

THEME: **THE PARABLES OF JESUS**

TOPIC: **THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.**

TEXT: **MATTHEW 13:45-46; 1 PETER 1:18**

INTRODUCTION

In "**The Parable of the Hidden Treasure**", I suggested...

a. That Jesus was depicting the "value" of the kingdom to one who accidentally finds it.
b. That Paul's conversion was an example of how one is willing to give up all in order to lay hold of the "treasure" of the kingdom.

c. That the value of the kingdom can be seen when we consider that it is:

- A refuge from the powers of darkness - **Colossians 1:13**
- A domain of righteousness, peace, and joy - **Romans 14:17**
- An unshakable kingdom - **Hebrews 12:25-29**
- Destined for eternal glory - **Matthew 13:41-43**

Jesus followed His parable with another commonly called "**The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price**". Its similarity to the previous parable is obvious, and yet there is a difference

I. THE PARABLE EXPLAINED

A. THE DETAILS OF THE PARABLE.

1. A merchant is seeking beautiful pearls
2. He finds one pearl of great price
3. Undeterred by its price, he sells all that he has and buys it!

B. THE MEANING OF THE PARABLE...

1. The use of the word "**Again**" ties this parable to the preceding one
 - a. Where the value and preciousness of the kingdom was being described
 - b. Where we saw the value to one who accidentally finds it
2. But in this parable, the person is on a mission to find that which is of great value
 - a. He believes there is something out there worth looking for, or he would not be seeking it
 - b. When he finds it, he immediately recognizes its value and is willing to sell all to obtain it
3. Neither this parable (nor the previous one) is suggesting we can "buy" or otherwise "earn" our salvation
 - a. For salvation is a gift - **Romans 6:23**
 - b. We can "buy" salvation only in the sense of gaining rightful possession of it
 - 1) Which we do by grace through faith - **Ephesians 2:8-9.**
 - 2) When we submit to the working of God and the renewing the Holy Spirit which takes place as we are baptized into Christ – **Colossians 2:11-13; Titus 3:4-7.**
4. This parable, then, describes how some people react to the kingdom of heaven, when they know there must be something out there worthy of great value and have been searching for it.

C. BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF THOSE WHO SOUGHT THE KINGDOM.

1. **The Ethiopian Eunuch - Acts 8:26-38**
 - a. His journey to Jerusalem to worship, his reading of Scripture while returning, indicates he was spiritually searching. Who in our days can we say is spiritually searching?
 - b. His immediate desire to be baptized shows his estimation of the value of the salvation offered through Christ.
2. **Cornelius – Acts 10:1-8, 30-33**
 - a. His prayers and alms were indicative of his search for "righteousness"

b. As promised by Jesus (**Matthew 5:6**), God took note of his spiritual hunger and thirst, and sent Peter to tell him the gospel of Christ

3. Lydia - Ac 16:11-15

- a. Her meeting with other women to pray illustrates her spiritual searching
- b. Upon hearing the things spoken by Paul, she and her household were baptized

Reflection – The above examples should remind us that there are many people who know there is some "thing", some "purpose", some "meaning", that is worthy of diligent search, and who spend their lives trying to find it. When by the grace and providence of God they come to learn of Christ and His kingdom, they are willing to give up all to obtain it!

These examples, and the parable itself, confirm the truthfulness of Jesus' teaching about those **"who hunger and thirst for righteousness"**, will indeed find what God has for them!

It might be that we may "stumble" across the blessings God has in Christ and His kingdom (as in **"The Parable of the Hidden Treasure"**).

But do we want to risk our salvation on possibly "stumbling" across it?

What can we do to ensure that we will find what God has for us? Well, we need to be like that merchant, "searching" for that "pearl of great price". How does one do that in regards to spiritual matters...?]

II. SEARCHING FOR "THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE"

A. FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH - Acts 8:27-28

1. Be a student of the Scriptures
2. Apply the Scriptures to the best of your understanding
3. Be open to what others may have to share concerning the Scriptures

B. FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF THE BEREANS - Acts 17:10-11

1. Again, be open to what others may have to share
2. But apply diligence (i.e., "readiness of mind") to understand what others are saying
3. And in the end, let the Scriptures be your final authority
4. Demonstrate it by "searching the Scriptures daily"

CONCLUSION

1. Like the Ethiopian eunuch, the Bereans, Cornelius, Lydia, and many other religious people...
 - a. We may be lost in our present state of understanding of God's will
 - b. But if we will search like that "merchant" did, and have the desire to understand and please God like these people did.
 - c. ...then we can trust in God's Providence to lead us to the truth, and to that **"pearl of great price"**!

2. Is the "pearl of great price" worth it?
 - a. Again, I wish I could invite those who have passed on to give us their perspective
 - b. Who though they may have suffered greatly in this life, have come to experience the ultimate blessings of the "kingdom of heaven".-- I am confident they would say **"It is surely worth it all!"**

3. And the blessings of the kingdom are not limited to the life hereafter; as Jesus reassured Peter, there are hundredfold blessings even "in this time" - **Mark 10:28-30**

Dear friend, do you not desire this "**pearl of great price**"? Are you even searching? Can we help you in your search?