

Something Valuable

Parables of Jesus: Part 12 “Something Valuable”

Rev. Cameron D St. Michael – November 7, 2021

24th Sunday After Pentecost – All Saints Sunday

Readings: Matthew 13:44-46; Revelation 21:1-6

Reflection: Psalm 24

Greeting: Lord, your word has been tried and tested. How we love your word and remember your precepts. Your instruction is true! Your commandments are our joy! Help me understand so I can live! Praise the Lord! (*Psalm 119*)

Prayer: Almighty God, the author of our lives. We yearn to hear the word that you have for us today. Help us to lift up our ears that we may hear you. Open our eyes that we may see you. Rest upon our hearts that we may experience your love more deeply so that we may share that love with the world. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reflection: Psalm 24

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers. Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully. They will receive blessing from the Lord, and vindication from the God of their salvation. Such is the company of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. (Psalm 24 NRSV)*

We read the words of Psalm 24 and hear of God's glory. That we should trust in the Lord to guide us and lead us. That God's might and majesty shines forth to show us the way. How do you give thanks for God's constant presence? How to you display your love of God to others? How can we share in the hope of Christ's redeeming grace?

Prayer: O God, teach us to listen more closely. Guide us in understanding your ways so that we may grow together in wisdom. Help us to recall your love for us that is always with us. Help us to rest in our risen Savior. Hear our prayers on this day, raised up in Jesus' name, and show mercy to your children. May your Spirit guide us to peace and light everlasting. Amen.

Now let the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

Sermon:

Our scripture readings for today comes from the Common English Bible. Our first reading for today comes from Matthew chapter 13 verses 44 through 46.

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure that somebody hid in a field, which someone else found and covered up. Full of joy, the finder sold everything and bought that field. “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls. When he found one very precious pearl, he went and sold all that he owned and bought it. (Luke 18:9-14 CEB+)”

Our second reading for today comes from Revelation chapter 21 verses 1 through 6. *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne say, “Look! God’s dwelling is here with humankind. He will dwell with them, and they will be his peoples. God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more. There will be no mourning, crying, or pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” Then the one seated on the throne said, “Look! I’m making all things new.” He also said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” Then he said to me, “All is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will freely give water from the life-giving spring. (Revelation 21:1-6 CEB+)”*

This is the word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

For this All Saints Sunday, we look at a set of parables and a reading from Revelation. The exploration we have is about joy and love. We get a reflection of the joy of heaven in our parables. That the kingdom is like a treasure, that when it is discovered that it is worth giving up everything for it. What could be this good? We get another idea of this love and joy in Revelation. In our reading we see this new thing God is making. God being with us, wiping away every tear, with no more death, no more mourning, no more crying, no more pain. And with this I had to think not only of the joy of that entire concept by itself, this idea of a place free from the struggles and free from the hardships. I was reminded of how precious this is, and how we seek it out because of how much value it has. But I also thought about the joy that it gives in knowing that is the home offered to those we love that have gone before us. And it speaks to the value of hope.

In many ways, it's hard for us to imagine the kingdom without imagining what it's like to be there. But I think one of the things that weighs most on our minds is what it's like for those that we've lost, gone from this life on to the next. The question becomes what is it left? The answer is hope. Hope in finding something so valuable that it is far greater than anything we could imagine. Hope in finding something so wonderful that it goes far beyond anything else we could dream of. Hope in something so good that we can stop, and we can smile even in the

midst of hardship, even in the midst of loss. And that's one of the big things that came to mind today is that it's a hope that allows us to continue living. It's a hope that allows us to celebrate those who have gone before. I think it helps because we know how valuable those lives are to us, and so we gain an even greater hope in knowing the love that God has for us all.

Because it's not always easy to celebrate. It's not always easy to say we have hope. But our parables for today remind me that that hope is worth holding on to. That that hope can be more precious than anything else we can imagine because it's that hope that keeps us going. The hope of a brighter tomorrow. Hope for those that are no longer with us in this life. Hope for a future in this life and in the next. Because we know what we've been told, and we know what God has promised. Because we know we can face tomorrow. This day is a reflection of our own hope, both a celebration and a mourning, because there is no way to separate the two. Because even though our hope may be set on all that God has promised us, there is still the pain of separation. And yet we have the precious hope of the future. That day when we will be together fully once again. It also carries with us the hope that all those that have gone before us are still united with us in Christ. Because he is in us, and we in him, that we are joined together. That beyond death we have the joy of life eternal, there for each of us.

