

The Hidden Treasure

Lesson * 19: (Mt. 13:44; Prov. 2:1-5; II Cor. 4:3-4; Col. 2:3; COL 103-114)

In this lesson we will study the parable of the hidden treasure. Though it is one of Jesus' shorter parables, it teaches profound spiritual lessons. As we begin, let us take a look at the symbols which the parable contains.

The Customs of the Day

1. Where did people hide their treasures in ancient times? "In ancient times it was customary for men to hide their treasures in the _____." (COL 103)
2. For what three reasons did people bury their treasures in the earth in ancient times? "Thefts and _____ were frequent. . . . whenever there was a _____ in the ruling power, those who had large possessions were liable to be put under _____ tribute. Moreover the country was in constant danger of _____ by marauding armies." (COL 103)
3. How was it possible for hidden treasures to be lost? "But often the _____ of concealment was forgotten; _____ might claim the owner, _____ or exile might separate him from his treasure. . . ." (COL 103)
4. Could the treasure be found simply by walking over the place it was buried? "A man might pass over the place where the treasure had been _____. In dire necessity he might sit down to rest at the foot of a _____, not knowing of the riches hidden at its roots." (COL 104-105)
5. What would friends and relatives think of the person who sold all to buy the field? "His family and his neighbors think that he is acting like a _____. Looking on the field, they see no _____ in the neglected soil." (COL 104)
6. What was the man willing to do in order to purchase the field and find the treasure? "The finder of the treasure in the field was ready to part with _____ that he had, ready to put forth untiring _____, in order to secure the hidden riches." (COL 104; Mt. 13:44)

The Symbols of the Parable

7. What is symbolized by the field? "In the parable the field containing the _____ represents the Holy _____." (COL 104)
8. According to Ellen White, what does the treasure represent? "And the _____ is the treasure." (COL 104)

9. Is Ellen White's concept in harmony with the Bible? Notice the words of the apostle Paul: "But if the _____ be _____, it is hid from them that are _____. In whom the god of this world hath blinded the _____ of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious _____ of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (II Cor. 4:3-4)
10. What is meant by the silver and gold in the treasure? "Receive my _____, and not silver; and _____ rather than _____ gold." (Prov. 8:10)
11. What is far better to have than silver and gold? "How much _____ is sit to get wisdom than _____! And to get _____ rather to be chosen than _____!" (Prov. 16:16)
12. How does Proverbs 2:1-5 help us understand the meaning of the treasure? "If thou seekest her [wisdom] as _____, and searchest for her as for hid _____; then shalt thou understand the _____ of the LORD, and find the _____ of God."
13. What did David have to say about the value of the law of God? "The law [torah] of thy mouth is _____ unto me than thousands of _____ and _____." (Ps. 119:72)
14. Who is represented by the man who discovered and bought the treasure? "So the _____ of heavenly treasure will count no _____ too great and no _____ too dear, in order to gain the treasures of truth" (COL 104)

Why the Treasure is Hidden

15. What happens when people place earthly riches above the Word of God? "From them the treasures of His _____ are _____." (COL 106)
16. How does the field and the treasure apply to the Jewish people? "As a _____ treasure, truth had been intrusted to the _____ people. . . . They had the word of God [the field] in their hands; but the traditions which had been handed down from generation to generation, and the human _____ of the Scriptures, hid from them the truth [the treasure] as it is in _____." (COL 105)
17. Does God conceal His truth from men? "God does not _____ His truth from men. By their _____ course of action they make it obscure to _____." (COL 105)
18. What is true higher education, according to the Spirit of Prophecy? "The true higher education is gained by _____ and _____ the word of God. But when God's word is laid aside for books that do not lead to God and the kingdom of heaven, the education acquired is a _____ of the name." (COL 107)

Note: If what Ellen White says is true, most of the education which is imparted in worldly schools and in many of our own SDA schools is a perversion of true education.

19. What wise words of counsel about text books does Ellen G. White give to our educational institutions? “Instead of books containing the _____ of reputedly great authors, they choose the word of Him who is the greatest _____ and the greatest teacher the world has ever known. . . .” (COL 108)
20. Why did the Jews fail to find Christ in the Old Testament? “It required a _____ to receive changeless, eternal truth. Therefore they would not admit the most _____ evidence that God could give to establish faith in Christ.” (COL 105)

Note: In order to find Christ in the Scriptures, two things must happen. First, we must put all our effort and energy to dig deep into the Word. Second, we must be willing to give up all that which would keep us from “buying” Christ.

