

Is There Sunken Treasure In Your Home?

--- Portrait of a Treasure Hunter

by Moe & Paige Becnel

In September 2003, we wrote Is There Sunken Treasure In Your Home – A Glimpse From the Titanic. If you have not read it, we encourage you read it in our Article Archives on www.blendingAfamily.com before reading this article. Portrait of a Treasure Hunter is Part 2 to the September, 2003 article.

Sunken treasure (or sunken relationships) in a home can be very difficult to overcome, and we do not intend to make light of, or imply that it is an easy thing to do. Hurt feelings and deep levels of disrespect that have built up over a period of time can make the task seem impossible, or can make you not want to pursue restoring the relationship.

But God --- Oh those words we love to hear at times, and don't want to hear at other times!!!
But God wants your relationships to last a lifetime – *especially your marriage and family relationships*.

After researching the Titanic and all that was lost that day, we decided to seek the expertise of deep sea divers and treasure hunters to see what we could learn about restoring fellowship to sunken family relationships. We interviewed Steve Dunlap, a friend and commercial diver from Baton Rouge, LA. We also found a famous underwater treasure hunter named Mel Fisher (1922-1998) who created a worldwide legacy of finding lost treasure. Mel has an interesting website www.melfisher.com. Here's what we learned.

It starts with a VISION Successful treasure hunters believe the records that say there is sunken treasure out there. They then begin to envision themselves finding that treasure, and INVEST THEIR LIVES to finding it. It becomes their PASSION. VISION & PASSION – more than anything else – is the key to their success! Mel Fisher's motto was "TODAY'S THE DAY." Even Mel had more days of "not finding" than of finding. But his continual focus on the future, not the failed days, made him a success at a task that many others had tried and quit. Those who lose their passion eventually quit.

It's a lot of Hard Work We recall some fishing trips we have been on in the Gulf of Mexico. As we lose sight of the shore line about 10 miles out, everything looks the same. Looking for treasure in the ocean has to be worse than looking for a-needle-in-a-hay-stack.

Treasure hunting is labor intensive. Days, weeks and months of research and exploration are spent to locate a ship; then again to locate treasure in and around the ship.

Some tools used in the process include large boats, maps, compasses, sonar, GPS, cranes and hoists, rope, scuba gear, watches, knives, spear guns, filtering devices to clear silt off the ocean floor, chipping tools, and cutting torches.

A lot of effort – time, work, investment (money), danger, and risk - goes into finding lost treasure, with no guarantee of results.

Once treasure is recovered, it then has to be restored. *Barnacles, coral and corrosion have hidden the original beauty of the treasure. Chemicals, tools, and time are needed to restore the precious items to its original beauty.*

Avoiding the Traps Treasure hunters have to be smart. Things can and do go wrong for even the best divers. They assume much risk as soon as they get in the water.

Clear thinking is required – they must continually be conscious of their air supply, time, atmospheric pressure on their body, safety lines, and animals that may have made the wrecked ship their home. They have to make good decisions to minimize the physical and financial risks involved in treasure hunting.

An Example of Ingenuity

As new problems arise each day, the successful treasure hunter has to think of new, innovative ways to find and recover the treasure. Here is an example of ingenuity --- quoted from Mel's Story by Bleth McHaley & Wendy Tucker

"Mel personally continued to develop various types of wet suits, spear guns, including gas guns, underwater cameras, housings, and other underwater equipment."

"In 1962, returning from the Caribbean through Florida, Mel had a meeting with a treasure hunter named Kip Wagner. Wagner had been attempting to salvage remains of the ten shipwrecks of the 1715 Spanish Plate Fleet lost in a hurricane off Florida's East Coast. Ill-equipped, with his crew unable to devote full-time to the project, Wagner invited Mel to join him on a 50-50 basis."

Mel, along with a hand-picked team of seven people, agreed to move to Florida and work for one year without pay while searching for the big bonanza.

After 360 days of "no finds", the team was testing a device Mel invented called the "mailbox". This is a tube which is lowered from the vessels stern over the propellers while the boat is securely anchored. The engines are then put in gear and the prop wash sends a layer of clear water from the surface downward to the bottom so the divers can see.

But it did more than bring clear water to the bottom so that the divers could see. The "mailbox" also dug a hole in the sand and revealed 1,033 gold coins. Mel Fisher exclaimed, "Once you have seen the ocean bottom paved with gold, you'll never forget it!"

"Thousands of people: students, scholars and interested persons: come from all over the world to see the educational, cultural and historical treasures that have been raised from oblivion by Mel Fisher and his crews.

Whoever comes to see Mel Fisher also comes to share in the glory of discovery.

For those who dream and persevere like Mel Fisher, "Today" is always "The Day".

Isn't that amazing! The treasure was close to them - under their nose, but because the silt covered the treasure on the ocean floor, and clouded the water due to the ocean currents, they could not see the treasure.

Ingenuity made them able to see clearly the treasure that they could not see before.

Finding God's Way

Aren't there many times we could use some ingenuity in a situation with our spouse, a child or stepchild, or an extended family member – to understand them better, to see their heart, or struggle, or pain more clearly?

