The Greatest Treasure

Intro: As a basis for our lesson notice Mat. 13:44-46. “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.” These parables were presented by Christ to show the beauty and value of His gospel and the willingness of those who realized its value to sacrifice all that they might possess it.

1. It was not uncommon in that day and time to find buried treasure, banks were not commonplace then.
2. The man in this parable:
   a. Found a treasure so great he considered its value above all else.
   b. He sold all he had to buy it.

I. Why Is The Gospel The Greatest Treasure?
   A. Because of its source.
      1. Each person has something that is very dear to them. They treasure it because of its source (given to them by their mate, parents, or children, etc.).
      2. John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
      3. Eph. 2:8 “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:”
   B. Because of its cost.
      1. We place the worth and value of something according to what it cost.
      2. It cost the blood of Jesus Christ.
         a. Mat. 26:28 “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”
         b. Acts 20:28 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”
         c. Eph. 5:25 “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”
   C. Because of its purpose.
      1. It saves:
         a. Rom. 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”
         b. Jam. 1:21 “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”
      2. It changes lives:
         a. Rom. 12:1-2 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”
         b. Rom. 6:5-7,17-18 “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.”
from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”

c. Consider: Saul who becomes the apostle Paul (persecutor to persecuted).

D. Because of its exclusiveness.
1. John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”
2. Acts 4:12 “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”
3. Heb. 10:26 “For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,”
4. There is only one church.
   a. Eph. 4:4 “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;”
   b. There is salvation only in that one church; Eph. 5:23 “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.”
   c. Mat. 15:13 “But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.”
5. Nothing can take its place, as nothing can take the place of water to a man dying of thirst.

E. Because of its inclusiveness.
1. God’s grace is for all; Tit. 2:11 “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,”
2. Jesus died for all; Heb. 2:9 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”
3. The invitation extended to all; Mat. 11:28 “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”
4. The gospel preached to all; Mark 16:15 “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”
5. It is not restricted to any class, race, or nation.

II. THIS TREASURE IS IN EARTHEN VESSELS.

A. 2 Cor. 4:3-7 “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. 6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”

B. God has ordained that by man the gospel is to be preached to man.
1. 1 Cor. 1:21 “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”
2. Rom. 10:12-17 “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14 How shall they believe in him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? 17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
3. **Examples.**
   a. Peter to the Jews (Acts 2)
   b. Ananias to Saul
      (1) Christ appeared to Saul but did not tell him what to do to be saved.
      (2) Acts 9:6 “And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And
          the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must
          do.”
      (3) Instead He sent Ananias to Saul.
   c. Peter to Cornelius
      (1) An angel appeared to Cornelius, but did not tell him what to do to be saved.
      (2) Cornelius had to send for Peter to learn what to do.

4. Christ gave the apostles and us a commission to preach the gospel to every creature.
   a. Mat. 28:19-20 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,
      and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have
      commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
   b. Mark 16:15 “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every
      creature.”
   c. Luke 24:46-47 “And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and
      to rise from the dead the third day: 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached
      in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

C. **What this means to God’s children.**
   1. A precious privilege; Rom. 10:15 “And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is
      written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of
      good things!
   2. A bound duty; Rom. 1:14 “I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise,
      and to the unwise.”
   3. A fearful responsibility; 1 Cor. 9:16 “For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of:
      for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”

D. **The power is in the message, not the messenger.**
   1. Rom. 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation
      to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”
   2. 1 Cor. 3:5-7 “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the
      Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither
      is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.”

III. **WE SHOULD SACRIFICE ALL FOR IT.**
   A. The man in the parable was not blind to its value: he went and sold all he had and
      bought it.
   B. Spiritual matters must come first.
      1. Mat. 6:33 “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be
         added unto you.”
      2. John 6:27 “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting
         life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”
      3. Rev. 2:5 “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. 5 Remember
         therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee
         quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”
C. We too should sacrifice all for it.

1. Earthly possessions; Mat. 16:26 “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

2. Family and friends; Mat. 10:35-38 “For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”

Conclusion: Phi. 3:8 “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,”