

The Pearl of Great Price Mt. 13:44-46

Is there anything so valuable to you that you would sell everything you own to possess it?

The Lord has given us great treasures in Jesus Christ. We have the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, the peace that passes understanding, a home in heaven, the joy of our salvation, and the Word of God to guide us through the ups and downs of life. These treasures are priceless, because they affect our souls and they are everlasting. These treasures are available to us, but we must be willing to sacrifice other things in order to possess them. What we give up though is hardly worth anything compared to what we gain in Jesus Christ. We must take advantage of the opportunity God has given us to follow Jesus.

There are many kinds of treasures. Some are valuable monetarily; some are valuable to the heart; but I want to discuss with you the treasures of the soul. *Treasures that last beyond this life and into the life to come.* The treasures of the soul are real treasures, if you possess them, you have everything – but without them you have nothing that will last beyond this life, if even that long.

First, *I believe that God Himself is a great treasure.* Having a relationship with God is the greatest of treasures. He is our Creator, our Savior, our sustainer, our hope, and our life. God loves us, hears our prayers, provides for us, and guides us in this life. Isaiah said in **Isaiah 33:5-6**, ***“The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness, and he will be the stability of your times, abundance of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge; the fear of the LORD is Zion’s treasure.”*** I want you to know that it is God that matters in this life, the God you read about in the Bible, is your God. If money is your god and what you trust in, I tell you that you will be disappointed, because it will never be enough. **Proverbs 15:16** says, ***“Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble with it.”*** Things might lord it over you, but they can never be the loving God of the Bible – that is Jehovah God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The God of the Bible is a good and merciful God who will love you and is ready to forgive you all your sins.

Second, *Christ is a treasure.* Paul in **Col. 2:1-3** said, ***“For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”*** I want you to understand this, there is nothing more precious, more spiritual, wiser, purer, or more loving than simple New Testament Christianity. We may easily say that in Christ we have *“a love that can never be fathomed; a life that can never*

die; a righteousness that can never be tarnished; a peace that can never be understood; a rest that can never be disturbed; a joy that can never be diminished; a hope that can never be disappointed; a glory that can never be clouded; a happiness that can never be interrupted; a light that can never be darkened; a strength that can never be enfeebled; a beauty that can never be marred; a purity that can never be defiled; a wisdom that can never be baffled, our resources in Jesus Christ can never be exhausted.”

No wonder that the apostle Paul, though he was a respected Jew, gave it all up for Jesus Christ. He was truly a Jew of Jews, but he gave it all up that he might attain salvation in Jesus Christ. In **Phil. 3:7-8** he said, ***“But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.”*** To Paul – that man that had it made in Judaism – nothing was more important than knowing Christ.

Christ was on his heart and his mind day and night. In **Phil. 1:21** he said, ***“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”*** Paul gladly sacrificed himself for the cause of Christ. He didn’t count his life as dear to himself, if he could but fulfill the ministry to preach the gospel (**Acts 20:24**). He said in **1 Cor. 2:2**, ***“For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.”*** That was the focus of his life – it was his treasure! I hope that it is yours as well. I know that I can no longer live without the Lord Jesus in my life and as my focus for life.

Third, heaven is a treasure. Jesus in **Mt. 6:19-21** said, ***“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*** We live only a short time on this earth, and we must prepare for the time when we cross beyond this life. We must treasure our eternal home. What treasures are you laying up in heaven? They won’t be earthly treasure, but they’ll be heavenly. Perhaps it will be a friend whom you have converted to Christ. Perhaps it will be a gift you gave the Lord to bless someone. It is only what you give the Lord that survives this life. Everything else will perish. Your life here is just a vapor that appears for a little while and the vanishes away. Don’t waste your life today by failing to prepare for eternity.

Jesus told this parable in **Lk. 12:16-21**, ***“And he told them a parable, saying, ‘The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’” But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you,***

and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.” You’ll either spend eternity with God or without Him. What are you doing with your life?

Fourth, the Word of God is a treasure. In **Proverbs 2:1-6**, Solomon wrote this to his son, *“My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.”* Solomon spends nearly ten chapters of this book trying to get his son’s attention. He wants his son to hear what he has to say, because he realizes what a treasure the truth is.

In **Proverbs 23:23** he said, *“Buy the truth, and do not sell it; get wisdom and instruction and understanding.”* Truth is available to all, but it is not cheap. You have to search it out in the pages of the Bible. The more you study, the greater the treasure you will find there. *Too many people are spiritually impoverished, because they never study the Word of God.* They are willing to accept what others say, often without question. If someone lies and you believe it, you have missed the truth and the wisdom it brings. **Acts 17:11** tells us about the Bereans, *“Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.”* I do hope that you that you also are examining the Scriptures.

David in **Psalms 119:11** said, *“I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.”* The Word of God, stored in our hearts and cherished, has great ability to help us in time of temptation. In **Mt. 4**, when the devil was tempting Jesus, the Lord answered every challenge with a quotation from the Word of God. He boldly told Satan, *“It is written.”* That is to say, God wrote it, and it is still authoritative, it is still true, and it still teaches us how to live. In **Mt. 4:4** Jesus said of the written Word of God, *“It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”* The word of God makes us alive, and it will last. Everybody is interested in things that last. The Lord said in **Mt. 6:19-20**, *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.”*

Fifth, the church is a treasure. Some people ignore or put down the church, but how these people think and how Jesus thinks are two different things. The church is the Lord’s treasure. He treasures the church more than you can imagine. The church is not the building but every individual Christian the makes up the church. Peter puts it this

way in **1 Peter 2:9-10**, ***“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”***

God sees in the church a people for his own possession. They are precious, chosen, cherished, and beloved. He considers every member of the church a royal priest, called out of the darkness of this world and called into His marvelous light. The church is His means of telling the world about the excellencies of God and of His Christ. God treasures His people, and you can tell how much He values her by what He is willing to give for the church.

Acts 20:28 simply says that Christ purchased the church with His own blood. Christ gave up everything for the church. The Bible tells us He owns the cattle on a thousand hills. Things don’t matter to God, but the blood Jesus shed is something else. The Lord pour out His blood for the church. We should treasure the things that Jesus treasures and love the church the way that Jesus loves it.

In **Mt. 13:44-46** Jesus taught two small parables about the kingdom of heaven, ***“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. “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.”***

Hidden treasures today are rare. In the ancient biblical times, they were common. Israel was a land bridge between Egypt and the east, it was repeatedly invaded, ravaged, and captured. To protect themselves, people often hid treasures in the ground, in walls, in tree trunks, or wherever they could. On occasions they died, or were captured, and no one knew where the treasure was hidden.

In part this kingdom is talking about the church. When the church lives the way, God intended it to be, it is a great treasure to be found – there is nothing more noble and better than God’s church. It is after all the only truly God built institution on this earth.

The Lord Jesus in **Mt. 6:20-21** said, ***“but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*** What matters to you? What are your treasures? *I hope that God, Christ, heaven, the Bible, and His church are your treasures.* I hope you have obeyed the gospel and have received the priceless grace of God.

Let me ask you this, “How much do you treasure the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of your sins, or the grace of God?” Paul in **1 Cor. 15:10** said this, ***“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.”*** Paul did not want anyone to take this gift of God lightly. He wanted God’s grace to matter in how he lived and in what he did. **Do you?**

Are you putting Christ first in your life? Would you give up everything to know Him? Are you worshipping with the church? Are you reading your Bible? Are you praying regularly? Have you obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ? You do that by believing in Jesus, repenting of your sins, confessing the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by being baptized into Christ. *If you have not done even one of these things, can you truly say that you take the grace of God seriously?* Won’t you commit to Jesus today? All things are ready, Come to the Feast!