

Sailing in Uncharted Territory

Have you ever wondered what it was like to be sailing with Leif Ericson, Christopher Columbus, Americus Vesputius, or Magellan? Can you imagine with me what it must have been like to leave behind the last marker or the last familiar piece of land? Can you see an explorer going to his cabin late at night after getting his bearing on the North Star, the sun is set and he has no map to tell him where his options are. Can you see him face the western sky as soon as he gets up in the morning? He has no idea of the length of time his journey shall take. He doesn't know what the people will be like which he meets along the way. If you have ever seen some of the maps from the middle ages you will observe the sad but incredible superstition etched in permanent ink. On the periphery, just at the end of the furthestmost point of exploration, hovering over the uncharted oceans on the end of the flat world are the words, "Here beith Demons!" Their antiquated and inaccurate map shows their warped understanding. Talk about an inaccurate "worldview"! Think about the first name of Columbus; "Christopher" which means light bearer. As you read his own words, you will discover at the very time of his historic voyage, he really believed he was a man on a mission to fulfill exactly what his name meant.

In finding and doing the will of God, our Lord will lead us into uncharted waters to test our faith to see if we will walk by faith and not by sight (II Corinthians 5:7). Today, if we will hear God's voice (Hebrews 3:15), we should be challenged by these words of inspiration: "*And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water*" (Matthew 14:28). In sailing in uncharted seas, I can say three wonderful things about the journey thus far:

I. We are guided by God's unseen hand.

If I were to visibly see God's hand, it would not convince me that he is with us anymore surely than we have seen evidenced in the circumstances in this grand undertaking.

Psalm 31:3, "*For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me.*"

Psalm 32:8, "*I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.*"

Psalm 48:14, "*For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.*"

II. We are often told to move without the full knowledge of the future.

God gave Abraham an order to leave the land of his nativity and up bringing without giving him details of where he was going. "*Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee*" (Genesis 12:1).

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the disciples did not know the message that our Lord was conveying at that time. I like the way the Lord Jesus put it in John 12:16, "*These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.*"

Jesus told Simon Peter at the feet washing: "*Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.*" (John 13:7).

A great test of faith is obeying the light God has given us and believing He will grant unto us light as we travel down the road of His perfect will.

III. If God calls the trip, wonderful things await us.

When modern man first saw into the treasure room of King Tut, his response when asked by a fellow archeologist, "What do you see?" The reply was, "I see wonderful things". Listen to this promise: "*They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the*

LORD, and his wonders in the deep” (Psalm 107:23, 24).

On this journey God has called us and I am convinced there are wonderful things awaiting us. Let's go together!

- Pastor Pope -

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