

THE STORYTELLER

Week 9: Is Jesus Worth Everything?

Sermon Series:

For 13 weeks, we are going to unpack the parables of Jesus, investigating the parables from the Gospel of Matthew and Luke.

Jeff defined a parable as a story that explains our reality giving a new or greater understanding of the world around us. Specifically, concerning God and our relationship with God. Key to parables is their depth and layers, they are stories that come alongside our own circumstances.

As we go through this series remember Jeff's 4 steps to consider: 1. What is the context in which the parable is told? 2. What are the indispensable plot elements? 3. What was the meaning at that moment, in that setting? 4. How does that meaning adapt to our cultural setting today?

The purpose of this sermon series is to draw us in, pique our curiosity, and sit with Jesus. You are invited to pull up a chair ask questions, be confused, wonder, and listen to the parable of Jesus.

Message Focus:

Is Jesus Worth Everything?

The Passages: Matthew 13:44-52

Reflection Questions:

- 1.) Mark begins with Jesus proclaiming, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has come near, repent, and believe in the good news." In Mat. 13, Jesus describes that very kingdom "like", which is present and available through three short parables. Specifically, a treasure, a merchant, and a net. How do these pictures inform our understanding of the kingdom of heaven? What is common in all three of these examples, hint: think of action in relation to time. If someone were to ask you, "What is the Kingdom of heaven like?" How would you describe the kingdom?
- 2.) In the first two parables, what action is taken by the "someone" and the "merchant" in order to obtain the treasure and the pearl? What do these actions reveal about following Jesus and entering the kingdom of Heaven (i.e. how much does it cost?). How do these verses relate to Mat. 16:24-26? How do you weigh the value of the kingdom of God in relationship to the cost of discipleship?
- 3.) In reading these parables, there is value and cost associated with these parables. Reread each parable and pause to consider the whole: the object, the person, the process, and the result. How does each of these work together to paint a picture of the kingdom of heaven? Finally, how is the third parable related to the first two? As a preview to next week's sermon, compare 13:47-50 with 13:40-42. What is similar and what is different?