

Rev. T. Jefferson Rogers Jr.
Text: Matthew 13:45-46
Title: Parable of The Precious Pearl

Intro: Jesus again is teaching a parable. The word parable is *parabole* which means “to place beside.” A parable places something unfamiliar beside something familiar for the purpose of teaching. Jesus’ purpose for teaching parabolically is threefold: 1st He taught in parables to open the eyes of His disciples to deeper insights into His person and His kingdom (Matthew 13:10-11). 2nd To conceal the truth from those who would abuse it (Matthew 13:13-14). Isaiah 6:9-10 says, *“Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive. Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts and turn and be healed.”* 3rd To fulfill prophecy (Matthew 13:34-35). Psalm 78:1-3 says, *“Give ear, O my people to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.”*

The kingdom of heaven is not a geographical place. Jesus makes it clear that the kingdom is “within us.” Nobody can say “Look! Over there! There is the kingdom of heaven!” The kingdom of heaven refers to the spiritual realm over which God reigns as King. It is the activity of the King exercising His sovereign power. It is better conveyed as kingship, rule, or sovereignty. The kingdom of heaven is of a purely spiritual nature.

In Matthew 13, Jesus shares seven parables with His disciples to reveal something significant about the kingdom of heaven.

In Matthew 13:3-9, Jesus taught the parable of the sower. The purpose of the parable of the sower is to show that Jesus Christ came to share the Word of God with everyone.

In Matthew 13:24-30, Jesus taught the parable of the wheat and tares. The purpose of the parable of the wheat and tares is to reveal what the kingdom of heaven is like before and after Jesus’ second advent.

In Matthew 13:31-32, Jesus taught the parable of the mustard seed. In the parable of the mustard seed the Lord shows His reign with a feeble and despicable commencement, for the express **purpose**, that His power may be more fully illustrated by its unexpected progress.

In Matthew 13:33, Jesus taught the parable of the leaven. In the parable of the leaven Jesus shows how the kingdom of heaven spreads throughout the earth.

In Matthew 13:44, The purpose for Jesus’ teaching the parable of the hidden treasure is to illustrate the value of the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is worth more than anything you or I can possess on earth.

The sixth parable is similar to the preceding one, it is also geared to signify the value of the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus said, ***“The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man.”*** A merchant man is a businessman whose efforts are directed at securing for himself the most benefits and blessings he can manage.

I want to suggest two pictures from this parable to show the value of the kingdom.

- I. Picture 1: The Merchant Man is Mankind—you and me. Jesus said the merchant man is looking for goodly pearls. Goodly pearls represent blessings and benefits, power and prosperity, positions and prominence.
We are actively engaged in seeking personal blessings and benefits of various kinds. Every human being in one way or another seeks personal blessings and benefits. Examples: Going to school to get an education is seeking blessings and benefits. Investing money for gain is seeking personal blessings and benefits. Working on a job for wages is to seek personal blessings and benefits. Dating someone hoping to secure a spouse is seeking personal blessings and benefits. We seek these things because we believe they will bless and benefit us.

There is something of more value than personal blessings and benefits listed above, and that is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus likens the kingdom of heaven to one pearl of great price.

- A. He seeks one pearl of great price: the former parable describes one who finds the treasure as it was by chance, but this parable speaks of one who has long been searching for a costly pearl. In verse 46, the merchant man seeks a beautiful pearl. The word “seek” is *zeteo* which means to seek in order to find. It denotes one who is intense and intentional in his/her search for something. In other words, the merchant man was searching with strength for a specific pearl. The specific pearl is the King of the kingdom of heaven.
Example: Andrew and John – John 1:41 says, ***“The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah”*** (that is, the Christ). The word found indicates that they were searching for Jesus.

W.F. Adeney said, “The pearl is found. This is the first step. The pearl is found, but not yet owned. We may see the kingdom afar off, yet we may not have possession of it.” We can see it, and not possess it. We must go further to enter the kingdom.

- B. He buys the pearl of great price: In verse 46, I am not suggesting that we can purchase the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven cannot be purchased by man, it must be accepted. The acceptance of Jesus Christ means there must be a willingness to let everything go.

The pearl is costly. The merchant sold all he had acquired on his journey in life to buy the one pearl. Now, we know that the gospel is God’s free gift; it was costly, for it cost the life of Christ on the cross; therefore, it is not cheap; yet it is not bought by us, but by Christ. However, this does not exclude the necessity of

sacrifice on our part. We can pay nothing to God. We must renounce sin, pride, reputation, self, and the idolizing and trusting in all things but God. We must be willing to forsake all comfort and ease. We must deny ourselves and count the true cost of discipleship—

Luke 9:57-62 And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Luke 14:25-33 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, saying, 'This person began to build and wasn't able to finish.' "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

Philippians 3:7-8, "But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my LORD, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "Jesus is the only significance. Beside Jesus nothing has any significance. He alone matters."

Billy Graham said, "Salvation is free, but discipleship costs everything we have."

The price is gladly paid. The merchant recognized the value of the pearl. He feels that he has made a good arrangement, though he has sold all to buy the pearl of great price. He who gives up all for Christ requires no sympathy because his gain is great.

- II. Picture 2: The Merchant Man is Jesus Christ— the pearl of great value is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus Christ came to earth giving up everything. He laid aside His glory

and the majesty He shared with the Father before coming to earth. Jesus laid down His life for the joy that was set before. He endured the cross, despised the shame so that He could take the priceless pearl in His hand and rejoice over it.

We are valuable to God; He gave His only Son Jesus to die for us. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 8:9, ***“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.”***

Jesus gave up everything so that we can enter His kingdom. Jesus died for me; Jesus died for you! To God we were worth Jesus’ death on the cross. Isaiah 53:10 says, ***“It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.”***

Jesus was glad to give His life for us.