

# The Parchment

Volume 2, Issue 17  
Rev. Howard Chang  
June 13, 2010

## Treasure Hunt

When I was a child I played treasure hunt. My friends and I would pretend that the pirate's gold was hidden in an underground treasure chest. With shovel in hand, we began digging. If we could find that treasure chest, we would be rich!

In life, many of us will consider what goals we may want to achieve. We will set priorities that point us toward what is most valuable to us. We might say we are on a *treasure hunt*. One question we may want to reflect on is *which* treasure are we hunting? What are we willing to sacrifice for that treasure?

For example, Jesus told a parable likening the kingdom of heaven to a treasure: "*The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field*" (Matthew 13:44). What was the kingdom of heaven worth to the man? He sold everything he had to buy the field that had the treasure in it. It was worth everything to him.

The backyard treasure hunt, together with the kingdom parable, gives us two options for what our treasure can be. Jesus states explicitly, "*Do not store up for yourselves treasure on earth...store up for yourselves treasure in heaven*" (Matthew

6:19-20). The treasure hunt for worldly possessions and the stuff of this earth is well represented in our society. The media we watch and listen to affirms the belief that material wealth, with all that it brings, constitutes the American pursuit of "happiness."

On the other hand, the treasure in heaven is harder to grasp. It places value on the things that God cares about such as loving Him and in turn loving our neighbor. It is about being generous and gracious to others. It is about following Jesus and His Word. Its reward is eternal. If we see the value of living God's ways, we will reap the rewards that come from God's hand.

A few years ago, Lori and I learned a valuable lesson in putting a priority on heavenly treasures. We were on a very tight budget during my graduate studies. Our expenses seemed to double in keeping up a house in San Jose and a household in Washington. In Vancouver, WA we became a magnet for many of the neighborhood children. We fed them, provided a place for them to do homework, and played with them. I found myself struggling with the added expense of extra mouths to feed and giving up my own time and space. At first I did not consider investing in those children as a treasure. Looking back I see how all the little ways of giving amounted to a big impact both on our family and on the children we served.

Jesus ends the passage with a truth to take to heart: "*Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*" (Matthew 6:21). If our treasure is with the things of God, our heart and treasure will be with Him also.