**DISCERNMENT 91** (2-7-17) DISCERNMENT, pg. 141

When we think of entertainment, we think of Hollywood, movie stars, television, radio, concerts, sports, etc. but the Bible rarely uses it this way. Most of the time, it refers to hospitality.

*Hospitality in the ancient world often included putting up a guest overnight or longer. This is hardest to do when experiencing a time of persecution.*

*The Hebrews would not know whether a guest would prove to be a spy or a fellow believer being pursued.*

*John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1921.*

***Acts 10:6 … he is staying with a certain tanner named Simon, whose house is by the sea."***

***Acts 10:23 And so he invited them in and gave them lodging.***

***Hebrews 13:2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.***

As you might suspect, this verse has been challenging and even controversial to some.

*The word angel may refer to superhuman beings or it may refer to human beings who are messengers from God. The same word is used to address the leaders of the seven churches of Asia Minor in chapters 2 and 3 of the Book of Revelation, in which I take the position that the “angels” are human messengers; that is, they are the teachers or leaders of the churches being addressed.*

*The writer mentions that there are those in the Old Testament who “entertained angels unawares.” Abraham was one of them* (Gen. 18:1-9)*,* [Lot Gen. 19:1-3]*… Joshua also entertained an angel.*

*The basic thought of this verse in the Hebrew epistle is that we are to extend love to strangers by showing hospitality to them. We ought to be careful that our love is exercised with judgment, but we need to recognize that there are folk around us to whom we could be very helpful. We should extend our love to them, and in doing this we might meet some very wonderful people.*

*J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible Commentary, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 610.*

The way that hospitality is shown varies with different geographical areas, traditions and cultures, but the motivation behind it is the same, at least it should be, which is to go out of your way to look after the needs of others. It is a friendly, generous, and gracious way of showing Christ’s love to family, friends, and sometimes strangers.

Showing hospitality is giving of yourself and your possessions to make others comfortable, to entertain them, and to provide basic needs for them. It is to unselfishly volunteer to take on extra work and spend extra time to show love towards others.

Below are examples of how hospitality was extended to guests in the O.T.

 *• A greeting with bow or kiss,* ***Gen 18:2; 19:1***

 *• A welcome for the guest to come in,* ***Gen 24:31***

 *• An invitation to rest,* ***Gen 18:4****;* ***Judg 4:19***

 *• An opportunity to wash,* ***Gen 18:4; 19:2; 24:32***

 *• A provision of food and drink,* ***Judg 4:19; 19:5***

 *• An invitation to converse,* ***Gen 24:33***

 *• A provision of security,* ***Gen 19:8***

*Douglas K. Wilson, “Hospitality,” ed. John D. Barry et al., The Lexham Bible Dictionary (Bellingham, WA:*

*Lexham Press, 2016).*

**DISCERNMENT 92** (2-9-17)

*“The Israelites were commanded to treat foreigners well because of their own background as foreigners in Egypt (Exod 22:21; Lev 19:33–34)”. Ibid*

 DISCERNMENT, pg. 142

***Exodus 22:21 And you shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.***

An illustration of how important hospitality was in the ancient world is found in the verses below:

***Luke 11:5-8 And He said to them, "Suppose one of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6) for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7) and from inside he shall answer and say, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' 8) "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.***

The account of Lazarus and the rich man in ***Luke 16:19-31*** highlights the futility and selfishness of not showing hospitality to those who are in need.

Jesus demonstrated the difference between showing hospitality with a **loving and generous** heart and a **selfish and hateful** heart that shows no hospitality, ***Luke 7:36-50***.

Normally we are to show hospitality to people without hesitation or complaint.

***1 Peter 4:8-10 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. 9) Be hospitable to one another without complaint. 10) As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*** [We are mirroring God’s grace].

There is a tendency for some wives to fail to show hospitality because they are embarrassed that their house is messy. That should never keep anyone from showing hospitality to someone who is in need. Someone who needs a temporary place to stay or food to eat doesn’t care what the house looks like. That is also true for friends or family members that need face to face counseling and encouragement.

***Romans 12:10-13 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; 11) not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12) rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, 13) contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.***

However, there are circumstances where we are commanded not to show hospitality to certain people:

UNREPENTANT BELIEVERS want you to join them; they complain, criticize & try to divide believers::

***1 Corinthians 5:11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler, not even to eat with such a one.***

***Romans 16:17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions*** [hindering the growth of other believers] ***and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.***

FALSE TEACHERS who will lead people astray:

***2 Timothy 3:5*** [False teacher who are] ***holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; avoid such men as these.*** [Watch yourself that you don’t lose what rewards you have built up]

***2 John 7-11***  READ

***2 John 1:10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting…*** [You shun these doctrinally negative people ! to help them correct themselves spiritually. Keep on associating with like-minded friends who love BD].

