

Camp Copass Boys Camp 2007 – Bible Study #1

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Theme: Treasure Hunter

"Your Greatest Treasure"

Memory Verse: The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. Matthew 13:44a

Bible Study Text: Matthew 13:44-46

Object: To help boys understand that their greatest treasure is Jesus and the salvation He offers.

Charles Mason found an unexpected treasure in his closet. Charles “Smoke” Mason recently cleaned out his closet and discovered an old baseball uniform. Mason was a baseball player. He never made it to the big leagues. He was a minor league pitcher in the New York Yankee's system in the 1930's. However, he is about to make more money because of his baseball career than the rest of his teammates combined.

When Mason played baseball, teams were not as profitable as they are today, so they had to be more frugal. One of the strategies to hold down costs was to get as much wear from a uniform as possible. Many teams would collect all the uniforms from the major league players and distribute them to minor leaguers the following year.

In 1937, Mason was assigned the uniform with the Yankee's number nine on the back. It was the same uniform worn by a rookie named Joe DiMaggio in 1936. It was the only year that he wore that particular number, changing to number five the next year.

Today, the uniform in Mason's possession since 1937 is considered one of the rarest of baseball artifacts. Predictions are that it will bring \$600,000 at an auction in the next few weeks. For nearly seventy years, it has been collecting dust and cobwebs in the closet.

[Source: Terry Austin, “Stumbling Across a Treasure.” E-mail, Dec 15, 2005. www.churchstewardship.org]

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What is the most valuable treasure you have? Jesus told a story about the Kingdom of Heaven. He said it is like treasure hidden in a field: "When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field."

When Jesus spoke about the Kingdom of Heaven He was including everything that our salvation means, both present and future. Truly our salvation is the greatest treasure we can ever possess.

In Jesus' time there were no banks for people to put their money in, so people would often simply hide it in some obscure place or even bury it where only they would know its location.

We might assume in Jesus' story that this man was a farmer who rented some land. In the process of farming he uncovered the treasure, which had probably been put there years before and forgotten. Probably he plowed up the box and when he went to

see what was in it, he was overjoyed to find it full of treasure. The field was not his, so, by rights, the treasure was not his either. Immediately he hid the treasure again and joyfully went and sold everything he owned and bought the field.

The lesson of this little story seems to be that our salvation is so precious that we could consider it a treasure worth more than all else we have or could possibly have. It indicates that you might be the poorest person in the world, but if you are saved, you are the richest person in the world.

The Apostle Paul had a similar thing in mind when he wrote these words, "I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." (Philippians 3:8 NIV)

Another idea that Jesus may have wanted us to understand from this story is that the farmer discovered this great treasure suddenly and quite by accident. But when he saw it, he knew immediately its worth.

Sometimes people discover the treasure of God's salvation the same way. They are going about their business at school or play, and suddenly God shows them the great treasure of His Kingdom--what it means to be a Christian and have eternal life in heaven. It is the most precious treasure we will ever receive.

God may speak to your heart this week. Will you be willing to give your life to Him who gave His all for you? Notice how quickly the man in Jesus' story acted when he found the treasure. He didn't waste any time going to sell all he had to buy the field. When Jesus speaks to our hearts about salvation we should be ready to open our hearts and invite Him in as Savior.

For Discussion:

1. Does this story make you want to go home and search your closets to see if you have anything valuable? What do you think this man thought about when he discovered the treasure?
2. If you had some very valuable possession where would you keep it?
3. Is treasure always just money? What else could be considered a treasure?
4. Why is your salvation worth more than any thing you own or could possibly own?