

The Parables of Jesus #8
The Parable of the Treasure in the Field
(Mt. 13:44)
Bill Denton

INTRODUCTION

A. The First United Church in Hamilton, Canada decided to raise some money by holding an auction

1. They got everyone to collect their junk and bring it to the church building
2. They hired a professional auctioneer who managed to sell everything and raise quite a bit of money
3. One couple, Joe and Mildred, had some old lawn furniture sitting on the porch for years
4. Mildred loaded it up and took it down to the auction
5. On the day of the sale, Joe went down to browse around, and guess what he discovered -- this great set of old lawn furniture -- he bought it
6. Mildred would have to wait another year to get rid of Joe's treasure!

B. We all like to find treasures

1. I once heard of someone who bought an old antique to take home and refinish
2. They discovered several thousand dollars hidden away inside a drawer

C. Little wonder that Jesus used the picture of a treasure to give us another description of the God's kingdom

1. Matt 13:44
Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. (NKJ)
2. It is a simple picture that presents wonderful truth about the kingdom

I. A LOOK AT THE PARABLE

A. To understand the parable, we must accept the fact that Jesus was describing the kingdom

1. The kingdom of heaven is like -- "like" makes this a simile
2. He uses a familiar word to describe one we may not be so familiar with
3. The kingdom of heaven may not be so well known, but everyone would understand a treasure in a field (or anywhere else for that matter)

B. Consider the elements of this little story

1. Kingdom of heaven
 - a. this is what Jesus is trying to help people understand
 - b. we have seen it described already as a small seed, but now Jesus is trying to communicate more about it's qualities
2. Treasure
 - a. Gk. = thesauros (wealth, something of value)
 - b. Matt 6:21
For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
(NKJ)
 - c. 2 Cor 4:7
But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.
(NKJ)
 - d. Heb 11:26
esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. (NKJ)
3. Field
 - a. just what it says -- a field like you would find on any farm
 - b. it was common for people to hide their valuables by burying them in the ground
 - c. this makes it a picture to which the average person could relate
4. The action of finding, selling and buying
 - a. there is no need to debate the morality of the man in the story
 - b. again, everyone would understand the man's actions
 - c. he found a treasure in a field -- if the treasure belonged to the owner, you can be sure the owner would have refused to sell or he would have removed the treasure prior to the sale
 - d. Jesus is simply telling the story of what any sensible person would do

C. The point of the story

1. The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure which was discovered hidden out in a field
2. The finder, locates the owner and determines the price
3. He sells everything else he has and purchases the field in order to obtain the treasure
4. He isn't nearly so much interested in the field as he is the treasure, which is the most valuable thing to the man

II. LESSONS TO LEARN FROM THE PARABLE

A. If the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure, then it must be something of great value

1. Mark 8:36

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? (NKJ)

2. Acts 4:12

Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. (NKJ)

3. 1 Cor 3:11

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (NKJ)

4. Phil 3:7-11

But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. (NKJ)

5. Col 2:3

in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (NKJ)

B. If the kingdom is like a treasure, there must be something that gives it value

1. Dan 7:13-14

I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed. (NKJ)

2. Luke 1:32-33

He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end. (NKJ)

3. Matt 28:18
And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ""All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (NKJ)
4. Luke 22:29
And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, (NKJ)
5. Heb 1:8
But to the Son He says: ""Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. (NKJ)

C. A treasure (kingdom) with that value would be worth whatever it takes to obtain it

1. 2 Chr 7:14
if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. (NKJ)
2. Isa 55:7
Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. (NKJ)
3. Mark 1:14-15
Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ""The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel. (NKJ)

CONCLUSION

A. The end of this story by Jesus focuses on the joy of the man who has so energetically acquired the treasure

1. It was the treasure that brought him great joy
2. It wasn't himself, his shrewd business deal, or the field that brought joy
3. The treasure itself was the sole source of joy

B. The kingdom of God is indeed the source of joy for us

1. Acts 8:8
And there was great joy in that city. (NKJ)
2. Rom 14:17
for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (NKJ)

C. That treasure is available to you tonight

1. Can you see its value?
2. Is it more valuable to you than all the things of the world?
3. Would you give up everything else to obtain that treasure/
4. Is heavenly joy worth the price?

D. Invitation