

Dear Friends,

William is 9 years old and was born with a heart defect. His dream is to pilot an aircraft one day, and thanks to Jim, a pilot with American Airlines, firefighters, air traffic controllers and many more people at Chicago and Dallas/Fort Worth Int'l airports, along with the Make-a-Wish Foundation, William was given that opportunity. Together they gave William three jam-packed days filled with everything involved in sitting in the left seat of an American Airlines aircraft. Make-A-Wish believes that fulfilling the wish of a child undergoing severe medical trauma can be a real game-changer for the child.

Most of us are not experiencing life-threatening medical conditions. Yet many of us do experience struggles in our lives, stress and events that change our direction. At those times, what is our wish?

Jesus teaches us that we have one wish – if you will – in life, one choice that is a game-changer. That choice is God. “Seek first the kingdom of God,” he announces in the Sermon on the Mount “. . . and all these things will be given you besides” (Mt. 6:33). If we choose God, everything else in our lives, all we need for real happiness, will fall into place.

Today’s parables continue to describe the kingdom of God. The first two parables – that of the buried treasure and the pearl - are lessons regarding total attachment to God and detachment from the things of the world. By way of these parables Jesus is presenting the command to love God unreservedly as the means to life and happiness.

The parable of the dragnet is much like last week’s parable of the wheat and weeds. The decision regarding what is good or bad is left to the angels at the end of time. Jesus is making the point that the kingdom of God is not an instant happening nor a static event, but a movement toward completion and fulfillment which He has set into motion. While we are still living there is time to choose for God, to embrace more and more his reign in our lives.

Life is not always easy; sometimes it can seem unfair. By choosing God, by making God and His ways our priority, no matter what life brings, we are prepared. Choosing God is the ultimate game-changer and not just for ourselves but for those with whom we have contact. By valuing God above all, by trusting in Him, we can enter into the lives of those who are undergoing life-threatening traumas and lead them along the path to the kingdom.

What one “wish” do we truly desire? Is it to “Seek first the Kingdom of God”? What are we willing to do in order for our “wish” to be fulfilled?

Peace and blessings,
Father John