

## PLENTY AND WANT

### God Offers His Salvation Freely to All

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#### Intent of the Parable.

- ✓ *Salvation is a free gift of God It is He who initiates our Salvation.*
- ✓ *God, in his Son Jesus, freely came to our poor and sinful world.*
- ✓ *To be saved we have to follow Christ and heed his words/.*
- ✓ *To reach our heavenly destination we have to swim across the rough waters of life, stripped off attachments to all earthly things.*
- ✓ *Our world however wealthy is poor in spiritual values and treasures.*

## The Parable

#### Narrator:

Long ago in days gone by, lost in one of the high seas, there were two 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 sweet fruits and golden grain. The islanders there, were 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 struggle very hard for their daily bread. They were poor and destitute.

Among the lucky dwellers of Plenty, there was one Mr. Concern. He was a kind-hearted man who showed great concern for the needy and the suffering. One day, Mr. Concern used to climb a little mountain in the island of Plenty and from its summit spy the island of Want and her inhabitants. Want looked so desolate, so poor, and so barren! Full of concern, 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 things just for the asking. Surely, I'll swim across the sea and invite the people of Want to come over to our island of Plenty. They have to enjoy all that we have; all that nature and Providence have given us so bountifully.

#### Narrator:

Once Mr. Concern made his mind, nobody and nothing would stop him!. He plunged into the sea and swam toward the island of Want. He had a mission: to invite all those in Want to Plenty! Vigorously he swam across the waters. 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 spoke 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 one and all of you 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 take us.

**Narrator**

The following hours were hours of nervous waiting. Some inhabitants of Want stitched some 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 ocean. Following their leader, they swam for quite 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 FOR REFLECTION

- From eternity, in Heaven, **The Island of Plenty**, God lived in His fullness of divine life.
- From birth, we lived in **The Island of Want**, in terrible spiritual poverty and want. No grace, no love, no hope, sinful and away from God.
- God our "**Divine Mr. Concern**" felt pity for us humans struggling and suffering in our **Island of Want**.
- Out of love, God, in the person of Jesus, came into our **Island of Want**, He became like one of us, and sort of **Divine Mr. Concern** and uninvited us to follow Him to his **Island of Plenty** to share in the fullness and riches of his divine life.
- He told us that **in order to follow Him and to enter into the Island of Plenty, we had to detach ourselves from all things whatever of our World of Want.**
- **At his command, we had to leave all our former things, behind and courageously, plunge into the perilous seas of life braving hardships and dangers**
- **He assured us that thus, following Him, we would reach with Him into the shores of his World of Plenty**
- The Island of Plenty was very close, yet so hard to reach.
- Only those ready to give up everything - *the poor in spirit and the child like* -- would be able to reach the promised land of Plenty.
- Some people of the island of Want, although materially poor, got drowned while crossing the sea because of their attachments
- The little bags strapped on their backs sunk them down into the water.

## APPENDIX

### For a More Just Social Order

Note,

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

### Hints for a Social Reading of the Parable

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

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

The Island of "Plenty" would symbolize a new and just society built, on love, justice and peace, the Kingdom of God on earth.

Those who live in "plenty" would 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 men – rich and poor alike - have to be "poor in spirit" and "childlike" in order to be able to build a society of love and justice.

All 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 materially poor, in want and in near destitution, He preached the blessedness of a superior kind of poverty, the poverty of the spirit.

In a new society built on poverty of spirit where there would be plenty for all,

We do not need large wealth, but large hearts... detached hearts... simple hearts... childlike hearts to build a society of plenty.

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

In our existing society there isn't enough

For every body's

'greed.