21. What did Jesus say to the Jews of His day? “Ye _____ the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have _____ life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not _____ to me, that ye might have life.” (Jn. 5:39).

Note: The Jews of Christ’s day searched the Old Testament Scriptures [the field] in order to find the treasure but came up empty because they rejected the treasure of Scripture–Jesus Christ. This is why Jesus said: “For had ye believed Moses [his writings], ye would have believed me; for he wrote about me.” (Jn. 5:46)

Searching for the Treasure

1. What did the man of the parable do when he found the hidden treasure? “when a man hath found, he hideth, and for _____ thereof goeth and selleth _____ that he hath, and buyeth that field.” (Mt. 13:44)
2. **Thought Question:** What do you think is meant by the act of selling all in order to buy the field? _____
3. What example from Adventist history illustrates what it means to search for hidden treasure? (See quotation # 11 the end of this material). _____
4. How did the pioneers approach Bible study? (Study quotation # 11 at the end of this material and write down several answers)
- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

5. Why do many fail to find the hidden treasures of God's word? "They are content with _____ work, taking for granted that they have all that is _____. They take the sayings of others for _____, being too _____ to put themselves to diligent, earnest labor, represented in the word as _____ for hidden treasure." (COL 109-110)
6. How important is a study of the Scriptures? "It is _____ for old and young not only to _____ God's word, but to _____ it with wholehearted earnestness, praying and searching for truth as for hidden treasure. . . . Our _____ depends on a knowledge of the _____ contained in the Scriptures." (COL 111)
7. How important is faith in the search for the hidden treasure of God's word? "To have faith means to _____ and _____ the gospel treasure, with all the obligations which it _____. . . . without the eye of faith [the seeker] cannot _____ the treasure." (COL 112-113).

Gems from Ellen White on the Hidden Treasure

8. "We are to regard the Bible as God's disclosure to us of eternal things--the things of most consequence for us to know. By the world it is thrown aside as if the perusal of it were finished, but a thousand years of research would not exhaust the hidden treasure it contains. Eternity alone will disclose the wisdom of this Book, for it is the wisdom of an infinite mind. Shall we, then, cultivate a deep hunger for the productions of human authors and disregard the word of God?" Counsels to Teachers, p. 443.
9. "The jewels of truth lie scattered over the field of revelation; but they have been buried beneath human traditions, beneath the sayings and commandments of men, and the wisdom from heaven has been practically ignored. Satan has succeeded in making the world believe that the words and achievements of men are of great consequence." Counsels to Teachers, p. 437.
10. "Thousands of men who minister in the pulpit are lacking in essential qualities of mind and character because they do not apply themselves to the study of the Scriptures. They are content with a superficial knowledge of the truths that are full of rich depths of meaning; and they prefer to go on, losing much in every way, rather than to search diligently for the hidden treasure." Counsels to Teachers, p. 460.
11. "The Bible is to be your standard, the living oracles of Jehovah are to be your guide. You are to dig for the truth as for hidden treasures. You are to find where the treasure is, and then you are to plow every inch of that field to get the jewels. You are to work the mines of truth for new gems, for new diamonds, and you will find them." Faith and Works, p. 77.
12. "These men [worldly authors] had received their talents from God, and every gem of thought by which they had been esteemed worthy of the attention of scholars and thinkers, belongs not to them, but to the God of all wisdom, whom they did not acknowledge. Through tradition,

through false education, these men are exalted as the world's educators; but in going to them students are in danger of accepting the vile with the precious; for superstition, specious reasoning, and error are mingled with portions of true philosophy and instruction. This mingling makes a potion that is poisonous to the soul,-- destructive of faith in the God of all truth. Those who have a thirst for knowledge need not go to these polluted fountains; for they are invited to come to the fountain of life and drink freely. Through searching the word of God, they may find the hidden treasure of truth that has long been buried beneath the rubbish of error, human tradition, and opinions of men.” Fundamentals of Christian Education, pp. 170-171.

13. “The wonderful symbol of the living bird dipped in the blood of the bird slain and then set free to its joyous life {Lev. 14:4-8}, is to us the symbol of the atonement. There were death and life blended, presenting to the searcher for truth and hidden treasure, the union of the pardoning blood with the resurrection and life of our Redeemer. The bird slain was over living water; that flowing stream was a symbol of the ever flowing, ever cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. . . . “ Sons and Daughters of God, p. 226.

