

# True Riches

By Gary Shepard

**Bible Text:** Matthew 13:44  
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Turn in your Bibles this morning to Matthew chapter 13.

Christ said, “My sheep hear my voice.”<sup>1</sup>

And then in another place he said this. “He that is of God heareth God’s words.”<sup>2</sup>

And my aim today is to give you many of God’s words. And my message today I have entitled, “True Riches.” I could have called it, in light of this text, “Real Treasure.” But I want you to notice, first of all, in Matthew 13, something that Christ says in verse 44.

Matthew 13 and verse 44.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.”<sup>3</sup>

If you will hold your place here and turn with me in the book of James, James issues a very stern warning by the Spirit of God to those who are rich in this world and who desire to be. James chapter five he says, “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.”<sup>4</sup>

If you look back in verse 13 of chapter four he says it is something the same way.

“Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain.”<sup>5</sup>

He issues these warnings. He says you made these plans. You are going to go and you will go to this city and you will get gain. Well, the scripture says in Luke six, “But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John 10:27.

<sup>2</sup> John 8:47.

<sup>3</sup> Mathew 13:44.

<sup>4</sup> James 5:1.

<sup>5</sup> James 4:13.

That is all you will ever receive. Whatever consolation that your wealth gives which is none at all, that is all you will ever receive.

Then he continues in James five and verse two. He says, “Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.”<sup>7</sup>

What you think is fine and good and be desired, he says, “They are nothing but rubbish and damaged goods.”

And he simply states the words of Christ in Matthew six who said:

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.<sup>8</sup>

He says, “Whatever your treasure is, whatever you value above all things, there your heart will be also.”

And then notice what he says in verse three. He says, “Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.”<sup>9</sup>

What does he say? He says great wealth testifies against you before God. And not only that, it consumes you like a fire and the only provision that it might ever provide for you is simply that in these last days and not in the great eternity that is to come.

He says in verse four, “Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.”<sup>10</sup>

In other words, he says in verse five, “Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.”<sup>11</sup>

And what he is saying there is self consumed wealth is like fattening yourself for the slaughter, just like the swine.

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<sup>6</sup> Luke 6:24.

<sup>7</sup> James 5:2.

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 6:19-21.

<sup>9</sup> James 5:3.

<sup>10</sup> James 5:4.

<sup>11</sup> James 5:5.

And not only here, but in a great number of places in the Bible do we have warnings along the same line.

He says in Isaiah five and verse eight, “Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!”<sup>12</sup>

Then he says by Christ again in Matthew 19, “Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”<sup>13</sup>

And all through this book we find the words of Christ like this again in Luke one. “He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.”<sup>14</sup>

“But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.”<sup>15</sup>

“Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth.”<sup>16</sup>

And if you would turn with me over into 1 Timothy and the sixth chapter and listen to what the apostle writes in 1 Timothy six and verse seven. These are serious words.

For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich...<sup>17</sup>

That means those who would desire to be rich

...fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; That thou keep this commandment without spot,

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<sup>12</sup> Isaiah 5:8.

<sup>13</sup> Matthew 19:23-24.

<sup>14</sup> Luke 1:53.

<sup>15</sup> Luke 6:24.

<sup>16</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:24.

<sup>17</sup> 1 Timothy 6:7-9.

unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.<sup>18</sup>

Now there is an amazing thing among mankind and that is that men by nature seek to strike it rich without really working. But in salvation, they seek to be rich in it by their working.

Now believers in the Lord Jesus Christ they seek not material wealth, nor spiritual wealth by their works. You see, both are God's to give.

Somebody says, "Well, I have what I have because I work really hard to get it."

Well, for everyone that says that, I could line up beside them a multiplied millions of people who have worked just as hard as they worked and maybe even harder and yet they haven't come to that point. Why is that? Because all things are of God to give. And he is not saying that we are to be indolent or lazy or slothful or any of these things, but that we are to do the things that we ought to do.

He says, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."<sup>19</sup>

But in the final analysis all things are God's to give or withhold. He raises up and he brings down. He makes rich and he makes poor. And so the Lord's people live in the knowledge of that and that does not mean that though they are poor in the things of this world, that does not mean that they are not truly rich.

And they know the difference.

Look back here in our text because the Lord Jesus Christ here in Matthew 13:44 uses a word that ought to catch our attention. He speaks of treasure.

Now I can guarantee this. You don't know what treasure is and I don't know what treasure is and no one else in this world really knows what treasure is, but Christ does. And he speaks this parable, he gives these words to his people and he tells them that the

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<sup>18</sup> 1 Timothy 6:9-19.

