

My friends, today the LORD gives us three parables—three warnings, three invitations, three chances to wake up and realize what is at stake. And He does not mince words here. He tells us plainly: **The Kingdom of Heaven is worth everything** (Mt 13:44). Not some things. Not most things. **Everything.**

And when I hear that first parable—the treasure buried in a field—I can’t help but smile and think of my grandfather, David. Born in 1906. He lived through the Depression. Distrusted banks. And being a farmer... and for quite some time, having a side business as a moonshiner... he had plenty of land and plenty of cash. And he buried it. He put butter bowls of cash out by the smokehouse, mason jars of moonshine out in the fields.

When he died at the age of 90, two expeditions formed. His children went to the smokehouse. His grandchildren—myself included—went to the fields. We kids were convinced we were about to hit a lucky strike. We poked the ground with rebar like we were searching for gold.

We found nothing.

But those on the smokehouse crew did. They found the butter bowls. They found the money. And they found out something else: butter bowls don’t keep out water. They don’t keep out air. They don’t keep out time. The treasure was there... but it was ruined. Thankfully, if there was 50% of the bank note remaining, the bank was willing to exchange it for a new bill of equal value.

And my friends, **that is exactly the point of the Gospel.**

We spend our lives chasing treasures that cannot last. Money. Comfort. Reputation. Pleasure. Possessions. We bury them, protect them, cling to them, worry over them. And time eats them alive. Just like the money in those butter bowls.

Scripture says it bluntly in Matthew 6:19: **“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy.”**

The treasures of this world rot. They mold. They fade. They slip through our fingers. And all the while, the LORD is standing right in front of us saying, **“There is a treasure that will never rot. Never fade. Never be lost. But you must give everything to possess it.”**

The man in the parable sells *all he has*—and he does it **with joy**. Not fear. Not hesitation. Joy. Because he knows what he’s found.

Then Jesus tells us about the pearl of great price. This time it’s not an accident. It’s a search. A merchant—someone who is trained to recognize value—finds one pearl so magnificent that he sells everything to obtain it. He knows what he’s looking at. He knows its worth. And he knows nothing else compares.

My friends, **that is the Kingdom of Heaven.** That is Christ. That is the Eucharist. That is the life of grace that could be ours.

St. Paul says in Philippians 3:8, **“More than that, I even consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my LORD. For His sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ.”** (Phil 3:8)

And if we truly saw His worth, we would drop everything—sin, pride, grudges, addictions, excuses—and run toward Him.

But then Jesus tells us the third parable.

The dragging of the nets gathers **everyone**. Good and bad. Faithful and unfaithful. Churchgoers and non-churchgoers. People who say “LORD, LORD” and people who never think of Him at all. Everyone is gathered.

But not everyone is kept.

There is a sorting. A judgment. A moment when the angels separate the righteous from the wicked. And Jesus says it plainly—there will be a fiery furnace. There will be wailing and grinding of teeth. Not because God is cruel, but because **we chose lesser treasures**. We chose butter bowls buried in the dirt instead of the Kingdom of Heaven.

And my friends, **we will not accidentally stumble into Heaven**. We will not drift into holiness. We will not slide into eternal life by doing the bare minimum.

Jesus Himself says in Matthew 7:14, **“The gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”**

The Kingdom costs everything. But it also gives everything.

Then Jesus says something remarkable: the scribe trained for the Kingdom brings out “things new and old”. In other words, the disciple must know the whole story—what God has done, what God is doing, and what God promises to do. We must **know the treasure**. We must recognize its worth. And we must share it. To gain treasure, you must also give it away.

So here is the question—**What is the Kingdom worth to you?**

What sins do we continue in that are worth losing the Kingdom of Heaven over? Scripture warns us in Romans 6:23: **“The wages of sin is death.”**

What grudges are we holding onto that are worth losing eternal life? Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:15, **“If you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive you.”**

What comfort, what habit, what earthly treasure do we cling to that is worth losing eternal life? Christ asks us in Mark 8:36, **“What profit is there for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?”**

Year A, 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time 2026

My friends, the Kingdom is the only treasure that lasts. Everything else—everything—ends up like those butter bowls. Ruined. Faded. Corrupted. Gone.

But Christ offers us a treasure that will never rot, never mold, never be lost. And He asks for everything—not because He wants to take from us, but because He wants to give us **Himself**.

He wants to give us a treasure that time cannot touch. A treasure death cannot steal. A treasure that will carry us into eternity.

May we be like the man in the field and the merchant with the pearl—decisive, joyful, wholehearted in making our choice. May we stop digging for treasures that cannot last. And may we give everything for the one treasure that will carry us into eternity with Christ the LORD.

May the LORD bless you and keep you, and make His Face to shine upon you, and give you peace.