

:: summary

During his ministry, Jesus was often called *Rabbi* or Teacher, and he taught his followers using parables or extended metaphors that connected elements from everyday life with profound spiritual truths. Jesus used parables to make the intangible tangible, so that those who follow him can live transformed lives with God. In the parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl, Jesus helps us understand what is truly valuable, so that we might receive the eternal treasure God offers to us through Jesus and live joyfully in relationship with Him.

:: explore and discuss it

Matthew 6:21 says that "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also," meaning we live and set our priorities according to what we truly value. Our treasure is what we spend our time, energy and effort pursuing and protecting. It is what we value most and what motivates us.

If you were to fill a treasure chest according to your lifestyle, what would be found inside the chest?

Read Matthew 13:44

In the ancient world, the safest place to store your most valuable possessions was a hole in the ground at a secret location. Because of this, finding hidden treasure was and still is a real possibility. In this case, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, for which God so selflessly gave of himself through Jesus, so that by his sacrifice on the cross everyone might be restored into right relationship with God. It is His free gift offered to us.

As a parable intended by Jesus to teach us spiritual truths, what can we learn from the one who stumbles upon a treasure like this?

Read Matthew 13:45-46

At the time of Jesus, pearls were extremely rare and highly valuable as the only organic gem on earth. Therefore, it's easy to understand why the merchant would be so eager to exchange all he has for this prize.

What does this parable have in common with the first?

If we understand Jesus as the one who came to give all of himself to redeem or pay the price for these treasures, what spiritual truths is Jesus bringing to our attention through these two parables?

:: make it personal

Jesus' point in these parables is to make us aware of the price he came to pay so that we might receive God's free gift of eternal life offered through him. The concept here is grace before works, meaning we can't buy this gift, but we can live in response to the grace we have received.

Do you live as someone who has found treasure of greatest value in life with God or are you looking for treasure somewhere else?

If you consider the contents of your treasure chest, are there things you value more than what Jesus came to offer you? What lesser valuables might God be calling you to let go of, give away or use for his purposes?

:: pray it

Invite God to look through your treasure chest with you. Ask Him to help you discern the true value of what you are holding onto and what He offers. Ask God to help you to discard any fool's gold in your life and live according to the value of the priceless gift of eternal life with Him that He has offers you in Jesus.

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