

Title: LESSONS FROM THE PEARL

Text: Matthew 13:45-46

Intro: In this parable the merchant is Jesus, the pearl is the church, and the great price is the death of Jesus on the cross. Pearls have been used for centuries as objects of beauty. We will take a look at the pearl and notice several wonderful spiritual lessons about the Lord & His church.

1. A PEARL IS THE PRODUCT OF SUFFERING

A. A pearl is formed when an oyster gets a grain of sand trapped in the soft flesh inside its shell. This piece of sand irritates the oyster and it responds by coating the grain with layers of saliva and calcium.

B. The church was formed from the terrible pains and death Christ bore for sinners upon the cross! (**Eph. 5:25; Rev. 1:5**)

2. A PEARL IS FORMED FROM WORTHLESS MATTER

A. The pearl is formed from all types of junk. Pieces of sand, bone fragments from dead fish, and other wastes on the sea floor.

B. The composition of the church comes out of condemned and hell-bound sinners! (**Matt. 9:12-13; Eph. 2:1-3**)

3. A PEARL IS A COMPOSITE THING

A. It is a combination of things. There are at least 3 materials used in forming a pearl – the irritant material, saliva, and calcium.

B. The church is composed of all kinds of people from all races and backgrounds (**Gal. 3:26-28**). They have one thing in common – Salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone!

4. A PEARL GROWS GRADUALLY

A. After a grain of sand enters inside the oyster, it can take the oyster up to 3 years to produce the magnificent pearl.

B. God has slowly and gradually built His church in this world. It has been growing for 2,000 years as the Spirit convicts sinners and come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ (**Eph. 2:21-22**).

5. A PEARL IS A HIDDEN WORK

A. The pearl grows hidden in the oyster submerged in water.

B. Aside from the physical numerical aspect, no one can truly see the actual spiritual growth of the church. We can only see the visible local church but not the invisible spiritual body which forms the vastness of whole church (**Eph. 1:22-23**).

6. A PEARL IS A VERY VALUABLE OBJECT

A. Pearls can be worth a fortune. In fact strings of pearls can actually be worth millions of dollars.

B. The church was worth the treasure of heaven to God! He paid the highest price, the very best of heaven – His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to save the church from hell! (**Rom. 5:6-8**)

C. The church is truly very valuable to the world even when the world does not actually appreciate it. The church serves as a restraining force against evil that will one day sweep over the world. Therefore she is worth all the price and efforts that we need to give to keep her alive, active and strong in the Lord. It is worth all our praying, our giving, our working, our sacrificing. The church is worth all we can give to her!

7. A PEARL IS A UNITY

A. The pearl is the only gem known to man that cannot be cut. Large diamonds are cut and made into several smaller, more valuable stones. The pearl cannot be divided without destroying its natural value and beauty.

B. The local church may be divided in the eyes of man, but the true spiritual church (the true body of Christ made up of both dead and alive in Christ) will ever stand as one (**Phil. 1:27**).

C. When any local church is divided, it loses its value and beauty to the watching world! Therefore, there is a great need for us to be of one mind and of one accord for testimony's sake! It doesn't look good when God's people cannot get along well!

8. A PEARL REFLECTS LIGHT

A. One of the outstanding qualities of the pearl is its ability to reflect light. The church is called to reflect the true light of the world – the Lord Jesus Christ (**John 8:12; 9:5**)..

B. The church, like the moon reflecting the light of the sun at night, is to reflect the light of the Lord Jesus Christ to this spiritually darkened world (**Phil. 2:15**).

Conclusion: And so we have seen that the little pearl teaches several great Bible truths about Christ and His church. Let us learn a lesson from the qualities of the pearl – from its beauty and value to the owner! The next time you see a pearl, meditate on these wonderful truths!