

(Matt. 13:44) – THE PARABLE OF HIDDEN TREASURE – This parable illustrates how precious and highly valued God’s elect are to Christ. His people are His cherished and beloved treasure. All of the redeemed are His inheritance, the apple of His eye and the jewels of His crown (Psa. 135:4; 17:8; Zech. 2:8; Mal. 3:17). The world sees no real value in the true children of God. In fact, the ungodly consider those who believe, worship, honor, and serve Christ as the “off scouring of all things” (1 Cor. 4:13). But to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we are His precious treasure (Isa. 43:4). We need to understand that our value to the Lord is not due to any inherent goodness found in ourselves or our works. In ourselves, we are sinful people and unworthy of the least of God’s mercies and blessings (Gen. 32:10). The value of God’s people is only found in the glory that God has because of our salvation by His grace in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. God is glorified as both a just God and a Savior in our salvation. And it is because of the sovereign grace of God given us in Christ (2 Tim. 1:9) in eternal election, that we are of great value to the Lord. We are His dear children whom He loves with an everlasting love (1 John 3:1-2). The man in this parable is Christ the Lord. Our worthiness is found in Christ as we are redeemed by His blood and justified in His righteousness imputed to us.

In this parable the treasure is said to be “*HID IN A FIELD.*” According to God’s eternal purpose and plan, the elect of the Lord are scattered throughout the nations of the world (Rev. 5:9). The man here is the Lord Jesus Christ. His people were chosen by God before the world began and given into His care. Their whole salvation and eternal well-being were entrusted to Him alone. We were so greatly loved and highly valued by Him that He willingly and gladly came into the world of sin and shame to save us from our sins (Heb. 12:2). The salvation He came to accomplish to the praise of the glory of God’s grace required Him to satisfy God’s justice by His death for our sins. In order to redeem and deliver the people He treasures from sin and death, He had to lay down His life for them (His sheep) (John 10:11,18). Christ, as it were, sold “*ALL THAT HE HATH,*” His whole self (Gal. 1:4; 2:20; Eph. 5:25; 1 Tim. 2:6; Titus 2:14).

It says that He “*BUYETH THE FIELD,*” and the field is the world. Does this mean that Christ redeemed every person in the world from sin and death? NO. Christ died for His sheep to redeem them alone from sin and death. But by His death for His sheep, He bought the crown rights to own and govern this entire world, both the living and the dead (Rom. 14:9). He rules over all the world in order to save His people out of the world. He redeemed His people by His blood (1 Pet. 1:18-19) and purchased the field in which they were hidden in the purpose and providence of God. In His appointed time, He finds His people with the effectual call of power and grace by the Gospel and brings them to Himself.

(Matt. 13:45-46) – THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE – As the parable of the hidden treasure shows how God’s elect are precious to Christ, this parable teaches how Christ becomes precious to the elect. Peter wrote, “*Unto you therefore which believe HE is precious*” (1 Pet. 2:7). Christ is every believer’s treasure! The “*MERCHANT MAN*” pictures a sinner who, realizing something of the awesomeness of God and the certainty of judgment to come, begins to seek “*GOODLY PEARLS.*” These are things he values as making him right with God and establishing righteousness before God. He becomes religious, seeks to do acts of charity and even self-denial. He may join a church, get baptized, give his tithe, and work hard to change his behavior. But by the grace of God, he finds “*ONE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.*” This pearl of great price is Christ in the glory of His Person and the power of His finished work of redemption. In this light as revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, he sees his own sinfulness and depravity. He sees his need of salvation totally by the grace of God and not by his works or will. He learns that all of his supposed “goodly pearls” were worthless and dead works, evil deeds and fruit unto death as compared to Christ and His righteousness, the pearl of great price (Luke 16:15; Php. 3:3-9).

The parable said that when he found the pearl, he “*WENT AND SOLD ALL THAT HE HAD, AND BOUGHT IT.*” Does this mean that we can buy salvation? NO! First of all, we are all spiritually bankrupt and have nothing with which to buy the least of God’s blessings (Isa. 55:1-3). Secondly, there is a redemption price, and it must be paid in full. Thirdly, when the Spirit reveals Christ and His redemptive work accomplished on the cross, He gives us this redemption price, the blood of Jesus Christ, and we bring it to God for our whole salvation. We see that salvation is wholly by God’s grace in Christ and totally free to us (Rom. 8:32; 1 Cor. 2:12; Eph. 1:3). It is then that we are made willing to part with all of our so-called goodly pearls in true God-given repentance and come to God-given faith in Christ. It is then we are brought to submit to His righteousness as the only ground upon which God forgives us and declares us righteous in His sight (Php. 3:7-9).

Consider two questions: (1) Who will seek and find the pearl of great price? Those who are made to realize their need of Christ. I am unrighteous; I need Christ to be my righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30). I am sinful; I need His blood to wash away my sins (1 John 1:7). I am alienated from God; I need Christ to be my Reconciler and Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5). I deserve condemnation and death because of my sin; I need Christ Who died that God might be just and the Justifier of sinners like me (Rom. 3:24-26). I am by nature spiritually dead and depraved; I need Christ to give me life through the Spirit and the Word (John 3:3-7). (2) Where is this pearl of great price to be found? Christ is found in the Word of God, for all the Scriptures speak of Him (John 1:45; 5:39,46; Acts 10:43). Christ is found among His people where they worship and honor Him (Matt. 18:20). Seek Him as the exalted Lord, the successful Lamb of God Who accomplished the salvation of His people (Heb. 10:14).