

## **The Immeasurable Value of the Kingdom of Heaven**

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Scriptural Text: Matthew 13:44-58, ESV

### **The Parable of the Hidden Treasure**

<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 Parable of the Pearl of Great Value**

<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 Parable of the Net**

<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.”*

### **New and Old Treasures**

<sup>51</sup> *“Have you understood all these things?”* They said to him, “Yes.” <sup>52</sup> And he said to them, *“Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”*

### **Jesus Rejected at Nazareth**

<sup>53</sup> And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, <sup>54</sup> and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? <sup>55</sup> Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? <sup>56</sup> And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?” <sup>57</sup> And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, *“A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household.”* <sup>58</sup> And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

Barbara Crensavage decided to try out an old recipe one snowy evening in December. This specific dish called for four dozen quahog clams. She purchased those clams. They were abundant where she lived along the coast. Mr. Crensavage was given the task of shucking those clams and the good husband he is, he got right to work doing just that. He looked at one of them and it was purplish. It looked diseased and it looked dead. He was about to toss it away when Mrs. Crensavage came along. She said, “Wait, let’s look at this.” He opened it and inside that purple clam nestled a rare, extremely valuable pearl, a purple pearl. Experts estimated one in two million clams possessed such a pearl and the dollar value on that pearl is so rare it is hard to fix. Some have gone for hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Imagine the joy in the Crensavage home that evening as they discovered the true value of the pearl they found nestled in this clam. Imagine the sadness they would have had if they had thrown that clam away and later discovered they had thrown away a vast treasure.

Things are not always what they appear to be and that is true of the Kingdom of God. In our text, Jesus is going to teach us three more parables about the Kingdom of Heaven. He teaches parables, as He tells us in Matthew 13, for two reasons. First, in order to reveal the Kingdom to those who have ears to hear. Second, He teaches in parables in order to conceal the Kingdom from those who do not have ears to hear. This is a sobering word when we consider those are the two purposes for which Jesus teaches in parables because we are on one side or the other of these two reasons.

It causes me to ask in my heart, “Are my ears open to receive God’s Truth, even if it is the kind of truth I personally disagree with, which does not settle in nicely to my own personal opinions about life, about truth, about way things are and how they ought to be? Do I have ears to hear?”

Each of the parables we look at begin with the words, “The Kingdom of Heaven is like...” Jesus believes it vital we understand what the Kingdom is like so He takes His time, in these parables, to teach us. He does so that we might seek after the Kingdom of God and seek it with all of our heart. And, in seeking we might find it and discover the joy of it and discovering the joy of it we would have life that reflect this Kingdom.

What exactly is the Kingdom of Heaven? We discussed it in our previous study, but for review it is important for us to know what Jesus is referencing. The Kingdom of Heaven is not something brand new. Jesus is not revealing something that has not already been revealed before. It is the same Kingdom God has been revealing in sacred Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. The Kingdom is all about the King and all about the King’s reign. The Kingdom is one in which God Himself reigns upon the throne and in reigning upon the throne He reverses the painful consequences of sin and the fall of man. These are consequences such as disease, war, conflict, depression, heartache, poverty, sickness, and brokenness. All of these are vanquished within His Kingdom.

It is significant to know Jesus does not pronounce a different Kingdom than that one Moses and all the prophets pronounced, but there is something new regarding Jesus’ teaching. Jesus teaches us new revelation about the description of that Kingdom. Jesus is proclaiming in this Kingdom God is establishing upon this earth, there will be a long period of time between the First Advent of the Messiah and His sufferings and the Second Advent of the Messiah and the glories that are going to be His, the culmination of all of His work.

