

MisSion CriTikal

#22 – The Treasure Map

The giant of a man with bulging muscles and a mean look that said he could bite the end off the flint-lock pistol he was holding. This giant was standing guard over a chest behind him. Two men a little smaller than him were using hammers and crowbars to break the heavy lock on the chest. For one full day both of these men struggled all out to open the chest, knowing that every hammer blow paid for the contents of the chest.

No human words could fully describe the chest contents of diamonds, rubies, perfect pearls, gold coins almost without number. The treasure chest was beyond anyone's imagination.

Watching the three men was a fourth man. He wore a triangular hat seen on most actors of pirates, as was the black patch over one eye. Held by one hand, at his side, is the map. It was the treasure map that showed them where to start digging and how deep in the pacific island sand. In a straight line between the two biggest palm trees, fourteen paces from the tree nearest the gray boulder.

Treasure hunters come in all sizes and from many lands. As a teenager, Lenny walked with his young admirer, Toby, himself 8 months past his 5th birthday. Though Toby had to have a helping hand from Lenny, the treasure hunting they were now doing in the very same town dump that Lenny had found the tent – a treasure to be sure.

“I'm only 5 and not good at most things, but here I am, a treasure hunter with my best friend,” Toby said to himself. Now anyone knows that to be a successful treasure hunter, you have to be able to recognize a treasure when you see it. No matter if that treasure used to be someone's trash; a treasure is a treasure – pure and simple.

Their first treasure that might have some possibilities was a card table that had one slightly bent leg. But moments later, Lenny picked up a collection of papers that had some interesting typed words on them and handwritten notes with portions underlined. All told, there were 5 pages.

About half of one of the pages appeared to be some Bible verses triple spaced with handwriting between the lines. Something

inside the tent said he should talk to Ol' Tom the blind fella that lived in the ramshackled village below the tent mission. Tom just gushed with love for God's Word and its absolute beauty beyond what eyes can behold.

The next day, Lenny sat in the cool shade with Tom and read most of what the papers said. It was like Tom had embraced the greatest love of his life. No the papers were not Bible pages but the dozen or so verses were quotes from Proverbs 3. The other writings seemed to be notes for a sermon preached.

Sunday morning, the three ladies from the village, and about 6 teens sat in the tent as Ol' Tom prayed and then began to share his heart. “I thank you for letting me share my heart with you this morning in our little mission. Lenny read to me some scripture and sermon notes that are a treasure of truth in themselves – they actually form a map for you and I to follow to obtain the riches of Heaven while we walk this earth.

Lenny read aloud the Proverbs verses and then Tom continued. I want to call your attention to just three steps we must make according to the treasure map Lenny just read to us. The first is *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding*. The key word here is TRUST.” Tom explained how this trust gives us sure footing as we step into our faith in Jesus. “...and He shall direct thy paths. There's our map – simple, right?”

“Trust was first, now HONOR. *We are to honor the Lord with our substance*- with our possessions, our talents, and our work. The third step is to FEAR the Lord and depart from evil. Now listen close... everybody listening?” Everyone replied yes or nodded their head yes.

“Mostly you and I think of FEAR as how we feel when we're face to face with a vicious man-eating lion. We get scared and want to run. This fear is how we'd feel if we thought that Jesus left us alone and we couldn't call on Him anymore. So this treasure map in Proverbs directs our paths as we trust, fear, and honor the Lord Jesus Christ. Lenny, I think we ought to work on memorizing this treasure map so we can always share it with others.