**DISCERNMENT 93** (2-14-17) DISCERNMENT, pg. 143

*If we keep in mind how many journeys we read of in the New Testament, the few references to inns are probably a sign that there were not so many of them. The inns were mostly of dubious character, and more care went into tending donkeys and camels, than into lodging people.*

*Bruce Malina and Stephan Joubert, A Time Travel to the World of Jesus (Halfway House: Orion, 1997).*

*Travellers depended on friends, or even strangers, for lodging. (In our own history, when people still went on horseback, they often, at dusk, asked for lodging at a farmhouse on their way). But you could not simply travel, like a tramp, from one house to another. There were rules for guests as well as for hosts, and the rules were a safeguard against abuse.*

*For example, that a stranger who calls himself a fellow-Christian and a preacher is a false prophet if he stays with you for longer than three days.* [There is an old saying that fish and visitors start to smell after two or three days.]

*ibid*

Customs and traditions vary depending on time and geographical locations, but what does not vary is good manners and common sense.

Dropping in on someone unannounced in most cases is a breach of etiquette, poor judgment, and bad manners. Some people don’t mind but most people do. Very close friends and close family members might not mind, but it is still best to call to make sure they are not busy.

Apart from an emergency or some rare circumstance, just showing up at someone’s door shows a lack of thoughtfulness. It’s like saying, “I’m here, stop what you’re doing and give me your undivided attention.” When a male just shows up at a female’s front door unannounced, he should receive a scolding rather than a welcome.

When we are visiting someone, we should always demonstrate our best manners and behavior. We should not be busybodies, poking around in places where we have not been invited. We should ask if we can help in any way, and be considerate of their time. If we are staying, we should remember that we should pick up after ourselves and leave the place looking better than we found it. Above all, we should express our sincere gratitude to our host or hostess for their hospitality.

Now let’s turn our attention back to entertainment. Two thousand years ago, people rarely had a chance to be entertained:

*In the ancient Mediterranean world people preferred to live in the present. Eight out of every ten people were very poor and lived from day to day. In any case, they worked almost the whole day to earn enough to buy food (in Mt 20:1–16 mention is made of a 12-hour working day in which manual work was done.)*

*Ibid*

Today, things are quite different, entertainment is a huge industry in our country. We are probably the most entertained people ever. It is said that all things should be done in moderation and too much of good thing is not good.

Yes, a moderate amount of entertainment is good, but too much is not.

*Entertainment is serious business in the United States, where it's consumers' biggest expenditure after housing, food and health care. In 2004, Americans spent $705.9 billion on entertainment, a figure equivalent to the entire gross national product of Canada -- or Australia, for that matter.*

[*http://www.marketwatch.com/story/americans-value-entertainment-studies-show*](http://www.marketwatch.com/story/americans-value-entertainment-studies-show)

*“The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in August 2012, the average American spent $2,504 on entertainment in 2010.* [The 2017 figure is $2,827]. *That’s $235 a month. Americans*

 DISCERNMENT, pg. 144

*who earned $100,000 or more spent an average of $5,500 on different types of entertainment. That’s $458 a month.”*

[*http://budgeting.thenest.com/much-money-average-american-spend-entertainment-year-26018.html*](http://budgeting.thenest.com/much-money-average-american-spend-entertainment-year-26018.html)

The first time a voice was heard on a wireless device, a radio, was in 1921. The radio became the rage during the 20s and 30s. Black and white television took over the main form of entertainment in the 50s and color TV in the 60s.

You may be surprised at how much Television the average American watches:

*“The average American spends more than 34 hours a week watching live television, says a new Nielsen report — plus another three to six hours watching taped programs.* [That’s nearly six hours a day. (5.7)] *The survey was taken in 2012.”*

*Ibid*

It is no surprise that people, especially young people, are being programed by TV programing. There was a time when people would read a book with no pictures or graphics and would enjoy it by using their imagination. It is difficult today to hold children’s attention with only words on a page or even telling a story because they now have become addicted to video, audio, and graphics.

Entertainment has come to us over the years in several modes; through phonographs, 38 record players, 45 record players, real to real tape recorders, 8 track tape players, cassette tapes players, and VHS (Video Home System). Now we live in the digital age and we have CDs, DVDs, MP3s, Desktop Computers, Lap Top Computers, I-Pads, I-Pods, I-Tablets, I-Phones, VCRs, Podcasts, Live Streaming, and all types of social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

The method and quality of transmitting video and audio has improved drastically but that usually is not true when it comes to the content of what we’re receiving. It could be said that a more accurate term would be propaganda or indoctrination rather than entertainment.

