



What Would you Do with a Hidden Treasure or a Prized Pearl?

Devotional by Sherry Kirton
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Read the first Passage. This set of parables above was told to the disciples, the future leaders of the church.

List of passages: Matthew 13:44-52; 1Corinthians 2:6-10; Isaiah 55:1-3.

Matt. 13:44 *“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.*

45 *“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.*

47 *“Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. 48 When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. 49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous 50 and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

51 *“Have you understood all these things?” Jesus asked.*

“Yes,” they replied.

52 *He said to them, “Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”*

The parable of verse 44 is strange. The man was likely a tenant farmer, which is still common today. He'd rent a field because he didn't believe he could afford to own one, so he was probably poor. But he believed he could farm one that he rented and then he would keep the profit made after the harvest, having paid off his land-lord, his workers, his suppliers, and his own regular expenses. When this tenant farmer was digging in the field he unexpectedly finds a hidden treasure. Since the treasure is owned by the one who possess the land, he can't outright take the treasure for himself. As an honest man, he reburries it, and then comes to his full senses; he sells all of his things so that he can purchase the field and he does it immediately. Now the treasure is his by right and he can still farm the land for an added profit, if he so chooses.

The parable of verse 45 has a merchant, a man of some wealth. He also sells off everything he has to afford the greatly valued pearl, and buys it. His job was to hunt for a treasure, unlike the farmer.

Then the parable of verses 47-50 comes. WHAT?! ANOTHER PARABLE! This time the kingdom of heaven is a fisherman's net that caught all kinds of fish. Several fishermen working together after the catch get to the work of sorting the good from the bad. If the fish are believers who bought the hidden treasure then this parable is for those fish who hoard their treasure.

The first two parables seem to go together easily; they are found treasures. The third parable seems to be the odd man out. Then Jesus asks if the disciples had understood all of the parables to which they reply, “Yes”. We do hope they did, because they became the teachers. Verse 52 winds it up, “every teacher of the law... is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasure as well as old.”

Yep, but this one reminds us that **there is a hidden question, a prized response** to being taught about the kingdom of heaven: we are more than landowners who profit from our farm and unseen treasure. We are more than fish who possess a prized pearl. **We are the fish caught in the lake:** some of us will be good and some of us will be thrown into the fiery furnace if we are not abiding in His righteousness. If we don't bother to share that hidden treasure or that prized pearl with others then we are hoarding our treasure. And this is the one kind of treasure that doesn't become less when it is given away, but more.

My iPod is a prized possession given me by my husband. But I can't even loan chunks of it to my children. If I try to divide it it will become worthless because it will cease to function. But the hidden treasure grows when we give it away. We don't lose our portion as we share it. It increases because it is the kingdom of heaven that we open to those around us. So, **what would you do with that kind of hidden treasure or prized pearl? Would you sell all you have in order to possess it?**



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Would you be joyful and do it immediately? And then, would you joyfully

give it away?

1Cor. 2:6 “We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. **7** No, we speak of God’s secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. **8** None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. **9** However, as it is written:

“No eye has seen,
no ear has heard,
no mind has conceived
what God has prepared for those who love him”

— but God has revealed it to us by His Spirit.”

1st Corinthians 2:6-10 reminds us that God’s secret wisdom had been hidden, but it is now revealed to us by His Holy Spirit. However, it still is not the same as the ideas of this age which change often. Nor is the secret wisdom the same as the ideas of those who are highly prized in this world who will be left penniless when their time comes to buy their ticket to heaven. Penniless because they cannot purchase the ticket even with their own blood. The price is much more than that. The blood that can purchase this ticket must be pure and unblemished, sinless. And there was only One who could afford that. Jesus payed for all of our tickets with His life: that is the beginning of the secret wisdom of God. And yet, we still cannot conceive of what God has prepared for those who love Him even though He has revealed it to us by His Spirit. Even though we can see how amazingly high the price and therefore, how prized it is, we still cannot conceive how much it may profit in the end.

Isaiah 55:1 “Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters;
and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.
2 Why spend money on what is not bread,
and your labor on what does not satisfy?
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.
3 Give ear and come to me;
hear me, that your soul may live.
I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
my faithful love promised to David.”

Isaiah 55:1-3 says that the kingdom of heaven fills us without requiring payment from us... and the richest of fare is what comes from that storehouse.

My iPod fills my head with great music and ideas from God. It even reminds me of my important schedule and keeps my contacts and driving directions for me. But it can’t pay my ticket to heaven.

So, the hidden question is: what will you do if you have found this treasure--sell all you have to have it--and will you joyfully give it away?

Now, What is the prized response?

--some ideas are from a sermon given 24 July 2005 by Rev. Larry Huggett at Peace Presbyterian in Elk Grove, CA.