

## Treasure!

Joe Slater

Maybe you should vacation in the Rockies this summer. Back in 2010 Mr. Forest Fenn, a New Mexico art dealer, hid a chest of gold nuggets and precious jewels worth about \$2-million somewhere in the Rockies. He even published a map and poem he said contained all the hints you need to find the treasure. Some 350,000 people have tried to locate it, all to no avail. A few people have died in accidents while searching.

Mr. Fenn said he hid the cache to promote fishing and other outdoor activities involving families pursuing the riches. “I wanted to give kids something to do. They spend too much time in the game room or playing with their little handheld texting machines.”\*\*

No doubt our children would be better served by hiking and fishing than by endlessly playing video games! And I understand the attraction of a \$2-million stash of gold and jewels! I’m disturbed, however, by the preoccupation with “uncertain riches” (1 Timothy 6:17), contrasted with the evident lack of interest in eternal, spiritual matters.

Jesus spoke of a treasure hidden in a field; the man who found it sold everything he had to buy the field. It wasn’t money, but God’s kingdom (Matthew 13:44). I’d love to see 350,000 people seeking the kingdom with the intensity they show toward gold and jewels.

What about us? What are we telling our children when we will move heaven and earth to attend every practice and every game for sports, but casually miss Bible classes and church? We say God is most important, but is He? Really? Think about it.

\*\*<https://www.yahoo.com/news/millionaire-hid-treasure-rocky-mountains-134324925.html>.

## A LOSING BATTLE

Once there was an eagle soaring high in the sky. It flew almost out of sight, but became unsteady and finally began to fall. It plunged to the earth in a pasture near two men. When the men approached the eagle, they found him shaking and trembling. In his claw was a rattlesnake!

The eagle had caught the reptile, soared into the sky, and finally lost the battle when the snake bit it. Not, there it lay – holding onto the very thing that killed it!

So it is with many folks today. They have found something from which they hope to derive some pleasure; but, like the eagle in the story, they are fighting a losing battle. They are holding onto the very thing that will mean their spiritual death.

How sad it is to think of a soul being lost simply because a person is too proud or too stubborn to free himself from the thing which is destroying him!

“Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience” (Colossians 3:5, 6).

--Bobby Key (Miami, OK) via *Old Paths*

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### Look Carefully

Look carefully, then look again.

The word is sin; it is not swen.

Look at the word, and you will see,

In the middle of sin is I, not we.

--author unknown (via *Bulletin Gold*)

## JUNK OR JEWEL? [The Pinky Bates Story, #3]

(conclusion from last week)

Philippians 3:13-14 advises us to put the past behind us, reach ahead, and press toward the prize. Before my spiritual awakening, it was easier to cop out, to blame some person, thing, or circumstance. My mom died from years of abusing prescription drugs, and Dad died an alcoholic, a Hopeless End. By the standard of this world, I was a lost cause. Except for God and Buck, everyone had given up on me. I had given up on myself. I pondered the words of Romans 7:24 – “*O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!*”

Let God have His way in your life. As hard as it is to believe, he loves **you**. Take one day at a time, and let Him direct your path. You won’t face anything greater than you can bear because the Lord is in control and is there to help you escape (1 Corinthians 10:13). Those of us in prison and alcoholics/drug addicts are always scheming ways to escape. Jesus helps us escape the right way. The better we behave, the better we feel about ourselves. It helps if we get a few victories under our belt. Start with small stuff. Early on my road to recover, Buck got a job for me in a print shop. I was tired of emptying trash cans one day and said I could do a lot more. He said, “If you can’t handle a little job, you can’t handle a big one.” Jeremiah 12:5 says, “*If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in thickets?*” The key is: Don’t quit! Ecclesiastes 9:4 says, “*Anyone who is among the living has hope; even a live dog is better than a dead lion. The living know they will die, but the dead know nothing!*” You may feel like a dog, but if alive, get up (with help from above), shake off the fleas, and do better.

--Pinky Joe Bates won victory on June 19, 2003. His long struggle over, final rest is his – safe in the arms of Jesus