

You Are the Pearl of Great Value

by Derek Prince

Man is a unique creation, made in the image and likeness of God, and is a partner with God, with Christ being all and in all.

Duration: 41:58

Scripture: Genesis 2:7, Ephesians 1:6, James 4:5, 1 John 4:16

Topics: "Gospel"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by emphasizing the importance of realizing how valuable we are in the eyes of God. He believes that the greatest problem of humanity is our failure to recognize our worth, which leads us to devalue ourselves. The speaker then shares a parable from Matthew 13:44-46, comparing the kingdom of heaven to a hidden treasure in a field. He suggests that Jesus is the man in the parable who gave up everything to obtain the treasure, which represents the people of God. The sermon concludes with a reminder that God never gives up on us, using the example of a parent's unwavering love for their wayward child.

Transcript

Okay, now we're going to do our proclamation. 1 John chapter 4 verse 16. We have known and believed the love that God has for us.

God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. Be good for you all if you all said that. So we can say it phrase by phrase after us.

We have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. Amen.

Now, my topic this morning is in the form of a question. Do you realize how valuable you are? And I suspect that most of you do not realize how valuable you are. If I were to be asked what is the greatest single problem of humanity, this would be my answer.

We do not realize how valuable we are. And the result is we throw ourselves away cheap. We're like somebody who has been given the most wonderful jewel, incredibly beautiful and valuable.

And he goes and gets swindled, and trades it in for a night with a prostitute, or a beer party, or some prestigious position in politics, or even in the church. He's been swindled, because what he has is worth

far more than all those things put together. And the devil is out to swindle us.

He's out to cheat us of what God has put in us. In order to have some idea of how valuable we really are, we need to look at the description of the creation of man, which begins in Genesis chapter 1 verse 26. Then God said, Let us make man in our image.

Notice it's plural. Let us, that already introduces the plurality of the Godhead in the first chapter of Genesis. Let us make man in our image according to our likeness.

Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God, the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, decided to make man. And it says in our image and in our likeness.

They're not the same. The word image in Hebrew is tselem, which is the word that means a shadow, and it's the word that is used in taking a photograph. It is a visible likeness.

The other word, I'm sorry, a visible image, the other word likeness, refers to something inside. Some people find it perhaps hard to grasp but man is made in the visible image of God. If you find that hard to believe just ask this question.

Would it have been natural or normal for the Son of God to appear on earth in the form of an ox or a beetle? You see there's something about our form which is appropriate for the Son of God. So it's in our image, it's in our likeness. I believe the likeness is internal.

God is a triune being, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Man is a triune being, spirit, soul and body. So we're made in God's image and in God's likeness.

And we're made to have dominion, to rule the earth. And then we go on to describe the actual process by which God made man. But before we do that I think it would be good to turn to the first chapter of John's Gospel for a moment.

We are dealing here with profound truths in the Christian faith. And they're very simple. Simple but profound.

Now if you turn to the first chapter of John's Gospel it says, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. We know through Revelation that is Jesus in His pre-incarnate form.

He was the Word with God. And it goes on to say, All things were made through Him, that's the Word. And without Him nothing was made that was made.

So when we read the description in Genesis of the process by which man was made, we realize it wasn't God the Father, it was God the Son who shaped us, molded us and made us. Now going back to Genesis chapter 2, in this amazing verse we get a complete description of how God actually made man. I was a professional philosopher years ago before I became a Christian.

And I read books in which philosophers wrote one sentence that extended over two pages without a period. And when I came to the Bible I was impressed by its simplicity. No superfluous words, no long complicated phrases.

But simple and yet immensely profound. And I sometimes, sometimes people have come to me in the past and said Brother Prince that was a deep message. And I think Lord what did I do wrong? I have no aim to be deep, I want to be simple.

I've worked at it for 50 years being simple. I haven't achieved it but I'm nearer now than I was. All right we're looking now in Genesis 2 verse 7. The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul.

My translation says being but that obscures the whole truth. He became a living soul. The word soul is very, very important.

The soul is the unique individual that says I will, I won't, I think, I believe, I feel, I wish. And to render it a being absolutely obscures much of the revelation of Scripture. So how did the Lord God make man? He molded him.

That's the Hebrew word that's used for the potter. He molded him out of earth and obviously there must have been water to make clay. And so he had made this perfect statue, if you want to use the word, more perfect than anything that Michelangelo ever produced.

