

him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness.

Your God was willing to give everything, willing to give up everything, willing to suffer everything for you. And here's the crazy part, of course: for something that's not worth very much. Because, think about it, certainly, we have no value of our own. We are not worthy or valuable except in that God loves us. We bring nothing to the table, no value, no merit, no worth. Scripture says the best we can offer God is as filthy rags. Yuck, who wants them?

But God sees us, even in our sin, as treasures – great pearls – worth even the life and suffering and death of His own Son. And there at the cross of Jesus He makes us into treasures that shine with heaven's brightness forever.\

Do you see the problem with the first understanding of the parable? If you think of the parable as teaching us that heaven is the most important thing, the most valuable thing: then you should want to give up everything to get there. We're left trying to buy our way into heaven by being especially good or especially generous, or especially self-sacrificial. But the problem is that, thinking along those lines, that we'd never get the kingdom! Because there is nothing we can do! Nothing we can earn! Nothing we can give up that will buy our way into the kingdom of God! Only Jesus can pay the price.

Even if you did, literally, sell everything you had and donate it to Bethlehem/St. John Lutheran Church... even if you up and moved to Calcutta to serve the poor and comfort the lepers, it still isn't enough. We would still be lost, if we didn't have Jesus.

But Christ has paid the price and bought us back. The beauty of it all is that our value to God depends on HIM, not on us. This is why we can rest assured, knowing the

treasure of God's kingdom is ours forever. Because Jesus put it on HIS tab, and there is no credit limit there. His grace will never be declined. His mercy will never go bankrupt. His love will never be repossessed. His promises are more than FDIC insured; they are eternally trustworthy and true.

What a great treasure we have in these parables of Christ. They illustrate the great value of belonging to his kingdom, and —I believe even more— they show us the great value that God places on us by paying the ultimate price for us at the cross. Look to Him, believe in Him, trust in Him alone, for He has made you His. In the precious, precious, name of Jesus, Amen.

May the peace of God –which surpasses understanding–
guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

[\[Home\]](#)

[\[Return to Sermon Archive\]](#)

[\[Site map\]](#)