

# The Hidden Treasure & the Pearl

Matthew 13:44-46

## PPT Title

### The Hidden Treasure & the Pearl

**Main Point:** The Kingdom of God is worth far more than anything else.

**Key Verse:** *The kingdom of heaven is like treasure that was hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again. He was very happy. So he went and sold everything he had. And he bought that field.* - Matthew 13:44

**Props:** Small plate of fruit, dark glasses, bandana; Strand of pearls (artificial is fine)

### BACKGROUND

**Say:** This summer we have been studying the parables that Jesus taught. Parables are stories about everyday people and things that help us understand spiritual truths.



Two weeks ago, we read as Jesus compared the kingdom of God to a mustard seed. The seed starts out really small, but in time it grows to be one of the largest plants in the garden. This is like the kingdom of God because it grows in the hearts of believers, and it grows throughout the world as more and more people enter the kingdom.



Last week, we read Jesus' parable about the four soils. In this parable, we learned that different people hear God's truth and accept it in different ways. **Ask:** Who can remember the four different soils Jesus talked about? *Hard path, rocky places, thorny, and good soil.* **Say:** The hard path was a symbol for people who hear God's word but ignore it. The rocky places stood for the people who like hearing God's word at first, but they don't let it take root in their hearts. When problems come, they forget all about God's word. Next, the thorny soil stood for those people who trust God's word and begin to bear fruit. But then they let greed and worry take over their heart and mind, and that chokes out the truth that they know.

Finally, there was good soil. This stood for the people who hear God's word and believe it fully. They put their trust in Jesus. Their hearts receive the message of the kingdom, and the seed takes root and produces lots of spiritual fruit. We want to be the kind of good soil that Jesus talked about. We want to have a teachable heart where God's truth can produce good fruit.

### HIDDEN TREASURE

**Teacher Note:** These parables are not a plea for us to sell all we have in order to obtain the kingdom - for we truly have nothing to offer God (Ephesians 2:5-9). Instead, they are a call for us to desire the kingdom above all else. Consider the words of Jim Elliot, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose." The emphasis is not on what we give up, but on the unfathomable new life that is being offered to us.

**Say:** Jesus often used parables to teach what the kingdom of God is **like**. This week, we'll look at a parable in which Jesus told how much the kingdom of God is **worth**.



Before we read the parable, I want to tell you another true story. In 1998, a man named James Hill found a small cave full of emeralds on his family's property in North Carolina. The total weight of the emeralds was about 3,300 carats. (Just as a comparison, the

diamond on a woman's wedding ring may be about one-quarter or one-half of a carat.) It turns out that Mr. Hill's emeralds were some of the best quality emeralds in North America. When they were cut and polished, they were worth millions of dollars. Was this a big hidden treasure? It sure was, and it was right in the man's own backyard!

Now, let's turn to Matthew 13:44 and read what Jesus said about hidden treasure. Jesus told a parable about a man who found something in a field that he did not own.

### PPT Key Verse

Jesus said: *The kingdom of heaven is like treasure that was hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again. He was very happy. So he went and sold everything he had. And he bought that field.* - Matthew 13:44



We are not sure what this man was doing in someone else's field. Maybe he was a hired helper for the man who owned the field, or maybe he was just passing through. Or maybe the field was for sale and the man was looking it over before deciding whether to buy it. Whatever the reason he was there, he found an amazing treasure, maybe similar to the emeralds. This was a great surprise! Instantly, the man knew that the treasure was incredibly valuable. He was full of joy over this discovery. He went home and sold everything he owned: his house, his furniture, his jewelry, his sheep and goats. Then he took all the money that he had made, and he bought that field. Clearly, the treasure in that field was worth more than everything else that the man owned.

When the man found the treasure, he could have covered it back up, gone about his business, and forgotten all about it. But that's not what he did. The treasure was too great to forget about! The man was so excited to know that he could possibly own that treasure. He probably laid awake each night thinking about the treasure until it was his. Notice that the man sold EVERYTHING. He was left with nothing. He knew that the treasure was better than his home and his belongings. The treasure was so important to him, that he joyfully gave up everything else in the world to gain that treasure.

### KINGDOM TREASURE



**Say:** Jesus began His story with the words, "The kingdom of heaven is like..." Let's talk about the kingdom of heaven for a minute. (Matthew uses the phrase "kingdom of heaven" while the other authors use "kingdom of God," but they are one and the same.) The kingdom of God is wherever the will of God is done. Because each of us sins, none of us can do the perfect will of God. On our own, we cannot be part of God's kingdom. But Jesus came to make the kingdom available to everyone (Mark 1:15). Jesus takes away the sin of everyone who trusts in Him (John 1:29). The person has a change of heart, and he or she truly **wants** to do God's will. By the grace of God, He sends His Holy Spirit to live inside of that person, and he or she is then **able** to do God's will. That person is part of God's kingdom.