Made in clay, absolutely perfect physically in its outward form but lifeless. And one of the interesting things is that whenever God deals with man he has to stoop. And so there was this body of clay on the ground and the Lord God stooped down, placed his lips against the lips of clay, his nostrils against the nostrils of clay and breathed into him the breath of life.

And man became a living soul. Think of what that breath of life accomplished. It changed a lifeless clay figure into a complete perfect person.

With all the faculties, mental, spiritual, physical. That was achieved by the in-breathed breath of God. That makes divine healing the most logical thing.

In the days when your watches need repair, you don't wear watches that need repair now but there was a time when some of us wore watches like that. When your watch went wrong you didn't take it to the bootmaker. To whom did you take it? The watchmaker.

When your body goes wrong, to whom will you take it? To the body maker. That's the logical thing to do. Now, I have learned a certain measure of Hebrew.

I'm far from being perfect in the language. But what I know, I use. And I want to just say a little bit about this process.

Because me, it is so vivid. And I hope I can make it vivid to you. Hebrew is one of those languages where the words, the sound of the words often indicates or resembles the thing.

For instance, the Hebrew word for thunder is Ram. You can hear the roll of the thunder. The Hebrew word for an earthquake is Rahash.

And you can hear all the buildings sliding down. And the Hebrew word for to breathe here in its particular form is Vayipach. And that, if you know phonetics, it's got a plosive, the P sound.

And then it's got that long guttural outgoing breath, which English-speaking people can't say unless they're Scottish. Scots can say it. Lach, Lomd.

So it's Vayipach. First of all, there's the explosion. And then there's the long drawn-out outgoing breath.

And I want to show you that the Lord put all of himself into that breath. It wasn't a little language sigh. He in-breathed his total self into that body of clay.

And man became a living soul. Now there's another important truth. That's why it's so important that we stick to the word soul.

In 1 Corinthians 15 verse 45 it says the first man Adam was a living soul. The second man was a life-giving spirit. And you have the contrast between spirit and soul.

Which is why I object to the translation which obscures it. So we have spirit and soul. Spirit is life-giving.

Soul is life-receiving. And the word for spirit in Hebrew is Ruach. It's a long drawn-out going breath.

But the word, I know you'll smile at this, but anyhow it's true. The word for soul is Nephesh. Which is a receiving sound.

Have you ever listened to somebody deep asleep? How does he go? Nephesh. Nephesh. You see, the spirit gives out, the soul receives.

And that's how man was made. In the image and likeness of God, with the hands of the Son of God, with the in-breathed breath of the life of God. Psalm 119, the psalmist says, verse 73, to the Lord.

Your hands have made me and fashioned me, but it's molded me. So that speaks about the physical aspect of creation. But in Job 33 and verse 4, Job speaks about the spiritual aspect.

Or not Job, but any who. Job 33, verse 4. The spirit of God has made me and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. So you have there those two processes.

The hand, the molding of the hands, the in-breathed breath of God. The references, if you want them, Psalm 119, verse 73 and Job 33, verse 4. Now man is an absolutely unique creation. Nothing else in the universe has ever been made in any way, like the way that man was made.

See one of the things the devil will do, is try to get you to believe you're not important. Or you're not valuable. That is probably his main tactic.

And he's very, very busy doing it today. And in my observation, at least 50 percent of the people in America today have a problem with rejection. They feel unworthy, they feel unwanted, they feel un, un, they feel not valuable.

They look down upon themselves. The reason is, they have not understood how they were created and what they were created for. In, in my opinion, man is the supreme masterpiece of the Creator.

Unique. No other created thing was made the same way as man was. In nothing else did God put his lips to the lips of his creature and breathed life.

Other things were made by the spoken word of God. But man, that means you and me, is an absolutely unique creation. The masterpiece, I believe, of God's creation.

Now man was made to be a partner with God. If we describe, for instance, God's dealings with Adam in Genesis 2, verses 18 and following. And the Lord God said, it is not good that man should be alone.

I will make him a helper comparable to him. I prefer to say to complement him. As my wife Ruth has pointed out, that's the first time that the Lord said anything was not good.

Up to that point everything had been good. But there was one thing that was not good, was for man to be alone. So ladies, just see how valuable you are.

To me it's a tragedy that women want to be something other than what God made them to be. Because God invested a lot and some of you women have thrown it away. You've been cheated.

