In His Joy

[Matthew 13:44-50](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+13%3A44-50&version=ESV)

Key Verse 44: “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”

**Summary**

These verses show 3 parables that teach us about the kingdom of heaven.

2 of the parables emphasize the kingdom of heaven’s hidden and valuable nature, but also clearly explain the cost to obtaining the kingdom -Sell all that you have.

The 3rd parable shares that many are caught in the net of the kingdom of heaven, but not all that are caught end up being stored away in a container (the kingdom of heaven at the end), but there are some that are identified as ‘evil’ or ‘bad’ and are thrown out. Why were some kept and some thrown out? According to the first 2 parables, perhaps the ‘bad’ are those who did not sell all that they have to follow Jesus and obtain the kingdom of heaven.

1. V44. Summarize the parable of the **hidden** **treasure**. Who does the man represent? What does the hidden treasure represent? What is revealed about the man?
   1. In this parable Jesus again reveals deep truths about how mankind is experiencing the kingdom of heaven while on earth.
   2. A man who could represent all believers that want to obtain the kingdom of heaven, found hidden treasure (the kingdom of heaven) in a field. The man immediately sold all that he had to buy the field and in turn the treasure.
   3. This reveals that the cost of the field was not cheap. This also shows us the way the man was to legally and correctly acquire the hidden treasure. He couldn't just take it out of the field, he had to purchase it. This shows that the man had great understanding.
2. How does the man acquire the hidden treasure? How much does the treasure cost?
   1. It says that the man sells all that he has to buy the field. The truth about obtaining the kingdom of heaven is that the purchase cost is not set at a fixed price, whether you are rich and have 10 million dollars or whether you are poor and only have 2 pennies, the cost of obtaining the kingdom of heaven is to sell and give away all that you have.
   2. This transaction is very expensive and very difficult for everyone. However, for those that realize they are poor in this world and that they will become rich after the transaction, this can be an easy decision to make. But for those who think they are rich now in this world and do not understand the true value of the kingdom of heaven, this can be a very difficult, even an almost impossible transaction to make. (See [Matthew 19:20-26](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+19%3A20-26&version=ESV))
3. What emotion does the man have when he sells all that he has to buy the field? If the kingdom of heaven is the treasure, how would God view this man?
   1. While it may be difficult or painful to sell all that we have, this man knows the value of the hidden treasure (the kingdom of heaven) so for him it is easy, he can even sell all that he has with joy, knowing that what he is obtaining is of an incomparably greater value. ([Philippians 3:8-10](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians%203%3A8-10&version=ESV))
4. How are the secrets of the kingdom of heaven hidden? How can we find them? How can we acquire them?
   1. There are many verses throughout the bible that emphasize that the wisdom and the secrets of the kingdom of heaven are hidden, and that those who seek them like hidden treasure will find them. This truth could infer that this man was a treasure hunter, seeking the hidden treasure of the kingdom of heaven. While the secrets are hidden since the foundation of the world, Jesus in his grace and mercy is more than happy to share and explain them to those have ears to hear: [Mt. 13:35](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mt.+13%3A35&version=ESV): “I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.” (Also see [Mt. 7:7-8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mt.+7%3A7-8&version=ESV), [Prov. 8:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Prov.+8%3A17&version=ESV), [Heb 11:6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Heb+11%3A6&version=ESV))
   2. However, in this scenario it says that the man “covered up the treasure” after he found it. This could imply that the hidden treasure was exposed and out in the open at the time that he came to it, which could imply that he stumbled upon it without looking for it and that it kind of happened by chance. This angle could be used to further emphasize his joy and excitement of finding treasure suddenly.
   3. Going with this 2nd understanding one could say that the kingdom of heaven is out there in the open, easy to discover, and readily available to everyone… However, the main point of this parable is that whether we discover it by chance, or find it through intent, that is only half of it. The main point is that we need to recognize the value of the kingdom of heaven and sell all that we have to obtain it. If we find a great treasure but just look at it and don’t obtain it for ourselves, we will be overcome with grief at the missed opportunity (see verse 50b “weeping and gnashing of teeth”).
5. V45-46. Summarize the parable of the pearl of **great** **value**. How does the merchant search for and identify the pearl of great value? What does this reveal about him? ([Proverbs 8:10-11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=proverbs+8%3A10-11%2C+19&version=ESV))
   1. This parable is similar to the previous parable about a man who finds hidden treasure in a field, but is also unique. There are 2 big differences: The person in this parable is identified as a merchant and he is given a trade or a mission: to search for fine pearls.
   2. This brings a different perspective to the act of finding the kingdom of heaven. This merchant is already aware that there is valuable treasure out there, he is searching for it. An important detail though is this merchant is an expert collector of pearls, he isn't just searching for any pearl or any wisdom, he is looking for really precious and valuable pearls.
   3. This merchant then finds THE pearl. This merchant may have expected to find a good pearl or an expensive pearl, but he found a pearl of GREAT value. This merchant upon seeing this pearl immediately knew its great value and quickly sold all that he had to purchase it.
