

PLENTY AND WANT
God's Generous and Plentiful Salvation
Is Freely Offerd to All

Intent of the Parable.

- ✓ *Salvation is a free gift of God's loving concern*
- ✓ *It is God who initiates our Salvation. He, in his Son Jesus, freely came to our poor and sinful world.*
- ✓ *To be saved we have to follow Christ and heed his teachings.*
- ✓ *To reach our heavenly destination we have to swim across the rough waters of life, stripped off attachments to earthly possessions*
- ✓ *To understand the mysteries of God's love we have to become like little children.*
- ✓ *Our world however wealthy is poor in spiritual values and treasures.*

The Parable..

Narrator: Long, long ago in days gone by, lost in one of the high seas, there were two little islands facing each other. Their names were "Plenty" and "Want". Plenty and Want were separated from each other by only a few miles of a blue and deep stretch of sea ,

Plenty was fertile and rich. Her soil, being very productive yielded to the natives an abundance of fruits and golden grain. They got all their wealth for the asking. The islanders there rich, healthy and hearty.

Want, on the contrary, was a very poor island. Her soil was rocky and barren. There was a dearth of water and scarcity of fruits and grain. The dwellers of Want had to work hard for their daily bread. All were poor and destitute.

Among the lucky dwellers of Plenty, there was one Mr. Concern. He was a kind-hearted man who always showed concern for the needy and the suffering. Mr. Concern used to climb a little mountain in the island of Plenty and from its summit look in the direction of the island of Want. Want looked so desolate, so poor, so barren! Full of kindness one day Mr Concern mumbled to himself:

Mr. Concern: Poor people, living in Want! Their island is just a bare rock, dry and parched! It beats me how they manage to survive over there, let alone live! On the other hand, we, here in Plenty, have all we need and desire. We get everything just for the asking. Surely, sooner than later, I'll go across the sea. I'll invite the people of Want to come over to our island of Plenty. They have to enjoy all we have; all that nature and Providence have given us so bountifully.

Narrator: Having reached a point of no return, nobody and nothing would stop Mr. Concern. He plunged into the sea and swam toward the island of Want. He had a

mission: to summon all those in Want to Plenty! Vigorously he swam across the sea. Finally, he made it! When he put his foot ashore the islanders of Want were very surprised to see a stranger. Mr. Concern was the first visitor ever to arrive at the island of Want!

The news of Mr. Concern's arrival spread like wild fire. In no time the whole island gathered on the shore to see the stranger. "Who could he be?" they asked one another. With a friendly and benign smile, Mr. Concern looked at them and gently and lovingly talked to them

Mr. Concern: Dear friends and brothers, I guess you do not know me, yet I assure you that I have thought of you many times. I live in the neighboring island of Plenty. From the top of that mountain yonder there, I used to look at your land of Want. I felt great concerned for you, for your welfare and your happiness. I saw the hardships and destitution; you have to face in your island of Want.

On the contrary in our Island of Plenty, we have abundance of fruits and grain, we have more wealth than we need, we live a happy and contented life, while you live a life of want and misery.

Now, dearest friends, forget your fields, your houses and your belongings. Leave behind whatever you possess here and follow me! Come with me to the Island of Plenty! I invite you all to come and share the bounty we have there.

Narrator: The elders of Want met to discuss Mr. Concern's proposal. It was too good to be true! It looked like a dream! Could they, at long last, lead a life of ease, joy and plenty? After a short debate they arrived at a unanimous decision. They said:

Elders: Yes, we shall follow you. Tomorrow at dawn we shall swim with you across the sea. We shall follow you wherever you go.

Narrator The following hours were hours of getting ready and waiting. Some inhabitants of Want made small bags where they kept their scanty money, gold and petty jewelry and strapped them on their backs.

Before sunrise, all the inhabitants of Want stood at the beach in readiness for the crossing of the sea. At dawn, as the morning sun arose, Mr. Concern gave the signal and all plunged into the sea. Following their leader, they swam for a long time.

Mr. Concern was the first to touch the shores of plenty. He sat on the beach and anxiously waited for his friends to arrive. When he saw the people of Want arriving one after the other he was full of joy! "They made it! They made it!" He shouted with joy!

But alas! When Mr. Concern made the final count of the arrivals to the Island of Plenty, his heart sunk! He realized too late, that only "children" and "those without bags

strapped on their backs” had made it to the Island of Plenty! All the rest had perished while crossing the sea!

