

Pictures of the People of God

Pt. 2 “A Pearl of Great Price” Mt 13:45,46

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Jan 23rd

God uses many different Parables and Pictures in order to help us better understand Him as well as understanding how he sees us. Last week we examined the parable of the buried treasure in Mt. 13:43 and learned:

- The Point of the parable: *That God Values (treasures) us!* 1 Pt 2:9
- The Problem of the parable: *That Satan owns us!* Eph. 2:1-3
- The Price (our sin demanded): *That Christ Died to redeem us!* Ro. 6:23; 5:8; Jn 19:30
- The Purpose: *Our Reconciliation and Rewarding Service.* 2 Cor 5:19,20; Rev. 4:11

In the following parable Jesus continues these truths by describing us as:

PEARLS OF GREAT PRICE! Matthew 13:45,46

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: (Kalos’: valuable) Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”

While both parables (*The Treasure and the Pearl*) describe the of our Redemption, (*The man had to exchange “all that he had” in order to redeem both of them*) this parable focuses on the Process of our Perfection/sanctification.

1. Notice how Pearls are created:

A. They begin with a foreign object that enters the Oyster (SW) or Mussels. (FW)

- 1) This object is not naturally a part of the oyster/mussel.
- 2) It then becomes imbedded in the oyster/mussel.

B. The oyster accepts the object and begins Transform it. (Mother of Pearl)

- 1) Since it’s naturally rough it produces and “irritation” to the oyster.
- 2) The oyster begins to coat it with Nacre (Mother of Pearl).
- 3) This process involves several “coats” of nacre until rough edges are smooth & the pearl is formed.

C. The longer the item remains in the oyster, the larger, smoother, and more valuable it becomes.

- 1) It doesn’t have to “work” to become valuable, just “abide” in the Oyster.

2. How are we like Pearls?

A. We are naturally spiritual “outsiders”. Eph. 2:1-3; 11-12 *“remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, ... That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:”*

- 1) If we die in this condition we will spend eternity separated from God. John 8:23-24
(See also Mt. 7:21-23; Ro 6:23 and John 3:18,36)

B. When we come to Christ in faith, we’re accepted. John 6:37 *“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”*

- 1) God sees us “in Christ”. Phil. 3:9 *“And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, ... but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:”* (See also 2 Cor 5:21)
Eph 1:6-7 *“To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted (Charito’ō: honored, highly favored. Comes from Charis: GRACE!) in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;”* (also Eph. 2:13-16)

C. As the oyster “covers” the irritation with nacre, so God covers and Transforms us with His **Grace!** (charis: God’s influence on our hearts and it’s manifestation in and through our lives.)

1) It’s His grace that **Saves** us. (Eph. 2:8-10)

Eph 1:6-7: *“To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;”*

2) It’s His grace that **Sanctifies** (transforms) us. 2 Cor 12:7-9 *My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”*

3) It’s His Grace that equips us for **Service.**

Phil. 2:13 *“it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”*

Eph 4:7 *“unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.”*

D. The longer we abide “in Christ” the greater the influence of His Grace. Jn 15:4,5

E. When ready, Pearls are placed in specific settings by the master jeweler. 1 Pt 4:10 *“As every man hath received the gift, (charisma: deliverance and a spiritual endowment, enabling) even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”*

1) God polishes, prepares and points us in specific areas of service! Mal 3:16-18; *“they shall be mine...when I make up my jewels...”* Segullâ’: peculiar {special} treasure

Ex. 19:5,6 *“ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me...a kingdom of priests”*

Conclusion:

This picture of “goodly pearls” is so important that God will provide us with an eternal reminder of it. (Rev. 2:21) While there are several ways we’re like natural pearls, there’s some significant ways in which we’re not.

1) Unlike the pearl, we’re not passive recipients of God’s transforming Grace...

a) To benefit from it, we must **respond** to it. (Eph. 2:10) 1 Cor 15:10 *“by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”* (Phil. 2:13)

b) Failure to do so **Frustrates** God’s Grace! Gal. 2:20, 21

2) Once removed from the oyster, the pearl cannot grow any larger. We are never completely removed from God and can (should) continue to grow

“in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” 2 Pt 3:18

Application:

Are you resisting or Responding to God’s Grace?

1) Have you accepted His invitation to be “in” Christ?

(Eph. 2:8,9; Mt 11:28,29; John 5:39,40)

2) Are you cooperating with His desire to Transform you “into” Christ’s image? (Ro. 8:29; Heb. 3:7,8)

3) Have you accepted His call to service by sharing His grace & light with others?

(Eph. 2:10; Gal. 2:20,21)

