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The Kingdom Parable of the Pearl.

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Learn the Bible with Friends

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

The Kingdom Parable of the Pearl.

Topics.

- The two most common interpretations of this parable.
- Seeking and finding the valuable pearl.
- A pearl of great price.
- The pearl and triumphant Christians.
- A pearl fit for a royal crown.
- Christ's pearl will shine throughout all eternity.
- Our life is hidden with Christ in God.
- The riches of God's grace and the treasured pearl.

A PEARL OF GREAT VALUE

- **Matthew 13:45-46:** Jesus said, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, ⁴⁶who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Matthew is the only one that records this parable of only thirty-four words there is no record of it in the books of Mark, Luke or John. The title in this verse, the Kingdom of Heaven does not mean that the Kingdom is actually in heaven.

The following Scriptures are just a few of the many that show that the Kingdom of Heaven is the same as the Kingdom of God.

Matthew wrote:

- Jesus answered them, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it has not been given (Matt. 13:11).

Mark wrote:

- Jesus said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the Kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables (Mark 4:11).

Luke wrote:

- Jesus said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the Kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand (Luke 8:10).

Matthew wrote:

- Jesus told them another parable. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened" (Matt. 13:33).

Luke wrote:

- Jesus said, "Whereunto shall I liken the Kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened (Luke 13:20-21).

These verses clearly show that the Kingdom of Heaven refers to God's present Kingdom on earth.

NOTE: this study looks at the two most common interpretations of this parable. Some teach that Christ is the pearl who sinners sacrifice everything to acquire while others believe that the pearl symbolizes the saved and the faithful church. Since both these views contain certain truths this, we will examine both views.

CHRIST IS THE PEARL WHO SINNERS SACRIFICE EVERYTHING TO ACQUIRE

Throughout the world there has always been and even today still are people amongst all the nations of the world seeking spiritual life. One only has to go into a New Age bookshop to see the truth of this statement. For this reason, many teach that the parable is about a sinner sacrificing everything in order to acquire Christ. Before we begin to look deeper into this theory it should be mentioned that anyone who denies that there are not a multitude of good spiritual teachings in the world today that do give a certain mental benefit and do offer certain spiritual formula's that will enhance a person's life in this world if they practise what some of these authors teach in their best-selling global books is (I think) deceiving themselves.

I say this because many of these authors teach Scriptural principles and biblical ethics and have given me insights into certain thing I wouldn't have discovered myself, but it should be understood that though many of these books do offer certain principles that will prove healthy to the mental state of a person's mind and offer certain truths that can enhance a person's life in this world not one of these books have the power to give eternal life and eternal happiness in everlasting glory if they deny the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Those who hold to the teaching that Christ is the pearl say that the parable is about those who do not know God's love and grace pursuing all sorts of spiritual paths to find spiritual life and God and eventually discover the beauty and glory of God's love and grace in Christ so overwhelmingly glorious that it supersedes by far all they have discovered and experienced; so much so that they are willing to give up everything to follow Christ.

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NOTE: finding God's love and grace in Christ is not about going to church every Sunday or about strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs and traditions though some of these maybe good in themselves no-one needs to adhere to them to be living in a heart-filled relationship of love in God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Throughout history many brothers and sisters have found God's love and grace in Christ so glorious that they have not only suffered horrific persecution because of their faith but also laid down their lives to death for the Lord.

The author of Hebrews wrote:

- Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life, others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated of whom the world was not worthy wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth and all these were commended for their faith (Heb. 11:35-39).

These verses show that there has always been and always will be sinners who are prepared to give up everything, even their life for Christ. Clearly there are many more principles that could be drawn from this interpretation and many more similarities that could be added to it. Jesus said:

- Whoever asks for the Holy Spirit it will be given to them; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you, for everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened (Luke 11:9-13).

Showing that in the same way as a merchant man seeks after pearls salvation in Christ must also be sought after. Because there are many truths contained in this interpretation it would be foolish to argue against it since it certainly applies to all who have sought after spiritual life and humbled themselves before God and with an honest heartfelt repentance accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and surrendered their life to him.

