

Pearls and Pigs

#0410

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—August 4, 1972

This evening, from God's book, I want to study with you about pearls and pigs and something else that we'll mention later. We'll start with the pearls. That's a nicer subject, isn't it? Matthew the 13th chapter:

“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”
Matthew 13:45–46.

It's a wonderful thing to find what you're looking for. Have you found it? If you have really found it, you've found this pearl, friends, because every man in this world is seeking this pearl, whether he knows it or not.

As surely as the lungs hunger for air and nothing else can satisfy them; as surely as the stomach hungers for food and nothing but food can satisfy it; so surely every human being *hunger*s for God. As one of old put it:

Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God,
And our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee.

Christ is the pearl of great price. This isn't just some poetry, something to write a song about. This is *reality*, friends. There's a *hunger* in our hearts. God made us this way because *He* is the One who fills the need. Have you found Him?

In this story Jesus told, the man who was seeking goodly pearls found the *one* pearl of great price, and he did what? He sold *all* he had to buy the pearl. Why do you suppose he sold all the other things? It took *that* to buy the pearl. Can you imagine him looking over his collection and thinking, “Can I part with this? Oh, I hate to part with this pearl, but look, there's that *great* pearl, that pearl of great price, and I want it so much! I think I can part with this.” And so around the circle of the different jewels he had—it took them all.

Why did Jesus, in this story, make it necessary for the man to sell *all* he had to buy that one pearl? Because that's the way it is in what we're studying about. So many people are cheating themselves out of the richest experiences in life because they're going to the bargain basement, and it isn't *there*. It isn't there. What a shame, dear friends, to pay part and get nothing; to give up some things and yet not get what it is that we're really seeking. This is what is happening with multitudes of people.

You know in the church, friends, there are many people who are too good for hell, but they're not good enough for Heaven. They've given up *some* things, the *worst* vices, but ah, they are *strangers* to that inner fellowship with Christ which can come only to those who yield *everything* to the Savior!

You see what this pearl is. It is not in knowing Christ merely intellectually, not merely in knowing *about* Him. It's in knowing *Him*.

Turn to Philippians the third chapter, and you'll see what I mean. Paul had been a strict Pharisee, but when he became acquainted with Christ, oh, something came into his life that satisfied his soul!

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" Philippians 3:7–8.

You see? All the things that Paul had, he gave them all up in order that he might know Christ—the knowledge of Christ. See how it's mentioned again in the 10th verse:

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings..." Philippians 3:10.

"I want to know Christ," Paul says. "And in order to know Him, I've given up *everything*—money, fame, position, recognition—everything. I've lost it all, and it's worth it. What I've found is worth more than the sum total of all I've lost."

Have you found Him, friends? Do you have the pearl? Is Jesus your friend? Are you His friend? *This* is the pearl of great price.

Turn to Revelation, the second chapter. Now, I don't know for sure that this that Jesus is going to give us is an actual pearl. Maybe it is. It calls it here "a white stone." So, for tonight, I'm thinking of it as a pearl.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone..." Revelation 2:17.

By faith, we receive, symbolically, Christ as the great pearl, the pearl of great price here. But when we get to Heaven, dear friends, He's actually going to give us a white stone, perhaps a beautiful pearl—something beautiful, lustrous. But oh, watch! What's that for? What's it about? What does it mean?

"...And in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving He that receiveth it" *Ibid*.

Listen friend, if you've made Jesus first in your life here and have come to know Him as the pearl of great price, He's going to give *you* a special stone of rarest beauty, and in that stone your name written by His own loving hand, and a new name that nobody else will know.

I like to think of it as God's pet name for me—just a little secret between my Lord and me. You know, if you love somebody really well, you probably have a pet name for them, maybe more than one. Jesus has a special name for me. He's going to write it in that white stone and give it to me.

Oh friends, this fellowship with Jesus, this friendship with our Lord, what a pearl of great price it is! What a shame to miss that beautiful experience just through hanging on to the things of this world. What do you say?

Now turn to Matthew the seventh chapter, verse 6. This is a part of Jesus' wonderful Sermon on the Mount. Notice how He links together the first part of our study tonight with the second part:

“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you” Matthew 7:6.

Pigs just don't have what it takes to appreciate pearls. A pig would rather have a bucket of swill than all the pearls in Tiffany. Do you know why? He can eat it. He can eat the garbage. He likes it. He cannot appreciate pearls.

I wonder if any of us are sometimes tempted to measure pleasures by how they tickle the nerve endings. I wonder if any of us are close enough to the pig that we find the greatest pleasures in life in just wallowing in the sensual, the earthly.

Peter gives us a picture of it over in 2 Peter 2:22. That ought to be an easy verse to remember: second epistle of Peter, what chapter? The second chapter. What verse? 22—2, 2, 2, 2—2 Peter 2:22. Peter is talking about some people here:

“But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire” 2 Peter 2:22.

Here's the pig again. Where is she headed? The mud. Why? She likes it. She didn't appreciate the bath at all. The only person that was interested in the bath was the one that washed her. *She* wasn't.

You know, when I read this text tonight, I think of an experience my wife had a number of years ago. She was visiting one of our schools, and the lady she was visiting had to go to town on an errand. My wife went along. Among other places, she went to

the express office to get a package. While she was there, she noticed an outgoing package. I guess it was outgoing; maybe it was incoming. At any rate, it was a crate, and in it was a little pig. It must have been a special pig, probably a pedigreed pig, you understand. And it had been washed and cleaned up and powdered if you please. [Chuckles from the audience]

Do you know what that pig did when it got where it was going, and they let it out of the crate? *You* know, don't you? It headed for the nearest hog wallow. And if it could talk, it would have grunted something like this, "Those people have ideas of how to fix me up, but I know what I want. I want the mud. I want the filth. I want the garbage. I want to *wallow* in the mire."

I want to tell you something, dear friends. It takes more than social service and welfare agencies to lift the true standard of living among the people. It takes more than money, more than education, more than environment. The sow that is washed goes back to the mire when it gets its chance, and God is not going to make things the way they ought to be in Heaven by seeing to it that people can't find what they're looking for.

What is it that you enjoy most in this life? Will it be in Heaven? If not, how will you stand it? I am told by those who gather statistics that the average American spends six hours a day looking at TV. Will your favorite program be on the screen in Heaven? If it isn't, how will you survive? There are some people who can't stop for an evangelistic service because they must see their favorite program. There's many a family who can't stop for family worship because the time that used to be devoted to family worship, now people are sitting there with their eyes glued on that screen.

"Ah," someone says, "I can't stand that!"

No, that may not be the particular thing that you desire. What is it that fills your heart and thrills your soul? Will that thing which is your real pleasure be in *Heaven*? Oh, if not, dear friends, why not take advantage of the wonderful privilege that's offered—to be changed?

Ah, can a pig be changed? Well, it could if God saw fit to work the miracle. Thank God, friends, that *kind* of miracle is offered in the gospel. 2 Corinthians 5:17, let's turn and read it:

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a *new* creature..."

He's not a pig anymore, thank God!

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Oh, I thank God for the miracle of the Gospel! The man who used to go and get drunk is sober now, and he gets more joy in the food and drink that keep him sober than

he used to get out of all that dissipation. He's a new creature. The man or woman who used to have a cigarette every few minutes—two, three, four, five packs a day—now, no more. What's happened? God has worked a change in their lives.

May I ask a question, friends? How many of you can say, honestly, that there's something—you don't have to tell us what it is—that used to be your pleasure which is now clear out of your life, and you're thankful to God for it? May I see your hands? Why, yes, nearly every hand in this audience.

Let me ask you something: if God can do that with *one* thing, do you think He can do it with some *more* things? Do you? Why not let Him finish what He started? Why not say to Him, "Lord, if you've taken this out of my life and this and this, thank God! I want you to finish it"?

Turn to Philippians, just over to your right a few pages, Philippians 1:6. What's the second word of this wonderful verse? "Confident." What does that mean? "Sure," "certain," "no question about it":

"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun
a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus
Christ" Philippians 1:6.

