

Parables of The Hidden Treasure and The Pearl - Bill Cahusac

Bill began by expressing thankfulness for 3 things: Us as a church, the community of those who love Jesus; The worship band (and especially Pete Sheath on Keyboard, sensitively playing in the background); and Peter Walker in the congregation, a former NT Lecturer who has guided a generation of church leaders.

- Encourage each person in your Collective to name something for which they are thankful.

Matt 13v44-46

These parables are a turning point in Jesus' ministry. He'd been speaking to Jews, who have rejected him, so he's turning to his disciples - "lean in," this is just for you. Jesus is looking for his disciples to be the New Israel. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like..."

1. Hidden Treasure. People in the time of Jesus did not have banks to keep their wealth safely but stashed it away, hidden in secret places. Their rules meant that if it was found on land they legally owned, they could keep it rather than the original owner.

God hides himself in plain sight. He is the treasure waiting to be found. There's no cost/benefit analysis. God hides in the ordinary - a burning bush for Moses, who got curious and was surprised by God.

- When did you last see God hidden in the ordinary?
- When was the last time you pushed in to discover more of God?
- Do we see something bigger than us when visiting spectacular buildings (ie cathedrals) or nature?
- Is God hiding in ordinary places waiting to be found?
- What is our response to finding the hidden God? Do we value the moment or just carry on?

"Get lost in the miracle that has just fallen into your lap." Eugene Wallace

When we see a sunset, stop, look, don't be distracted like children on their devices. Be thankful. This can be an access point - finding God in plain sight.

2. Pearl of great value. Professional treasure hunters know the difference between a lot and a lot lot! This pearl was the best, don't be blinded by the superficial. The finder wasn't distracted by anything

- Do we settle for the counterfeit - the "nearly pearl," it's worth something but not everything.

Bill is training to be a Counsellor and has learned there are 3 drivers: Significance; Self-worth and Security. These all come from being in Christ. That's the theory, but do we settle for less?

- Is our self-worth based on what others think of us? Or our health?
- Is our security based on something other than Jesus?
- Do we recognise what is happening in our lives?
- What is the "nearly pearl" in our lives?
- What stops us from continuing to press in and search for the pearl of great price?

We can fool ourselves and be convinced that our job, our abilities are the pearl. Don't be blindsided by the instant when the real thing is available (think coffee - instant is cheap but it's not the real thing).

- Do we recognise what we find in Jesus, and does he transform our lives and those around us?
- Does it cost all?

In conclusion,

- Have we lost a sense of curiosity? (Moses had that when he saw the burning bush)
- Have we settled for the counterfeit? Where is our Significance, Self-worth and Security coming from? - "Things are not bad, but they're not the real thing."
- Have we forgotten the currency? What is it worth?

We must decide: choose to be curious, not settle, but chase after the most precious.

God wants to give you the gift of himself: He is the treasure of great price. Choose only him.

For Reflection in Collective:

- Bill asked lots of questions during his talk so review the bullet points above.

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