

PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE & THE PEARL
MATTHEW 13:44–46
LESSON 8



WELCOME

Do you have a possession that is especially precious to you? What is it and why is it precious? What would you give up in order to keep it?

BACKGROUND

Jesus continued to use everyday objects and ideas to explain spiritual truths to His audience. The parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl had familiar elements for His listeners.¹ “Pearls were especially valued in the Near East,”² and “ordinary people used the ground as the safest place to keep their most cherished belonging[s],”³ burying them in secret places.



WORD

As you come to the Word, pause and ask God to make it come alive for you.

Context: In **Matthew 13:36**, we learn that Jesus left the crowds outside and went into a house with His disciples where He continued to teach this smaller group. After explaining the parable of the weeds to them (**Matthew 13:37–43**), He taught them more about the Kingdom of Heaven using two parables, one about a hidden treasure and the other about a valuable pearl.

Matthew 13:44–46

⁴⁴ *“The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure that a man discovered hidden in a field. In his excitement, he hid it again and sold everything he owned to get enough money to buy the field.*

¹ Barton, Bruce B. *Life Application Bible Commentary: Matthew*. Tyndale House Publishers, 1996. 256

² Ibid. 274

³ Barclay, William. *The Gospel of Matthew Vol. 2*. Westminster Press, 1975. 84

⁴⁵ *“Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant on the lookout for choice pearls. ⁴⁶ When he discovered a pearl of great value, he sold everything he owned and bought it!*

1. In the first parable, what is the Kingdom of Heaven like? (**Matthew 13:44**)

a. What is your opinion of the actions of the man who sold everything to buy the field?

b. What do you think Jesus was trying to teach His disciples with this parable?

2. In our world anything of value is worth sacrifice and commitment. The same is true for God's Kingdom. In the following verses, underline the call(s) to sacrifice for the Kingdom of Heaven.

a. **Luke 9:23–24**

Then he said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.

b. **Matthew 19:21–24**

Jesus told him, “If you want to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

But when the young man heard this, he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “I tell you the truth, it is very hard for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. I’ll say it again—it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!”

c. **Mark 10:28–30**

Then Peter began to speak up. “We’ve given up everything to follow you,” he said.

“Yes,” Jesus replied, “and I assure you that everyone who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, for my sake and for the Good News, will receive now in return a hundred times as many houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and property—along with persecution. And in the world to come that person will have eternal life.

- d. When have you had to make a hard choice to do what Jesus was asking of you?

3. What is the Kingdom of Heaven compared to in the second parable?⁴ (**Matthew 13:45–46**)
- a. How is this comparison the same as the previous parable?

 - b. How is this comparison different from the previous parable?
4. “To the ancient peoples ... a pearl was the loveliest of all possessions; that means that the Kingdom of Heaven is the loveliest thing in the world. Let us remember what the Kingdom is. To be in the Kingdom is to accept and to do the will of God. That is to say, to do the will of God is no grim, grey, agonizing thing; it is a lovely thing. Beyond the discipline, beyond the sacrifice, beyond the self-denial, beyond the cross, there lies the supreme loveliness which is nowhere else. There is only one way to bring peace to the heart, joy to the mind, beauty to the life, and that is to accept and to do the will of God.”⁵
- a. What is your response to this quote? Do you think accepting and doing the will of God is a lovely thing? Why or why not?

 - b. What words might you use instead of “lovely” and why?

⁴ This parable can be understood/interpreted in two ways. The first understanding places the merchant in the role of Jesus giving up everything to save His Church (the pearl). The second interpretation, similar to the previous parable, reminds us to give up everything in order to obtain the Kingdom of Heaven. Both interpretations have value. In this lesson, the second interpretation will be used. *Life Application Study Bible: New Living Translation*. Tyndale House Publishers, 2007. 1570.

⁵ Barclay, William. *The Gospel of Matthew Vol. 2*. Westminster Press, 1975. 87

c. Do you know anyone who sees doing the will of God as a “lovely” and admirable thing? How do they live that out? What impact has their example had on you?

d. In what way(s) is Holy Spirit speaking to you about this area of your life?

ALLEGIANCE & INTEGRATION

Relinquishing and surrendering our lives to the King with loyalty to Him alone and putting our intellectual understanding of the Kingdom into practice in every aspect of our lives.

5. This parable suggests that there are many choice pearls, but one that is of great value (**Matthew 13:45**). What other things are valuable in your life?

a. In what ways do you find those other valuable things tend to crowd out the most valuable thing of all (knowing and walking with Jesus)?

- b. Are there any specific changes you would like to make in order to reflect the value you place on your walk with Jesus?

MISSION

Living out the Gospel and Kingdom values through faith-filled proclamation and demonstration.

6. As evidenced in these parables, people discover the Kingdom of God in a variety of ways (**Matthew 13:44–45**), and the Kingdom is so valuable that it calls for total investment from those who find it.⁶ What did it look like for you to discover the Kingdom?
7. Rehearsing or practicing parts of our own story helps us share it with others. In sharing our stories, we have an opportunity to testify to the worthiness of pursuing God’s Kingdom. Write a couple of sentences you could share with someone about the ways you have invested your life toward the wholehearted pursuit of Jesus and His Kingdom.

⁶ Barton, Bruce B. *Life Application Bible Commentary: Matthew*. Tyndale House Publishers, 1996. 274



WORSHIP

Take a moment to enter into a time of worship—both on your own and with your community—to show praise, adoration and love for God.

“The treasure and pearl parables tell of the joy of finding peace with God. There’s no other word to express it. Both stories involve people who very happily find the answer to their life’s hopes and dreams.”⁷

Joy occurs not because our circumstances are perfect, but because of the hope and peace we find in our relationship with God. Reflect on the following verses and underline the characteristics of God. Identify some ways you've experienced those truths about God and thank Him.

*God’s way is perfect.
All the LORD’s promises prove true.
He is a shield for all who look to him for protection.
For who is God except the Lord?
Who but our God is a solid rock?*

Psalm 18:30–31

CONVERSATION PROMPTS

Consider using one of the conversation prompts this week to begin having a spiritual conversation with someone in your life.

- What is something you own that is especially valuable to you?
- What is a sacrificial choice you have had to make in your life?
- How do you pursue things that are valuable to you?

TAKE-AWAY SUMMARY

As you have worked through this lesson and listened to Holy Spirit, what is your one significant take-away?

Write a brief summary of your take-away on page 117.

⁷ Barton, Bruce B. *Life Application Bible Commentary: Matthew*. Tyndale House Publishers, 1996. 274

SERMON NOTES

Lesson 8

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page. It is intended for the user to write their sermon notes for Lesson 8.

Prayer Requests

Lined area for writing prayer requests.