

A friend of Gary Kildall, a man called Paul Carroll, wrote a book about this. And he said, Gary Kildall was a smart guy.

But he just didn't realise how big the deal was. He just didn't realise how big the deal was.

[26 : 38] And he lost out big signs. Now this evening, in this church and in many other buildings across Harris and Lewis and across Scotland and across the world, God comes calling.

And God is offering what you could call the offer of a lifetime. A big deal. It's a big deal. And yet, I suppose, if we were to have a guest, probably about 90% of our community here don't think it's a big deal.

Because I would estimate, probably, if Tadbart and Harris are similar to other places in Scotland, about 90% at least, of this community tonight is doing something else.

It's decided that they have something more important to do than to meet with God tonight. They don't think it's a big deal. They don't realise how big a deal it is.

And, again, as I said, Jesus tonight comes calling. Jesus Christ is with us by His Holy Spirit in this room. And He reaches out to people who haven't already met with Him or given their lives to Him or accepted Him as their Saviour and as their Lord.

[28 : 08] He comes to meet with all of us. But in particular tonight, I think, through this passage and through this parable, He speaks to those who as yet don't know Him.

And I think we're going to discover that this is a big deal. The fact that it's the biggest deal of all. As we read through the Gospels and as we read Jesus' teaching, we see quite clearly, it becomes apparent, that His teaching is focused on the Kingdom of Heaven.

Again, we've seen in these parables, the Kingdom of Heaven is like pleasure. The Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. His supreme focus was not so much on moral or ethical teaching, although there is much moral and ethical teaching in the teaching of Jesus.

He is focused rather on spiritual teaching. Spiritual truths concerning the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of God. He began His ministry in Matthew chapter 4, verses 17 and verse 23.

The Kingdom of Heaven is near, repent and believe the good news. We find that in Mark's Gospel too. He sent His apostles out proclaiming the same message. The Kingdom of Heaven is near.

[29 : 27] So, Jesus, at the heart of Jesus' teaching is the Kingdom of Heaven. And again, tonight we're going to look at two of these parables that speaks about the Kingdom of Heaven.

The parables of treasure and the parables of the parent of the bride. So, what is the Kingdom of Heaven that Jesus speaks about? What exactly is He talking about here?

He's not obviously talking about a physical place. Rather, He's talking about a spiritual reality. And here is how one commentator, a man called William Hendrickson, describes the Kingdom of Heaven.

Hendrickson says, the Kingdom of Heaven is the glad recognition of God's rule over our hearts and lives.

Note the word glad. It's not a grudging recognition, but a glad recognition. It's a joyful thing. And what Jesus is saying in the parables is that the most important thing for all of us, indeed the most beneficial, the most precious thing for all of us, is to willingly, to gladly submit our hearts and minds to God's rule.

[30 : 53] Not to grudgingly give in to God, because we have no choice in the matter, but to willingly come and bow the knee to Christ and make Him, gladly make Him Lord of our lives.

The Kingdom of Heaven is the glad recognition of God's rule over our hearts and lives. Glad, joyful. And indeed in these verses that we've read, verses 42 to 44, Jesus makes clear that this is the most precious truth that we can know.

He calls it a hidden treasure. He says that it's a pearl of great price. I wonder tonight in here how we view the Kingdom of Heaven, or how we view the rule of God over our hearts and lives.

How we look at that, how we consider that. Would we consider it to be a great treasure and a precious thing?

Maybe there are a number of people in here tonight to whom this treasure is still hidden. To those of us who have acknowledged Christ and received Christ, we have no doubt that it is the greatest treasure, and that it is precious.

[32 : 12] But maybe there's people in here tonight to whom this treasure is hidden. Maybe you can understand tonight a grudging submission to God's rule.

But you don't really see it as a good deal. Maybe you don't even see it as a big deal. And indeed maybe right now you are experiencing a grudging submission to God. Maybe you are a young person, maybe you are a young person, maybe drag you along. Maybe you are an old person.

Maybe right now you are experiencing a grudging submission to God just by coming to church. And maybe it brings you no joy.

