

Matthew 13:44-52 NIV

# How Do YOU View the Kingdom of Heaven?

Sunday, July 27 at 9:00 + Monday, July 28 at 7 PM

7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost / 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity – 2014

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: We tend to put a value on things. Furthermore, the things we value THE MOST receive our ♦time, ♦attention, and ♦passion! Now, think about *your life*: Are those things generally *physical* or *spiritual*? Are they of *temporal* or *eternal* significance?

The last two Sundays we have been focusing on Matthew, the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter, which includes seven parables. Today:

- Parables **five** and **six** point to people who value one thing far above everything else.
- Parable **seven** points to the great sorting that will take place when Jesus returns, a sorting that will *correlate with the focus* of our ♦time, ♦attention, and ♦passion.

1. **How Do YOU View the Kingdom of Heaven? Like Treasure Hidden in a Field:** <sup>44</sup> “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it [on purpose or by chance], he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.” //

- a. Earthly meaning: Long ago banks were unreliable, so people would sometimes bury their treasure; then, to keep it secure, they wouldn't tell anyone else the location. Sometimes such men died in battle or for unexpected reasons. Then, at a later time, someone ✓accidentally

found the treasure, ✓recognized its great value, ✓was super-excited, ✓reburied it, ✓gladly sold all he had, and ✓immediately purchased that property *which contained the great treasure!!!*

b. Heavenly meaning:

- i. Normal: Dr. Kretzmann: “The point of the parable is that the kingdom of heaven outweighs in value all else, and that the man who understands this will **with pleasure** part with all.” (NT 1:76) Is that how YOU value the kingdom of heaven?

- ii. Interesting: The Lutheran Study Bible notes a possible different interpretation: “...the field as the world, the treasure as you, and the man as Christ, who gives up the glory of heaven to win you.” (1610) Jesus truly gave up everything for us, so that we could be with Him forevermore!

2. **How Do YOU View the Kingdom of Heaven? Like a Pearl of Great Value:** <sup>45</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. <sup>46</sup> When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.” //

- a. Earthly meaning: In this case the man's looking was deliberate – *since his business was fine pearls*, so he was ever looking to find fine pearls; then, *when he did*, he tried to *buy low* and *sell high!* In this case he found one that was exceedingly valuable, *yet its full value was not recognized by its owner*. Therefore, seeing that +the deal was amazing and +the profit would

be super-extraordinary, *he quickly sold everything and bought that one valuable pearl!*

- b. Heavenly meaning: Dr. Kretzmann: “He who has learned to know this priceless gift [*thus eternal salvation through the Christ*] will **gladly** renounce all goods, joys, and delights of this world, and consider all human wisdom and righteousness as loss, **in order to gain Christ.**” (NT 1:76)

3. **How Do YOU View the Kingdom of Heaven? Like a Net with All Kinds of Fish:** <sup>47</sup> “Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. <sup>48</sup> When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. <sup>49</sup> This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous <sup>50</sup> and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. // With those words Jesus gave us both *the earthly parable* and *the heavenly meaning!*

- a. Earthly meaning: Picture two boats *with a net stretched between them* as they go to the shore; the result is a net which has caught all kinds of fish – some *are kept*, some *are thrown away!*
- b. Heavenly meaning: Again, Dr. Kretzmann has explained this well: “**The working of the Gospel-preaching results in an outward collection of such as are really members of the Kingdom and such as merely bear the semblance of such membership, but have not accepted the Gospel [the good news of Jesus and His finished work].**”

The latter add to the bulk, but do not belong to the essence. On the last day the separation will take place, and the sorting will result in the eternal condemnation of those that were merely [pretending] membership, who [*in reality*] care nothing for faith and salvation.” (Ibid., 77) For us who know Jesus as Savior, we – **by grace thru faith** – are good *in His sight* and will be saved!

**Conclusion:** <sup>51</sup> “Have you understood all these things?” Jesus asked. “Yes,” they replied. <sup>52</sup> He said to them, “Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.” // Let us reflect on those words:

- ⇒ God wants to equip each of us to be teachers of His Word: ♦to our *families and friends*, ♦to our *neighbors and coworkers*, ♦to those who attend here at BLC.
- ⇒ Those who learn the Bible are like us who own a house: As we have many things – *both newer and older within our homes* – that should be used to bless those in **physical** need, so we have *newer and older Bible knowledge* that should be used to bless those in **spiritual** need!

**Therefore**, ♦*aware of* and *sorry for* our sins, ♦certain of God’s forgiveness through Jesus, and ♦directing our time, attention, and passion toward our membership in God’s kingdom – *which includes our growth in God’s Holy Word*, **let us see how we have been blessed and go forth to be a blessing!**  
And all God’s people said: **Amen!**