

WORTH IT ALL
Matthew 13:44-46
By Andy Manning

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Is there anything worth so much that you would give up everything to get it?
2. I looked up some of the most valuable things in the world:
 - i. The most valuable home in the United States right now is Gordon Point in Naples, Florida, for \$295 million.
 - ii. The most valuable car in the world is a 1955 Mercedes-Benz, which sold in 2022 for \$195 million.
 - iii. The most valuable diamond in the world is the Cullinan diamond, worth up to \$2 billion.
3. Today I want to talk to you about something that far surpasses the value of anything on earth, and the best thing is that God wants to give it to you.
4. We are in a sermon series on the parables of Jesus.
5. Jesus often taught by telling stories called parables. A parable is an earthly story about heavenly realities. It is a story that uses something unfamiliar – like farming – to explain unfamiliar spiritual realities.
6. Today we are going to look at two parables (only found in Matthew) that were told together, both of them with the same meaning.

II. TEXT: Matthew 13:44-46

44 “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure, buried in a field, that a man found and reburied. Then in his joy he goes and sells everything he has and buys that field.

45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls.

46 When he found one priceless pearl, he went and sold everything he had and bought it.

III. THE HIDDEN TREASURE

1. Let’s look at the details of each parable more closely.
2. A man finds treasure buried in a field, and then he sells everything he has to buy the field.

3. This was not an unlikely situation. Back in those days, people didn't put their money in banks. They often hid it by burying it in a secret place. If the owner died suddenly, then nobody would know about the treasure. Years later the property would be sold, and the new owner would accidentally find treasure in his yard.
4. This kind of thing still happens today.
5. In 1946 a little boy near the Dead Sea found some scrolls, some ancient Bible manuscripts, that were two thousand years old.
6. A diver off the coast of Florida found a sunken Spanish ship from the seventeenth century that will filled with silver and gold.
7. There was a farmer in Suffolk, England who was plowing in his field when he found a container that had beautiful silver dishes dating back to the days of the Roman Empire.
8. That's possibly what happened in this parable. The man didn't own the field, so he was possibly hired to plow the field for the owner when he stumbled upon the buried treasure. He reburied it, sold all his possessions, and bought the field.
9. Is that ethical? Absolutely. Back then, according to Jewish rabbinical law, the man didn't have to tell the owner about the treasure, and once he bought the field, he could take possession of the treasure. If the treasure belonged to the owner of the field, then he would have known about it, and he wouldn't have sold the field, or he would have dug it up before he sold the field. The fact that he sold the field without retrieving the treasure shows that it wasn't his, and so the man in Jesus' story had every right to it.

IV. THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

1. The second story is about a merchant who was a pearl dealer. He was sort of like antique dealers today, who shop at thrift stores and garage sales to buy an antique at a bargain price in hopes of selling it for top dollar. This merchant would travel from place to place looking for fine pearls.
2. In those days pearls were like diamonds today. They were extremely valuable. They could be found in the Red Sea, but the best pearls were found in the Persian Gulf and in the Indian Ocean. Pearl diving, or pearling was very dangerous. Without diving equipment the pearl divers

would tie rocks to their bodies, take a deep breath, jump off the side of the boat, and search along the surface of the ocean for oysters. Many divers would die searching for pearls.

3. Eventually the merchant finds a priceless pearl, or a very precious pearl. So he sells everything he owns and buys it.
4. Both parables teach the same truth: **The kingdom of heaven is more valuable than anything, and you can have it if you surrender all to Jesus.**
5. Let's break this down by looking at three lessons.

