

Hidden Treasure & a Costly Pearl

I. Introduction

A. Ill. Residents of Hackney, a community in E. London, decided to dig a pond in 2007.

1. Three weeks into the project, the dig revealed a glass jar filled with 80 gold coins.
2. They were Double- Eagle gold coins from the USA.
3. How did they find their way to the capital of the UK?
4. The coins were donated to the Museum of London.
5. Museum researchers found that the coins belonged to German-Jewish refugee Martin Sulzbacher.
6. Fearing a Nazi invasion, his brother had buried the coins in his back garden in 1940 and told only his direct family members where they were located.
7. Sulzbacher's brother and family members were killed not long after during a bombing raid on London & the location of the treasure died with them.
8. The museum has since found the owner's descendants and handed over the \$130,700 (£101k) find.

B. Ill. Dead Sea Scrolls

1. Found by Shepherds in November of 1946.
2. One of the shepherds fell into one of the caves in the West Bank near the Dead Sea (previously part of Jordan).

C. Ever found something significant?

D. I found some cash I put in my winter jacket last year this Spring!

II. Scripture: Matthew 13:44-50

A. First book in the NT

III. Context

A. Matthew 13 is a chapter of parables...

1. Parable of the sower.
2. ...weeds.
3. ...mustard seed and leaven.
4. ...hidden treasure.
5. ...pearl of great value.
6. ...net.

B. **Parable** = a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson.

1. An "illustration"
2. A point is being made. What is it?

C. Jesus explains why he uses parables on the crowd: Matthew 13:13 "This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand."

1. Not about IQ or Jesus causing confusion.
2. Some just are not really interested.
3. "Not willing that any should perish."

D. They are all about the "kingdom of heaven."

IV. Hidden Treasure in a Field

A. v. 44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

B. Ill. "Copper Scroll" found at Qumran

1. Details 64 different places where treasures were supposed to be hidden.
2. "In the ruin which is in the valley, pass under the steps leading to the East forty cubits...[there is] a chest of money and its total: the weight of seventeen talents."

C. **Note:** Treasure in a field is about a *surprise discovery*.

1. He wasn't hunting treasure, he was working.
 2. He made a discovery, he found the treasure.
 3. He was full of joy! Excited!
 4. What a find! How lucky!
- D. Thomas Long: "When people truly encounter it [the

kingdom] and realize what it is, it enters their hearts, seizes their imaginations, and overwhelms them with its precious value. No price is too great; nothing that they own can rival its value. Everything they possess goes on the auction block for the sake of possessing the kingdom."

E. **Point:** Some have stumbled onto the kingdom of Heaven and recognized it was of such great value that it was worth the highest price!

F. **Note:** Early holiness people standards.

1. "A Vivid Description of Sin's Bypaths for Young People" by J. M. Humphrey
2. Table of Contents: "Disobedient to parents, Telling lies, playing in the streets after dark, carrying beer for the neighbors, playing truant from school, petty stealing, deserting home, reading novels, the nickel shows, neglecting Sabbath School, smoking cigarettes, swearing, dancing, disturbing religious meetings, fearing the ppl, procrastination,

infidelity, card playing & gambling, selling out too cheap.”

3. Why so extreme? The value of this treasure was so high.
4. Obtain this treasure at all costs! No matter the price!

V. The Pearl of Great Value

A. vv. 45-46 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, [46] who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.”

B. The Pearl of great price is about someone who is searching for this valuable pearl.

1. Not accidental. They are seeking.
2. They have pearls, but they know there is something more valuable out there!

C. Ill. A young family had some folks over for a meal.

1. The wife apologized to her guests for not being able to serve cheese with the meal.
2. The toddler in the family slipped out of his chair and came back a few moments later with some cheese he served to the guests.
3. “I guess you have better eyes than mommy. Where

did you find the cheese?”

4. With pride in his voice he said, “The rat trap!”

D. **Pastoral Pause:** Do you have a sense of the value of your heavenly citizenship?

1. What is your part in the kingdom of Heaven worth to you?
2. How important is it to you?

D. Dietrich Bonhoeffer “The Cost of Discipleship”

“Cheap Grace is the preaching of forgiveness w/out requiring repentance, baptism w/out church discipline, Communion w/out confession, absolution w/out personal confession. Cheap grace is grace w/out discipleship, grace w/out the cross, grace w/out Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.

Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy [for] which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves

his nets and follows him.

Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock.

Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it give a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son (you were bought with a price) and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered him up for us.”

VI. The Net & Fish

A. vv. 47-50 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. [48] When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away

the bad. [49] So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous [50] and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

B. There will be a judgement at the end of this age.

1. The kingdom of Heaven does not welcome unrepented sin.
2. The false, fake, hypocrites, deceivers, and uncommitted will be cast out.

C. **Note:** There is too much at stake that is too important for us to continue to be too passive about!

1. The spiritual condition of your self.
2. ...family. ...neighbors
3. ...friends. ...co-workers.
4. ...enemies.

D. **Point:** There is a Hell to shun and Heaven to gain!

E. **Pastoral Pause:** O that we would be as concerned about the kingdom of Heaven as we are about our retirement.

1. ...about the earthly rulers.
2. ...our entertainment.
3. ...sports team.
4. ...our hobbies; our jobs.
5. ...our outward appearance.

6. ...our reputation.
7. ...our education. ...our wealth. ...our fame.

VII. Conclusion

- A. I don't know whether you have stumbled upon it today or whether you have been seeking something.
 1. But there is a treasure in giving your life to Christ that cannot be measured by human metrics.
 2. There is a pearl of rarest value that is worth selling all you have!
- B. Do not miss this treasure for "quarter machine" trinkets of this world!
 1. Do not miss this pearl of great price for cheap plastic beads of entertainment!
 2. Do not miss this costly treasure for moments of lust and addiction!
 3. It is worth too much! It cost so much! The value is too great!
 4. **Sell all you have to get it.**
Pay whatever the asking price is! Give everything you have for this treasure!

Response: