

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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December 31, 2023

“The Gospel”

By Foy E. Wallace Jr.



“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.” (Matthew 13:44.)

The parables of Jesus adorn his teaching as jewels adorn the robe of a queen. They add richness, beauty, and charm to his “wonderful words of life.” Among the cluster of parables in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew lies the parable of the treasure hidden in the field. When the eye rests upon this parable, almost hidden from view in its brevity, it shines like the luster of the diamond that flashes a thousand rays as the sun falls upon it.

The parable is based upon facts, or conditions then existent. In the absence of iron safes and vaults of modern days, people often hid their valuables in the ground for safe-keeping. It is presumable that the original owner of the field had died and all knowledge of the treasure had perished. The man found it, and joyfully disposed of other possessions that he might buy that field and possess this treasure.

The narrative, though brief, is laden with meaning and replete with instruction.

1. The Gospel of Christ Is a Treasure.

Speaking of the “glorious gospel of Christ,” Paul said: *“We have this treasure in earthen vessels”* (See 2 Corinthians 4:3-7). The Gospel is a treasure of wonderful knowledge. It is life eternal to know God, Jesus said in his prayer (John 17:3).

And Paul said to Timothy to know the sacred writings will make one *“wise unto salvation”* (2 Timothy 3:15). We may have life and wisdom in the knowledge of many things, but only in the knowledge of God and the gospel can we have life eternal and wisdom unto salvation.

The gospel is a treasure of great blessing. All spiritual blessings are in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). Men may have—and they do have—material blessings out of Christ, but spiritual blessings come only to those in Christ. Salvation is in Christ (Acts 4:12). Life is in Christ (Rom. 8:2). We are new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). Forgiveness and redemption are in Christ (Colossians 1:14).

A simple rule, then, easily observed, would be this: Get into Christ, stay in Christ, stay out of everything else, and these promises will be yours.

2. The Gospel Was Once a Hidden Treasure.

It was hidden for ages in God (Ephesians 3:1-6). It was covered up beneath the types and shadows of the Old Testament. It was buried beneath prophecy and prediction. Promises that were radiant with hope and joy to a guilty world were hidden rather than revealed.

Because of their metaphorical costume and their figurative style, they could not be discerned. They were hidden treasures. But the “glorious gospel” is no longer hidden. The gospel treasure has been found.

3. The Gospel Has Been Revealed by Jesus Christ.

Of the revelation of the Gospel Paul said: *“Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit”* (Ephesians 3:5).

This may be quite appropriately called the evolution of the Gospel — its unfolding, or development, through the dispensations of time since the eternal ages.

The Gospel existed first as a plan in the mind of God. *“Having made known unto us the mystery of his will,...according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”* (Ephesians 1:9-11.)

It existed later in promises made to Abraham. *“In thee shall all nations be blessed.”* (Gal. 3:8.) It existed next in prophecies, and finally in fact:

“Of which salvation the prophets have inquired...searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify...Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you” (1 Peter 1:10-12).

Thus, we have, referring again to 2 Corinthians 4:7, this *“treasure in earthen vessels.”* God ordained that by man (the earthen vessel--the inspired apostle) the Gospel should be preached to man.



Memory Verse of the Week:

John 7:17 (NKJB) *“If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.”*

“Practicing Self-Sacrifice”

By Joe R. Price

The person who practices righteousness is righteous (1 John 3:7). Likewise, we cannot just talk about self-sacrifice; we must practice it daily. Consider these applications of self-sacrifice.

(1) Self-sacrifice is necessary to repent and be saved.

The godly sorrow that produces repentance unto salvation is ready and willing to sacrifice every sin that was previously committed (2 Corinthians 7:10; Acts 19:18-20).

(2) Self-sacrifice is necessary to worship God.

Many excuses are heard when one chooses not to deny self and worship the Lord. To put the Lord first and worship Him will mean sacrificing your time and your personal convenience to assemble with God's people (Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:24-25). Giving as the Lord has prospered you involves self-sacrifice (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

(3) Self-sacrifice is necessary to learn God's word.

Time and effort are required to study and learn the Bible. The upright in heart make the necessary sacrifices to learn and live the word of God (Psalm 1:1-2; 25:4-5; 2 Timothy 2:15).

(4) Self-sacrifice is necessary to live a moral life.

The gospel calls us to put away evil companions and immoral conduct (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1 Timothy 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:22). As we live in the world, we must not be of the world (cf. John 17:15-17). This requires putting away fleshly desires and putting on the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 13:13-14; 1 John 2:15-16).

