

Jesus Is The Treasure

July 13, 2025

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Luke 10:25-37 NKJ ²⁵ And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading *of it*?" ²⁷ So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" ²⁸ And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." ²⁹ But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead. ³¹ "Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² "Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. ³³ "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ "So he went to *him* and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ "On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave *them* to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' ³⁶ "So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" ³⁷ And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Treasure Island, although published in 1883, is still one of the world's most beloved children's books. It has been adapted into at least 41 various films and TV shows worldwide, including a Muppets movie and a wishbone episode. It is a tale of adventure and romance that has captivated kids and adults for nearly 150 years.

However much we might like reading the book or watching the Muppet movie, not many of us would enjoy the real thing. The life of a 19th century sailor was filled with disease, hunger and danger. Most of us are probably more than happy to read it in the comfort of our own air-conditioned beds. After all adventures are "nasty disturbing uncomfortable things! Make you late for dinner!"

In our VBS series this coming week, the children will be reminded that God has called us on a very real adventure. An adventure in which he calls us to follow him, across deserts and seas, through pain and suffering, away from the comforts of this life but towards the joys of eternity. He calls us to follow him into death that we may emerge out of death into the light of life.

The Lord warns us that it won't be an easy trip. The dangers are very real, but the treasure is also real and far more precious than gold. Therefore:

Joshua 1:9 Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

Most of you probably know this verse from Joshua 1:9, but it is actually repeated 11 times in scripture. Three times Moses repeats it to Joshua just before he dies. Three times God reminds Joshua in the first chapter of Joshua. Then another five times it is repeated by Joshua and then later by David. It is a passage well worth remembering and repeating lest we shrink back from the path our God has called us to walk.

God called Joshua to a very difficult adventure. It was his task to lead the people across the Jordan river to face the might and strength of the Canaanite armies. God called him to faith and courage. He would need faith and courage when he walked across the river, and more faith and courage to battle giants of Canaan.

But this adventure wasn't just about conquering a land and a people. It was about Jesus. It was about God's plan to bring salvation not just for the Israelites but for the Canaanites and the whole world. Joshua through faith was a part of God plan to bring salvation to the whole world.

In our text this morning God calls us like he called Joshua on an adventure, but a very different kind of adventure. The task he gives us is very different from the one he gave to Joshua. He calls us not to destroy our enemies but to show mercy on those in need. The dangers are also very different, but just like Joshua it's all about Jesus Christ. And just like Joshua we have this command and this promise.

Joshua 1:9 Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

The good Samaritan is Jesus.

We are the ones laying broken and near death on the side of the road. If you have never felt like the beaten man in our text, give it few years. We all at one point or another end up feeling beaten up and left for dead, sometimes literally other times emotionally, but Jesus doesn't pass us by. Many other people do. Even those we thought were friends sometimes pass us by, but not Jesus. Jesus gives us this promise:

Joshua 1:9 for the LORD your God is with you

When we are beaten down Jesus is there by our side. Paul reminds us in 2 Cor 4:8

2 Corinthians 4:8-10 8 We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed-- 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our bod

With these words Paul reminds us that Jesus will always be there to help when we are beaten down.

Jesus is the good Samaritan. We are called to follow Jesus, to imitate Christ. As Jesus stops to help us we are called to reach out to those who were are beaten and broken. This is part of the adventure to which Christ has called us.

Reaching out to others is often dangerous. The Samaritan risked many dangers when he stopped to help that man. We also risk danger when we try to be good Samaritans. Sometimes we risk physical danger but more often the risk is a fear of reaching out. Whatever the risk is Jesus tells us as he told Joshua, "**be strong and of good courage for I am with you.**"

We shouldn't take foolish risks. Jesus says to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves." There are ways to help out without putting yourself in physical danger. A young woman driving alone who sees a man in need, can help by calling someone rather than getting out of the car herself. We don't have to take foolish risks, but fear should not stop us from helping out. What stops us most often from helping other is the fear of putting ourselves out there, but once again Jesus reminds to be bold and courageous and not to hold back out of fear, for he is with us.

What is most important is not how good we are at being a good Samaritan, but how Jesus is our good Samaritan who rescued us from death and forgives all our sins and failures. He has called us to follow him not to pirate gold but to the treasures of heaven. We pray that he would give us strength along the way to also share the love we have received from him with others.