Added to this there is nothing in this world that can fill the human heart with joy and contentment more than having God's love and grace entering into it and for this reason Christ can be seen as the pearl of great price. This is the glory and wonder of the parable both this interpretation and the following one (which I think has even more glory) can be applied without abusing the parable.

NOTE: there are many who have been involved in Christianity who have turned to other spiritual teachings this I believe (for the most part) is because they have only known God as a religious rule keeper, meaning that it is only if they do certain religious (things these will vary depending on what church they have been in) they will be accepted by God. They have not been taught that God will lavish His grace upon those who love His Son regardless of religious rule keeping and keeping religious customs and traditions. They have not been told that God wants to invade their heart and mind with His love and walk with them in their everyday life and not just in religious services.

True Christianity is living with God in our hearts and minds in the same manner as we would allow a partner, we are deeply in love with to invade our heart, our mind and our thoughts. Devoted married couples do not just love each other in the intimate moments of the bedroom rather the love continues to flow throughout all the mundane chores of life. Likewise, it is with God certainly there are spiritual highs as a married couple experience, but there are also many lows, but like the devoted married couple the love continues to flow (maybe not as noticeable) even in the lows, the difficulties and ugly moments of life. In the same way true Christianity is not something that is turned on and off it is spiritual fluid, forever flowing in the heart and mind no matter how secular the environment a believer is in or how religious.

THE PEARL SYMBOLIZES THE SAVED AND THE FAITHFUL CHURCH

The parable can be seen as picture of Christ seeking the sinner and his church. There are many reasons why the parable can be viewed in this light and I have no-doubt if you have read this far the following will truly thrill you since it not only magnifies God's great love in Christ, but also shines a spotlight on what it cost our heavenly Father to save us to eternal life and the price Jesus paid to redeem us. To discover the glory of this interpretation it helps firstly to preview the flow of the previous parables.

- In the parable of the sower the man that was sowing good seed is a picture of Christ (though the principle taught can apply to all who sow the word of God).
- In the parable of the wheat and tares; the man sowing of the good seed is Christ.
- In the parable of the mustard seed the man sowing the mustard seed is a picture of Christ.

In these three amazing parables the man is offering heavenly riches to the lost and the ungodly.

- In the parable of leaven, it is a woman and not a man sowing corrupt seeds.
- In the parable of the treasure the man who finds the treasure is Christ.

Now in this parable of the pearl the man who finds the pearl can be seen as Christ himself which means that the Kingdom of God in focus is the present Christian era. Christ is seeking out of this world a faithful people that he can take as his bride and as a Kingdom of priest to God to rule and reign with him when he returns as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to establish Gods Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth. The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

A MERCHANT MAN, PEARLS AND KINGS

Pearls were specifically for the adornment of kings and the merchant men who went seeking them were doing so in order to provide that symbol of glory for someone other than themselves, normally for the king. These merchantmen were not seeking to hoard them or to possess them, but for someone other than themselves, but with our heavenly Merchantman it is different he purchased us that he might eternally possess us. As his church, we are his very own, and one day when glorified, he is to present to himself such a pearl without spot or blemish.

SEEKING AND FINDING THE VALUABLE PEARL

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Paul declares that:

- There is none who seeks after God (Rom. 3:11).
- The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10).
- The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23).
- When they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both (Luke 7:42).

These verses show that it is Christ who seeks the sinner it is the good Shepherd who seeks the lost sheep and not the lost sheep seeking the Shepherd. Christ cannot be purchased he is God's unspeakable gift, the gift cannot be bought, sold or bartered, added to this the Scripture presents the sinner as having nothing to pay or offer to God. The prophet Isaiah wrote:

- We are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags. (Isaiah 64:6).

Isaiah clearly shows that the sinner has nothing to sell in order to buy Christ which means it is not the sinner who is the active agent in choosing Christ, but Christ choosing the sinner.

NOTE: the words, Christ choosing the sinner does not mean that he individually chooses some to be saved to eternal life and not others. Jesus said; "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16) which means Christ died for everyone whether they accept him or not. Jesus has chosen to lay down his life for all so in this sense he has chosen us even

before we choose him. It is not Christ who determines whether we will be saved or not, but our response to him, since he has already proven his love to us on the bloodstained cross of Calvary.

