

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Message Four

**The Kingdom and the Church as
the Treasure and the Pearl**

Scripture Reading: Matt. 16:18-19; 18:17-18; 13:44-46; 1 Cor. 3:6; 2 Cor. 3:18;
Rom. 14:17; Eph. 2:19; Exo. 19:5; Psa. 135:4; 1 Cor. 3:12; Matt. 6:10;
Acts 1:3; 20:28; Eph. 5:27; Rev. 21:18-21; 2:7, 17

I. The book of Matthew portrays the Lord Jesus as the wonderful One who has come to sow Himself as the seed of life into us; after the sowing of the seed, there is growth, transformation, and building; the building is the building of the church, which is the kingdom—Matt. 16:18-19:

- A. The parables of the mysteries of the kingdom show us that the Lord Jesus came as a Sower to sow the seed and that eventually He gained a pearl; the pearl comes out of the seed; Christ is the seed, and the church is the pearl—Matt. 13:44-46:
 - 1. First is growth; the seed needs to grow; as we pointed out previously, Paul planted, Apollos watered, and God made to grow—1 Cor. 3:6.
 - 2. The second thing is transformation; the pearl is not an item of God's original creation; it is a transformed piece of sand; in itself the sand is not precious, but it is covered and transformed by the secretion of a precious element.
 - 3. Transformation is not self-correction or a mere outward change; it is a metabolic change, which results from a new element being added into us—2 Cor. 3:18.
- B. With the seed, the wheat, and the meal there is the possibility for the evil one to damage by bringing in something negative and corrupting; but with the pearl and the treasure, Satan can do nothing:
 - 1. Whenever there is transformation in a church, Satan is finished; if the church is transformed, Satan will be jobless—Matt. 16:18.
 - 2. If our growth remains at the stage of the seed, the wheat, or the meal, Satan will have many opportunities to damage and frustrate; we need growth, and even more, we need transformation—cf. Matt. 13.

II. The Lord Jesus is continually seeking two things—the kingdom as the treasure and the church as the pearl—Matt. 13:44-46:

- A. If we would apply the parables of the treasure and the pearl in a practical way, we need to see that during the period of the existence of Christendom, the Lord is working to gain the treasure and the pearl.
- B. In order to understand the treasure and the pearl in 13:44-46, we need to consider the kingdom and the church in 16:18-19; the treasure is the kingdom, and the pearl is the church.
- C. On the cross the Lord Jesus sacrificed everything to buy both the pearl and the field in which the treasure was hidden; this reveals how much He desires the kingdom and the church—Matt. 13:44-46.

III. The treasure hidden in the field signifies the kingdom hidden in the God-created earth—Matt. 13:44:

- A. The treasure signifies the kingdom with the true Israel, God's peculiar treasure—Exo. 19:5; Psa. 135:4.
- B. The treasure hidden in the field must consist of gold or precious stones, the materials for the building of the church and the New Jerusalem—1 Cor. 3:12; Rev. 21:18-20.
- C. Christ went to the cross and sacrificed all that He had to redeem the God-created earth because within the earth there was the kingdom, the treasure—Matt. 13:44:

EUROPEAN YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE—MAŁE CICHE

1. In the Bible the earth signifies the world created by God, and the sea signifies the world corrupted by Satan—Gen. 1:26-28; Isa 57:20:
 - a. God's kingdom cannot be established in the sea, and God's will cannot be done in the Satan-corrupted world.
 - b. God's will must be done on the God-created earth, and God's kingdom must be established on the Christ-redeemed earth—Matt. 6:10.
2. In order to have the kingdom on earth, the Lord had to redeem the earth because it had been polluted by Satan's fall and man's sin.
3. The kingdom is realized in the church life, but its manifestation is related to the redeemed nation of Israel—Rom. 14:17; Acts 1:3, 6; 3:21; Matt. 19:28.

IV. Because the pearl comes out of the sea, which signifies the world corrupted by Satan (Rev. 17:15), it must refer to the church, which is constituted mainly of regenerated believers from the Gentile world and which is of great value—Matt. 13:45-46:

- A. The merchant in verse 45 is Christ, who was seeking the church for His kingdom; after finding it in 16:18 and 18:17, He went to the cross and sold all that He had and bought it for the kingdom—Acts 20:28.
- B. Ephesians 5:27 says that Christ will present to Himself a glorious church without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing; this is the church as the beautiful pearl produced out of the Gentile world.
- C. The parable of the pearl in Matthew 13:45-46 reveals that the Lord's desire is to have this pearl of great value—the church as the consummation of His complete salvation—Rom. 5:10.
- D. The parables in Matthew 13 reveal that the Lord Jesus came as the Sower to sow the seed and that eventually He gained the pearl; the Sower Himself is the seed, and the multiplication of the seed is the multiplication of the Sower; hence, the kingdom is the multiplication of Christ as the seed sown into us.

V. The parables of the treasure and the pearl refer to the overcomers throughout the centuries—Rev. 2:7b, 11b, 17b, 26; 3:5, 12, 21:

- A. In the first four parables the Lord covers Christendom in a general way, and in the next two parables He covers the overcomers in a particular way.
- B. In the eyes of God, the overcomers are more solid, precious, and valuable than the wheat; He likens them to the treasure hidden in the field and to the pearl out of the sea.