

**Matthew 13: 45 & 46; “The Cost of Buying the Pearl”, Session # 7 on the Parable of the Pearl of Great Price, Presented by Pastor Paul Rendall on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in the Adult Sunday School.**

**Matthew 13: 45 & 46** – “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.”

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Last week I showed you that if you have found the Pearl of Great Price, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the great salvation which is in Him, you have all things. We looked at 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3: 18-23 and we saw that all things are ours, whether it is Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas. All things are yours whether it is the world, or life or death, or things present or things to come. All things are yours and you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s. Therefore, I said to you, when you see the infinite value of Christ who is yours, you should stop boasting in men. You should stop trying through your own cleverness to obtain the things that you want out of life and see that the greatest thing in the world is that you know Christ.

We then looked at 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1: 26-31 where Paul tells us that God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. He has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things that are mighty, He has chosen the base things of the world and the despised to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. Rather, we should realize that Christ, the Pearl of Great Price has become for us wisdom from God – and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that we might glory in having found Him and all the blessings of salvation, and eternal life, in Him.

When we see the infinite value of Christ, then the Lord Jesus Himself tells us in this Parable that we will sell all to buy this Pearl. This leads me to attempt to show you then a corollary truth:

**1. If you see the Infinite Value of Christ you will Count the Cost of what it will mean to sell all to Buy It.**

**Luke 14: 25-33** – “Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it— lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.”

**A.** To “forsake all” compares to the phrase “he went and sold all” to buy the Pearl of great price. The phrase, “after he laid the foundation” compares to a person’s making profession of faith in Jesus. “Not being able to finish” means not continuing to follow Jesus, not persevering in faith in Jesus and obedience to His word, but leaving off following Him. Jesus gave these sayings in the presence of the great multitude who were following Him at that time in His ministry. He says that if anyone does not hate his father, mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, that he cannot be His disciple. He is saying that there cannot be any competition between love of your relatives, whoever they are, with your love for Him as your Savior and Lord. In every case, your love for Christ must be greater. Your love for your relatives must be great enough that you would hate any counsel of theirs which attempts to take you away from following what Christ commands you to do in His word. It even means that you must hate your own life as well. That is, hate everything that you have sinfully lived your life for in the past, and even your sense of self-righteous pride that you have had in yourself for all that you have done for God in the past, if you would be Christ’s disciple.

**B.** He compares living the Christian life to your intending to build a tower. If you were really going to do that, you should sit down and first count the cost of what it would take to build it. Do you really have enough to build it? So taking up a profession of Christ and His gospel is like building a tower. It is something very great that you are going to build, with your life. Something great and lasting if you calculate the cost. If you do not calculate the cost, and you begin to build, and you are not able to finish, then people looking on will mock, Jesus says. They will say – It was all boastful talk and good intentions, but not enough consideration of the cost. Not enough calculation of the cost of what it will mean to deny yourself at major points, of love of worldly pleasure or spending time with worldly friends who do not want to follow Jesus. Calculate also the disapproval of unbelieving family and friends.

**C.** Then Jesus gives another illustration; that of a king going to make war against another king. Does the king not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to meet him who comes against him with 20 thousand? So taking up a profession of faith is liken here to two kings engaging in a war. The king on the one side is the Christian making the profession. A true believer is a king unto God, as we will one day rule over all things with Christ. We are heirs of the kingdom of glory. On the other side is the Devil. And he is the prince of this world, a king over the kingdom of darkness. He has greater strength and power by nature than the professed Christian has. He is the one who comes against the Christian with all of his forces. And without Christ's salvation, and His help, he cannot defeat him.

But with His help, he can. This is why Christ is the Pearl of Great Price. He has already overcome Satan at the cross. And this is why the Christian prays to be strong in the Lord and in His mighty strength. With his own resources alone, he cannot defeat the Devil's strategies against him. Every Christian or even the whole church would be forced to send a delegation and ask conditions of peace, and none would be granted. But because Christ has defeated Satan at the cross, he and all of his demonic forces can be defeated by us, and Satan overcome in every situation of spiritual warfare.

## **2. Considering the Cost of Buying the Pearl means thinking about where your true strength lies.**

This is why our Lord is the Pearl of great Price. He laid down His life so that we would no longer be captives of Satan, but be freed to join Him, take up the whole armor of God, and fight the good fight of faith.

**Ephesians 6: 10-17** – “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts in the heavenly places.” “Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” “Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.”

It is the Lord Jesus who gives us the power to be strong to do what is right. To be able to do what is right in every situation means that we must realize that we are in a spiritual battle with Satan. He is a wily opponent, and a deceiver who will attack us when we consciously are striving to do God's will at every point in our lives. We wrestle with his strategies at many points in living our life unto God. We must therefore take up the whole armor of God. We must consciously gird our waist with truth and put on the breastplate of righteousness. We will check to see that we have believed in the gospel, and that we have received Christ's Finished Work to wear as our clothing and our armor. It is Christ's righteousness that we stand in, but this will also give us confidence to pursue righteous living ourselves when we see how He lived and what He has done for us. We

can stand fast with this, and walk straight into the face of spiritual battle with the Devil if the truth of the Bible girds our waist.

We will shod our feet with the gospel of peace. That is, we will realize that our battle is not with flesh and blood. It is not for us to think that we can argue or force unsaved people into the kingdom. We will be those who sow the word as peacemakers on behalf of our God and our Christ. We will attempt to win people to Christ by being winsome, loving, kind, compassionate, and gentle in our demeanor.

We will take up the shield of faith, above all these other pieces of armor, so that we will be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one. The wicked one, when he realizes that we are serious about doing God's will, will throw all kinds of fiery darts at us. He will tell us that we are not able to do God's will, that we are either lazy or hypocritical or too zealous or too worldly to do God's will. He is called the accuser of the brethren in this regard; always trying to make us look weak, and will attempt to show us all of our weaknesses and sins on a regular basis. He will tempt us to give up, to let down the shield of faith, and then will attempt to devour us. But we can resist him if we are steadfast in our faith. (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5: 9)

We also take up the helmet of salvation. That is, We consciously take up this piece of armor so that our mind is protected by our realizing that Christ is our salvation, He alone has won the battle for my soul. My trust is in His finished work of righteousness and sufferings, and not in the best of my efforts or good works, in terms of my being saved. Since my trust is in the Lord, then He will guard my mind and my heart with His grace and Spirit. I must consciously take up this helmet of salvation. And I must go forward to the conflict with my spiritual adversary, and not think that I can avoid it. I must deny myself, pick up my cross, and follow the Captain of my salvation.

Further, I must take up the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. I realize that I must wield the Scripture as a sword to cut down and cut away the false arguments and rationalizations of Satan as to why I should not or cannot keep God's commandments, or why I should participate in some sin. I must remember that Christ had to first overcome the evil one when He was tempted in the wilderness. His overcoming him by using Scripture to answer his temptations is the same way that I will take, in learning to resist his temptations, and to overcome him.