The following verse shows that God choose us:

- You did *not choose me*, but *I chose you* and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you (John 15:16).
- Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and *gave himself* for her (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Christ choose the apostles in that they were simply going about their daily work and he said to them, "Come follow me," and they accepted the invitation likewise Christ died for all mankind and invites all to follow him, he has shown his love to every man and woman through the bloodstained cross of Calvary and in this sense he has chosen all men and women from all nations, languages and countries, but of course he will not force anyone to take up this invitation, but for all who do, not one can claim that they first loved him.

GOODLY PEARLS

The parable says, the merchant man is seeking goodly pearls (Matt. 13:45-46) since the word pearls is plural this means the merchant man was seeking many pearls not just one pearl and while he was looking for many pearls, he finds one very valuable pearl. The only other mention of a pearl in the Bible is in the book of Revelation which states:

- The twelve gates were twelve *pearls* each individual gate was of one *pearl* and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass (Rev. 21:1-27).

Whether we believe the twelve pearls here are symbols of the twelve tribes or the twelve apostles or the church is not important for this study, since all we need to know is that the pearls in this glorious vision represent believers and not Christ. It is very hard for us to see ourselves as a pearl of great price to Christ and to God since everything in our mind screams, no that cannot be true, since we all have different types of sinful inward dysfunctions and aberrations dwelling within the fallen body we have inherited from our earthly father Adam. Added to this not one of us is able to stand before the Most Holy God perfectly free of sin and since this is true and we experience it and live in its reality and will continue to do so until Christ returns and this fallen corrupted mortal body we live in puts on incorruption and immortality (1 Cor. 15:49-56), but we are not considered a pearl of great price because we attain to a certain standard of righteousness or because we strictly adhere to ceremonial rites, holy days and keep religious customs and traditions, but because of our faith in Christ and his righteousness and not our own. This is why God wants us to walk with Him by faith and in His grace and in His love.

Ponder the following thought for a moment: if it was possible for us to perfectly keep all God's law a personal relationship with God would be insufferable because striving to perfectly keep the law to be justified would put a person's life under constant stress and anxiety for the following reasons, on the days we perfectly kept the law we would comfortably approach God, but on the days we failed in any part of it we would be unable to approach Him. Added to this dilemma, if we were able to perfectly keep the law, we would most likely tend to become very self-righteous. Those who were able to perfectly keep it would be inclined to be very judgmental to those who had difficulty, worse still if we died on a day, we failed to perfectly keep the law in any part we would be condemned to eternal death. This is the glory of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; it proclaims that whoever accepts Christ will be saved to eternal life not by self-effort and striving to attain to God's perfect

standard of Holiness but by Christ righteousness and by God's grace. Christ did not suffer a brutal, bloody and cruel death so that we could attain to the perfect demands of the law and attain to the perfect Holiness of God and live a sin-free life, but because we couldn't if anyone of us could attain to the glorious state of sinlessness Christ died for no purpose. This is why God wants us to walk with Him by faith and by love God knows if we deny the grace He lavishes on all who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for righteousness that leads to eternal life and trust in our own righteousness to be counted worthy the voices in our head will continually hold us guilty before the law and without grace these voices of guilt and condemnation will resound louder and louder as we draw closer and closer to God. This is one of the reasons those who have never been taught the grace of God give up on the Christian faith.

A PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

Of course, the pearl is of great price it cost God the life of His most beloved Son and Jesus our glorious redeemer gave his life over to the hands of brutal, cruel and bloody murderers so that you and I could be saved to eternal life. There are not enough riches or wealth in this world that can repay God and His Son for such sacrifices or that can redeem us from our sins.

SOME FACTS ABOUT REAL PEARLS

A pearl is a product of a living organism, which is not true of any other precious stone. It is produced as the result of an injury suffered by a living organism, such as an oyster, this injury causes the beginning of the pearls' production. It is the presence of some external substance, such as a grain of sand or some parasitic intruder that calcareous matter in thin layers is spread over the intruding object until ultimately it assumes a pearly lustre. In the process of making the pearl the living organism surrounds the object tormenting it with mother of pearl, until gradually the pearl is formed. It is out of much suffering; an object of beauty is produced and the offending particle becomes a pearl of great worth. How accurate is this fact of the Christian and the church, which came out of the wounded side of Christ, but even greater than the mystery and the wonder of the creation of a pearl in an oyster shell, is the marvel of Christ who, through the travail and pain our sin caused him, covered us over and transformed the thing of injury to the desired thing. As the little grain of sand is ultimately clothed with a beauty not its own, so we are covered with a beauty and splendour of him who suffered on our behalf.