Oh, thank God, friends! He wants to change everything in our lives.

Do you know that's why God has given us the Sabbath—the holy Sabbath, the seventh-day Sabbath, the Bible Sabbath, from Friday sunset to sunset Saturday, the seventh-day according to the Word of God—do you know that the reason God has given us that Sabbath is that it is the *sign* of His creative power, the *sign* of His ability to start something and *finish* it?

Do you know that this is why the popular churches have had no barrier against this pagan doctrine of evolution? Having lost the Sabbath, lost the memorial of God's creative power, they have been prepared to accept this false scientific reasoning that God (if there *is* a God, and if He has anything to do with things) has been making this world through millions and millions of years, and isn't through yet.

Thank God friends, the Bible Sabbath is God's sign of a finished work! It's God's memorial of creative power. Let's repeat the Fourth Commandment together:

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the

seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day,
and hallowed it" Exodus 20:8–11.

When did He begin? He began Sunday morning. When did He get through? He got through, my dear friends, in six days. That's what the law of God says. And then He did what? He rested. What day? The *seventh* day. Why friend, do you see how simple it is to believe that we're worshiping on God's holy Sabbath, a God who can begin something and finish it? Doesn't that give you a lot of courage for what God will do in your *life*? That's what we need: creative power, lifting power.

This is the power that Jesus manifested when He was here in the flesh. When the leper came to Him and begged for cleansing, Christ worked a miracle. He put forth His hand and touched him, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed. What was that? A miracle—the miracle of *creation*.

When Jesus stood at the tomb of Lazarus and called to that corpse that had been dead for four days and said, "Lazarus, come forth," the dead man *arose*. What was that? A miracle of creation. Why, my friends, it was just as great a miracle to bring Lazarus out of the tomb as it was to make Adam out of the clay in the first place, wasn't it? Yes, yes. In each case, we have the Creator present.

I tell you, my friend, whatever your problem, however "piggish" some habit is in your life, however much like the wallowing hog, something in your program is, Jesus can change you and make you like Himself.

"Being confident of this very thing..." Philippians 1:6.

Let Him do it. What do you say?

Luke the 15th chapter, beginning with the 11th verse and on to the end of the chapter—a wonderful story (someone has called it the greatest short story every written), the parable of the prodigal son. You remember the experience. Here's a man with two sons. The younger one says, "Father, I'm tired of sticking around here—nothing going on. Instead of waiting for you to die, Father, couldn't you give me what's going to come to me when you die? Couldn't you let me have it now?"

Imagine the nerve of that thing. "Can't wait till Dad dies. I want it *right now*." He belonged to the "Now" generation, didn't he? And, strange to say, the father gave it to him! It's wonderful what God will do in letting people have what they want and what they *think* they want.

And so he got his portion of the inheritance, and off he went *away* from the father, *away* from all restrictions, *away* from everybody that knew him, on, on, on to the far country, spending as he went. And there, he "lived it up" for who knows how long.

But, finally, as those things always happen, his money ran out. And interestingly enough, his *friends* ran out about the same time. And at the same time, as luck would have it, so perhaps he thought, a great famine arose. In this famine, without money, without friends, he began to be in want. And so finally, looking for work, he found a farmer out in the country.

And I can imagine him saying to that man, “You know, I grew up on a farm. I haven’t done much of it for a long time, but I’m hungry.”

The man said, “All right. I can give you a job.”

What was his job? To feed the swine—these wallowing pigs that we’ve been talking about. Think of it, friends! He had been an honored son in his father’s house, an heir of riches. But he’d taken those riches and gone out and spent them. And finally, he’s down with the pigs. And will you notice what it says here:

“And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him” Luke 15:16.

Ah, what a picture of heart hunger! He was *literally* hungry; his bones were sticking out. And he got so hungry that, there with the swine, he was about ready to eat what the pigs were eating. There he was.

Sometimes dear friends, it *takes* that for a man to know the difference between pearls and pigs. Sometimes it takes that to wake up to the riches that were. He had no thought of ever being an heir again. He’d lost that. He’d gotten his and *spent* it. But something began to form in his mind. He began to see daylight. His foggy mind was clearing up. Hunger helps with that sometimes.

He said, “Look here! I’m down here with the pigs. And even the servants on my father’s farm have plenty to eat, and I’m perishing with hunger. I’m going to do something. Instead of working for this man that has me feeding pigs, I’m going home. There are no pigs there. And maybe dad will give me a job, a decent job, where I can eat with the servants. They’re well-fed.”

So he starts home. Thank God, friends, he starts home. He had no idea of the reception he was going to get. I suppose he wondered about it many a time. I don’t know how long it took him, but I’ll tell you one thing, friends, of this I’m sure: he wished he hadn’t gone so far on his trip out. And this is what the sinner wishes many times on his way back to God.

But thank God, he didn’t let that stop him. There may have been blisters on his feet. Finally, they may have been bleeding, but he plods on—back of him the pigpen, ahead of him home. And as he comes over the hill and sees that home in the distance, somebody starts running up the road. Who is it? His father. The Bible says his father

“saw him a great way off.” Do you know why? He was looking for him. Otherwise, he never would have noticed him.

My dear friend, God is looking for *you*. If you’ve been out with the pigs, He’s looking for you. If you’ve let anything in this world lure you away from home, He’s looking for you. He’s lonesome for you.

Oh, what a wonderful moment when the father and the son meet and the arms of the father are thrown around that boy! The son’s head is on his father’s breast, and he sobs out his repentance. “Oh father,” he says, “I’ve sinned against Heaven and in your sight, and I’m no more worthy to be called your son.”

The father didn’t wait to hear him through. He never had a *chance* to ask for this job that he’d planned to apply for. He was received home as a *son*—a lost son now found, a wandering child now returned. You know the rest of the story—the wonderful feast, the lights, the music, the joy. Ah friends, he’d come from pigs back to pearls! And *this* time, he knew when he was well off. He hadn’t known the first time.

Oh, that God may help every one of us tonight to enter into that fellowship with the Father which is worth more than a good meal in the Father’s house.

I want Borton to sing for us the “Prodigal’s Return.” And, friend, as we sit and listen to this sweet message, let every one of us identify with this song because (listen!) if we’ve already come to God, we want to press closer to Him, don’t we? And if we’ve never come, let’s do it tonight.

Out in the wilderness, dark and drear,
Sadly I wandered for many a year,
Driven by hunger and filled with fear;
I will arise and go.

Backward with sorrow my steps to trace,
Seeking my heavenly Father’s face,
Willing to take but a servants place;
I will arise and go.

Back to my Father and home,
Back to my Father and home,
I will arise and go
Back to my Father and home.

Why should I perish in dark despair
Here where there is no one to help or care
When there is shelter and food to spare?
I will arise and go.

Deeply repenting the wrongs I've done,
Worthy no more to be called a son,
Hoping my Father his child may own;
I will arise and go.

Back to my Father and home,
Back to my Father and home,
I will arise and go
Back to my Father and home.

Oh, that I never had gone astray.
Life was all radiant with hope one day.
Now all it's treasures I've thrown away,
Yet, I'll arise and go.

Something is saying, "God loves you still,
Though you have treated with Him so ill."
I must not linger for night grows chill,
I will arise and go.

Back to my Father and home,
Back to my Father and home,
I will arise and go
Back to my Father and home.
~Thomas O. Chisholm, "The Prodigal Son"

Wouldn't you like to sing that chorus with her? Let's sing that chorus again:

Back to my Father and home,
Back to my Father and home,
I will arise and go
Back to my Father and home.

How many of us would like to send God that word tonight, may I see your hands?
Is that it? All right, friends. Wouldn't you like to sing it again? Once more:

Back to my Father and home,
Back to my Father and home,
I will arise and go
Back to my Father and home.

Oh friends, remember: no matter how glad the son is to get home, the father is "gladder" to have him back. It's impossible for you *ever* to understand *all* that God feels in getting you close to Him. You can know it more and more and more, but it's bigger than that, bigger than that.