V. **THREE LESSONS**

1. **The kingdom of heaven is more valuable than anything.**

- i. In both parables Jesus starts out by saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like..."
- ii. What is the kingdom of heaven?
- iii. There are four gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – but Matthew is the only one who used the term "kingdom of heaven." The others used the term "kingdom of God." Both terms refer to the same thing, but Matthew wrote to a Jewish audience, and the Jews were highly sensitive to God's name. To avoid taking God's name in vain, they tried to never even mention God's name. Instead, they would use a substitute for God's name, such as heaven. For example, "I pray to heaven every day for you." To avoid unnecessarily offending his Jewish audience, Matthew used the term "kingdom of heaven" instead of "kingdom of God."
- iv. But what is the kingdom of heaven? To put it simply, the kingdom of heaven is synonymous with salvation. It is the realm of King Jesus, and everyone who accepts Christ as Savior and King is a citizen. So, when you think of the kingdom of heaven, think of salvation.
- v. Both parables teach that the kingdom of heaven is more valuable than anything. The treasure in the field is so valuable that the man sells all he has to buy it, and the pearl is so valuable that the merchant sells all his has to buy it. The kingdom of heaven is more valuable than anything.

- vi. What makes the kingdom of heaven so valuable? If you have the kingdom of heaven, your past is forgiven, your present is manageable, and your future is secure.
1. Your past is forgiven.
 - a. If you have the kingdom of heaven, then your past is forgiven.
 - b. You are a sinner. I know that because the Bible says all have sinned (Rm 3:23).
 - c. The punishment for sin is death – eternal separation from God in hell.
 - d. But when you put your faith in Jesus and experience salvation, God forgives all your sins. In other words, when you put your faith in Jesus, God decides that He will not hold your sins against you. He will not punish you for your sin.
 - e. How is that possible? That's why God sent Jesus to earth. Jesus came to earth and died on the cross, in your place, for your sins.
 - f. **Ephesians 1:7** "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace."
 - g. Since Jesus paid for your sins, you don't have to pay for your sins. Jesus was hung for your hang-ups. He died on the cross and was punished so you don't have to be.
 - h. If you have the kingdom of heaven, then you don't have to worry about God sending you to hell when you die, because your sins are forgiven.
 - i. Have you ever played with an Etch-a-Sketch? If you make a mistake, all you have to do is turn it upside down, shake it, and you get a clean slate. That's what happens when you become a Christian. God gives you a clean slate and forgives all your sins.
 2. Your present is manageable.

- a. If you have the kingdom of heaven, your present is manageable.
- b. Notice I said “manageable.” Becoming a Christian doesn’t mean that you won’t have any problems; life is still hard, but the salvation makes it manageable.
- c. When you get saved, God gives you ten gifts that make life manageable.
 - i. He gives you love.
 - 1. **John 3:16** “For God so loved the world...”
 - 2. When you get saved, God makes you feel valuable and important, regardless of how others treat you, because He gave His life to save you.
 - ii. He gives you joy.
 - 1. **Galatians 5:22** “The fruit of the Spirit is joy.”
 - 2. When you get saved, God gives you joy -- an abiding happiness no matter your circumstances.
 - 3. How? Because as hard as life is, you know how the story ends. You get to go to heaven for all eternity.
 - iii. He gives you peace.
 - 1. **John 14:27** Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you.”
 - 2. When you get saved God gives you inner peace -- the absence of worry and anxiety in life’s difficulties.
 - 3. How? Because you have the confidence that nothing can happen to you unless God allows it, and He will use it for your good (Rm 8:28).
 - iv. He gives you comfort.
 - 1. **2 Corinthians 1:4** “He comforts us in all our affliction.”

2. When you get saved, God gives you comfort. He comes alongside you and gives you strength and courage to cope with your affliction.
- v. He gives you provision.
1. **Philippians 4:19** “And my God will supply all your needs.”
 2. When you get saved, God promises that from that day on He will always provide for your needs.
- vi. He gives you power.
1. **Philippians 2:13** “For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what please Him.”
 2. When you get saved, God gives you power to overcome destructive habits and addictions that are ruining your life.
- vii. He gives you purpose.
1. **1 Corinthians 10:31** “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.”
 2. When you get saved, God gives you a sense of purpose and significance. You know that you are here for a reason; you have a mission; a job; an assignment – to glorify God; to love God and lead others to know and love Him.
- viii. He gives you Himself.
1. **Hebrews 13:5** “I will never leave you or abandon you.”
 2. When you get saved God gives you the gift of His presence. He comes to live inside of you, and He will never leave you. You will never go through anything alone. He is always near.

