

PRAY EVERY DAY July 26, 2020 Resource

God's Invitation to Seek and Find from Jeremiah 29:11-13, NRSV

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart...

Treasure Found Parable from Matthew 13:44, NRSV

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

The Bishop Sharma Lewis Read the Bible in 2020 Challenge

More resources at www.vaumc.org/2020BibleChallenge

July 8 – 28 "Fruit of the Spirit: Goodness"

July 29 – August 18 "Fruit of the Spirit: Faithfulness"

July 27: Galatians 6:6-10

July 31: Lamentations 3:22-24

July 28: Titus 3:1-6

August 1: Psalm 119:89-90

July 29: Deuteronomy 7:6-11

August 2: Isaiah 11:1-5

July 30: Psalm 92:1-4

Small Group or Personal Study

Read Matthew 13:44.

Use the questions below for small group or personal study:

- In Matthew 13:44 Jesus compared the kingdom of heaven to a treasure hidden in the field. As in other parables in Matthew 13 the kingdom of heaven keeps showing up in the earth. What treasures have you found in the earth in things or relationships? How have you discovered the kingdom heaven hidden in the world like a treasure found?

- In the parable the treasure found was not stolen or taken from the field. One of the unique things about the treasures of heaven is that they cannot be stolen away. They come to us by grace and freely. Think of heavenly treasures like God's love, forgiveness, peace, providence, hope, true relationships which are precious but cannot be ill-gotten but are grace given. In the story, the finder hides the treasure and goes to buy the field to own the treasure within it. What are the things of heaven you have found and you did recognize their exceeding worth?

- How did you respond to the treasures of heaven? Did you receive them? Did you pass them by? Are you in the field of decision about a heavenly treasure now?

- The finder sold everything to buy the field and gain the treasure. The finder may have had things of great value but they paled in comparison to heavenly treasure. It was a no-brainer to acquire the treasures of God. What have you had to give up or dispossess so that heaven could hold you?

- Read some more in Matthew about treasures and consider how and whether you are holding onto to treasures that will fade or eternal treasures in the promises of God. Read: (1) Matthew 2:10-11; (2) Matthew 6:19-21; and (3) Matthew 19:16-22.

- Notice the earthly acquisition in the parable. To get the heavenly treasure, the finder purchased the field. This is a reminder that seeking, finding, and receiving heaven also connects us to the world God has made, Jesus came to save, and the Spirit moves in today. The treasures of heaven will make us to invest in people and creation right around us. Jesus continues to

bring the stuff of heaven to earth. How is Jesus calling you to invest in people and ministry in the earth to bring out the treasures of heaven?

A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition

I am no longer my own, but thine.

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee, exalted for thee or brought low by thee.

Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.

And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

Spend time in silence

Prayer for others and yourself

The Lord's Prayer

The Bishop Sharma Lewis Call to Pray at Noon Every Day

Almighty God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

We thank you for your blessings, past, present and future. You are our rock and the source of our hope in all things and at all times. As Jehovah Jireh, our provider God, we ask you this day to stretch out your mighty hand and eradicate from the face of the earth forever this virus called COVID-19 (coronavirus) that is spreading rapidly from continent to continent.

We also pray that you, Jehovah Rapha, our healing God, would place your hand upon all of those who have been stricken by this virus and restore them to full health. Be with those who have lost loved ones and are grieving. Protect all who are caring for those with this virus and keep them from contracting it themselves. Calm our fears and provide us with your peace that surpasses all understanding. Strengthen us with the joy of the Lord and help us to hold firmly to the hope that only you can provide.

Unify us that we, the Virginia Annual Conference, may be able to experience anew the promise of your presence in and through the unity of our faith, hope and trust in you in the days ahead and forever. We offer this prayer in the mighty name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.
AMEN.

Share the Love of Jesus because It's All about Relationships

How will you or how did you share the love of Jesus with neighbor today with no strings attached? Write it down and share about it this week in small group for support and prayer.

A Blessing for Joy from Psalm 40:16-17, NRSV

But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;

may those who love your salvation say continually, "Great is the LORD!"

As for me, I am poor and needy, but the LORD takes thought for me.

You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God.