And maybe you haven't even considered that it's even possible for one moment that submitting your life to Christ, to God, would bring you joy.

[33 : 11] If you haven't understood that, then let me tell you, you are missing out on life's greatest treasure, and God's which is blessing.

But you are within touching distance of a hidden treasure and a peril of great Christ.

Let's look at these parables together. The first thing that we notice, I think, about these parables is that there are differences here between these two. We talk about two men.

One man who found a treasure, one who found a peril. There are differences between them. And we can look at that first. But there are also similarities. Let's look at the difference between them.

The first one, he stumbles across this treasure quite unexpectedly.

He wasn't particularly looking for any treasure. It was hidden and he comes across it, very likely digging in a field. And suddenly, before his very eyes, he sees this amazing treasure.

[34 : 19] Now, at that time, there were no banks or building societies. It was quite commonplace for people to bury the valuables in the ground. To keep them safe.

And perhaps, we don't know, perhaps a previous owner of the field had done just that. And maybe he had died without letting people know where he left his valuables. Again, we don't know.

And possibly this man had wrecked at the field. And while he was out thinking, his spade hit something. And there we are, hidden treasure. This most wonderful treasure has come across. We know how it happened. But we know that it happened.

This man was not looking to find treasure. And yet, he comes across quite unexpectedly. Now, that can happen.

And it might happen to somebody in here tonight. Because God deals with many people in that way. Take, for example, the Apostle Paul. The last thing that Paul expected to find was a great treasure in Christianity.

[35 : 17] Quite the opposite. He considered it quite worthless. He went around severely persecuting the Church of Jesus Christ. And yet, suddenly, just like that, he is confronted by Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus.

And everything in his life changes. And over 20 years later, this is what Paul says in Philippians chapter 3.

I consider everything a loss. Compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord, I consider them rubbish. That I may gain Christ.

Quite out of the blue, like the man in this parable, Paul discovers hidden treasure. He realizes that knowing Jesus is the most important and precious thing in heaven or in earth or anywhere else.

And God does sometimes deal with us in that way. Isaiah 65, verse 1, I have revealed myself to those who did not ask for me, and have been found by those who did not see me.

[36 : 27] I don't know. Maybe tonight God is going to deal with someone here in this very way.

Maybe someone in here tonight who is really not expecting to find treasure in church will meet with Jesus Christ.

God will undoubtedly do that today. Whether here or in some other place. And as the young person was talking this afternoon about C.S. Lewis' biography, autobiography, it is called Surprised by Joy.

And C.S. Lewis suddenly came across Christ. And he was confronted with Christ. he discovered God's kingdom he discovered Jesus for himself and he called his autobiography surprised by joy

wouldn't it be great if someone in here tonight were surprised by joy suddenly realizing in the midst of an ordinary service that they have found the greatest treasure that they could possibly find in

Jesus Christ well Jesus Christ is here he promises to be here he tells us that where two or three

people gather in his name he's here by his spirit and Jesus Christ keeps his promises you see God will definitely do that to somebody somewhere today somebody somewhere will be today surprised

by joy as they meet with Jesus Christ and realize that he is the greatest treasure in a peril of new Christ why not here it would be wonderful if God were to do that tonight

I really pray that that would happen the second man was searching for treasure he was looking he knew there was a precious pearl out there somewhere something so beautiful and precious that if he found it it would give his life new meaning and purpose and joy and for years this man had been diligently searching maybe that's you tonight maybe tonight in here you have been searching maybe you've been coming to church for a year and maybe you've been looking for something that will change your life you know that some deep down that there is something missing in your life that's something that you need and you hear about Jesus Christ and maybe you like exactly as you hear about but as yet you just haven't found him have you been searching for you really want me to believe and trust in God you know what