You've come to believe you ought to be like men. You never will be. It's impossible.

It's one of the most ridiculous statements that's ever come out of human lips. That the only difference between men and women is that women bear children. It is absurd.

Only very clever people could believe something so stupid. So we're going on now with Genesis 2. The Lord saw that man needed a helper to complement him. And then it describes how he made other things.

Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. Isn't that tremendous? Because you know in Hebrew a name always has significance.

So to name a creature Adam had to see the real nature and function of that creature. Think of when a hippopotamus came the first time. And he said hippopotamus.

No he didn't because it's not that. So we go on. So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air and to every beast of the field.

But for Adam there was not found a helper to complement him. I thank God that he has given me a helper to complement me. I want to say I appreciate my wife.

And husbands I hope you appreciate your wives. It says that the virtuous wife concerning her husband she will do him good and not evil. All the days of her life.

I've had two wives like that in succession not simultaneously. And each of them I could say with absolute confidence would always do me good and not evil. It says the heart of her husband will safely trust in her.

What a precious gift. Thank you Lord. And let me add that the Lord, this is purely individual, never allowed me to choose my own wife.

Each time I was to marry he showed me specifically and supernaturally whom I was to marry. I'm so glad because I don't think I'm a very good judge of character. But the Lord chose for me and He couldn't have chosen better.

All right, now let's go on. We know the story of the fall, I'm not going to go into that. But immediately after the fall it says in Genesis chapter 3, verse 8. They, that's Adam and Eve, heard the sound of the Lord God

walking in the garden in the cool of the day.

And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. So there was the Lord regularly every evening. It says in the cool of the day, in the wind of the day, when the evening breeze sprung up, the Lord was there to fellowship, to come and spend time with them.

What a, can you fathom the depths of that? Almighty God wanted to fellowship with Adam and Eve. I hope you're beginning to see how very important you are. Don't ever belittle yourself again if you're a child of God.

Never speak negatively about yourself, because you're God's handiwork. Now you know the story that man rebelled, turned away from God, went far from Him. But God never gave up on man.

And I want to tell you parents, who have children that are not walking with the Lord, never give up on them. I can say on the basis of our own experience, Ruth had a son who at the age of 15 ran from home, went into drugs, became a street alcoholic for 20 years. He lived like that.

And when Ruth prayed, she would weep. And I say, it's all right. The last chapter hasn't been written.

Three years ago, sovereignly and supernaturally, he came absolutely free from alcohol. When we were at the celebration we had for my, whatever it was, 50th year in Charlotte last week. Somebody said to one of the persons leading the meeting, will anybody here who has one unsaved, or any unsaved children, stand up.

And Ruth and I looked at one another, and for the first time we didn't have to stand up. Now I want to turn to a verse which is translated differently in almost every version of the Bible. It's James chapter 4 verse 5. And I want to say, Bob forgive me for quoting you, but it's so much easier to quote you.

Because I don't take responsibility. Bob used to say, how can I help it if I'm right, you see. Now if I quote him, it doesn't put anything on me.

But I do know what this verse means. And the new American Standard Bible has got it absolutely right. And it says of God, he jealously desires the spirit which he has made to dwell in us.

I don't believe that's the baptism the Holy Spirit has referred to, it's creation. God put a spirit in each of us, from himself. And he jealously desires that spirit.

No matter how far man has gone away, God jealously desires the spirit that's in him. Some people don't like the thought that God is jealous. To me it's an amazing fact of grace that God would be jealous about people like you and me.

But he is. He wants us exclusively. And so out of his jealousy, the Lord took action and he sent Jesus.

And you could write of course volumes about what Jesus came to do. But I just want to read one verse from Luke 19 verse 10. When Jesus came to the house of Zacchaeus.

I love this story. Zacchaeus was not a religious man and he was short of stature and he didn't think he'd get a chance to see Jesus. So he climbed up, you know the story, in the branches of the sycamore tree.

But when Jesus came under that tree, he stopped. And he looked up and he called him by his name. Nobody had to introduce Zacchaeus to Jesus.

And nobody will ever have to introduce you to Jesus, because he already knows all about you. And they all criticized, as people do, because he'd gone to be a guest in the house of a tax collector. The most unpopular kind of Jew was one who collected taxes for the Roman government.

But Jesus said don't criticize. Luke 19 verse 9 and 10. Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is the son of Abraham.

