

Matthew 13:44-58

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[0 : 0 0] to the book of Matthew. Matthew chapter 13. I know we still have people shuffling around, but we'll make our way into the text this morning. Matthew 13. Our focus will be on verses 44 through 58, which will finish up the 13th chapter for us.

Not necessarily getting into a Mother's Day sermon. We're just continuing to continue to make our way through the gospel of Matthew. But yet I feel like this is an applicable passage even for this time.

So as we make our way through the gospel of Matthew, we're now in the 13th chapter. And if you remember, the 13th chapter is really a hinge chapter. It's a chapter in which things are transitioning in the gospel of Matthew itself.

Prior to this chapter, we've had the introduction of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, who is Jesus Christ. We've been introduced to him. He's been validated in our presence. We've seen the miraculous deeds which he has done, though we will see more of those later on in the gospel.

We've seen him being validated before the religious leaders of his day. We've seen the religious leaders' denial of him, which we will again see later on. We'll see a further denial of that.

[1 : 0 4] But from this point on, especially in the gospel of Matthew and the other gospels, Jesus' face is turned towards Jerusalem. So he is now on his way to his crucifixion, which is the purpose for his coming.

So now he transitions after the 13th chapter from primarily teaching indoors to preaching outdoors. He goes from teaching to the religious leaders, and in the synagogue, though we'll see him return to the synagogue, to going to the ordinary man of the common folk.

We see the scene being set from appealing to the religious leaders to dying for all of mankind because this is the purpose. But it's not like Jesus changed his plans.

God does all things decently and in order. He is a God of order. And the news was brought to those who should have accepted it, who should have been looking for it.

As a matter of fact, the religious leaders of that day were those who were earnestly desiring a Messiah, a Savior, and yet they missed it. And here we see this reality that the best of man falls short.

[2 : 0 8] There are none righteous, no, not one, as scripture teaches us. But here in the 13th chapter, we are in the middle of a chapter that tells us expressively over and over and over again what the kingdom of heaven is like.

It is a chapter of parables. Now it's good to take it into context because there are seven parables primarily, and there's an eighth that some count as a parable, but the seven are really pertaining to the kingdom of heaven.

The first one is not introduced for us as the kingdom of heaven is like because it's the parable of the soils. It just directly goes into a man casting seed and it falling upon the four different types of soils.

You remember that, right? That's not what the kingdom of heaven is like. That's the kingdom of heaven's inauguration. That's how it began. The seed was scattered. The soil either rejected it, denied it, or accepted it.

That one is defined for us, and then a little bit later we get into the next six or the kingdom of heaven is like. We'll read three of those today. So we have the inauguration of the kingdom first, and then we have kind of this invitation that comes or where it looks like the wheat and the tares are growing up together and all those things, but then we have our passage this morning, and we begin to see the kingdom's worth.

[3 : 20] Here in Matthew 13, verses 44 through 58, we see the kingdom's worth. Okay, so if you are physically able, I know that you just sat down and all just got calm in the house, but if you are physically able and desire to do so, would you stand with me as we read together the word of God found in Matthew 13, starting in verse 44 and going down to the end of the chapter, which is verse 58.

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid again, and from joy over it, he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea and gathering fish of every kind, and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach, and they sat down and gathered the good fish in the containers, but the bad they threw away, so it will be at the end of the age.

The angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous and will throw them into the furnace of fire, and that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Have you understood all these things?

They said to him, yes. And Jesus said to them, Therefore, every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household who brings out of his treasure things new and old.

[4 : 40] When Jesus had finished these parables, he departed from there, and he came to his hometown and began teaching them in their synagogue so that they were astonished and said, Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?

Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary and his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas and his sisters? Are they not all with us? Where then did this man get all these things?

And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household. And he did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day. God, we thank you for the blessing of gathering together. We ask now that in this moment of stillness and calmness, Lord, that you would speak to our hearts and minds, that you would allow the truth of Scripture to resonate within us.

Lord, help us to see more of you, more of your character, more of your love and your desire for us. Lord, may we draw closer to you because of it. And we ask it all in Christ's name.

[5 : 42] Amen. You may be seated. Matthew 13, verses 44 through 58, show us or clearly reveal to us the kingdom's worth. It is in these passages that we understand the extreme value that the kingdom has.

