

"DIGGING FOR TREASURE"

Proverbs 2:1-6

More than 100 years after the Klondike Gold Rush, prospector Shawn Ryan and his wife are leading a new Klondike Gold Rush that has made them millionaires several times over. "I don't have enough fingers and toes to name off what he has found," said geologist Mike Burke, "He has found a number of small deposits to larger deposits. It's at least probably a million ounces of gold." Ryan uses GPS to make geological maps, but his real innovation comes from his method of exploration. His main piece of equipment is a tulip bulb planter from Holland that he uses to dig down into the dirt. He then samples the soil closer to the rocks beneath. He staked over 40,000 claims which could contain 1 million ounces of gold – worth billions of dollars. Our text speaks about digging for wisdom.

I. OBTAINING WISDOM

A. There are incorrect ideas about wisdom/revelation in preaching

1. **Gifting:** You either have it or you don't If you admire good preachers: Forget it – you can't be like that if you don't have it
2. **Revelation/wisdom will just happen** If you just wait for it for x number of years – eventually you'll be a great preacher

B. But Revelation/wisdom in preaching is a matter of the heart

1. **Humility:** V1 receive my words... A recognition that I need help/I want to get better
 - a. Years ago: Was a Pastor who would tell people: I am one of the best preachers in the Fellowship: No one else thought so!
 1. Men who never ask a question
 2. Never invest in their preaching: Books/seminars
 - b. Legendary cellist Pablo Casals was asked why he continued to practice at age 90. "Because I think I'm making progress."
2. **Hunger:** V1 treasure my commands within you...
 - a. It all begins with a love for the word of God! All good preaching flows out of this
 1. A love of reading God's word
 2. A love for studying God's word: Wanting to go deeper
 - b. Every good preacher I know in our Fellowship loves God's word
 1. If you don't love the word of God – ask God to give you a love for it!

II. DIGGING FOR TREASURE

A. Text gives a picture of how you find revelation: You dig!! v4 If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures;

1. You don't find silver/treasure on the surface: You have to dig into the ground!
2. This is what we call studying: **2 Timothy 2:15 study to show yourself approved...**
 - a. To devote time/attention to gain knowledge
 - b. Greek: To be zealous/eager
 - c. Analysis "To take apart" – see what's in there

B. 3 kinds of digging/studying

1. **Systematic digging:** If a miner feels there is ore in a certain place – he systematically searches the area
 - a. Systematic theology: Researching Bible doctrines to give yourself a solid foundation
 1. PM did this in early days of Pastoring: Working as little as possible to give time to study
 - b. This is often accomplished by outside resources: **A book of systematic theology**
 1. Books of the Bible: As a disciple I went through several books of the Bible by Irving Jensen; Self-study guide
 - a. Helps you see overview: Themes/words/structure of the book
2. **Following the leading of God:** As you read the Bible – words/phrases/ideas/pints will occur to you
 - a. Usually they are not fully formed – but that is God directing you to where revelation can be found!
 - b. Digging comes by asking questions: I do not recommend you go to commentaries first! It forces your brain...
 1. Journalism questions: Who/what/when/where/why (not holy – but a wide range of probing questions)
 - a. Who is the speaker/who this speaking to?
 - b. Why is he saying this? (What is the background problem/situation he is addressing?)
 - c. What is the damage/effects of this problem?
 - d. What's the answer? (how do we fix the problem?)
 - e. What's the promise or blessing?
 - f. What is the theme running through the passage: May be more than 1; so which idea occurred to you?
 - g. When does this passage apply?
 - h. What should we do with this thought?
3. **Asking questions of things you don't understand:** You need to do this as you read the Bible
 - a. You need to write things down: Paper or electronically Questions! Come back later & dig deeper
 - b. This will usually involve commentaries/encyclopedias, etc. – outside resources
 1. I was puzzled by the command: You shall not boil a baby goat in it's mother's milk...What? I studied: This was ancient witchcraft/superstition: If you boil a baby goat – you will get money magically! I preached a money sermon called "Magic Milk"

III. THE RESPONSE OF GOD

A. Our text reminds us that God is the source of all knowledge

1. **V6 For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding;**
 - a. So we can ask with confidence – He loves to give wisdom!
 1. **James 1:5** If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

B. But the response of God comes after: **The heart of hunger and humility - The labor of digging:**

1. **V4 If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures;**
 - a. **James 4:6** But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."
2. But God will respond and help us
 - a. **V5 Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God. ⁶For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding;**
4. The response of God in giving us wisdom and understanding has impact on other people's lives