

Quest - continued

continued ... in this life just like it will be a place of joy in the next life (Matthew 25:21,23).

Our third lesson is taken from the pearl of great price. We need to be more like this merchant - a man with a mission. Too many people wander around aimlessly in life and rob themselves of life's most prized treasure, Jesus Christ. We find the kingdom of heaven only after we search for it (Matthew 6:33; 7:7).

Our last practical lesson is again taken from both parables. The men in these parables gave up "all" for what they wanted. The men did not own their treasures the moment they found them. They had first to do some things to get them. What good would it have been to find a hidden treasure or a pearl of great price, and then do nothing to get it? Recognizing or talking about the enormous value of the kingdom is not enough. Jesus demands that we give up "all" to enter into (experience) the kingdom of heaven. Discipleship is demanding (Matthew 16:24).

Is the story of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price, your story? Are you out looking for the kingdom of heaven? Have you found its enormous value? Are you happy about what you have found? Have you paid the price and sacrificed all to be a part of it? God has given us a treasure on earth (the kingdom of heaven), so that one day we can have a treasure in heaven. - *Chris Reeves*

Up-Coming Events

- Plan to attend our VBS this week, June 5-9, 2017.

Warfield Blvd. church of Christ
290 Warfield Blvd.
Clarksville, TN 37043

Website
WBCOC.org

Assembly Times
Sunday: 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 6 pm
Wednesday: 7 pm

Everyone Is Welcome!
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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

The Quest for the Best

In search of buried treasure has been one of man's obsessions throughout history. Who has read *Treasure Island* or *The Count of Monte Cristo*? In this article we will look at a treasure story that surpasses any treasure story ever told. Why? Because the treasure itself surpasses the value of any earthly treasure.

In Matthew 13, Jesus speaks the parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price. In the parable of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price, Jesus wanted to teach one main lesson: recognize and appreciate the enormous value of the kingdom of heaven and sacrifice whatever it takes to get into it.

The Hidden Treasure (Mt. 13:44).

"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field."

Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure. The kingdom of heaven has enormous, supreme value. Jesus said a man happened to find this treasure, and then, fearing that someone else would find it, hid the treasure until he could secure it for himself. Consider the attitude and action of this man. He was full of joy and he seized the crucial moment when it came to him. There was no apathy or lethargy about him.

We are then told that he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field.

There are three verbs that show this man's great sacrifice: "goes," "sells" and "buys." Observe then three basic truths about the kingdom of heaven: 1) the kingdom is a treasure - it is valuable; 2) there is great joy in the kingdom - it is exciting; and, 3) one must sacrifice all for the kingdom - it is demanding.

The Pearl of Great Price (Mt. 13:45-46).

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls: and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

Jesus spoke of a merchant. This man was seeking something. He was on a quest. He was a business man who approached his work seriously, with energy, and definite purpose. He had a goal, a sense of direction, and a destination. He knew exactly where he was going and what he was looking for.

What was he seeking? "Goodly" pearls, not just any ordinary pearls. This man was not on a mere quest, but a quest for the best. He set the highest possible goals and standards for himself. He was not satisfied with less than the best.

Pearls, the precious gems found in the shells of oysters, were popular ornaments in New Testament times much as they are today (Matthew 7:6).

We are told that the man found "one" pearl of great price; not two, not three, or more, but "one." This man knew his business and recognized the best when he found it. He could tell the worth from the worthless. He

was a man of values and priorities. He was a connoisseur of fine pearls. He had a trained eye and trained mind.

So what did this man do? He went and sold all that he had, and bought it. As in the previous parable, there are three verbs that show this man's great sacrifice: "went," "sold," and "bought."

Again observe three basic truths about the kingdom of heaven: there is to be a seeking for the kingdom - it is important; the kingdom is like goodly pearls - it is valuable; and, one must sacrifice all for the kingdom - it is demanding.

What are some lessons that we can learn from these two parables? First, there is the lesson of an incomparable treasure. In both parables, Jesus was trying to teach a lesson about the unsurpassable value and supreme worth of the kingdom of heaven. God's word is a "treasure" (2 Corinthians 4:7) more valuable than an earthly treasure (Job 28:18; Psalm 19:7-9; Proverbs 3:13-15). Christ himself is a "treasure" (Colossians 2:3).

Our second lesson is taken from the parable of the hidden treasure. The man who found the hidden treasure did not regret selling all he had. He did not complain about the sacrifice. He did not grudgingly give up what he had. He was excited and joyful in giving up all for what he found. The kingdom of heaven is all about joy (Galatians 5:22). The kingdom is to be a place of joy ... *continued*