In that long period of time that separates the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories of the Messiah, some people living within the world will respond to the King and some people will not. Some will reject Him. During this long period of time the Devil himself will be allowed to work his evil purposes right along side the Son of Man who is, at the same time, working His good purposes in the Kingdom. At the end of this time, each person born during the time of the Kingdom will be judged on the basis of their response to the Messiah. All of these truths are unveiled for us by Jesus in these parables. Jesus does so, again, so that we might seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

In our text of three parables, two of them seem quite similar at first reading, yet they are different and they emphasize different truths. In two of the parables, Jesus likens the Kingdom to a treasure hidden in a field and to a merchant searching for a fine pearl. The third parable takes us to the End of the Age when the Kingdom of Heaven is fully realized. This parable likens the Kingdom to a dragnet that catches all kinds of fish and the good ones, the edible ones, are put into a container and the bad ones, the inedible ones, are discarded. If we were to put this message of these three parables into one sentence, I believe it would be right to simply quote Jesus’ words in Matthew 10,

<sup>39</sup> *“Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”*

That is the message Jesus brings to us in this study. I must ask the question: Am I ready to find my life? If I am that means I must be ready to lose it, but I need not fear ever losing my life because the moment I lose my life, that is when I really find it. The Kingdom life Jesus offers to us is so valuable it is worth losing everything else in order to gain it.

At then end of these parables we will be left asking the question: Do I really believe this? If I do believe the Kingdom of Heaven is immeasurably valuable, more valuable than anything else in my life, it means my life will be lived radically different from those who do not believe that simple truth. Is my life really radically different from people who do not believe the Kingdom of Heaven is that valuable?

**The first Kingdom principle we will consider in this study is: when we discover the immeasurable value of God’s Kingdom, we joyfully give everything to own it.** There are four Kingdom principles to consider, but we are going to put most of our thoughts on this one by design. Jesus says,

<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.”*

These stories from Jesus begin to capture our imagination and we, right away, imagine a guy who is meandering through a field. He is not looking for anything in particular; he is just taking a walk. His foot stubs itself against something protruding from the ground. He looks down and a little piece of cloth is coming up out of the ground and it arouses his curiosity and he takes some time and he begins to find out, "What is this?" As he digs and digs and digs, it is a bundle wrapped in cloth. As he opens the bundle, he discovers this immense treasure.

What does he do? He takes it immediately to the owner of the field and says, "Look at the treasure in your field!" No, he does not do that. Instead he digs a deeper hole so no part of the treasure will be arising to the top of the field. He covers the treasure and he goes home to sell everything he has. He knows this field will cost him everything. There are no loans in his day he can access. He tells himself, "I must get enough money so that the person who owns this field is willing to sell this field to me." He sells everything he has and he brings his money to the owner of the field and says, "I want to buy your field and I am willing to pay more than market value. This is what I have."

The owner believes he is getting a great deal. This is a no-brainer. The field is not worth as much as what is being offered. The owner takes the money and gives to the buyer the title deed to the land. The man goes back to dig up the treasure because the treasure is his. This is the story Jesus shares with us.

In the 1st Century it was not uncommon for people to bury treasure in secret places in some field. There were no banks or federal insurance. Wars brought such instability that the safest place to put a treasure is in a hidden spot in the ground. Apparently the person who hid this treasure died without telling anyone where the treasure was. Certainly, the owner did not know because he was not the one who put the treasure there. He did not even know about the treasure. That treasure could have been buried for decades or centuries of time. We do not know how long that treasure had been underground, but this man finds it, sells everything he has, and buys the field.

At first reading, we might think, "That rascal. He just cheated that owner out of the treasure legally his." I will not defend the ethics of this man and that is not Jesus' point. Jesus is not teaching business principles. He is teaching us about the nature of the Kingdom. Jesus is not affirming this man's scheme, but He is using it to illustrate something that is true of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Read carefully the story Jesus tells. Jesus does not say, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who found a treasure." He will say that about the merchant, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant seeking to buy a fine pearl." No, He tells us, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a hidden treasure the man finds."

