

The Parables of Jesus #9
The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price
(Mt. 13:45-46)
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Introduction

A. Matt 13:45-46

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. (NKJ)

1. This parable is very similar to the one in Mt 13:44 about the treasure found in the field
2. However there are some differences

B. Jesus used several different parables to teach a basic understanding of the kingdom

1. It gives us the idea that it is important to know about the kingdom
2. It gives us the idea that the kingdom is multi-faceted
3. It gives us the idea that the kingdom is a vital and valuable subject
4. It gives us the idea that people do not understand it very well

C. The kingdom of heaven has been compared to several things

1. Seed -- leaven -- treasure
2. Each of those is a thing of usefulness or value
3. In the parable of the pearl of great price, we must be careful to identify what it is that Jesus compares the kingdom to

D. There is valuable information here that can determine the place of the kingdom in our lives

I. THE PARABLE

A. Important: Here, the kingdom is said to be like a man seeking pearls

1. The kingdom is not compared simply to a pearl of great value
2. The emphasis here is not as focused on the material thing of value
3. The emphasis here is on that which connects the merchant with the pearl

B. The action of the man in the parable is the key -- he is seeking for something

1. He is a pearl merchant -- he is looking for pearls
2. A good merchant knows that the goods don't just come to him, but he must search out the best for himself
3. It is this action of active looking and seeking that Jesus emphasizes

C. We should not be surprised at this principle

1. Matt 6:19-21

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (NKJ)

2. Col 3:1-2

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (NKJ)

3. Heb 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (NKJ)

D. It is important to note that the man of faith is a man of action

1. The man of faith is like the merchant -- he goes looking for things of value to obtain for himself
2. He does not wait for them to arrive all by themselves
3. This is the great point of the parable -- that God blesses seekers

E. The action is also similar to the man who discovered the treasure in the field

1. When the man discovered the one pearl of great value, he knew he must obtain it
2. He sold all that he had to buy that one pearl
3. The fruit of his search led to a sacrifice
 - a. Matt 19:21-22 (attitude of failure)

Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. (NKJ)

b. Luke 12:31-33 (attitude of success)

But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. (NKJ)

II. THERE ARE SOME GREAT "PEARL MERCHANTS" IN THE BIBLE

A. Nicodemus

1. Jn 3:1-21

2. John 7:50-51

Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, "Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?" (NKJ)

3. John 19:39-40

And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. (NKJ)

B. The Ethiopian Eunuch

1. Acts 8:27-28

So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. (NKJ)

2. Acts 8:35-37

Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, ""See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, ""If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (NKJ)

C. Cornelius

1. Acts 10:1-2

There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. (NKJ)

2. Acts 10:47-48

"Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days. (NKJ)

D. All of these had found a "pearl" that was the reward of their search

III. OTHER LESSONS

A. God desires that we seek him

1. Heb 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (NKJ)

2. Matt 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. (NKJ)

3. Matt 7:7-8

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. (NKJ)

B. Seeking is the key to understanding

1. Mt 13:11ff

2. Parables enabled Jesus to do two things

- a. communicate truth to those who sought truth
- b. conceal truth from those who did not seek it

CONCLUSION

A. Are you a seeker?

1. If so, what things are you seeking?
2. Are they things of value?
3. You need to know there is something of ultimate value available

B. If you found it, what would you give for it?

1. Would you give all you have for it?
2. If not, then it isn't the most valuable possession

C. The kingdom of heaven is like a man looking for valuable pearls, who found one of great value, and who sold all he had to obtain the one pearl for himself

D. Invitation