

Pearl of Great Price

Bible Study

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The Church of God International



Introduction

One day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore.



Then he told them many things in parables, saying in Matthew 13:45-46 “the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.”



Jesus likened the Kingdom of Heaven to a fine pearl of great value.



When you find it, buy it with everything you
got He said!



Today we will talk about this parable.



This parable is easy to understand. The interpretation and understanding is within the verse itself.



The parable is to bring you closer to the truth if you can find and understand it.



Now, let us analyze the verses point by point.



The five (5) points are:

1. What is a fine pearl?
2. How great is the value?
3. Who is the merchant?
4. What is this Kingdom of Heaven?
5. Have you found it?



What is a fine pearl?

Pearl is the world's oldest gem. Of all the precious gems in the whole earth, pearl is unique and has been revered since ancient times.



The pearl is a gem perfected by nature. Unlike gemstones that are mined from the earth and have to go through a process of purification and cutting, the pearl is produced entirely by a living organism.



In fact, the very existence of a pearl is a
miracle of nature.



A pearl is formed when an irritant, such as a grain of sand or a piece of shell, is accidentally lodged in an oyster's soft inner body.



The irritation causes the oyster to secrete a crystalline substance called nacre, which builds up around the irritant in layers until a pearl is formed.



To find a pearl, free divers have to descend to depths of over 100 feet to the ocean floor on a single breath.



The divers are exposed to dangers of perilous environment and hostile creatures. They have to bring to the surface more than a ton of oysters just to find 3-4 quality pearls.



Because of the extreme difficulty and uncertainty of pearl growth, pearls in ancient times were extremely rare.



And, pearl of exceptional quality and size is exceedingly scarce.



How great is the value?

In ancient times, the pearl was the most costly and sought after gem.



Its value exceeded all other gemstones.
It is prized more than diamond, emerald,
ruby and gold.



Pearls possess a history and allure far
beyond what we recognize today.



Throughout much of recorded history, a natural pearl of perfect sphere and luster was a treasure of incomparable value.



In fact, pearl was the most expensive jewelry in the ancient world.



Today, we see the pearl as a relatively inexpensive jewelry compared to the more pricey gemstones.



Today, the cultivation of oyster pearls for pearl mass production has made pearls accessible, abundant and widely available everywhere.



You can find a pearl necklace in flea markets
(Tiangge at Greenhills, 168 Mall and
Tiendesitas) around Metro Manila for as
low as Php1,600 a strand



In ancient times, pearl was the most expensive, coveted and precious gem in the world.



In those days, natural pearls were so rare and expensive that they were reserved exclusively for the noble and the ultra rich



At the height of the Roman Empire, when pearl fever reached its peak, the historian Suetonius wrote that the Roman general Vitellius financed an entire military campaign by selling just one of his mother's pearl earrings



Pearls were rumored to play the pivotal role
at the most celebrated banquet in
literature.



To convince Rome that Egypt possessed a heritage and wealth that put it above conquest, Cleopatra wagered Marc Antony she could give the most expensive dinner in history.



The Roman reclined as the queen sat with an empty plate and a goblet of wine (or vinegar). She crushed one large pearl of a pair of earrings, dissolved it in the liquid, then drank it down.



Astonished, Antony declined his dinner—the matching pearl—and admitted she had won.



Pliny, the world's first gemologist, writes in his famous *Natural History* that the two pearls were worth an estimated 60 million sesterces, or 1,875,000 ounces of fine silver (\$26,000,000 with silver at \$14/ounce or Php1.2B at today's valuation).



The esteem of pearls reached unprecedented levels in the Roman Empire. Pearls were prized in the Roman Empire with enormous value attached to them.



Pearl was ranked first in value among all precious things. The Roman elite coveted pearls as a symbol of prestige, wealth and power.



Jesus used the exceedingly great value of the finest pearl as His analogy of the Kingdom of God – a thing that is priced above everything else.



Who is the merchant?