So, we remember those who have gone before, those who have ended their journey in this life, and we remember how much value God finds in each life. We recall the love and joy that those lives created. That each is something precious in the sight of God. We remember also the hope that they give us. This day we remember the lives lived that are no longer with us. But with them comes hope, hope that we are still united. Hope that we carry that love in our hearts always. Hope that they are risen in our Savior Jesus Christ. That they live in our hearts and that they live in him. It reminds us of the joy of this life and in the joy of the next. That Christ is with us today, binding us together with all those who have gone on into that heavenly kingdom.

But that we are still bound together in love. That it is love that holds us together. It is love that is the precious thing that unites all things in the kingdom. That it is love that is so valuable that everything else is worth putting aside. That it is love that brings us joy. It is love that brings us hope. It is love that unites us in life, in death, and in resurrection. It is love that is worth finding. It is love that is worth saving. It is love that is worth believing. It is the love that sets us free. It is the love not thinking solely of itself. But a love that would give all for all. A love that would suffer and die on a cross. Just so that we would understand we are loved to understand that that love transcends death, that that love unites us that that love is precious. And that love is with us today. It's the love that makes all things new. It is the love that is worth finding and keeping. The love of Christ that dwells within our hearts when we invite Christ in. The love of the Holy Spirit when we follow and do what we need to do. The love of the Father that transcends time itself, steadfast down through the ages. It is a precious thing that unites us, not just in life, not just in death, but in all things. It is love that gives us hope. And it is love

that gives us the ability to carry on. And it is love, that most valuable of things, that binds us together forever and always. Amen.

All Saints Sunday Remembrance of Names:

Those who have finished their journey:

Ken Bushur	Jerry Holsapple	Jason Powell
John Blade	Sheila Holsapple	Trinity Powers
Macel Buss	Martha Hurst	George Reisner
Hubert "Tip" Carlen	Emily Jobe	John Robey
Wilma Clark	Wendell Kemper	Karen Robinson
Irma Cressap	Terry Kemper	Winona Saathoff
Lowell Cutright	John Kinzel	Andy Shull
Doris Devall	Gene Mayhood	Patricia Taggart
Alan Dunne	Judith McGinnis	Steve Titus
Mark Fulton	John Millsap	LeRoy Wetzel
Emily Gerald	Bud Mitchell	Lois Woolever
Elaine Carr Gregory	John Moran	Morris Wright
Dean Hawes	Harold Moss	Davey Yaw
Bill Hayden	Matt Peters	
Charlie Henderson	Brent Pitcher	

All other who finished their journey in the last year

All those whom we still hold dear in our hearts

Prayer of Confession and Pardon: God of grace and glory, we thank you that you judge us not by the perfection of our actions, but by our readiness to live boldly by faith. Help us, as individuals and as a congregation, to trust you and follow where you lead, that in Christ your name may be glorified in all the earth. May we find forgiveness in your love. Amen.

Offering: If you are so moved to make an offering, you may send it to the church treasurer, or you may send it to the PO Box listed below. We are still the church, and the church still needs your support to keep doing all the important work that we do.

Lord's Prayer

Dismissal with Blessing: May we go forth reflecting God's love in our lives as we go forth in the peace of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Current Series – Parables of Jesus

Our series is *Parables of Jesus* and will be looking at different parables that Jesus told. Each week I will ask that you read and reflect on the parable coming up. Feel free to discuss it with others or to get together to read and study. I would love to hear your reflections after the Sunday message!

November 14th – Changing Your Mind – Matthew 21:28-32

A parable about what it means to be willing to change when needed.

Prayer List

Rev Charliam Renner	Bishop Frank Beard	Our Conference	Our Healthcare Workers
Patti Corder and the Greenup Ambulance Crew		Angie Veach	Eric Veach
Cathy Devall	Brock McMorris	Ed & Verna Titus	Henry Catey
Jake Kiser	Cindy Cisney	Nancy Hoke	Don Wells
Tricia Adkins	Don Stewart	Ronnie Winstead	Annie McMorris
Dwight Parsons	Lauren Stewart	Phyllis Gable	Sage Martin
Dalton McFarland	Darrell Quick	Ruth Ann Finley	Sandy Starwalt
Jodie Bunch	Andie, Ed, Alex, & Katie Kulach	Richard Durham	Kathy Hanks
Wayne Carrell	Gary & Mary Winterrowd	Leo Smith	Bonnie Hite
Lavada Markwell	Greg Williams	Eloise Buffenmeyer	Martha Roberts
Charlie & Charlotte Baxter	Paul Schulte	Gene Laymon	Family of John Blade
Family of Charlie Henderson	Tom Finley	Family of Martha Hurst	

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