

# **Wheelersburg Baptist Church**

Preaching Series: The King's Parables in Matthew's Gospel

Part 4: The Parables of The Hidden Treasure, The Pearl, The Net

Matthew 13:44-50

May 25, 2025

**Main Idea:** Only those who know and love King Jesus will remain in His kingdom.

## **The Outline**

I. Introduction: A Brief Review.

II. The Three Parables

A. The Parable of the Net (Matthew 13:47-50)

- a. The Story
- b. The Details
- c. The Lesson: Many are called, few are chosen

B. The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44)

- a. The Story
- b. The Details
- c. The Lesson: Show me what brings you obsessive joy, and I'll show you your heart

C. The Parable of the Pearl of Great Value (Matthew 13:45-46)

- a. The Story
- b. The Details
- c. The Lesson: People will give everything to have what they truly want.

III. How these parables are connected

IV. Our response

## **I. Introduction: A Brief review of the first four parables of Matthew 13**

The first four parables in Matthew 13 illustrate various responses to the gospel.

**The Parable of the Sower** (preached on April 27 by Pastor Brad) This story depicts a farmer scattering seeds, symbolizing the Word of God, onto four different types of soil, representing four kinds of hearts:

The first soil was hard, and never received the seed at all, and the seed was lost. This soil represents the hard heart. The second type of soil was rocky, which allowed the seed to sprout, but lacking depth, but the plant withered and died, representing a shallow heart that cannot sustain life. The third type of soil thorny which nurtured some growth, but competing thorns and weeds choked and killed the plant, illustrating a crowded heart distracted by worldly concerns. And finally, the fourth soil was good soil that produced varying yields of a successful harvest, representing the prepared heart that receives, perseveres and bears fruit. The parable shows that not all who hear the gospel of the kingdom remain faithful or bear fruit. Some reject it entirely, others falter under trials, and still others are hindered by divided affections. Only those with hearts that have been prepared by the Spirit of God persevere and bear lasting fruit.

**The Parables of Weeds** (preached May 4 by Michael) A farmer's workers report to him that his field contained both wheat and weeds. The workers asked the farmer if they should remove the weeds, but the farmer explained that would be too difficult because it is almost impossible to tell them apart. He further surmised that his enemy had planted the weeds at night, but that at the harvest the reapers would separate the weeds and burn them, and gather the wheat into the barn.

The wheat represented the true sons of the kingdom, and the weeds represented the sons of the devil. The reapers represented the angels who will separate the rebellious unrighteous law breakers from the righteous sons of the kingdom. The workers of iniquity will be sentenced to eternal destruction, and the righteous sons of the kingdom will receive and display the eternal glory of their Father.

**The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven** (preached May 19 by Scott) These are two parables that illustrate the nature of kingdom growth, that it starts small, and grows well beyond expectation and influence. The parable of the mustard is a story of a farmer that took the smallest of seeds, a mustard seed, and planted it, and it grew into a huge tree big enough to house many birds. The parable of the leaven is about woman adding a bit of leaven to her flour, creating a huge effect throughout the mix.

The three parables we are going to study today have no farmers, seeds, dough or plants. We are going to consider one parable about man's response to finding an unexpected treasure, a second parable about a merchant's response when he finds a costly pearl, and a third parable about a fishing net. We will study each parable individually, then consider how they are connected, and finish by reflecting on appropriate responses to these parables.

A key kingdom lesson emerges from these three parables: While many are drawn to the message of Christ's kingdom, only a few come to know and love King Jesus, and only those who truly love Jesus will enter and remain in His eternal kingdom.

## **II. Examining the Three Parables**

### **A. The Parable of the Net (Matthew 13:47-50)**

#### **The Story**

*<sup>47</sup> "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. <sup>48</sup> When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad. <sup>49</sup> So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous <sup>50</sup> and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

#### **The Details**

Many of Jesus disciples were fishermen. They were familiar with the process of spreading a wide net that would catch all manner of fish. Not until the net was full and drawn ashore did the sorting occur. Just like the field that contained both wheat and weeds, the net contained both clean fish that could be sold and consumed, and unclean fish that needed to be separated out and discarded.

