



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

July 29, 2018

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Deacons:
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Steve McCreary

Minister:
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Secretary:
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Service Times:
Sunday
Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday
Bible Study 7:30 pm

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OUR TREASURE

As you know, one of Jesus' favorite teaching tools were parables. I have heard parables defined as earthly stories with a heavenly meaning. I like that definition, and I think it perfectly describes the short parable we will discuss which is found in **Matthew 13:44**.

"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."

It is one of the shortest parables you will find, but it may be one of my favorites. It captures the sense of awe and excitement we should have when it come to our faith. Jesus makes the assumption that if you were to find a great treasure somewhere, you would sell your things in order to get that field so the treasure could be rightfully yours. Why would we do that? Because the treasure is way more valuable then what we own now. It just makes sense to do this. This is the physical meaning of the parable, so what is the spiritual meaning?

The New Testament makes some amazing claims about what God has made available to us. It talks about the glory waiting to be revealed to us in heaven. It discusses us being seated with Christ in the heavenly realms, to reign and rule with him. Scripture over and over points to the unfathomable splendor of what eternity with God will be like. Even with the little bit we know, it is obvious this is a treasure far more valuable than anything this earth has to offer.

I don't think this passage is necessarily saying to sell everything we have to obtain the treasure of heaven. However, I think it is saying there is nothing here on earth that we should allow to come between us and heaven. Our ambitions and desires should be squarely focused on the treasure God is offering us, and we should be willing to cut out anything that might stand in our way. Not out of a sense of obligation, but out of joy! We should be thrilled when we consider what is to come. We may not have hold of it now, but it is as good as done because God has promised it. We are wealthy beyond measure!

Steve McFadden

THE WICKED NEVER LEARN

Anyone who is willing can learn the Truth and be saved. Jesus said, “*If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine*” (**John 7:17**). John wrote, “*Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*” (**Revelation 22:17**). Anyone with a truly good and honest heart will accept and obey the Truth.

That same honest person will learn from his mistakes. He will sincerely and earnestly strive to correct them. Like the prodigal son, he will learn from experience (**Luke 15:11-32**). Like Moses, he will listen to good advice (**Exodus 18:13-26**). Solomon said, “*...rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning*” (**Proverbs 9:8-9**).

The attitude of the wicked is much different. They fail to learn from experience because they are too stubborn to change their ways. If they receive good in life, they will not show appreciation by turning to God. Isaiah said, “*Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness*” (**Isaiah 26:10**). If they receive evil in life, they do not humble themselves before God. The Israelites saw Korah and his company destroyed for their rebellion, but the next day they rebelled themselves (**Numbers 16**). **Psalm 78** is a tragic record of a nation that refused to learn from the past.

The wicked refused to listen to words of correction. Solomon spoke often about such an attitude. He wrote, “*He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot*” (**Proverbs 9:7**). Some are so foolish, Solomon taught, that repeated severe correction will not awaken them: “*Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him*” (**Proverbs 27:22**).

A wicked man, of course, can change his ways, but only if he changes his attitude. As long as he has a rebellious heart, he will not turn to God, even in spite of words and experiences that should change him.

Kerry Duke