

The 9th Sunday after Pentecost
“The treasured Gospel of Jesus Christ!”
Matthew 13:44
July 26, 2026
Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for this 9th Sunday after Pentecost is from
our Gospel reading, Matthew 13:44.

“44 “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.”

So far our text:

We have before us in our Gospel reading are three more parables, beginning with our text of the parable of the hidden treasure. Then we hear the parable of the finding of the great pearl and, finally, the dragnet parable which catches all kinds of fish. Some are keepers and some are no good, like that catfish that you catch in the bay, thinking it might be a redfish or speckled trout. Saltwater catfish, unlike fresh water catfish, are “no bueno” for eating.

This dragnet parable is very similar to last week’s parable of the wheat and tares, which Pastor Richardson preached on while I was at our Synod’s National Convention. And we give thanks to God for Pastor Richardson bringing us God’s lifegiving Word.

The dragnet is the ingathering of all the people, the end of this age, when the Gospel of salvation ceases to be preached. And those that have heard and believed in Jesus are the wheat, the good fish. Those who have rejected God’s message of salvation are the tares, the bad fish.

For by the Gospel alone, that is, the message of salvation found in Jesus Christ alone... a poor sinner, you and me, are converted and sown as good seeds in this wicked world. The Son of Man, Jesus Christ does this. The devil, on the other hand, sows bad seed by obscuring the Gospel of truth so that wicked men, ugly tares spring up who hate the Gospel. Yes, the devil gives wicked men the truths that they want to hear. He tries to

tempt us with these same lies... that this life is where you can find happiness in whatever makes you feel good and alive. Eat drink and be merry for tomorrow we die.

Indeed, we will all die. There is an ingathering of the wheat and tares, and a separation – judgment day. The wheat, God’s believing people go to heaven, while the tares, the unbelievers are sent to eternal damnation where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. Yes, Jesus repeats this stark warning today as well, doesn’t He! He adds that they will be thrown into the “furnace of fire”.

Do you remember what Jesus said about the believers last week? **“Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”** Eternally shining with Jesus’ righteousness, given through faith by the power of the Gospel! Eternally in the presence of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in heaven. Is that not good news to hear this morning? So, Jesus says: **“He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”**

And so, Jesus gives us more parables for us to hear this morning that we may better understand the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. And believing, remain steadfast in the faith until the harvest, until the dragnet is pulled!

We thank God that the mystery of the Good News has been revealed to us. God has shown us where the treasure is! The Gospel of salvation in Jesus! Two weeks ago, we heard Jesus say:

Matthew 13:11

“He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.”

And these mysteries of salvation for our souls come to us through the Gospel in His Word and Sacraments, that is, His Word with the visible elements of water, bread and wine! So Paul says of God’s divinely called pastors:

1 Corinthians 4:1

“Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.”

We contemplate today how the Gospel is a greatly valued and greatly prized Treasure for all men!

“The Word of God and its precious Gospel are very available to mankind but is completely hidden and meaningless until God Himself reveals the meaning.”

The Gospel can do no good unless it is heard and believed, that is, that God reveals the X marking the life giving treasure. There are many treasures that man seeks but only one is eternally good for the soul – the Gospel.

Today’s parable is like the Coventry Direct commercial that you may have seen. An elderly man and woman are inside their house discussing how they are going to pay their bills, and then the camera pans to some miners underneath their house. “You’re sitting on a gold mine.” Sell your life insurance policy for needed cash. We’ll buy it from you! Yet, they can’t hear the miners. But you can, because you’ve seen the commercial.

Now I’m not advocating that you sell your life insurance policy if you have one, but that you hear about the gold mine that is below you, with you and in your very mouth – the Good News of Jesus Christ. Listen to Romans 10:

“6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down from above) 7 or, “ ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”

In the parable, a man found this treasure, accidentally – For God alone chooses when to reveal His mystery so that it may be confessed!

When Jesus went to the well in John 4, the woman at Sychar was looking for water to fill her jug and she “found the living water of Jesus the Savior”.

“22 You worship what you do not know;”

25 The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.”

26 Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.”

