

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN A PEARL & THE CHURCH

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Mat. 13:45-46).

The parable of the pearl of great price is listed among our Lord's Kingdom parables (**Mat. 13:1ff**). In this particular parable, the Lord compares His church to a costly pearl. The pearl is used to show the value of the church and to encourage all to place the church first in all choices. Have you ever stopped to consider the similarities between the pearl and the Lord's church?

First, let's consider some facts about pearls. A pearl originates in water. It is formed around an irritant, such as a grain of sand, that has found its way into an oyster or mussel. All other jewels originate in the central fires of the earth. A pearl is a growth jewel. It is perfect in that it does not need ground and polished to have value. It needs nothing added or subtracted, and it has no substitute. In addition, a pearl is a very costly stone; thus, a much desired jewel. Possessing pearls is possessing the best!

Second, let's consider some facts about the church (ekklesia- "called out"). The church originates in the watery grave of baptism for all believer's. Each person becomes a Christian and is thus added to the church by birth in baptism (**cf. John 3:3-5; Acts 2:38, 47; Rom. 6:4**). And like a pearl, growth follows this birth (**cf. 2 Pet. 3:18**). The church, like the pearl, is perfect in that it provides man with forgiveness of sin and hope of eternal life (**cf. Col. 1:13-14; Rev. 22:14**). In addition, the church, like the pearl, is a costly institution. It cost Christ His life and His blood (**Acts 20:28**). It cost God His only Son (**John 3:16-17**). And finally, the church, like the pearl, should be desired above all other institutions (**cf. Mat. 6:33**). The true church is as rare as the true pearl- it's one of a kind (**Eph. 4:4**). Possessing the church is possessing the very best!

There are very few people in the world who would refuse a genuine pearl if it were given to them. Yet, the greatest of all jewels, the Lord's church, is a gift to all who would accept it, but the majority refuse it (**Mat. 7:13-14**).

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