14. “In those days there were many who searched for treasure which was supposed to be buried in certain localities where great cities had once stood. In the great thoroughfare of travel, where Jesus was then teaching, it was not unusual to meet persons who had come long distances on their way to where it was supposed hidden treasure could be found. The desire for great riches led them upon a journey fraught with many perils. They had left their avocations upon a venture that seldom proved successful. But if they secured a small treasure they redoubled their exertions, hoping to realize still greater riches. Jesus had this class of his hearers in view, when he thus illustrated the mysterious riches of his grace, which, once having attracted the heart of man, lead him to seek higher attainments and greater blessings. The more he realizes of the peace of God, the more he desires to drink deeper at the fountain of his love. The thirst for righteousness, the longing and seeking for its treasures, continually increase.

“In order to obtain a vast treasure that is supposed to be hidden in a field, or a gem that is of great and unknown value, the man who is seeking for riches invests all his substance in that field, or uses it to purchase the precious jewel, calculating that it will increase in value on his hands and bring him the fortune that he covets. So should the Christian, who desires the riches of Heaven, set aside all considerations that interfere with his eternal welfare, and put his soul into the work of securing the riches of Christ's love. His talents, his means, his energies, should all be applied in such a way as to win the approbation of God. Jesus directs the minds of his hearers to infinite riches, hidden where all may engage in searching for them, sure of being successful, never doomed to the disappointment of fruitless toil. He came from Heaven to direct the search. High and low, rich and poor, stand upon an equal footing, and none need seek in vain.” Spirit of Prophecy, volume 2, pp. 251-252.

15. “Above all other books, the word of God must be our study, the great textbook, the basis of all education; and our children are to be educated in the truths found therein, irrespective of

previous habits and customs. In doing this, teachers and students will find the hidden treasure, the higher education. Testimonies for the Church, volume 6, pp. 131-132.

16. “The Majesty of heaven was not discerned in the disguise of humanity. He was the divine Teacher sent from God, the glorious Treasure given to humanity. He was fairer than the sons of men, but His matchless glory was hidden under a cover of poverty and suffering. He veiled His glory in order that divinity might touch humanity, and the treasure of immense value was not discerned by the human race....

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). The treasure indeed is hidden under the garb of humanity. Christ is the unsearchable riches, and he who finds Christ finds heaven. The human agent who looks upon Jesus, who dwells by faith on His matchless charms, finds the eternal treasure.

“Christ does not use this parable to commend the man who hides the treasure until he can buy the field, but His object in using this illustration is to convey to our mind the value of spiritual things. To obtain worldly treasure, the man would make a sacrifice of his all, and how much more should we give for the priceless, heavenly treasure!” That I May Know Him, p. 58

17. “We have purchased the field of truth because of the treasure that is hidden therein. The rich gems of truth do not lie on the surface. You must dig for them. Take your Bible, and compare passage with passage, and verse with verse, and you will find the precious jewels of truth. You should put the precious gems of light in a beautiful setting, and hang them in memory's hall.” Review and Herald, April 16, 1889.

18. “My husband, with Elders Joseph Bates, Stephen Pierce, Hiram Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, was among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure.

“We would come together burdened in soul, praying that we might be one in faith and doctrine; for we knew that Christ is not divided. One point at a time was made the subject of investigation. The Scriptures were opened with a sense of awe. Often we fasted, that we might be better fitted to understand the truth. After earnest prayer, if any point was not understood, it was discussed and each one expressed his opinion freely; then we would again bow in prayer, and earnest supplications went up to heaven that God would help us to see eye to eye, that we might be one, as Christ and the Father are one. Many tears were shed.

“We spent many hours in this way. Sometimes the entire night was spent in solemn investigation of the Scriptures, that we might understand the truth for our time. On some occasions the Spirit of God would come upon me, and difficult portions were made clear through God's appointed way, and then there was perfect harmony. We were all of one mind and one spirit.”

“We sought most earnestly that the Scriptures should not be wrested to suit any man's opinions. We tried to make our differences as slight as possible by not dwelling on points that

were of minor importance, upon which there were varying opinions. But the burden of every soul was to bring about a condition among the brethren which would answer the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one as He and the Father are one.

“Sometimes one or two of the brethren would stubbornly set themselves against the view presented, and would act out the natural feelings of the heart; but when this disposition appeared, we suspended our investigations and adjourned our meeting, that each one might have an opportunity to go to God in prayer, and without conversation with others, study the point of difference, asking light from heaven. With expressions of friendliness we parted, to meet again as soon as possible for further investigation. At times the power of God came upon us in a marked manner, and when clear light revealed the points of truth, we would weep and rejoice together. We loved Jesus; we loved one another.” Christian Experience and Teaching of Ellen G. White, pp. 192-195.