

Sought. Found. Bought. | ■ Matthew 13:45-46

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we are encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. I'm Pastor Patrick Daly, and each week I share sermons that balance the grace and love of Jesus Christ with the truth of the Word of God.

Together, we'll explore Scripture using observation, interpretation, and application. This helps us discover practical ways to live out our faith every single day.

Let's dive in together into God's Word. Well, good morning, everyone. Sorry, my page keeps falling out here. It's great to be here with all of you as we're continuing our sermon series as we've been going through the parables of Christ.

These parables are so simple, yet they're so deep and they're so complex. They speak to, really, regardless of age or where you're at in your spiritual walk, certainly your spiritual walk should be to Jesus Christ, and knowing Him and your spiritual walk in Christ should happen after the fact. Come to know the Lord and be on a journey with Jesus Christ. Today, we're going to be going over another parable, which is known as the parable of the pearl of great value, which is right after the parable of the hidden treasure.

[1 : 20] But before we do, one of the things that really has, in researching and preparing for today's sermon, I kind of found some very interesting facts about pearls.

You know, pearls in many civilizations were considered to be one of the most valuable gemstones out there. Different than rubies, different than diamonds, different than gold and silver.

However, it's something that is made. Pearls are not mined. When you think of all these precious gems and stuff, you have to go into the earth, or there's a lot of effort and energy and time that's put into finding rare gems.

But unlike other gems, they are formed through struggle. They are formed through a grain of sand that irritates an oyster.

That little imperfection. And over time, it transforms it into something beautiful. And I think for a moment, some of you have heard the analogy, this idea of the Kintsugi bowl, where we've talked about a broken bowl or plate.

[2 : 35] They get smashed onto the ground. And how God, we are like that broken plate. God takes that which is broken and brings it together and makes us more valuable than we were broken.

And we can think of this idea of the oyster. We can think of this idea of pearls. That we go through struggles in our own life. We go through a refining process, as it were.

And as time goes on, we become more smooth, more purified by the Lord, by our own experiences that we go through.

When we think about the idea of God being the potter and us being the clay, we are being molded by the Lord. We can think right, right even before we even go into this parable, about the very idea of how pearls are made.

They are made by a single grain of sand that over time, it becomes something beautiful. Much like how we are taken care by the Lord, and we are refined.

[3 : 40] We become more smooth, as it were. We get changed over time. And I speak of transformation that happens in our own very lives. And a pearl's worth is determined by its rarity, its perfection, and its process.

Think about that. We have all these ideas, and again, this is before we even go into the parable, this idea that pearls getting made over time is something that is so beautiful that it's not mindful, but it's a process that happens over time in the natural world by a living organism.

What a beautiful parallel we can think of when it comes to our Lord and our God who molds us every single day. Amen? So think about that.

Let's pray, and we're going to read the word together, and we're going to observe what does the text say, going to interpret the lessons, and apply it to our lives.

Let's pray together. Dear Lord and Heavenly Father, we are grateful that we have this time together, Father, we ask that you bless this time. There's a lot of spiritual truths that are found not only in the natural world of the things that we can observe in your creation, but also in things, in these simple parables for our own lives.

[5 : 05] Father, I ask that you bless this time for us being together as we go through your word, and may we recognize that you are one amazing and great God, loving us so much, and like I was talking about, you refine us, you mold us, as it were, you take that which is broken and make it whole, and it's kind of hard to think that we might irritate you, but you still mold us nonetheless.

You form us into who you want us to be. So once again, Father, bless this time together as we go through this, this simple parable, the pearl of great value.

It is in the name of Jesus Christ that we pray and we all say together, amen. Amen. You know, there's a lot of people out in the world who seek for things that are of value.

For many of us, when we think of just people, everyday people, some people search for treasures that are hidden in the world. They pursue, you know, they see things like Indiana Jones where they are trying to find hidden treasure or trying to find different hidden civilizations, treasure maps, and all those things.

There's other people that seek for knowledge. They want to have an understanding of how the world works and even think of people in the scientific community, understanding organisms or understanding planets and star systems and all these things.

[6 : 41] You also have people that are very focused on money and success, achievements, influence even. We can think of status and approval or relationships and pleasure.

And it's not to say that all of these things are bad. It's when these things become our own God that we must be careful of that. We think for a moment and we should think for a moment that for a lot of these pursuits, if these things become your God, there's a sense of emptiness that comes from it. I mentioned last week and I'll mention it again that there's a lot of people, they have all the money in the world. They might have all the fame, all the notoriety, all the influence in the world, but yet they still feel an emptiness inside, seeking fulfillment, seeking to fill that void or that emptiness.

