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Sermon Notes

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Bringing Out New Treasures As Well As Old

Matthew 13:51-52

The Treasure Vault of Eltz Castle:

Eltz Castle in Munstermaifeld, is one of the most beautiful and best preserved castles in Germany. Lying in a romantic setting surrounded by an unspoilt landscape, inviting and majestic at the same time - like a fairy-tale castle come to life. The Treasure Vault in the cellar of the Castle contains an exceptional collection of art works of over five hundred items stretching from the 12th to the 19th century. The variety on display is impressive. In addition to the remarkable gold and silver items, such as the drinking vessels depicting the goddess Diana, knights on horseback and the statue of St. John Nepomuk, there are also curiosities such as the "Dukatenscheißer", "Gluttony conveyed by Drunkenness" and the "Monster". Other outstanding pieces are the "Reiterstreithammer" (a 16th century knight's battleaxe with a flintlock pistol built in) and some valuable crossbows. The collection also contains interesting examples of porcelain from Vienna and Hoechst from the 18th century. The displayed items all belonged to members of the Eltz family; they were mostly acquired for daily use.

Of all the precious treasures in the Vault, perhaps none is more impressive than the Prince Elector's ring

The ring of Philipp Karl zu Eltz ... was produced in 1730 in Idar-Oberstein, Germany's historic centre for precious stones. There are 48 stones which can be inserted into the ring according to the wearer's taste, frame of mind or clothing on the day in question. Each stone is precious and beautiful

If you were to visit the rich householder in the height of his power, after a fine banquet he would bring out of his treasure vault one rare priceless treasure after another... some of them new and fascinating, others ancient

This is perhaps the kind of treasure vault that Jesus Christ had in mind when he completed his array of seven magnificent parables of the Kingdom with the following exchange with His precious disciples:

"Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked. "Yes," they replied. He said to them, "Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old."

I. The Goals of Christ's Instruction About the Kingdom

A. Christ's First Goal: The Disciples' Clear Understanding

vs. 51 "Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked.

1. Simple question at one level... "Do you get it?"
2. At a deeper level, not so simple... UNDERSTANDING is the key

Remember the parable of the Seed and the Soils:

vs. 23 *But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.*

Without understanding, His disciples would bear no fruit

3. Understanding was the very thing Christ intended to give His disciples by these parables

Mark 4:33-34 With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

4. It all begins in the mind: understanding was Christ's first goal

Psalm 119:34 Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart.

Psalm 119:144 Your statutes are forever right; give me understanding that I may live.

Proverbs 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

B. Christ's Second Goal: The Disciples' Comprehensive Understanding

1. Not Merely Partial Understanding

"Have you understood ALL these things?"

2. Immediate context: the seven parables of Matthew 13

Here in Matthew 13, we have seen seven instructive parables... other than the first, each one begins with the same phrase

"The kingdom of heaven is like..."

The Seed and the Soils (vs. 3-8)

Have you understood that: The Kingdom of heaven advances by people hearing and believing the word of God. Different people receive the word different ways, as is demonstrated by the results in their lives.

The Wheat and the Weeds (vs. 24-30)

Have you understood that: The Kingdom of Heaven exists and advances constantly in this world in a complex, mixed situation... enemies who are very hard to tell from friends and friends who are very hard to tell from enemies. Only at the end of the world will this be resolved.

The Mustard Seed (vs. 31-32)

Have you understood that: The Kingdom of heaven starts small and grows constantly until it is immense and imposing.

The Yeast (vs. 33)

Have you understood that: The growth of Kingdom of heaven is hidden and mysterious, but in the end it will permeate the entire world, and each individual believer.

The Treasure Hidden in the Field (vs. 44)

Have you understood that: The Kingdom of heaven is of incredible value, worth everything in your life to obtain. However that value is initially hidden and must be discovered.

The Pearl of Great Value (vs. 45-46)

Have you understood that: The Kingdom of heaven is of incredible value, worth everything in your life to obtain. However, you must search for it with all your heart.

The Dragnet (vs. 47-50)

Have you understood that: The Kingdom of heaven will end on Judgment Day in which all people will be divided into two categories. Those who reject the word will suffer eternally in hell.

