

Lesson 21: Review of Matthew 13:44-58: "Treasuring Christ"

The vision of the church I pastor is simple: "To behold the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ." I agree with this vision statement. I believe that this is a lifelong quest for every person who has been born again by grace through faith in Christ! It is not really hard to grasp that by gazing intently on Christ Jesus as He is revealed in Scripture that we will behold the glory of God. A simple way to say this is, "Turn your eyes upon Jesus." A dramatic way of saying this is, "Treasure Christ!"

I think Christians are to behold the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ. Therefore the parables in Matthew 13:44-46 directs our attention the value, or the treasure one enjoys when they behold the glory of the treasure of the Kingdom. We know this treasure to be God Himself in the face, or person of Jesus Christ!

The first parable (13:44) we see a treasure simply found. But when it is found the treasure is so great that it transforms the man who found it. His focus and direction in life completely changes. Read it yourself. The man finds the treasure and "in his joy went and sold everything he had and went back and bought the field." I wonder how many of us receive Christ with joy?

The man who found the buried treasure recognized immediately the great value and the great advantage possession of the treasure would provide him. As Christians when we "find Christ", so to speak, we find in Him the "fullness of God" (Col. 1:19); we find in Him "grace upon grace" and "the fullness of grace and truth" (John 1:16-17); we find in Him "the fullness of the Wisdom of God" for our righteousness and holiness (1 Cor. 1:30)! All these treasures are laid up in Christ! Get this: If you belong to Christ, Christ belongs to you!

You may ask, where may I find this treasure? First, know that the Treasure is hidden in the Gospel. The field in the parable is the Gospel. So, find the Gospel and you will find Christ. He will not be found in any other field; only in the Gospel! Matthew Henry describes it like this: "Christ is hid as the milk in the breast, the marrow in the bone, the manna in the dew, the water in the well, the honey in the honeycomb. It is hid not in a garden enclosed, or a spring shut up, but in a field, an open field; whoever will let him come, and search the Scriptures; let him dig in this field."

Have you been looking for Christ as for treasure? If not, why not? Will you repent and seek Him now?

The second parable is the parable of the Merchant (13:45-46). The merchant is in pursuit of pearls of value; the more the better. This man is inclined toward investment and return. But, when he finds THE pearl of pearls (a pearl that far exceeds the sum total of all other pearls) he unloads ALL his earthly all and buys the one pearl of great price.

We could say that the merchant is like reverent and moral people. There are people like this. They search for higher morality, higher integrity, higher perfection, etc. But when they find Christ they find in Him everything they've been striving for: He is the highest morality, the highest integrity, the highest perfection and infinitely more! The find in Christ the Pearl of pearls and lose everything to gain Christ! They lack nothing in Him!

What has been your highest pursuit? Have you found Christ? If you have found Christ have you received His righteousness by faith?

The Parables of judgment and privilege (13:47-52) are alarming and sobering. The parable of the "net" is a parable of judgment and separation (vv47-50). It is obvious that at "the judgment" that believers (good fish) will be separated out from the bad fish (unbelievers). Though for now both good and bad swim together there will come a day of separation unto eternal life for believers and of judgment for those who refuse Christ.

The parable of privilege is very short. But what is pertinent to us is this: If you have Christ and are learning Christ as you study the Scripture and get to know Him better, how are "bringing [treasures] out of the storehouse" to share with people close to you? **With revelation** (Scripture, and subsequent growing in the grace and the knowledge of God through faith in Christ) **comes responsibility!** What will you do?

The final word from Jesus in this lesson warns against the danger of unbelief. Many people will be stunned at the judgment day when they see many people they once ignored and mocked separated unto eternal life with God. They will regret forever more, with great sorrow, that they despised the gospel. They will mourn that they refused the treasure offered to them many, many times. They will indeed behold the glory of God, but only His glory as it is revealed in wrath against them. And think of it, the only thing that sent them to this kind of judgment was the sin of "offense". Like the people in 13:53-58 they were simply offended by Jesus.

Will you warn your loved ones to be careful not to take offense toward Jesus?

Questions for Matthew 14:1-36 "Treasuring Christ"

1. From the notes on page 1, **A)** what impressed and/or helped you? **B)** Explain "A".

Introduction to Matthew 14:1-36: Real faith is rare. In our study of the first parables of Jesus in Matthew 13 we see "real faith" illustrated and explained. But in Matthew 14 and following we see "real faith" fleshed out. The next few chapters of Matthew will challenge us and test the sincerity and genuineness of our faith. Is our faith fixed firmly on Jesus Christ? A true faith is a faith anchored upon Christ and His person and work; the kind of faith that falls with all its weight on the sufficiency and efficacy of Christ. We will begin by going over Matthew 13:53-58 in order to initiate the "test" then we will look at 14:1-12 and 14:13-36.

2. Read Matthew 13:53-58. "Nazareth Rejects Jesus": **A)** Psalm 36:2 is a good verse to look up as a preface to this section. Read it and write down that which best describes false faith. **B)** Write down the five questions you find in vv.54-57. **C)** Why do you think they asked questions that they already knew the answer too? (see v.57) **D)** Why is having "the facts right" without faith so dangerous and deceptive? (Use Ps. 36:2 and any other helpful verses you can find to support your answer) **E)** Considering their questions (see **B)**), list the things that must have offended them. **F)** Examine yourself to see if you have the "facts" right about Jesus but have not faith in Him, but are instead offended with Him. **G)** Would you be willing humbly lay your offense down at His feet by faith, asking for Him to forgive and help you? **H)** If you are NOT offended with Jesus explain why.

3. Read Matthew 14:1-12: "Herod Rejected the Message of Christ" **A)** Review vv.1-12 and describe Herod. (morality, mental state of mind, temperament, etc. **B)** Name some of his sins that you glean from this passage. **C)** Even though it was John who spoke to Herod, would you agree that it was really Jesus whom Herod rejected? If so, why? **D)** If you recall the parable of the "soils" (13:1-9, 18-23) which "soil" was Herod? **E)** What warnings do you "hear" as you consider the people of Capernaum (13:53-58) and Herod (14:1-12). **F)** How will this help you in regard to your own life, or as you think of a pray for loved ones? (**Be careful not to violate confidentiality! It would be better to speak of "what you will do" rather than another person's problems.**)

4. Read Matthew 14:13-36: "Jesus Calls His Disciples to the Impossible" **A)** List the "big events" that occur in these verses. (not the actual miracles that occur, just the "big events".) **B)** What "big events" are occurring in your life right now **C)** In these verses how many "impossible things" did Jesus call his disciple to do? **D)** What "impossible thing" is Jesus calling you to do today despite the bigness of the "event(s)" in your life right now? **E)** Look at Jesus' quotations in vv.13-36. Which ones are helpful to you? Why?