God is seeking you to and he has a promise for you and that promise is in Proverbs chapter 8 verse 17 if you seek after God you will find him and the reason for that is that God is seeking for selected Christ ask and you shall receive seek and you shall find knock and the door will be opened up to you and that's not me saying that that's God's promise and you need to hold on to that promise if you are seeking and if you have been seeking and if you've been coming to church for a year God says keep asking keep asking keep knocking keep seeking so we see that there's differences between these two men but of course there are also similarities look at the similarities for a few minutes firstly this is important they both recognised the value of what they'd found they both understood that what they had discovered was precious they both realised this is really important this is precious unlike Gary Kilnall again the question for us is as today once again

[40 : 50] God comes calling and Jesus Christ reaches out through the gospel and presents us with the truths and the treasures of the kingdom of heaven do we recognise their value do we recognise and realise the true value and worth of Jesus Christ and his gospel do we understand that they are hidden that he is a hidden treasure and a pair of great prize I assume there are many things in life that we place value on we all have our own value systems we value our bones and our money and our career and possessions and relationships but what about the gospel what about the kingdom of God how much is that deal worth to us tonight or do we not think it's a big deal at all well Jesus says clearly it's a big deal because there is much stake here tonight first of all there is much at stake here tonight because there is much to lose

Jesus said what shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul what Jesus is saying is that our souls are at stake this is the big this is the biggest deal of all our love and what Jesus is saying is that our souls are at stake Jesus makes very clear probably clearer than any other person who has written or spoken through the bible that there is an alternative to the kingdom of heaven the two passages on either side of this the parable of the weeds and the parable of the net that we've read make that very clear this is how it will be at the end of the day the angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth how I wish I could say to you that the reality is different but I can't I can't because Jesus Christ makes clear that there are two options two alternatives G.K. Chesterton said this he said hell is God's great compliment to the reality of human freedom and the dignity of human personality because Chesterton says because God is saying to us you are significant I take you seriously choose to reject me choose hell if you will and I will let you go there so how much is it worth to you to save your soul from hell it's a big deal because there is much to lose it is also a big deal because there is much to gain

Jesus said I have come that you may have life and have it to the full what price can we put on having life to the full of knowing God's love God's presence God's peace God's strength in this life and being with him through all eternity what is it worth to me to know that all my sins are forgiven that I am eternally secure what price can I put on knowing God as my father what price can I put on knowing that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for me Jesus says in John 14 I am the way and the truth and the life no one comes to the father except through me now these are words that got Jesus into a lot of trouble when he walked his heard they are words that still get him into trouble because people say that's really awful that's so arrogant claiming that there's no other way to God except through Jesus Christ and yet as I as a sinner who knows my need of forgiveness I know that I need to come back to God as I look through history and as I look through religion and as I look through mythology and as I look through all of human experience I can find no one who says I go to prepare a place for you and if I go to prepare a place for you then I will come back and receive you to myself so that where I am there you will be also I know of no one else who has said I

have died for your sins I can find no one in history or in literature or anyone else who says that who makes the claims that Jesus tried to and I know of no one else to whom I can entrust my eternal soul because no one else says I am going to prepare a place for you and I will come and receive you to myself so that where you are where I am there you will be also what price is it for me to know these things and to know that my soul is safe and secure that God has provided for us for me in Jesus

[46 : 19] Christ the Savior who has died for me to save me from hell to pay the price for my sins so that I can become a child of God to those who believed in him Jesus gives the right to become the children of God children of the King princes and princesses you know in this world people strive for position Jesus offers us the position of being princes and princesses child children of the King there is no greater promotion if you like there is no he makes us the children of God princes and princesses what price is it worth what is it worth for me to know that what is it worth for you to know that and this is not something that we should acknowledge grudgingly when you think of it but reach out for gladly receive into our hearts and into our lives it's a big deal there is too much at stake to do otherwise and these men recognized that they saw that clearly they recognized the value of what they had found and I wonder tonight if we really understand the value of what has been placed before us by Christ tonight through the gospel secondly these men were similar in the sense that they were determined to have this treasure and I'm sure that you will all agree that anyone who becomes aware of a treasure that is available to him or to God and just sits there in the hope that somehow someone will come along and give them that treasure would be very foolish

