

**Series: The Kingdom of Jesus**

**Message: Descriptions of the Kingdom – the parables –part 4**

**Hidden Treasure / The Pearl**

**Scripture: Matthew 13:44-46**

**Introduction:** These two parables are told privately to the disciples. They are only recorded by Matthew. Matthew, who was also called Levi, was a tax collector. He was hated by his countrymen and despised by his employers, the Romans. He collected the taxes for Rome and added extra to be able to acquire wealth. He had his own society of outcast friends and lived comfortably. Then Matthew met Jesus. One day Jesus asked Matthew to leave it all behind and follow Him. Jesus attends a party at Matthew's home and Matthew sees the love and acceptance Jesus offered. Matthew left it all behind and followed Jesus. Matthew had found the treasure, the pearl in Jesus. Matthew found what he had been searching for without knowing it. What he had longed to find in pleasure and possessions he now fully found in Jesus. In Jesus, Matthew discovered real meaning and purpose in life. In Jesus, Matthew found real love, joy, peace, and contentment. Perhaps this is why these parables stuck in Matthew's mind. Perhaps this is why the Holy Spirit led Matthew to share them in his Gospel account.

The treasure is Jesus. Jesus is the Kingdom. This means more than the salvation that is found in Jesus. These parables were spoken to the disciples who had already believed in Jesus. Jesus saves. Salvation however is not the treasure, Jesus is the treasure. Many desire the gift of salvation from Jesus yet do not understand that Jesus is the treasure. Only Jesus can make a person to be once again in right relationship with the Creator, God.

Only Jesus can bring eternal life, forgiveness of sin and removal of all guilt and shame. Jesus is God, the eternal treasure. Jesus is the treasure that can be given away and never be lost.

**In both parables we see several aspects that are similar.**

- A treasure exists that has ultimate value
- A treasure is hidden. It must be found or made visible
- There is a seeking of the treasure. (Passive or Active)
- There is a discovery of the treasure
- There is an awareness of the value of the treasure which changes the one who finds it.
- There is an abandonment of everything else to be able to gain the treasure and make it one's own.

**Jesus call to follow Him is pictured in these parables.**

Some who Jesus called to follow Him were looking in a passive way. The purpose and meaning of life was missing but the hope of finding it was gone. The search for love, peace, joy, and contentment had left the person broken and hopeless. The need for this treasure remained within the person but the person had given up on finding it. This is like the **hidden treasure** stumbled upon in the field. The treasure really finds the person.

**Examples:** The Samaritan woman at the well

The woman caught in adultery

The leper who returned to give thanks

The man brought to Jesus by his friends thru the roof.

Some who Jesus called to follow Him were looking in an active way. They may have been looking in the wrong places or for the wrong motives but they were still hopeful in the search.

Like the merchant looking for fine pearls who upon seeing **the pearl** gives up all other pursuits of pearls to secure this one and only pearl needed. Once he found this pearl there was no more need to search for fine pearls that could not satisfy. He had found The Pearl. Once these people met Jesus they followed Him completely knowing that He was the treasure.

**Examples:** Andrew, Simon Peter's Brother

The rich young ruler

Nicodemus

Ethiopian eunuch and Cornelius from the book of Acts

Jesus called people at first with the simple words, "Follow Me". In this call the treasure is identified. Once the person began to follow Jesus they came to understand the value of the treasure that had found them.

Jesus then began to say; if you wish to continue following Me you must deny self, take up your cross, and then follow Me.(Luke 9:23). Jesus defined what this meant on many occasions.

Luke 14:26-33 and John 6:47-58 are examples.

The crowds did not understand Jesus words and they stopped following Jesus after He spoke such hard words. The disciples however were beginning to grasp the meaning remained with Jesus understanding that in Jesus they had found the treasure, who was worth the abandonment of all that they once believed could satisfy.

After these experiences Jesus spoke to them about the real love He had for them and that this love would lead them to obey His ways and love one another. (John 15:10-12)

Jesus then began to tell His followers that He was treating them as friends revealing the secrets of God to them. (John 15:13-17)

Before leaving these disciples Jesus promised He would always be with them. He then called them to give away the treasure as much as they could to every person in the world. (Matt. 28:18-20)

Those who truly have found the treasure and fully abandoned themselves to Jesus find great joy in sharing Him with others.

**What is required to gain this treasure or pearl?** It is a paradox. The answer is both nothing and everything. The treasure of a personal relationship with Jesus is a free gift. It must simply be received by faith. It is the gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

We cannot buy it or earn it. We must receive Jesus by faith like a little child. God's grace enables us to identify Jesus as the only real treasure and by faith we seek to make him our own.

Once we receive this precious gift we grow to understand the treasure God has given to us. Our response is to abandon all we have previously pursued and allow Jesus to meet all of our needs and to use of lives for His glory and Kingdom.

Paul's testimony in Philippians 3:7-14

### **Closing thoughts**

Read lyrics of two favorite hymns which speak to this paradox and treasure we have in Jesus

Jesus paid in all – page 210

Living for Jesus – page 372

Have you found the treasure? Has the treasure called you to follow Him?

Are you still looking for ways that satisfy the need for purpose, meaning, joy, peace, love and contentment? If you have trusted in Jesus you already have the treasure. You must abandon yourself to Him and you will find that He satisfies all your needs.

If you have not yet trusted Jesus to begin your journey of following Him today is the day to begin.

Begin to trust and follow Jesus

Surrender in abandonment and continue to follow Jesus

Repent of accepting or pursuing cheap substitutes – rededicate

Join with us in worshipping and serving Jesus together in this community and around the world