<sup>19</sup> 1 timothy 5:8.

kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure. In other words, if it were to be that you or I had hardly enough to eat in this world or enough clothes to cover our backs and live as we say hand to mouth every day of our life, if we have what he is talking about here, we have a real treasure.

I thought about it lately, how many people who lived their lives most all of their lives putting their money in stocks and in all these companies. They were making money as I say on paper. But in the last few years, all they look to, all they hoped in, all that they trusted in would be theirs for their comfort in their old age or their old days or their retirement years and they look at it now and what was much is nothing.

I know lots of people who have come to that place. But if you notice here, our Lord is talking about something that is a real treasure. What is it? It is the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ. He is talking here about the riches of God's grace and he is talking about something that is unseen to the natural eye. He is talking about something that is spiritual which means it is the only truly real thing that there is and he is likening it to a treasure.

When I was a boy we used to cobble some things in a box and call it a treasure. We would put a few things that were shiny, maybe had a couple of coins or a fake stone or something like that and we would play pirates or something and we would put that in a little cardboard box and call it a treasure.

And it isn't much different in our day. He says, "You take the money, the things that canker and rust and that thieves try to steal and you regard it as everything to you when all it is a handful of trinkets and not a treasure at all.

The scripture says that unto the Lord's people in this book are given exceeding great and precious promises. Do you believe that, that there are promises made by God here to the people who are in Jesus Christ that are actually in his sight exceedingly great and precious?

If you look back in Matthew chapter 12 and at verse 35 he says, "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart..."<sup>20</sup>

Now the Bible says there is none good, no not one. And yet at the same time God is infinitely good.

But he says, "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."<sup>21</sup>

If I talk about the things that are natural to us, they are just evil treasure. But if we talk about the things that are of God, the gifts of God, that which he gives us in grace in the

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<sup>20</sup> Mathew 12:35.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

Lord Jesus Christ, that is good treasure, he said. It is the gospel of Jesus Christ of whom it is said, "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."<sup>22</sup>

Where are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge? They are in Jesus Christ. And that is true also of what preaching, what true preaching really is if you look down in verse 52 of Matthew 13.

It says, "Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven..."<sup>23</sup>

That is every preacher, every teacher who is instructed, truly taught of God by his Spirit and the Word of God of the kingdom of heaven, "...is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."<sup>24</sup>

This morning coming to the service I heard as I turned on the radio to make sure our program came on and what it should be, I heard a bit of the previous teaching. And it was done by a man who followed Martin Lloyd Jones at Westminster Chapel, London, England and a man who know lives retired in the US. He was teaching. I don't have any doubt that he knows something about the gospel, but all he was bringing out was things fro the family, things for the life, things for this, things that any knowledgeable true psychiatrist or therapist or whatever they might be, they would be giving the same kind of stuff basically, any so-called moral teacher. He didn't have any treasure to give. He didn't take out any treasure of the old and the new, of the Old Testament and the New Testament, the things of Jesus Christ.

The main issue, the main problem that is behind all the family problems and such that make up what this world is all about, every thing is because of sin.

I told my doctor that. I don't think he agreed with me, but all affliction in our body, everything that we suffer in this body is at least in one way or another the consequence of sin.

So the man who truly preaches the gospel, whoever he is and wherever he is, he takes of his treasure things old and new, things from the Old Testament and the New Testament, all the things in this book which is Christ's book and they all speak of him.

Paul says to the Ephesians, " In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."<sup>25</sup>

There is only one kind of riches that are going to last. There is only one coin for eternity, if you will, only one currency for eternity. There is only one standard in the sight of God almighty and that is the riches of his grace.

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<sup>22</sup> Colossians 2:3.

<sup>23</sup> Matthew 13:52.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ephesians 1:7.

Peter said, “We are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.” And he went on to describe the Lord’s people as heirs, heirs of God. He describes them as being joint heirs with Jesus Christ. What does that mean? It means that those who are joint heirs with Christ, they get it all, everything.

That inheritance that he describes as an eternal inheritance, when houses are consumed under the coming wrath and judgment of God, when he says that the elements will melt with a fervent heat and all the things of this earth will be purged with fire, when they all the mansions of this world go up in smoke, when all the coins melt down to nothing, when everything is consumed by God, this all consuming fire, there will be an inheritance left for the people of God, the inheritance of the saints in light, that eternal inheritance that he speaks of.

Now I want to read you a lot of verses to show you this in this book. You don’t have to look at all of them, but listen to them.

Isaiah 33:6.

“And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure.”<sup>26</sup>

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,”<sup>27</sup> he says.

