



GREETINGS FROM THE GRIFFINS

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Lost Treasure

The Superstition mountains in Arizona are surrounded by elaborate stories of lost treasure. One of the most famous is the "Lost Dutchman"; a hermit who was reported to have found a vast store of Spanish gold hidden away in the peaks and valleys of the rugged mountain wilderness. Looking for different forms of treasure in the Superstitions is the substance that western novels are written about. Some sought their treasure in lost gold, silver mines, or raising cattle. In the mid 1890's a hermit by the name of Elisha



Marcus Reavis entered the Superstition mountains undoubtedly looking for his own lost treasure. He stumbled onto a high mountain oasis with a beautiful meadow and year-round stream running through it. With the dry desert filled with Apaches on every side he sought his fortune. But it wasn't to be, he died in 1896 and someone else took possession of his dreams. That man was John Fraser. He too came looking for his pot of gold. In 1909 he sold his oasis to William Clemans.



William and his two sons Earl & Mark had the start of their dream. The following year they started building a road up the mountain to have better access to the ranch. They purchased

cattle in the desert and drove them up the mountain where they would fatten on the mountain pastures. They took what had been started by the previous owners and made it better. In 1910 they hired Billy Martin to be their ranch foreman and head up the cattle industry. In 1919 they patented the ranch and their cattle herd continued to grow. There was a large apple orchard fed by the mountain spring and an extensive vegetable garden. In 1937 they constructed a proper ranch house, and the ranch was truly taking shape.

For 37 years they lived their dream, but in the end they sold all of it to Bacon & Upton, Mesa land promoters who wanted to sell housing lots in the mountain pines. They too were chasing their own elusive dreams of wealth. The road to the ranch was completed in 1948 by the promoters but like all who went before them, couldn't seem to tie down the rainbow. In 1955 the ranch was purchased by Floyd Stone & partner Kenneth Lockwood who kept the ranch until 1966 when they sold it to the United States Department of Agriculture for \$80,000.00. They in turn declared it a wilderness area and only hikers, campers, and hunters would use this mountain oasis. Many came to love the beauty, and history of the old ranch site.

November 30, 1991 the ranch house burned down. The forest service went in and cleaned all remaining human effects. The apple orchard has all but died off. Now those who make the arduous trip to the old ranch site see only the ghosts of dead dreams of fortune blowing in the wind. Faded memories and old photographs are all that are left.

For 76 years men struggled against Apaches and the elements of nature, to find their fortune in the mountain wilderness of central Arizona, whether from gold, silver, cattle or land speculation. But in the end there remains little evidence that they have even been there to toil their lives away on dreams of wealth.

True Treasure

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." Matthew 6:19-24

Children of God

In this passage of Scripture we see powerful examples of proper Christian living and focus. Nowhere in the Bible do we see that it is wrong to have a job or earn a decent income. We do see though that we are to have a biblical perspective on what is truly important. So many times in life people can get lost in seeking worldly riches and lose focus on the things that really matter.

In the examples that Jesus is describing in these passages we see that treasures sought on the earth will be destroyed or ultimately left behind when we depart from the earth. We are not earthly beings put here to amass wealth and worldly desires. We were put here by our Creator to live Godly lives that are pleasing to Him, and to help those around us find the true riches. Namely Jesus Christ and His Salvation.

The story of the men seeking wealth in the mountains should invoke sadness in each of us as we reflect on all they gave up in seeking their fortune. We don't know if they ever received God's gift of Salvation. How sad it would be if they toiled their lives away when the true riches were right there, free for the taking, if they would have only asked. Just before Jesus left the earth He commissioned us, the children of God, to make disciples of all nations. Most of us won't ever go to a foreign land to accomplish this command, and we are not asked to, but we are all to live Godly lives above reproach so that those around us can see the Light shining from us, and that Light is Jesus in us.



This picture, taken from our RV window, shows the rain squall that moved through our area the last couple of days. We are living in the desert, so we do appreciate rain,

but this was a bit much. Like most of the country, we got to experience just how powerful nature can be. Thankfully there was no real or lasting damage done to our rig or the ranch. The rain did clear the air and the sky has been so fresh.

We have come to the end of another year of service in our ministry and have been so blessed by God and those He has called to support us in the work we do. We are looking for 2017 to be even better with more support and more opportunities to reach people for the Kingdom of God. God is so great and He continues to touch people's hearts for His Glory. Thank you for joining with us.