

opportunity has been freely given to us, Romans 6:23). Just like the men in the parables needed to sell everything to take possession of the treasure, Jesus requires we must sacrifice everything about our lives to have this greater opportunity to be part of God's kingdom (Luke 9:23-26)! In fact, Jesus teaches people the need to count the cost of the kingdom (Luke 14:25-33) – our lives, possessions, relationships, sufferings, etc. You must be willing to put King Jesus before everything about your life!

**Being part of the kingdom impacts everything.** There is no area of your life being part of God's kingdom will not touch (i.e. your relationships, how you spend your time, how you spend your money, how you treat people, your priorities, your goals, your work, your character, etc.)! So, the impact of the treasure of God's kingdom is such that you give yourself as a living sacrifice in God's service (Romans 12:1-2) and allow the gospel of the kingdom to completely transform your life so as to please King Jesus (Colossians 3, v. 17).

**The sacrifices made for the kingdom's sake should be made joyfully.** Sadly, not every person who hears the gospel of the kingdom will look at the opportunity in the same way presented in these parables. Rather, some are too distracted by the things in their lives to notice the opportunity, others will begin doing what is necessary to be part of the kingdom and reconsider later as the cost mounts, and others will consider the things of this life too precious to sacrifice to be part of the kingdom (Matthew 13:18-23; 19:16-22). Yet, the reality is that if anyone is not willing to sacrifice everything, that person does not really appreciate the true value of the treasure that is the kingdom of Heaven! For, when the value was recognized, people throughout the New Testament saw it as the greatest bargain ever known to mankind and sacrificed the things of this life to be part of Jesus's eternal kingdom (Philippians 3:7-11)!

### Conclusion

You must learn from Jesus's parables of the hidden treasure and priceless pearl. These parables teach you about the kingdom of Heaven. If you want to be ready to stand before the King in Judgment, you must make the appropriate applications from these parables to your life! Namely, you must recognize the value of being part of Jesus's kingdom as being greater than anything about life on this earth and live accordingly!

Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

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## The Parables Of The Hidden Treasure And Priceless Pearl

Jesus often taught in parables. A “parable” is a story with moral/spiritual applications. Jesus used parables in His teaching to reveal, conceal, and fulfill prophecy. Particularly, the parables help people learn about the kingdom of God – including the nature of the kingdom, the nature of the King, and the nature of kingdom citizens. One parable is commonly referred to as the “parable of the hidden treasure” (Matthew 13:44). Another similar parable is the “parable of the priceless pearl” (Matthew 13:45-46). While there are many lessons we can learn from these parables, the main point of these parables is to learn that the opportunity to be part of Jesus's kingdom is a priceless treasure that far surpasses the value of any other thing.

The purpose of this lesson is to learn from the parables of the hidden treasure and priceless pearl so as to understand the stories and how they apply to our lives.

### Context

**Greater context.** Matthew 13:1-2 describes the scene of large crowds listening to Jesus teach. Particularly, the chapter demonstrates that Jesus spoke many things to them in parables (v. 3, 34-35). Then, Jesus gave additional instruction to His disciples (v. 10-17, 36).

**Immediate context.** There are two longer parables in Matthew 13 that contain substantial explanations (parables of the sower and the wheat and the weeds). Then, there are several smaller parables taught in the chapter. These two parables are given among those spoken to the disciples in a house after he left the crowds by the sea (v. 36).

**The Parable Of The Hidden Treasure**

**A hidden treasure in a field (13:44a).** Although finding treasure in a field is something unfamiliar to many today (as valuables are typically kept securely in a bank or safe), it was common at this time to bury valuables. Some would even do this and the valuable thing would be lost when that one would die (if no one else knew its location).

**A man who finds the treasure (13:44b).** Although we are not told the circumstances, a man happened upon the hidden treasure. Perhaps he was not even intentionally seeking a treasure but found it in the process of whatever he was doing.

**The treasure is reburied (13:44c).** So it would not be taken from him, he reburied the treasure until he could buy the field. Note that focusing on whether there was anything deceptive about this man keeping the treasure from its owner is to miss Jesus's point.

**Sacrifice is joyfully made to buy the field (13:44d).** Rather than continuing on with his day as if nothing had happened, he did everything he could to raise the money needed to buy the field – selling everything he had. Nothing was more valuable to him than this treasure!

### The Parable Of The Priceless Pearl

**A merchant in search of pearls (13:45).** Here is a man who is focused on buying and selling/trading pearls. Note that pearls are often spoken of in the Bible.

**A pearl of great value is found (13:46a).** As this man was searching for pearls, he found one particular pearl whose value far surpassed the rest. It is described as being of great value – with the implication that its value was priceless.

**Sacrifice is made to buy the pearl (13:46b).** When this man discovered his opportunity to possess such a pearl, he went to the great lengths of selling everything he had to buy it. Nothing was considered more valuable to him than this pearl!

### Applications

**The kingdom of Heaven is far more valuable than anything on this earth.** Jesus is clearly wanting people to recognize the value of the kingdom in these parables. Since the kingdom of Heaven refers to all that is connected with the reign/rule of God, there are some definite blessings provided to citizens of this kingdom (Ephesians 1:3). Most notably, citizens of this kingdom will spend eternity with God in Heaven as opposed to spending eternity in the fires of Hell (Matthew 13:41-43)! So, with the

kingdom focused on spiritual things that are eternal, nothing physical can possibly compare (Matthew 6:19-21)!

**We could not give enough to buy entrance to the kingdom of Heaven for ourselves.** Neither of these men believed they were making an even exchange (between what they sold and what they were getting). Rather, they were getting an incredible bargain! Similarly, the opportunity to be part of the kingdom of Heaven is something that no person could create for himself/herself. That is, no one can buy their way into the kingdom of Heaven or earn their own way (Ephesians 2:1-3). Yet, through Jesus's sacrifice, the opportunity to be part of the kingdom and spend eternity in Heaven has been made available to each one of us (Ephesians 2:4-10; John 3:16; Romans 5:6-11)! So, rather than being hopelessly on the outside of the kingdom, we can discover this great opportunity and share in it!

**Some will discover their opportunity to be part of the kingdom in different ways.** It seems that the two men in the parables each found the priceless thing in a different way (the man with the treasure seemed to happen upon it, while the merchant was searching for pearls). Though this may not be the case, it is true that people discover the treasure God offers through the gospel in different ways. For example, the Samaritan woman in John 4 found the treasure while going to draw water (vv. 7-10, 25-26). Upon finding the greater treasure, she then left her water jar to tell others what she had discovered (vv. 28-29). Others have found the treasure while they were trying to seek after God or learn the truth (like the Ethiopian treasurer, Acts 8:26-28, 30-35). Upon hearing the truth explained, he was obedient to it (vv. 36-39). Today, some discover their opportunities as part of an effort to seek God and know the truth; others have the opportunity placed in front of them without it being part of a greater effort to consciously seek God and find truth.

**Effort is required to enter the kingdom.** Although Jesus has made it possible to be part of the kingdom of Heaven, there is still effort required from each person. For example, the men in the parables had to take action to have the great treasures they had each discovered. Faith is the response God consistently requires to enter His kingdom (Ephesians 2:8-9; John 3:16). However, this response is not merely accepting certain things to be true, but trusting God so much that you are moved to obeying what He says (Matthew 7:21-23; James 2:14-26).

**Being part of the kingdom costs us everything.** Even though we could never afford or earn sharing in the kingdom on our own, it is also not free in the sense of there being no cost (only free in the sense that the