For the son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. So though man was lost, though he'd wandered far away, though he'd forgotten his own origin and his own destiny. God sent Jesus to come and look for him.

To me that's amazing. And then we find in Colossians 3, what God does for us in Christ, when Christ finds us. Colossians 3, 9 through 11.

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of him who created. So the new creation restores the image of God that was marred by sin. And then it says, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

So in this new man there is again the image and likeness of God, in the person and face of Jesus Christ. He restores his image in us through the new creation. And then when we come to that point, racial differences, denominational differences, cultural differences, no longer divide us.

Only though when we can say Christ is all. That's the only place of real unity in the body. It's the only place where all divisions are set aside.

When we can say Christ is all. You know the most important statements in the Bible are made in the shortest words. Earlier on in Colossians Paul says that God had a mystery which was kept secret from ages and from generations, but has now been made manifest to us.

What is the mystery? Christ in you. Three monosyllables. That's the supreme mystery of God.

And here it says Christ is all. So if you put together Christ in you and Christ is all, you've got the totality of redemption. Now I referred sometime while I was here to a, what I would call a visitation that I had from the Lord in Auckland last December.

And how the Lord said will you ask me to give you my heart for America. One other thing happened. I became really, I would say charged with the presence of God.

I had to walk up and down. I couldn't stay still. And as I was doing so, these words came to me.

Christ is all. And I said to myself that's it. Christ is all.

And then I thought about the charismatic movement. And I thought how much we have how to do it books. And I've written some of them myself.

We're so busy with getting this fixing your marriage, bringing up your children, running the church, being an evangelist. That we somehow just let Jesus get left out. We're so adept, so clever.

We've got so many spiritual gifts. We have so many ministries, so many outreaches. All of that is fine.

But it's not the center. The center is Christ is all. And I felt the Lord was indicating to me, I would love to get back to my rightful place.

I've been displaced by so many other things, so much cleverness, so much spirituality. But the truth is Christ is. Would you like to say those three words? Christ is all.

Now that the meaning of those is awesome. Because it means you're saying, when I have Christ, I have all I need. I need nothing more than Christ.

Have you come to that place? The trouble with many of us is we have too much. We're too clever. We're too spiritual.

We need to return to the simplicity of Christ in you. Christ is all. Now let me try and press this home to show you, on the basis of what I've said, how valuable you are.

I want to turn first of all to Ephesians chapter 1 verse 6. Speaking about what God has done through Christ. It says to the praise of the glory of his grace, by which he made us accepted in the beloved. I love that verse.

It's not a totally literal translation. The literal translation says, by which he has bestowed grace on us. But I like accepted, because it's the remedy for rejection.

The opposite of rejection is accepted. I've told this story in many places, but I remember it right now. I was years ago in a place called the camps farthest out.

Some of you know about that in Tennessee, Georgia. And I was on my way to preach, and I was in danger of being late, and I was in a hurry. And there was a lady going the opposite direction, equally in a hurry, and we collided.

And when she pulled herself together, she said, oh Mr. Prince, I was praying that if God wanted me to speak to you, we'd meet. So I said, well we have met. I can give you only two minutes.

Tell me what your problem is. So she began to tell me. After one minute, I stopped her, and I said, I think I understand your problem.

I want you to pray this prayer after me. I didn't know what I was going to pray, and I certainly didn't tell her what I was going to pray. And I led her in a prayer, something like this.

God I want to thank you, that you really love me. I really am your child. You really are my father.

I'm a member of the best family in the universe. God you love me, and I love you. Thank you God.

Thank you, thank you, thank you. And then I said goodbye. About a month later, I got a letter from the lady, and she said that brief prayer has completely changed my life.

And I understood something which has been very real to me ever since. In that prayer, she passed from rejection to acceptance. After all, what can you be better than a member of God's family.

There are so many, many ministers who are striving for success, and they measure their security by their success. If I'm successful, I'm secure. If I'm not successful, I'm insecure.

That is not the basis of our security. The basis of our security is, I'm a child of God. God loves me, I love him.

And that time, that you can always be secure about. See I see so many ministers, insecure, because they're striving for success. Success is not security.

Security is in a relationship with God the Father. God is my father, I am his child. God loves me, I love him.