Pearls were undoubtedly first discovered and appreciated in the Orient along the Persian Gulf region.



The knowledge of their value subsequently spread to the west to Greece and Rome.



Supplies of pearls from the Persian Gulf reached the Roman Empire either by the sea or the land route.



During the period of the Roman Empire, Roman ships were sent out to the Persian Gulf in quest of pearls as the most treasured commodities in the Roman Empire, not only for ornamentation but also as a valuable reserve that strengthened the currency of the Roman Empire.



Pearls from the Persian Gulf also reached the Roman Empire through the land route.



Many Jewish merchants were involved in the pearl trade. Even today, the Jews are renowned for their gem trade.



The merchant's vocation is to seek the best quality and the most precious pearls he can find. As a merchant, finding a precious pearl takes great effort and finding one such pearl is an opportunity of a lifetime.



He will commit his life, livelihood and all he possesses to secure the fine pearl with the aspiration of acquiring it



With a single find he is set for the rest of his
life.

The finding of a rare and extraordinary pearl
is an opportunity all merchants will not
pass up.



Finding the one precious pearl is what a merchant live for



Jesus likened all Christians to a merchant.
Wherein our profession is to seek out that
one pearl of great price.



What is the kingdom of heaven?

Jesus Christ likened the Kingdom of Heaven to a merchant seeking for fine pearls.



When he found one of exceedingly great value, he went away and sold everything he owned and bought it.



Do you know what the Kingdom of Heaven
is and where to find it?



Many erroneously thought that the fine pearl is Jesus Christ - when one finds Christ he must sell all that he possesses in order to have Him.



Others thought the pearl is the church that
Jesus came with His all in order to obtain
it.



The object of the parable discussion is about the Kingdom of Heaven! It is not about Jesus or the church.



The Kingdom of Heaven is the same as the Kingdom of God as referred to by Jesus Christ.



Remember, Jesus in His 3 1/2 years of ministry went about town preaching the good news – the good news of a coming Kingdom.



Matthew 4:17

(17) From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”



Jesus called it the Kingdom of God. Luke referred to it as the Kingdom of Heaven.



Jesus' parable of the Pearl of Great Price is about the Kingdom of Heaven – meaning a heavenly kingdom



Jesus said that 'it is The Father's good pleasure to give to you this kingdom.'



Luke 12:32

(32) “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.



Unfortunately, the message of the Kingdom
of God has been lost.



People are oblivious to God's grand and wonderful plan for mankind. God's divine will and purpose for the entire creation had been lost.



For this purpose, Jesus Christ came to restore all things - to restore the way to and the knowledge of the Kingdom.



So, when you find this Kingdom you must
hold on to it with dear life!



Jesus spoke about a kingdom that has been prepared for us since the foundation of the world.



Matthew 25:34

(34) “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.’”



At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Jesus preached that the Kingdom is at hand. Kingdom is at hand means it has started.



Luke 16:16

(16) “The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing their way into it.



The reason was that Christ opened the door
to the kingdom by His redemptive
sacrifice.



Now, mankind has access to eternal salvation and become partakers of the kingdom of God. People are streaming into it. People are getting saved.



Matthew 11:12

(12) From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been subjected to violence, and violent people have been raiding it.



The Kingdom of God is the family of God. It is a kingdom composed of God-like beings. With God as our Father, Jesus Christ as our brother and the saints as brothers and sisters in the family of God.



This is what Jesus said in Hebrews 2:10-11,
"Both the one who makes people holy and
those who are made holy are of the **same
family**. So Jesus is not ashamed to call
them brothers and sisters"



As Peter said in 2 Peter 1:4,
“Through these he has given us his very
great and precious promises, so that
through them you may **participate in the
divine nature**”



At creation we know that man was fashioned
in the image and likeness of God.



Notice how God describes the creation;
'everything after its own kind.'



The vegetation after it's own kind, the fowl of the air, the fishes of the sea, the livestock and cattle all after its own kind.