The great price: was great because of what it cost to obtain it. A product gets its value by its rarity, diamonds are expensive because it cost a lot to obtain them and because they are not in abundant supply therefore the price or value of them is set very high.

- Isaiah wrote: as many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men (Isaiah 52:14-15).

This is the enormous price Christ paid to redeem us to eternal glory.

THE PEARL AND TRIUMPHANT CHRISTIANS

Another comparison between a pearl and the church is that the pearl being at first embedded in a mass of living, but corruptible flesh is then separated and cleansed from its surroundings in order that it might appear in its purity as well as its beauty as a fit gem for a royal crown. Is this not a good picture of the Christian and the faithful church? The faithful and triumphant Christian and the church is saved to sin no more, but the

Christian and the church on earth is still surrounded with a mass of corruptible flesh so much so that it would seem as if the professed Christian and the church is deeply embedded in worldly things. The Lord, however, by his Spirit is occupied with the purification of his own, and will ultimately return and present the faithful and triumphant church to himself, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Paul proclaimed:

- That Christ might sanctify and cleanse the church with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:26-27).
- Christ will come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at among all who have believed (2 Thess. 1:10).

THE LOWLY ORIGIN OF THE PEARL AND THE CHURCH

Another comparison between a pearl and the church is the lowly origin of the beautiful pearl. Originally its home was in the depths of the seas among the mire and scavengers of the deep. In Scripture the sea is often used as a type that symbolizes godless people of all tongues and nations out of which the church is taken. The oyster living in the depths of the ocean out of which the pearl is taken beautifully symbolizes the mire and ruin of our origin after the fall of which we also have been taken out of.

A PEARL FIT FOR A ROYAL CROWN

The miracle of grace is the truth that Jesus the most beloved Son of God humbled himself amongst the worst of sinners to extract out of the sea of mankind a pearl fit to be placed upon his royal crown. As a diver descends into the ocean, at great risk to detach the rough oyster shell from its rocky bed and bring it up to the light. Jesus humbled himself and at the sacrifice of his life, was buried in a tomb in order to bring up from the depths of sin a glorious pearl into the light of life. Christians who know God's love and grace constantly praise their Saviour for drawing them out of many waters. The price God paid for the creation of a sinner to be transformed into a pearl worthy of a king's royal crown was the death of His most beloved Son at the cross of Calvary.

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CHRIST PAID A GREAT PRICE TO PURCHASE THE PEARL

Christ paid a great price he was fully innocent of any sin and yet suffered at the hands of his Father's creation and died as a common criminal hung on a cross suffering a most terrible pain. The merchantman sold all that he had to possess the pearl the only sacrifice that was great enough to have that lustrous pearl in the palm of his hand was his very own life. Christ paid the ultimate price to have a redeemed people as his pearl he gave his most precious possession, his own life, with his own blood the Lord bought the sinner back to God. The preciousness of the pearl consists, not so much in its own value or worth but in the price paid for its possession. Whether we deem the goodly pearls to represent individual believers in Christ and the one pearl as the collective faithful global church worldwide amongst the nations matters little because the Lord's faithful church is one body and we are all one in Christ Jesus. Jesus prayed:

- That his brothers and sisters would all be one, just as his Father is in him, and he is in the Father, he prayed we would also be one in the Father and one in the Lord.