And it is in these passages that we understand exactly what it costs to be a part of the kingdom of heaven. Now, we understand that after Jesus told the parable of the wheat and tares where the man went out and sowed the field with good seed and then his enemy came in and sowed bad seed and they grew up together and then he went in and he discussed it to his disciples and he clarified to them the meaning of it.

These last three parables that we have are those that are taught in private company. These are ones that Jesus is not teaching to the multitudes but rather is just teaching to his disciples. The eighth parable would have been the one like he who believes and understands is like a man who takes out new and old things.

We'll get to that in just a moment. But here we have the kingdom of heaven and the treasure hidden in the field, the pearl of great value and the dragnet that is cast. And we have the description of what happens when Jesus goes back to his hometown.

But I want you to see this morning the worth of the kingdom. Now before we really get into the text we need to kind of look at the truth of the text because we want to make sure that we take it in context so that we don't take it out of context and make it say what it is we want it to say.

[7 : 06] And we need to make sure that we are accurately handling the word of God so that we can get the truth of the matter really settled in our hearts and our minds. Now often when we read these passages or we hear them taught or we hear them preached we see them being taught in this manner.

The kingdom of heaven is so valuable it's worth you giving up everything you have to gain it. It is like you finding a treasure that is hidden in the field and that kingdom of heaven is so great that you need to go sell everything you have and give yourselves to the kingdom.

Or the kingdom of heaven is so great that it is like you looking for something that you don't even really know what you're looking for. You're searching for something with meaning and you finally find this pearl of great value so the kingdom of heaven is worth so much it's worth you giving up everything you have in order to gain it.

Now I'm not saying that the application of the text in that manner is wrong but I want us to challenge is that really the truth that it's teaching.

Now I don't stand alone in this. Okay before you say oh Pastor Billy Joe is just really going out on a limb. There are a lot of great biblical scholars that understand this a lot that are still teaching today and some who have taught historically throughout the ages who I believe have rightly handled this.

[8 : 24] But I want us to ask ourselves a question. In every other parable looking at this because this really makes a big difference by the way of how we read this passage.

In every other parable which Jesus taught and there is a single man is that single man ever a man in particular? I'll answer it for you no.

Every time Jesus speaks of a man doing something and he then clarifies that teaching he says the man is the son of God. The man who sows the field or casts the seed is the son of God.

The man who sows the field with good seed is the son of God. Over and over again the man who entrusts his servants with talents and then departs until he comes back again is the son of God.

So in every parable which Jesus teaches especially through the Gospel of Matthew a single man is always a picture of Christ himself. It is never a picture of any man in particular. Okay?

[9 : 21] Second thing we speak of a man who finds a treasure hidden in a field. When a field is clarified or used in a parable is the field just something in general?

And the answer to that is no because the field on which the seed is sown is according to Jesus' interpretation the world. Okay? So we're seeing things in a greater manner.

Now you say Pastor does this matter? Yes it matters. Stay with me. Okay? Because I want you to understand why I got there and why it matters. If the application of the text is that the kingdom of heaven is worth so much you need to give up everything you have to get it then the implication from that application I know that's a lot of Asians but stay with me because words matter.

So what is implied by you doing that is that you can gain the kingdom. What is implied is that the kingdom is worth so much you need to give up everything you have and go get it.

And my friend listen to me that is not biblical because no man gains the kingdom or buys the kingdom.

[10 : 28] There is none righteous no not one. You can never in all of your ability and in all of your desires and with all of your money the Bible tells us in the book of Psalms a man cannot pay his brother's ransom.

He will never be able to afford its cost. It says that a man cannot pay the ransom for his brother's soul but God ransoms the man. So man can never afford it.

Listen the kingdom of heaven is so valuable it's beyond what you could ever pay for it. And the next question we have to ask ourselves and that application is is any man naturally looking for the kingdom of heaven?

And the answer to that biblically is no. There are none who seek after good no not one. In our own natural desires we do not seek after the kingdom of heaven we are drawn.

Jesus himself said no man comes to the father lest he be what was that word? Drawn to the father. No one comes but through me. It's this thing called wooing w-o-o-i-n-g winning others over or loving you into his presence.

[11 : 39] The only way we ever come to the father is because we are drawn to the father through the son of God himself. We are compelled by the love that he has demonstrated towards us. We are moved by the compassion he has over us.

