



WOW: Word Of the Week

Search

August 17, 2022

A few weeks ago, I chose “quest” as our WOW. Biblically, quest is an idea, concept, ideal – not a word that is found in most translations. Quest sounds difficult. Quest requires perseverance, a long-term view, commitment, a vision, continuity. A quest implies effort. In common usage, quest is goal-oriented, long-term, long-thought out.

Search is specific, urgent, immediate. Not what is your quest—long-term, future goal? But what is your search today? These words relate to one another in my life. My daily search moves toward my life’s quest.

The words differ because they reflect two different perspectives. Search is Bible—the concordance is helpful.

What are you searching for? Who are you searching for?

Jesus told a parable about searching for a treasure – a treasure in a field. Another about searching for and finding a pearl of exorbitant value—great price may be too weak in our 21st century vocabulary. Jesus was talking about us—we are on a treasure hunt. He described a woman searching for a coin, a shepherd searching for a sheep, a father searching for a son. Successful searches lead to joy!

Jesus came on a search – to seek and to save the lost. One undeniable aspect of discipleship is that the Master’s search is also the search of his followers.

Application time.

Throughout our lives, we never escape searching. What are you searching for? What is the focal point of your life? What is your first thought, your last thought, each day? What do you spend your life pursuing? What is your treasure? What is your pearl? Jesus was teaching kingdom parables—kingdom is the greatest value.

We spend our lives searching for wealth, things, prestige, honor, accolades, feel-good stuff, experiences, travel, dining, fill in the blank. We hope these things will bring us meaning, belonging, identity, community.

What would you give everything to obtain? That is your treasure, your pearl. For Paul, it was to know Christ, to gain Christ, to share Christ. For Jesus, it was “to seek and to save the lost.” WOW!

Let me suggest three possibilities worth considering.

Treasure hunt, item #1. Search for truth, follow after truth. I edited and translated an evangelistic series, “En Pos de la Verdad,” following after truth. Truth must be known, understood, applied. Therefore, all preaching seeks to communicate truth, God’s Word. Preaching truth must facilitate the search.

Treasure hunt, item #2. Search for Jesus, seek to follow Jesus. See Jesus—the Greeks in John 12 wanted to see Jesus. Seeing Jesus clarifies who God is.

Success in the treasure hunt sends us forth on a rescue mission. Seeing Jesus, following Jesus, causes us to join Jesus in his mission. Loving God, loving neighbor puts us on a search for souls

I have been thinking about, comparing, contrasting related words: quest, search, pursuit.

What are you searching for? Many want to give multiple answers, struggling to focus, to identify only one thing. We multi-task; we have multiple goals. Where are you going? How do you know?

Pursuit. Hot pursuit. What are you pursuing? Think about the word “pursuit.” How far back can you stay? How closely should you follow? What effort would you expend if you were in pursuit?

To close: a resolution, or perhaps a prayer. Lord, help me spend my life pursuing what matters. Help me invest my life in eternity. Help me seek the things you seek, help me pursue the things you pursue. May your purpose be my purpose. May I follow closely, imitating, more and more reflecting the image of Jesus in my life, in Him and through Him I pray in His name, Amen.