

Parables Of The Treasure
And The Pearl

Matthew 13:44-46

MEMORY VERSE

1 CORINTHIANS 6:20

For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Several maps of your classroom and as many small prizes (stickers, erasers, pencils, etc.) as the number of children in your class.

As many 8.5"x11" pieces of paper and pencils and crayons as the number of children in your class.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Going on a Treasure Hunt

Make several maps of your classroom for your class to find a secret treasure. Depending on the size of your class, you can do the treasure hunt all together or pick volunteers for the various stages. On the first map, show where the second map is hidden. On the second map, show where the third map is hidden, and so on until the final map shows the treasure.

In the bottom of your supply cabinet, clear enough space to put the small prizes. This will be the treasure your class has been "hunting" for. Give the child that found the treasure the privilege of helping serve the class their prize. Ask the class how it felt for them to look for the treasure. Was it exciting when they found the treasure? Explain to the class that we are God's special treasure, and we have been bought with a great price. **We are God's treasure.**

LESSON TIME!

In our lesson today we will learn about another hidden treasure. Our verses will show us where the treasure was hidden, who hid it, who found it, and what it was.

Jesus had been talking to the crowds of people, telling them parables. Remember from our past lessons that a parable is a story where the teller puts down a spiritual truth alongside a physical illustration. In other words, it is kind of like a story that helps us understand the truth of God's Word.

Jesus left the multitudes and took His disciples into a house alone. He shared with them about the kingdom of heaven. The disciples sat and listened, just as we will, to these two parables about hidden treasure.

It is very important to listen to and read God's Word. God has given us His Word, and it continues to teach us today. Just as the disciples learned by listening to Jesus' words, we can learn by listening to those same words recorded in the Bible.

MATTHEW 13:44

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

Our verse starts, "...the kingdom of heaven is like..." Jesus uses a parable to describe His kingdom. He gave them (and us) a word picture to better describe heaven. What is the kingdom of heaven like? It is like "treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid, and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

What is the spiritual truth Jesus is "casting alongside" this story? This whole parable represents what Jesus did. He came to earth and found a treasure, which He hid. In those days, a person would hide a secret treasure because there were no banks. Then Jesus, because of the love He had for the great treasure, sold all in order to buy the field where the treasure was hidden.

How did Jesus sell all that He had?

Philippians 2:5-8 tells us,

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."

Jesus valued the treasure enough to give up His heavenly position and come in the form of a servant in order to die on the cross for the sake and redemption of the treasure. What is the treasure? It is the church, the true believers; it is those of us who have given our lives completely to Jesus. It is those of us who have said with Paul in

Galatians 2:20,

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

So, if Christ is your Savior and Lord, you are His treasure. **We are God's treasure.**

We are not God's treasure because we are valuable or great. We know enough about our own hearts to realize that is not true. We cannot say, "I'm so valuable; that's why Jesus calls me His treasure." There is no real value in any of us. God is right when He says that even our righteousness is as filthy rags (Is. 64:6). We are His treasure simply because He chose by grace to call us His treasure.

What is Your Secret Treasure?

Have each child write down or draw a picture (for younger children) of something in their lives that is more important than anything. It can be a very special gift or a pet or even a person, like a parent, sibling, or friend.

Have a few children come up and tell the class what their treasure is. Try to offer different things to the students to give their treasure up. If the child responds to any offers, explain that his treasure was not really a treasure at all.

Explain to the class that when we have a "treasure" nothing is more important or valuable. Tell them that that is how God looks at His church. Nothing is more important to Him than His treasure, us!

Who knows what grace means? Grace is God giving us what we don't deserve; forgiveness and love. **We are God's treasure.**

We can never find joy or purpose in ourselves; we say, "I'm not so great, but Jesus is changing me." We, as His treasure, get to spend every day meditating on the grace and love He gives, and we can spend our whole life responding to whom He is and what He's done. That will never disappoint us.

We are robbed of blessings when we take our eyes off of Him and look at ourselves. He is our glorious King. He chose to call us His treasure. He chose to come and give up His all in order to purchase

the "field" we call this world, so He could buy my life and yours with His blood. The Bible tells us we were bought at a great price. Jesus gave His life to pay for us. Now we are His; **We are God's treasure.**

Who Will Buy?

Do a skit for your class with your aide or a student that you practiced with prior to class.

Pretend that you are auctioning different children in your class. Shout things like, "Hurry, hurry, and step right up. Who will be the first to own this little boy?"

Have your aide or student respond by saying that you cannot sell that child; he/she has already been bought. Insist that you will sell the child at a higher price this time. Your aide will respond by saying that the price is too high. No one else would be willing to pay it. Goad the aide by shouting out prices like fifty cents, no, a dollar, no, a hundred dollars, no, a million dollars, NO!

Show your frustration and ask what was paid for that child anyway. Have your aide respond by saying that that child was paid for with a life. You respond in great surprise. Have your aide tell the class that Jesus died for each of them. If they have received Him as their Savior and Lord, Jesus paid for them with His own life.

MATTHEW 13:45-46

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls,

"who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Again, the treasure here, a very valuable pearl, is the true church. It is those who believe on Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Even though there are lots of church buildings, the true church is made up of those who have asked Jesus to come and live inside of their heart. The church is not a building; it is a multitude of believers in Jesus.

If we have asked Jesus to become our Savior and believe that He lived a perfect life, died on the cross, and rose again on the third day, we are part of His church, His "pearl of great price."

Lots of people go to church, but they may not really believe in Jesus. They are not included as part of His treasure. It is only through repentance and faith in Christ that we become part of His church. **We are God's treasure.**

Today, if you are not sure you are part of His church but you see your need for Him, please talk to a teacher or aide about it, and we can pray with you. You can become His today, and you can spend the rest of your life responding to His great plan. **We are God's treasure.**

What are some ways that we can respond to the Lord because He has shown us such great love? We certainly can worship Him. We can tell others about Him. We can also obey Him and do everything He would like for us to do. Since we have been bought with a price (the very life of Jesus), how much more we need to obey and serve Him for our entire lives.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for making us His treasure. Be sure to pray with children who would like to receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior.