



When Ordinary Becomes Extraordinary

July 24-30, 2022

[Matthew 13:44-46](#)

MAIN POINT

The true value of the kingdom is hidden to the world, but worth any sacrifice to the disciple.

INTRODUCTION

Do you like going to garage sales? If not, does anyone in your family?

What's the most interesting thing you or someone you know has found at something like a garage sale or a flea market?

What's the appeal of going to places like these?

Whether baseball cards in the attic, old coins in the basement, or works of art at the bottom of the box, everyone has thought about how great it would be to stumble across some kind of treasure, overlooked by all but you. It's the dream of finding that object of great value hidden among the common stuff. In [Matthew 13](#), Jesus gave us two parables that both deal with the true value of the kingdom of God. Though the true value of the kingdom might be hidden to the world, it's worthy of any sacrifice to the disciple.

UNDERSTANDING

READ [MATTHEW 13:44-46](#).

What are some of the attributes of the kingdom of God Jesus described using these stories?

Was the man in the first parable out looking for buried treasure?
Why is that a significant detail to notice?

Look back at [Matthew 13:11-17](#). Why, according to these verses, did Jesus speak in parables?

How do these verses help us understand how the kingdom is like a hidden treasure?

Jesus was speaking to all different kinds of people when He taught. Some were true believers; others were skeptics; and others were there to try and catch Him in some sort of sin or blasphemy. This is one of the reasons He taught in parables. These stories, by their very nature, divided the audience. They showed, as Jesus taught in the parable of the sower, that those who heard His words had different kinds of hearts. Some would be truly receptive and understand, while others were hard and would not.

READ [1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-25](#).

How do these verses help us see the hidden nature of God's kingdom?

If the kingdom is hidden to those who don't believe, what is the appropriate way

**Christians should react to the knowledge they have of the kingdom?
What is the inappropriate way?**

In the first parable, the man wasn't looking for treasure; he was going about on his way and happened upon it. The same thing is true of us, if we are believers. We were lost in our sin and transgressions, but God opened our eyes and showed us the true nature of life and the kingdom. Because it was God's work in us, we have no reason to boast in our own knowledge. Instead, we should be humbly grateful that our eyes are open.

In both parables, something incomparably valuable was found. Do you think we tend to look at the kingdom as being that valuable? How do you know?

What kinds of things stand in the way of our ability to see the true value of the kingdom?

In both parables, the object didn't become more or less valuable when it was discovered. Both the treasure and the pearl were intrinsically valuable on their own. The only thing that changed was the perspective of the people in Jesus' stories. We live in a time when our perspective is easily dulled by the things around us. In order to see the true value of the kingdom, we must begin by praying for God to open our eyes to its value and then making ourselves ready to sacrifice whatever we need to in order to pursue it.

These parables involve great sacrifice on the part of those finding the objects of value. Why would this have been meaningful to the first disciples?

**Is the idea of sacrificing for the sake of the kingdom meaningful to you?
Why or why not?**

Why does finding and embracing God's kingdom always involve a measure of sacrifice?

According to Jesus, the kingdom of God has all-surpassing value, but that value doesn't come without cost. We must lay down our lives if we want to truly follow Him. But the good news about losing your life for the sake of Jesus and His kingdom is that your experience doesn't stop there. When we lose our lives, we truly find them. Whatever we might sacrifice for the sake of the kingdom we will find, in the end, to be paltry in comparison to what we gain.

APPLICATION

Jesus said to seek first His kingdom ([Matthew 6:33](#)). Is this true of you right now? What are some of the things, that might not necessarily be bad things, which you might be seeking instead of His kingdom?

Is there any practice you can introduce or eliminate from your life this week that would help you see the true value of God's kingdom?

How can you hold the kingdom in its rightful place of value in your family? In your social circle?

PRAYER

Pray that God would open your eyes to see the true value of His kingdom. Ask Him to give you the courage and faith to embrace the cost that comes with His kingdom.

COMMENTARY

MATTHEW 13:44-46

This couplet of short parables is, in some ways, parallel to [13:31-33](#), but the message of these parables has to do with the surprising value of the kingdom of heaven. These parables answer two closely related questions from the surrounding context. *First, why should we give our lives for a kingdom we cannot see? Second, can the kingdom truly be the answer to our search for ultimate fulfillment?*

Even at this early point in Jesus' ministry, he was demanding much of his followers. They had already given up the security of a quiet life at home ([8:19-20](#)), abandoning family priorities ([8:21-22](#)), risking the threat of imprisonment and torture ([10:17-19](#); [11:2](#)), and enduring the critical questioning of the powerful religious leadership ([9:11,14](#); [12:2](#)). In Matthew 10, Jesus projected even farther into the future, predicting even worse happenings for those who stayed by him. These timid souls needed assurance that the price they were paying was worth the kingdom they would receive. Believers today need exactly the same reassurance. The rewards are worth the price!

13:44. As with the yeast ([13:33](#)), here also the kingdom is portrayed as being hidden from view. It was a kingdom of the spirit realm and human souls, which cannot be seen with physical eyes. This parable makes four points: (1) there is an "accidental" aspect to our discovery of the kingdom's value, because each of us is so absorbed in going his own way that God must take the initiative to show us the kingdom ([Isaiah 53:6](#); [Matthew 18:12-14](#); [Romans 5:6-8](#); [1 John 4:10,19](#)); (2) when we do realize the value of the invisible kingdom, its value is cause for great joy; (3) the kingdom is worth everything we have and are; (4) to own the kingdom, we must accept all that comes with it. The field in the parable that cost everything the man owned represents the losses, hardships, and persecution a follower of Jesus is called on to endure for him.

Even though Jesus said that the joyful person hid the treasure again, he did not mean to say that believers should hide and hoard the kingdom. He included this detail to make the parable realistic. If the man had made known to others what was hidden in the field, someone else might have made a higher bid to the landowner, and the original finder would have lost the field and the treasure. The comparison between the treasure and the kingdom breaks down at this point, because there is only one field with the treasure. But the kingdom is available to any who will come. The point is the incredible value of the kingdom.

13:45-46. While the man who found the "treasure" discovered the kingdom's worth by accident, the pearl merchant was searching for something of value. We need not take this as a contradiction of the "accidental" element of our discovery of the kingdom. Even though we are going our own way, oblivious to the kingdom apart from God's revelation, every human being is on a quest. Every choice a person makes is somehow guided by his or her search for ultimate fulfillment. Before God breaks in, we simply do not know what we are searching for. Most people search in the wrong places, seeking fulfillment through deceitful, worldly means (wealth, pleasure, power, fame), yet never finding it in those places. When, by God's gracious guidance, we find the kingdom, we realize that it is what we have been searching for all along.

The pearl merchant recognized instantly the value of the one pearl, because he had measured the value of many lesser pearls throughout his life. He, like the treasure finder, went and sold everything he owned in order to possess the pearl.