The fear of the Lord, reverence for God, believing God and bowing to his Word, his truth, is his treasure.

The apostle Paul he writes to the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians four, he says, “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels.”<sup>28</sup>

Do you know what an earthen vessel is? It is just a clay pot.

Men who have what they think are valuable things, they put it in what appears to be a valuable container. And actually in my days I have seen some things that, for the most part, you could throw the contents away and take the container. It looked more valuable than the contents did.

But what he is saying here is that the most valuable thing in this world—and he is talking here about preaching the gospel—he says the most valuable thing of this world, the treasure of this world is in human vessels. It is proclaimed by faulty clay individuals who in themselves are often times failures and never to be trusted in, but God has given this treasure in earthen vessels that the glory might be to God.

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<sup>26</sup> Isaiah 33:6.

<sup>27</sup> Psalm 111:10

<sup>28</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:7.

The man I heard on the radio this morning, he is a doctor. He is an educated man. He is a very articulate man. He is a very personable individual. But he obviously does not have the treasure.

This is a treasure, this gospel. You can't look at me. You can't watch me. You can't examine my life. You can't look at whatever it is you hold up as a high standard and determine whether or not I know the gospel or preach it by that.

He says, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."<sup>29</sup>

That is why I told you I want to speak God's words this morning, because if you believe me just because I said it, I could prove to be the phoniest character in the world. My words could fail, but his words never fail and he calls it a treasure.

Paul, again to the Corinthians he said, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor," now listen to this, "that ye through his poverty might be rich."<sup>30</sup>

Everyone that Christ died for, everyone that he came into this world, his people that he came to save from their sins, his poverty, the rich one, he became poor that we through his poverty might be rich.

Paul, when he preached he preached praying as he did for the Ephesians. He said, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."<sup>31</sup>

He said, "That is what I want you to know about, Christ and the glory that is in him and the inheritance of all that are in him by grace. He has done all that he has done," Paul says, "that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

And here is this man Paul, Saul of Tarsus who undoubtedly was brought down from his high horse and his place in life and his station in religion and talented all, but lost and done that he might preach Christ. And then he writes and he makes this statement.

He says, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."<sup>32</sup>

You take a small child or a person from way out away from civilization and you just hand a big diamond, let's say the Hope diamond, put it in their hands and let them examine it. Well, the child they might just take it and rub it in the dirt and just do anything with it, eat

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> 2 Corinthians 8:9.

<sup>31</sup> Ephesians 1:18.

<sup>32</sup> Ephesians 3:8.

it. The man who is out there who is not aware of anything like that, he may take it and glue it to a tree or something.

Why is that? Because they don't have any understanding of knowledge of the worth of things. And that is the way we are as sinners. We don't have any... we don't have any right estimate or value of the worth of things as they truly are before God. And that is why we will scabble our lives away to make a buck and he says, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"<sup>33</sup>

He says in Colossians, "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."<sup>34</sup>

He writes to the Romans, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"<sup>35</sup>

But he says, "For the vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory he will make known the riches of his glory."

Believers are, as Paul says, sorrowful sometimes yet always rejoicing. He says they are poor, yet making many rich, sometimes as those who have nothing and yet possessing all things.

Can you see that?

It says of Moses in Hebrews 11 that he esteemed the reproach of Christ, that means he esteemed being mocked because of his association with the living God. He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

God had given him an understanding to know that the one who had the riches of Egypt would one day wind up with zero. And the one who was reproached for Christ's sake would one day have everything.

You remember Lazarus who died as a beggar at the door of the rich man? God said to that rich man when he cried out in hell and begged for a drop of water, "Send Lazarus with a drop of water to cool my tongue for I am in torment."

He said, "You had your riches and in this life Lazarus had sorrow and weakness, but now he is rich."

It says by Peter, "To whom coming," that is Christ, "as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Mark 8:36.

<sup>34</sup> Colossians 1:27.

<sup>35</sup> Romans 11:33.

<sup>36</sup> 1 Peter 2:4.

Or maybe we can hear Peter as God through him calls him to call a passage from the Old Testament when he said:

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.<sup>37</sup>

He said to you who believe and this world is full of people who claim they believe and it is a big lie because it says, “Unto you who believe he is precious.” And that is what this parable is all about. He is absolutely precious, which means he is the one to be had if it means the discarding of everything else. He is precious. He is precious. Whether or not any believe on him or not.

But unto those who truly believe, he is precious, because all righteousness, holiness, redemption, all spiritual blessings, everything that is truly valuable, everything that is real and lasting is in Jesus Christ.