Political correctness, immorality, vulgarity, the emasculation of men and the DE feminization of women, the promotion of homo-sexuality and all things that are unbiblical pervades the small screen as well as movies and plays. There are a few exceptions but they are hard to find.

Sitcoms like “Rosanne” eroded the structure of the family by promoting disrespect and defiance to authority. Now we have shows like “The Modern Family” which is portrays a totally dysfunctional “family” and glorifies homosexuals and same-sex marriage.

Comedy that is actually funny and wholesome is nearly nonexistent. Like nearly every other aspect of broadcasting these days, comedy has become crude, base, and vulgar.

Once movies actually had good crisp dialog and a script that was edifying and inspiring. Movies like “The African Queen” with Humphrey Bogart and Catherine Hepburn, “Gone With the Wind”, “Ben Hur”, “Big Country”, “Zulu”, and “Sea Biscuit” taught virtue and ended motivating us to be better people. Most movies today have little, if any, meaningful dialog and depend more on explosions, gratuitous vulgarity, profanity, violence, and sex to sell tickets.

**DISCERNMENT 94** (2-16-17)

Sports is a huge form of entertainment that has its problems as well. It has been elevated to a place where it has become a religion for many. Many people have an undying allegiance to their favorite football team, baseball team, basketball team, or racecar driver. They may not know who their children’s school teacher or Sunday school teacher is, but they know everything there is to know about their favorite team and their favorite athlete.

There is BIG MONEY in sports and it costs big money to attend college and professional games. The lowest price for a Super Bowl ticket this year was around $1,500. The big names in sports make very unseemly vast amounts of money just to play a game. J.J. Watt plays for the “Texans” and he signed a one-hundred-million-dollar contract over a six-year period.

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He’s only 25 years old and that breaks down to 16.66 million dollars a year. He plays about 12 games a year; each game lasts an hour; he only plays about half of that time which would be ½ an hour each game. So, he actually plays about six hours each year and averages about $2,766,666 per hour. Of course, this does not include practice time and travel time to games. But most people would be willing to trade salaries with him, wouldn’t you? J.J. Watt is a fine athlete and unlike so many other famous athletes who are arrogant and get into trouble, he is a wonderful role model to kids and gives his time and money to benefit others.

Sports have become so important to many that they have eclipsed the spiritual life of many believers. School sports and Little League now schedule games on Sunday mornings during church time. So many Christian parents miss church so that their child won’t miss a game. Shame on them! They are teaching their children the wrong priorities, *i.e.* Social life and or sports are more important than spiritual life.

***Matthew 4:4 “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of god.’ ”***

***Proverbs 4:13 Take hold of instruction*** [Bible doctrine]***; do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life.***

***Hebrews 10:24-25***  ***And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works, 25) not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing…***

**MONEY**

Let’s start with a loaded question. How much money does it take to make you happy? How much money would you be content with? There are millions of people that would answer that question with a certain amount. Millions of people buy lottery tickets with less than one in a million chance of winning in hopes that it will bring them happiness.

Money is just a commodity but it could be characterized as being dangerous. That has nothing to do with money itself, but with greed and the lust that people have for it. We all depend on money to buy the necessities of life in order to live. So, what should our attitude be towards money? Fortunately, we are not left to figure that out ourselves because the Scriptures have much to say about it.

Money has become the god of many people and millions have been enslaved by it. They live their entire life trying to acquire money or preserve the money they have, rather than being satisfied with enough to have a comfortable lifestyle for themselves and their family. They are infected with greed, having an insatiable lust not only for a luxurious lifestyle, but also for the intangible things money can buy such as power, fame, and status.

***Matthew 6:19-21 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20) "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21) for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.***

This does not say it is wrong to lay up treasures or minimize the need to work to provide for our-selves and our families which the Bible commands. This was written to most people, even most Christians, who never give a thought about laying up treasures for themselves in **HEAVEN**. They only think about the details of their own puny lives here on **EARTH**. While we all must think about the details of life as we go about our daily routine, we don’t have to be consumed by them. There is more to life than this physical earth. We also have, & more importantly, should have, a spiritual life.

**DISCERNMENT 95** (2-21-17)

***Matthew 6:19-21*** does not condemn the laying up of treasure as being a wrong motivation. That’s not the issue. The issue is **where** one lays up treasure. A comparison is made between focusing on the material advantages of this **EARTH** with the spiritual advantages of ETERNITY. This passage is strongly recommending that we build up a **HEAVENLY** treasure house.

