

# What Are You Seeking?

**H**ow much spiritual treasure do you have? Or, do you have any? Is your spiritual treasure chest empty? If you think your treasure chest is full, why do you think it is full? The desire for spiritual treasure exists within the heart of most individuals. We sense that there is something beyond our visual senses. It is really only a small percentage of the world's population that denies God's existence. The vast majority of the human race believes, senses, and knows that something beyond us exists. So we seek spiritual treasure.

**SPIRITUAL TREASURE!** There has been a rash of books with titles such as "Discovering Intimacy With God," "The Sacred Heart," "The Journey of Desire," "Wild at Heart," and "Experiencing God!" The books have been greatly popular revealing the hunger of souls for something more. The titles suggest that the books offer treasure for the spiritually hungry and thirsty.

Several years ago I was invited to speak at a church in the Netherlands. I had just finished talking about Moses' relationship with God - how he had wanted to know God and to see Him. I had explained that Moses had seen God's back (Ex. 33:18-23) and knew Him face-to-face (Deut. 34:10). Jeremiah 29:12-43 encourages us to seek Him. If we will eagerly search for Him we will find Him. The goal in the Christian life is to know God and to know Him intimately. After the message, a woman approached me and asked if I had ever spoken with God personally. She wanted to know if direct contact was possible. She was spiritually thirsty for more!

The other evening a group of Christians were celebrat-

ing the second anniversary of a Bible study. Several people shared that the Bible study had greatly impacted their life. One woman shared that because of the study she was no longer spiritually thirsty. But that is not true of everyone. Disappointment in the spiritual realm of life is common for many. Millions of people have visited and attended seminars, university classes, churches, synagogues, shrines, and temples in pursuit of God. They come week after week, month after month, year after year, hoping to connect with God and find spiritual treasure. They want to experience God!

Earlier this summer a woman wrote to NeverThirsty and made this comment,



For years I have read my Bible, doing Bible studies, and I still could not get my fill of studies. I could not understand why I had to read and study until tonight when I studied God's Passion. Now I understand my hunger for Bible studies. Thank you for the studies. They made me cry with joy.

Her words express it all. She has been seeking spiritual treasure and she found it in the discovery of God Himself - Jesus Christ! A. W. Tozer wrote these insightful words,

The modern scientist has lost God amid the wonders of His world; we Christians are in real danger of losing God amid the wonders of His Word. We have almost forgotten that He is a person and, as such, can be cultivated as any person can.<sup>1</sup>

**TREASURE HUNT.** But God is not found in our emo-

1. A. W. Tozer. The Pursuit of God. Christian Publications, Inc. p. 13.

tions or in some book about the Bible, religious philosophy, or theories about God. Nature may give us clues that He exists, but He can only be discovered in the pages of the Bible. Books and sermons may point in the correct direction but the spiritual treasure for the soul is found in 66 books comprised of 1189 chapters or 31,173 verses. The spiritual treasure is not found in arguments about Bible trivia or in superficial points of doctrine. The apostle Paul warned us to avoid foolish controversies that are not spiritual treasures at all.

*As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God's work—which is by faith. (NASB) 1 Tim. 1:3-4*

Instead, spiritual treasure is the discovery of God Himself in the pages of scripture. Other books can point us like a street sign in the correct direction, but God can only be found in the Old and New Testaments - no other place. Jesus told us . . .

*Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. (NASB) Luke 24:27*

*You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me. (NASB) John 5:39*

We must seek to understand Him. We can discover more about Him by what He has taught us and how He has responded in the past. If we are confused, it is the New Testament that clarifies who He is.

*Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father?'" (NASB) John 14:8-9*

**EMPTY TREASURE CHEST.** But some are seeking an experience with God in the wrong place and in the wrong way. I live on a strict diet since I am allergic to some foods and my digestive system is intolerant to others. It is a diet that I have learned to enjoy. Some today are on bad spiritual diets. They are seeking spiritual food in the wrong places and in the wrong ways. Some are captive to the culture of our times and are being pulled away by the remaining vestiges of modernism and postmodernism, and more recently the emerging/emergent church movement. Some Christian churches are removing crosses from their worship centers because the cross offends and because it is foolishness to others (1 Cor. 1:18; Gal. 5:11) in an attempt to appeal to those who do not believe in Jesus Christ.

