

## HOLINESS IN THE PARABLES

J. D. Drysdale

These two parables constitute together but one text and teach the same general lesson, namely, the incomparable worth of the kingdom of God. It seems to us also the parables teach two great doctrines, namely: justification, and entire sanctification. The one, the entering into the kingdom, and the other, the entering into it in all its fullness, and the enjoyment thereof. The truth that the kingdom of heaven is the summum bonum to which everything else must be subordinated, and if necessary sacrificed, occupied the foremost place in the teaching of Jesus Christ. He taught that truth on many occasions, to many persons, to individual followers, to the collective body of disciples, to the multitude at large, and often in most startling terms.

"Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:60). "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven and come and follow me" (Matt. 19:21). "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). "If any may come to me, and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26).

What are these, and many other kindred sayings, but an emphatic proclamation of the truth taught in our parables that the Kingdom of Heaven is entitled to the first place in our regard, as at once man's chief good and chief end?

The natural heart of man is far more concerned about the seen and temporal than it is about the unseen and eternal. The natural heart sees no beauty in Him that it should desire Him. There must first of all be a revelation of the exceeding sinfulness of sin before their will be a seeking for the Saviour from all sin. There must come to the human heart a revelation of the need of, and the exceeding beauty of the Saviour before there will be an utter abandoning of everything and everybody that He may have the pre-eminence.

The gospel is a treasure indeed—better than gold and silver, more precious than rubies, worth more than all the world. A man may have all that the world can give, yet without the gospel he is poor; and he is rich who has the gospel, though he may be in want of almost all besides.

But the gospel has not always been made known; even now it is unknown to a great part of mankind; and where it is known, numbers know it only with the understanding, not with the heart. In all these cases it is like "treasure hid in a field." The heathen are altogether ignorant of it; from them this treasure is quite hidden. The nominal Christian knows of its existence, but knows not its preciousness; and it is no treasure to one who feels no need of it, and sees no value in it.

The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in the field—to hidden treasure. We are not to imagine that the treasure here mentioned, and to which gospel salvation is likened, means a pot or chest of money hidden in the field, but rather a gold or silver mine, which he who found could not get at, or work, without turning up the field, and for this purpose he bought it. There is no sense in the purchase of a field for a pot of money, which he might have carried away very readily by overreaching the owner by an unjust purchase.

Our Lord's meaning seems to be this:

The kingdom of heaven—the salvation provided by the Gospel—is like a treasure—something of inestimable value—hidden in a field; it is a rich mine, the veins of which run in all directions in the sacred scriptures; therefore, the field must be dug up, the records of salvation diligently and carefully turned over and searched. Which, when a man hath found—when a sinner is convinced that the promise of life eternal is for him, he kept secret—pondered the matter deeply in his heart; he examines the preciousness of the treasure, and counts the cost of purchase; for joy thereof—finding that this salvation is just what his needy soul requires, and that which will make him presently and eternally happy, went and sold all that he had—renounces his sins, abandons his evil companions, and relinquishes all hope of salvation through his own righteousness; and purchased that field—i. e., by the blood of the covenant he buys gold tried in the fire, white raiment, and the like; in a word pardon and purity which he receives from God for the sake of Jesus.

We should consider the salvation of God as our treasure and: (1) Value it above all the riches of the world. (2) Search for it in the scriptures till we fully understand its worth and excellence. (3) Deeply ponder it in the secret of our souls. (4) Part with all we have in order to get it. (5) Place our whole joy and felicity in it. (6) Be always convinced that it must be bought, and that no price is accepted for it but the blood of the covenant, and the sufferings and death of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the true Treasure; in Him there is an abundance of all that which is rich and useful and will be a portion for us; all fullness (Col. 1:19, John 1:16); treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:4), of righteousness, grace, and peace; these are laid up for us in Christ; and if we have an interest in Him, it is all our own.

In Isaiah 35:8, we read, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the way-faring men, though fools shall not err therein."

The highway is the way of salvation, and the way within the way is the way of holiness. Before we can tread the way of holiness we must know the way of salvation. We must know what it means to be saved by faith in Jesus before we can see the way of holiness—holiness by faith in Jesus, not by effort of our own. This way of holiness is a clean way, an exclusive way, a simple way, and a safe way. On it we have the best of company and plenty of music (see Isa. 35:10). This double truth runs right through the Bible, but alas! So few seem to see it, much less enter into it. We must be justified freely by His grace before we can be sanctified wholly by His Spirit.

To come back to our parables, it would seem that the discovery of the treasure in the field is a picture of the way of salvation by faith in Jesus, and that the merchantman seeking godly pearls is a picture of a believer seeking and entering into the way of holiness.

Notice he is called a merchantman; is this not a very apt description of a true Christian seeking the very best to be found in Christ?

When we are truly born of the Spirit we have life and arising out of this we begin to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and the promise is that we shall be filled. No corpse

hungers and thirsts! It is only the living who hunger and thirst. When we receive the new birth we receive life, but when we receive the blessing of holiness we receive life more abundant.

We see, then that the man in the parable is a merchant, i. e., a Christian. By some means he ascertains that there is on hand a pearl of great price, i. e., of infinite value—its beauty and brilliancy eclipsing all others. Now he goes and sells out all he has; and we must remember that now he has an infinitely better stock in trade than he had before he bought the field, and found in it the first blessing. The language of this man's heart is:

"Here I give my all to Thee—  
Friends, and time and earthly store;  
Soul and body Thine to be;  
Wholly Thine for evermore."

And the final outcome is that he receives the pearl of great price, entire sanctification. The language of this man's heart while he continues to abide in Christ is:

"I've found the 'Pearl of greatest price,'  
My heart doth sing for joy;  
And sing I must, for Christ I have—  
Oh, what a Christ have I!  
My Christ, He is 'the Lord of Lords,'  
The Sovereign 'King of Kings,'  
The risen 'Son of Righteousness,  
With healing in His wings.'  
My Christ, He is 'the Tree of Life,'  
That in God's Eden grows,  
The living 'clear as crystal' stream  
Where life forever flows.  
Christ is my Meat, Christ is my Drink,  
My Medicine, and my Health;  
My Portion, mine Inheritance,  
Yea, all my Boundless Wealth."

## WEDDINGS

Brown-Brown

At the Reformed Baptist parsonage in Seal Cove, N. B., on April 19th, Edith May, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Brown, of Seal Cove, was united in marriage to Herman Brown, of North Head. Rev. G. R. Symonds officiated.

## OBITUARY

**Mr. William Anderson**, aged 64 years, passed away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Bernard Tatton, on the 10th of April, after an illness of eight years. Mr. Anderson came to this country from Norway, when a small boy, and spent the remaining part of his life on Wood Island and Grand Manan. He was a fine, upright man and died trusting in the Christ he learned to love earlier in life.

He is survived by his widow, two sons, Lic. Herman Anderson and Rev. Fred Anderson; and two daughters, Mrs. Grover Cronk, of Seal Cove, and Mrs. Bernard Tatton, of North Head.

The funeral service was held in the Reformed Baptist Church, and was conducted by Rev. J. A. Owens, assisted by Rev. G. R. Symonds. The North Head Choir sang two selections. Interment was made in North Head Cemetery. The floral tributes were many and beautiful. To the bereaved ones we extend our sympathy.