

Pastor Ron Birk tells the story of waking up on morning and looking at his mirror. Through sleepy eyes he saw “garbage.” He fumbled for his glasses and looked again. Yep, that’s what it said, “garbage.” On little post-it note, his wife had written him a reminder. He needed to take out the garbage.

As he took out the garbage, he thought about the number of times he’d looked in the mirror and reflected that he was garbage. He looked into the mirror and felt a sense of worthlessness. He looked in the mirror and saw his own brokenness and faults. He felt like he was trash.

As he reflected on being garbage, he remembered a story he had heard. It was about a rural family that ordered a mirror, which they had never had. When the mirror came, dad looked in the mirror and marveled. Mom looked in the mirror and smiled. The baby looked in the mirror and giggled. When the son looked in the mirror, he didn’t know whether he should laugh or cry. He gazed upon a disfigured face, which was marked by being kicked by a mule. He looked at his mother and asked, “Did you know I looked like this? How could you love me?” His mother wrapped him in his arms, and said, “It doesn’t matter what you look like; I love you because you are mine.”

Pastor Birk goes on to say that’s what grace is like. Grace is the fact that God loves us in spite of the scars and disfigurements that mars us. God loves us in all our brokenness. God doesn’t expect us to be perfect before God loves us. God loves us because we are children of God.

I sometimes get that sense of worthlessness that Pastor Birk experienced. Maybe you do too. It is easy to believe that we don’t measure up. It is easy to believe that we are garbage in the eyes of God. It is in those moments when God takes us in God’s arms to say, “It doesn’t matter what you look like; you are my child. I love you.”

May you always know who you are and that God loves you!

Pastor Parnell