So with all of that said we need to understand that when we speak of the kingdom's worth we are not talking of the reality this is how valuable the kingdom is you should so go get it. We are speaking of this reality now hear me out and I will be done and we will really get into it.

This is how much you are worth to the king because those who profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are the kingdom of heaven.

These parables as Adrian Rogers once said declare to you your worth to the king not how much he deserves of you to give to gain him because you cannot afford him so he bought you and that's a big difference.

Here we see the declared value of the kingdom. The kingdom is a treasure. The kingdom is a pearl of great price. I believe it was Warren Wiersbe who said the treasure hidden in the field is the nation of Israel.

[12 : 51] The nation of Israel and that's a good application. The nation of Israel is that which belongs to God and God has given everything he has to gain it. He has called it out of the unknown and the nation of Israel is at this point in time in history displaced among the world.

It is hidden in the field and the nation of Israel is so valuable in God's eyes. Friends listen to me. He would sell everything he has and buy the field and if the world is the field when Jesus died on the cross he did what?

He took the keys from he who was reigning. Satan tempted Jesus and said all of this has been given unto me and I will give it to you if you bow down and worship me. Jesus said I'm not going to worship you I'll die for them and I'll buy the field back.

He bought the field. He bought this world in which the nation of Israel is currently hid in. Warren Rearsby says that the pearl of great value is the church and I love his application there because his application is a pearl is something that is unified can never be divided it's not going to be cut it's not going to be removed it is something that is joined together that is built in tribulation it is built during suffering and pain and all the things that go on and the greater the tribulation that happens inside and it's something that is hidden until it is finally opened up.

Friend listen to me the church today is a pearl of great value born in tribulation born under pain and suffering and persecution and no one really knows the beauty of the church until that great day in the book of revelations when the bridal supper of the lamb takes place.

[14 : 12] See what we see here is the declared value of the kingdom this is how much the kingdom of heaven is worth. it is worth so much. It is a treasure it is a pearl of great value it is something that is greater than anything else it is something that exceeds in value anything that could ever be gained.

And not only do we see the declared value we see the demonstrated love because this is not how much we love the kingdom but rather how much the king loves his own kingdom because it says the kingdom is so worth it.

it is so valuable that he would sell all that he has to buy it. That he would give up everything he has to own it. And does the scripture not tell us that Jesus himself laid aside his glory and the word became flesh and he took on humanity and he humbled himself and as scripture says became a little lower than the angels.

And why does he do that? The Bible tells us in the book of Hebrews who for the joy set before him endured the cross. What was the joy on the other side of the cross? Was it just going back to heaven?

No. It was the redemption and the purchase of the kingdom. He has bought for himself that which is of exceedingly great value. He has purchased for his own possession the kingdom of heaven.

[15 : 29] And my friend listen to me. That is you if you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. See quite often we get the Bible and we get the gospel twisted around.

We begin to think Jesus is worse so much we need to give up everything we have to follow him. That is compulsory living and for a time that may work and then all of a sudden when things go tough or when things get harder when it doesn't seem to work out the way we think it should and we enter into what the parable of the soul says difficult times of trials and tribulations and sometimes even in prosperity Jesus doesn't look that valuable anymore so we quit giving up everything to follow him because we are basing upon our declared value of him and our obedience based upon our declared value of him is changing based upon our circumstances but when we look at the gospel and we see the reality that Jesus says that we are worth so much he would give up everything he has to gain us.

Now our obedience is out of love not out of earning. We are now responding to how much he says we're worth not how much we think he's worth.

Now that's not a name it and claim it theology that's just true biblical gospel. The Bible says that who for the joy set before him he endured the cross for us. Why would he do that?

Because he is demonstrating his love for the kingdom to redeem for himself a people from every tribe every tongue every nation that may not be manifested now but will be manifested in some day and when we understand the worth of the kingdom we begin to understand just a little bit of the worth of our own lives in his eyes.

[17 : 08] And I have found that the greatest motivator for obedience is not when I think I need to give up more but when I realize he gave up all. And when I realize he gave up everything for me now all of a sudden I'm motivated by his love that has been shown and displayed to me rather than by my desire to find him because he came after me.