#### **The Lesson**

Many are called, few are chosen.

The present earthly kingdom and gospel gathers both the evil and the righteous. But in the final judgement, those who are unclean, though they have been dwelling with righteous, will be separated and cast into the fire of judgement.

The gospel draws people from all walks of life; those with hard hearts, shallow hearts, crowded hearts, and those with prepared hearts. In this present age, it is not always evident which fish are clean, and which are not. However, when this age ends, the King will return with the angels to gather his people, the righteous, and execute final condemnation and punishment on evildoers, those He does not know. Many people hear the gospel, but only a few are truly changed into the children of God.

### **B. The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44)**

#### **The Story**

*<sup>44</sup> "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

#### **The Details**

Jesus tells a story about a man who finds a treasure hidden in a field. This man is so overjoyed and thrilled with the value of that treasure that he immediately secures it so he can go and sell

everything he has, take all the proceeds, and buy the field so he can have the treasure. Note that the treasure is hidden, therefore most people didn't see it.

### **The Lesson**

Many people hear the gospel of the kingdom, but most do not recognize the value of the kingdom. They have eyes that do not see. The puritan Matthew Henry in his whole Bible commentary identifies the hidden treasure as Christ, and the field as the gospel. Within the Scripture is hidden the treasure of Jesus Christ.

In John 5:39 Jesus told the religious leaders of the day that they searched the Scriptures in vain because they were blind to the purpose of the Scriptures, which was to reveal Him as Messiah. <sup>39</sup>*You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,* <sup>40</sup>*yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.* Many people hear the gospel. These religious leaders heard the gospel of Christ proclaimed and even saw Christ and His miracles, but it didn't penetrate, take root and bear fruit. They could not see the value of the treasure, it was hidden. But there were a few, the elect of God, that had been given opened eyes that could see the glory and value of the treasure. The treasure was not hidden from them. They were so enraptured, captured and captivated with the beauty and value of the treasure that they were willing to leave everything to have the treasure of Christ.

Show me what captivates you and brings you joy, and I'll show you the treasure of your heart. Our hearts are so fickle. Our preferences and tastes change, sometimes daily. How can a person know his heart? The prophet Jeremiah makes this observation in Jer 7:9 *the human heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick; who can understand it?* Though it is difficult to know the treasure of our heart, Jesus said we can get a clue based on our outward actions and words. Mt:12:33-37 <sup>33</sup>*"Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. <sup>34</sup>You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. <sup>35</sup>The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. <sup>36</sup>I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, <sup>37</sup>for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."* All of the good, as well as the bad in our lives comes from the affections of our inner man. What we learn from this parable is that the true treasure of our heart is whatever causes us to rejoice to the degree that we must have it, even if we lose everything else. What is it, or who is it, that captures your heart in that way? What or who do you love, adore, fear, worship and serve? Who causes you to tremble? That is your king and master. Is King Jesus the One who captures your heart? Have you really seen Him? Do you really know Him? Is He the most beautiful, amazing, awe-inspiring person you have ever met? Is He your One and only treasure, so beautiful and valuable, that you would leave it all just to have Him?

**Show me what captivates you and brings you joy, and I will show you the treasure of your heart.**

## **C. The Parable of the Pearl of Great Value (Matthew 13:45-46)**

### **The Story**

<sup>45</sup> *“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, <sup>46</sup> who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*

### **The Details**

This parable is much like the one that precedes it. However, the man in the previous parable happened to find the treasure, and the merchant in this parable was actively looking for valuable pearls. Jesus speaks of a merchant that was seeking the very best pearls. And in his pursuit, he found a single pearl that was like none other. He was so taken with its beauty and value, he sold everything he had and went and bought it.

This merchant was searching for valuable pearls, and in his diligent seeking found it. The man who found the treasure just happened to see it and perceived it was valuable. Both recognized the extraordinary beauty and value of the treasure and the pearl, and both were obsessed with a passionate joy to sell everything they had to obtain one thing.

