

Gilly Robinson, 26 July 2020

The Kingdom of Heaven is like this.....

Mtt 13 v44-52

Our scripture today continues Jesus' teaching on The Kingdom of Heaven or The kingdom of God. It is one and the same.

Jesus is trying to help the people 'see' what Gods Kingdom of Heaven looks like by telling these stories. He wants the people to understand how valuable it is. How it is filled with good things. How, even though it starts small the Kingdom of Heaven grows.

He wants us to have a vision in our mind of what it looks like even though we cannot see it with our eyes. Of course, the Kingdom of God is more than our eternal home. It's here and now. It's knowing the Father, the King. Hearing His voice and receiving His peace, His Joy, His love and power. The Kingdom of Heaven is the best life possible. He came to give us life, to the full (john 10:10)

Our first 2 parables are called the parables of Joy.

The treasure in the Field.... The man just stumbles across the treasure.

In those times people often buried valuables, to keep them safe from thieves and plundering enemy soldiers. And in the Jewish law, anything found belonged to the findee! Finders keepers!

Most interpretations say that the treasure is the Kingdom of God. But I like the thought that **it is us**. You and me. Jesus is the man who sold all that he owned, leaving His home in Glory, to come and pay for the sin of the whole world (field) with His blood just so he could have you, and me, his treasure.

Heavens Kingdom is experienced when we realize what a great price Jesus places on our souls. He gave his sacred blood for us.

We are precious to him. He loves us so very much...

The re-hiding of the treasure is a hint of new life, hidden in God.

The story of the Pearl merchant is similar. This time though the man is searching for the treasure and again gives up all he has to purchase it.

There is so much joy in his finding the pearl. Us.

I am overwhelmed when I think of Jesus' sacrifice. And in these stories I see afresh how loved and precious we are to our Saviour. Really enveloped in His arms. Secure under his wings

Seeing the **treasure** as the Kingdom of God highlights to us that The Kingdom is far more valuable than anything else in this world. Nothing compares to the new life that the King wants to give us. Both men gave up everything else, GLADLY, JOYFULLY to claim their new found treasure. And we shouldn't let anything keep us from entering the Kingdom of Heaven. Knowing the value of what we have as members of the Kingdom, shouldn't we share it with everyone we know? In 1 Peter 2v9, God wants all people to believe in Jesus and enter into His Kingdom. Share the treasure!

Whichever explanation you like best, we can be assured that God loves us. We are unique and exquisite like the pearl.

The Kingdom of Heaven is unique and worth more than anything we can comprehend.

Surely, knowing how precious we are in God's sight will empower us to share the find. The abundance of good things. Giving us such confidence and security to bring the Kingdom closer to us here on earth by demonstrating His love and acceptance.

Many of us happily share a 'find' with our family, friends and neighbours. A particularly beautiful place. A really enjoyable film. An author. A book. A parking space...An amazing bargain! I've found the best place for a coffee.

What is stopping us sharing the BEST news? The news of God's salvation. Of Jesus' love. Of our forgiveness.... I could go on!!

The last parable, of the fishing net, tells us of a familiar scene to the disciples, of sorting fish. The meaning is similar to the earlier one of wheat and weeds (that Dolapo spoke on 2 weeks ago). Obey God, and tell others of His goodness and grace, without dictating who is part of the Kingdom and who is not. That will happen on Judgement day. Judgement belongs to God only.

Jesus is encouraging the disciples to be open in their approach to evangelism. They and we, have a duty to bring people in and not keep them out like the Pharisees were doing.

Today, we have learnt how precious we each are.

How the Kingdom of Heaven is the best treasure we will ever discover. That it is to be shared with all. (Even those we don't want included.) Joyfully and gladly. Joy, not duty drives us. Calls to duty often fall on deaf ears. Calls to joy, however, make us want to respond.

Let's respond, with that deep joy, secure in the knowledge of God's love. As Terry has said before, let's live life loved. Share it and show it.

Let us pray,
Father, I am overwhelmed by your love for me.
That you see me as precious and valuable. Thank you for your sacrifice.
Thank you for paying for my sin.
May the joy of knowing you and my place in your Kingdom transmit to my everyday life. My conversations and actions.
Forgive me when I judge others and make assumptions.
Help me to remember that you want to save all of us. To bring all of humanity into your Kingdom.
And thank you for your Kingdom. The treasure that all are seeking.
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.
In the name of Jesus,
Amen

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