

Southern Adventist University
Knowledge Exchange

The Main Thing Devotional

Office of Ministry and Missions

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You're Worth It!

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“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.” Matthew 13:45–46

To Jesus, you are worth it! During a trip to Alaska this summer, I came across the inspiring story of a sled dog named Granite. Susan Butcher, his owner, trained him for three Iditarod Trail Sled Dog races that stretch over 1,000 miles. However, things could have easily gone in a different direction for her sled dog. When Granite was born, he was one of five puppies. All his siblings looked healthy except him. His fur was dull, he had knock-knees, and he would let his siblings push him away from his mother. People advised Susan to give Granite away as a pet because he was not worth the time and effort it would take to train him. Despite the cynical consensus of her friends, Susan saw Granite's potential, not his limitations. Susan trained Granite to be a sled dog, and in 1988, Granite became the only lead dog to win the Iditarod three times in a row. Unlike her counselors, Susan did not see Granite as he was; she saw him as he could be. For Susan, Granite was worth it!

When I first heard the story of Granite and Susan, I could not help but consider how Jesus sees us. When others, and even ourselves, see our limitations, God sees our value based on what we could be through His grace.

In Matthew 13, Jesus tells a parable to illustrate what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. He describes a merchant who travels the world searching for a beautiful pearl. One day, the merchant finds a pearl that far exceeds his expectations. Being an expert in fine pearls, he understands that all he owns is not as valuable as this one pearl, so with great joy and anticipation, the merchant sells everything he owns to buy a one-of-a-kind pearl.

So, what is the meaning of the parable? It is unmistakable that we are the merchant, and Jesus is the pearl. When we commit all to Jesus, He gives us back so much more because Jesus is more valuable than anything we can possess. However, the parable has a dual meaning. If we only saw the pearl representing Jesus, we would only see one side of the coin. However, the parable also highlights that we are the pearl Jesus gave everything for because He sees tremendous value in us. In Malachi 3:17, God calls us His Jewels, "They shall be Mine," says the Lord of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him."

For many of us, it is hard to believe that Jesus would give up everything for a sinful and broken world. The world bases the value of others in superficial ways, such as what car they drive, their GPA score, the size of their home, or how many social media followers they have. However, this Kingdom of Heaven values our worth differently. Our true value is based exclusively on the Cross of Jesus Christ, and through the lens of the Cross we can see our actual worth. Ellen White writes, "The parable of the merchantman seeking goodly pearls has a double significance: it applies not only to men as seeking the kingdom of heaven, but to Christ as seeking His lost inheritance...God looked upon humanity, not as vile and worthless; He looked upon it in Christ, saw it as it might become through redeeming love." [\[1\]](#)

If you ever doubt your worth, Jesus seeks to remind you today that His death on the Cross reveals how valuable you are. To Jesus, you are worth it!

REFLECTION

1. How does Granite's story inspire you to see the potential in others and yourself?
2. In what ways can we apply the parable of the merchant and the pearl to our lives?
3. How does the Kingdom of Heaven's view of worth differ from the world?

4. What is one practical way we can value ourselves and others through the lens of the Cross?

PRAYER REQUESTS AND RESOURCES

- Join us tonight in Illes Gym for Vespers with our guest speaker, Pastor Douglas Na'a. Doors open at 7:15 p.m.
- Find a meaningful sense of belonging by joining a student or faculty/staff LifeGroup today: [click here](#).
- Follow @ministryandmissions on Instagram for updates on events and programs, and it is also a place where you will find encouraging messages. Also, [check out our website](#) for many new resources.
- Talk with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#) or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.