

Peter and Sue were looking forward to an outing with their friends, Phil and Marjorie. Marjorie invited them to go with them to see a house for sale in the country. They planned to make a day of it, to relax in the sunny weather, admire the scenery on the drive and enjoy a leisurely lunch. Perhaps stop at a country shop or two along the way. It was a much needed outing.

The stone house with its four fireplaces was situated on a mature plot, with graceful shade trees in front and hedges that lined the drive. The house had plenty of windows to catch the east and west sun, and the rooms were of a good size. Out back, a flagstone terrace ran the length of the house. One could just imagine meals with friends, or watching the sunset. The yard in back was open, no plants or shrubs, with a deep wooded area at the very back of the lot. The kitchen could stand modernizing, but it was clean and quite usable as it was. It was a lovely house and grounds. Not too big, and not too small.

Phil and Marjorie decided the house did not suit their needs because it was just a tad too far from town. Phil and Marjorie are city people and their idea of a country house is an apartment with a big shade tree out the back door. They admitted the house was lovely, but it was too overwhelming to think of all the upkeep.

While they were speaking with the realtor, Peter explored the grounds and called Sue over to see what he had found in the wooded area. There was a creek and a natural spring, hidden by a stand of small trees. "Sue, there's plenty of room for a garden out back and the creek and spring can irrigate the garden and provide drinking water. I know you told Marjorie that you like the house, but do you like it enough to move here? We have longed to move further out into the country where we could grow our own food, the house is comfortable and is just the right size for us. Who knows when we'll find a treasure like this again? What do you say?"

After a leisurely lunch at a roadside inn, the scenery on the ride home seemed twice as beautiful as on the trip up.

Peter's cousin William, always admired Peter and Sue's home and had told them on numerous occasions that if they ever wanted to sell, he wanted to purchase their house.

Peter called William with the good news, that they were ready to sell. William was at their doorstep in record time, with a check and a contract in hand.

After William left, Peter called the realtor and put in an offer on the house. The next morning the realtor called to say the offer had been accepted, and because the owner was moving abroad, they wanted to close this week, if possible.

Two weeks later, Peter and Sue hosted a small luncheon on the terrace for Phil and Marjorie, and William and his

wife. It was a delight to entertain friends in their new home. William cleared his throat and asked, "Peter, what made you and Sue decide to purchase this house so quickly after seeing it for only a few minutes?"

Peter smiled, and said "William, do you know the passage in the Bible, about a man that finds a treasure hidden in a field? It's in Matthew 13:44, and says that a man found a treasure hidden in a field. He buried the treasure, then he went and sold everything he had to buy the field from the owner, so that he would own the treasure. That's how Sue and I felt when we saw this house. It met all our needs and more. It was what we wanted and needed. The real gem of the house is that it also came with a spring and flowing water that will keep us well watered, so we sold what we had and purchased it."

Of course, the picture of what the Bible verse is talking about is Jesus, the Priceless Treasure, found in an open

field. The field is the Bible, and Jesus is found in the Bible. He is a gold mine with rich veins of gold that run deep in many directions. The treasures hidden in the Bible for us to discover are like nuggets of gold, only more valuable, and the veins of gold are layer upon layer, so that we can spend a lifetime and never exhaust what the mine has to offer. It is the Holy Spirit that explains to us the worth and excellence of the gold nuggets we find, and He leads us to more nuggets.

The man who sold all he had to buy the field with treasure was talking about being willing to give up everything in his life to follow Jesus - giving up hope of saving himself through his own good works, and instead, turning to Jesus, our Treasure and Savior, for His salvation and righteousness, which Jesus paid for by dying for our sins.

Many people see the open field, the Bible, and they pass right by, missing the great Treasure in the gold mine.

“Wow” said William, “I never thought of the Bible as a gold mine. I have often wondered how our preacher came up with all those insights that I had missed. It never crossed my mind to ask the Holy Spirit to help me understand the Bible. I guess that's what is meant by asking for wisdom and discernment. I see that it's high time I do more digging for treasure, with my Guide from now on. Why didn't I think of this before? Thanks for showing me Peter.”

William raised his glass in a toast to “Treasure we have found, and to plumbing the depths for more nuggets. How truly rich we are.”