

sermon study guide

Speaker: Ashwin Ramani

Date: October 24/25 2020

Sermon Title: The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like... Part 6: Hidden Treasure and Costly Pearl

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. What is the most valuable thing you've ever found or won or the best deal you've ever come across?
2. What 'sacrifice' have you made where you were confident there would be a greater 'payout' afterward? Have you ever 'gambled' on a venture that required sacrifice without knowing if it will pay off? Share with your group.

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Matthew 13:44-46

3. How are these parables similar? How do they differ? How are 'joy' and 'sacrifice' related in these parables?

Read Mark 10:21-22 and Philippians 3:7-8

4. What did the rich young man and the apostle Paul stand to lose by following Jesus? Why do you think the two responded so differently?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. What things can you do to nudge your revelation of Jesus closer to what Paul said in Philippians 3:7-8? How can you live in such a way to encourage others to see the kingdom of heaven the way Paul did?
6. How does this discussion of "treasures of great value" cause you to re-evaluate the goals you have set for yourself?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Treasure's great value is linked both to the cost required to obtain it and the joy of possessing it. Reflect on the value of the treasure we receive from Jesus' sacrifice compared with the cost of His sacrifice. What treasures of lasting value might we be missing out on even as we pursue "the good life"?

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 13:44-46

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.

Mark 10:21-22

21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." 22 At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Philippians 3:7-8

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ

sermon study summary

The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like...Part 6: Hidden Treasure and Costly Pearl

October 24/25, 2020

Ashwin Ramani

Jesus uses common stories from everyday life to explain aspects of the Kingdom of Heaven. In Matthew 13:44-46, Jesus teaches about sacrificing for God's Kingdom. Many of us will gladly sacrifice for what we want most. If we see the Kingdom of Heaven as priceless, we will give up everything to be a part of His Kingdom.

Let's look at two parables. In Jesus' day there were few options for safeguarding one's wealth. A common way was simply to hide it. If the owner happened to die with that secret, it was lost until someone might come across it. When a man discovered a significant treasure hidden in a field he sold everything to buy that field – and the accompanying treasure. According to Rabbinic law, if one owns a plot of land, what is on, or under, that land belongs to the owner. Similarly, a merchant who finds a pearl of vast worth sells all he has to buy it. Both stories exhibit a calculated act of sacrifice – each emphasize what it cost them - everything. They were sure they were getting something worth much more than what they were giving up, and did so joyfully.

Do we see the Kingdom of God as something so precious that we will joyfully give up whatever is necessary in order to be a part of this Kingdom knowing we are getting something far better? If you comprehend how valuable His Kingdom is you will gladly rearrange your priorities, give up dreams, sinful habits, and future rights.

The 'rich young man' (Mark 10:17-22) was presented with this offer, yet was unable to see the surpassing value of the Kingdom and turned Jesus down. The Apostle Paul, however, saw things differently (Phil 3:4-11). He had pedigree, status, zeal, education and more, yet anything Paul had previously seen as valuable was 'considered garbage' (v. 8) compared to a relationship with Jesus. Knowing Jesus became his chief passion in life.

Jesus presents each of us with the same offer: to give up everything and follow Him, and make Jesus Lord and Master over our lives, joyfully putting all we have at His disposal. We will joyfully sacrifice for what we perceive to be of great value. In this case this 'great value' is Jesus and His Kingdom. After years of suffering in Africa to make inroads for the gospel, the 19th Century Christian missionary David Livingstone said, "People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa .. it is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather it is a privilege."

How do we do this? Remember Jesus. He looked at us and treated us as treasures, giving up everything to give us a new status, identity, and a place in God's family. The Christian life is lived in response to Jesus' sacrifice. Focus not on what we might have to give up to be a part of the Kingdom. Focus rather on Jesus, His love, and what He has done for you.