

Matthew 13: 45 & 46; “A Pearl Formed by Accretion”, Session # 5 on the Parable of the Pearl of Great Price, Presented by Pastor Paul Rendall on March 12th, 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.”

I said to you last week that we have much to learn about the infinite value of the Pearl of Great Price. I am speaking of the infinite value of the Lord Jesus Christ. I spoke to you about –

1st – How are Pearls Made and Why are they so Greatly Sought After?

In the Birth of a Pearl –

Oysters make pearls in response to an irritant, such as a grain of sand or another object. When any irritant makes its way between the mollusk’s shell and mantle, the creature produces nacre, a protective coating that helps reduce irritation. Nacre is also referred to as mother-of-pearl; it’s made of microscopic crystals of calcium carbonate, and it also lines the interior of a mollusk’s shell.

Layers of nacre coat the irritant, eventually forming an iridescent gem (the pearl).

2. Having this Information on a Natural Earthly Pearl, then I gave you Biblical Information as to why the Value of Christ is so very Great.

A. Christ from All Eternity, before the world was created, was God the Son.

John 1: 1-4 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.”

B. One of the main Reasons that Christ became a Man was in order to deal with our sin.

Today’s Study – The Cultivation of the Pearl & What It will take to Buy It.

John 6: 38 – “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” “This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me, I should lose nothing.”

C. The “Farmer” who cultivated Christ as this Pearl was the Father

It is said above that it takes up to 4 years to see a large Pearl form. In Christ the Most Precious and Perfect Pearl the work took 3 and a half years for Him to render a full obedience to God’s law and then He had to suffer and die on the cross for our sins.

Psalm 42: 6-8 – “O my God, my soul is cast down within me; therefore I will remember You from the land of the Jordan, and from the heights of Hermon, from the Hill Mizar.” “Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; all Your waves and billows have gone over me.” “The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me – A prayer to the God of my life.”

Remember earlier when I read you Wikipedia’s words on how precious pearls were obtained. It said this: Many hundreds of pearl oysters or mussels must be gathered and opened, and thus killed, to find even one wild pearl; for many centuries, this was the only way pearls were obtained, and why pearls fetched such extraordinary prices in the past. We can say also that Christ our Savior thus had to die on the cross, the Father having Him to experience the waves and billows of His Divine wrath tearing Him apart so that the Pearl of Great Price would be formed.

Samuel Eyles Pierce says on Psalm 42: 7 – Deep calls unto deep at the noise of thy water spouts: all thy waves and billows are gone over me. I have not the least objection to this being applied to David, especially as he is acknowledge a type of Christ; and that his present case and circumstances filled him, under the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit, to write of his great antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ. To whom the whole may most suitably be applied, and in whom it hat been most solemnly realized. He was most truly in the utmost state of distress. As the surety of his people, all the floods, waves, and billows of divine wrath went over him. While he was in this state, and the Lord thus exercised him, he might most assuredly say, Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.”

D. Christ’s perfect obedience to God’s law, and His sufferings on our behalf is like the formation of a Pearl which is formed by layers of Nacre.

2nd Corinthians 5: 21 – “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might became the righteousness of God in Him.

This formation of the Pearl through this means produces a very great result. Grace, or the Pearl, being found by any sinner who applies to God and to Christ to save them. God will give grace that is greater than all their sins.

E. A Pearl is formed by accretion.

John 1: 16 – “And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.” (Grace upon Grace, it says in the New American Standard translation.

What are some of the many blessings that Christ brings to us as believers which would fit the description of our receiving grace upon grace?

Albert Barnes says: Pardon, redemption, protection, sanctification, peace here, and heaven hereafter.

I would say – Justification in both its parts of forgiveness of sins and the imputation of righteousness, adoption, and sanctification, as well as all of the graces of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit’s constantly being present with us, working in our hearts Christ’s precious grace. Constant protection and deliverance through the prayers of others and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1: 19)

Christ’s fullness of grace and truth was cultivated in His life by the Father unto a perfect obedience which led to His sacrifice for our sins on the cross. It is Christ’s Finished Work as the God Man which makes Him the Pearl of Great Price to us.

