Following Jesus: A Heart Full of God’s Treasure

Matthew 13:51-58

MPS Christ-followers live by faith through the treasure of God’s eternal wisdom to obey and make Jesus known to all people.

OBJ Every person can identify a real heart of faith as distinguished by Three Qualities.

INTRO What is your heart full of today? Did you come to understand God’s Word? Your response will reveal your answer.

READ Matthew 13:51-58

*“Have you understood all these things?” They said to him, “Yes.” 52And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”*

*53And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, 54and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? 55Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?” 57And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household.” 58And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief*. **Matthew 13:51-58**

Matthew concludes this section of parables with a question from Jesus to the disciples, “Do you understand?” After explaining why he used parables, because only those who believe will understand, He responded to their request for help to understand (.36). He taught them how the Kingdom operates in this world, how it is of supreme value for life, and how it will grow to produce an abundant harvest to the end of the age. And all who BELIEVE will understand these teachings in even greater measure. The disciples responded, “Yes”. And likely they did understand in a broad, general manner. But even as Jesus taught in the parable of the mustard seed, their understanding would grow and deepen as their faith increased.

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TRANS Jesus’ next statement (.52) indicates just how much more there was to understand from his teaching. *“Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”*

**A “scribe” was an honored role**. A scribe was charged to record and copy the sacred texts. They were highly educated and extensively trained for their work. Their work demanded exactness and the highest precision to ensure perfection because they were preparing manuscripts for reading in public worship, teaching, and duplication. Scribes were highly regarded and worked long hours in isolation and under great pressure because they were handling the holy scriptures. Their role was so unique that it demanded a distinct pattern of life to accommodate their work.

Here is what is most interesting in this; the disciples were not considered scribes, at least to this point. But Jesus identifies them as a “*scribe*” trained distinctively for the Kingdom of Heaven. What they have received is of highest value and intended for transmission to others. The disciple’s role is to apply their life to know Jesus and advance the message of His Kingdom, specifically, the truth of God in His Word – the treasure of knowing God and making Him known.

**Jesus’ analogy emphasizes their role**. Scribes of the Kingdom are “*like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”* The scribe’s work creates a storehouse of treasure, a treasure which is an unending source for all of life, the eternal wisdom of God’s Word, which is to be shared with others. This analogy teaches that they have both a responsibility for and a generosity in readily sharing what they have stored up. And finally, that all they have placed in the storehouse, both old and new, are of the highest value. Both old and new (Testaments) are the eternal wisdom of God and sufficient for the sourcing of life in the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus is training the disciples to serve the Kingdom by living in and sharing the treasure of His eternal truth with all people.

TRANS In response to the disciples request for help in understanding (.36), Jesus asks; “Do you understand?”[[1]](#footnote-1) This is a good moment for us to consider this question for us today. Christ-follower, do you understand what Jesus is saying?

APPL LifePoint, I PRAY this sounds familiar to you! Jesus’ teaching is central to our mission and vision: All real Christ-followers are Disciples, actively engaged to build a storehouse of treasure of God’s eternal truth from which to live in relationship and obedience to Him. This treasure is not only for us but to be intentionally shared with others generously. This is why LifePoint also teaches that all real Christ-followers are also Missioners, Disciples who live to share the treasure of God’s eternal wisdom, truth, by the gospel of Jesus Christ with all people. This passage is foundational to understand who we are in Christ and Jesus’ commission to us. The labor of His Kingdom is not reserved for a select few highly trained individuals. Making disciples is the commission of every Christ-follower, to live for Jesus’ Kingdom; making Him Known as we are being made in His likeness.Matt28:19;2Cor5:15

TRANS When we reckon with Jesus’s analogy it makes His question weightier and impactful. To emphasize the meaning of Jesus’ question, Matthew uses a contradistinction, a contrast to clearly distinguish between items. Look at verse 53.

READ Matthew 13:53-58

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Matthew contrasts Jesus’ disciples, people whose lives had been radically changed by Him, by highlighting the way people in his hometown received him. In contrast to the storehouse of treasure His disciples lived out of, the people in Jesus’ hometown experienced an absence of mighty works from God. Not everyone, but most, did not experience any work of God. Same person, same teaching, but the contrast distinguishes the two groups by one quality, “*because of the unbelief*.” The people in Jesus’ hometown did not experience the power of God in nor around their lives because of their unbelief.

**“A*stonished*” tells us they recognized His teaching was different**. How could they not believe? The answer is found in the way they perceived Jesus. They recognized his wisdom and mighty works, which were undeniable, but they dismissed him, instead of considering the prophecies God had foretold about Him. They made him like them, instead of considering, from their knowledge of God’s Word, how He was like God, and fulfilled the Word of God. They even asked a right question, “Where then did this man get all these things?” But instead of a heart to understand their heart was filled with unbelief. They knew him too well to accept Him as anything other than how they understood Him, instead of what he claimed and who He proved to be. Familiarity from what was visible blinded them to the revelation of the divine. Unbelief always values what is seen over the unseen, what is known over revealed, what is explainable over incomprehensible, and what is controllable over what seems inconceivable. Their response was rooted in the fact that they didn’t believe God, and they found Jesus too familiar to trust in Him. So instead of treasuring, they took offense.