Maybe you identify with something like that. Maybe there's been a time in your life where you felt empty and you were seeking the things that the world had to offer, but you couldn't fill that void. And last week we were talking about how there's this hidden treasure that a man stumbles upon.

And what's so profound about it is we can see from that parable that the greatest treasure exists in our Lord Jesus Christ, who provides all that we need, who gives us new life and spiritual transformation for us.

[8 : 10] And this transformation changes the very essence of who we are. We can think of how we are to put on the new self and how we are to be transformed by the renewal of our mind.

And it begs the question of for you, maybe personally, have you been searching the world for different things and you're finding emptiness?

Maybe not. Maybe you already know the Lord and you're like, I already know the Lord. I don't need to search anything else. Amen. Praise be. But for those of us that may have felt that emptiness before, just know, as we've talked about the greatest treasure being in Jesus Christ, there is fulfillment, there is new life, there is salvation, there is transformation that comes from the Lord. And I don't know about you, nothing else in this world can give that. Just like what the Lord gives to us. And so Jesus tells this parable about a merchant who finds one pearl so valuable that he sells everything to obtain it.

Let's turn to the Gospel of Matthew chapter 13. It's going to be, we can go back to the title one. Matthew chapter 13 verses 45 to 46.

[9 : 34] It's just a real short one. It's on page 974 in the ESV Pew Bible.

Or if you're using whatever translation you'd like. Matthew chapter 13, are we there? Okay. So church, let's read it together. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls who on finding one pearl of great value went and sold all that he had and bought it.

That's got to be a pretty valuable pearl, right? We can see just on the surface here that you have someone that is a merchant, right? Someone that is trying to, well, he's trying to make some money, right?

That's pretty obvious there. But when we look at this parable, how it's embedded with the other parables, right? We have the parable of the hidden treasure, the parable of the pearl of great value, and the parable of the net.

They are all kind of together and it helps us with our understanding. The parable of the hidden treasure then would mean that it's someone who finds the kingdom kingdom.

[10:58] We need to see that there's a difference. Some stumble upon truth and some actively search for it. That's one thing that we can see with this parallel here. Then, of course, we need to understand that, again, the parable of the hidden treasure was someone who found the treasure, right?

Found it, discovered it, they covered it, sold everything to obtain it. Here, it's a merchant, a paid man, as it were, to go and to find pearls.

So he is actively, or whoever this merchant is, is pursuing that which is valuable. And so on the next slide here, you'll see that what we see in the text is the merchant is a representation of someone who is seeking, a seeker of true worth, right?

They're not seeking for just random, strange things, they're seeking for pearls so that they can go to the market and sell those pearls to obviously make money, right? That's a pretty easy thing.

Then, of course, the fine pearls are the things that are of value. That's pretty obvious, right? You're wanting to find the real thing. You don't want to find plastic pearls, right? You want to find something that's of value.

[12:11] And then, of course, we have the one pearl then which is priceless, surpassing all others. This is something that we need to hang on to, that this one pearl was so valuable that this merchant was willing to sell everything for that pearl.

There has to be something that is special and something that is significant about this pearl. And then, of course, selling everything, right? Total surrender. I mean, for some of us, we find something of great value.

It might make us uncomfortable to, you know, even sell a lot of things or to get rid of a lot of things to obtain something. So it's showing in here, and I'm, I'm finding that this merchant found a pearl that is of such great value.

Think of sacrifices you might have had to make for, to buy something or to get something, right?

There's sacrifices for things. It might be buying a new car or it might be, you know, working to buy new clothes, whatever it is.

But to sacrifice everything for a pearl of such great value is remarkable. And then, of course, buying the pearl, a decisive all-in commitment.

[13:25] That's significant. So we ask the question then, all right, so you have this merchant that's coming to find one pearl of great value, and he, this merchant, only obtains the one pearl.

Let's go to that next slide. What can we learn and interpret from this? Now, sometimes it's important for us to remember we don't want to overthink too much about this because there's spiritual truths from the simplicity of the parable.

So there's two things that we can look at this. Number one is that God is the merchant and we are the pearl representing how God sacrificed everything through his son, Jesus Christ, to purchase, right, Jesus paying it all on the cross for us.

and we benefit from this sacrifice. So that's one way we can look at it. The other way we can look at it is that in the same way then, we should be like that merchant pursuing the pearl of great value.

