

## Week 2

### 9/7/17: Hidden Treasure

**Verses:** Matt 13:44; Phil 3:7,8; Matt 16:26

This parable focuses on the man working the ground, there is no mention of the previous owner of the field. What is clear however is the value that each party placed upon the property, the original owner saw nothing more than a business transaction whilst the purchaser sacrificed everything he had to secure the treasure. If you owned this field knowing there was a great treasure hidden in its soil, you wouldn't part with it nor let anyone else stumble upon it, you would protect it at all cost. One man saw something so valuable he would give everything to have it, his Saviour and his faith meant more to him than anything else in this world. We are worth the sacrifice to Christ, is He worth the sacrifice for you?

*"This parable illustrates the value of the heavenly treasure, and the effort that should be made to secure it. The finder of the treasure in the field was ready to part with all that he had, ready to put forth untiring labour, in order to secure the hidden riches. So the finder of heavenly treasure will count no labour too great and no sacrifice too dear, in order to gain the treasures of truth." {COL 104.1}*

**Reflection:** What do you see as most valuable in your life? How precious is your faith, would you protect and cherish it as the man in the parable?

**Further Reading:** Christ's Object Lessons p103-114

### 10/7/17: The Pearl

**Verses:** Matt 13:45,46; John 3:16; Rev 3:21

The world has so much to offer when it comes to quick fixes and feel good remedies, sweet distraction's masking the troubles of life. The world of technology has taught us that what was modern today will be superseded tomorrow. This same principle applies with every aspect of our lives, tomorrow there will be something different promising relief for whatever new ailments exist. The pearls of the world offer short term relief and temporal satisfaction, we soon realise they are blemished and imperfect, they look attractive at a glance but each contains a fatal flaw. There is one perfect pearl that brings deep satisfaction and abundant joy, this pearl is obtained through diligent searching and sacrifice. The church started through men and women that saw greater value in the promises of Christ and heaven, for these the pearls of earth were nothing compared with that one perfect pearl.

*"These scenes are to be repeated, and with greater power. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the former rain, but the latter rain will be more abundant. The Spirit awaits our demand and reception. Christ is again to be revealed in His fullness by the Holy Spirit's power. Men will discern the value of the precious pearl, and with the apostle Paul they will say, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Philippians 3:7, 8." {COL 121.1}*

**Reflection:** The world offers substitutes and explanations to keep our eyes away from Christ the true pearl. Can you think of some examples and how they might affect you personally? (For example: Evolutionary theories attempt to remove the existence and authority of God in our lives...)

**Further Reading:** Christ's Object Lessons 115-121

## 11/7/17: The Net

**Verses:** Matt 13:47-50; John 3:17

To speak of sin is an uncomfortable subject for many, for it cuts to the heart of all and its affect can be seen around us so graphically. When Christ spoke of sin and judgement it was not to condemn, but out of love and mercy, to drive men to the open arms of their Saviour. We can spend countless hours blaming God for the state of the world or we can stop and see who made the first move when Adam and Eve sinned. Christ still makes that first move towards each of us just as He did back in the garden, the raw honesty which is employed to highlight sin is not designed to drive fear into the heart but to remove the veil of deception that sin hides under. We will all be challenged daily, we will face internal and external battles which cause us to have periods of doubt and fear. The fact is there is sin and we have a Saviour that we can cling to with absolute assurance, and that's the Gospel message.

“God does not desire the destruction of any. “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?” Ezekiel 33:11. Throughout the period of probationary time His Spirit is entreating men to accept the gift of life. It is only those who reject His pleading that will be left to perish. God has declared that sin must be destroyed as an evil ruinous to the universe. Those who cling to sin will perish in its destruction.” {COL 123.3}

**Reflection:** Christ spoke so openly about the nature of sin, as a parent you want to protect your children from anything that will harm them. Wouldn't you rather hear the truth as painful as it may be, knowing if it meant the difference between life and death?