I remember a number of years ago I was a treasurer of the community association in Bernra and we were building a new hall and we knew that there were grants available so we got this huge book with names and addresses of grant giving bodies now we could quite easily have put the book on the table and sat there as a committee and said well now let's wait and see if someone will realise that we're looking for money for a new hall and send us a cheque that would have been really crazy wouldn't it no we didn't do that we opened up the book and we started reading and we started filling in forms and applying with S.M.

off and we got something I don't know a lot of money here's a book and in here are all the details that we need the word of God tells us what we need and in here is hidden treasure and pearls of great price here is Jesus Christ who is the hidden treasure who is the pearl of great price there's a book that tells us about it and here's the verse again ask and you shall receive seek and you shall find not and the door shall be opened to you and again are you sitting with this book in the hope that somehow something is going to happen what does God say ask and see and know so the men recognized the value of this treasure from this pearl and they were determined to have it and thirdly the men were willing to give up everything that they had to have this treasure they sold everything they had and they bought the land and the pearl because they realized that nothing else that they had possessions or money or property meant anything if they didn't have this treasure they realized that anything else they had in this world was in one sense worthless unless they had this treasure and this pearl they were prepared to part with everything in order to have it now does this mean that we can buy our way into the kingdom of heaven does this mean that the message here is to come and buy your way and well no it doesn't it doesn't mean that at all the crucial message is make sure that you don't allow anything else in all the world to become more precious to you than your need to enter

God's kingdom put aside everything else that would stand in the way of your salvation or in the way of you coming to know Jesus Christ like property or possessions or whatsoever for they are not precious at all if they stop you from entering the kingdom of God we cannot buy a way into the kingdom of God because the price for entrance has already been paid not only do we not have the where will fall to buy a way it's not necessary because the entrance has already been paid I'm reminded of a story of a young boy who went to church and his mum gave him 50 pence for the collection and he went off to the church and he came back and he still had his 50 pence and the mum says did you not put the collection in the plate oh no mum he said I was quite lucky he said when

I was coming to the church he was coming along the road with granddad and he paid me in we can't pay our way in because it's already been paid Christ is paid for Christ but it will cost us in one sense because we are called to repent of sin we are called by God to turn away from our sins we saw that on Saturday morning all that associates us with the first Adam as we look in our own

hearts and lives and see the sinfulness and the disobedience and the stuff that really is bad and that separates us from our holy God we are called by God to repent to turn away from that to get rid of anything that stands between us and him because nothing is more precious than his love in Christ it's not enough just to know about it it's not enough just to understand its value we need to lay hold upon it we need to appropriate this for ourselves and that's what these men did and that's the last similarity they acquired the treasure they laid hold of it what does that really mean well we need to lay hold on this through repentance and faith and trusting and believing that Jesus

[53 : 44] Christ when he says I have died for your sins and as he has said in the most wonderful way this morning God when we trust in Christ forgets he throws our sins and casts them into the sea of his forgetfulness he has the power to erase them as they never happened what a wonderful wonderful precious gift what could be more precious as I look back on my own life and see again the sins and the mess and the stuff that's there that I've done and yet I can believe God's word that he says it is forgotten it is washed clean by the blood of Jesus Christ what price did he pay for that but we have to lay hold on it and we have what does that mean what does it mean to lay hold on on the gospel and the claim of God well we need with our mind to believe Christ we need to believe what he says accept his word as being the truth we need to believe in him trust him as our saviour with our mind we grasp hold we lay hold of the truth of the gospel with our hearts we lay hold of the love of the gospel and we respond we let the truth of God's love for us and Christ drop from our minds to our hearts knowing that we are loved more than we could ever begin to imagine without wills we obey him we make an out and out commitment to Jesus we need to make a whole hearted response that understands the value of what is on offer here tonight our souls are at stake we've made that clear