We're motivated by love not obligation. And when we see this love that has been demonstrated for the kingdom in the reality that he has given up everything what did the kingdom of heaven cost him?

Literally everything. He laid aside his glory. He stepped off his throne. He has descended into humanity. It says in the book of 1 Peter he descended to the lower parts of the earth and he who descended also ascended and led captive the host of captives.

That his whole reason for coming was to set man free. He didn't have to come here. He said the kingdom is worth it. It's worth so much I'll give up everything I have father to gain it.

I'll buy the world back. Friend listen we can never afford it. Again the book of Psalms a man cannot pay the redemption price of his brother. brother but God can redeem the man.

[18 : 34] What a beautiful picture. If we cannot afford to pay the redemption of our brother we'll never be able to afford to pay the redemption of our own life. But he can and he says we're worth it and he demonstrates it to us but the reality that he has given up everything to gain it.

And this is the thing that should motivate us to serve him and to love him and to follow him. And it leads us to the parable of the dragnet. In the parable of the dragnet we see the delivered people of the kingdom.

You have the declared value of the kingdom the demonstrated love for the kingdom and now the delivered people of the kingdom. The reality that in this day the kingdom of heaven coexists with the kingdom of this world.

There are two kingdoms that are battling it out. Because while Jesus has purchased this world he does not yet reign over this world. There is a prince of this world who is currently reigning until the day when Jesus puts the world under his feet and makes it his footstool.

We see that in scripture. And there is this battle this spiritual battlefield that is going on and it's the same picture that we see in the wheat and the tares or the good seed and the bad seed the enemy of man who is constantly putting those people around the righteous.

[19 : 47] So there's the righteous and the wicked living together. And we begin to see this reality being played out even in our own churches. We see this reality being played out in the world in which we live that the kingdom of heaven coexists with the kingdom of this world and at this present time in this present age it seems as if the righteous and the wicked both experience the blessings of the kingdom.

Jesus himself says in the Sermon on the Mount that all of man experiences the blessing of the Father. That the rain falls on the righteous and the wicked.

The sun shines on the righteous and the wicked. The Bible tells us in the book of Job that if God was to call his spirit back to himself all of man would die. Because spirit is breath. Right?

The reality that the only reason any man is alive is because God has allowed them to live. The righteous and the wicked live simultaneously at the same time. And this is why we get the picture that the kingdom seems to be hidden.

We don't see why we can as others have said the church ought to be a little display of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of this world. And it ought to stand out. The reality is that when we walk out those doors we're going to be intermingled and it's going to really be hard to tell where the kingdom of heaven stops and where it starts.

[21 : 02] And we're going to live in a mixed multitude if you will. And while it can be all glory hallelujah sinking in here it's oh me oh no out there. And there seems to be this trial and this temptation and this struggle of is this really the way it's supposed to be.

In the parable of the dragnet we see this picture that the dragnet is cast out into the sea and it gathers in some of every kind. The world ought to be ought to benefit from the presence of the kingdom of heaven which is a good way of saying this community ought to be better because this church exists.

This community should be caught into the dragnet in which we are going which is the kingdom of heaven. Right? The kingdom of heaven is to permeate society and affect and influence it and it is to change it.

It is to be that which blesses the community it lives in. And the world needs to look starkly different because the kingdom of heaven is present. That's the dragnet. And in that dragnet everybody is affected.

Right? It's all going along with it and the kingdom of heaven is taking it. And it says but at the end of the age this is the second time that word is used because it's used in the wheat and tares parable as well. At the end of the age this present age there will be this day of deliverance.

[22 : 19] Because then it says there will be this sifting or separating. All the good fish will be gathered together and all the bad fish will be cast aside into the lake of fire.

Not the lake of water but the lake of fire where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Before we think that God is so judgmental there in his condemnation of the wicked, the weeping and gnashing of teeth does not imply mourning and weeping.

It implies the gnashing of teeth is just angry. Like they just continue to be mad at God. It is this we don't want anything to do with God. We didn't want anything to do with him in that life and we don't want anything to do with him in this life.

It is this ongoing denial of the reality of who he is. And we see this day of deliverance. There will be a day when the kingdom of heaven is manifest and the people of the kingdom are separated from the influences that are around them.

