

9th Sunday after Pentecost, 8th Sunday after Trinity – 2023

Saturday, 7/29 at 4:00 | Sunday, 7/30 at 9:00

In YOUR LIFE

What Is MORE IMPORTANT Than *the Kingdom of Heaven*?

Text: Matthew 13:44-52 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: To me, **my right arm** is *MORE IMPORTANT* than **my mobile phone** and **knowing Jesus** is *MORE IMPORTANT* than **my house**.

- What is MOST IMPORTANT to you?... Do you have your answer?
- Remember, **our actions speak louder than our words!** So, do your actions support your answer?
- If ▶knowing and ▶living for Jesus are not number 1 in our words and deeds, *let us repent today!*

Last week we heard Jesus' parable of the **real wheat** and the **fake wheat** ([Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43](#)).

Today, we continue in **Matthew chapter 13** as Jesus tells three more parables about the kingdom of heaven.

1. **The GREAT TREASURE Is Kingdom Membership:**

⁴⁴ **"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure** [something of extreme value] **hidden** [or concealed] **in the field**

[somewhere in the world (see v. 38)], which a man found and hid *again*; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

- a. Country Club Membership: Do you want to be a member of the *New Orleans Country Club*? Okay, the initiation fee is about **100k**, while the annual membership is more than **10k**. If being a member is extremely important to you, *then you will do whatever is necessary to pay the price!*
- b. Kingdom of Heaven Membership: If being with God forever is MOST IMPORTANT to you, *then you are willing to give up everything!* Jesus said: “For whoever wishes to **save his life will lose it**; but whoever **loses his life for My sake** and the gospel’s **will save it**” (Mk. 8:35). To give up everything includes our *possessions* and *life*.

2. **The GREAT PEARL Is Kingdom Membership:** ⁴⁵ “**Again, the kingdom of heaven is like** a merchant seeking fine pearls, ⁴⁶ and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. // Let’s understand the VALUE of kingdom membership by setting out a *brief* comparison:

Relationship with God		Separation from God
Alive in Christ		Dead in Sin
Living in peace		Living in fear
Eternal bliss		Eternal torment

When we *know* and *believe* the differences, *then we are willing to give up EVERYTHING for membership in the kingdom of heaven!*

3. The GOOD FISH Are Kingdom Members:

- a. The Parable Itself: ⁴⁷ “**Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet** [with floats on the top and weights on the bottom] **cast into the sea, and gathering fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away.**
- i. The filling: As time marches on in this fallen world, *a dragnet is gathering up all kinds of people*. When the dragnet is full, *that will be the end of the age, the return of Jesus!*
- ii. The separating: When Jesus comes, *the separating will take place: “...there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left”* (Matt. 24:40-41).
- iii. Who are the good fish? All have sinned, so what makes the difference? **By the love and choosing and power of God**, *some unrepentant sinners have been changed into repentant sinners, that is, good fish.*
- b. The Parable Explained: ⁴⁹ “**So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked** [*doers of evil*] **from among the righteous, ⁵⁰ and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** // Who are the wicked ones? All who do not know Jesus:

- i. The fake wheat from last week – *either by choice or by deception.*
 - ii. The ones with mixed up priorities:
 - 1. *Rejecting* the hidden treasure and *keeping* their temporal possessions.
 - 2. *Rejecting* the great pearl and *keeping* their temporal possessions.
 - iii. The bad fish – *by choice or by deception.*
4. **Chapter Summary:** Earlier in the chapter (v. 36), Jesus’ disciples asked Him to explain a parable. So here, Jesus said to them: ⁵¹ **“Have you understood all these things?”** They said to Him, **“Yes.”** ⁵² **And Jesus said to them, “Therefore every scribe [person skilled in Jewish law and theology] who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household [family], who brings out of his treasure [the things that are of extreme value to him] **things new and old.**”** // As disciples of Jesus, we are **► learning from Him and ► following Him.** We have **old things** – that we have known for quite a while, and **new things** – that we have recently learned. Let us **► treasure them all** and **► share them with anyone who is willing to listen!**

Let Us Pray: Dear HS, please keep working in our minds and hearts so that our membership in the kingdom of heaven is always the MOST IMPORTANT; *then use us to be an eternal blessing to others!*

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