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## ***The Restoration Road Worksheet: The Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl***

**(Matthew 13:44-45)**

### **Introduction**

Why do we do what we do? Whether we date, breakup, marry, or divorce; apply, attend, or volunteer; call, click, or consider; exercise, eat, starve, binge, or purge; compete, compromise, accommodate, avoid, or collaborate; or give, receive, exchange, buy, or sell, the answer to why we do what we do lies in what we value. *Value* answers the question, “Why?” because value connects *belief* with *behavior*. It begins in our hearts and surfaces in our lives. We *search*, *sacrifice*, and *prioritize* for what we value. Jesus valued the kingdom of heaven—God’s reign, rule, and order in the hearts and lives of people on this earth now and in the future. In a word, it’s *wisdom*. Two thousand years later, how do we value the kingdom of heaven? Jesus revealed the answer to this question through two parables about worth: *The Hidden Treasure* and *The Pearl* (Matthew 13:44-45).

### **(1) Search**

First, we search for the kingdom of heaven. Jesus described a treasure hidden in a field that a man had discovered along with a fine pearl that a merchant had been seeking. In each case, there was a search because the person valued the treasure more than his current possessions. Since no formal banks existed two thousand years ago, valued possessions were hidden in the land. Consequently, ownership of the buried treasures transferred with the title to the property. In fact, the scrolls discovered at the caves of Qumran included metes and bounds descriptions of the locations of buried treasure.



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Likewise, fine pearls were among the most valued commodities in the culture. Today, little has changed. We search for what we value.

Wisdom is the ultimate value in the kingdom of God, and we are called to search for it as for *hidden treasure* (Proverbs 2:1-6). Rabbis referred to a proverb as a *pearl* of wisdom, which can be defined as God's heart combined with street smarts. The apostle Paul referred to Jesus Christ as the wisdom of God—the intersection of the vertical (God) with the horizontal (man), (1 Corinthians 1:24). Thus, wisdom is not merely a principle, but a person. Unfortunately, we spend most of our lives searching for things that promise to benefit only our earthly kingdoms. These luring attractions come in many shapes and sizes, including money, material possessions, degrees, fame, or self-serving relationships. However, God has revealed His wisdom through Christ and the Bible in order for us to advance His kingdom through our wise use of money, material possessions, degrees, awareness, and loving relationships. This begins when we search for wisdom.

#### *Street Smarts for the Restoration Road*

Search for wisdom. This year, commit to reading two chapters in the Bible each day—one in Proverbs (the chapter number corresponding with the date of the month) and one in the New Testament. You will read through God's wisdom book of pearls twelve times as well as the entire New Testament. Each day, ask God to give you His heart intersecting with street smarts, including His kingdom vision for your life. This endeavor will empower you to store up wisdom as you learn more about Christ's kingdom value and His design for your life.

#### **(2) Sell All (Sacrifice)**



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Second, we sell all for the kingdom of heaven. In each parable, the person who found the treasure sold all he had in order to buy it—he sold in order to reallocate his resources to something that he valued more than what he had received in exchange. The first man sold all he had in order to buy the land with the hidden treasure. The second did the same in order to buy the fine pearl. This required *sacrifice*.

A pearl posed an interesting illustration because it was formed from distress in the tender part of the oyster. Thus, the pearl was a picture of God’s kingdom being made available to everyone through the sacrificial pain of Christ who tenderheartedly sold all for us (2 Corinthians 8:9). Similarly, David urged his son Solomon to sell everything in order to get wisdom—the greatest value in the kingdom of heaven (Proverbs 4:7). For us to heed David’s advice, we must sacrificially reallocate our resources to value wisdom. First, we review the scheduling of our time; the use of our talent; and the investment of our treasure. Next, we *remove* or *reclaim*. We remove what does not wisely advance the kingdom of heaven in our lives in order to add what does, or we reclaim the same time, talent, or treasure for God’s kingdom.

#### *Street Smarts for the Restoration Road*

Sell all to gain wisdom. Reallocate your resources (time, talent, and treasure) in order to value the kingdom of heaven. This will mean *sacrifice*. In order to do this, quickly review your calendar (time), your task list (talent), and your checkbook register (treasure). These three indicators reveal what you value—what is connecting your belief with your behavior, demonstrating *why* you do what you do. *Remove* what does not wisely advance the kingdom of God in order to add what does. In some cases, rather than



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remove, you might *reclaim* the same time, talent, or treasure for the advancement of God's kingdom.

### **(3) Buy (Prioritize)**

Third, we buy, or prioritize, the kingdom of heaven. In each parable, the person who found the treasure not only sold all to gain it, he finally bought it. Similarly, Christ bought us for a world record price (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). In return, will we buy wisdom (Proverbs 23:23)? When we buy something, we are saying that the commodity is more valuable than what we give in exchange. When it comes to advancing the kingdom of heaven in others, we must *prioritize* them by investing in their hearts and lives. We add new appointments, new tasks, and new financial commitments.

#### *Street Smarts for the Restoration Road*

Buy wisdom. Invest in the hearts and lives of others. *Prioritize* those you encounter, by communicating that they are more valuable to you than the time, talent, or treasure you give in exchange for the connection. Spend time with a young person who needs direction. Listen to a friend. Give to someone in need without receiving anything in return. In every interaction with another human being, prioritize the advancement of the kingdom of heaven.

### **Conclusion**

When we begin to search, sacrifice, and prioritize for the kingdom of heaven like it was a hidden treasure or pearl, we discover its ultimate value, Christ the wisdom of God.