

? What would have happened if the man in the parable had not been prepared to pay the price?

Do we always value our faith and relationship with God the way we should?

Why?

Do you think familiarity breeds contempt?

▶ **Turning the Parable on its head.**

There is another way to interpret this parable. You can look at it from a totally different perspective. We have assumed so far that the person finding the treasure is us, but you can also look at this parable from Christ's perspective. He is the man who finds the treasure who buys the pearl.

Looking at the parable this way.

? **Whose is the treasure?**
What is the price paid?
What risk did He take?

What does this say about our value to God?

What does it say about our relationship with Him?

Christ came searching for us, and paid the ultimate price to bring us to Himself, to make us His own

♥ *You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body. 1 Corinthians 6:19b-20*

? **What does this say about how we should value our lives?**
What does this say about how you should respond to God?

! It is an inescapable fact, that however we may value our lives, at the cross Christ paid what He thought you are worth.

FREEDOM

Christian Church
The field and the Pearl

*** Read Matthew 13v44-46**

Jesus often told parables in pairs, two similar stories making the same point or variations on the same point. These two parables are a good example.

Why did Jesus tell these parables?

These are parables of the kingdom, He told them to describe what the Kingdom of heaven is like.

What aspect of the Kingdom of Heaven do these parables address?

The Kingdom of God is a very broad theme in scripture, it describes where ever God is reigning. It has a past, present and future manifestation, it embraces heaven and earth. These parables describe the here and now aspects of the Kingdom and especially entering or finding the Kingdom.

▶ **The field**
How is the treasure found?

The treasure is found by chance. Maybe he was just wandering through the field. Maybe the man was ploughing a field when his plough hits something, he investigates and finds that it is buried treasure, he reburies it and buys the field.

? **How did the treasure get there?**
Did the man own the field?
Was it legal/moral/ethical to hide the treasure and buy the field?

The treasure got there because someone hid it, maybe to avoid war or danger. That it is unknown and un-recovered suggests that it is ancient treasure. Whether it was ethic or not is irrelevant to the story. The only hint as to the law, is that the finder equates owning the field with the right to the treasure. However, these details are important to the story. They remind us that it was not his treasure and he had to do something to acquire it.

How do you think he felt when he found the treasure?
Finding buried treasure is the ultimate good luck. The bible characterises his response by the word joy.

? **Who is the man?**
What is the treasure?
What is the field?

The man represents us, the treasure is the the gospel, the field is the world or our lives.

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In what way is the Gospel like the treasure?

- Valuable
- Good luck
- hidden in plain sight



Did the man deserve the treasure? Did he work of it?



What he found was at someone else's expense, the treasure was not his. For us, the Gospel is entirely at God's expense, God's riches at Christ's expense. We did not, cannot earn it. We have no intrinsic right to it, we do not deserve it. We got lucky. Often because of our short term view, we do not realise how lucky we are! Eternal life is an incredibly good deal.



What did the man have to do to possess the treasure? He had to somehow find the money to buy the field.

What is the equivalent for us today of buying the field?



There is a cost, a sacrifice to be made in order to follow Christ and receive the treasure, the cost is our lives. We have to sell ourself to Christ, to follow Him and obey Him whatever He may ask of us. To us this cost may seem quite high, it may well have been hard for a hired labourer to find the money, he may have balked at the cost!



For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. Mark 8:35

One of the points of this parable is that what it cost the man to obtain the treasure was disproportionate to the rewards.

The man went from being a hired hand to a wealthy land owner over night. The moment he has the treasure, the cost of buying the field becomes insignificant, if he borrowed the money or sold his house, he now has more than enough to repay it. While the cost of following Jesus is high the blessings we receive here and now handsomely offset the cost.



Peter answered him, "We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?" Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. Matthew 19:27-29



How does this fit the parable? What does this mean for you?



The Pearl What happened to the merchant?

The merchant found the most precious pearl, when he found it, he sold everything he had to buy it.



How did the man find the treasure? How did the merchant find the pearl?



The man with the treasure found it by chance, the merchant was out searching. (found/looking). These are the two ways people still find Christ, for some it seems like chance, others were searching for the truth.



What did the merchant do when he found the pearl?

Both people recognised the value of what they found.
Both risked everything to obtain it.
Both were ready to sacrifice to obtain it.
Both had to make a deal to obtain it
What they found changed both their lives.



What deal do we have to make? What choice did both people face?



What was the price of the pearl? What does this say about its value?



The pearl was the missing part of his life, what he had been searching for, when he found it, he was complete, he could rest, his life had found fulfilment.

How do these stories compare with Luke 18:18-23?

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:21



Why do you think Jesus used a pearl for His story? Where do pearls come from?

Pearls are rare and exotic. But there is an element of unlikelihood in both parables. Finding something rare, beautiful and expensive in the most unlikely place. Both stories capture the wonder of finding Christ and of the relationship He has called us into.



But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ-- the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. Philippians 4:7-9