

Parables of a Hidden Treasure and a Valuable Pearl



Scripture Reference: [Matthew 13:44-46](#)

Suggested Emphasis: The Kingdom of God is a treasure more precious than anything in this world.



Background Study



Story Introduction



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Story Overview:

When a man found a treasure he hid it in a field and then sold everything he had to buy the field. Another man sold everything he had to buy a pearl of great value. Jesus said the Kingdom of God is like this. When we find God we should do everything we can to follow him.

Background Study:

Children love to hear about treasure. Actually, adults like to hear about treasure, too! Jesus must have really caught the attention of his audience when he began talking about a man finding a buried treasure.

The man in the parable somehow stumbled across a treasure. He did not own the field where he found it so maybe he was in the process of doing work for someone. He might have been planting or constructing some sort of building. Whatever he was doing, it must have been a wonderful surprise to find a treasure.

The treasure might have been a clay jar full of money. People sometimes hid their money this way to keep it safe from thieves. If the person were to die without telling anyone where the money was buried then who would ever know? This might have been the kind of treasure that the man in the parable found.

There was no doubt in the mind of this man that the treasure he found was worth everything he owned. The scripture said he joyfully sold everything he had so he could buy the field. When we truly realise the worth of our salvation we will joyfully give up everything to serve God. Anything that we give up will be nothing in comparison to the treasure of God.

The man stumbled upon the treasure. Some people come to God that way. They might accept a friend's invitation to worship one day. Or some situation (like an illness or the death of a loved one) might suddenly lead them to God.

Other people might search for God for a long time. They know that there is something missing in their life and they try to figure out how to fill the void. They may search the Scriptures or "try out" different types of faiths or churches. Finally, they find the truth and become a Christian. This kind of searching is what happened to the merchant in the second parable.

A merchant would be experienced in riches. He would constantly be looking for treasures so he could buy and sell them. The merchant in this parable probably already had a lot of wealth. When he found this one precious pearl he recognised its value. He was willing to sell everything he owned to buy this pearl.

Children learn from the examples of adults in their lives. Do they see us as adults treat earthly things like treasures? Do they constantly hear us talk about money and debts and purchases? Take a good look at your view of God. Is he the most important thing in your life? Do you put him above everything on this earth? How hard would it be to give up any of your possessions, relationships, or plans to follow God? Would you joyfully give them up? Remember that this parable is not just for children, it is for you and me.

Some Scriptures to help in your study: Psalm 19:9-10; Proverbs 2:1-5; Luke 18:18-30.

Other Scriptures about the kingdom of God: Matthew 6:33; Colossians 1:13; Luke 16:16; Mark 10:15; John 18:36; James 2:5.



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Way to Introduce the Story:

(Before class hide a "treasure" box of candy coins - or hide any prizes that the children can keep when they find the box.) After the children have found the "treasure" then show them something else of great value (perhaps your ring or other jewellery or even money). As an alternative, you could find books or magazines and show pictures of some valuable items. Ask the children what they would trade for the treasures you are showing. "In the bible we can read a story that Jesus told. The story is about two men who find treasures."

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The Story:

Jesus told his followers many parables about the Kingdom of God. Do you know what a kingdom is? A kingdom is a place where everyone does what the king says. If you live in the Kingdom of God then that means you do what God says because God is the King.

The Kingdom of God is not a place. It is a way of thinking and acting. Jesus taught people about the real king of the universe who loves everyone. He wants everyone, no matter where they live, to follow him and live in his kingdom.

- If you live in New Zealand and do what God says then you live in the Kingdom of God.
- If you live in Australia and do what God says then you live in the Kingdom of God.
- If you live in Japan and do what God says then you live in the Kingdom of God.
- Where do you live? (Let children answer.) Do you obey God? (Let the children answer.) If you obey God then you live in the Kingdom of God!

Sometimes kingdoms can be rich and beautiful. The king might own all kinds of treasures and have lots of money. Jesus told his followers that the Kingdom of God is richer and more valuable than any treasure in the whole world.