And the treasure was “found”! She left the water pot. Everything in this world doesn’t matter when you find the treasure that matters! It changes your life so that now

everything matters. Your life, your soul's forgiveness, your eternal life – the Gospel is a treasure that is permanent – cannot be separated from you – cannot be destroyed.

19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Jesus went to her. She didn't know that there was the treasure of treasures at the well until Jesus opened her heart – Jesus first showed her need, her sins, and then quenched her thirst with His love for her. And through her, Jesus revealed His treasure to her town!

Think of Paul – how he was travelling with much different motives, persecuting Christians, striving after Pharisaical righteousness. This was his treasure. And then Jesus found him. Stopped him in his tracks. Blinded him so that he would see clearly the true treasure with eyes of faith. Who are you?

God chose him. There is no decision theology in the Christian faith. It's by grace that we know the Priceless Treasure Jesus...

By grace we know that He is the Son of God, incarnate of the Virgin Mary...true Man who bore our sins...all the false gods that we have adored and treasured...He did this out of love for us, for you for me...though we deserved nothing but punishment the abominable treasure that the devil offers – eternity in hell – though that is ours, our inheritance from Adam, because of our sins – Jesus took it all.

He took it away and buried it at the cross. Yes, this worthless, horrific treasure was buried at the cross and Jesus placed a new treasure, the priceless treasure in our world – Himself – the Righteousness of God that reconciles the sins of the world. The whole world. That includes you and me. That is the Gospel treasure. It is hidden, but God wants all to know where X marks the spot. In His precious Gospel. His Word of Truth – Jesus the Savior of the World – The Way, the Truth, the Life.

To hear His Word and understand it, that is to believe it, means that the precious seed of the Gospel is planted in you and you are bearing fruit. God made Paul to bear much fruit!

“15 But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.”

“17 And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” 18 Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.”

X marks the spot of the baptismal font – where this treasure is given to you! Sealed to you. Guaranteed to you!

Listen to Paul as he speaks to Titus and us in chapter 3.

“4 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared,⁵ not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

That’s treasure! That’s eternal treasure! That’s mercy! Your baptism is your treasure for it unites you to Jesus! And it gives you all that Jesus has gained for the world.

“5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

So Paul describes this beautiful treasure in Philippians 3:

“7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ 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 ⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

God wants all people to know His Son Jesus and receive the resurrection of the dead, not the wailing and gnashing of teeth in the furnace of fire.

Jesus told a young man what he lacked to receive the true treasure – genuine repentance for not keeping God’s law perfectly, a forsaking of all that you treasure as your god in this life!

21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.” (Mark 10:17-21)

All your perceived goodness, your worthless “righteousness” ...get rid of it. Repent of it. And receive the true treasure – Jesus – the Gospel of His righteousness!

When the true treasure of the Gospel is rejected and seen as worthless, and sinful man continues to cling to his worthless idols and material treasures – the treasure of the Gospel remains hidden, and there is sadness...

“22 But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.”

But...but when it is received there is exuberant joy of the soul, exuberant joy in heaven. Joy!

“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.

Thesaurus – is the Greek word for treasure – treasury of words, synonyms that describe with elegance and beauty the word you want to embellish. Look at the word from different angles.

The Bible Thesaurus – the heavenly Gospel treasure of Jesus – we look at its beauty from all different angles. From heavens we have the angelic view...

“8 “Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I

have found the piece which I lost!’ 10 Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” (Luke 15:8-10)

So many words to describe the majesty and beauty of the Gospel – grace, mercy, peace, love, ransom for many, God so loved the world...

You have this treasure. Now bring it out for the world to see. Describe it that the Holy Spirit would through your word of the Gospel bring others to faith – that they would escape the eternal wailing and gnashing of teeth.

52 Then He said to them, “Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.”

Bring out your treasure of the Gospel – admire it cherish it as you read from the Old and New Testament. Receive the treasure of the Lord’s Supper often. Jesus brings His treasure out for you to receive and eat and drink with your mouth – His very body and blood – for your forgiveness. And you are filled with joy that your sins are forgiven! Heaven is yours! Now go and tell others where the treasure of the Gospel is! Tell others where X marks the spot. Lead them to the treasure and give them God’s Word that He would find them .

“6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. (2 Corinthians 4:6-8)

Amen.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)