The first important question to answer in understanding this parable is: What does this treasure represent? I believe the treasure represents the glories and blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven. This treasure includes the gifts of God's grace found in God's Kingdom. It includes forgiveness of sin, freedom from the slavery from sin, the assurance of an Eternal Home in Heaven, the deliverance from God's Final Judgment, the comfort of God's wise and continual counsel, the guidance of God's special revelation, a lamp unto our feet, a light to our path, the intercession of a High Priest on our behalf, the absolute victory of God over the Devil, the hope of the bodily resurrection, the adoption into God's family, the security of God's preserving grace. It is all of these blessings and many more included in this treasure.

Yet, I believe all of these are only the little gems which surround the capstone jewel. The Great Treasure of the Kingdom is the King. That is why the Kingdom is so awesome and so valuable because this King is sitting upon this throne. The treasure offered to us is God Himself.

Two verses which have come to be two of my very favorites are found in 2 Corinthians 4,

<sup>6</sup> For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

This is the Gospel. God created this world and said, “Let there be light,”<sup>1</sup> and He has shone light into our hearts. That is what He cries out to the heart of the elect. What happens when the light of God shines upon a human heart? The knowledge of the glory of God is discovered. That glory is seen shining from the face of Jesus Himself. What is the Kingdom? The Kingdom is the good news that God offers Himself to us and He offers us access to His glory to experience Him, to enjoy Him, to love Him and to know Him.

This is why Jesus, in Luke 17, says,

<sup>20</sup>Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, “*The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed,* <sup>21</sup>*nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.*”

Jesus is telling them, “I am here. The King is here. The Kingdom of Heaven is right here in your midst.” Isn’t that awesome? The reason the blessings of God’s gifts in Jesus are so precious and so valuable is not that these gifts are great in themselves, but these gifts from God are precious because they allow us to see God and to know God and to worship God in His glory. That is why they are so valuable.

If, in the good news of the Kingdom, we learn the forgiveness of sin is offered to us and we think, “I desire God’s forgiveness. I do not want to be condemned by God at the End of the Age, but I am not interested very much in seeing God and knowing God and worshipping God and loving God.” If we think that we will miss the Kingdom, because the Kingdom is not about the forgiveness of sins, the Kingdom is about the forgiveness of sins so that we can know God and love God and experience God and enjoy God forever. That is the Great Treasure of the Gospel – God Himself.

The Apostle Peter writes, in 1 Peter 3,

<sup>18</sup>For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God...

God is the Great Treasure of the Gospel, He is the Greatest Gift. If we have no interest in God and His glory then we have no interest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

David the psalmist, who understood this about the Kingdom, would write these words,

<sup>Psalm 27:4</sup>One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.

That is the one thing David’s life was all about and it was the only thing that matters. That is the pearl of great price. That is the treasure hidden and he would give everything in order to experience that. David would, also, later write, in Psalm 42,

<sup>1</sup>As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. <sup>2</sup>My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

This is more important than water to a thirsty, dying man. In Psalm 63, we read,

<sup>1</sup>O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. <sup>2</sup>So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.

Does your heart pant, thirst, for the Living God? This is what the Kingdom is all about and this is why Jesus is teaching us this incredible truth and incredible principle. Have you seen the value of this treasure?

The first truth about the Kingdom this parable unveils for us is: everyone does not immediately recognize the value of the Kingdom. Many pass by without seeing it as a treasure. The owner of the field did not know the treasure was in

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:3

his field. It looked like a lump of dirt. The neighbors did not know there was a treasure in the field. No one in this story realized the treasure was so valuable. Jesus is teaching us the value of this treasure is often hidden from the view of many and that is the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven. They see the treasure and they only see it as a lump of dirt and they pass by and it is hidden from their eyes.

