

# Food That Perishes

John 6:22-29

by Leon Barnes

Jesus had just performed the great miracle of feeding five thousand people with a little boy's lunch of five barley loaves and two small fish. The multitude, seeing it and realizing that He was the Prophet who was to come into the world, determined to come and take Him by force to make Him a king (6:14, 15). The next day this crowd came seeking Jesus. They were confused by how He got to the other side of the sea. When they found Jesus He challenged their motives (6:26). He accused them of missing the signs and seeing only the food. They had missed the point and could not see the implication of His lesson. He then challenged them not to labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life.

Nothing is more pertinent for us than the study of motives.

## I. THE RIGHT ACTION WITH THE WRONG MOTIVE IS EMPTY

It was right for the people to seek Jesus. But the reason they were looking for Him was to escape having to work for God. They desired food like the Israelites in the wilderness had. They wanted manna falling from heaven. Jesus was not pleased with this action. It is the same as a man kissing his wife out of a sense of duty. The motive is wrong, and the action is without value.

We need to check our motives for serving God. If we serve Him to gain acceptance in a certain group, we have the wrong motive. If we serve Him because we are looking for a mate, we are wrong again. It is also wrong to serve Him for social reasons. Any of these, plus much more, may be good things. But they are mere sidelights. None are the right goals or purposes

for serving the Lord.

## II. SEEK THAT WHICH WILL LAST

What will last beyond this life? Physical things will not (1 Timothy 6:6-8; Luke 12:13-21). Physical relationships will not. But, our character will last. What makes us who we are will last. We will remain the same people in eternity (Revelation 6). Our preparation to meet God will last (2 Timothy 4:6-8), as will our relationship with God. We will become full and complete in eternity (Revelation 7). Our relationship with one another as Christians will last also. We will remain brothers and sisters in Christ. The value of anything is gauged by how long it will last. Spiritual things, therefore, are of the greatest value of all.

## III. REAL FAITH IS NEEDED (6:28, 29)

Doing the work of God is a matter of faith or belief (Hebrews 11:6). It is not an empty faith without action (James 2:24-26). Rather, it is a full and obedient faith that is ready to obey God's command, like the faith of Abraham (Romans 4; Hebrews 11). This faith is generated by study of the Word (Romans 10:17). It grows in trust of God and enables us to do exactly what He says. Job had great trust in God (Job 1:21, 22; 2:10). Job displayed the ultimate trust when he said, "Though He slay me, I will hope in Him" (Job 13:15). "Fair weather" faith will never sustain us through the valleys and heartaches of life. A deeper faith, such as the apostles asked for, must come (Luke 17:1-5).

## CONCLUSION

It takes real faith to live for Christ. Do you have the faith to live for Him?