

Sermon: The Lord is Our Treasure

Text: Matthew 6:19-21; 13:44-46; 19:16-21

Introduction:

One of Jesus's most powerful parables is also one of His shortest:

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. (Matt. 13:44)

Fifteen minutes before this man's discovery in the field, the thought of selling all that he owned to buy it wouldn't have crossed his mind. Even if it had, it would have seemed ludicrous. But fifteen minutes after finding the treasure, he was off to do it with joy. What made the difference? The treasure.

This man suddenly found something that transformed his whole outlook on life. The treasure restructured his values and priorities. It altered his goals. The treasure revolutionized the man. The treasure in this parable is the resurrection to eternal life. It was the same "treasure in heaven" that Jesus promised the rich young man if he would sell his possessions, give to the poor, and follow Jesus (Matthew 19:21). The rich young man, blinded by short-term worldly wealth, could not see the treasure, but the man in the parable did, and he jumped at it.

Now, there was a cost to obtaining the treasure. Viewed one way, the cost seemed high—it cost him everything he owned. But viewed another way, the cost was very small. Standing in the field, the man did a quick cost-benefit analysis. It didn't take him long to realize that selling all his possessions was going to make him wealthy beyond his wildest dreams. He would have been a fool not to do whatever was necessary to buy that field.

Now, when the man bought the field and obtained the treasure of eternal life, what specifically did he get? This is an important question, because the Bible makes eternal life a central focus for the Christian, yet provides few descriptions about what it will be like. When the Bible does describe eternal life, it often uses similes, metaphors, and symbols. Why? It's because we simply are not yet equipped to comprehend the reality we will experience in the new age, for "no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him". (1 Cor. 2:9)

The resurrection from the dead is the single greatest hope of the Christian. It's the only prize that ultimately matters, and the wise person will make it their one great life goal to obtain it. Jesus's great longing is that you will be *with Him*. And when you are finally with Him, "He will wipe away every tear from your eyes—death will be no more, neither will there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things will have passed away". (Rev. 21:4)

That is the treasure you have discovered in the field of this fallen world. Jesus has paid for it all, and it costs you everything you own in this age to have it. Yet it is such a small payment for such an everlasting, never-ending treasure that only a fool would pass it up.

The treasure makes all the difference.

Examination:

- Read **Matthew 6:19-21**

- A translations of our scripture could read: Do not treasure for yourself treasures. What does Jesus mean? Should we not bother with a savings account? Should we not invest in Wall Street?
- What is a difference between what we store up on earth and what we store up in heaven?
- In Jesus' day, banks were not nearly as prevalent as they are today—so people saved their wealth in other ways. Study the passage carefully, and identify at least three of the ways that people saved their wealth.
- With each of these options, what did Jesus say would destroy them?
- Why do we seek to accumulate “treasure on earth”? Can you think of at least four reasons?
- **Matthew 6:20** is one of the clearest verses in the Bible supporting eternal rewards. What does Jesus mean by eternal treasures?
- Jesus said what you spend money on or invest money in, you will love. Your heart always follows your money. How do you know what has your heart?
- What occupies your thoughts when you have nothing else to do? What is it you worry about? What do you measure others by? The answers to these are a real clue to what you treasure.
- What is it you know you cannot be happy without?
- The Word of God indicates our responsibility to be generous. What is the difference in giving with expectations versus giving with no expectations?
- What does it mean to give sacrificially?

- Read **Matthew 13:44**

We all have things that we are unwilling to “sell” for the kingdom of heaven—things that are a product of our past experiences, the wrong beliefs that we live into, and our mindsets that we cling to for the sake of false security, ego-driven significance, or even worldly satisfaction.

- What are the things that you are unwilling to “sell” at this time to purchase the kingdom of heaven?
- What are you clinging to and refusing to count as loss for the sake of knowing Christ Jesus?
- Are you willing to acknowledge those things you refuse to sell?

Application:

Take some time over the next week and do identify the “earthly treasures” that you are unwilling to let go of. Think of this as a yard sale of emotions, beliefs, attitudes, ego, or mindsets.

Consider this question and be honest with yourself: On what have you refused to put a price tag? Put one on it this week.