**Question:** How do we store up treasure in heaven?

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One thing is certain. We do not store up treasure in heaven by being self-centered and only gratifying ourselves or our loved ones until we die. Those who spend time and effort to lay up treasure for themselves here on earth are only temporarily and marginally benefited. They are wasting the TIME God has given them to sow and reap eternal prosperity.

BUT believers who are growing to spiritual maturity are laying up treasure in heaven. The more Bible doctrine they learn, the more motivated they become to help unbelievers in need who will then be open to hearing them offer the GOOD NEWS. Then, mature believers’ desire keeps growing to where they love following up with new believers, helping and encouraging them and other believers who are sick, afflicted, or poor to get well enough and to have the $ to get to Bible class where they will be motivated to grow up spiritually and to do these same things. This is EXPERIENTIAL SANCTIFICATION.

Not only are others benefitted, but we are permanently and tremendously benefited the more we work for the spiritual advancement of others. THAT is what glorifies and honors God ! THAT is how to be delivered from the bondage of money, high status, and glorious, earthly possessions in time.

Laying up treasure on earth does not require us to be filled with the H.S. or to have a personal sense of eternal destiny, BUT laying up treasure in heaven does. We can’t do it without HIS power and help.

**DISCERNMENT 96** (2-23-17)

*USDA:* ***“Attack on Religious Freedom”***

[***https://www.adflegal.org/detailspages/press-release-details/adf-to-president-trump-religious-intolerance-at-usda-latest-example-of-need-for-religious-freedom-***](https://www.adflegal.org/detailspages/press-release-details/adf-to-president-trump-religious-intolerance-at-usda-latest-example-of-need-for-religious-freedom-)***order***

***1 Timothy 6:17-19 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. 18) Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, 19) storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.***

So, what does ***“lay hold on eternal life”*** mean HERE***?***

**ETERNAL LIFE** can pertain to three different things:

*Eternal life is viewed as* ***a free gift****,* ***John 3:36****;* ***Eph. 2:8-10****,* ***a present experience****,* ***John 10:10****, and* ***a reward****,* ***Mark 10:29, 30****;* ***Luke 18:29, 30****. Paul is not speaking of Timothy’s salvation, but instead, he is speaking of his fruitfulness in this life and his rewards in the next.*

*Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), 1 Ti 6:12.*

**1.** **FREE GIFT:** Of course, we know that ***John 3:36*** & ***Eph. 2:8-10*** refer to the gift of eternal life which is imputed to us at salvation called **POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION** (PS) or INITIAL SANCTFICATION (IS); ***Rm.6:23*** is even better.

**2.** **PRESENT EXPERIENCE: *John 10:10 "The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have*** [Eternal] ***life, and might have it abundantly.***

**Lay hold of ABUNDANT LIFE ! ! !** This refers to what can happen after salvation: **EXPERIENTIAL SANCTIFICATION (ES) or** Abundant Life = also called Eternal Life as a present experience here as in other verses. This is the legacy or goal Jesus set for us, living moment by moment in fellowship with God by means of acknowledgment of our sins, in the power of God the Holy Spirit and through application of God’s Word we have learned to our circumstances.

**3. REWARDS:  *Mark 10:29-30*** & ***Luke 18:29-30*** refer to the abundant life of Super Grace Blessings which faithful believers enjoy and possess in time and even more in eternity; these forever BELONG to these winner believers who have grown to spiritual maturity.

**THE RICH YOUNG RULER** DISCERNMENT, pg. 147

***Luke 18:15-28***, covers the story about this man asked Jesus Christ, ***“What must I do to inherit eternal life?”*** His question is an example of **3.** where the term **“*eternal life*”** is used to mean an abundant life ending with REWARDS. It appears that he was already a believer; the Mark account says that the young man knelt down before Jesus, ***Mark 10:17***. He had great wealth and status and wanted to know what he must do to receive the same in the eternal Kingdom. If he was asking Christ what he must do to be eternally saved, Christ would never have told him to keep the command- ments. Obedience and faithfulness are required to ***“take hold of eternal life”*** which is an experiential type of eternal life that is described as the abundant life in ***John 10:10*.**