No captain who has ever sailed his ship over the seven seas has ever seen one-thousandth part of the ocean, has he? And you and I have never, never yet seen all there is to God's love. But to know *something* of it, to know that this is what we want, *this* is indeed the pearl of great price.

And remember, friends, don't forget that opening text. The man that got the pearl, what did he do with everything else? *Sold it*; turned it into money to buy that pearl.

You can't buy salvation with money, but I tell you, friends, it will cost you everything you have. It's worth it! It's worth it! We can never know that true, clear, joyous, eternal fellowship with the Father and the Son as long as we're hanging on to some pig, or as long as we want to wallow in the mire once in a while. You know, some people think that if they've been good all week, they ought to have a good time Saturday night; if they've done right all week, have a good time Saturday night. And you know what a pig's idea of a good time is...

Let me tell you something, friends. I read:

"...In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" Psalm 16:11.

Oh, to be a son in the Father's house! Oh, to know the joy of fellowship with Him every day! I thank God for this. But remember, it takes *all*. It took that to buy the pearl. It takes that to open the heart to Jesus.

Will you turn to hymn 573?

All to Jesus I surrender,
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.

[Doctor, would you come and lead us in this closing song, please?]

Listen, friends: as we have this closing song, I want to give an invitation. If there is somebody here that has never made a full surrender to Jesus, but you're making it tonight, come and kneel down here. Tell the Lord you're giving Him everything.

If there's somebody that has once known Him, but you've lost the way, come back tonight. Come and kneel down.

And besides that, I have another call. If there's somebody here tonight, that as the Holy Spirit convicts you, you realize that there's *some* definite thing you need to give up to God that He's put His finger on tonight, whatever it is, come and kneel down. Talk to God about it.

There may be somebody that's convicted about some habit in your life that's too much like a pig to take to Heaven. Why not ask Jesus to take it out of your life tonight? What do you say, friends? There may be somebody that's struggling with some problem of appetite or passion. You want help from Jesus for victory, full and complete; come up here and kneel down and seek God. Jesus says:

“And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search
for Me with all your heart” Jeremiah 29:13.

There may be somebody in our audience tonight that has been living a Christian life, living up to the best light you have, but tonight you know and understand that the seventh-day, Saturday, is the true Bible Sabbath, and tonight God convicts you that this is the night to seek Jesus for power to keep the holy Sabbath day. *You* come up and kneel down.

Whatever it is that God is dealing with you about, whatever thing it is in your life that you know needs changing and changing *now*, come friends. Let's leave all that would hinder and seek for the pearl of great price, for Jesus' sake. Come as we sing number 573.

Will the audience stand?

All to Jesus I surrender,
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live;

I surrender all,
I surrender all,
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.

All to Jesus I surrender;
Humbly at His feet I bow,
Worldly pleasures all forsaken;
Take me, Jesus, take me now;

I surrender all,
I surrender all,
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.

All to Jesus I surrender;
Make me, Savior, wholly Thine;
Let me feel the Holy Spirit,
Truly know that Thou art mine;

I surrender all,
I surrender all,
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.

All to Jesus I surrender;
Now I feel the sacred flame.
O the joy of full salvation!
Glory, glory to His name!

I surrender all,
I surrender all,
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.
— Judson W. Van De Venter “I Surrender All”
Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal #309

Thank God. The Father’s arms, how they love to clasp each one.

I only got partway through my sermon tonight. I’ll give you the rest next Friday night, God willing. I have some other very interesting things to share with you.

And now, dear Lord, we do thank Thee for meeting with us and opening the Word of God to us. And we thank Thee for the response in these dear hearts. We’re tired of all that would keep us from Thee. We’re not looking for bargain-basement things. We want to sell everything and have the pearl: fellowship with Thee, full fellowship with Jesus Christ.

Now, as we go into this after-meeting, meet with us and give every heart a rich experience. Dismiss this congregation with Thy presence. May any who should tarry feel and know Thy call. And as we all go out from this chapel, may it be to spread the good news that Christ is a wonderful Savior, that there is *nothing* that can keep us from a deep experience with Him. We ask it in His dear name, amen.

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