

THE PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM  
“PARTICIPATION IN THE  
KINGDOM”

*Matthew 13:44-50*



**Theme:** In order to participate in the Kingdom of Heaven, one must appropriate it personally through faith in the King.

I. THE APPRAISAL OF THE KINGDOM – *13:44-46*

A. *TO SOME THE VALUE OF THE KINGDOM HAS BEEN HIDDEN* – v. 44

1. In this parable, the man stumbles across the “*treasure*” (to which the Kingdom of Heaven is compared) “*hidden in a field.*”
2. This “*treasure*” [θησαυρός - lit. a place where something is placed for safekeeping] was not lying on top for all to see, but required discovery.
3. Likewise, not all men have discovered the value of the Kingdom, incapable of comprehending what people who have found “the Way” see in it – cp. *Matthew 7:13-14; 1 Corinthians 2:14*
4. In this first of these coupled parables, notice that this man was not looking for it, he happens to stumble upon it quite accidentally – cp. *Isaiah 65:1.*

A. *TO SOME THE VALUE OF THE KINGDOM HAS BEEN ELUSIVE* – v. 45

1. “*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls ...*”
2. On the other hand, the parable of the Pearl reveals a man whose life’s pursuit is to find the “*one pearl of great value*” [πολύτιμος] – a man who is hunting diligently for it.
3. Pearls during this era were of greatest value – exacting great cost in their discovery as men often died in the attempt to harvest them
4. This man was searching for something to bring him satisfaction – realizing that he was missing something, but was not yet satisfied – cp. *Luke 13:24; Acts 17:27*

5. This man represents the religious man who, because God is drawing him has been seeking – only to find religion of unsatisfying value – until He comes upon Christ.
6. An old hymn declares it accurately:

*I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew  
He moved my soul to seek Him, seeking me;  
It was not I that found, O Savior true;  
No, I was found of Thee.*

## II. THE APPROPRIATION OF THE KINGDOM – **13:44-46**

### A. *IT MUST BE APPROPRIATED PERSONALLY*

1. In both of these parables, those who discover the Kingdom of Heaven found in Christ Jesus cannot be satisfied without Him.
2. That the Kingdom of Heaven must be personally appropriated is the crux of these two parables.
3. This raises the issue that people can exist in the Kingdom – that is, under the rule of Christ’s authority – and never personally appropriate Christ as their King – cp. **Matthew 8:12**.

### B. *IT MUST BE APPROPRIATED PASSIONATELY*

1. Once we see the need for personal appropriation, we ask ourselves “Is it possible to be superficial in our appropriation?”
2. Notice how that both parables involve recognizing the value of the Kingdom, the desire to personally appropriate it, and the degrees to which these men went to do so: they ***“went and sold all [they] had, and bought it.”***
3. Obviously, this is not teaching that we can literally purchase our salvation – the point is the passion or urgency involved in personally appropriating the Kingdom – cp. **Luke 9:57-62**
4. Others may have other hindrances to their willingness to personally appropriate Jesus Christ as their King – habits, relationships, career decisions, popularity, sinful pleasures, etc ...
5. In these parables, there is an economic exchange – a man gives everything he has in order to obtain that which is most priceless.

## *The Gospel According to Matthew*

6. In essence, when we come to Christ in salvation we do the same thing – the sinner gives up everything that he has to offer – the comparable rubbish of our sinful existence – for the priceless of Christ Jesus – cp. *Philippians 3:8-9*
7. The focus of the one in whom God is working becomes what is being gained – not on what is being given up ... that no longer matters!
8. This does NOT represent a human work in gaining salvation – but rather a part of the saving work of God worked out in the soul of the sinner by the Holy Spirit.
9. Are you willing to go and dispense of all you have? – cp. *Matthew 16:26*.

### **C. *IT MUST BE APPROPRIATED PROMPTLY***

1. Notice again, that this appropriation occurs after realizing the value of it, experiencing the desire to personally appropriate it, and the passion with which it is desired.
2. There is an inferred sense of urgency found in the eagerness of the man as he makes the arrangements to obtain it – cp. *2 Corinthians 6:1-2*.

## **III. THE ALTERNATIVE TO THE KINGDOM – *13:47-50***

### **A. *THE ACCUMULATION TO JUDGMENT* – *vv. 47-49***

1. Here we find the end judgment described by the one who has designed it – using an analogy to a fisherman using a huge “*dragnet*” to catch everything within its reaches.
2. Then, once the catch is drawn up upon the shore, they sit down and sort the catch – preserving the desired fish in various “*containers*” while discarding that which was to be discarded.
3. Not that “*the kingdom of Heaven is like a dragnet*” – moving through the world unseen by the “fish” to be caught within it.

When it touches the back of a fish, the creature simply swims a little further ahead of it, enjoying what appears to be permanent freedom. Men move about in this world imagining themselves to be free, fulfilling their own desires, with little knowledge that the net of judgment is coming closer and closer .... Finally, they will be dragged onto the shore, flailing as they enter death.” (MacArthur, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, p. 120)

4. Thus, men are storing up wrath until *“the end of the age [when] the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous,”* thinking they are outside the view of God’s righteous eye – cp. [2 Peter 2:9-13a](#).

**B. THE AUSTERITY OF THE JUDGMENT – v. 50**

1. The place where the discardable catch are cast is into *“the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*
2. Realizing that Jesus said twice as much about Hell as He did Heaven, we must recognize that to deny its reality is to denounce the authenticity of Jesus Himself.
  - a. Constant torment, misery and pain – [Mark 9:43](#)
  - b. Torment of both body and soul – [Matthew 10:28](#)
  - c. Torment experienced in varying degrees – [Matthew 11:22-23](#)
  - d. Torment that is everlasting – [Matthew 25:46](#).