So, the immediate context of Christ's question was the array of seven parable in Matthew 13

3. Ultimate context: The Whole Bible... "New treasures as well as old"

- a. old treasures: the glories of the Old Covenant... of the Law, the Writings, and the Prophets
- b. new treasures: the full revelation of the Kingdom of Heaven
- c. Christ's foundational principle: the eternal benefit of ALL the word of God

Old Testament is eternal:

Matthew 5:17-18 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

New Testament is eternal:

Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Christ's desire and goal: Comprehensive understanding by His disciples

Comprehensive understanding of the Old Treasures: the glories of the Old Testament Scripture

Comprehensive understanding of the New Treasures: the glories of the Kingdom of Heaven

4. The "Whole Counsel of God"

Acts 20:27 For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God.

The Biblical revelation is now complete with the coming of the Kingdom...

The Old Treasures of the Old Testament are made more perfect and valuable by the fulfillment of Christ

The New Treasure of the New Testament are uncovered, revealed to our eyes by the ministry of the Apostles

So, Jesus asked: "Have you understood ALL these things??"

5. Disciples' immediate answer

"Yes."

- a. they get it... but at a basic level
- b. they have not TOTAL understanding
- c. neither do they understand nothing
- d. The growth of the disciples' understanding in the New Testament is breathtaking

Disciples consistently did NOT get it

- i) did not understand His miraculous power

[When they saw Him walking on water] ***Mark 6:52 They were completely amazed, 52 for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.***

ii) did not understand His figures of speech

[On the clean and unclean foods] **Matthew 15:15-17** *Peter said, "Explain the parable to us." 16 "Are you still so dull?" Jesus asked them. "Don't you understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body?*

"Dull" = without understanding, senseless, foolish, thick, slow

[When they forget bread and Jesus told them to beware the yeast of the Pharisees & Sadducees] **Matthew 16:5-12** *Jesus asked, "You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread? 9 Do you still not understand? Don't you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? 10 Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? 11 How is it you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." 12 Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.*

iii) did not understand Christ's symbolic actions

Triumphal entry

John 12:16 *At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.*

Footwashing

John 13:6-7 *He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" 7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."*

iv). especially did not understand His redemptive mission and His sacrificial death

Luke 9:44-45 *"Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men." 45 But they did not understand what this meant. It was hidden from them, so that they did not grasp it, and they were afraid to ask him about it.*

Luke 18:31-34 *Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled.*

32 He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. 33 On the third day he will rise again." 34 The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about.

John 16:16-18 "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me." 17 Some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by saying, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,' and 'Because I am going to the Father?'" 18 They kept asking, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand what he is saying."

v) did not understand the resurrection

John 20:9 (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)

Thus, there were MANY things the disciples did not yet understand

e. BUT after the resurrection Christ ministered directly to their minds to give them deep understanding of the Scriptures

Luke 24:44-45 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

This was also His purpose in our text... the full and proper understanding of the Law, the Writings and the Prophets... the Old Testament

f. AND the indwelling Holy Spirit would complete their journey of understanding

John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.

That is why Peter was able to stand up on Pentecost and give that amazing sermon, with all of its Old Testament allusions, so accurately

g. at the end of their training, they would be the foundation of the church

Ephesians 2:20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Colossians 1:28 We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.

C. Christ's Third Goal: The Disciples' Rich Delight

vs. 52 He said to them, "Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old."

1. Image: a householder, the owner of a house... a treasure box, or perhaps treasure vault
 2. Christ calls them "treasures", new and old
 3. Biblical truth... the full revelation of God's truth, Old and New Testaments, is a GREAT treasure
 4. In light of Christ, all of a sudden the whole Old Testament BLAZES with truth
- Without instruction about the Kingdom, the Old Testament is dark, mysterious, and incomplete.
 - BUT the instruction about the Kingdom does not render the Old Testament obsolete, but rather makes it all the more precious. The Old Testament becomes the sure and certain foundation of the New Testament's proclamation of Christ and His Kingdom.
 - Thus the well-instructed Scribe can bring out treasure after treasure... old treasures and new treasures.
 - The Old Testament history only makes sense in the perfect light of Christ's Kingdom: the creation of Genesis 1, the new creation of Revelation 21; the flood of Noah the first judgment, the trumpets of Revelation the final judgment; the physical Exodus of the Jews, the spiritual Exodus of the children of God... all this history a tapestry pointing to Christ and His Kingdom
 - The sacrificial system finds its explanation and fulfillment in Christ's death on the cross... every animal whose blood was ever shed now makes sense in light of the cross
 - The Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle is fulfilled in the body of Christ... a new and living way opened for us into His presence
 - The ceremonial laws of Moses (circumcision) complete their purpose by pointing to a Jewish Messiah...and to an internal circumcision of the heart by the Spirit
 - The Three Feasts of Moses: Passover, Firstfruits, and Final Fruits, find their perfect fulfillment in the advance of the Kingdom: Christ the Passover Lamb, Pentecost—the day of firstfruits; the yet to come celebration of final harvest