- ix. He gives you prayer.
 - 1. **1 Peter 5:7** “Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares for you.”
 - 2. When you get saved, God gives you the gift of prayer. Any time you need something, all you have to do is ask and God is ready to help (Ps 46:1).
 - x. He gives you a family.
 - 1. **Ephesians 5:30** “We are members of his body.”
 - 2. When you get saved, God doesn’t leave you as an orphan, but places you in the church, surrounding you with brothers and sisters in Christ who are there to love you and walk with you through life.
 - 3. People may reject you; they may abandon you; but as a Christian you will always have a family to love you unconditionally – the local church.
3. Your future is secure.
- a. The kingdom of heaven is priceless because your future is secure.
 - b. When you trust in Jesus and get saved, God promises you eternal life.
 - c. **Romans 6:23** For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 - d. The moment you die, you will wake up in heaven, in paradise, to spend eternity in the presence of God, where there is no sin, no suffering, no sadness, no confusion, no loneliness.
 - e. What if you mess up and sin? First of all, you will. Second, you can’t lose your salvation. Once saved, always saved. God did not save you because you were good, and so He’s not going to revoke your salvation when you fail to be good. Your salvation has

nothing to do with your performance, or your good works; it's all because of Jesus and what He did for you. No matter what you do, your future is secure. Your place in heaven is reserved.

- f. **John 10:27-28** 27 My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand.
- g. Once you become a citizen of the kingdom, no one can snatch you out of God's hand.
- vii. The kingdom of heaven (salvation) is more valuable than anything else.
- viii. Take money, for example. Money can't buy love. Money can't buy happiness. Money can't buy eternal life. Money can't buy God's forgiveness. You need money, but it can only do so much.
- ix. But with the kingdom of heaven, your past is forgiven, your present is manageable, and your future is secure.

2. The kingdom of heaven is available to you.

- i. Let's go back to our two parables. One man found treasure in a field, and he bought the field. The merchant found a priceless treasure, and he bought it. In other words, both men found something that was priceless, and yet it was available to them. There was a way for them to obtain it.
- ii. The kingdom of heaven (salvation) is more valuable than anything on earth, and yet it is available to you. It is available to every human being on earth, no matter who you are or what you have done.
- iii. When Jesus went to Jericho, he could have stayed at anyone's house – the most religious people; the most holy people; the most educated; the most powerful. Instead, he chose to visit the home of another tax cheat named Zacchaeus. When people criticized Jesus He said, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10)." If the kingdom was available to Zacchaeus, then it's available to you.

- iv. When Jesus was passed through Samaria, he stopped by Jacob's well to speak with a woman who had been divorced five times, and was living with a man out of wedlock. He didn't reject her; He offered her eternal life (Jn 4:13). If the kingdom was available to her, it is available to you.
- v. When Jesus was dying on the cross, He was placed between two criminals. Matthew and Mark say that both thieves mocked Jesus, but Luke says that eventually one of them had a change of heart, and as he was dying he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom (Lk 23:42)." Jesus didn't reject him. He didn't rebuke him or scold him or condemn him. Jesus told him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise (Lk 23:43)." If the kingdom was available to the thief on the cross, then it's available to you.
- vi. When Jesus was looking for someone to be a missionary to go out and tell all the Gentiles about the kingdom of heaven, he chose the biggest persecutor of Christianity, Saul. Jesus appeared to Him in a vision, and radically changed his heart. Saul the persecutor became Paul the missionary. If the kingdom of heaven was available to Paul, then it is available to you.
- vii. The kingdom of heaven is available to liars, thieves, and cheaters. It is available to addicts, abusers, and drug dealers. It's available to the promiscuous, the divorcees, the cheaters, the greedy, the pedophiles, the racists, the murderers. It is available everyone who will simply accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
- viii. The Bible doesn't say "For God so loved *some* people," but "For God so loved the *world!*"

3. The kingdom of heaven requires that you surrender all to Jesus.

- i. Let's go back to our parables. In both parables, the outcome was the same. To get the treasure, the man sold everything he had to buy the field. To get the pearl, the merchant sold everything he had.
- ii. Remember the big idea of the parable: The kingdom of heaven is more valuable than anything, and you can have it if you surrender all to Jesus.

