

The Pearl of Great Price – A Formed Christ



*The greatest gift of love
anyone could ever receive is Jesus Himself.
What a precious Treasure we contain!*

How Valuable Is He?

Everyone who is born-again has received Christ at New Birth. What we do with Him after that will depend on how valuable He is to us. Treasure can be defined as the object upon which the desire of our heart is set. The maturity of the Seed of Christ that has been planted in us will highly depend upon how much we love the gift of Christ we have been given. An all surpassing and supreme love for Jesus will press us into the image of the Seed rather than stagnation or conformity to the world.

An oyster is a strange creature with a wonderful purpose. It dwells in deep waters where great pressures and dangers are constant. If anyone has ever seen an oyster shell, you would know that it is pretty and shiny and has a beauty about it. But nothing of the exterior shell is the true purpose of the oyster. In itself, the oyster shell is a house for a very specific treasure. If pressures and irritation are processed properly, then a pearl of great value will grow within it. The heart and focus of the oyster is not on itself but the forming pearl inside. All energy, attention, love, and resources are devoted to the pearl growing and coming forth in beauty. The oyster allows itself to go through great bruising, pressure, discomfort and crisis to facilitate that pearl's formation. Irritants, pressures and storms are welcomed because they will help the pearl to form. The existence of the oyster is devoted

The Great Price

A merchant is someone who deals with buying and selling. In a parable in Matthew 13:45-46 there was a certain merchant who found a pearl that was of such great value that he departed and sold everything he owned to buy it. Many of us are seeking for something that we find worthy to give ourselves to, but some having found what they consider treasure will not pay the great price to possess it. New birth does not cost us anything for it is a free gift. For Christ to be formed in us comes at a great price, it costs us everything. And yet, to one who loves Jesus supremely, no cost is too high for nothing compares to bearing the Life of Christ from deep within.

This treasure is not external to us for it is treasure that is within. We carry this treasure with us everywhere we go. But the spirit of the oyster WILL NOT BE SATISFIED until the pearl is formed and given. We can see a precious example of this spirit working in Hannah in first Samuel chapter one. Everyone around her was satisfied with religious Israel. Going to the temple and worshipping at the set times seemed to be enough for the rest of the crowd. But it irritated Hannah, for deep within she longed to bring forth a son. As her irritation grew so did her passion. Her heart pressed and reached out for God to grant her a son. Her husband, the priesthood,... everybody tried to settle her down, but she would not be sated. No price was too high to bring forth a son. She would lose face and look like a fool who was drunk in the temple when in reality she was pouring out her soul before God. She would endure mocking and misunderstanding but she would not conform to a mindset or religious system that said it was okay to not bring forth a son. Being accepted in the temple was not the same as having a son. Even so; being saved is no small consolation for the heart that would lose its own life to bring forth the life of Christ.

Hidden Treasures

The process of forming a pearl begins when a tiny grain of sand gets caught IN it. We could call that a diversion or distraction. Imagine how this would feel, a constant little irritant always rubbing you the wrong way. I am sure we all can relate with this in our own lives. But if our ultimate heart cry is for Christ to be formed in us— then these so called “distractions” can actually accelerate us on our journey. Lack of persecution, pressure and irritation can result in little increase of the treasure, for such pearls are formed with such a price. David said, “I will not offer up to the Lord that which cost me nothing.” If we understand that, then even the worst situation can become like soil for Christ to grow in.

*“That thou may love the Lord thy God, and that thou may cleave to Him; for He is thy life”
(Deuteronomy 30:20a).*

Once again, it was a tiny little grain of sand that got inside the oyster and irritated it! Can we relate!? It was not just the big crisis or impossible situation, but also things that are so small they can seem un-noticeable to the human eye. These problems can feel like the very things that are going to destroy our relationship with the Lord, but they can become the very elements to help Christ grow in us.

When these irritants start bothering the oyster, a process began that eventually would form a pearl. In like manner, our little problems can become helpers in our pursuit of the Pearl Himself! If He is truly the desire of our hearts, then we will pay any price to allow Christ to grow and form. Remember the merchant who sold every thing to buy the precious pearl.

Precious Faith While In The Earth

When Jesus returns, He isn't looking for people who are praying hard, fasting often, and ministering the most. He is looking for a Body that is one with Him and full of His Life. Jesus was the Seed that fell into the ground at Calvary. What should be rising up out of us is the nature and character of Christ, brought forth and sharpened through every day pressures and trials. It is our calling. To Him it speaks of how we really have loved Him. Will He find this faith in the earth and in earthen vessels that bear His life? Will He find such faith in the earth where there is tribulation and persecution? In the earth, will He find those who have a faith that loves His increase more than deliverances from the problems? Again, these are hard sayings, but the pressures that will come to every oyster are hard and will have to be confronted eventually. If we can prepare our hearts now and begin to soften and tenderize to His desire; then we will be ready to stand and abide in the day of temptation. It is not to pass a test that we do this, but for the increase of Christ within and to the glory of God the Father. There are those who have sold all to have Jesus in this way. They, in their hearts, have counted ALL ELSE loss to gain through external tragedy, daily irritations and hard circumstance a formed Christ within. They have joined with God in His eternal purpose and allowed all these things to work together for the good of conforming them to the image of the Son (Rom. 8:29).

May our passion for the Lord show others that the Jesus we are sharing is WORTHY of all our hearts, lives and love. Not just because we preach or talk about it, but because we have loved Him through the hard times and He has come forth as purified gold! We can be vessels of honor by loving the treasure that is in us through life or death, in good times and bad, in sickness or in health. May we LOVE Him with all our hearts, soul and strength until His love fills us and constrains us to pour this treasure out to others. Jesus is TREASURE in His Church who has loved Him and will love Him no matter what, worlds without end!

The Pearl Is For Others!

The pearl is not supposed to make the oyster special. One day the oyster is cracked open and the pearl is given for others. The pearl make others beautiful! It becomes a way we bless others, rather than using it to increase our own stature. As Christ is formed in us we will become as broken bread and poured out wine. Our hard shell will crack and the Treasure that is within will be given for others. The Christ we have will be administered to the Body until together we all come to maturity as one new man (Ephesians 4:13). There is an effectual working in the measure of every part that will help the Body grow unto the edifying of itself in love! (Ephesians 4:16)



Where Are The Oysters In Israel!

Where are the Oysters in Israel? Where are the hearts that sense the possibility of bringing forth Christ as the greatest riches of the universe? Who will cast off the traditions of men and the confines of cultural Christianity to do whatever it takes until Christ be formed in His Church? This heart cry is empowered by extreme love for Jesus. Those who see Him as the end of all searching and the purpose of all things will sell everything to possess Christ as their very Life. They will let go of even the things of God to have the nature of God formed within. Ministry, gifts, and doctrines will never compare to the Person of Christ and His Life filling us. To carry forth His Life in a manner that bears His nature is to hold forth the riches of the Godhead through a Body. In other words, we are the treasure chest that should carry more than a seed or small grain of sand and say that we have really found the answer. People should witness a formed Christ when they meet the Church and discover Life and not doctrinal programs. Programs, worship times, and everything else is not wrong, it just should facilitate the Life of Christ that is filling the Church which is His Body. The more our treasure becomes Christ formed in His Church, the more all these things will fall into their proper order and place. In ALL THINGS may Christ alone have the pre-eminence. The Spirit and the Bride beckon Christ to come forth as our very LIFE! AMEN. ***