



SERMON GROUP LINK

BRADY HERBERT | "PARABLES OF THE HIDDEN TREASURES"

Harris Creek Baptist Church

July 13, 2014

LIFE GROUP LEADER INSTRUCTIONS

In preparation for group discussion, take a few minutes to read through the instructions to the right.

PASSAGES TO STUDY

SERMON TEXT:

Matthew 13:44-46

OTHER SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Romans 12:2; Philippians 3:7-8

BEFORE LIFE GROUP

1. Spend time in prayer and studying the passage.
2. Listen to the sermon and take notes. Write down questions you had while listening to the sermon.
3. Read through all of the material.
4. Write down two or three ways to apply the passage to your daily life.

DURING LIFE GROUP

1. Summarize the sermon in your own words. Ask other group members to do the same.
2. Ask someone to read the text for the group.
3. Lead your group through the discussion questions, asking the ones that are relevant to your group. Supplement some of the discussion with your own thoughts and follow-up questions.
4. Share how you might be able to apply the sermon to your everyday life.
5. Close with a time of prayer, asking God to increase the depth of our relationship with Him and our obedience to what we learned.

SERMON RECAP

In his book *Creativity, Inc.*, Ed Catmull (the founder and CEO of Pixar Studios) talks about the fact that, when creating art, every human being has to overcome inaccurate versions of images we carry around in our head if we want to create realistic art. In talking about this challenge, he says, "It is a fact of life, though a confounding one, that focusing on something can make it more difficult to see. The goal is to learn to suspend, if only temporarily, the habits and impulses that obscure your vision." What Catmull says about art is true for us spiritually, as well. We naturally carry around a bunch of inaccurate pictures in our head of what true life is all about, how to find fulfillment, and even the concepts we have of God. In fact, some of our preconceived images we possess are some of the primary barriers that keep us from accurately reproducing the Kingdom of God in our daily lives. Perhaps that is one reason why Jesus taught in parables: he wanted to help us learn to suspend any habits that obscure our vision of the Kingdom. To say it another way, he wanted to help us "learn to see." One of Jesus' greatest and most effective ways of doing this is found in parables like the "twin parables" in Matthew 13:44-46. He turns our worldview upside down so that we can see more clearly and hopefully more accurately reproduce the Kingdom in our daily lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. It was said that many of our natural perceptions we carry around in our head are actually inaccurate when compared to reality. How did the art example in the sermon help explain this point? Are there other aspects of your spiritual life where you think you could be carrying around a slightly inaccurate view of reality?
2. It's often said that the Gospel turns the world's value system upside down. Why is it so important for Jesus to flip the way we think the world works on its head? A.J. Conyers says, "A paradox stands at the center of life: only when we give it away, do we really have it." How does this fit with the idea that the Gospel is an "inverted" way of seeing the world?
3. The two parables in Matthew 13:44-46 are called "twin parables" because they are always told together. What are some differences between these two stories? What do these parables have in common?
4. One of Jesus' greatest and most effective ways of turning our world "upside down" is calling us to sacrifice everything for the sake of His Kingdom. What are some ways we try to rationalize, or even distort, this demand? How do Paul's words in Philippians 3:7-8 echo the demand Jesus presents in Matthew 13:44-46?
5. In *My Utmost for His Highest*, Oswald Chambers says, "Abandonment means to refuse yourself the luxury of asking any questions...And once you do get to the point of total surrender to Him, you will be the most surprised and delighted person on earth. God will have you absolutely, without any limitations, and He will have given you your life. If you are not there, it is either because of disobedience in your life or your refusal to be simple enough." Do you agree or disagree? Why?
6. One of the primary themes in Matthew 13:44-46 is the joy that follows surrender. Why is joy a result of absolute surrender?
7. What did you take away from this weekend's message? How do you feel led to respond?