

PARABLE OF THE MERCHANT AND PEARL OF GREAT VALUE: GIVING UP ALL FOR CHRIST MATHEW 13:45–46

Introduction

The point of this parable is the same as the Parable of the Hidden Treasure. They could be preached and taught together. (See Mt. 13:44) The Parable of the Pearl has two interpretations.

1. Some say the merchant *man is Jesus Christ*. The many *pearls* for which He seeks are potential believers, and the one great pearl is the church, the full body of believers (Jn. 17:21; 1 Cor. 13:,12). Note: the pearls are sought after, and the one great pearl is found as a result of seeking for all the pearls. (Notes Mt. 13:44)
2. Some say the merchant man represents men who seek after truth (pearls). In the search, some men discover the truth of Jesus Christ, the pearl of great price; and when a person finds a priceless pearl, he takes the three steps outlined by Christ: he goes, sells all he has, and buys the pearl of great price (See Mt. 13:44).
 - I. He seeks pearls (v. 45).
 - II. He finds a priceless pearl (v. 46).

I. *Mathew 13:45 Pearl*

The pearl is born out of suffering. A speck of sand or parasite makes its way into an oyster. The oyster is a living organism, so the intruder hurts the oyster. To protect itself, the oyster secretes a substance called mother-of-pearl, or nacre, to surround the intruder. It is the secretion that gradually forms the pearl. Thus, the pearl is born out of much torment and pain. The same is true of the believer and the church: both are born out of suffering and out of the travail and death of the Lord Jesus.

John 3:15-16 *“That everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

Rom 5:8-10 *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! For if, when we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!*

2 Cor 5:21 *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Gal 3:13 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”*

1 Pet 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

1 Pet 3:18 *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.*

Another picture can be seen in that the pearl is embedded in living, but corruptible flesh. It remains there until perfectly formed and purified. Then it is separated from the corruptible flesh as a thing of beauty. It is priceless, fit for the diadem of a king.

Mat 6:20 *“But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.”*

Mat 19:21 *Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”*

Luke 12:33 *“Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.”*

Phil 3:8 *What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.*

1 Tim 6:17-19 *Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.*

Heb 11:24-26 *By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.*

Rev 3:18 *I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.*

Still another picture is seen in the beauty of a pearl. A pearl has a lovely aesthetic value. It is purchased and possessed as much for the *inward satisfaction and enjoyment* as for its monetary value.

John 15:11 *“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”*

Acts 8:5-8 *Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in that city.*

Rom 5:10-11 *For if, when we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*

Rom 14:17 *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

Gal 5:22 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness.*

1 Pet 1:8 *Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.*

Psa 16:11 *You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

Jer 15:16 *When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name, O Lord God Almighty.*

Isa 12:3 *With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.*

Isa 61:10 *I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

II. Mathew 13:45 Seeking for Pearls

The man discovers the pearl of great price while seeking for pearls. Note there are *many* pearls and some of these are *fine* pearls. Pearls are a symbol of truth and of life. Men seek truth and life in such things as philosophy, science, technology, wealth, fame, sensation (the sinful nature), art, music, literature and religion. But there is only one pearl that is priceless, only one pearl that is worth more than the world itself - the pearl of Jesus Christ Himself. (See *Jesus Christ, Wisdom and Knowledge*, Col. 2:3).

Mat 13:46 *When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.*

Acts 4:12 *“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”*

1 Cor 3:11 *For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

Phil 3:8 *What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.*

Col 1:19 *For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him.*

Col 2:3 *In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ■*

COLOSSIANS 02:03
JESUS CHRIST: WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
Colossians 02: 03

A mature people know that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ.

1. Men seek for wisdom and understanding. The word *wisdom* (sophia) means the ability to use the truth once the truth is known; it is using the truth wisely just as it should be used. It is knowing how to confront day to day problems and handle them wisely. It is practical wisdom, knowing how to apply the great truths of life to everyday living. The word *understanding* (gnosis) is the ability to grasp the facts and the truth. It means the ability to see and know the truth It is seeing and knowing what to do. It grasps the great truths of life. It sees the answers to the problems of...
 - life and death • good and evil
 - time and eternity • God and man
 - health and disease • comfort and suffering
2. Note where the great treasures of wisdom and understanding are: they are hid in Jesus Christ. What does this mean?
 - a. Jesus Christ is the very embodiment of all wisdom. He is the One Person who *lived out* the truth, who lived and never sinned. He is the Person who confronted every trial and problem in life and solved it — who lived exactly as all men are to live. The wisdom of life — of how to live life — is seen in Jesus Christ and in Him alone. In Him are all the treasures of wisdom, all the treasures of practical day-to-day living.
 - b. Jesus Christ is the very embodiment of understanding. He is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe; therefore, all the truth and facts of the universe are

found in Him. (This is bound to be true, for when anything is made, the facts of its nature are found in the person who created it.) In Jesus Christ is the understanding of creation, the universe, good and evil, time and eternity, health and disease, comfort and suffering, and God and man.

All the *treasures of understanding* are bound up in Christ. Man can *understand* himself and his world only in Christ Jesus. Any approach to understand the world apart from Christ leads to false conclusions and a world of corruption, discrimination, strife, division and all the other evils that exist within the world.

3. Note that wisdom and understanding are “hid” in Jesus Christ. This does not mean that they are hidden from us, but rather *for us* (Mathew Henry. *Mathew Henry’s Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 756). They are there for us to seek and search out and thereby to honour Christ as the Source and Substance of our hearts and lives.

Rom 11:33-36 *Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! “Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counsellor?” “Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?” For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.*

1 Cor 1:24 *But to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

1 Cor 1:30 *It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God — that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.*

Col 2:3 *In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

James 1:5 *If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.*

Jer 9:24 *“But let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight,” declares the Lord.*

Hosea 6:3 *“Let us acknowledge the Lord; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth.”* □