Jesus makes that clear that we can't lose our souls and that there is nothing on earth that can possibly compensate us for that Gary Kilthorne didn't realize how big the deal was and he lost out big style and I wonder tonight where we stand I have no words that can convince you the Holy Spirit has to convince you of the truth of this but I pray that the Holy Spirit would apply these words of Christ to your hearts and that tonight you would see what a big deal this is not only in what you can lose but what you can gain if the Son sets you free then you will be free indeed I have come that you may have life and have it to the fold you you ask is it possible that 90% of the population are going to miss out on this deal as you said probably 90% of our community is not in church tonight and has really no desire to be here and sees no big deal in all of this and you ask is it possible that 90% of the population of this country are going to miss out on this deal because they don't think it's important because they don't accept what is at stake because they don't believe the word of God yes it's possible I pray that it's not the case but it's not about human opinion it's about the word of God you see I don't know how many hundreds of years ago 99% of the population of the world thought that the earth was flat while I see as about the circle of the earth 99% of the world's population was wrong and their opinion didn't change the shape of the earth not by one centimeter please don't let people's opinions stop you from engaging with the word of God and discovering for yourselves that this is the truth and that there is a great treasure and a peril of great surprise and that this is a big deal Jesus says again for what shall it profit a man that gains the whole world and loses his soul but what shall a man give in exchange for his soul have we recognised tonight that a treasure is being offered to us the salvation of our souls freely offered to us if we just come to Christ turn from our sins and trust in his word to the cross or are we saying well that's too much I don't really think that's a big deal that means I have to give up A B C D well whatever you're holding on to tonight and it's stopping you from coming to class I hope it's worth it because it's a big deal and if you prepare to put your soul at stake for something that this world is offering you I would say we need to rethink and to ask God to show you maybe you're saying to God no the cost is too great whether it be in relationships that you have maybe there's somebody who you know in your family or in your life who would I don't know maybe even not speak to you if you become a Christian I don't know maybe there's something with your relationship that's stopping you and you're saying no the cost is too great this morning we look at the cross if tonight you want to turn to God and say I'm sorry Lord but the cost is just too much then turn God will point you to Calvary and say look at the cross and see what it cost me I have given everything for you in my son Jesus Christ as I said I can't convince you I can't change your hearts only the spirit can do that but I believe with all my heart that this is the truth and I believe it because I know this is God's word and I believe it because it's my own history it's my own experience in life when I turned to Christ when I accepted and

acknowledged my sins and sought forgiveness and sought new life Christ knew and I changed my life and maybe I was here and I were sharing some of that testament later on but in the meantime [60 : 48] I just want to say to you again Jesus Christ is here tonight and again focus on what that older elder said to Spurgeon as he sat in the gallery of that church and again I'm out of words so I'm quite glad but all the old elder could say was look to Jesus and I say that again tonight that's all I can say to you look to Jesus because Jesus Christ is here and for one look at him the child clergy was saved and again that's the same rest is history Gary Gary killed all lost out big style I know money is not the most important thing but he lost out because he didn't realize it was such a big deal tonight

I implore you don't just walk away from Christ don't just go home I did it so often I would hear the word of God preached in the church and it would go through to my heart and by the time I got into the car and got home I was more interested in a cup of tea than I was in my soul please don't do that today if you hear my voice do not harden your heart let's pray and gracious God and loving Father we thank you for the gospel we thank you for this hidden treasure this pearl of great Christ and we thank you Lord that you come again here tonight to offer this hidden treasure this pearl of great Christ help us Lord to understand first of all the value of this what you are offering us the salvation of our souls help us Lord God also that you understand that the price has already been paid that we have to receive a gift help us to understand that what is required of us is repentance and faith to trust in eternal sin and to believe in

Christ help us Lord just to open our hearts to your spirit because the important thing is not that we are seeking you but that you are seeking us and that you are here tonight doing just that and we pray in Jesus name and for his glory Amen we will conclude our service by singing in mission praise 708 mission praise 708 to God do the glory great things he hath done so loved he the world that he gave us his son he yielded his life atonement for sin and opened the life to that all in middle and praise the Lord let's sing together to God be the glory and now may grace and mercy and peace from almighty God Father Son and Holy Spirit one God rest upon us and remain with us now and ever more