*Immediately preceding the encounter with the rich young ruler is the story of being like a little child as a condition of kingdom entrance. Like a child, one must assume lower status. The key characteristic of a small child is not his faith, but his insignificance. The teaching here is that “status in the kingdom is often inversely proportional to status in the world.” A little child is the lowest rung on the social ladder. Keener notes that to “become as children, refers to assuming a child’s low status rather than a characteristic like humility.” Hagner agrees, “the child’s humility is his lack of status, not his actions or feelings of humbleness.” Our Lord teaches in that “the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Mt. 19:14; Luke 18:16). In Luke’s expanded version he explains that “****entering the kingdom****” and “****receiving the kingdom****” are the same thing and both refer to* ***obtaining high status there and do not relate to soteriological entrance.*** *Joseph Dillow, Final Destiny, n.d.*

***Luke 18:15-17 And they were bringing even their babies to Him so that He might touch them, but when the disciples saw it, they began rebuking them. 16) But Jesus called for them, saying, "Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 17) "Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child*** [accepting his low status] ***shall not enter it*** [with a high status] *~~at all~~****."***

***Luke 18:18******And immediately following this blessing on the children, a ruler questioned Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life*** [abundant kingdom life]?”

***Luke 18:29-30 And He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30) who shall not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life*** [Rewards]***."***

*We showed in a previous chapter that to receive a kingdom is to receive royal authority there. This fits the broader context precisely, where we have been told twice that he who humbles himself will be exalted. High honor in the kingdom comes to those who adopt the lowest status now. As Jesus put it in Matthew’s account, “Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave,” Matt 20:26-27.*

*ibid*

THE RICH YOUNG RULER/ believer was unwilling at that time to humbly forfeit his high, earthly status or to sacrifice his time & $ in order to faithfully serve Christ and others. Therefore, he was in danger of being called **“*least in the Kingdom of heaven*”, *Matt 5:19***, and of missing out on the abundant life of super grace blessings.

*Whoever does not receive royal authority by taking the lowest status now will not enter into royal authority in the coming kingdom.” “Entering the kingdom” does not refer to going to heaven when one dies; rather, it means to enter into the experience of ruling there, or to enter into greatness (Matthew 5:19-20). Receiving the kingdom and ruling there are the same thing. Neither refers to personal salvation; instead, both refer to something in addition to justification. Ibid*

***Matthew 5:19-20 Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.***

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***20) "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven*** [in the sense that you will be called great]***.***

Jesus assured His disciples that they would inherit eternal life which meant that they would be called great in the kingdom, they would be first rather than last, and they would receive many rewards.

***Matthew 19:29-30 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, shall receive many times as much, and shall inherit eternal life*** [having to do with rewards]***. 30) "But many who are first will be last; and the last, first.***

Examples of verses where *“****eternal life****”* is not salvific: ***John 12:25***, ***Titus 3:7***, ***Gal. 6:8***, ***Matt. 19:29, Jude 21***, ***1 Tim. 6:12 & 19***, ***Mark 10:17***, ***1 John 3:15***, ***Rom. 2:7***

**DISCERNMENT 97** (2-28-17)

Now back to the subject of **MONEY.** Money isn’t always the answer. Sometimes it is the problem.The following verse brings out the number one problem out of the many problems people have who have plenty of money, and that is how to keep it. That can be a real challenge. Look at what the Bible says about how hard it is to stay rich:

***Proverbs 23:4-5 Do not weary yourself to gain wealth; cease from your consideration of it. 5) When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings, like an eagle that flies toward the heavens.***

***Proverbs 28:19-20 He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows frivolity will have poverty enough! 20) A faithful man will abound with blessings, but he who hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.***

People whose goal is to acquire wealth are never happy because they are never truly satisfied, content or happy. Does the Bible tell us with what we should be content?

***1 Timothy 6:6-12 Now godliness with contentment is great gain. 7) For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8) And having food and clothing, with these, we shall be content. 9) But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdi-tion. 10) For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 11) But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. 12) Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.***

***The love of money,*** PHILARGURIA (**φιλαργυρία**), n. nsf, avarice, greed, or miserliness.

This phrase is often misquoted, “*Money is the root of all evil*.” However, there is nothing inherently wrong or sordid about money. We all need money to purchase the necessities of life. It is ***the love or lust for money*** that is the root of all kinds of evil.

***Proverbs 28:20 A faithful man will abound with blessings, but he who makes haste to be rich will not go unpunished.***

The way to become richly blessed is by being faithful or trustworthy, not by gambling or using get-rich-quick schemes. It could also refer to being a thief or a robber.

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Many times, deception, dishonesty, or crime is used by one who has a consuming desire to get rich quick. These types are usually punished either by the courts or by poverty or both.

