

Sermon for Sep 24, 2023
“Kingdom of Heaven, The Most Precious Treasure”
(Matthew 13:44-46)

Fall picnic and treasure hunt!

Good morning!

Today is a special day for our congregation. We are gathering here for a three-church combined picnic. It may not sound like much, but this coming together is a huge deal. It is a sign of the good work we have done together as people of faith seeking to work more closely in the community. I welcome everyone here. Let us greet each other with ‘God Bless you!’

A picnic is a time to rest and recharge away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. I have great memories from elementary school related to picnics. In Korea, where I went to elementary school, I went on a picnic to beautiful places around the school in the spring and fall.

There was always delicious food and fun games prepared for the picnic. My favorite game during the picnic was ‘treasure hunt.’ In this game, the person in charge of the game writes the name or number of the treasure on a piece of paper, hides it in a crevice in a rock or under a tree, and gives the corresponding prize to the person who finds it. I liked the ‘treasure hunt’ game because, if I found the most pieces of paper the teachers had hidden, I could receive many gifts. I have memories of receiving many prizes from a ‘treasure hunt’ and returning home with a happy heart. Today, as I read the parable of the hidden treasure and pearl in the Gospel of Matthew, I am very happy that we, as Christians, are the most blessed beings in the world.

Kingdom of heaven, the most precious treasure

In today's text, Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a hidden treasure and a pearl of a great price. Verse 44 of today's text says: **“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”**

This verse says that the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. Additionally, this treasure is so valuable that he sold everything he owned to buy the field where the treasure was hidden. Furthermore, Jesus says that the kingdom of heaven is like a pearl of great price. Matthew 13:46 says: **“On finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.”**

This verse also says that the kingdom of heaven is like a pearl of great price; so valuable that one would sell all his possessions to buy the pearl.

These two parables speak of the fact that the kingdom of heaven is the most precious treasure that cannot be compared to anything in this world. Do you agree with this fact? If you agree, please respond with ‘Amen’.

However, Christians are people who live with the kingdom of heaven in their hearts.

Therefore, Christians are people who enjoy the greatest blessings in the world.

Therefore, we hope that we will not be discouraged in life by not having money, being ignored by others, and not being able to enjoy the status and power we desire. This is because we have received the status of citizens of heaven as a gift through Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection.

There is rest and peace in the kingdom of heaven that we possess. Also, in the kingdom of heaven we possess, there is forgiveness and reconciliation. Furthermore, in the kingdom of heaven we possess, there is eternal life and joy and gratitude that cannot be shaken by our possessions or circumstances.

Today, I hope you and I will not forget that we are children of God who possess the most precious treasure and pearl. Today's picnic is like a bonus given to us who possess the most precious treasure and pearl. The Lord is so good that He gives us the best gifts and bonuses. Aren't you so grateful for this fact?

I hope that we can all rest and recharge through the bonus outing the Lord has given us today.

Let us pray!

Heavenly Father!

We are the Lord's people who have the kingdom of God in our hearts. We possess the most precious treasure, and we lack nothing. Let us have the picnic that the Lord gave us as a bonus with gratitude and joy. We pray in the name of Jesus, who saved us and gave us the best gift. Amen!

Meal Prayer

Dear God, we gather today with grateful hearts to thank you for this food before us. We appreciate the effort and resources that have gone into providing us with this nourishment.

May this meal not only sustain our bodies but also remind us of the many blessings in our lives. We are thankful for the love of family and friends who surround us and for the abundance we enjoy.

Bless this food, our time together, and those who prepared it. May it strengthen us physically and spiritually.

In Jesus' name we give thanks and pray, **Amen.**