

## The Ugly Rock

Years ago, while on vacation, we came across a rock known as “The Ugly Rock.” This rock was indeed ugly, it was grayish and lumpy and not attractive at all to look at. There were no lines of different colors or design. Just a gray ugly lump. But, inside this ugly rock were beautiful and colorful crystals. When opened the rock revealed glass like crystals made up of beautiful shades of blues from the darkest blue to the almost white blues. The Ugly Rock was a thing of beauty on the inside. I was reminded of this recently when reading about how a sculptor or carver does their work. They can take a piece of wood or a piece of stone or marble and see what is inside. They carve or chip away until their vision is revealed. I have always marveled at anyone who can carve or sculpt whether it is a piece of wood or marble or even a block of ice. They have to see what is inside. I thought of the way God has taken my life and chipped away at it until the whole was being revealed. God sees our possibilities and chips away at our ego, our circumstances, our past and makes us who we are. Sometimes we move and he has to chip some more, or we stand in his way. I think that without the help of God I would have ended up in a different place. I think God is still chipping and forming and probably will until I leave this place. We may look at ourselves and see an Ugly Rock, but God looks at us and sees the beautiful crystals that have formed inside and the possibilities. Sometimes we must be broken in order to have our beauty and strengths revealed. God took Saul, an enemy, and made him a disciple.

Acts 9:1-6 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” Who are you, Lord? Saul asked. “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

Saul became Paul and the beauty of his soul was revealed.

Thank you, God, for seeing what we could be instead of what we are. Guide us, mold us, chip away at us until we become who you would like us to be. Reveal our possibilities. Be with those that are suffering illness and those who are grieving. We with those who are caregivers, give them strength and comfort. Give our world peace and tolerance for each other. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry and keep him and his family in your care. Be with our staff and leaders, give them strength and wisdom. Be with our church, may we grow closer together as a family of God and may we extend that love to all. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Grace Epperson