***Proverbs 28:22 A man with an evil eye hastens after wealth, and does not know that want will come upon him.***

***Proverbs 22:9 Whoever has a bountiful*** [Heb. Good] ***eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.***

A generous person is said to have “*a good eye*” whereas a stingy person is said to have “*an evil eye*”. Willingness to share food with the poor, weak, and helpless shows that a person is genuine. He looks at others with the desire to help them, not to take advantage of them.

**DISCERNMENT 98** (3-2-17) Money isn’t always the answer. Sometimes it is the problem.

Most people are so focused on the things of this life that they never give a thought to the next. This is true for many people following Jesus in the crowds who were very interested in getting a free meal provided miraculously by the Son of God but they couldn’t care less about the spiritual food He provided which could save their soul.

***John 6:26-27 Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves, and were filled. 27) Do not labor*** [plural, continual labor or works] ***for the*** [physical] ***food that perishes, but for the food*** [singular, spiritual] ***that endures to*** [results in] ***eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you*** [not***. For on him God the Father has set his seal."***

Is the term ***“eternal life”*** here salvific, meaning eternal salvation?

The writers of the Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version seem to think it is. here is their take on this verse:

*Do not labor for the food: The impression that one must work for eternal life is quickly corrected when Jesus adds which the Son of Man will give you. The Son provides life as a gift (4:10). Set His seal on Him means that the Father has authorized and authenticated the Son as the Giver of life.*

*Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), Jn 6:27.*

What is the one and only way a person receives eternal life? Through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Is there anything about believing in Christ in this verse? No, it says**, “*labor for food that endures to eternal life*”.**

Jesus was not suggesting that people should not labor to supply food for themselves and their families; He was comparing physical food which has very temporary benefits to spiritual food that offers enduring benefits resulting in eternal life or an abundant life. Some scholars think Christ’s answer was about the GOSPEL:

***John 6:26-27 Do not l*abor**[plural, continual labor or works] ***for the*** [physical] ***food that perishes*** [it doesn’t last; soon, we need more]***, but*** [labor] ***for the*** [permanent] ***food*** [the gospel] ***that endures to*** [results in] ***eternal life*** [everlasting life]***, which the Son of Man will give to you.***

An alternative meaning:

***Do not labor*** [plural, continual labor or works] ***for the*** [physical] ***food that perishes*** [it doesn’t last; soon, we need more]***, but for the*** [spiritual] ***food*** [singular, B.D.] ***that endures to*** [results in] ***eternal life*** [an abundant, dynamic life]***, which the Son of Man will give to you.***

*Receiving eternal life by grace alone is one thing, but to enjoy its richness and ultimately receive it as a reward is entirely another. Joseph Dillow, Final Destiny, p. 217*

Eternal life is imputed to every believer at the point of salvation, however there is an additional sense of eternal life which requires work which results in rewards.

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*Whenever the New Testament speaks of eternal life as a present possession, it is a gift received by faith (John 3:16); but whenever it refers to eternal life as something to be received in the future by those who are already believers, it refers to eternal rewards, Jn 5:21; Ga. 6:8; 1 Tm. 6:17–19; Tit. 1:2; 1 Pt. 1:7. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, The Nelson Study Bible: NKJ Version Ro 2:7.*

 *“A careful reading of the New Testament data indicates that* ***eternal life is viewed from two different perspectives****. Every time eternal life is presented as an acquisition in the future (15 times, 44%), it is always based on works. When eternal life is presented as an acquisition in the present (19 times, 56%), faith alone is the only condition mentioned. The fact that almost half the time (44 %) the acquisition of eternal life conditioned on works surely signifies that the two different aspects of eternal life are in view: its initial acquisition by faith alone, and an enhanced experience of eternal life subsequent to its initial acquisition conditioned on faith plus obedience. The former relates to gaining life and the latter living it, leading to an abundant inheritance in the future.*

 *Ibid*

***John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee*** [GTF]***, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.***

 ***“****Advancing in this dynamic dimension of eternal life is what Jesus referred to as saving one’s soul. He explained elsewhere that this life was intended to grow and become more abundant: “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10). But growth is not automatic; it is conditioned on our responses. Only by the exercise of spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, community with other believers, obedience, faith, study of the Scriptures, and proper responses to trials, does our intimacy with Christ increase.”*

 *Ibid*

The people obviously thought that Jesus was talking about working for something because they asked Him this question:

***John 6:28 They said therefore to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"***

Why would Jesus tell the 5,000 people to work for the food that endures to eternal life (salvation) when that is impossible? Eternal life is a FREE GIFT that can only be received as a gift. It is more reasonable that the eternal life Jesus spoke of here was the experiential, abundant life. The 5,000 thought they needed to work the works of God to acquire that kind of life.