Then I'm totally secure, no matter what happens. And then in Ephesians 3:10, this is one of those unbelievable verses. Paul says about the Christians, us, in verse 10, to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be known, by that made known by the church, to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

The redeemed body of Jesus Christ is to be an eternal demonstration to the whole universe of the grace of God. I believe God creates everything with a purpose. And in every creation of God, there's a revelation of God.

But the church is a revelation of the grace of God. You know what grace is? It's unearned, unmerited favor. And I believe in the purpose of redemption through Christ, God had one specific thing that he wanted to demonstrate to the universe forever.

You know what that is? Grace. And I'm sure the angels have looked down many times and wonder, well God why do you bother with those troublesome, unresponsive people. You could just let them go and invest in something else.

And God says, no I've chosen the weakest, the most unworthy, the biggest failures, because all through eternity they're going to be the demonstration of my grace to the whole universe. So never think you're unimportant again. God has chosen you to be part of the demonstration of his grace.

I believe grace can only be demonstrated where it isn't deserved. So the angels really can't receive grace, because they don't do anything wrong, except the ones that are fallen. The only people in the world who can demonstrate the grace of God are fallen sinners.

And God chose us for that purpose. To me it is mind-boggling that throughout all eternity, you and I, in our redeemed condition, are to be the demonstration of the grace of God to the universe. If that doesn't make you feel happy, I don't know what could.

If you're still feeling unimportant, begin to think about that. Now I want to close with a little parable, which has become very vivid to me. Now we all know there are different ways of interpreting parables.

So as Bonbantha says, how can I help it if I'm right? Matthew chapter 13, verses 44, 45 and 46. Two very brief parables. Again the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid.

And for joy over it, he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field. Notice he didn't want the field, he wanted the treasure. But to get the treasure, he had to buy the field.

And he sold all that he had, it cost him everything. I believe the man is Jesus. I believe the treasure is the people of God, hidden in the earth of this world.

And in order to get the treasure, Jesus paid the price for the world. And it cost him everything he had. Then we go on to the next beautiful parable.

Again the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it. I want you to notice this was a merchant, he was not a tourist. He knew the exact value of things, he'd dealt with pearls all his life.

And one day he found a pearl so amazingly beautiful and perfect, that he said I've got to have that. I've got to have that, no matter what it costs. So he went and sold all he had.

He sold his car, he sold his house, just to buy that one pearl. And I can picture him breaking the news to his wife, honey I've sold the car. You sold the car? What for? Well I found something so valuable.

Well at least we've got a house to live in. No, I'm sorry to tell you, I sold the house too. Well where are we going to live? Well we'll have to live with your parents for a while.

So she says well what did you get for this? He said I got the most beautiful, precious, glorious pearl I've ever seen in my life. And it was worth, it cost me everything, and I don't regret what I paid for it. Now, what is the pearl? There are many ways of interpreting this, but I want to tell you, you are the pearl.

You alone. If only you would have been saved, out of all the human race, Jesus would have died for you. And I want you to picture yourself in his hand, like the pearl.

He's holding you, and he's looking at you, and he says you're beautiful, you're glorious, you cost me everything I had, but I'm glad I did it. I've never regretted it. Can you see yourself like that pearl? Just begin to think of yourself for a few moments as a pearl in the hand of the Lord, his crucified hand.

And he's telling you, I'm glad I've got you. I looked for you a long while, I searched in many places, and now you're mine. How could you ever feel unworthy or rejected after that? Why don't we just take a little time to thank the Lord.

You see, the purest expression of faith is giving thanks. And as you begin to apprehend what I've been teaching, and start to thank the Lord for it, it'll become real to you. And where is, where are our musicians? I don't know what we're going to play, but let's play something really, let's say soupy, sentimental.

Thank you. Let's just thank each one of us personally. Thank you Lord, thank you Jesus.

Thank you that you loved me so much, that you paid all that you had to buy just me. Thank you Lord, I am the pearl that you died for. If no one else had ever been saved, you'd have died for me.

Let's just thank him. Let's take a little while just to thank him. You owe him half a billion thanks, start paying off.

Thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you. We praise you.

We praise you Lord Jesus. We love you Lord Jesus. We love you because you first loved us, and gave your life for us.

Paid the ultimate price to redeem us. You did it not just for us Lord, you did it for me. You did it for each one individually.

Each of us is a pearl in your hand, that cost you everything you had. Thank you Lord, thank you Lord, thank you Lord, thank you Lord. Do we have a song leader?

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