Some may wonder, how, can the Father be one in Christ and Christ be one in the Father and at the same time multitudes of faithful brothers and sisters in Christ worldwide can not only be one in the Father and one in the Lord, but also be one in each other. How is it possible that beings from

vastly different origins, vastly different minds and vastly different personalities cannot only be one with each other, but also be one in each other? The answer is spiritual and actually very simple and I am sure to many it is also very obvious, since there is only one way anyone can be one in and with another and at the same time be one with and in many others and that is by love. It is by love that God is one in Christ and Christ is one in God and we are one in the Father and His Son and they are one in us. This is one of the reasons why love will endure throughout all eternity the second reason of course is that God is love (1 John 4:8) (1 John 4:16). There is another glorious truth we can learn from this, what is that you might ask? Simply this, anything that is against the law of love is also against the will of God.

CHRIST'S PEARL WILL SHINE THROUGHOUT ALL ETERNITY

Another comparison between a pearl and the church is the fact that the pearl is formed slowly and gradually behind its production is a tedious process of waiting while the pearl is being secretly and surely formed. So it is with the formation of the faithful church which Christ's death made possible, and which the Holy Spirit through more than nineteen centuries has been making actual? Just as the oyster constantly repeats the process of covering the wound that pierced its side with one layer after another until a thing of beauty is formed so it is with Christ; out of each generation of men and woman on earth Christ is adding many pearls to his church which He is now building. When the Lord returns to gather his church to himself then the sons and daughters of God will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father (Matt. 13:43) and Christ's pearl will be perfected and shine in brilliant glory throughout all ETERNITY. Paul wrote:

- God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

This glorious statement shines a brilliant spotlight on the truth that God's love toward us and the gift of eternal life is not dependent on our works, but on God's love and the grace He lavishes upon all who are devoted to his Son in faith and in love. The strength of God's love in the heart and experiencing its comfort is dependent upon believing that God loves us not because of our righteousness since even in our best moments we fall far short of God's perfect Holiness, but because of Christ's righteousness. It is having the faith and the confidence that there is nothing we can do to earn salvation except believe in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ and walk with him in a spiritual relationship of love all the while trusting in God's grace that He showers upon all who are devoted to the Lord who sold his life to murderers and gave up everything to die a brutal, bloody and cruel death on the cross of Calvary to purchase the pearl of great price. The faithful church will ever be the object of Christ's desire this same church is one pearl and one body though composed of many members it is one habitation of God, though built of many stones. This church Jesus said he would build is composed of redeemed Jews and Gentiles alike from all nations of the world.

THE MUSTARD SEED AND THE PEARL

Both the mustard seed and the pearl grow from something very small, the tree from the little mustard seed and the pearl from the tiny bit of sand, but what a different result. The pearl unlike the mustard seed never assumes very large dimensions, but its value may be almost priceless. The two parables together teach us that size is not everything and that the value of a thing is not to be estimated by its size.

OUR LIFE IS, HIDDEN WITH CHRIST IN GOD

Another comparison between a pearl and the church is that of its secret growth. Paul wrote:

- Our life is hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3).

It must not be forgotten that the formation of the pearl is a secret one, none but the eye of God watches the oyster transforming into a pearl of beauty and great worth. Is it not so with the faithful church world-wide which Christ is now forming? Unknown and unseen the Lord's pearl is being fashioned. Certainly we can see the organised, visible church: churches of wood, stone and cement with their governments, institutions and denominations we can see both plain and ornamental, but no-one can see the church of the living God behind the scaffolding hidden in the heart and mind of the sons and daughters of God the true bricks and mortar of the church which is Christ's body, growing up into a pearl fit for a king's royal crown in and for the Lord.

THE RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE AND THE TREASURED PEARL

Jesus in this parable is shining a floodlight on the truth that the faithful global church (the global body of Christ) is an object of great value and beauty to the Lord which though presently hidden from the eyes of men, has the prospect of an honourable, glorious and exalted future. As richly pearls adorn the crowns of monarchs so in the ages to come Christ will show the exceeding riches of God's grace and display his own treasured pearl throughout all eternity. The world may not count us worthy, but dignity, honour and glory are to be ours when Christ displays his glorified church to a wondering universe. Paul wrote the following glorious words:

- God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— by GRACE you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are HIS workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2:4-10).

In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:28). This means the faithful of the Old and New Testament will be one in Christ and be forever with Jesus as his pearl of great price.

Throughout all the eternal ages the Lord's pearl will be the
revealer of God's infinite grace displayed and
manifested through the Lord Jesus Christ.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