Then, in the next verse, Jesus changes the subject to the gospel.

***John 6:29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."***

Jesus explains to them that it is impossible for them to work the work of God. The work [singular] that really matters is the work accomplished on the cross by God and their part was simply to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, the One God the Father sent to save sinners. Jesus changed the subject from divine provision for this life to divine provision for salvation. They wanted bread for life and Jesus was offering them the Bread of life.

***John 6:30 They said therefore to Him, "What then do You do for a sign, that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?***

*This is the crowd who actually were fed the bread, so their question is almost unbelievable!! "What sign will You show, that we may see, and believe You?" He had performed miracle after miracle. That crowd was formed on the basis of miracles, they had crossed the Sea of Galilee on the basis of miracles, they had become the recipients of one of the greatest of all miracles and now they are asking for a miracle!* [*What they really mean (from the following verses) is 'you fed us once, so now feed us for 40 years like 'Moses' did*. *R.B. Theime Jr. Gospel of John notes*

 DISCERNMENT, pg. 151 ***John 6:31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.'"***

*They were saying to Jesus that Moses was a great guy in his day and we figure You are about as good as Moses. If Moses gave them bread for 40 years, you can do the same! What were they quoting? They misquoted from Psalm 78:24. GOD gave them bread from heaven for forty years. But the Galileans said that Moses did this.*

*ibid*

Even though they didn’t actually say Moses’ name, they were suggesting that Moses fed the Israelites in the wilderness and Jesus cold prove His worth as well if He would feed them for 40 years. This analysis is born out in the next verse where Jesus corrects their error in quoting ***Psalm 78:24***.

***John 6:32 Jesus therefore said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven.***

Like so often is the case, they misquoted the Bible to support a preconceived motive or ideology.

***John 6:33*** (NASV) ***For the bread of God is that*** [J.C.] ***which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.***

***John 6:33*** (NKJV) ***For the bread of God is He*** [J.C.] ***who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.***

Eight out of the ten translationshad the word ***He*** or its equivalent “one” referencing who comes down from heaven. Of course, this makes a big difference as to the meaning of this verse. The ***bread of God*** is a metaphor for the Lord Jesus Christ who came down from heaven and gives life to the world. It is a ***He*** not a ***that*** who gives life to the world.

***John 6:34 They said therefore to Him, "Lord, evermore give us this bread."***

This looks like they have had a change of heart, but what they still want is the physical food, not the spiritual food.

***John 6:35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.***

Jesus finally tells them right out that He is the bread of life, the One who comes down from heaven to supply not only their physical needs, but also their ultimate need of eternal salvation as well as to fill the void in their soul that only He can satisfy.

***John 6:36 "But I said to you, that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe.***

It is hard to believe that after seeing the wonderful miracles of Jesus and hearing Him explain to them personally who He was and what they could have, they still refused to believe He was the MESSIAH.

***John 6:37-38 All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. 38) For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.***

This includes the **Doctrine of Eternal Security**: Once Saved Always Saved. God in His Omniscience knows who will believe in Jesus Christ. He sees all who ***will come to Me*** [Jesus] and who will believe in Him as 'elected' which means that they will accept the gospel.

When one believes the gospel, he is baptized with the Holy Spirit, ***1 Cor. 12:13.***

This means he is permanently united with Christ or put into union with Him by God the Holy Spirit. He is “in Christ”, and He [J.C.] will never cast him out under any circumstances.

**DISCERNMENT 99** (3-7-17)

***John 6:39 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me, I lose nothing but raise it up on the last day.***

The focus is on eternal security and the future resurrection. In other words, every person who believes in Jesus Christ will receive a resurrection body when the Lord Jesus Christ returns at the Rapture.

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***John 6:40 For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."***

Now we come to where Jesus boldly and clearly tells the people how they can receive the imputation of eternal life which is a gracious gift. He also included what comes with that imputation which is a resurrection body that will be received on the last day [of the Church Age].

**DISCERNMENT 100** (3-9-17) Money isn’t always the answer. Sometimes it is the problem.

Jesus elaborated on this even more in the following verses:

***John 6:47-51 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. 48) "I am the bread of life. 49) "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50) "This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51) "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."***

J. Vernon McGee paraphrased it this way:

*Stop working for food that perishes, but work for food that endures for everlasting life, which food the Son of Man will give you, for on Him, God the Father has set His seal.”*

*J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible Commentary, electronic ed., vol. 4 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 404.*

The most sensitive part of a man’s anatomy is his wallet.

**MONEY AND HAPPINESS?**

*Keith Nicholson won $426,495 in the British soccer pool. His wife announced that he was going to “spend, spend, spend.” But look what happened to the money and the Nicholsons.*

*They bought a luxury home for $47,600. Before they hit the jackpot, they had rented city housing for $5.43 a week. They gave parties almost every night. In four years they managed to spend $196,000. “We had oodles of money,” reported Mrs. Nicholson, “but we lost our friends. The people we had known in the old days, and whom we really wanted to see, never came along.”*

*In 1966, Nicholson was killed in a crash in the $5,600 car bought out of his winnings, From the jackpot money, $107,113 went to the government in death taxes. The remainder was invested, half in trust for the three children, and half to give Mrs. Nicholson $25-a-week income.*

*Paul Lee Tan, Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times (Garland, TX: Bible Communications, Inc., 1996), 826.*

*Where is happiness found? John D. Rockefeller, a Christian millionaire, said, I have made many millions, but they have brought me no happiness. I would barter them all for the days I sat on an office stool in Cleveland and counted myself rich on three dollars a week.” Broken in health, he employed an armed guard.*

*W. H. Vanderbilt said, “The care of 200 million dollars is too great a load for any brain or back to bear. It is enough to kill anyone. There is no pleasure in it.”*

*John Jacob Astor left five million, but had been martyr to dyspepsia and melancholy. He said, “I am the most miserable man on earth.*

*Henry Ford, the automobile king, said, “Work is the only pleasure. It is only work that keeps me alive and makes life worth living. I was happier when doing a mechanic’s job.”*

*Andrew Carnegie, the multi-millionaire, said, “Millionaires seldom smile.”*

*A. Naismith Ibid 827****.***

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*Many there are who would think that the word “sorrowful” would never be associated with the words “rich,” “young,” and “ruler.” But such was the case with the young man in Matt. 19:22–23; Luke 18:18. He had position, possessions, and youth. In spite of having all three, he went away sorrowful. He was sorrowful because of what he would have to give up. He should have been sorrowful because of what he would miss in the future. Bible Expositor*

*“You must be a happy man, Mr. Rothschild,” said a gentleman who was sharing the hospitality of the first Baron Rothschild’s home, “Happy! me happy!” was the reply. “What! happy when, just as you are going to dine, you have a letter placed in your hands saying, “If you do not send me £500 I will blow your brains out!” Happy! me happy!” Walter Baxendale ibid 829*

*It is recorded of one of America’s richest men, that before he died he said to a friend: “I don’t see what good it does me—all this money that you say is mine. I can’t eat it, can’t spend it; in fact, I never saw it, and never had it in my hand for a moment. I dress no better than my private secretary, and cannot eat as much as my coachman. I live in a big servants’ boardinghouse, have dyspepsia* [indigestion]*, cannot drink champagne, and most of my money is in the hands of others, who use it mainly for their own benefit.” This is the testimony of one who put his treasure in “a bag with holes.” Gospel Herald ibid 830*

*“Money never made a man happy yet, nor will it. There is nothing in its nature to produce happiness. The more a man has, the more he wants. Instead of its filling a vaccum, it makes one. If it satisfies one want, it doubles and trebles that want another way. That was a true proverb of the wise man; rely upon it: “Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure, and trouble therewith.” Benjamin Franklin ibid*

* *Happiness is a two-way station between too much and too little. ~Channing Pollock~*
* *Money will buy a fine dog, but only love will make him wag his tail.*
* *The poorest man I know is the man who has nothing but money. ~John D. Rockefeller, Jr.~*
* *The late Robert Horton said the greatest lesson he learned from life was* *that people who set their minds and hearts on money are equally disappointed whether they get it or whether they don’t.*

 **Money Will Buy:**

A bed BUT NOT sleep. Medicine BUT NOT health.

Books BUT NOT brains. Luxuries BUT NOT culture.

Food BUT NOT appetite. Amusement BUT NOT happiness.

Finery BUT NOT beauty. A crucifix BUT NOT a Savior.

A house BUT NOT a home. A church-pew BUT NOT heaven.

*Cecil Rhodes was considered by many to be the instigator of the war between the English and the South African Boers. His main purpose was to obtain the rich natural resources of that area. When he was about to die, however, he cried out in remorse, “I’ve found much in Africa—diamonds, gold, and land are mine, but now I must leave them all behind. Not a thing I’ve gained can be taken with me. Eternal treasures that abide I have not sought; therefore, I actually have nothing at all!”*

*Our Daily Bread* *ibid 834*

Read: ***Ecclesiastes 2:1-26*** and ***5:10-20***