But, man is created after the God kind. The image and likeness of God suggest the potential of man to be like God.



Genesis 1:11-12

(11) Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so.

(12) The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.



Genesis 1:21

(21) So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.



Genesis 1:25-26

(25) God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.



Genesis 1:25-26

(26) Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”



At the end of our spiritual creation, indeed,
we shall be like Him.



1 Corinthians 15:48-54

(48) As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven.

(49) And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear **the image of the heavenly man.**



1 Corinthians 15:48-54

(50) I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

(51) Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—

(52) in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.



1 Corinthians 15:48-54

(53) For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

(54) When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”



The verses talks about change of nature from physical to spiritual, from corruption to perfection and from mortality to immortality.



Boldly, Paul declares that we shall bear the image of the heavenly; that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.



Revelation 21:5-7

(5) He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”



Revelation 21:5-7

(6) He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.

(7) Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and **they will be my children.**



In the final reality as described in
Revelation 21:5-7, we shall become
children of God.



What then is the Kingdom of God?

The Kingdom of God is the Divine Family of God that you can become a member of.



That is the kingdom message of Jesus
Christ.



Jesus said that you are Gods and the scriptures cannot be broken.



John 10:34-35

(34) Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I have said you are “gods””?

(35) If he called them ‘gods,’ to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be set aside—



Jesus boldly declares that we are gods for that is our potential and the reason for creation. The statement is too wonderful to even contemplate.



1 Corinthians 2:9

(9) However, as it is written:

“What no eye has seen,
what no ear has heard,
and what no human mind has
conceived”—

the things God has prepared for those
who love him—



Few believed Jesus then, and even few now! But, the truth is still out there for you to accept.



All the apostles knew this wonderful and amazing truth. They all preached about it.



1 John 3:1-3

(1) See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.



1 John 3:1-3

(2) Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, **we shall be like him**, for we shall see him as he is.

(3) All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.



John in 1 John 3:1-3 confirms that we are children of God for that is what we are and what we are to inherit and become!



Summation

The pearl of great price is the Kingdom of
God.

It is the most precious thing there is in this
life.



The one goal in our life – your life and my life - is to attain to become a member of the Kingdom of God.



You have come to know this vital truth today.
This is the message Jesus came to preach
– the Kingdom of God that is at hand.



This is the Kingdom that has been established by God from the foundation of the world for God's people.



Do not ignore or disregard this truth –
the pearl of great price.



Jesus forbid saying in Matthew 7:6.

(6) “Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your **pearls** to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.



Finally, in the Book of Revelation 21
Jesus reveals the Holy City - the abode of
the righteous – the New Jerusalem will
come down from heaven.



The New Jerusalem will shine like a brilliant
jewel with walls and foundations of
precious gemstones.



And, its gates – the entrances into the city –
each gate will be made of a single pearl.



There will be twelve (12) gates in the Holy City and the saints will walk through them and live in there – the New Jerusalem forever and ever.



Revelation 21: 9-27

(9) One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”

(10) And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.



Revelation 21: 9-27

(11) It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

(12) It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.



Revelation 21: 9-27

- (13) There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west.
- (14) The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.



Revelation 21: 9-27

(15) The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls.

(16) The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long.



Revelation 21: 9-27

- (17) The angel measured the wall using human measurement, and it was 144 cubits thick.
- (18) The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.
- (19) The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald,



Revelation 21: 9-27

(20) the fifth onyx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.

(21) The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass.



Revelation 21: 9-27

(22) I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

(23) The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

(24) The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.



Revelation 21: 9-27

(25) On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.

(26) The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.

(27) Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.



This is the vision Jesus wishes to share with
you.



Again, Jesus said in the parable “the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls”.



When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.'



For our final question:
Have you found the pearl of great price?
We hope you have!



The pearl of great value is the Kingdom of God that The Father has prepared for you since the foundation of the world



You have found it!
You have the opportunity to be part of this
magnificent Kingdom of God.



END

