

THE TREASURE IN THE FIELD, THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE, THE FISH-NET

BIBLE TEXT : Matthew 13:44-52

LESSON 78 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Matthew 13:44-52

⁴⁴ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

⁴⁵ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

⁴⁶ Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

⁴⁷ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

⁴⁸ Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

⁴⁹ So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

⁵⁰ And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

⁵² Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe *which is* instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure *things* new and old.

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

The Lure of Wealth

Searching for hidden treasure has been the occupation of many adventurers of all ages; and the lure for lost riches or new gold fields has caused many men to forsake their families and friends, mortgage their homes, give all they have, and suffer great hardships — all in the hope of amassing a fortune in this world. The majority of these people have been disappointed, and never realized their dreams; but what excitement and joy there has been among the people who have found the treasures, who have staked mines that brought them great wealth!

The Greatest Treasure

Jesus likened the Kingdom of Heaven to a treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it he sold all he had so that he could buy that field and enjoy the riches buried there. That treasure is *Jesus* and His Gospel, the truth hidden in the Word of God. A sinner cannot understand the joys of salvation; to him the treasures in the Word are hidden. The carnal mind can see nothing interesting in the way of holiness; but when a person honestly seeks for the truth, he finds it in the Word of God. Quickly he forsakes everything of the world to obtain that treasure; and how happy he is when he feels the joys of salvation down deep in his heart!

The Lord spoke these words through Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived: "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; . . . Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God" (Proverbs 2:1-5).

Some people realize that money alone cannot make them happy, but they think education, travel, security, and worldly fellowship will fill their life with contentment; but the wisdom of the world, the freedom from want and fear, the things men call "the better things in life," are all meaningless without Jesus. In Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3).

The Value of Jewels

Searching for precious jewels is another occupation that has enticed many men over land and sea. The more rare the gem, the greater its value. Hundreds of thousands of dollars, and even millions, have been paid for one diamond which, after all, could bring no lasting happiness to the owner. When a specialist in that line of work hears of a particularly precious jewel he could obtain if he had the money to pay for it, he is like the man of whom Jesus told who heard of a very valuable pearl and sold all the pearls he owned that he might buy the one of great price.

Jesus Our Pearl

Jesus likened such a transaction to what happens when the truth of the Gospel is revealed to a man. He tries to obtain for

himself the comforts and luxuries of life, but he is not satisfied until he has owned as his Savior the Christ who came to redeem him. Jesus is our greatest prize; Jesus died to save the lost and make them ready for Heaven. He is especially precious, "for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). He is not just another precious jewel, but He is the only One of such great value. If we do not appreciate His worth to us, if we do not give all for Him, we shall never go to Heaven.

The Apostle Paul realized that life came only through Jesus, and he was one who sold all to own Him. He said, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Philippians 3:8).

Precious to Believers

Who is it that finds Jesus to be precious? "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner" (1 Peter 2:7).

How can we "buy" Jesus? We cannot purchase our salvation with money. Isaiah proclaimed: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isaiah 55:1). He was comparing the Gospel with food and drink, the things that give us life: trying to show that we can obtain spiritual things without paying for it with money.

Forsaking All

Then what is required of us? We can "buy" the things of Heaven by forsaking our sins, by giving up anything that would keep us from living for Jesus and serving Him with all our hearts. Peter told Jesus that he and the other disciples had given up all to follow Him, and Jesus answered, "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Luke 18:29, 30). Another time the Lord told the people, "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).

We often speak of paying the price of the Gospel. That price is our will yielded entirely to Jesus, so He can ask us to do anything He wants to, and we will do it.

The Fish-Net

Jesus spoke another parable concerning the Kingdom of Heaven. He likened the Kingdom to a fish-net that was cast into the water, and when it was brought in, all kinds of fish were found in it, both good and bad. But the fisherman did not want the fish that were not good to eat, so he separated them from the good ones, and threw them away.

The good and the bad people all have to live together now, but when Jesus comes back to this earth He will take His own to be with Him, but the wicked ones will be cast into eternal fire where there will be such great suffering that the people will groan and gnash their teeth. No one needs to go to that terrible place. Every one of us can be among the good fish whom Jesus loves, if we love Him enough to live as He wants us to live.

Treasures New and Old

Jesus asked His disciples if they understood the parables He told them. They answered, "Yea, Lord." These were precious truths that Jesus was revealing to His people; and He wanted them to tell others about them. The scribes were the people who

could read the Scriptures and could explain them. Jesus wanted His disciples to be scribes who understood the new dispensation which He preached, and would explain it to other people. There is nothing as precious as the Gospel.

The true Christian is happy to tell about the things Jesus has done for him. Perhaps he was saved many years ago, but it still brings a blessing to him to tell of the call of the Spirit to him to follow the Lord. His heart thrills when he thinks of the miraculous way he was led, perhaps, to where he could hear the story of redeeming grace. That is an "old treasure." But the Christian does not have to look back many years to realize the value of the Gospel in his life. Every day he finds new treasures; God's presence daily renews his strength and gives him new joy, and he wants the world to know about it.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Who is our hidden treasure?
- 2 What did the man do who found the pearl of great price?
- 3 What must we do to be saved and have Jesus in our hearts?
- 4 With whom did Jesus compare the good and bad fish in the net?
- 5 How long will they be together?
- 6 What are our "treasures new and old"?