- iii. You can have the kingdom of heaven, but you must surrender all to Jesus.
- iv. The Bible is clear that salvation cannot be bought, and it cannot be earned by doing good works. Instead, it is received by faith in Jesus, and faith alone (Eph 2:8-9).
- v. However, it is easy to misunderstand the meaning of faith. What does it mean to put your faith in Jesus?
- vi. Saving faith has three elements.
 - 1. Knowledge.
 - a. You need to know and understand the facts of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which can be summarized with four words:
 - b. Creation: God created you for a relationship with Him.
 - c. Corruption: You have sinned, and the punishment for sin is separation from God in this life and for eternity.
 - d. Cross: Jesus died for your sins and rose again.
 - e. Choice: To be saved, you must admit you are a sinner, believe in Jesus, and call on Him to save you.
 - 2. Assent.
 - a. You must agree that the gospel is true.
 - b. I know all about Superman, but I don't believe he is real. I know all about Satan Clause, but I don't believe he is real. You may know all about Jesus, but do you believe He is real? Do you believe He really is the Son of God, the Savior of the world who died and rose again? Do you believe His death paid for your sins, and through faith in Him you can be forgiven and have eternal life?
 - c. However, knowledge and assent are not enough. They are not the totality of genuine saving faith. It's not enough to know about Jesus, and to believe that He is real. How do I know that? Because even Satan has that kind of faith. Satan knows more about Jesus

than you, and he agrees that Jesus is real. But he is not saved. He is not in the kingdom.

3. Personal trust and surrender to Christ.
 - a. Notice the word “surrender.” Saving faith involves repentance, which is the decision to turn give up anything that is against God’s will.
 - b. This is what we see in the parables of the treasure and the pearl. The men gave up everything to get the prize.
 - c. Jesus is the prize. Salvation is the prize. The kingdom of heaven is the prize. And to get it, you must make the decision to give up anything that is against God’s will.
 - d. Jesus put it like this.
 - e. **Luke 9:23** “If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me.”
 - f. If you want Jesus, the treasure, the pearl, then you must deny yourself – in two ways:
 - i. You must deny self-righteousness: Admit that you cannot save yourself, or do anything to contribute to your salvation. Acknowledge that your salvation is all because of Jesus.
 - ii. You must deny self-rule: Surrender total control of your life to Jesus. Hand over the steering wheel of your life. Let Him be in charge of your life.
- vii. To gain the kingdom of heaven, you have to surrender all to Jesus. Surrender anything that would prevent you from being faithful to Him.
 1. You might need to give up your career, because you can’t do it without being unethical.
 2. You might need to give up a relationship, because some people will not accept you if you follow Christ, or some people will drag you down and discourage your devotion.
 3. You might need to give up a sin that brings you pleasure.

- viii. Whatever it may be, if you want the kingdom of heaven, you must surrender all to Jesus.
- ix. That may seem like a great sacrifice, but you have to consider the value of the prize. Jesus is worth it. The kingdom of heaven is worth it all. Salvation is worth it all.

VI. CONCLUSION

1. In February 2014, a Northern California couple were walking their dog on their own property when they spotted something beginning to emerge from under the dirt of the pathway. It was a corroded tin can that had been buried years before. Digging it up, they found more cans, all containing gold coins – more than fourteen hundred coins total, valued at more than ten million dollars. The coins had been minted in San Francisco at various times between 1847 and 1894 – dates that span the California gold rush era. One particularly rare coin in the collection was valued at more than a million dollars. It was believed to be the most valuable hidden treasure ever uncovered in the United States. Most of the network news reports covering the story stressed the fact that the odds of winning the lottery are several thousand times better than the chance of finding such a rare treasure.
2. Ten million dollars is a lot of money, but the kingdom of heaven is worth infinitely more.
3. The odds of finding such a rare treasure are slimmer than slim, but the kingdom of heaven is available to you right now. It's yours for the taking. All you have to do is surrender all to Jesus. And it's worth it all.