It is hidden from their eyes because 2 Corinthians 4, tells us Satan has blinded the eyes of those who do not believe and he keeps them from seeing how valuable and wonderful the treasure, God Himself, is,

<sup>3</sup> And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. <sup>4</sup> In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

The man in the parable was not searching for the treasure, he simply stumbled upon it. I believe this is a picture of God's sovereign grace at work in a lost soul. When did the Apostle Paul see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus? He saw the light, not when he was actively pursuing God, but he saw it as he was traveling toward Damascus to persecute Christians. He hated Jesus and God said, "Let there be light and there was light."

If you and I ever see the value of the treasure, it will not be because we are smarter or wiser, but it will be because God, in His grace, has revealed something to us. It is by grace and it is a gift and that is why we fall on our face in humility as we worship Him, "God, why have you shown this to me? Thank You that You have done that. I do not deserve to see such things."

God is the One who gives the treasure so should we do something to find the treasure? The answer is, "Yes!" and that is why He gives to us the second parable. He does not want us to believe we are not called to seek after the treasure. Jesus main application in this first parable is: when we discover the immeasurable value of God's Kingdom we will joyfully give everything to own it. This parable and the parable of the merchant looking for pears teach this truth.

No one twisted this man's arm to get him to sell everything he owned. No one said, "You must sell everything you own or else." No, he is motivated by the value of the treasure and that is how a Christian is motivated to live their life for the glory of God, to lose everything and say, "Nothing else matters except the glory of God in my life. I do not give up this world's goods, whether it is this world's pleasures or this world's power, position, or people, because some law tells me I must. I do that out of the joy of pursuing the value of the treasure." The Christian life is not one big "ought to" or one big "law". It is one great treasure. That is what the Kingdom of Heaven is all about.

If these men, the man in the field and the merchant, had lost everything in a fire they would have been incredibly sad. They would have suffered loss and for nothing, but when they sold everything, they lost everything, do you believe they were sad? No, they took what they had and they got excited, especially when the transaction was made. They were not thinking of their loss, they were thinking of their gain. And so it is in the Kingdom of Heaven when we understand the value of the treasure that is ours in the Gospel. We are not thinking of our loss, "I sure would have loved to have that house again, ...that car again, ...that relationship again, ...that pleasure again." We are not looking over our shoulder because we are looking ahead at the treasure that is ours.

That is the reason why it is so vital for us to understand the immeasurable value of the Kingdom of Heaven. That is why Jesus takes His time. We will get all of that stuff in our Christian living if we do not.

Jesus is not teaching us we can purchase the Kingdom of Heaven. He is teaching us the Kingdom of Heaven is worth everything. Jesus understands, throughout Old Testament time, God offers the Kingdom as a free gift. Isaiah the Prophet would say, in Isaiah 55,

<sup>1</sup> "Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

All the way to the end of Revelation, this idea is talked. We do not purchase the Kingdom of Heaven. That is not the point of this parable. In Revelation, Jesus Himself would say,

<sup>22:17</sup> *‘The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!” Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.’*

He is not teaching us we have some business transaction with God. He is teaching us, once we understand how valuable the Kingdom is, we will do anything to obtain it.

What is the cost to us? It is the loss of everything and anything which keeps us from embracing Jesus. Some will say, “I do not want to follow Jesus because I love this world’s pleasures too much. That is the reason why I am not ready. I have attended church. I have heard about this and I do not see the value of the Kingdom. I see the values of these pleasures. I am not ready.” This is because they do not see the value of the Kingdom. “I do not follow Jesus because I love this world’s possessions too much and because I love this world’s praise too much. I know if I follow Jesus I will lose this world’s possessions and this world’s praises. I do not want to do that.” This is because they do not see the value of the Kingdom.

As a pastor, I cannot say, “You ought to anyway.” As a pastor I can only say, “This is what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. It is an invaluable treasure and I weep you do not see it. I pray you will because then this is a no-brainer.” “What was I doing. I was such a fool searching after those other things and perhaps forfeiting the only thing that has eternal value.”

