

Sermon Title: I Am God's Treasure

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 14:12

### Introduction

During our recent Niagara Conference we experienced an overflow of God's love and a call into a new identity in Christ. Seminars and messages focused on overcoming a spirit of rejection and learning what it is to be a friend of God and have a right relationship with Him. During the altar calls more than fillings of the Spirit or power encounters with God, there was a lot of deep inner healing as God was removing hurt, pain, and false identities from people and filling them with the truth of His love and acceptance. It was a beautiful time! You can listen to all the messages and seminars under the media section of the website [www.niagarakorea.com](http://www.niagarakorea.com).

During the Friday night service speaker Sarah Yang shared some different stories to illustrate how we often allow the world to shape our identity rather than God. One of the stories she shared was the story of Don Quixote de La Mancha. It is a story that shows the true heart of God and **who we are meant to be** as we receive His love and His truth in our lives. I want to retell the summary of the story because I feel God wants to go deeper into it today...

Don Quixote, known as the knight of the woeful countenance, goes off in search of adventure and encounters a woman named Aldonza who is a prostitute. Don Quixote approaches this woman and respectfully lauds her as *"My Lady."* But when Aldonza hears his greeting, she sarcastically responds by saying, *"Me a lady? I was born in a ditch by a mother who left me there, naked and cold and too hungry to cry. I never blamed her. I am sure that she left, hoping that I would have the good sense to die. I am no lady. I am only Aldonza."* However, undaunted by her bitter reply, Don Quixote insists, *"Your name is not Aldonza. I give you a new name. You are my lady. And I give you the name Dulcinea."* The name Dulcinea is a name that means something sweet and good, essentially everything that Aldonza was not.

Later in the story, Don Quixote again encounters Aldonza immediately after she has been raped in a barn. When he approaches and addresses her as *"My Lady,"* she screams at him, *"Don't call me a lady! Won't you look at me! I am only a common prostitute reeking with sweat. A thing men use and forget! I am not a lady. I am Aldonza. I am nothing, nothing at all!"* And then, as she runs away, Don Quixote calls out to her, *"My Lady!"* And, after a short pause, he again calls, *"My Lady!"* And then he calls out the new name he has given her, *"Dulcinea!"*

At the conclusion of the play, when Don Quixote is now blind and on his death bed, a beautiful woman approaches and kneels at his bedside. Don Quixote asks, *"Who are you?"* The woman then stands and announces, *"My name, sir, is Dulcinea!"* Finally, at the conclusion of the story, the woman named Aldonza who was so filled with self-hate becomes Dulcinea, the kind of person that Don Quixote always envisioned she could become.

### God's Vision For Us

Aldonza never knew her beauty or her worth until Don Quixote spoke the truth over her. He even gave her a new name, a name that the world would refute but Don Quixote knew to be true: "Dulcinea, sweet and good."

In the same way God is speaking new names over us. Names that are unfamiliar to many of us, especially as we grew up and endured different hardships and were shaped by the voices

of this world. During the Niagara Conference God was speaking His love over us and that truth ministered deeply to many. But God isn't done. All throughout the story Don Quixote continued to call her Dulcinea. In the same way, all throughout our life God is speaking His love over us. And I feel He wants to speak more over you today.

The title of today's sermon is "I Am God's Treasure." The Scripture reading for today is Deuteronomy 14:2.

**Deuteronomy 14:2 – For you are a people holy to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.**

Many of us know that God calls us His sons and daughters. But sadly often our relationships here on earth determine how we see our value before God as His children. Nearly all of us have had a father or a mother. They have loved us with whatever love they had to give. For some, you received a lot of love, while for others you received neglect and hurt. So when we hear that God calls us His sons and daughters, we can accept the identity but our worth is often dependent upon the worth our own parents spoke over us.

The son of a king or of a powerful person will often understand his worth even at a young age. He will know his standing before men and will usually be confident and secure. But the son of a peasant or of a man of low character will often put his value at the level of his father. For Aldonza, she was abandoned and neglected as a child. So from a young age she set her worth as someone to be neglected and unworthy of good treatment.

But God clears up all confusion throughout Scripture. He doesn't just call us His sons and daughters or even His friends, He calls us His treasured possession. In Psalm 139 He tells us we were fearfully and wonderfully made by Him. In Isaiah 43 God tells us that we are precious and honored in His sight and He loves us. In Isaiah 62 He tells us that we are a crown of beauty in His hand. In Zechariah 2 He calls us the apple of His eye. In Genesis 1 a beautiful and majestic God makes us in His image. No other creature was made in the image of God. Only us. **So if a beautiful God made us all in His image, what does that make you?**

