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The Pearl Necklace **Teresa Hampton**

The little girl's most prized possession was a pearl necklace. It was the dollar-store variety. Certainly not worth much, but she didn't know. She never took it off, even at bathtime. Soon it began to turn green from constant wear.

One night, when Daddy put her to bed, he asked her to give him the necklace. She refused, saying, "I love you, Daddy, but I really *need* my necklace." Each night the scene was repeated. Finally, after Daddy had once again asked for her necklace, she removed the pearl treasure. With tears in her eyes, she placed it in her father's hand. He quietly reached into his pocket, retrieved a small velvet pouch, and placed it in the girl's hand. She quickly discovered a beautiful strand of pearls inside. Real pearls!

Jesus talked about a merchant who sought beautiful pearls. When he found a pearl of great price, he went and sold all he had and bought the pearl (Matt. 13:45-46). He realized the worthlessness of his possessions in light of a priceless pearl.

I wonder. Do we love material things more than we love God? Do we cling to the things that entertain us, things that make our lives easier, things we think we need? They will, after all, turn green with constant use. In other words, they will not last.

If we are willing to give up the cheap, worthless things in order to get something valuable, if we are willing to surrender *everything* – body, mind, heart, *and* possessions – we'll find we have a worthy, valuable, and enduring treasure, a pearl of great price!

Today's Verse: *"Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, and revive me in Your way. Establish Your word to Your servant, who is devoted to fearing You"* Psalm 119:37