WORLD & SOCIETY.

WHEN WILL CHRISTIAN PARENTS HAVE THE COURAGE TO TELL THEIR CHILD'S ATHLETIC COACH, "NO, WE WILL NOT GO TO MEETS & GAMES ON SUNDAY MORNING - WE WILL BE IN CHURCH?" WHEN WILL CHRISTIAN FAMILIES & INDIVIDUALS HAVE THE GUTS TO CUT BACK ON THEIR SPENDING SO THAT THE FULL TITHE CAN BE GIVEN TO GOD? WHEN WILL CHRISTIANS FEED ON FOOD FOR PEACE & SACRIFICE RATHER THAN VIOLENCE & EXCESSES? ON & ON & ON. **THE WORK THAT WE MUST DO TO LIVE OUR LIVES FOR JESUS WILL SHOW AT EVERY TURN THAT JESUS IS LORD! THIS IS THE FOOD FOR ETERNAL LIFE!**