Now notice what he says here in Matthew 13 and verse 44. He says these riches are said to be hidden. This treasure is hidden, hidden in a field which on one hand simply means hidden in this world from Adam’s day till now because when Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, God said to them, spoke to them of this very treasure. He said, “The woman’s seed will crush the serpent.”

Hidden in all those Old Testament types and shadows that we find he is Christ the Spirit of prophecy. God, when Adam and Eve sinned and came as he came before them and they were found naked in his sight, it says that he slew animals and clothed them and made coats of skins for them.

What is that? That is Christ. He died to make a covering for his people, a coat of righteousness. The lamb that Abel slew and God had favor on his sacrifice, all those Old Testament sacrifices, that priest that entered in once a year into the holy place and offered up sacrifices to God, all these things Christ hidden in a type and shadow.

And they are hidden simply according to God’s sovereign will. That is what Christ said.

It says in Matthew 11, “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent.”<sup>38</sup>

To those who think they can by searching find him out, to those who think by working they can explain him, gain him, have his favor by something they know or do, he says,

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<sup>37</sup> 1 Peter 2:6-7.

<sup>38</sup> Matthew 11:25.

“you hid these things from the wise and prudent, ah, but you have revealed them unto babes.”

Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.<sup>39</sup>

I want to ask people sometime. Do you ever wonder why that the worship of God just really doesn't mean anything to you or why what he says in this Word really you can take it or leave it or why you have no heart interest in the most precious glorious thing that there is in this world? And the reality is that every one of us is shut up to this undeniable truth. No man knows the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Father will reveal him. And likewise, no one knows the Son save the Father and he to whom the Father will reveal him.

And men and women live their days blinded by the devil and this stupid evaluation of things thinking that one day they will get into this business of the Bible. One day they will get down to this matter of truth and God and eternity and salvation and sin. No, you won't. God leaves you to yourself. You will count all these things like a coin that jingles in your pocket and a house you can put your lock on and a piece of land or something like that or a savings account, whatever it is. You will count it as something and you will die with nothing.

You see, he is hidden in this book. This book is just another book to men and women who have not received the work of God's Spirit to show them Christ, to show them themselves. This book is hidden to those who are described as dead in trespasses and sins.

You wouldn't ask a dead man how much something was worth, would you? It is described as being hidden to those that are perishing. He says:

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.<sup>40</sup>

You see, if you were a congregation of blind people it wouldn't do me any good to change from a 75 watt bulb to a 100 watt bulb, would it, because the problem is not with the light. The problem is with your inability to see. And God alone can give that.

It is described as a mystery that has to be revealed by his Spirit. Paul says, “But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.”<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Matthew 11:26-27.

<sup>40</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:3-4.

<sup>41</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:7.

He says, “Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.”<sup>42</sup>

All of these treasures are hid in Christ. As a matter of fact, he is the treasure. And yet Isaiah says that “he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.”<sup>43</sup>

There is nothing about Christ, there is nothing about salvation by grace, there is nothing about God himself and all his promises that the natural man would ever desire. As a matter of fact, it is like handing away, handing something to a child who doesn’t know the value. Hand him a hundred dollar bill on one hand or an ice cream cone in the other hand. See which one he takes.

And we will never give up the things of this world. We will never give up our own righteousness, our own way, our own thinking, our own sense of values until he shows us something better, until we are made to see that Christ is wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. He is everything.

Well, how is this treasure found? Well, the thought...

It says here, “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found...”<sup>44</sup>

And the notion here in the original words is unexpectedly found. He wasn’t looking for it and he still wouldn’t be looking for it unless God showed it to him.

I remember reading years ago about two men in Australia that came upon a, the world’s largest opal and I don’t remember the details, but it was astounding, the world’s largest opal. They were out looking for something else. I believe they were out digging for gold and they came upon this stone, precious opal.

But what struck me was what they named it? They called it the welcome stranger. And that is what the Lord Jesus Christ is when he comes to sinners like us who in our blindness have had this misguided sense of values and everything. We have written what was really lost to be profit and what was really profit to be loss in our lives. And he reveals to us the welcome stranger, Christ. He is everything. Unsought, unwanted and expectedly found.

Do you remember Noah? Did you know that Noah was no better than every person who perished in the flood? In himself, as he proved after the flood, but it says that “Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.”<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Colossians 1:26.

<sup>43</sup> Isaiah 53:2.

<sup>44</sup> Matthew 13:44.

<sup>45</sup> Genesis 6:8.

