

Finders Keepers

Ancient Near East . . .

- No banks / vaults
- Thieves often stole treasures from houses (Mt.6:19-20)
- Rich divided goods into three parts:
 - commerce
 - jewels
 - rest was buried

‘Who long for death, but it does not come,
And search for it more than hidden treasures’
– Job 3:21

Mt. 13:44

- Man hears army is invading; one night he slips out to field, buries treasure [25:18]
- Army comes, takes them into exile; the secret dies with the owner
- Years pass; someone buys that field, rents it to poor man
- One day his plow scrapes something – metal chest
- He opens lid, finds treasure; hides it, hurries away to buy the field, claim the treasure

Mt.13:44 – modern misguided version

- Death: leave treasure for family to fight over
- War: leave / lose everything. Refugees
- Market crash
- Fear of discovery
- Theft. Mt.6:19
- Natural disasters / tragedies. Mt.7:24-27
- Preoccupation with other things. Mk.4:19
- Sadly learn bitter truth . . . RYR

Was the finder honest?

- Owner is dead...
- Jewish law expressly allowed anything found to belong to the finder
- To inquire into legalities of parable is to carry its point too far
- Even if Jesus did not approve the man's actions, He merely uses them to illustrate the kingdom of heaven
 - Cf. Lk.16, steward

Mt.13:44, 45-46

- Both stress value of kingdom; but there is one difference:
 - 44: man found treasure by chance
 - 45-46: merchant
 - 1) Seeking pearls...
 - 2) Saw one of great value (1 Pt.1:7)
 - 3) Sold all he had to buy it (money no object; total focus)

Truth may be discovered either way

1. Some are unconcerned about soul; happen to hear truth; obey
 - Gn.28:16, Jacob
 - Ro.10:20, non-seekers
 - Lk.19:1-10, Zacchaeus
 - Jn.1:49, Nathanael
 - Jn.4, Samaritan
 - Jn.9, blind man
 - Ac.9, Saul

Truth may be discovered either way

1. Some are unconcerned about soul; happen to hear truth; obey
2. Others are seeking heavenly treasure
 - Jn.3, Nicodemus
 - Ac.8, Eunuch
 - Ac.10, Cornelius
 - Ac.17, Bereans

Lessons

1. Total commitment
2. First priority (Mt.6:33)
3. All treasures found in Christ

Col.1²⁶ the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. ²⁷ To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory

²³ in whom are hidden all treasures of wisdom and knowledge

I. Value of Kingdom of God

Earthly treasures cannot bring joy

Lose them in pain, sickness, death

Family / personal tragedies. 2 Sm.13, David

- 1 K.12:4
 - Our King died for us . . . and arose
 - King Midas
 - Lk.12:21
- Ac.2:38, forgiveness / Ro.5:1, peace /
2 Co.5:17, new creation
- Ac.8, eunuch . . . (Mt.19:27-29)

I. Value of Kingdom of God

II. Some Sacrifice to
Find Kingdom of God

Mt. 13:44

- Joy
 - Not hasty like rocky soil (13:20)
 - Sacrificial joy that counts the cost
 - He will part with every possession, yet...
- Sold all...bought – highest priority
 - Mt. 16²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me”

What some give up to be right with God

- Family: Gn.12. Mk.10:28-31
- Stubborn will: 2 Sm.24:24
- Business: Lk.5:10-11 . . . [27-28, Matthew]
- Friends: 1 Co.15:33
- Pleasures: Hb.11:24-25

Why don't all jump at opportunity to enter kingdom of heaven?

- Some do not realize its value
- Some wait till they are old ... often too late
- Some spend all their effort on earthly treasures

I. Value of Kingdom of God

II. Some Sacrifice to Find Kingdom

III. We are Responsible for
Obtaining Heavenly Treasure

44:

- Treasure was there for all who wanted it
- This man found it, sold possessions, bought it
- Ac.8 – treasurer found Treasure

Col.2³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge

- Excuses we will never hear about monetary treasure
 - “There are hypocrites who look for buried treasure”
 - “I need my rest...”

A song:

- This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through...my treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue... (Ph.3:7-8)

A man (v.44):

- Stephen, Ac.7 – died rich
- RYR, Mt.19 – walked away