**Secondly, when we discover the immeasurable value of God’s Kingdom we seek after it with intensity.** That is the idea of the merchant on a quest for fine pearls,

<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.*

His heart is awakened to the idea there is something valuable for him to discover, so he seeks it with intensity. When he finds this one pearl of great price, that is when he goes and sells everything he has in order to buy it. Jesus teaches us, in Matthew 6,

<sup>33a</sup> *“But seek first the kingdom of God...”*

It is our responsibility. We cannot expect to stumble over it. It is our responsibility to seek. God in His grace allows our seeking to become finding. When we find it, it is not because we are such a great seeker, but it is because God is such a great giver.

When we read the parable of the merchant searching after pearls, in the application, we must ask the question: Am I like that guy? What am I doing that sets aside other priorities of seeking after other treasures, in order to find this treasure? As I look at my time, as I look at the investments of my life, am I truly seeking after, with this kind of intensity, for this one pearl, this one specific treasure?

A number of years ago my wife and children and I went to Sapphire Valley, North Carolina. There we came across a gem mine which was still active. There were box screens and digging tools. They had a story on the wall about a man, in the last year or two, who found a gem worth \$50,000.00. This got us all excited. There were displays of normal rocks and rocks with sapphires. I was glad they had that, because I could hardly tell the difference looking at them. We decided to find gems!

We took the box screen and the tools and we spent a good part of the morning digging and going through the river and screening all of the rock. Do you know what we found? We found nothing but fool’s gold and rock! We realized our seeking was not going to be finding. However, without seeking no one can expect to find and God tells us we are responsible for seeking.

I believe this is still true even of Christians who find. There is still more of the value of the treasure of the Kingdom of Heaven to discover. That is the nature of it. We are ever satisfied, yet we are ever seeking. We are satisfied completely in Jesus, yet we say, “I know there is more of Him because He is so awesome and He is so great. There is more of Him to discover so that I might even see more of the glory because the glory of God is infinite.”

Does our life reflect a seeking heart? Are we discovering more of the glories of God as we listen to these parables and think of the Kingdom of Heaven? Do we think of the Kingdom of Heaven as “cool”? Do we want to become so incredibly devoted and wrapped up in it? Are we seeking? The wonderful promise of the Kingdom is: everyone who seeks finds. If we seek for Him with all of our heart we will find it.

The heart that says, “I do not see the value of the Kingdom,” the application is: what are we doing to seek? Are we investing time in God's Word and are we investing time in praying to God, calling out upon God's mercy in order to discover who He is and what His Kingdom is all about.

The last two Kingdom principles relate to the third parable. **When we discover the immeasurable value of God's Kingdom we anticipate future glory.**

<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.

I believe this is a big net that is thrown from a fisherman's boat, where there are several men working this net. It is dragged along through the water. In the previous study we discussed the parable of the weeds and the wheat. Jesus presents this same truth about the End of the Age in that parable. In that parable, Jesus tells us the harvest is the End of the Age. In this parable, the pulling in of the net is the End of the Age. In the other parable, the reapers are angels and in this parable the fishermen are the angels and they are bringing in the fish, people of every kind.

We get this picture of God's Eternal Kingdom and it is a Kingdom in which God is sowing the seeds, the Word of God, a Kingdom in which we find more and more treasure, it is a Kingdom where once we find the treasure we give everything we have to own it, finally it comes down to the last age and something huge happens at the End of the Age. The Kingdom is not only going to be like that, but it will not always be like that.

Jesus tells us what the End of the Age is going to be like: it will be like the fisherman who threw out his net, drags in all the fish, and then the fisherman looks and some fish are edible and some are not. He takes the edible ones and puts them in containers and he takes the inedible ones and he throws them out.

I love the parable of the weeds and the wheat because it gives a much clearer description of what happens to the fish once they are in the containers and for those who see the value of the Kingdom,

<sup>43</sup> “Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.”

That last day will be a day in which different people will experience radically different outcomes. For those who see the glory in the treasure of the Kingdom and give everything in order to own it, there is glory and they will shine like the sun with the glory of God in the Kingdom of their Father forever and ever. What a day that will be!

Beloved, if you see the value of the Kingdom, you are one of those who have given everything in order to grab onto it and say, “My life is Christ's to be used however He wants. He is worth that.” You have a future that is glorious.

I was speaking with a man in our church recently and he told about sharing the Gospel with his neighbors. I love that. If you share the Gospel with your neighbors, please talk to me. I love hearing those stories and how the seed of God is being sown. He was telling about this neighbor with whom he was sharing the Gospel and the neighbor looked at him and said, “I do not care what anyone says, no one can tell me what happens in the afterlife.” That is true. No one can. Jesus does tell us, but He does not tell him because that is the reason it is hidden from him. Unless the heart is ready to receive and say, “God, I am ready to humble myself and listen to You,” no one can tell you what happens in the afterlife.

**The last principle we learn is: When we do not discover the immeasurable value of God's Kingdom we will experience certain judgment.**

It is an awful judgment. Jesus tells us,

<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.”*

Every time I read that I shudder because it is an awful description of an awful place and an awful experience. It is interesting Jesus uses the exact same words just a few verses earlier, at the end of the parable of the weeds. Why does He have to repeat that? Isn't once enough to say, “They will be thrown into the fiery furnace, into the place where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.” He repeats it because He knows it is our nature to reject it and He does not want anyone to be surprised on that Last Day.

Beloved, there is a time at the End of the Age during which we will all stand before God and give an account. What happens there? Those who have received God's grace through faith will enter into God's glory. Those who are left in their sins are thrown into a place Jesus describes as a “fiery furnace”. What happens in that place? Weeping and gnashing of teeth happen there. That is all that happens there.

Many today believe they are the one's who have the right to sit in judgment upon God. They say, “I cannot worship a God who would judge people so harshly. I cannot worship a God like that,” “I cannot worship a God who would have anyone condemned and assigned into a place that is a fiery furnace where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth,” “I cannot worship a God who would condemn certain sins, homosexuality, abortion, sins our culture accepts,” “I cannot worship a God who would not accept those sins,” “I cannot worship a God who would exclude other gods, who is not open to anyone who worships any god to receive his freedom. I cannot worship a God like that.”

On that day, we will not be sitting in judgment of God. God sits in judgment of us. That means God does not bend His will to ours. It means we must bend our will to His or be separated from Him and His Kingdom forever and ever. This is what Jesus says the Kingdom of Heaven I like.

It is an awesome grace of God that the Judge who is right to condemn us is the Judge who gives Himself as a sacrifice to rescue us from His own wrath. What more could He do to rescue us? He will not become unrighteous for us to be saved. Jesus is the only way to be delivered from the punishment of sin, because only through Him does God, both, maintain His righteousness and offer forgiveness to sinners.

I believe, as Christians, none of us like to think about the Doctrine of Hell. I certainly do not. I become uncomfortable every time I do, but we must because this is what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. We must think more about Hell and not less. Why? First, so that we become more prepared. Secondly, so that we might help others to become prepared. It is a disavow of the Doctrine of Hell within the church of Jesus which I believe cause so much weakness in the realm of evangelism. I believe if we thought more about Hell we would be much, much, much more aggressive in shining out the light of the Gospel to people because He loves them and He cares for them.

What happens to the person who sells everything and buys the field and buys the pearl? Are they gloomy and sad? No, they are exuberant with much joy. Once the merchant found the pearl there was no looking back; this was the pearl. This was every other pearl wrapped up in one. This was the pearl and his joy was complete. No longer did he need to be a merchant because he found it. Such is the life who finds the King and His glory.

Jesus says,

<sup>Matthew 16:24</sup> Then Jesus told his disciples, *“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”* <sup>25</sup> *For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.* <sup>26</sup> *For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?* <sup>27</sup> *For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.”*

Beloved, let us gain everything by embracing Jesus as the Messiah.