

Our Treasure 'In-Christ'

Read

Matthew 13: 44-46 (NIV) - *The kingdom of heaven 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.*

45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

Psalms 119:18

God has to touch our eyes in order to the beautiful things in His Kingdom.

Could it be possible that we've been going through life, but yet not found the beautiful things that matter?

I pray that we would be a people that see the beauty we have in Christ. I'm going to start this with a story I heard recently by Dr Russell Conwell. It's a true story he heard during his travels. And through the sales of his book, he started Temple University.

Illustration (Story - Acres of Diamonds)

There was a man named Ali Hafed who lived on the banks of the River Indus who had a nice farm, a beautiful wife and children. He was content with what he had, daily tending to his farm and providing for his family. One day a priest came by and told this farmer about the famed diamonds in Persia. He told the farmer about diamonds in Persia, that if he had a few diamonds he could have not just one farm, but many. This farmer from then on was consumed by the thought of capturing diamonds.

Soon after, he sold up and went travelling in search of diamonds, across Persia, Palestine and into Europe. A couple of years later, all the money he had was gone, and he was wandering around in rags. When a large wave came in from the sea, he was happily swept under by it. Now the scene changes to the man who had bought the farmer's land. One fine day, as he was watering the fields he found a big sparkling stone in a stream that cut through his land. Upon further inspection, it was a pure diamond. In fact, after digging further there were more diamonds. This, according to the parable, was the discovery of the famed mines of Golconda, that would yield not just one or two but *acres of diamonds*.

The point of the story is that we often dream of fortunes to be made elsewhere. We ought instead to be happy with what we have around us Mr Conwell writes in his book.

The man who flung himself into the river never realised he was living in acres of diamonds.

Spiritual Transition

- As followers of Jesus, our faith is more of a journey
- During this journey, we go through moments
- Remember your first few instances with Jesus? Remember the Aladin song? A whole new world... But after a while, we lost sight of Jesus in our lives
- Have you met new believers?
- What about Youth Camp?... What happens? 'LIFE'...
- As 'life' moves, we go from 'here to there', and sometimes in this process, we lose the awe and reverence of what we have in Jesus

What about the gospel...

You see a lot of times we as Jesus followers forget what it means to be 'In-Christ'. Let's be honest, for those of us who have been following Jesus for years, we tend to lose the awe of the Gospel narrative. For instance, when I was at a missions trip back in 2017 and Pastor was communicating the gospel at an open-air meeting, I was more concerned about how many people would receive the message rather than it to enrich my soul personally. Sometimes the Greatest News of the Gospel can be Old News to some of us.

In a world that is obsessed with 'NEW', we need to constantly remind ourselves the Acres of Diamonds we have in Jesus!

You will see this story repeated...

Reminds me of the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15)

- What was in the mind of the younger son when he left his father's house?
- Only to go outside and realize that he needs to come back...
- That's the world we're living in, we are constantly pulled by the flesh to go somewhere to find riches of some kind and think we will make it.
- Especially with young people, we're all looking out. It's not in the church, not in the word, not in Godly relationships etc...
- Only to sell out so cheaply, that eventually, we realize it's all right back in the father's house!

Story of Abraham & Lot (Genesis 13)

- Abraham saw a family issue over money and decided for Lot to choose his way and he would go the other direction. Lot looked one side and he saw nothing, he looked the other side and saw all the things pleasing to the eyes and he made his decision. But later to realize to lose everything in Sodom & Gomorrah!
- But God said to Abraham in the wilderness: *Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. 15 All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. 16 I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. 17 Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.*

The Cross of Jesus

- Another beautiful example is that of the two criminals on either side of Jesus on the Cross (see *Luke 23:39-43*). One of them looks at Jesus as a no-good, beat up man, but the other criminal recognises this man and asks for forgiveness. Sure enough, this criminal received the most beautiful gift of eternal life. That is the power of perspective. May our perspective of faith be fixed on Jesus and Him alone, an unchanging, unwavering faith!
- So many people today, leaving God's kingdom, His Church in search of something precious. Let's try that drug or alcohol or relationship, but the story is the same to realize that there is nothing out there, it's all here in God's Kingdom!

God, open up my eyes that I may see your wonderous things! To see the beautiful things in store in the Kingdom. This must be our response!

You will see this theme all through the Bible:

- **King David:** from a shepherd boy knew where his treasure was...Psalms 27:4. And Guess what, he was imperfect!
- **Daniel:** taken as a slave to Babylon knew where his treasure was in the midst of a crazy king Nebuchadnezzar...
- **Hebrews 11 mentions the *Hall of Faith***
- **Apostle Paul:** if there was one man I would give some discount I would give Paul. He was whipped, he was beaten, in shackles for Jesus (2 Corinthians 11:23-26). But he knew His treasure... 1 Corinthians 2:2, Philippians... etc.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 (NIV)

Matthew 6:19-21 (NIV) - *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for*

yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Even when things seem 'Dry', *there is abundance in Christ Jesus!*

There is this phenomenon in the Amazon River

- Where the largest river meets and rushes out into the Atlantic ocean.
- In olden times, ships in this region use flags to communicate to other ships. There was this ship out at sea in distress one time and the crew was desperate for drinking water.
- A messenger would run up and have flags with him and send messages and someone on the other ship would look through the telescope and receives the message
- So there came a ship on the horizon and someone quickly ran up and wave a message - WE NEED WATER!
- The other ship says- LET DOWN YOUR BUCKET. They didn't understand and asked them again and the other ship says- LET DOWN YOUR BUCKET.
- They finally let down their bucket and sure enough, there is cool, clear delicious water
- There was a rush of clear water from the river for 200 miles out
- In other words, they were right in the middle of clear water and they didn't even know it

If I could just tell you, if you're thirsty, if you're dry, just let down your bucket! It's all here because Jesus is the living water!

John 4:14 (NIV): but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

God touches faithful people to see the treasure in His Kingdom,

- He touched Abraham to look up to the stars and that's how many people he influenced.
- He touched Moses to go beyond and save the children of Israel
- He touched David out of all the people to be a king and build the temple of God
- Saul thought he lived justly. But God touched him on that road to Damascus to see the real Jesus and change the course of history.

It doesn't matter what you see outside; if Jesus is there, everything is there! (Joy, peace, favour, victory). What are you looking for?

Living in this world can be tiring, our circumstances and situations steer us away, but Jesus still remains our true treasure.

Colossians 1:23 (ESV)

But you must continue to believe this truth and stand firmly in it. Don't drift away from the assurance you received when you heard the Good News...

There is nothing more beautiful than being '*In Christ*'. ***In Christ, we're living in Acres of Diamonds!***

As I Conclude

We need to be grateful to God for the Grace and Gift that He's placed upon us.

- Let's be thankful and grateful for ALL that God has done and going to do in the coming days.
- I'm not sure where you are in life, you may be tired, you may be beat up, you may be doing well.. but one thing I know from God's Word...
- Jesus is the same Yesterday, Today & Forever! And in Him, we have true treasure!

If you have gotten out, if you have lost sight, if you are tired, If you are lost...

Let's make it a decision to come back to the Father's house just like the younger son in Luke 15, to come back to the Cross of Jesus Christ. He's been waiting for you.

Pray, Minister...