But that is a day in the future. It is the end of this age. Can I tell you when that is? No. Absolutely not. We can spend all day long and probably into the next day and to the next day and the next day looking at soteriology which is the study of end time events and all these other things and kind of try to lay out how things happened during those last days.

[23 : 32] But all we need to know in reality is that there will be a day of separation. Where the kingdom of heaven has finally become exactly what it should be. A treasure.

A pearl of great price. Beautiful and worthy of the price paid for it. It will be a day of deliverance. But in this final portion of the scripture and we'll be through we see this great danger that confronts us.

And this is the danger. There is the denial by those closest to the kingdom. Jesus goes back to his hometown. Biblical scholars agree this is Jesus' last visit to Nazareth.

This is the last time he goes back to Nazareth. Now his home base is Capernaum. This is where he does most of his ministry and this is where he goes from the regions of Galilee and eventually goes down to Jerusalem.

But his hometown is Nazareth. And he goes back to Nazareth. Last visit home. And he's teaching in the synagogue. And it says and while he's teaching in the synagogue everybody began to question him.

[24 : 40] So where did he get all these teaching? Where did he get the work to do these miraculous deeds? Is this not the carpenter's son? Is his mother not Mary? See here's the sad irony. He is around those who know him best.

You know there are a lot of things we don't know about the life of Christ. As a matter of fact there are 33 years in which we only know one event that took place. And that is when he was about 12 years of age he went to Jerusalem with his parents and he stayed behind.

Other than that for 33 years all we know that he grew in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man. So scripture tells us 33 years of his life is confined to that stand that at one phrase he grew in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man.

That's all we know. For 33 years he was a resident of Nazareth. And these people watched him. They knew him. Nazareth is a small community especially during the time of Christ.

Very small. Much like growing up in this town or any other town. Because everybody knows you. Everybody understands you. And he goes back this time and he's teaching and he's teaching with authority and he's teaching with power and he's demonstrating and validating that through these miraculous deeds.

[25 : 48] And they question him not because they don't know who he is but they question him because they think they know who he is. See many times man's greatest denial is they think they have Jesus figured out.

And those who think they know the most about him seem to be the furthest from him. If I ever think that I have Christ figured out then I need to watch out.

Because every time I think I have any part of the Trinity figured out I just open up my Bible and it blows my mind again. Don't follow a Savior that you have figured out.

Follow a Savior who has you figured out. Because we need one who is greater and bigger and mightier than us. One who can do far above and beyond all that we could ever think, dream, or imagine.

Don't limit the Savior based on your understandings of him. Because see there is only one place in Scripture in which I find that Jesus' work to do miraculous deeds was limited and it was here in Nazareth.

[26 : 57] For it says, For he could not do many miraculous deeds there because of their unbelief. It's kind of astounding to think about it but the one thing that limited his ability to do the miraculous deeds was man's unbelief.

That when man fails to have faith and confidence in the reality that he is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and he can do whatever he wants to do whenever he wants to do it, however he wants to do it.

When man thinks that they have him figured out, then they begin to tread on the brink of unbelief which limits his ability to do things around them. He will not.

It's not that he cannot. He will not. Did Jesus himself not say, May it be done according to you as you have believed?

See, the sad reality is those who are often closest deny him the most. But we see here the exceeding worth of the kingdom.

[28 : 06] If we are worth that much to the King, that he would give up everything he has to purchase it, don't we think we can trust him to take care of us in the midst of it?

He who has bought it owns it and he who owns it controls it. There's a saying around my house, when you have bought it and paid for it, then you get to determine what we do with it.

And until then, it's my decision. Now, is that wrong? No. Why? Because possession dictates determination.

When Jesus gave his all to purchase the kingdom, he gets to determine what he does with it. We are the kingdom of heaven.

We didn't buy it. He bought us. May we surrender our lives to allow him to do with us as he sees fit and trust him to do it according to his power.

[29 : 12] Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day. Thank you for the gift of the day you've given us. We thank you for the truth of scripture.

We pray, O Lord, that these truths would resonate within our hearts far beyond our time together. That it would draw us closer to you, living surrendered lives for your glory and honor. Lord, if there be one here today who has never surrendered their life to you, may they understand their exceeding value in your sight.

May they understand how much you gave to purchase their redemption. May you be glorified and honored, Lord Jesus, and we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen.