"The Frugal Defender"

by Wayne Goff

The Kansas City Star ran a special last week on Eric Berry, a rookie defensive back with the Kansas City Chiefs. This young man signed a contract with the Chiefs in 2010 that would pay him $34 million in guaranteed money! But guess where they found him shopping for groceries? The **Family Dollar** store on Prospect Avenue! He can go shopping at the most expensive, extravagant stores in the country, but he shops at a dollar store. ***Why?***

Eric grew up in Fairburn, Georgia, a blue collar town outside Atlanta. He was taught by his parents, James & Carol Berry, about sacrifice and how to make dollars last. He worked with his dad painting houses and installing fiberglass installation. His dad told him that smart people never spent their last dollar -- because you never know when you might need it. His parents drove cars until the engines wore out, and refused to replace a TV until it was done for good!

Those who know Eric best speak more of his **character** than his **talent.** The Chiefs claim they signed Eric because they want players who are "professional" and "accountable to their teammates." Scott Pioli, the Chiefs' general manager, said: "What we're looking for in character, this guy has it." Imagine that! A young person who knows what it means to "work hard, do the right thing, pay attention, be on time, be accountable to their teammates." Those values have not disappeared with everyone.

Young people, and old alike, stop and consider this young man. Consider what Jesus Christ wants **YOU** to be -- honest, intelligent, responsible, accountable, hard-working, attentive to details, and one who does the right thing. Just remember that Christians do it for a *different* reason: *"And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown"* (1 Cor. 9:27).

We can learn much about character and discipline from Eric Berry. Let's just hope money and fame don't go to his head.

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