- The moral laws of Moses become written on our hearts and acted out in our lives by the life in the Spirit... the Ten Commandments: “you shall not murder” perfectly fulfilled by love your neighbor as yourself in the power of Christ
- The Psalms become the cries of the heart of subjects in the Kingdom... the Spirit-saturated prayer life of adopted children of God
- The Proverbs become the perfectly wise life fulfilled by the constant daily guidance of the Spirit
- The dark sayings of the prophets find the fulfillment in the coming of Christ and in the perfect salvation he came to bring.
- The visions of Isaiah were really visions of Christ and of His worldwide Kingdom, a Kingdom made rich by the Gentiles streaming into the open gates of the New Jerusalem
- The resurrection of dry bones seen by Ezekiel is understood perfectly in the of Christ’s resurrection as the firstfruits from the dead
- The sufferings of Job and their resolution find perfect fulfillment in the redeemer, Christ, whose sufferings for us sweeten all the sufferings of our lives
- The mysteries of Daniel’s final prophecies stretch out yet ahead of us, but much of it is behind us, fulfilled in the clear and magnificent light of Christ’s world-conquering Kingdom

It goes on and on... the perfect teaching ministry of the church is a series of one treasures after another: Old Treasures, New Treasures... brought out through accurate exposition by a Spirit-filled “scribe”...

D. Christ’s Fourth Goal: The Disciples’ Fruitful Teaching Ministry

1. Christ did not intend that His disciples merely have clear understanding... nor that they merely have comprehensive understanding of ALL these things... nor that they rightly appraise each of these truths as treasures, new and old
2. NO... Christ intended that they be NEW SCRIBES... who BRING OUT these treasures and set them forth plainly

vs. 52 He said to them, "Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old."

3. “Teacher of the Law” = “Scribe”... full-time copiers and teachers of God’s Word\
 - a. word of God written had to be copied for future generations

Law of Moses commanded Kings to be Scribes:

Deuteronomy 17:18 "Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests.

Joshua was a scribe... copying the Law of Moses:

Joshua 8:32 There, in the presence of the Israelites, Joshua copied on stones the law of Moses, which he had written.

- b. later generations a class of priests given the duty of copying the Law... AND of teaching it to the people

2 Chronicles 34:13 some of the Levites were scribes and officials and gatekeepers.

- c. Ezra a godly Scribe

Ezra 7:6 This Ezra went up from Babylon, and he was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given

Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the LORD, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel.

This is the ideal description of a Scribe... a teacher of the Law. Skilled in properly handling the Scripture

Nehemiah 8:1-3 all the people assembled as one man in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded for Israel.

So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. 3 He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

Ezra 8:8 They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read.

- d. Scribes in Christ's generation among His greatest enemies
4. Christ here envisages a new generation of Scribes... namely, His apostles, who were thoroughly instructed about the Kingdom of Heaven... ready to teach it to the ends of the earth

5. These Scribes—the apostles—would teach the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven; and would teach the commands of Christ to the ends of the earth

vs. 11-12 He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance.

The new Scribes who are personally instructed by Christ in the secrets of the Kingdom MUST NOT hoard the wealth themselves... they are to BRING OUT of their storeroom new treasures as well as old

The new Scribes are instructed about the Kingdom, so their teachings will come with the authority of a King:

Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Summary: Christ's goals are now set forth... He wanted His disciples to have a clear understanding, He wanted them to have a comprehensive understanding, He wanted them to delight in the treasures of the Kingdom, and He wanted them to be new scribes who would bring those new and old treasures out and make them plain for the delight of all!

