

Scouting

Judges 1:22-26, Mark 11:3, *Matthew 5:13-16, John 14:2-3*

February 6, 2011

I. So how many of you recognized the first three scriptures we read as referring to scouts?

A. So what exactly is it that a scout does?

1. A scout is somebody, who goes ahead to prepare the way.
2. They go ahead to learn of obstacles.
3. They give guidance as to the best way to go.
4. They lead into the future.

B. So the passage from the book of Judges comes from a time before the nation of Israel was formed and each of the twelve tribes had a tribal chief that they called a Judge.

1. This passage tells of how the tribe of Joseph sent out scouts to find a way for the tribe of Joseph to come in and occupy the city of Bethel.
2. Not exactly consistent with the commandments about killing and stealing, as we understand them; but it was a successful scouting trip.

C. The passage from Mark would have been real easy to see this scouting thing if they

would have just translated one word a little different --

"See, I am sending my scout ahead of you, who will prepare your way..."

1. Yes, John the Baptist did have a message, but his role was as a scout, to go ahead and prepare the way of the Lord, and make his path straight."
2. John, with his baptism, prepared the people for Jesus message that God's love and forgiveness was not dependent on being rich or ritually clean; two things you pretty much had to be in order to participate in the temple.

D. Then we have the passage from the gospel of John. We normally don't think of Jesus as a scout, but in so many ways that was what he did.

1. He went before us to show us "The Way."
2. He showed us how we should be about entering and building God's realm. Pioneer of our faith
3. And in this passage from John he is telling the disciples that he is going a head of them to prepare for them their place with God.

II. There are some folks here today who are clearly scouts, but the fact is all of us who call ourselves Christians are

called to emulate Jesus and that includes the part about being scouts; not necessarily Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts but Realm Scouts.

A. What is a Realm Scout?

Well, Realm Scouts don't have any special uniforms or badges; Realm Scouts are just anybody who wants to help prepare the way and lead people into God's Realm.

B. How do we do that?

By following God's call as we move into the future.

C. As the American pioneers moved west they need to have people with them that had some idea of where they were headed.

1. If you didn't have a good scout your chance of survival was very low, and you had an even lower change of getting to where you wanted to be.
2. There was treacherous terrain.
3. There may already be people there who didn't want you coming through.
4. There were wild animals.

5. There were weather conditions that killed a good many of the pioneers.
- D. Without a doubt a scout had to be incredibly brave and courageous, because in order to prepare the path they often had to go into areas alone in which no else had ever gone with no idea of what dangers might befall them.
- E. Just a heads up, the same things apply for a Realm Scout.

III. So who might be some famous Realm Scouts?

- A. We've already mentioned John the Baptist and Jesus, who in the book of Hebrews is called "the pioneer and perfecter of our faith." [Heb 12:2]
- B. But how about the Apostle Paul – who led Christianity into the non-Jewish world, teaching that God loved Gentiles, that is non-Jews, just as much as the Jews.
- C. There was Martin Luther who led Christians to really understand the idea that all people had a direct relationship to God. What we call the "Priesthood of all Believers."

- D. There was Antoinette Brown who led us to see that in the eyes of God women had equal status and authority with men.
- E. There was Martin Luther King, Jr. who led us to understand that God loves **all people** equally.
- F. The scouts of God's Realm seem to be moving us forward; but not just in some undefined direction.
The scouts of God's Realm are leading us in a direction of opening up God's love to more and more people;
even to the point that someday we may truly find a way to love, not just our neighbors, but our enemies.

IV. Now just as with the scouts who led the pioneers across this nation, there is still some danger involved.

- A. Sometimes people don't have faith in the guidance of the scout and they rebel.
- B. Sometimes some people are so disturbed by the guidance of the scout that they will even kill the scout; or at least have a good go at it.

- C. Just imagine trying to get people to follow you into a place that has never been entered before;
a place with new challenges and dangers that have never been faced before;
a place where there are no guarantees and your security is definitely at risk.
- D. But in order to follow God, to enter and build the Realm of God, that is just what we need to do.
- V. Oo, Oo – did you catch that? Who just heard that?
We just named the greatest scout of all time.
The one who leads us even into the valley of the shadow of death.
Did you catch it?
God.
- A. God is the scout that leads us, if we are willing to follow.
- B. There's going to be lots of people who won't want to follow God.
1. They won't follow because they're happy right where they're at.

2. They won't follow because they don't like where God is heading.
 3. They won't follow, because to follow they have to leave all they have.
 4. They won't follow because they just aren't paying attention.
- C. But if you are willing to follow God, then you too can be a scout, a Realm Scout that helps others to see where God is leading us.

VI. Being a Realm Scout will not be easy.

- A. It means you have to be very attentive to God's calling.
- B. It means you have to be very courageous.
- C. It means you have to be willing to move into the future and leave the past behind.
- D. It means that you have to be willing to give up what you have.
- E. It means that you must find your direction and strength in God and not in what others think or say.

Imagine a scout who just led where the people wanted to go.

They wouldn't be worth their salt.

Why, they would be like salt that had lost it's taste.

They'd be like a light put under a basket.

VII. Are you willing to be a Scout?

- A. Are you willing to go where God leads?
If so, let me hear an "AMEN!"
- B. Are you willing to help others find the way?
Do I hear an "AMEN!?"
- C. Are you willing to risk all you have, even your own life, to move into the future?
Do I hear an "AMEN!?"
- D. Yeah, you might want to think about that one for a second.
- E. But if you answered honestly and without hesitation, AMEN, which means SO BE It, or YES;
Then you are a Realm Scout.
AMEN.