

The Diamond From The Dunghill

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Let us imagine a man walking leisurely down a country road. He comes to an old, abandoned farm with a shell of a house and a broken down barn with an old manure pile next to it.

As he strolls by, his eye catches a glimpse of sunlight reflecting from something in that pile. He goes over and picks it up. It is covered with filth. Later tests prove it to be a sizable diamond!

Now, when he picks it up, what is the first thing he does with it? Does he take it to the local jeweler and say, "Sam I found this in a place you wouldn't guess. If it's what I think it is, please put it in a nice gold ring setting. I want to give it to my wife. *But don't clean that stuff off of it.*"

Of course not. If he did, Old Sam the jeweler would probably take a step back and stare at him as though he had "slipped a cog."

Would he take it still caked with gunk and present it to his wife? Not if he has a brain in his head. If he did so, we can imagine what her reaction would be.

Really, what is the first thing any rational person would do the moment he lifted that diamond from the dunghill? He would clean it up—thoroughly!

Now, God did not create us as junk. He created us as precious diamonds. By our own foolishness and disobedience, we ended up in the dunghill of sin. When we turned to Christ in genuine repentance and faith, the first thing he did was clean us up—thoroughly!

Then why do so many professed Christians believe and follow the widely held notion that we can be saved from the guilt and penalty of sin by faith in Christ, and yet continue under the power and in the practice of sin?

We are saved by grace through faith. Grace is the free forgiveness of repented sin, not a careless overlooking of sin. Grace does not cover over the "manure." Grace produces godliness (Titus 2:11-14). And saving faith (1) purifies the heart (Acts 15:9); (2) works by love (Galatians 5:6); and overcomes the world (1 John 5:4).

The angel instructed Joseph to call Mary's son JESUS, "for he shall save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). We have a complete salvation because we have a complete Savior. He saves us, not *in* our sins but *from* our sins. That is the true gospel of Jesus Christ, the powerful and liberating gospel that the angels long to look into (1 Peter 1:12).