II. Modern Applications

A. Expository Preaching

1. Bringing up treasure, setting it forth

Illus. Pearl divers, jewelers... the work of the expositor is to dive down and bring up the pearls from the sea bed below; the world of the preacher is to set those pearls in a beautiful work of art for the delight of the people... to dive down for pearls is the hard work of Biblical exegesis: Greek, Hebrew, word studies, grammar, syntax, Biblical and systematic theology... raw materials for Biblical messages; the work of the preacher is setting for those pearls of Biblical truth in an attractive and appealing way... like a jeweler sets pearls in a brooch or strings them attractively in a necklace

DON'T ACCEPT ANYTHING LESS FROM THIS PULPIT... or from the preachers you hear

2. Too much modern preaching is not an EXPOSITION of God's treasures... but a rumination of personal insights and anecdotes of the pastor
3. Understanding the WHOLE counsel of God's revelation should be the goal of faithful preaching

Psalm 119:130 The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

B. Biblical Theology

1. The unity of God's revelation... the integration of the Old and New Covenants
2. The "Big Picture"... seeing the forest AND the trees
3. Too many evangelical preachers ignore the Old Testament as something foreign
4. New Treasures as well as Old means we see a unity and eternity in the WHOLE counsel of God's Word
5. Big picture:

of a sovereign God who is a King and who created man in His image... who gave man a clear rule to live by in His law and who set a penalty of death for violation of that law

of man who did sin and rebel against his rightful King

of God the redeemer who works through human history to bring sinful man back into right relationship with him

of God the teacher who paints truth on the canvas of human history: through the call of Abraham, the history of the Jews, the mighty Exodus from bondage in Egypt, the Law of Moses, the wickedness of the Jews sinning in the Promised Land, the exile, the small restoration of the Jews back to the Promised Land

of a Law and Sacrificial System that prepared the way for Christ... the blood of every sacrifice proclaiming that forgiveness with a holy God was costly and possible

of the coming of the Kingdom in the coming of Christ... His teachings, His miracles, His perfect sinless life, His bloody atoning death on the cross

of the advance of the Kingdom through the foolishness of preaching... a simple message of repentance and faith in Christ, that would spread around the entire world and claim people from every tribe and language... of salvation by faith alone... of a life of glad submission to the King's Law by the indwelling Spirit

of the future perfect of the Kingdom in glory... when the wicked will be weeded out and thrown into eternal fire, when the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father

This is the Big Picture: the essential unity of the entire Bible, one story of a Holy, Loving King and a Rebellious but then Redeemed People

C. The Whole Counsel of God's Word

1. Not shrinking back from proclamation
2. Embracing every truth, every doctrine, no matter how difficult, as a treasure from God
3. Of yearning to hear EVERYTHING God has said to us, even if it takes a lifetime of hard study to understand it all
4. Of rejoicing in the whole counsel of God's word, as did Paul

Acts 20:27 For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God.

D. Biblical Evangelism

1. To learn how to preach Christ from the Old Testament

Illus. Sharing Christ on the way back from China with the Jewish woman born in Israel

2. To learn also the centrality of TEACHING in evangelism

2 Timothy 1:11 And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.

"...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you"

3. We are seeking to make DISCIPLES not merely converts
4. Disciples are going to be like these new scribes... owners of houses who have their own treasures, New as well as Old
5. We must not settle for shallow evangelism that does not make disciples of the King

E. Sheer Delight

Christ likened understanding the Kingdom truths to old and new treasures... treasure bring DELIGHT or they're worthless

The truth of God should bring delight to your soul

Psalm 1:1-2 Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked... But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

1. The riches of the word should bring sheer delight to the Christian

2. There is an awe-inspiring grandeur to the scope of Biblical revelation
3. Deep delight in the Word of God, in all of its riches, is one of the marks of regeneration
4. Having no interest in the Bible is a grave and serious sign that the person is not born-again

F. Daily Quiet Times

Psalm 119:16 I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.

1. If the Bible is a treasure, do you open it up regularly?
2. Who owns a masterpiece of art and never looks at it?

Illus. Perhaps the thief who doesn't really own the art because he stole it... it's not his and he cannot show it to anyone or take delight in it at all

But the owner of the masterpiece: a Rembrandt painting, a sculpture by Michaelangelo, a first edition of Shakespeare... he will bring it out frequently to look at it... and he will delight over it with his friends

Do you have your daily quiet time in the word? Fathers, do you have your family altar times? Friends, do you fellowship with the WORD dominating your conversation?

Do you bring out of your storeroom new treasures... new thoughts you've had this week in meditating on the word? As well as old treasures... truths you learned years ago but which still delight you today?