

This is the Day...Tuesday

July 26, 2022

Out of the Ashes

“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion, to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of His splendor.” (Isaiah 61:1-3)

As a busy and energetic young boy in my neighborhood, I was friends with just about every kid within a couple of rock throws from my house. We all knew each other, and we all knew each other’s parents. And most of the parents knew us all and treated each of us as their own. Regardless of whose house I was playing at, when lunch time came, the mom always offered to make me lunch and a cold drink. And in return, my mom did the same.

It was fun knowing all the adults and seeing how they were mostly just like my parents, with only a few exceptions. One of my favorite “parent” neighbors to visit was Mr. and Mrs. Rollins. The Rollins family had two children. One was two years older, and one was one year behind me. Mr. Rollins was the art teacher at the local high school. I loved going to his house because he would always take me to his art room when he did his work. Mr. Rollins was the DaVinci of what he called, “charcoal art.” Frequently, Mr. Rollins would let me sit in his art room with him as he worked. He had a firepit outside where he burned wood. He would take the ashes from that fire, using just his finger, and draw amazing pictures of faces and landscapes. It was kind of a running joke around the neighborhood that, if someone’s house ever burned down, Mr. Rollins could take that tragedy and make something beautiful out of it.

There are times when it may feel like our life has been reduced to ashes. Life is filled with fires that we are constantly trying to keep under control. Every poor decision, every addiction, every loved one we lose, every relationship that is severed, becomes a fire that we must handle. And add to that our propensity to sin on a regular basis and the guilt which follows, and you have got the potential for a real barn burner. If we are not careful, the flames can overcome us, and we can be reduced to ashes. Ever been there? Ever looked around and seen nothing but destruction?

On this day which God has given you, take a lesson from Mr. Rollins. If he can make something beautiful from the ashes, just imagine what God can do! God is ready to take those ashes you have created with your life and turn them into a beautiful work of art. Out of the ashes, you become His masterpiece!