(5) Self-sacrifice is necessary to help those in need.

To refuse to help someone when we can do so is not the love of God or the character of Jesus (1 John 3:17-18; Luke 10:30-37; Matthew 25:35-41).

Sacrifice characterizes the disciples of Jesus. Our purpose in life must be to gain Christ - everything else becomes secondary.

“But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ” (Philippians 3:7-8).

News and Notes:

Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Jamie Jones, Fred Johnson, Mary Ann Holley, Robert Howard, Billy Grisham, Tim Harris Jr (flu), Jalynn Hearn (flu), Anna Hearn (flu), Nathan Meade (flu), Price Whittemore (Strep, and possibly flu).

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Nathan Meade
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: "Sowing The Seed Of The Kingdom"

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Jerry Kennemur
1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
Author: Herschel Patton
Starting Page & Question: Page 21, Question # 5

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Paul Johnson
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Danny Sheffield
Scripture Reading: *Philippians 3:17-21*
Song Leader: Adam Harris
Lord's Supper: Paul Busby
Assisting: — —
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: "Brethren, Be Followers"
Closing Prayer: Paul Busby

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

January 3, 2023

Auditorium Bible Class: Russell Briggs
Workbook: Preparing To Teach Our Neighbors
Author: Max Tice
Starting Page & Question: Page #82, Discussion Questions #1
Invitation: Jerry Kennemur
Song Leader: Tim Harris Sr.
Closing Prayer: Paul Busby



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“Sowing The Seed Of The Kingdom”

Lesson Text: **Luke 8:11.**

I. The Seed Produces... When Men Sow It.

- Seed Sowing: **Luke 8:4-5; Romans 10:14-15.**
- Teaching And Preaching: **1 Corinthians 3:5-8.**
- Evangelism Is Our Mission: **Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; 1 Thess. 1:8.**
- The Gospel Has The Power: **Romans 1:16; James 1:21.**

II. The Seed Produces... In Proper Soil.

- Soil—Hearts: **Luke 8:5-8; 8:11-15.**
- Soil That Is Prepared: **Acts 8:4-8--8:12-13; 8:34-38; 16:11-15.**
- Good And Bad Soils: **Acts 18:5-8.**
- Seed Produces In Our Lives: **1 Peter 1:22-25.**

III. The Seed Produces... After Its Own Kind.

- Principle In Nature: **Genesis 1:12; Luke 11:43-44.**
- Principle In The Seed Of The Kingdom: **Acts 26:28.**
- The Seed Doesn't Make Anything But What The Bible Says....
 - **1 Peter 4:11; Acts 11:26; 1 Peter 4:16; James 2:7.**

IV. The Seed Produces... More Than We Sow.

- **Matthew 13:8.**
- **John 4:34-38.**
- **Acts 2:36-41.**

V. The Seed Produces... In Due Time.

- **Galatians 6:9.**
- **2 Timothy 2:24-26.**

“Brethren, Be Followers”

Lesson Text: **Philippians 3:17-21.**

I. Follow In Christ’s Steps.

- **1 Peter 2:21-23; Mark 1:16-20; Matthew 19:27-29.**
- It Is becoming A Follower Of Jesus’ Ways- **Matthew 10:25.**
 - His Humility, Meekness, Zeal, Love, Devotion....
- What If We Never Follow Jesus This Way?

II. Follow That Which Is Good.

- **1 Thessalonians 5:15 (KJB).**
 - Good Works **Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:7; 1 Timothy 5:10.**
 - Good Words **2 Thessalonians 2:16-17.**
 - Good Conscience **1 Timothy 1:5; 1 Peter 3:16.**
 - Good Thoughts **Philippians 4:8.**
- Too Many Pursue Bad Things & Will Be Lost! **1 Tim. 1:19-20; Titus 1:16.**

III. Follow After Righteousness.

- **1 Timothy 6:11-12; 2 Timothy 2:22.**
- In Practical Terms, it Must Be Our Priority- **Matthew 6:33.**
- What Is Righteousness?
- “the character or quality of being right or just”; it was formerly spelled “rightwiseness,”
(Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Vol. 2, p. 535).
- **Ephesians 4:21-24; 5:8-10; 2 Timothy 3:16-17.**

IV. Follow After Peace.

- **Hebrews 12:14; Romans 14:19-20;**
- Why Do Strife & Conflicts Happen?
- How Can We Prevent Fighting?
- **Ephesians 4:3; James 3:14-18.**

V. Follow Paul’s Example.

- **1 Corinthians 11:1– 4:15-17.**
- **Philippians 3:17.**
- **Philippians 4:9.**