The teaching of scripture has become a course on the "how to" and "what does it mean to me?" The discovery of God - spiritual treasure - is being stripped from the message. The discovery of God (or learning truth about God in the pages of scripture) is not the goal in some churches and it is obvious by the books and messages that tell us how to live a better life, how to get more money, how to have an intimate-relational community, or how to increase the attendance in the church. When churches change their worship services in order to become seeker sensitive, they have missed the point. They have also missed the fact that postmodernism is dying! The emerging church/emergent church is the new thing. The emerging church is not interested in large churches. They want small congregations and many are meeting in homes. They want relationships and "to feel" their "faith" or "to feel" God. They are not the post-modern seekers.

In a recent NBC News special about the evolving emergent/emerging church, a woman who attends a church called "The Spirit Garage" in Minneapolis, Minn was interviewed. Here is what she said,

*Growing up in a traditional church the comfort level was the familiarity of the music and the liturgy. It was not so much that I felt I belonged or had a real faith there. Here the people are real, the faith is real, [and] the music is from the heart. My comfort level is higher here!<sup>2</sup>*

2. NBC News Special (<http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=1505555>)

It was stunning that the teaching of scripture was not mentioned in the interview. It appears that she was looking for spiritual treasure, but she found a deceptive substitute. Her treasure chest is empty. Maybe the prophet Ezekiel and the apostle Paul captured it well with these words,

Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice. (NASB) Ezek. 33:32

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. (NASB) 2 Tim. 4:3-4

Maybe she did not communicate everything. But if God was the passion of her soul, why did she not say so? There is nothing in this world that countless generations before us have not discovered or experienced, except for scientific discoveries and advancements. If one truly wants to discover spiritual treasure, we must find it in the spiritual One - God Himself. The Bible is the *only* source of truth that paints a living picture of God. It is available to anyone who wants to learn about God.

**CONCLUSION.** These “spiritual movements” are really searches for spiritual treasure. They are commentaries on the Christian church at large which frequently dispenses “How to” messages in an attempt to be relevant, provide meaning, and encourage the soul. We have been and are responding to felt needs and not providing true spiritual treasure. So many are leaving our churches and looking elsewhere. The prescription for spiritual health and growth is the serious teaching and study of the Bible. Only then can one find spiritual treasure - God Himself. Spiritual maturity is to know

Him (1 John 2:12-14). When was the last time you heard someone say that God wants you to seek Him? This is an old truth. The ancient prophet Jeremiah recorded these words from our God,

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you . . . (NASB) Jer. 29:13-14

This is an invitation to a life long pursuit in the discovery of Him. In Jeremiah 9:23 we discover that God wants you to seek to know Him,

Thus says the LORD, “Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the LORD. (NASB) Jer. 9:23-24

The Bible is large! It provides a lifetime of discovery about Him. It is a treasure chest.

True spiritual treasure is found in the pages of scripture. Treasure hunters need more than boots, a hat for the sun, and sunglasses. They need shovels, brushes, and patience. In the spiritual realm, spiritual treasure hunters need a Bible, prayer, and time to read and study. They need to ask God to help them see Him, find Him, and to discover who He is! Little devotionals and books about the Bible only *contain* the Words of God. They are not the Words of God Himself. God Himself is found in the pages of scripture. The real spiritual treasure is God and God alone! Open your Bible, get out your pen, grab a coffee mug or a cup of tea, and start digging from the beginning to the end of the Bible. In each chapter and paragraph of each book ask, “Why did He do this? What does this reveal about God? How is He different from me?” Are you ready for spiritual treasure?

May the Lord bless you,  
- John Calahan  
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