The implication of that is that, well, there are other pearls out there, maybe pearls that are not of great value. Well, you want to find the pearl that is of great value.

[14:52] You want to find the pearl that is of great significance. And I think of people out there who are constantly searching for truth. They're trying to find meaning for their lives or even people that are looking in the things that will empty their life, not the things that will fulfill your life.

So, in this way, Christ being the pearl, God seeks his people and like a pearl that is formed from an irritant we are transformed through Christ's redemption.

Do you get it? That's interesting. It's just like how scripture says that Jesus came to seek and save the lost and that when we think of John 3.16 that God gave his only son that whosoever believes shall not perish but have eternal life.

Even in 1 Corinthians chapter 6 verse 20 where it mentions that you were bought with a price is another way we can kind of see how this is all connected.

And then, of course, for those of you who love Revelation, who loves Revelation? I don't see that all of you are raising your hand. I know, it's quite a, yeah, I get it.

[16:11] But in Revelation 21 it mentions that the gates of heaven are a single pearl. Isn't that beautiful language? a single pearl which is representing the value of salvation.

So do you see the connection there? Pearls in the time of Jesus, the time of the Jewish people, again, of ancient civilizations, pearls were of such great value.

And so to think for a moment how the pearl is parallel to the idea of salvation, to the knowing of salvation from Jesus Christ is remarkable.

We think of the future description of Revelation that's talking about the gates of heaven being with a single pearl is remarkable. Just like how this is tied into how we can learn and interpret this verse, these two verses.

God providing salvation to his people, providing salvation to all, but also for us to find the pearl of great value representing salvation.

[17:22] It's a very remarkable thought, right? God sought redeem and made you his own. And it's also a great reminder for us that God has paved the way for us to be saved by grace through faith.

To be bought with a price, we need to receive the gift of salvation saying yes to Jesus Christ, believing in his death, burial, and resurrection. And there's many people that search for meaning in this life, but nothing compares, nothing compares to what Christ offers for us.

The merchant, now this is interesting, you might think, well, if I was a merchant, wouldn't I grab all the pearls I possibly could grab? you have to think that this one pearl was of such great value and of such great significance that no other pearl mattered.

Isn't that remarkable? It's kind of hard for us to kind of fathom that, but I guess it's the difference between, well, it just goes to show, focus on the one and the significance of the great pearl compared to maybe it's smaller pearls, maybe it's just, whatever it is, it doesn't amount to the one great one.

This reminds us then, the merchant wasn't content with many pearls, he sought the one that surpassed all, regarding the image, regarding the value of that one pearl.

[18:57] And it's an encouragement for us that we are to seek the Lord. We are to seek first the kingdom of God, and as many verses say, we are to seek Christ and we will find him.

We should pursue the Lord just like how this merchant is pursuing pearls, but the fine pearl. Are you, ask yourself the question then, are you seeking lesser pearls?

Do you realize there's a much greater pearl that's available for you? and always remember, just as we've talked about with this parable of the hidden treasure, Jesus is not just another treasure, he is the greatest treasure.

So, what God provides for us is not just another pearl, it is the pearl of the most significant value to us.

And so, in this, how can I apply and live this out in my life then? this beautiful imagery of a merchant who's finding this pearl, sacrificing everything, selling everything for it?

[20:09] Well, number one is to recognize your worth in the eyes of God, you're made in the image of God, and that God invites you to know him.

God calls for you. Are you going to respond to his call? And we have to think that God's not going to force you to choose him.

God's going to give you the opportunity though to choose him, to receive that gift. So, ask yourself that question. To be sought after and redeemed is powerful language, just as I mentioned, being bought with a price, being redeemed and being called by name, and recognizing that Christ died for all, whosoever, we have to believe in him.

That is the foundation. The second thing is a question. Are you searching for the pearl of great value, right? Many pearls may seem valuable and we can think of what another pearl would represent.

Is that the things of this world? Is that other things? We can debate on that. But the point is that only one is the one of great value and that you should search for that.

[21:31] Seek first the kingdom of God and know that as we seek the Lord, we will find him. That's what we must do. The third thing then is are you willing to go all in?

Recognizing that when you find something of great value, you, don't hesitate. When you find the pearl that is of greatest significance and of greatest value, take that opportunity.

Believe in Christ and let Christ work in and through your life. Just as I mentioned in the very beginning about just even how pearls are made by the refining process that takes time by an irritant, well, in receiving salvation, we grow in Christ, or at least we're called to grow in Christ. Learn what it means to open the word or what it means to be a Christian and certainly to live it out. Being a representative of Christ, being an ambassador for others. It's what we say and what we do, how we interact with people on a day-to-day basis. Consider that for a moment.