Gospel **The contrast of responses to Jesus draws a clear distinction of a heart that believes**. Believe always means faith is exercised for God’s Word to “be lived” out in your life. “Believe = be lived” It is never limited to simply accepting data but applying it to life. And that’s the difference between real Christ-followers and those who never experience the mighty power of God in life. Until God’s Word is lived out, faith is not active, obedience is not possible, and one has not yet believed, according to the Bible.

TRANS There is a great silence between verses 51 and 52, not of of judgment but of gravity. The claim quickly made immediately holds more weight than, likely, first considered. But it is a weighty silence that you and I should take into consideration for our own lives this morning. Matthew’s contradistinction reveals a life of faith defined by a heart that believes.

OBJ Three Qualities distinguish a real heart of faith.

**1.** A heart that treasures every Word of God for life.

“Treasure” means recognizing the value of which fuels desire for understanding to believe fully. The one who pursues greater understanding is nurturing the seed of to grow toward obedience. Christian faith is not an ignorant but an informed faith. And as Jesus taught with the mustard seed parable, faith may start small, but it grows to great impact.

Believe / faith is distinguished by the way one receives God’s Word; they listen, seek to understand and obey as their source and direction for all of life. Believing something about God’s Word is useless if what is claimed to be believed is not trusted to put into action for life. The one who truly understands Jesus’s teaching does not consider God’s Word as simply data to store, but truth that transforms. If one wants to experience the power of God in and through their life, then they must believe to obey what they understand. The heart of faith is distinguished by taking the understanding Jesus gives and turning it into obedience for His glory.

APPL Real Christ-followers desire greater understanding of God in all things. Their hearts and minds are receptive to the teachings of Jesus. And their desire is not simply a static wish, but one that motivates them to live to pursue greater understanding toward transformation of life. We don’t read God’s Word and offer a myriad of reasons why it isn’t or can’t be true by reducing its importance, rationalizing its validity. When we do this, we exercise the same unbelief as the crowds. If you are not experiencing God’s power working and changing your life, you need to ask yourself, “Do I Understand?” A real Christ-follower knows they believe because they treasure God’s Word for obedience for all of life.

**2.** A heart that generously shares the blessing of God’s eternal treasure with others.

Jesus says that Christ-follower’s don’t simply collect their knowledge about God, but they bring them out to share. Sharing what the heart treasures is the most natural response. We want to share with others that which brings us most joy and gladness in life, which helps and strengthens us. This is the essence of faithful testimony; explain a problem or sin in which we were entangled, how Jesus spoke to our heart through His Word, and what has changed because of His mighty power at work. The heart always naturally shares what it treasures because it recognizes the source of strength it provides for life. The Christ-follower shares what is understood of God because the heart treasures Jesus above all else and His power is working powerfully.

APPL Are you sharing the treasure of your relationship with Jesus Christ with others? Or, is your heart filling with a pseudo-treasure?

**3.** A heart committed for all to have the riches of the Kingdom by coming to know the treasure of the King.

The kingdom scribe understands that what they are recording, and experiencing, from God is not just for them, but to be shared with all people. To be a follower of Jesus is to have a heart that truly desires others to come to saving faith in Jesus. And that desire fuels a life lived specifically to share the treasure of Jesus.

APPL Is your relationship with Jesus determining the way you live to share the treasure of His eternal wisdom with others?

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to obey and make Jesus known to all people.

CLOSE “Do you understand?” I was never confused about what my father meant when he asked, “Do you understand?” The only question was, was Lane going to do what he said, or would we have to return to a “teaching session” for greater understanding. If you want the mighty power of God to be working in your life, you must believe.

Is God’s Word your treasure trove for life or just a trinket box for “quick-fix”? Do you mine the depths of eternal wisdom and power, or do you only skim the surface for quick fixes and answers that dismiss need for further study or consideration?

1. R. T. France, [Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary](https://ref.ly/logosres/tntc61mtus?ref=Bible.Mt13.51&off=4&ctx=of+the+sower.83%0a51.+~In+v.+36+the+discipl), vol. 1, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 234. France writes, ““In v. 36 the disciples had asked for explanation. Jesus now checks that the teaching given specifically to them and not to the crowds has been effective. It has produced understanding. For this key word see vv. 13, 14, 15, 19, 23, above: it is the special prerogative of the disciple to whom the mysteries are revealed.” [↑](#footnote-ref-1)