

***Philippians 3:8-14***

*Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

**The Spirit of Discovery**

The idea of penetrating uncharted areas and discovering unknown treasures holds the attention of most people. For the adventurers of our society the stories of early explorers hold a unique fascination. However, when the claims to fame of these explorers is peeled away and the motive for their searching spirit examined, great contrasts are found to exist. Take for instance the contrast between the underlying motive of David Livingstone who opened up the interior of Africa and Ponce de Leon who is credited with discovering Florida.

As most are aware, Ponce de Leon was motivated to explore because of a deep desire to find the "fountain of youth". Although the world benefitted by the results of his search, Ponce de Leon never found his fountain.

On the other hand, David Livingstone had discovered the fountain of youth and was motivated to explore in order to share it with the native people of Africa. Recognizing that few history books ever described Livingstone's motive as such, I base this statement on David Livingstone's own diary: "January 14, 1856. Evening. Felt much turmoil of spirit in the prospect of having all my plans for the welfare of this great region knocked on the head by savages tomorrow. But Jesus said, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, ... and lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.'"

What David Livingstone had discovered personally was what Ponce de Leon search in vain for, eternal life. Before leaving England as a medical missionary, Livingstone had trusted in the death of Christ to pay for the guilt of sin and by faith he received the gift of God, eternal life through Christ (see Romans 6:23). Livingstone knew first hand the truth of these words of scripture: "How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings. They feast in the abundance of your house; you give them drink from your river of delights. For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light." (Psalms 36:7-9 NIV). So realized were these truths in Livingstone's life that he confidently declared "I had rather be in the heart of Africa in the will of God than on the throne of England out of the will of God"

The spirit of discover is a God created part of mankind. Part of that quest involves a desire deep within the heart of each person for eternity. In the years of Ponce de Leon's search there was quite likely a Bible within his own reach that could have directed him to the only true fountain of youth, Jesus Christ. What path will your quest take, that of David Livingstone's or Ponce de Leon? History texts may not indicate much difference but eternity will.

***What is my response:***

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