

Behold the Servant of the Lord

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By Lenny Cacchio

LEE'S SUMMIT, Mo.—Jesus once told a parable about a pearl of great price. It was a parable of a few words but packed with a mighty lesson: "The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it" (Matthew 13:45-46, ESV).

If you found such a pearl, would you not sacrifice everything to attain that prize?

It would take some faith to do it, but, if you keep the end in mind, you would certainly be foolish not to go after it.

But what if you didn't know what the end was?

What if all you had was a promise that everything would work out in the end? You are not told how it would work out, but only that it would.

Take up a cross

At another time, Jesus said: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it" (Luke 9:23-24).

In that case, would you be able to take up your cross daily and follow? Would you be willing to lose your life in order to save it?

Such a step of trusting faith has been required of God's people throughout the ages, from Noah to Moses to David to the prophets and straight through to the apostles and those of us who have followed them.

Mary's dilemma

It was also required of Jesus' mother, Mary.

Imagine a young Jewish girl about to be married and embark on her future with her new husband and one day a family, all of which was put at risk by an out-of-the-ordinary visit from a messenger of God.

Imagine the thoughts Mary must have had when told of what was to happen, that she would be with child, and the child would not be Joseph's. She knew she would be subject to ridicule and ostracized by her small-town neighbors.

Rumors would fly, and snide remarks would follow her and her son for the rest of their lives.

She could expect that Joseph would abandon her, and likely no good man would want her. She would have nothing to look forward to except single motherhood and all the poverty and misery that would come with it.

She could not have known at the time of Gabriel's appearing that Joseph would also receive word directly from God and that he would still marry her and accept the child as his own.

Faithful reaction

Yet, in spite of the uncertainty, in spite of the upheaval all these events would cause, Mary says, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38).

How many of us would be willing to forgo our hopes and dreams for the pearl of great price, for the call of God in our lives?

I don't know what God's call is for you, but, whatever it is, you are bought with a price. You are a pearl of great price. Jesus sacrificed all for you, and He calls us to do the same for Him.