Please repeat after me, **"I am beautiful."**

Now tell your neighbor, **"I am beautiful."**

And now tell them, **"You are God's treasure... and you're beautiful too."**

### **Hidden Treasures**

Whenever I share my testimony about how God led me to Korea to serve the kids in the children homes here, I like to highlight the verse Psalm 37:4, which in the NIV reads, "Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart." I share how I originally had no heart for children or for missions or for the land of Korea. But as I pursued God in college He began peeling off false desires in my heart, desires that the world had put over me, such as: having a secure job with a nice house and family, remaining in the States and living a safe and comfortable life. And as God removed the desires that were really never of me, He began to reveal the true desires in my heart... desires I had not known but God had given me from birth. Desires I now realize I had always carried but had never thought would be possible. God has created us with unique desires that often fit the character,

the background, and the gifting God has given us. But it is only until we pursue Him and learn to delight ourselves in Him that these true desires begin to be revealed and fulfilled in our lives.

And the same is for our identity. The world tries to tell us we must be a certain size, shape, appearance, intelligence, and social standing. And as the world heaps all these false identities over us, the treasures of our heart are soon covered over. We become “just another person” trying to be noticed.

But now I want to show you how God sees us. Please open your Bibles to Matthew 13.

Matthew 13:44-46 – The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, 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.

While Jesus speaks of the kingdom of heaven in these parables, I want to say that He is also referring to you. You represent the kingdom of heaven. In the parables Jesus speaks of the person finding the treasures and giving up everything for them. **This is the Gospel.** This is the story of God who created us, so loving us and knowing our true value, giving up His only Son that we might become His possession.

1Peter 2:9 – But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

What do the treasure and the fine pearls have in common? Both were hidden. Both were in darkness. Both the world never noticed. They were looked over until they were finally found by one who would truly treasure them. God has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. **So often we let the dirt, those false identities that covers us, determine our value. But God removes the dirt and He reveals us for who we really are: His treasure.** You are not to be hidden. God wants to parade you.

Romans 8:19 – For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

You are His treasure. He has sought you out. Like the shepherd who left the 99 to find the one lost sheep, like the woman who searched for her lost coin, and like the father who longingly waited for His prodigal son (Luke 15)... now that He has found you He wants to parade you. He wants the world to know you. Angels are rejoicing over your discovery.

### **The God Who Sees**

I know even as you are hearing this that while some of it is getting through, the labels of the past are still trying to block you from the full revelation that you are God’s treasure. This is an identity that must be meditated upon and one that you need to continue to hear over yourself. The world is always going to try and judge you by your job, your social status, your looks, and your past. But we aren’t called to judge by the physical but by the spiritual. We aren’t called to receive the voice of the world but instead the voice of Truth.

There is a woman in the Bible that I believe can relate with you. Her name is Hagar. She was an Egyptian maidservant of Sarah, Abraham’s wife. She was a servant, and servants had

little hope of rising above their social status. She likely valued herself as less than her master Sarah or Abraham.

But when Abraham and Sarah continue to try to have children but fail, Sarah gives up and tells Abraham to give her a son through her servant Hagar. Hagar would basically serve as a surrogate mother. Now suddenly Hagar had a chance to find value in herself. And Scripture says that when she indeed became pregnant through Abraham, that she looked with contempt upon Sarah (Genesis 16:4). In other words, in Hagar's eyes her value was now above Sarah. Hagar's sense of value was in her position. Before she was a lowly servant, but now she was a carrier of Abraham's baby. Because of Hagar's pride and contempt, Sarah mistreats Hagar and causes her to run away.

If you know your Bible history, Hagar was never a real part of God's plans. In fact the descendants of her child Ishmael would be against God's chosen people the Israelites. Hagar had sinned in her pride. She had disrespected her master. She was running away.

And yet God still pursues her. He appears to her in the wilderness and tells her that He has heard her cries of affliction. He instructs her to return to Sarah and submit to her, but before He leaves He also speaks a powerful word of prophecy over the baby in Hagar's womb.

Hagar was Egyptian and had never seen or heard from God before. And this is how she responds to His visit to her in Genesis 16:13...

**Genesis 16:13 – So she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, “You are a God who sees me,” for she said, “Truly here I have seen Him who looks after me.”**

Hagar receives a revelation of God. Despite her mistakes and the fact that she happened to be the one interfering with God's sovereign plan for Abraham, God still loves her and looks after her. He is a God who sees and looks after us, no matter what our background is or whatever we have done. He sees every injustice. He hears every cry of affliction. He knows you and He loves you. **What the world has labeled you and what you have done here on earth cannot hide who you truly are before God.** He sees you as His creation, made in His image, of greater value than anything else He has made.

### **Broken Jars of Clay**

There is a powerful prophecy of Jesus and His betrayal in the book of Zechariah. In this prophecy Zechariah is told to serve God's people as a shepherd, but He is rejected and his job ends...