New life in God's kingdom is much more than going to heaven when we die - although that will be wonderful! Kingdom life is here and now. It is knowing the Father, the King. It is listening to His voice. It is having His peace, His joy, His love, and His power. It is the best life possible. Jesus said, "I have come so they can have life. I want them to have it in the fullest possible way." (John 10:10)

Life outside of the kingdom of God is way less than God intended it to be. It is not full life because it is life that is separate from God (Isaiah 59:2). **Teacher: Call up a volunteer. Put dark glasses on her and tie the handkerchief LOOSELY to cover her nose and mouth (bandit style).** Life outside the kingdom is sort of like this. I have this beautiful fruit. But with those dark glasses on, you can't see all the nice colors. When I peel it, you can't smell it like I can smell it. I can take a bite and taste the amazing flavors. But you aren't quite able to taste it. Jesus came and offered the kingdom. Everyone who chooses to trust in Him has kingdom life - life to the fullest! **Take off the glasses and bandana and allow the volunteer to eat the fruit. Thank your volunteer.**

Jesus compared the kingdom of God to the hidden treasure. The kingdom of God **is** the

treasure. The kingdom of God is FAR more valuable than anything in this world. There is nothing that even compares to a loving relationship with the Creator of the universe!

**Application:** When we discover that we can enter God's kingdom, we have a choice to make, just as the man in the field did. We can see the treasure and we can just go back to our old way of life. Or we can see God's kingdom, full of peace, love, forgiveness, freedom, and joy, and want that more than anything else.

Jesus is not saying that you must go out and sell everything you own. He is saying that you should be willing to. He is saying that NOTHING compares in value to the new life that the King wants to give you. You should not love anything or anyone more than you love the King, God Himself. If you belong to the kingdom, you have the greatest treasure! This treasure is freely given by God, the King, to everyone who trusts in Him.

## PEARL OF GREAT VALUE

**Say:** Jesus continued by telling another, similar parable.



*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a trader who was looking for fine pearls. He found one that was very valuable. So he went away and sold everything he had. And he bought that pearl. - Matthew 13:45-46*

**Teacher:** Show your pearls. Pearls are very valuable. **Ask:** Does anyone know where pearls come from? *Listen for answers.* **Say:** Pearls come from oysters. These are underwater animals that live inside of a shell. The shell has two parts that are hinged together like this. **Place your hands together like an oyster shell.** The oyster opens its shell to let water and food in. And sometimes a piece of sand or shell gets in. The oyster creates a coating that covers the sand or shell. As time goes on, the sand is coated with more and more layers of this coating. Eventually, after several years, it ends up looking like a beautiful, shiny stone called a pearl. The bigger and more perfectly round the pearl, the more valuable it is.



Pearls were especially valuable in Jesus' day. Treasure seekers searched the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean to find oysters with pearls inside. Not every oyster has a pearl, and not every pearl is big or round.



The man in Jesus' parable found a **very valuable** pearl. This story is very much like the first parable. But in this parable, the man was **actively looking** for the treasure. This man was like the people who had listened to God's promises of long ago, and were waiting for the Messiah, the Savior, to come. Even though these people had been looking for God's kingdom, when they found it, it was far greater than what they had expected.

Just as in the first parable, the valuable pearl was a symbol of the kingdom of God. And like the first parable, the man gladly gave up everything he owned to get the pearl. He, too, knew that nothing he owned could compare to the great treasure he had finally found.

**Application:** The point of these two parables is the great value of being a part of God's kingdom. Jesus is not pointing out what we must give up to enter His kingdom. He is telling us that it is *worth* more than everything else. Both men GLADLY, JOYFULLY gave up everything else to claim their new found treasure. Jesus makes it clear that we should not let anything keep us from entering the kingdom of God. And when we know the value of what we have as members of the kingdom, shouldn't we share it with everyone we know?

Mr. Hill, the man who found emeralds in his backyard, hired guards to keep watch over his treasure. Why? As we can imagine, he was afraid that when people heard about his discovery, they would sneak onto his land and grab whatever pieces of emerald they could find. The problem with his emerald treasure was that there was a limited supply.

But our treasure - our **immeasurably better** treasure - **has no limit!** As we learned

two weeks ago, the kingdom of God will grow and grow! Jesus wants it to grow! He promises that it will grow - and God ALWAYS keeps His promises! God wants ALL people to believe in Jesus and enter into His kingdom (1 Peter 2:9). Share your treasure!

**Key Verse:** *The kingdom of heaven is like treasure that was hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again. He was very happy. So he went and sold everything he had. And he bought that field. - Matthew 13:44*

**PPT Main Point**

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