

This is the Day...Tuesday

January 11, 2022

Yard Sale Shopping

“The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7b)

It was a beautiful Saturday morning in late March. The first real spring day that year. The cold winter breeze had finally given up and the warm sun felt good to the skin. I was outside early that day, wanting to take advantage of every minute of the beautiful weather. Dad came out early that day also. He had plans for changing the oil in the old rambler station wagon and doing some work in the yard. As I walked out the back door and to the driveway, I noticed that there was a lot of activity at the neighbor’s house across the street. It looked like they were moving because all their stuff was out in the front yard. When I asked my dad what was going on he chuckled as he said, “No, they aren’t moving. They are having a yard sale.” My dad was the ultimate, anti-yard sale person. He thought yard sales were a big waste of time and energy. In Dad’s mind, if you needed to have a yard sale then you must be a hoarder. Dad kept nothing past its moment of usefulness. His general rule was, “If you have not used it in a year, you don’t need it.” As a result, we never had a yard sale and I had never attended a yard sale.

When Mom came outside, she asked me if I wanted to go with her to take a look. Since it was the neighbor’s house, maybe they would have some useful stuff. To Dad’s chagrin, Mom and I headed across the street. Once I looked around for a few minutes, I began to understand why Dad had such a negative opinion of yard sales. It was mostly junk. Old, worn clothes. Dirty toys and small trinkets. But since it was the neighbor’s stuff, Mom felt bad going over there and not buying something, so she bought a lady’s coat for 50 cents. As we were walking home, she was laughing at how ugly the coat was, but she said she would just give it to the church clothes closet. The following Sunday, as we were leaving for church, Mom came out with the coat on just to see what Dad would say. As she was modeling the coat for Dad she reached into the pocket and surprisingly pulled out two twenty-dollar bills! That is when Dad’s opinion changed as he said, “What a beautiful coat!”

It is human nature for us to judge things based on their outward appearance. Unfortunately, we also do the same with people. We forget that often life can leave a person looking worn out, flawed, and scared on the outside. But if we are willing to reach past the ugliness, we might just find a treasure on the inside. After church that day, Mom took the money she had found back over to the neighbor’s house and the ugly coat went to a good cause to help someone in need. But the real treasure of this experience was the lesson that we all learned. Dad even told Mom to do more yard sale shopping after that. You never know when you might find some treasure buried on the inside.