



Teachings of the Teacher – A study in the parables of Jesus
The Seeker of Treasures

Matthew 13:44-46

Lesson 7

There are two prevalent interpretations of the parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price. Both interpretations are valid and can be Scripturally supported. One interpretation is that the One who is seeking is Jesus, the field and the pearls being believers. The other interpretation determines believers to be the seekers and Jesus to be the treasure and the pearl. Jesus (and all we find in Him) is certainly a treasure. May your study this week create a deeper appreciation of Him. It is more difficult to comprehend our value to Jesus. Yet Scripture consistently reveals this truth. May your study this week also create a deeper understanding and awe of His love and value of you.

OBSERVATION: Read Matthew 13:44-46

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they were about?
2. Key words help us to better understand a parable. We have listed below key words of this parable. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text.
Key Words: *again, treasure, seeking/found, and the phrase kingdom of heaven*
3. Refer to the key phrase *kingdom of heaven* and make a list of what the *kingdom of heaven is like*.

CONSIDER THESE THINGS:

1. What is something that you have diligently sought to obtain?
 - a. What did you do to acquire it?
2. What is the difference between value and price?
3. How is the value of something determined?

THE TREASURE HIDDEN IN A FIELD: Read Matthew 13:44

1. What is the *kingdom of heaven* like?
 - a. What did the man *find* and *hide*?
 - 1.) Define the word *treasure*.

INTERPRETATION #1: CHRIST IS THE TREASURE

1. Let's first consider the *treasure* to be Christ, the *field* being the gospel. Read the following verses. Summarize what they teach us about the things of God being *treasures*.

Psalm 119:162 *I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure.*

Proverbs 2:2-5 *So that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; ³Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, ⁴If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; ⁵Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.*

Isaiah 33:6 *Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, and the strength of salvation; the fear of the LORD is His treasure.*

Colossians 2:3 *in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

- a. In what way is knowing and belonging to Jesus a *treasure* to you?
- b. The man in this parable *found* and *hid* the treasure. There were no banks in those days. Often men would hide their valuables by digging a hole in the ground and burying them. That was their way of keeping their *treasures*. Although Satan cannot steal your salvation from you, he can steal your joy and peace. What do you do to safeguard your relationship with the Lord?

- 1.) What happens when you don't protect that relationship?
 - a.) What did David write about *hiding* God's Word in Psalm 119:11?
 - i. What does it mean to *hide* God's word in your heart?
 - ii. Viewing God's word as a *treasure*, describe its value to you.

2. If the *treasure was found* on the property of another man, one might bury the treasure in haste. What did the man do about securing the *treasure* for himself?
 - a. The man *sold all he had and bought the field*. Read Isaiah 55:1,2. Meditate on the goodness of delighting in the Lord. Share some of your thoughts.
 - 1.) How much does the *water of life* cost? Revelation 22:17
 - b. Salvation costs us nothing. Following Jesus can cost much. What does it cost a person who desires to enjoy the riches of the *treasures* Christ offers?

Challenge: Use Scriptures to support your answer.

3. Fill in the blank to reveal why the man *sold all* to *buy the field*.
 Matthew 13:44 ...and for _____ over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.
 - a. Many believe that following Jesus robs a person's *joy* and freedom. What do you believe? Why?
 - 1.) Record the words of David from Psalm 4:7
 - 2.) Reflect upon Moses' decision as recorded in Hebrews 11:24-26 and Paul's attitude as recorded in Philippians 3:7-9. What had they discovered?

INTERPRETATION #2: THE BELIEVER IS THE TREASURE

1. Another valid interpretation places Christ as the man who *found and hid the treasure* and the *treasure* as the believer. How do the following verses confirm this truth? Note: the words *jewels* and *special people* also could be translated as *treasures*.

Deuteronomy 7:6 "For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.

Malachi 3:17 "They shall be Mine," says the Lord of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him."

Titus 2:14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

- a. As a believer, you are a *treasure* to God. What does that mean to you?
2. According to this parable, the man *found and hid* the treasure. According to Luke 19:10, why did Christ come?
 - a. What do we learn from Colossians 3:3 about our lives?
 - b. *You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your word* (Psalm 119:114). In what ways is God your *hiding place*?

Challenge: Consider the parable of the *wheat and tares* in Matthew 13:24-30. How is the believer *hidden* in the world?

3. The man in this parable *sold all that he had to buy the field*. What price did Christ pay to save sinners?
4. The man sold all that He had *for joy over the treasure*. What do the following verses reveal about the joy of the Lord as it relates to saving you?

Zephaniah 3:17

Isaiah 62:5

Luke 15:5-6

Hebrews 12:2

Jude 1:24

- a. Ponder this one: What *joy* do you think it brings to God to save you?

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE: Read Matthew 13:45,46

INTERPRETATION #1: CHRIST IS THE PEARL

1. In viewing the *pearl* to be Christ, we see that the man was seeking *beautiful pearls*. What are some things that man searches for in this life?
 - a. What were you searching for before you found Jesus?
2. Matthew 13:46 tells us that the man did three things. What were they?
 - a. Write the promise of Jeremiah 29:13 in your own words.
 - b. What does Colossians 2:3 reveal about Christ?
3. How have you found Jesus to be the *one pearl of great price*?

INTERPRETATION #2: BELIEVERS ARE THE PEARL

1. As Jesus sought to seek and save the lost, He found you and sold all He had to buy you. Consider that cost as you reflect on Philippians 2:5-8 and 1 Peter 1:18-19. How much did you cost God?
 - a. What response does God expect from the believer? See 1 Corinthians 6:20.
 - 1.) Practically, personally, what does that mean to you?



Challenge: Read the parables prior to the parables in this week's lesson (Matthew 13:24-43) and the parable which follows the parables in this week's lesson (Matthew 13:47-50). Consider the lesson of these parables. How might the interpretation of these parables help to interpret the parables in this week's lesson?

REVIEW: Read Matthew 13:44-46

1. Many times, God will allow portions of Scripture to be ambiguous, because He intends there to be dual interpretations. In the case of the parables of the treasure and the pearls, both describe the *kingdom of heaven*. As you consider the two interpretations, which one do you favor? Why?
2. In what ways have you been challenged to express your appreciation to Jesus by giving and sacrificing? Note: If you have not been challenged in this way, consider that a challenge!
3. In what ways has your appreciation and awe been increased as you ponder the price Jesus willingly paid to redeem you?

*Riches and honor are with me,
Enduring riches and righteousness.
My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold,
And my revenue than choice silver.
I traverse the way of righteousness,
In the midst of the paths of justice,
- Proverbs 8:18-20*

Observation Worksheet

Matthew 13:44-46

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

⁴⁵"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, ⁴⁶who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.