Matthew 13: 45-46 reads, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

God places a HIGH value on people! Jesus was filled with desire to forgive a "faithless" generation, which had turned their backs toward God. It was His compassion for people that caused people to turn toward Jesus, and toward God.

You are God's pearl of great price. He paid a great price to redeem you – because He loves you so much!

In a similar way, we also need to place a HIGH value on people! Your spouse and family are worth so much more than gold coins. We need God's PASSION toward our family. (We get it as we pray for them.)

If we have God's heart of compassion in us, we will turn people toward us --- and we will establish strong relationships.

People may have their back toward you, but a heart of compassion can cause them to turn toward you.

The Holy Spirit is concerned about the well being of your family, and He is your source of ingenuity. You just need to take the time out to pray (ask for His wisdom and listen). You knew that – didn't you!

Key Points to Recovering A Sunken Relationship:

- Recovering a sinking or sunken relationship IS POSSIBLE! As we can see by the success of persistent & committed treasure hunters, few things are impossible. Relationships fail because people give up hope, quit trying, or just do not want to work to make it work.
- It starts with a VISION – a positive vision of what your marriage & family can be. (People often see that vision with another person – their next relationship, but God has a plan for your marriage!) Set your vision high! Then become PASSIONATE about "building" your relationships. The change needs to start with you. Be responsible! Be committed in your effort. Sporadic effort is often perceived as insincere, half-hearted intent. P.S. – A vision is always of the future; you MUST forgive the past and not look back!
- It is not easy to recover buried treasure. Often relationships deteriorate over a period of time, and from a series of hurts. *Like the silt that has covered sunken treasure over many years*, relationships do not get broken overnight, and they will not get fixed overnight. BUT THEY CAN BE FIXED --- AND CAN BECOME BETTER THAN EVER!
- The treasure is under your nose --- your challenge is to find it & uncover it. *Ingenuity will make you able to see clearly the treasure God placed in your loved ones.*
- Your thoughts need to change about your family member(s) ---
 - from your past or current negative thoughts to new, positive thoughts;
 - from old ways to new innovative ways;

- seeing the problems or issues in your family differently.
- As you approach a family member that is hurt, you may get a negative response or 2 (or more) - before you uncover the treasure. It is part of the process, so expect it! Realizing *that "hurting people hurt people"*, and *"hurting people are easily hurt by people"* will help you to respond to their behavior and look past it.
- Just as the sunken treasure lost its beauty to the elements of the sea, people (including children of divorce) become wounded in relationships, and can become hard, bitter, insensitive, and uncaring. Restoring a relationship begins with restoring the individuals in the relationship. A hurt person can shine brightly again, but it may take time and work to rebuild trust, self-esteem, etc. Be a "builder" of your home. Edify your spouse, children and new (step) children --- with words and deeds (cards, special treats, etc.) Let them know they are a treasure.
- Be positive and persistent in your effort. Always believe, "TODAY'S THE DAY!"
- Once you recover your sunken treasure, you will value it more!
- If you abandon ship, you will face the same situation in your next relationship. Another way of saying this is, "If you do not value your relationships that have sunk, you will not place any higher value on your new relationships."
- *There is no perfect relationship, because there are no perfect people – not even you! So WHY NOT RESCUE THIS ONE!*

Building Life-long Relationships: (repeated from Part 1)

1. Every person in your family is priceless to God. God paid a great price when He sent Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb of God to redeem every one of us back to Himself. You need to see them in the same way, no matter how they are acting at any given moment.
2. Look for the sunken treasure. Recall the reasons you fell in love with your spouse. Look for the value in your children and new children. Compliment your spouse and children. Build them up.
3. Everyone in your family is entitled to make mistakes --- it is their human characteristic! And you will have your turn.
4. Children are a reward from God, no matter how they are acting at any given moment!
5. Apologize, and accept other people's apologies! Forgiveness is the key to repairing the holes in your relationships. In many places in the Bible, God commands us to forgive one another because forgiveness is an essential ingredient for life-long relationships.
6. Do not hurt the one that you vowed to become "one" with! Take extra care to protect your relationship.
7. Tough times bring out the worst in people. Expect it, and work together through those times. Dr. Robert Schuler wrote a book entitled, "Tough Times Never Last, Tough People Do".

Today Mel Fisher has quite a legacy. There are Mel Fisher maritime museums, exhibits and sales shops in Key West, Sanibel, Orlando, Kissimmee, and Sebastian, FL. His sons and crew carry on the family business of recovering and restoring lost treasure.

What is your dream for your marriage & family? Are you ready to see things new?

Are you willing to be a treasure hunter for a sinking or sunken relationships?

Are you ready to become creative and try new things?

What family member is really hurting & calling out for help?

Are you willing to be an ambassador to your new (step) children?

What legacy are you building for your children to carry on?

- Are you showing them what unconditional love looks like?
- Are you teaching them by example how to walk in forgiveness?
- Are you showing them that marriage can be life-long, and peace-filled?

Are you ready to persevere?

"For those who dream and persevere like Mel Fisher, 'Today' is always 'The Day!'"

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May your relationships thrive!

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