

The Pearl of Great Price

Matthew 13:45-46

As we continue to study the parables of our Lord in this chapter, once again we discover a parable that is divided on its interpretation. Some scholars view the merchant man as Christ, seeking out a pearl of great price, the church. Others view the merchant man as humanity, seeking out the pearl of great price, Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of men's souls.

I view this parable in light of Christ being the pearl of great price. We will discuss this in greater detail as we move through the text, but I find it difficult to see it in the other context. The merchant man is seeking goodly pearls, pearls of great worth and value. Now I know that Christ viewed our redemption of such worth that He was willing to offer Himself as the atoning sacrifice for our sin. However, I also realize, in and of ourselves, we are unworthy of any of His good grace. Apart from Christ, we have no hope or eternal value. Salvation was made possible, not according to our merit or worth, but based on His grace alone.

As we consider the salvation made available to humanity, I want to examine the [details](#) Jesus reveals as we think on: [The Pearl of Great Price](#).

I. The Seeker (45) – *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls.*

In this parable, Jesus speaks of a merchant man seeking pearls. One would discern that he is a man who understands his trade. He has been in business long enough to recognize a valuable pearl when he sees it. No doubt he has bought and sold many pearls throughout his time in business. However, his endeavors have not provided complete satisfaction. He has never found the pearl that satisfied his longing to find that one rare jewel. As he buys and sells countless pearls, he continues to seek that one rare pearl that will put an end to his search.

- Is that not how we, and countless others lived prior to coming to Christ in salvation? Some try various forms of religion. They attempt to satisfy the longing in their soul with the pleasures of life, or through sacrificial service to others. They may even attend a Bible believing church, being active and committed to its services and activities, seeking to find what they are looking for to bring real peace and contentment. Sadly, there is nothing in this world that can fully satisfy the longing man has within his soul. That need can be met by Christ alone.

II. The Search (45) – *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls.*

Jesus doesn't reveal how long this man has been in business, or where he search has taken him. We know nothing of the number of pearls he had bought and sold in the past. We know nothing of where his desires have taken him. All we know is the search continues. Surely he has seen some

of the best pearls known to man. He has handled many valuable pearls that have brought satisfaction to others, and yet his search continues. The merchant man is consumed with his pursuit of finding the perfect pearl. He has owned and traded so many, no doubt he will recognize it immediately when it is finally found.

- Our world is filled with many who spend their entire lives searching for that one thing that will make their lives complete, bringing purpose, peace, and security. Some may not want to admit it, but we are all spiritual beings. God created us that way. There is an inborn desire to worship. We all contemplate death and what lies beyond the grave. Many go from one organization, religion, or activity to another, searching for purpose and meaning.
- Although I was very young when I was saved, I remember a time in life when I was like the merchant man. I didn't have the wisdom or maturity I needed at that point in life, but I knew I needed more than I possessed at the time. I was blessed to be taken to church. I knew the stories of Jesus. I had heard of His death on the cross and glorious resurrection. I knew, and believed, that Jesus died so we might be forgiven and have eternal life. I knew what the pearl looked like! I knew that I needed what Christ offered, but I hadn't yet found it. My life was empty, filled with doubt and fear. I longed to find what I desperately needed, but discovered it wasn't found in anything the world could offer. Prior to salvation, my search continued.

III. The Selection (46) – **Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.** In his continual, relentless search, the merchant man finally discovered one pearl of great price. There was no question of its value. He immediately knew this was the one he had searched for his entire life. This particular pearl was prized above all others. He had never encountered another pearl that rivaled the beauty or worth of this pearl. For the merchant, this was the discovery of a lifetime, and he knew his search was over.

- Like the merchant man, I and countless others have made this discovery. As a young boy, dealing with a troubled life and uncertain future, I too found the Pearl of great price. It was immediately recognizable, even to an immature boy. This Pearl exceeded the splendor and beauty of anything I had ever encountered. As the Holy Spirit revealed Christ the Lord to me, I recognized that He alone could meet my need, save my soul, and reconcile me to God. I was overwhelmed with joy at my discovery. My search had ended.
- I won't say that I stumbled across this discovery of a lifetime, because I know the sovereignty of God led me to Christ through the direction of the Spirit. However, I must confess that I was not actively seeking this Pearl of great price the day I discovered Him. After this glorious discovery, I immediately knew I had found what my soul longed for! [Acts 4:12 – Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be](#)

saved. 2 Cor.5:21 – For he hath made him *to be sin* for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

IV. The Sacrifice (46) – *Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.* The merchant immediately recognized the value of this particular pearl. He knew he could not let it slip out of his grasp. This is the one he had searched for his entire life. He was willing to sell everything he owned in order to purchase and possess this single pearl. It proved to be more valuable than anything else he possessed. In fact, this pearl was worth more than everything else he owned combined.

- I must caution against misunderstanding what Jesus has said. He does not imply that we can purchase our salvation. We know salvation is a free gift of God's grace. It is by grace through faith, not of our works, lest we have reason to boast. However, Jesus does reveal that salvation, a personal relationship with Him, must be sought and desired above all else. Knowing Christ in salvation is of more value than all our possessions combined. We must be willing to sacrifice anything in this life that would hinder our possessing the Pearl of great price. Jesus alone secured our salvation as He died on the cross for our sin. He alone secured eternal life for every believer as He rose in victory over sin and death. He alone is the means of salvation. One must ensure they possess this Pearl above all else.

- In fact, nothing we possess compares to the value and worth of a personal relationship with Christ. That is the single most important possession anyone could have. Everything else we acquire in this life is temporary and fleeting, but our salvation in Christ will last beyond the grave. We must regard our relationship with Christ as the most valuable possession we have! [Philippians 3:7-11](#) – *But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.* ^[8] *Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,* ^[9] *And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:* ^[10] *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;* ^[11] *If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*

V. The Security (46) – *Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.* Consider the excitement the merchant must have felt at this moment. He had spent his life searching for the one pearl of great price. Finally he had found it, and was able to purchase it. The jewel he had long sought now belonged to him. Knowing the value of this pearl, I am sure the merchant felt secure in his future. He now owned one pearl that would provide for whatever needs he might encounter. His valuable possession offered unrivaled security.

- The same is true for every believer. Those who have been saved by grace, being placed in the body of Christ, have a possession that will meet every need they have. I am not saying that we won't have financial struggles or face difficulties in this life, but the saved have a possession that will endure beyond the grave and grant access to heaven. We will spend eternity with Christ our Lord because of His good grace and our relationship with Him. Of all that I possess, nothing else offers the security of salvation. My eternal destiny is settled and secure in Christ Jesus my Lord. *John 10:28-29 – And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.* ^[29] *My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.* *John 1:12-13 – But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:* ^[13] *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

Conclusion: This is a passage of assurance and comfort, but it is also a passage of certainty. Do you possess the Pearl of great price? Have you responded to the call of salvation, repented of sin and received Christ as your Savior? If not your search will continue for that which brings peace to your soul. Jesus alone can save from sin, and He alone can fill the void within your life. If you are unsaved, come to Christ today and be saved.

Christian, have you considered lately what you possess in Christ? I encourage you to take a moment to thank the Lord for His goodness and grace in your life. I hope this will also challenge us to share the Gospel with others, so they too can possess the Pearl of great price through salvation in Christ.