

Matthew 13:46

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Analysis

Who, when he had found one pearl of great price (ἐνα πολύτιμον μαργαρίτην, hena polytimon margaritēn—'one very precious pearl'), **went and sold all that he had, and bought it.** This is the second 'hidden treasure' parable (cf. v. 44), but with key differences: the merchant was actively searching (v. 45), whereas the first man stumbled upon treasure. Both, however, joyfully sacrifice everything for surpassing value.

The kingdom's worth demands total commitment—no half-hearted discipleship. Some interpret the merchant as Christ purchasing the church (pearl) at infinite cost (His blood), but context suggests the seeker is the believer recognizing the kingdom's supremacy and surrendering all (Luke 14:33, Philippians 3:7-8). The singularity—**one pearl**—emphasizes the kingdom's uniqueness: nothing rivals Christ's worth.

Historical Context

Pearls were the most valuable gems in the ancient world (beyond gold or silver), sourced from the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, or Indian Ocean through dangerous diving. For Jesus's audience, a 'pearl of great price' represented incomprehensible wealth. Merchant trading in fine pearls would be a wealthy, knowledgeable expert—yet even he sells everything for one supreme find.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What 'all that he had' might Jesus be calling you to 'sell' to fully possess the kingdom?
2. Do you approach Christianity as one option among many, or as the pearl that relativizes all other values?
3. How does this parable challenge consumer Christianity that seeks Jesus's benefits without surrendering all?

Interlinear Text

ὅς	εὗρὼν	ἐνα	πολύτιμον	μαργαρίτην	ἀπελθὼν
Who	when he had found	one	of great price	pearl	went
G3739	G2147	G1520	G4186	G3135	G565

πέπρακεν	πάντα	ὅσα	εἴχεν	καὶ	ήγορασεν	αὐτόν
and sold	all	that	he had	and	bought	it
G4097	G3956	G3745	G2192	G2532	G59	G846

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 3:8 (Parallel theme): Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

Colossians 2:3 (Parallel theme): In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Isaiah 33:6 (Parallel theme): And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure.

Acts 20:24 (Parallel theme): But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Proverbs 2:4 (Parallel theme): If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;

Matthew 13:44 (Parallel theme): Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

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