   4. In the collecting world there are many collectors: Those who collect fine art, those who collect rare books, stamps, baseball cards etc. The expert collectors know what items have value and which have good value, but they also are always searching for the holy grail of their respective field: The ultra rare item. In baseball this could be a baseball card of Babe Ruth, in books this could be a page of the Gutenberg Bible of which there are only a few known to exist, in stamps this could be a rare stamp that had a misprint etc. The common person seeing these items doesn’t know their true value or have an eye to catch these minor details that can make 1 baseball card extremely valuable and another seemingly identical baseball card worthless. This angle reveals to us the GREAT value of the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven may not seem that valuable to the common person, but to those with some understanding of wisdom and to those who have been searching, they understand the true eternal value of the kingdom of heaven and can easily sell all that they have to acquire it.
6. How are the secrets of the kingdom of heaven valuable? How can we find the secrets of the kingdom of heaven like the merchant? How can we acquire them?
   1. Continuing with the idea that we need to be like the merchant who understands the value of the wisdom of the kingdom of heaven, we ought to search the scriptures diligently so that we can learn the value of the kingdom of heaven, find and understand the secrets and wisdom of the kingdom of heaven, and then repent of this world and sell our old lives -all that we have to obtain it. ([Proverbs 3:13-18](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=proverbs+3%3A13-18&version=ESV))
7. V47-50. Summarize the parable of the net. What is the net? What did the net catch? (V47)
   1. In this parable Jesus again reveals deep truths about how mankind is experiencing the kingdom of heaven while on earth.
   2. The kingdom of heaven could be compared to a large net that is thrown into the sea and catches fish of all kinds.
8. Why is the kingdom of heaven being compared to a fishing net that catches fish of all kinds? ( [Matthew 4:18-20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%204:18-20&version=ESV)) Why does the net catch both the righteous *and* evil? What did the men do once the net was full?
   1. In Matthew 4:18-20 Jesus calls some of his first disciples who were at that time fishing and casting a net into the sea. He said to them: “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” This reveals that Jesus’ ministry, and the way of the kingdom of heaven in this age is to fish and catch people. Also note that the fishermen left their nets to follow Jesus. You could say they sold all they had at that moment to follow Jesus and left behind their wealth and livelihoods in this world to obtain the kingdom of heaven.
   2. Nets act like a trap and grab everything in their path, if something is caught in the net, it is stuck and can’t escape. Due to this net’s large size, many fish were caught. It even says in verse 47 that fish of ALL kinds were caught.
   3. The kingdom of heaven catches both good and bad, it catches both righteous and evil, it catches people of all kinds. When the net is full the net is drawn to shore and the good fish (the righteous) are separated from the bad (the evil).
9. How might we be counted as righteous and obtain the kingdom of heaven based on the hidden treasure and pearl parables? ([Matthew 10:37-39](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+10%3A37-39&version=ESV), [19:20-24](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+19%3A20-24&version=ESV))
   1. We see in the 2 reference verses from Matthew 10 and 19 that this concept of selling all that you have to obtain the kingdom of heaven is not just an idea hinted at in the parable of the hidden treasure and the pearl, but is a fundamental requirement.
   2. Jesus says in Mt. 10:37-39: “Whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” If someone is willing to sell all they have, or lose their life, they will find a new life in Jesus’ kingdom. If they do not sell all they have, in an attempt to save their life, they will actually lose their life.
   3. We see in Mt. 19:20-24 that a man indeed does find Jesus and finds the kingdom of heaven, but is not able to obtain it. Jesus says to him: “Sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” Instead of selling all that he had, the man went away sorrowful because he was rich in this world and couldn’t part with what he had to follow Jesus.
   4. This can show what it is like to be ‘caught’ in the net of the kingdom of heaven, but then get thrown out as evil in the end. Let us see the GREAT value of the kingdom of heaven and sell all that we have with joy to obtain it and be counted as righteous.
10. Does the parable of the net share similarities with any of the other parables in Matthew 13? Are there any connections or themes that can be shared amongst *all* the parables in Mt. 13?
    1. Searching for the secrets and the hidden treasure of the kingdom of heaven is greatly encouraged throughout scripture and will yield wonderful rewards: “He rewards those who seek him.”
    2. Reading [Proverbs 2:1-6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=proverbs+2&version=ESV) we see many similar themes that line up and stitch together the parables Jesus shared in Mt. 13: “**1** My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, **2** making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding..” The parable of the sower explains that those who have ears to hear will receive the good seed (my words/words of the kingdom) and their hearts will understand and grow wheat that bears 100/60/30 yield.
    3. “**4** if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, **5** then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.” Jesus' disciples wanted to seek and understand the hidden treasures of Jesus’ kingdom and valued it like silver. They went into the house and asked Jesus to explain the parables to them. When they did this they found the hidden treasure and learned its value. They could be compared to the merchant who searched for pearls and went into the house of a pearl seller and found a pearl of great value.
    4. The crowds could be compared to the man in the field who found the hidden treasure. Some in the crowd may have understood the value, and sold all they had to follow Jesus, while others may have found the treasure, but didn’t do all that they could to obtain it. This mixture is again shown in the wheat and the weeds parable and the fish of every kind in the net parable. There are many in and around the kingdom of heaven in this age on earth, but not all will be sorted with the good and found righteous in the end.
    5. Since we are here today studying this passage, we could argue that we have found the hidden treasure of the kingdom of heaven. However, let us do all that we can, and sell at that we have to ensure that we obtain it in the end.