

Small Groups @ TBC Sermon Discussion Notes

Date of Sermon: December 2nd, 2018

Speaker: Paul Ferguson

Title: Hidden Treasure – Matthew 13: 44 - 46

Introduction: Jesus used these two small stories (similes) as a means of showing how valuable the Kingdom of God is and therefore it is worth giving everything to enter.

Review: Invite one or more who have heard the talk to give their own brief review.

Read: Matthew 13: 44 - 46

Discuss as a group

- Matthew 13: 1 – 55 contains a group of parables that Jesus spoke to describe certain things about the Kingdom of Heaven. Conduct a quick review of the 7 or 8 parables in this section and 'flag up' some of the characteristics of the Kingdom that appear.
- The two similes we are studying are similar. Consider them carefully. What are the differences and similarities between the two different characters, their responses to finding treasure/pearl, and the outcome of their responses?
- Surely the idea that one has to give everything in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven could be understood as countering the gospel of grace, which says salvation is the gift of God? How might you respond to this and why?
- The man who found the treasure was filled with joy at his discovery. Take careful notice of the order in which things happened. Discovery, joy, sacrifice. What does this tell us about the motivation for giving everything for the Kingdom's sake?
- Read the account of Zacchaeus 19: 1-10 and compare it to Jesus' meeting with a rich young man Mark 10: 17 – 22. What can we learn from these two accounts?
- Does this parable mean that we all have to sell everything so that we can enter the Kingdom? If not what does it say about our possessions?

Leaders: feel free to be selective and creative with your use of these notes. **Don't feel you have to use all of the material**, but do try to keep the shape of Review – Read – Reflect – Respond and **DO make room for the 'And Finally' questions!**
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- If you have time consider this. These parables were used by Jesus to describe one of the overarching themes in the gospels – the Kingdom of God. Matthew uses Heaven because he is writing to a Jewish audience and referring to God's name was not good. Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God are synonymous in the gospels. The Kingdom of God is God's rule and reign, where Jesus is king. Consider what these parables tell us about the king?
- Encourage one another.

Reflect: And finally:

As you conclude, ask each person:

- What is the main thing you are taking away as an action point?
- How can we pray for you?
- Is there anything we can check on next time we meet?

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