### **The Lesson**

People will give everything to obtain what they truly want. If you have been granted spiritual sight, then you have seen the value of the kingdom, who is King Jesus. If you have seen the true Jesus, He has captured your heart and soul with His beauty, and majesty, and mercy, and kindness, and holiness and love of His Father. If you have beheld the lamb of God, who came to rescue His people by giving His life on the cross as a sacrifice for wretched rebels and sinners like us, if you see Him now, risen from the dead, ascended into heaven, and coming back soon as the sovereign all powerful king of kings and Lord of lords, coming to destroy all His enemies and all that oppose righteousness and His rule over creation.....If you see Jesus in His glory, then He will be all that you want. He is so beautiful, so mighty, so kind, so loving, so just, so forgiving, so perfect, so sufficient, and so complete, that you will need nothing other than Him. If you have seen the true Christ in His fullness, you will gladly leave everything and follow Him, for He Himself satisfies all of your desires and wants.

**People will give everything to have what they truly want.**

## **III. How these parables are connected**

In the parable of the net, we saw that the kingdom is dragnet that has been cast into the sea of the world and gathers many people. Everyone here this morning is caught in the kingdom net. If you have heard the gospel of the kingdom, and it has your interest, you are in the net. There are many kinds of people that have been caught by the kingdom net. There are both clean and unclean people. Once the net is full, it will be hauled in, and the angels will appear and are going to sit and sort through the net. Those who are clean, the elect, will be secured and ushered into the eternal kingdom. They will dwell with God forever as his children, joyfully loving and serving King Jesus as the one who has captured their heart. These are the ones who have had their eyes opened to see the beauty, wonder, and priceless value of King Jesus. Because He loved and revealed Himself to them, they love, worship, and obey Him, and have

forsaken all to follow Him. The unclean will be removed from the net and destroyed. These people didn't truly love Him and obey His gospel through faith and repentance, and they will be separated from the true believers and be cast into a place of fire, sorrow and torment forever.

#### **IV. Our Response**

The first response to this message is a profound question: How can a sinner, unclean and destined for destruction, be transformed into a righteous child of God, prepared and headed for an eternity with King Jesus?

This transformation requires a supernatural act of God—something only He can accomplish within a sinner's heart. He must open blind eyes to truly see Jesus and unstop deaf ears to hear His call. Once a sinner beholds the glory of Christ and hears His voice calling them to faith and repentance, the change begins. Only God can cleanse, forgive, and grant saving faith and repentance. Only He can regenerate and soften a hardened heart, enabling a sinner to love and obey the beautiful Christ, who is worthy of all praise, glory, and adoration.

For you to be cleansed and declared righteous, you must first acknowledge your own uncleanness, your lack of love for Christ, and your failure to recognize Him as the most valuable treasure in the universe. With this recognition comes the urgent need to call on God—asking Him for mercy, asking Him to save you from His wrath which you deserve. You must pray that He opens your eyes to the splendor of Jesus so that you may be captivated by His beauty. Ask Him to help you understand Christ's purpose on the cross—to bear the guilt and punishment of sinners and offer His righteous life as the only means of forgiveness and salvation.

If you grasp your need and recognize your spiritual poverty, your depravity, and your past indifference toward King Jesus, then confess these failures to God. Acknowledge your need for His salvation, deliverance, and righteousness.

- To be cleansed by Christ, you must first see that you are unclean.
- To be rescued, you must first recognize that you are in peril.
- To trust Jesus for salvation, you must first see Him.

If you have eyes to see, look at Him. If you have ears to hear, listen intently for His voice through the Scripture. Take time to behold the beauty and majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ. And as you look and listen, and seek Him, and demonstrate your faith by calling on Him and offering Him your life, willing to turn your back on everything else just to have Him, He will save you.

If you have done that, and Jesus has captured the affection of your heart, thank God for opening your eyes and granting you the precious gifts of faith and repentance.

When people truly perceive the beauty, value, glory, and majesty of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom, they forsake everything to have Him as their King, Master, and Savior.

**Only those who know and love King Jesus will remain in His kingdom.**