

**George Herbert, Sir Thomas Wyatt, Petrarch, and the *Gospels*
Courtesy of Prof. Harold Toliver of UC Irvine**

“The Pearl. Matthew 13”

I know the wayes of pleasure, the sweet strains,
The lullings and the relishes of it;
The propositions of hot bloud and brains;
What mirth and musick mean; what love and wit
Have done these twentie hundred yeares, and more:
I know the projects of unbridled store:
My stuffe is flesh, not brasse; my senses live,
And grumble oft, that they have more in me
Then he that curbs them, being but one to five:
Yet I love thee.

I know all these, and have them in my hand:
Therefore not sealed, but with open eyes
I flie to thee, and fully understand
Both the main sale, and the commodities;
And at what rate and price I have thy love;
With all the circumstances that may move:
Yet through the labyrinths, not my groveling wit,
But thy silk twist let down from heav'n to me,
Did both conduct and teach me, how by it
To climb to thee.

George Herbert. *The Temple*, public domain ed., 1876 facsimile of 1633 original. I have modernized the typography but kept the original spelling. [Link](#).

Here is the relevant section from *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew* 13:45-50, KJV:

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Sir Thomas Wyatt's "Whoso List to Hunt"

Refer to *The Gospel according to Saint John* 20:15-17, KJV:

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepst thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. [Note: the Vulgate Bible's "touch me not" is "noli me tangere."]]

Petrarch's *Il Canzoniere*, Sonnet 190. "Una candida cerva sopra l'erba" ("A white doe on the grass")

A pure white hind appeared to me
with two gold horns, on green grass,
between two streams, in a laurel's shade,
at sunrise, in the unripe season.

Her aspect was so sweet and proud
I left all my labour to follow her:
as a miser, in search of treasure,
makes his toil lose its bitterness in delight.

'Touch me not,' in diamonds and topaz,
was written round about her lovely neck:
'it pleased my Lord to set me free.'

The sun had already mounted to mid-day,
my eyes were tired with gazing, but not sated,
when I fell into water, and she vanished.

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