Matthew 5: 17 & 18 – “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets.” “I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.” “For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”

So Christ’s obedience was a full obedience to God’s law. He added obedience to obedience in doing so. He piled up His obedience until it was perfect, like Himself. He perfectly fulfilled God’s law in every aspect of keeping every one of His commandments. Layer upon Layer in the Oyster or Mollusk is added to cover the irritant, and when the work is finished, it looks perfect in some pearls. In Christ it was absolutely perfect. The result of Christ’s full and complete obedience to God’s law and His sufferings for sin is a Perfect Pearl, a Perfect Work in and by a Perfect Person to be searched for and found by those who will seek Him. The finished work of Christ in righteousness and sufferings is a complete and finished work, even as a Pearl which has no price.

When He says that not one jot or one tittle will pass from the law till all is fulfilled, what does it mean?

Fulfilled in who, and in what sense? I believe that by law that Jesus is referring to all of the Scriptures, what they say in both precepts and prophecies, none of this will pass away during this whole Church age. It will continue on until the time when this world ends and the New Heavens and New Earth are brought in by Christ. Specifically, it means that God's moral law as found in the Ten Commandments and summarized by the 1st and greatest commandment to love God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength and (2^{ndly}) your neighbor as yourself, shall not pass away in regard to the smallest details of responsibility that we have, to keep them. As it says in Romans 8: 3 & 4 – “For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

Jesus means that not the smallest letter of the Hebrew Alphabet (a jod, or iota) or even the smallest stroke would be taken away from it until everything was fulfilled; that is, when heaven and earth passed away to make way for the New Heavens and New Earth after Christ returns.

Philip Doddridge says - “The word ἰωτα, which we render jot, undoubtedly answers to the Hebrew letter י, jod, whence the English word here seems to be derived, and which, being the least letter of the alphabet, might properly be used proverbially on this occasion. Κερατια, which we render tittle, properly signifies one of those little ornamental curvatures or flourishes, which, when Hebrew is elegantly written, are generally used at the beginning and end of a letter, and sometimes at the corners too. I think it might well have been rendered, not the least letter, or stroke, &c., and so much the rather, as jot and tittle, in English, signify the same.”

Joseph Benson says: *Shall in no wise pass from, the law* — “Or, from the prophets, till all be fulfilled — Till all things which the law requires, or the prophets foretell, shall be effected. This seems to be the literal translation of the original words, εως αν παντα γενηται: for the law has its effect when its sanctions are executed, as well as when its precepts are obeyed. And the predictions of the prophets have their proper effect and confirmation, when they are accomplished. Some, however, understand the words as meaning, till the end, or, consummation of all things shall come, or, till the heavens and the earth shall pass away, or be destroyed. The meaning of our Lord's words, according to this interpretation, is, that there is nothing in the universe so stable as the truths contained in the moral law, and nothing so certain as the fulfilment of the predictions of the prophets: the heavens may fall, and the whole frame of nature be unhinged, nay, every part of it may be dissolved; but the rules of righteousness, and the declarations of the divine word, with their sanctions, shall remain immutable and eternal: for the word of the Lord endures for ever, 1Pe_1:25. Our Lord therefore proceeds, in the two next verses, to command his disciples, on the severest penalties, to enforce, both by their doctrine and example, the strict observation of all the moral precepts contained in the sacred writings, and that in their utmost extent.”

Proverbs 8: 17-21 – “I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently will find me. Riches and honor are with me, enduring riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold, and my revenue than choice silver. I traverse the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice, That I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, that I may fill their treasuries.”

You can see here that it is those who love Christ, He loves them back. And He loves them by giving them the true spiritual riches of His grace and wisdom and truth. It is in His power to give to every person who seeks Him, enduring riches and righteousness; both imputed righteousness and imparted grace leading to sanctification, or becoming righteous and holy before God. The fruit of His life, death, and resurrection is better than gold, yes better than even fine gold, and his revenue better than choice silver. He has traversed, or walked over all the ground of the way of righteous obedience to God's law at every point, and fulfilled all righteousness and justice so that those who love Him would inherit spiritual and everlasting wealth; even that their treasuries would be full of it. That is, that their minds and hearts would be full of these riches so that they could lay up treasure in heaven, and truly be satisfied with walking with Him and keeping His commandments.