

The Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

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[Scripture quotations taken from the NASB](#)

In Matthew 13 Jesus gave the parable of the hidden treasure and the parable of the pearl. Beginning in verse 44 we read: “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and *sells all that he has* and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and *sold all that he had* and bought it.” (Matthew 13:44-46, emphasis added).

The “hidden treasure” and the “one pearl of great value” of course refer to our salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Perhaps the first thing we should say about this parable is that Jesus is not teaching that we must “purchase” our own salvation by giving up all that we have. He is the One who paid the price for our salvation when He died on Calvary’s cross, and with His blood He “purchased for God” men from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation (Revelation 5:9). However, we should understand that *our calling to follow Jesus Christ will be costly for us*, as we learn from numerous teachings that Jesus gave to us.

In Luke 14:33, Jesus taught that no one can be His disciple unless they give up everything they have. Again, this is not to say that we must purchase our own salvation through a life of self-denial, but to say that following Jesus will be costly for us as God brings about the bearing of fruit in our life through the principle Jesus taught us in John 12:24-26.

In Luke 14:27, Jesus taught that anyone who does not “carry his own cross” and follow Him cannot be His disciple. The cross was widely understood in Jesus’ day to be an instrument of death. This “death” which Jesus spoke about is a death to what we would choose for ourselves in this life, and the obedient submission to the life and place of service that God chooses for us. This place of service that God has assigned for us will be revealed as the circumstances, conditions, and limitations of our lives unfold, and we find that many of the things we wanted for ourselves are out of reach and unattainable for us.

When we find ourselves facing the “death” of things that we wanted for ourselves in this life, things which may be completely honorable with no sin in them at all, but nonetheless things which God has withheld from us according to His plan and purpose for our lives, then we too have been called upon to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23). When we are confronted with these things, then we suffer with Jesus, which is to say that we experience a share in the same kinds of sufferings that He endured as He submitted to the plan and purpose of God for His life (Romans 8:17, 1 Peter 4:12-13).

During these times we will experience our own “Gethsemane”, so to speak, and we too, as Jesus did, will pray to God our Father to take this cup from us, knowing that all things are possible for Him. In these times, we too, as Jesus was, will be called upon to accept God’s answer to our prayers as His sovereign will for our life.

In Matthew 10:29-30, Jesus taught us that not even one sparrow falls to the ground apart from God’s will. He also taught that God knows even the number of hairs on our head. This is to say that God is intimately familiar with every detail and circumstance of our lives. When our requests made in prayer are not granted, then we are called upon to accept God’s answer to our prayer as part of His sovereign will and plan for our lives, just as Jesus did when He prayed: “Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will.” (Mark 14:36).

These are the hardest things to bear in the Christian life. Through these experiences of undeserved suffering with circumstances and conditions in our lives that God could change at any time, we “suffer with Jesus”, or share in His sufferings, in order that we may also share in His glory (Romans 8:17). His sufferings came about through no fault or wrongdoing of His own, but according to the predetermined plan and purpose of God for His life (Hebrews 2:10, Acts 2:23). We should all understand that this share in His sufferings is the one and only path

to spiritual fruitfulness, as God has ordained it to be so for every one of His people (John 12:24-26).

We have, by God's sovereign choice, by His mercy and grace, been brought to faith in His Son Jesus Christ. We have been given eyes to see and ears to hear (Matthew 13:11, 16). We have found "hidden treasure" (Matthew 13:44). We have found the "one Pearl of great value", Jesus Christ Himself (Matthew 13:45-46). Though we have been chosen by God and blessed to share in the eternal glory of His Son, we should understand that everyone who is called to faith in Christ will be required to follow Him (John 12:26), sharing in His sufferings in order to bear the fruit that God has ordained for our lives (John 12:24), which will bring about for us a share in Christ's eternal glory.