[22 : 51] Are you willing to go all in? What is holding you back from committing? That's a question you can ask yourself. And then number four is are you helping others to find the pearl?

If you know where the greatest treasure is, you got to share it. Now I know, like I mentioned last week, if you find a treasure chest, literally, with gold coins or Spanish doubloons or whatever it is, it probably wouldn't be wise to post it, right?

But when we're talking in the spiritual sense, finding the treasure, the hidden treasure, or finding the great pearl, we are called to share that, to share it with others. Shouldn't you tell others about the good news of the gospel?

Shouldn't you tell others about how Christ is all that we need and that Christ is enough? It's just like how scripture says that we are to go and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

And also in Romans chapter 10, for some of you that may know this verse, how will they believe if they haven't heard? That's why we've got to tell the world that Jesus lives.

[24 : 14] We've got to tell them the simple gospel. We've got to let them know about the pearl of great value. And so, in this, do you know someone who's searching for something more?

Do you know someone who's actively seeking truth? Or someone that's searching for the wrong thing in the wrong place? Maybe that's someone that you can talk to.

I think of one gentleman that I know. An old friend of mine would always, I'm not going to give you a name, he would read all these books on world religions and he was very, very smart.

And even in that, in all the knowledge in the world, there's still something missing in his life. And I'd pray for him, I'd try to show him about Christ.

He kept rejecting it and I still pray for him. I don't know if he knows the Lord or not, but I certainly continue to pray for him that he will one day. Just like how we are to scatter the seed, we are to continue to share the good news of the gospel.

[25 : 27] Think of someone that might be actively pursuing truth or searching for meaning in their life in the wrong places. Are you searching for the pearl of great value?

And if you have found the pearl of great value, be encouraged to share it with others. Think of one person that you know that you can have a discussion with.

Don't force it down their throat. It's about being present. It's about being there with people, exhibiting the light of Christ, the love of Christ, and the truth of Christ.

It is dealing with others with gracious speech, just like how scripture says we are to be salt and light. And so what would it look like to live out your faith by helping others find the pearl of great value?

As we think of this, as we close from here, I want you to think. A lot of these parables give us a different layer. it helps us in how we can share the good news of the gospel.

[26 : 39] Those that seek treasures, those that are searching for things of great value, it helps us understand not only our own faith, but how we can reach out to other people.

When I think of this, I personally think of people that they're just searching for meaning in all the wrong places.

Well, what a great opportunity for you to reach out to someone who's searching. Maybe that might be you. Maybe you've searched in the wrong areas and you feel that there's something that's missing in your life.

Let that be a call for you to come to Christ. Maybe you might have received the pearl and you feel very distant because you've received the pearl, but yet there's been past hurt or there's been things that have happened in your life.

Well, like I mentioned how pearls are formed, there's the refining process that happens in our life. And so in this, be called to know, to find that great pearl, receive it, right, the gift of salvation.

[27 : 56] And of course, if you have been hurt or if you feel broken, know that God is working in you just like that irritant is working in the oyster. Be called to share, to live out this faith.

There's such a call for us to live and love like the Lord. Let's pray together. And Father God, we thank you for this very interesting, very unique parable talking about the pearl of great value, which somehow is a representation of salvation.

Something that is of such great value that in this parable, this man gave up everything for it. Father, we pray that we may take this parable to heart.

And I pray for anyone that hasn't found the great pearl or hasn't found salvation in you, that they may do so. God, I also pray for those that may have felt distant or may still be unsure to go come back to the fold.

I pray for healing and restoration and comfort. And I also pray that we as the church body may receive this gift of salvation, grow in you and be moved to go out into the world and do good in your holy name.

[29 : 18] in the same way, Father, as you pursue us and we are bought with a price of your son, Jesus Christ, may we seek you in the same manner.

We thank you so much for this piece of scripture. Different language, but it still points to you nonetheless. We love you, we praise you, we glorify you, and we honor you.

And we thank you for your word, we thank you for the truth of the gospel. May we take this to heart, may we receive it, and may it transform our lives.

It is in the name of Jesus Christ that we pray and we all say together amen. Amen. Thank you for listening for this week's message from Ontario Community Church.

I pray that you are encouraged and strengthened in your walk with Christ. For more sermons and resources, visit OntarioCommunityChurch.org. May God bless you as you live out his grace and truth every single day.

[30 : 28] Amen.