Jesus thought that this might be difficult for the people to understand so he decided to tell them a parable. A parable is a simple story to help people understand a very important thing. Here is the parable:

Once a man was working in a field. As he was digging in the dirt he uncovered a treasure that someone had left there. The man was so excited that he buried the treasure back up and went back home to get some money to buy the field. He did not have enough money so he sold everything that he owned. He was happy to do this. Now, he had enough money so he went and bought the field. Then the treasure was his.

What do you think Jesus' parable meant? The Kingdom of God is like the treasure. When we find the Kingdom of God we are so happy that we will give up everything so that we can obey God. We are happy to do this because God is the king of the kingdom.

- If we used to swear/curse then we will give that up so we can obey God- the king.
- If we used to steal things then we will give that up so that we can obey God- the king.
- If our best friend tries to stop us from obeying God then we will even give up our best friend to obey the king and be in the Kingdom of God.

Nothing is more valuable than the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is a treasure!

Jesus told another parable to help the people understand the Kingdom of God:

Once there was a pearl merchant who looked for valuable pearls. When he found good pearls he would buy the pearls at a low price and then sell them at a higher price to make money. The pearl merchant was always looking for the finest pearls.

One day the pearl merchant found one pearl that was very valuable. It was the most beautiful pearl he had ever seen. He knew that he had to have that pearl! The merchant sold everything he had so he could have enough money to buy the pearl.

What do you think that parable meant? What do you think the pearl is like? (Let the children answer). The precious pearl is like the Kingdom of God. The pearl merchant gave up everything he had to own the precious pearl. The Kingdom of God is so valuable that we will want to give up everything to be in it.

What would you give up to be in the Kingdom of God?

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Click here to download the slideshow](#) or [click here to download the pictures to print](#). Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

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Review Questions:

1. In the parable, what did the man find hidden in a field? Treasure
2. In the parable, why did the merchant sell everything he had? He sold everything to buy a very valuable pearl.
3. What is the lesson of the Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Parable of the Pearl? The Kingdom of God is a treasure and more valuable than anything in the world.

Song Suggestions:

- [My God is So Big Song](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

Activities:

- Have children rewrite the parable using items of value to them. The treasure might be a million dollars or a huge diamond.
- [Print out this worksheet](#) for an interactive discussion about what we treasure.
- Use the "Crayon Resist" method to tell the story. [Instructions Here.](#)
- For review let the children choose a "treasure" out of a treasure box when they answer a question correctly.
- Ring a jeweller and find out how much pearls cost. Ask if they know the value of the world's most valuable pearls. Share the information with the class.
- Find out if your public library has good picture books about how pearls are formed. Bring the books to class to show the children.
- Play hangman using words from today's story (treasure, Matthew, pearl, merchant, etc.)
- Draw a vertical line down the centre of a chalk/white board. Title on column with "God's Treasures" and title the other "Man's Treasures". Ask the children to help you think of items to write in each column. Discuss the value of each. Read Matthew 6:19-21. This application idea is called [Drawing Contrasts](#).

Crafts:

- Write "God is MY Treasure" at the top of a poster board or large piece of paper. Bring catalogues, magazines, real estate ads and automobile ads to class and let the children cut out pictures of valuable things. Glue all of the pictures onto the poster. Discuss as you work.
- Make a treasure box and decorate it with glitter, beautiful stones, etc. Write "God" on the inside of the box.

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for "Parables of a Treasure and a Pearl" in A4 size paper](#)
[Click here for "Parables of a Treasure and a Pearl" in letter size paper \(USA\)](#)

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Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Hidden Treasure crossword puzzle \(sermons4kids.com\)](#)
- [A collection of activities about the pearl of great price \(sermons4kids.com\)](#)
- [Craft: Pearl on a seashell craft \(sundayschoolcrafts.net\)](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/marynnz/jesus-parables-teachings/>

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