

July 30, 2023



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

The best home of all is our home in heaven

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK:

Philippians 3:20 reminds us that "our citizenship is in heaven," and we are to "eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ."

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

Instead, they were longing for a better country, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them

(Heb 11:16 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Nov 22, 2016)

**Series: The Righteous
Reign of God**

UNIT 3: God's Eternal Reign

NEXT WEEK

**Inheriting the Kingdom
(Gal 5:13-26)**

Finding and Gathering Matthew 13:44-52

Lesson Background and Introduction

A primary challenge we have in applying the New Testament properly to our lives is that of bridging the gap between what is called "the two horizons." The first horizon is the historical context in which the New Testament was written; the second horizon is the modern context in which the twenty-first-century reader stands. Today's lesson requires that we grapple with this challenge, and consider what people in the first century AD valued as they accumulated wealth or were unable to do so. In the ancient world, a person's wealth was recognized in terms of physically possessing tangible assets such as livestock, precious metals, or luxurious attire (examples: Genesis 13:2; Joshua 22:8; Job 1:1-3; Luke 15:8; 16:19; James 2:2). The challenge of valid interpretation of the New Testament is obvious: to best determine proper and valid application, we should first try to see things through the eyes of the original, ancient audience. The challenge is similar when it comes to preserving wealth. In both the ancient and modern worlds, cattle can be rustled, gold can be stolen, and attire can wear out (examples: Joshua 7:21; Job 1:17; Matthew 6:19; James 5:2). Today, however, we are more likely to think in terms of threats to wealth that come via electronic means: phone calls from dishonest telemarketers, ransomware attacks, and wire fraud from criminal hackers. To protect accumulations of gold and silver in the ancient world involved securing those precious metals on one's person or hiding them somewhere (examples: 2 Kings 7:8; Matthew 25:18, 25). Protecting wealth today is much more likely to involve keeping one's computer antivirus and firewall up-to-date and being cautious about using public Wi-Fi, since modern-day wealth is largely stored in computer memory banks.

Jim Elliot, a missionary, was killed in Ecuador on January 8, 1956, while attempting to bring the gospel to the indigenous Huaorani people. The death of Elliot and his missionary companions has made him one of the most well-known Christian martyrs of the twentieth century. In 2006, his story came to the silver screen with the release of the movie End of the Spear. Something Elliot wrote in his journal in 1949 epitomized his passion for serving Jesus: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose." This speaks to the core point of the parables in today's lesson. To remain dedicated to the kingdom of Heaven is a treasure far beyond any material possessions. But its cost is a willingness to give up what we have to follow Jesus.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Finding and Buying (Matt 13:44-46)

Finding treasures can bring joy (44-45)

Joy through receiving the crown of joy (Isa 35:10)

Joy through the oil of gladness (Isa 61:3)

Joy through God making us a joy (Isa 65:18)

Joy through God turning sorrow into joy (Jer 31:13)

Buying treasures can increase value (46)

Value because of storing treasures in Heaven (Matt 6:19-21)

Value because of being rich in good works (1 Tim 6:17-19)

Value because of having lasting possession (Heb 10:34)

Value because of knowing Jesus as Lord (Phil 3:7-8)

Catching and Rejecting (Matt 13:47-52)

Catch and keep the good (47-48)

Keep the tested good (1 Thess 5:21)

Keep godly instructions (Prov 4:13)

Keep truth and wisdom (Prov 23:23)

Keep doing the work of the Lord (1 Cor 15:58)

Keep hoping in the faithful God (Heb 10:23)

Catch and reject the bad (49-50)

Reject bad so that God will forgive and heal (2 Chron 7:14)

Reject bad so that love is sincere (Rom 12:9)

Reject bad so that sin will be avoided (1 Thess 5:22)

Reject bad so that the word planted in us can be fully accepted (James 1:21)

Reject bad so that we can see good days (1 Peter 3:10-11)

Treasure both new and old godly items (51-52)

Old and new that is being stored up for us (Song 7:13)

Old and new commands of love (1 John 2:7-8)

Old and new like need and plenty (Phil 4:12)

Old and new godly teaching (2 Tim 2:2)

Old and new godly witnesses (2 Tim 2:2)

Old and new like poor and rich (2 Cor 6:10)