**Zechariah 11:12-13 – Then I said to them, “If it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them.” And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver. Then the Lord said to me, “Throw it to the potter” – the lordly price at which I was priced by them. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord, to the potter.**

Zechariah serves as the shepherd of God's people but is rejected. When he asks for his wages, they give him 30 pieces of silver, which is the price of slave. For the service he has done he is rewarded with the price of a slave. And God tells him to throw it into the house of the Lord, to the potter.

This part of Scripture is perhaps the clearest prophecy of Judas' betrayal of Jesus, the Chief Shepherd of God's flock. Judas agrees to betray, or sell, Jesus for the price of 30 pieces of silver. After Jesus is arrested the book of Matthew gives this account of Judas...

Matthew 27:3-7 – Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money." So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers.

And so the prophecy is fulfilled of the wages of the shepherd being given to the house of the Lord to purchase the potter's field.

But there is a deeper meaning to the prophecy than to simply foretell how Jesus would be betrayed. The wages of the Shepherd, the price for Jesus' life, was used to purchase the potter's field. The potter is a man who made jars, pots, and bowls from clay. His field was a place of useless land where he would throw his broken, damaged, and rejected work. It was to the world a junkyard. A place of broken jars, damaged pots, and rejected bowls. This was what God chose to purchase through the wages of His Son. God chose to purchase the potter's field. He chose to purchase us... people broken in sin and labeled by the world as rejected. The "God Who Sees" saw something special about us.

Paul brings this home in 2Corinthians 4:7...

2Corinthians 4:7 – But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

**You are an imperfect jar of clay. In the world's sight, you seem of little value. But God sees within you. He sees the treasures within you.** And He has chosen you and redeemed you. You are now of far greater value than you ever were before. The scars and the brokenness that marked you before He is healing. But no matter what scars you have, He still sees through into your heart and values you.

### **Love First...**

For every sinner and broken person Jesus met... the woman at the well, the woman with the issue of blood, demon oppressed men, Zacchaeus, and all the others... He loved them. He did not judge them, but instead He healed them and spoke love and acceptance into their lives. Jesus saw their hearts. He chose fishermen, a tax collector, and a zealot to be among His closest disciples. The world saw little value in these men, but Jesus saw the world being turned upside down through them. And Jesus was patient with them as well, amidst all their mistakes and failures Jesus still kept them close to Him. **And soon the treasures within them began to be revealed through them.**

### **When People Glow**

Have you ever seen someone glow? And I'm not just talking about when a woman is pregnant and has that glow, I'm talking about someone glowing because God's presence is shining through them.

In my life, especially in recent years I have seen a number of people glowing. I remember being in the States for my younger sister's graduation and a former classmate of mine, Crystal, happened to be there. She came up to me with a big smile and she was straight up glowing. I was stunned. She was very worldly in high school but I had heard she was saved in college. But I did not expect to see her like she was. I found out she had just returned from a 6 month internship at IHOP where she was in the prayer room from midnight to 6am everyday while also taking evening classes. She had really been in the presence of God. **And I could see the real her shining through.** We talked for a bit and after she walked away I asked my mom, who had been talking to another person, if she had seen Crystal. My mom nodded her head and said, "She was glowing."

To be honest, I have seen a few of you here glow. You probably didn't know it at the time. I doubt Stephen in the book of Acts knew he was glowing in front of his accusers. I have to be honest though, when a person is glowing with the light of Christ you cannot deny they are beautiful. *They are beautiful.*

The world tries to tell us that it is all about the outside appearance, especially for women. Plastic surgery has overtaken much of Korea. But no matter how much plastic you put on your body, you can't create true beauty. Only God can do that. **And to see true beauty is to see the treasures of the heart revealed in a person.**

A flower blooms in the sun. As we set ourselves before God and allow His presence to minister to us, we too begin to shine. We are God's treasure. As we are before Him, He will begin to reveal our true value and worth to us. Bask in His presence.

### **Shawn McDonald – Beautiful (Album: Live In Seattle)**

Before I close this message in prayer, I'm going to ask you all to listen to a song by Shawn McDonald. It's title is "Beautiful." Ask God to minister to you as you listen to the song and read the lyrics on the PowerPoint.

As I look into the stars  
Pondering how far away they are  
How You hold them in Your hands  
And still You know this man  
You know my inner most being, oh  
Even better than I know, than I know myself  
What a beautiful God  
What a beautiful God  
And what am I, that I might be called Your child  
What am I, what am I  
That You might know me, my King  
What am I, what am I, what am I

As I look off into the distance  
Watching the sun roll on by  
Beautiful colors all around me, oh  
Painted all over the sky  
The same hands that created all of this  
They created you and I  
What a beautiful God  
What a beautiful God  
And what am I, that I might be called Your child  
What am I, what am I  
That You might know me, my King  
What am I, what am I  
That You might die, that I might live  
What am I, what am I, what am I, what am I