Paul in Romans 10 said, “But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.”<sup>46</sup>

And God’s elect throughout the ages have been living their lives, marrying, given in marriage, all that stuff that characterizes life, moving here, doing this, making this move, making that move, but if they are his people, they are going to be found of that one whom they sought not. They are going to find the treasure in the least likely place. They are going to hear the gospel of God’s truth and grace and mercy to sinners in Jesus Christ from probably the least likely one. But when God brings it home to their heart and enables them to believe on Christ, they are going to know they found treasure or the treasure has found them.

And what does it say they do? It says, “... when a man hath found, he hideth [it].”<sup>47</sup>

And all that simply means is he regards it as something so precious that he guards it. He regards it as a precious thing. And I will tell you what. If you ever know Christ, if you ever know that gracious salvation and mercy that is in him, you will guard it. You will guard it that the cares of this life or the lusts of this life or the riches of this world or Satan or anybody else stealing away.

I will tell you this. I am not going to leave my children anything monetarily. It doesn’t look like it. It is going to take it all to keep us breathing. But I hope to leave them one legacy and that is the knowledge that above all things, even above them the thing that I counted most precious was Jesus Christ and this precious gospel.

I am not trying to write a book. I am not trying to leave a big legacy of that kind. But maybe they will pick up an old CD or an old tape or an old article wherein I tried to set forth before them the most precious thing that I possessed, the truth as it is in Christ. And the very thing that men and women say they want so much, joy, well, here it is.

What does he find? He finds this treasure and he sees the value of it. He guards it and it gives him great joy.

“...and of the joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth the field.”<sup>48</sup>

Now that doesn’t have quite the significance to us as it did under Jewish law, because when a man bought a field, bought a piece of ground, whatever was in that field was his. And that is the thought here. He found out that what he had found was so valuable, so to be desired, so necessary that he was willing to turn loose of what he never was willing to turn loose of before. And that is what the Lord’s people do when they are come and they are brought to see Christ and him crucified in their place and the full pardon of sin and perfect imputed righteousness, the very righteousness of God laid to their account, the

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<sup>46</sup> Isaiah 10:20.

<sup>47</sup> Mathew 13:44.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

gift of righteousness, the gift of grace, the gift of faith, the gift of Christ himself. And that old profession of religion that they once held to, sell it all. That old feeling that they thought they had as a young person in that old revival meeting, sell it all. The very things that they counted nearest and dearest in this world, their possessions, whatever it takes in order to have this, be gone with it. And Paul expresses it like this.

He said, “The very things that I thought were gain to me I know count them as dung, as refuse, as nothing that I may win Christ and be found in him.”

He said, “He that forsaketh not father and mother, sister and brother husband wife, yea, his own life, cannot be my disciple.”

“If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”<sup>49</sup>

Paul said, “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.”<sup>50</sup>

One old writer said, “The gospel does not receive from us the respect that it deserves unless we prefer it to all the riches, pleasures, honors and advantages of the world and to such an extent that we are satisfied with the spiritual blessings which it promises and throw aside everything that would keep us from enjoying them. For those who aspire to heaven must be disengaged from everything that would retard our progress.”

He sells it off and buys the field. And that is buy in this sense that we read in Isaiah 55 when God said:

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.<sup>51</sup>

Buy with out money and without price. What is that? Grace. The free grace of God in Jesus Christ, because unto you that believe he is precious.

Sometimes in my own flesh I am no different than anybody else. I will get to wanting. And then the Lord by his grace will remind me of his precious gifts of grace to me and I will think to myself, “How could I so foolishly want this, that or the other when I have everything?”

That is what God says. All things are mine. All souls are mine. Everything is mine. The cattle of a thousand hills is mine.

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<sup>49</sup> 1 John 2:15.

<sup>50</sup> Philippians 3:7.

<sup>51</sup> Isaiah 55:1-2.

And I will tell you I find it is better to trust him in these material things, to give you what he knows is best for you than to spend your life trying to get what you want. And he might just give it to you.

When those Israelites, they were fed with manna from on high, but they wanted the flesh. They wanted some flesh. They wanted some meat. And so God sent the quail came into the camp and they ate and they made themselves sick until it says that it came out of their nostrils. They vomited in the sickness of that until it came out of their nostrils. And that is the way with the riches of this world.

Christ said, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”<sup>52</sup>

According to his wise will, according to what you need, according to what will work for your spiritual and eternal and even present good.

*God, help us to see it and to rightly value Christ, his gospel, his truth, his sacrifice, his Word, because if we don't we are truly poor. And we will be eternally poor.*

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<sup>52</sup> Matthew 6:33.