POINTS ARISING FROM THE PARABLE

- From eternity, in the island of Plenty, God lives in His fullness of divine life.
- In our world we live in Want, in terrible spiritual want. No grace, no love, no forgiveness, no hope, in sin away from God.
- God calls us from this world of “Want” to his kingdom of “Plenty”, to the plenitude, to the fullness of His life.
- In his concern for us, Jesus comes to our world to call us to share of his plenitude, to take us to heaven, to the true island of plenty.
- First, he becomes like one of us, then he invites us to share his own life
- Christ, the Son of God, God’s love personified, sort of Divine Mr. Concern, invites us to follow Him.
- In order to follow Him and to enter into the Plenty of life, we have to leave behind all we have in this world of Want.
- We have to follow and courageously plunge into the perilous sea of life, to brave hardships and dangers and so, enter with Him into a better and richer life.
- To follow him, we have to become poor in spirit, childlike, trusting, and humble.
- The land of plenty is very close to us, yet so far, and so hard to reach.
- Only those who are ready to give up everything - the poor in spirit - and become like little children will be able to reach the Promised Land.
- Christ our Savior, - our Devine Mr. Concern – expects us, as he did it, to show concern for our brothers and sisters and risk our lives for them.
- Some people of the island of Want, though they were materially poor, were "rich in spirit” They were attached to the little they had.
- Thus, they drowned while crossing the sea with their little possessions strapped on their backs.

New Testament Texts in keeping with the Ideas of the Parable

Mt 5/1-11	Beatitudes. The value system of Christ.
Mt 6/19-21	Do not be greedy for earthly riches.
Mt 6/24	You cannot serve both God and money... man and money.
Mt 9/36-38	Jesus shows concern for the crowds.
Mt 15/32-33	Jesus worries for the crowds.
Mt 19/13-15	Jesus shows concern for children.
Mt 22/34-40	We cannot love God without loving man.
MI 25/31-46	Concern for man means love for God.
Lk 7/11-16	Naim. Jesus feels pity for the widow of Naim.
Lk 10/11-16 J	Jesus is "Mr Concern", the Good Samaritan.
Lk 12/13-21	The Rich Fool. Greed for money.

Lk 15/1-32	Lost sheep, lost coin, lost Son Concern.
Lk 16/19-31	Those lacking concern cannot enter the Kingdom of God.
Lk 18/18-27	Rich Young Man. Attached to money. Unfit to enter life.
Jn 1/1-14	The Word was made flesh. He became a man.
Jn 3/1-21	Nicodemus. God loved the world so much that He sent his Son...
Jn 10/1-16	Jesus the Good Shepherd. Dying for his sheep.
Jn 11/25-2	I am the resurrection and the life.
Jn 17/20-26	Jesus prays for us that none may be lost.
Rom 1/18-32	Man's spiritual "want", Spiritual poverty of man.
Rom 5/1-11;	God's salvation is for all.
6/1-14 : 10/ 1-21	Christ came to save all.
Gal 5/16-26	Conversion of heart. We have to become spiritual men.
Eph 1/3-21	God's plan to save man in Christ.
Phil 2/1-11	He became one with us.
Jas 5/1- 6	Warning to the rich.
1Jn 3/11-18	Love one another.

APPENDIX

For a More Just Social Order

Note.

- ✓ *The parable of **Plenty and Want** can be given also a social reading or interpretation.*
- ✓ *It may prove useful to conduct an event on **Social Concern and Social Justice**.*

Hints for a Social Reading and Interpretation of the Parable

A New Social Order - A New Earth – a New Island need New Hearts.

The Island of "Want" symbolizes our world with its grinding poverty, privations of every kind and exploitative structures.

The Island of "Plenty" symbolizes a new society build, on love, justice and peace, the Kingdom of God on earth.

Those who have "plenty" have to be ready to share what they have with those who are in "want..."

All men - those in plenty and those in want—have to undergo a conversion of heart.

All of us have to become "poor in spirit" and "childlike" to be able to build a society of love and justice for all.

Both should be detached from wealth, world status, prestige and fame!

To enter into the new Kingdom of Plenty, one has to spiritually dispossess himself of all he has and of all that he wants to have.

Greedy, possessive hearts will never enjoy the blessedness of plenty.

Christ ("Mr. Concern") shows us the way. Through material poverty, want and destitution He preached the blessedness of a superior kind of poverty, the poverty of the spirit.

To build a new society where there would be plenty for all, we do not need large wealth, but large hearts... detached hearts... simple hearts... childlike hearts.

In such a society there will be plenty for each one's needs