

WHAT DOES GOD SEE IN US?

I get up every morning, by the grace of God, and I say this day I will do better. this day I will do God's will and I will show kindness to all. Then the telephone rings and a caller for a brace, free from Medicare demands to know if I am Grace. I feel my blood start to boil, and I say and who are you and before I know it I am giving them a nasty lecture on "telephone manners." The correct way to make a telephone call is to say this is "Your name" and may I speak to, "my name." And I then enter into a long lecture on how no one has any manners anymore and how dare he demand to know who I am without introducing himself. Then I slam the phone down and I know my day and my promise are shot. Someone, who has no doubt been told find the person first and then tell them who you are once you have them hooked, has now been yelled at and shamed by an old lady just before being hung up on. I deserve my peace in my home, but do I have to be so nasty. Couldn't I just say something polite and then say "Have a good day" or something pleasant and then quietly say goodbye and set the phone down. How can I be called a Christian and yet be so unkind. Jesus didn't come looking for Saints, he came looking for people who would further his work with all their faults. Paul was a witness to the stoning of Stephen and walked away with no remorse but continued his way to find more Christians to persecute. He was going to break up a movement. Peter who had vowed his allegiance to Christ then denied him not once but three times. Throughout the bible we see people who sin and are forgiven, and that forgiveness changes them. None of us know when our words and actions might impact another person's life in a profound way. What if that word I spoke to the mother with three small children in the supermarket had been unkind instead of saying they are beautiful and behaving well. I later saw her at the produce stand on 26 Mile and the children were still behaving well and recognized me. What does God ask of us, "to love others as ourselves." I was in a discussion with another woman at the hair salon about holding doors for those behind us when entering or leaving a building. She was angry that people took the gesture as deserved and never uttered a thank you. Since I have become older and walk with a cane, I have noticed the people who will rush to beat me to the door to get in quicker and thus ahead of me for a table at a restaurant and those who will rush up to open the door and let me go in first. Often it is young people who will let me go first. This always makes me smile and I wonder if they see their grandmother in me and that is where their kindness comes from. I hope so. What does God see in us? He sees not what we are but what we could be. Friday, I had a lot of running around to do and I made it a point to be in the moment. To not be so wrapped up in what I had to do but to look around me and smile and say a kind word to everyone I met. When I walked up to check out the cashier had that "one more nasty customer look on her face." I said hello to her and laughed at my clumsiness as I dropped something and told her I feel I am getting taller since the floor is so much further away than it once was. She laughed and we chatted about my peanut butter coupon which gave me 2 large jars of peanut butter free. Then the elderly man (he had to be older than me) who was packing my groceries had on a name tag and I thanked him by name, and he beamed. I made sure I was in each moment, said a kind word to everyone I met and had a pleasant day rather than a rushed preoccupied day that was full of tension.

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Isaiah 40:29-31 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Lord, we thank you for the day, for the blessings we receive, for the food on our tables, the shelter of our homes and the love of our families. May we be a blessing to others who need shelter, warmth, food, and the word of God. Be with our Pastor and bless his ministry, bless his family. Be with us as we seek to make this church, your church, a haven, and sanctuary for all. May we be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ as we serve and may we make disciples in his name. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson