

Devotional Program III: *THE TRASH BAG*

We buy it and throw it away. In fact, that is the reason it is made, so that it can be thrown away. It is stepped on by elephants, dropped from helicopters, and tossed down steps to be sure that it will hold the trash without splitting open.

Not only do we throw things away, we also throw people away. We look for the most popular, the very brightest, important people and we throw the rest away so that we can keep the best. Over the years, we throw away relationships that we might have had with family, friends, and neighbors. We think that we can afford to throw away opportunities, invitations, education, leadership skills, and talents. We throw away children, young people, old people; age makes no difference. When a person cannot be used, we throw the person away.

Human beings are different from animals.⁵ Humans throw things away. We throw everything away, well maybe not everything, but if you go to the land-fill, you will find everything there.

God is in the business of redeeming.⁶ I will not say that God is re-cycling. Not everyone is interested in what God is doing because some people have thrown God away.⁷ If we look to see, however, we will find out that what God thinks is important is important enough to redeem. We throw away what God is saving.

We find God at the land-fill looking for us. Every day God goes there looking for people to take home with him.⁸ Also, we find that God is preparing a place for those he has redeemed.⁹ That God would redeem us is good news and that he has prepared a place is doubly good news.

Scripture reading: 1 Peter 2:10

Pastor Link's translation (in verse):

Once you were nobody
Now, you are God's people.
At one time, no one had pity on you.
Now God has treated you with kindness.¹⁰

NIV:

Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

PRAYER:

Redeeming Father, help us to stop throwing away people as trash. Strengthen us to witness to those around us about Your redeeming kindness in their lives. By Your Spirit bring us together as Your People through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

⁵See Luke 12:24.

⁶See 1 Timothy 1:13-16.

⁷See 1 Samuel 8:7-8.

⁸See Matthew 22:1-14 (parable of the Banquet).

⁹See John 14:2-3.

¹⁰See *also* Titus 3:3-4.