

The story of the pearl of great price

What do you love more than anything else in the world? What is your most valuable thing?

Jesus told another very short story, this time comparing the kingdom of heaven to a pearl of great price!



Watch together:

Mary tells the story on this video <https://youtu.be/3mG9lhPcf1Q> and you can read it in Matthew 13:45-46 or in a Bible story book - Stories Jesus Told 'The Precious Pearl' is a lovely version for younger children.

Chat together:

I wonder what you found most surprising about this story?

I wonder what Jesus was trying to tell people with this story?

What do you think God is saying to you in this story?

Is anything really more important than God?

The precious pearl is like the Kingdom of God. The pearl merchant gave up everything he had to own the precious pearl. Jesus was saying that the most important thing in the world was knowing God and being part of his family. Jesus is like the pearl and being his friend is more important than anything else. Put simply, Jesus wants us to love him more than anything else!

Make together:

What could you make to remind you about this story and what God is saying to you?

You could make some jewellery - maybe you have some beads which you can thread together to make a beautiful bracelet or necklace. If you don't have any beads maybe you could make a necklace out of pasta tubes, threading them on a piece of wool or string. You could try colouring the pasta with felt pens first.



Oyster shell with pearl - you will need a paper plate or some card, felt pens or crayons, glue stick, something white and round for the pearl, some tissue paper for the oyster.

Use the picture here as an idea of how to cut the plate or card into an 'oyster shell' shape. Maybe fold them in half first so the top and bottom match? Stick some tissue on one side for the oyster and decorate the other side with felt pens or crayons. Write the verses from Matthew 13:45-46 on a piece of paper and stick inside the lid or you may prefer to write this verse:



"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:21

Find your 'pearl' and stick it onto the oyster. Fold the lid over the pearl. You might like to decorate the outside too.

Pray together:

You might like to find a cross if you have one or draw a cross on a sheet of paper. You will also need small pieces of paper and pencils. Stand the cross up somewhere and sit around it.

Sit quietly for a moment and think about how Jesus wants to be our friend he died in our place so that we could be part of his family, and so that we could know God. Thank God for his great love for each one of us.

If you would like to, you can write or draw a message to Jesus either thanking him, or saying what he is worth more than - for instance, "You are worth more than my DVD player". Stick these notes on the cross, folded if you want. Don't worry about spelling because God can read it anyway! If you have little ones they might like to find something that they can lay by the cross instead of writing or drawing.

Say a prayer together; you can use this one or make up your own!

"Thank you Jesus that you are the most precious thing in our lives. Thank you for helping us to make good choices. Please help us to remember always that you love us and help us to share your love and what we have with others. Amen"

Other activities to try:

Pearls - I wonder if you know where pearls come from? Maybe you have some pearls which you could look at.

Pearls usually come from oysters, creatures living in shells under the water. The shells they live in are hinged together. Try cupping your hands together and open them as an oyster would when they want to let water and food in.

Sometimes, a piece of sand or a tiny microorganism gets in which irritates the oyster, so the oyster does something pretty amazing. It creates a coating that covers the thing that causes the irritation. Over time, the coating becomes thicker until years later, it looks beautiful - it has created a pearl.

This video from National Geographic explains how this happens:

<https://youtu.be/m07OvPEoR6g>

Treasure - Play a game and take it in turns describing a treasure, the rest of the family can try to guess what it is.

Describe the treasures in words, e.g. "This treasure has four wheels. It is painted green and I use it to move very fast along roads..." (Car) or this treasure is brown and soft, you can break it. If you hold it in your mouth it melts into a thick liquid; you can put it on top of cakes as well as eat it - but take the wrapper off first! (Chocolate)

Which things do you think are more important than God and which things are less important than God. Is anything really more important than God?

Oyster shell/pearl biscuits - if you have what you need you could make one of these! I think they use fondant icing for the pearl.



The pearl of great price (Matthew 13:45-46)



Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls.

When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

