

# The Pearl of Great Price

*"The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought it." Matthew 13:44-46*

Jesus Christ is the Pearl of Great Price! The Bible says that "Christ is the radiance of God's glory (Hebrews 1:3)... in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3)." When we really see Jesus Christ and who He is, we will want to sell all we have in order to know Him - the Pearl of Great Price. How much will it cost us to "sell all" for Christ? For two thousand years, the price has always been the same. Even if there are only a few "buyers," God has never lowered the price. The cost of knowing Christ is to believe in Him to the point that we want to give up our whole life for Him. Jesus said, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his soul-life will lose it, but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake and the gospel's will save it (Mark 8:34-37)." What does it mean to give up our soul-life for Christ and how do we do this? It means we give Jesus Christ complete control over our lives and become His bondslaves out of love. We then exchange our desires, interests and abilities for His desires, interests and abilities so that He can motivate us and work through us. We let the mind of Christ totally permeate our entire being because we want to know Him and love Him more than we want anything else in this world. And we do this by faith "for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).

Jesus said, "Whoever loses his soul-life for My sake will find it to life eternal (John 12:24)." The only way we will want to give up our soul-life is if we see that the Pearl of Great Price is worth far more than anything we have to give up. We first begin to see Jesus Christ clearly when we are born again into His kingdom. Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born

again he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3)." If we do not see Jesus is the Pearl of Great Price, we will not be able to "sell all" for His sake. If we do not see the eternal value of knowing Christ, we will not be able to lose our soul-life for His sake. Without seeing the Pearl of Great Price, the magnetic pull of the sin of the world is irresistible. Why do so few people give up their soul-life for Jesus Christ? Many never see the Pearl of Great Price. "The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God (2 Corinthians 4:4). In the case of others who once were saved but now live only to fulfill their soul-life in this world, they have lost sight of the Pearl of Great Price. They now simply love their soul-life too much to give it up for Christ. They are like Esau who sold his inheritance for a bowl of beans (Genesis 25:27-34). "But what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew 16:26)." Here is the glorious truth: It is possible for us to give up this world and all its pleasures because God, through the death of His Son, destroyed our sinful nature and removed it from us. When Christ died, God performed a divine heart transplant and exchanged our sinful heart with His Son's holy nature (Romans 6:3-11). Because our sinful nature died with Christ, we have died to the world (Galatians 6:14). We no longer have to practice sin. "No one who is born of God will continue to sin because God's seed (Christ) abides in him, and he cannot go on sinning because he is born of God (1 John 3:9)."

Gaining Jesus Christ is worth far more than everything we have to sell. Knowing Jesus is worth far beyond anything we have to lose. When Jesus told His disciples they must bear their own cross, deny themselves and lose their soul-life for His sake, what did He give them in return? He gave them Himself - the Pearl of Great Price. "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent (John 17:3)." If we underestimate the worth of Jesus Christ and

overestimate the value of what we have to lose, we will feel sorry for ourselves because we have to give up so much. We will have lost sight of the Pearl of Great Price. How much we "sell all" is in direct proportion to how much we see Christ. As we obey Jesus Christ and His Word, He will increasingly reveal Himself to us. "Whoever has My commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves Me. He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I too will love him and disclose Myself to him (John 14:21)." Giving up your whole life for the One you love and the One who loves you is the most beautiful experience you can have in this life. We lose our soul-life so we might gain the indescribable experience of close companionship and deep communion with Jesus.

How did Moses endure ill-treatment and resist the passing pleasures of sin? How could Moses consider disgrace for Christ of greater value than the treasures of Egypt? The Bible says Moses endured "by seeing Him who is unseen (Hebrews 12:25-27)." This was also the apostle Paul's testimony: "Whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I might gain Christ (Philippians 3:7-8)."

So let us fix our eyes on Jesus and, like Moses, see Him who is unseen for He is the author and finisher of our faith. Let us endure this race to the end so that we might receive the crown of glory He has for us. Nothing on this earth can compare to seeing Him and knowing Him - He is true riches! He is worth far more than anything we might lose, even our very lives. Jesus Christ died to make it possible for us to see Him and know Him. Let us sell all to buy the Pearl of Great Price!

*"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." Matthew 13:44-45*