**Further Reading:** Christ's Object Lessons p122-123

## 12/7/17: Asking to Give

**Verses:** Luke 11:1-13;

We have a human tendency to limit everything to “realistic” expectations, anyone that thinks outside these realms is usually labelled a dreamer. We tend to set goals when it comes to our own dreams and expectations that are within reach if we put in just that little bit of extra effort, we then pat ourselves on the back when we get there. Heavens blessings are limitless and unbridled, God wants us to think big with what He has given us, paying it forward, using what we have been blessed with. God gave to man through Christ, and Christ was the channel through which the blessings of God were poured out upon man. Christ wants to pour out blessings upon man not only to us but through us, everything given to Christ when He walked this earth is ours also. Let God work in and through you, what you receive increases as it is used.

*“Let the glorious conceptions of God possess your mind. Let your life be knit by hidden links to the life of Jesus. He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness is willing to shine in your heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will take the things of God and show them unto you, conveying them as a living power into the obedient heart. Christ will lead you to the threshold of the Infinite. You may behold the glory beyond the veil, and reveal to men the sufficiency of Him whoever liveth to make intercession for us.” {COL 149.3}*

**Reflection:** Has God worked a miracle through another person that helped you? Would you like to be a channel of blessing to someone else today? Consider your gifts and how these can be used to help others?

**Further Reading:** Christ's Object Lessons p139-149

## 13/7/17: Two Worshipers

**Verses:** Luke 18:9-14; Mark 14:27,29; John 21:15,17

The first thing that came to mind when I read this parable was the words, put yourself in their shoes. I can't help but see the love of God towards man, whilst rebuking one and giving hope to the other, He points each to the need of a Saviour. The Pharisee trusted in his obedience and ability to keep the standard, the publican was grieved because he couldn't keep the same. The greatest lesson we can learn from this parable is that we cannot trust our own abilities nor ever hope to live up to any standard set before us. As sinner's our only hope is Christ, He is our righteousness and hope, trust in Him alone. As He pointed the Pharisee and the tax collector towards heaven so He does for us today.

"For each of the classes represented by the Pharisee and the publican there is a lesson in the history of the apostle Peter. In his early discipleship Peter thought himself strong. Like the Pharisee, in his own estimation he was "not as other men are." When Christ on the eve of His betrayal forewarned His disciples, "All ye shall be offended because of Me this night," Peter confidently declared, "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." Mark 14:27, 29. Peter did not know his own danger. Self-confidence misled him. He thought himself able to withstand temptation; but in a few short hours the test came, and with cursing and swearing he denied his Lord. {COL 152.2}

**Reflection:** Be honest with yourself today, what do you need help with? What do you need to let go of? Give it all to Christ today

**Further Reading:** Christ's Object Lessons p150-163

## 14/7/17: "Shall Not God Avenge His Own?" (Part 1)

**Verses:** Luke 18:1-8; Rom 12:12; Eph 6:18

There is no surprise that we will go through troublesome times, tribulation is part and parcel of being a follower of Christ. We have a natural inclination to let what is happening to us cloud our better judgment causing us to disregard why it is happening. The theme of steadfast prayer and patience in tribulation echo throughout every passage of scripture, reminding us we are on the receiving end of a defeated foe's wrath. Christ asks us to hold our heads high and trust Him, He will avenge His own.

"The work of Satan as an accuser began in heaven. This has been his work on earth ever since man's fall, and it will, be his work in a special sense as we approach nearer to the close of this world's history. As he sees that his time is short, he will work with greater earnestness to deceive and destroy. He is angry when he sees a people on the earth who, even in their weakness and sinfulness, have respect to the law of Jehovah. He is determined that they shall not obey God. He delights in their unworthiness, and has devices prepared for every soul, that all may be ensnared and separated from God. He seeks to accuse and condemn God and all who strive to carry out His purposes in this world in mercy and love, in compassion and forgiveness." {COL 167.1}

**Reflection and small group discussion:** Read Matt 10:22 Discuss in your small group how this might impact your attitude towards troubles that seem to come your way.

**Further Reading:** Christ's Object Lessons p164-184

## 15/7/17: "Things New and Old"

There is no reading today, however, find some time to read the chapter "things New and Old" Think about the implications of putting what you have learnt into practise. Have a blessed and relaxing Sabbath.

**Further Reading:** Christ's Object Lessons 124-138