

THE OLD WOODEN TABLE THAT NOBODY WANTED



This is the story of an old wooden table found in a trash heap in upstate New York. One afternoon in the mid-summer of 2013, our family took a trip to visit my sister near Lake George, tucked away in the beautiful Adirondack mountains. I love the mountains and never tire of visiting there. You see, when the mountains are calling, you must go! We always look forward to visiting my sister and her family. It always offers me a special opportunity to love on my niece and nephew whom I hold so dear.

That trip was exceptional, as we had lots of time to unwind and explore the mountains with hearts expectant, excited about the adventure. My twin sister, Stacey, and brother-in-law Jim took us to a hidden dump in the barren wilderness full of old treasures that no one wanted. Old pieces of furniture were rotting from the many cold, harsh winters, from old rundown shacks that were abandoned long ago. Most people would not go near the place as the area's glory days were clearly long past.

On that day, searching through the old dump, I came across an old wooden end table. It was broken, worn, and falling completely apart. It had seen better days. Experts tell me it was built probably around the 1930s. It had some good bones left but needed a lot restoration work. Most people would have thrown it away or used it as kindling. Honestly, it was ugly and useless in its current state, but my heart leapt inside me as the Holy Spirit caught my attention. I could feel the table had lessons to teach me, and I was eager to discover them. As I pulled it out of the trash, the top boards fell completely off. I scooped

them all up and carried them to the car. My family was supportive but wondered why I saw such treasure in a pile of old boards. It had been left to decay for decades, and clearly no one wanted it. Why would they?

Over the next seven years we moved several times, so the table pieces were moved from one storage unit to another. I had plans for the table but never got around to doing anything. I knew I did not have the skills to restore it myself, and no carpenter would touch it, or if someone did agree, they would charge me an arm and a leg. And so, the table sat in a dark room enduring the many seasons of frigid New York winters and hot, muggy summers.

In 2020 I had finally had enough. It was clear that the table was important to God, so it was valuable to me as well. I remembered the remarkable evening seven years earlier when the Spirit of God told me to pull that treasure out of a rotting trash heap. There were lessons the Lord wanted to teach me—a deeper revelation that I had yet to learn. At that moment, I yanked the table out of storage and took it to a man they called the Furniture Doctor in Bloomfield, New York. His specialty was restoring broken furniture.

I greeted the furniture doctor with a smile and handed over the many loose pieces of my hidden treasure. He told me the project could be costly but agreed to take it on. After all he was the furniture doctor and my end table was very sick indeed.

The process was long and tedious. He spent many long hours stripping the old wood and sanding it back to its original beauty. Sanding was not easy given its deteriorated state. But rough spots and weathered stains were no match for the furniture doctor.

He worked extremely hard putting the table back together again. Then he sanded, glued, and screwed the pieces together, restoring each broken piece. He used tools that seemed harsh like a hammer and saw, but with every blow and cut, the wood became more beautiful. Finally, the day came when he brushed the beautiful stain across the grains of the restored table's wood. It was left to dry and set until the long-awaited call came that I could pick up my treasure. I was filled with anticipation as we drove the twenty minutes to Bloomfield, New York. When we saw it for the first time, our mouths dropped open because it was unrecognizable as the broken, dilapidated mess it had been.

That table is no longer stuck in a trash heap or storage shed, but proudly on display in our living room. It is confirmation that everything has value and that hidden beauty can burst forth through the power of restoration. Every time I walk by my table my heart leaps as I see the deeper truth behind its story.



The Story Behind the Story

Consider this: A master craftsman runs his hands over an old weathered table, clearly deteriorated after years outdoors. The stain has long faded, the screws are rusted, and the wood is warped and worn. A nearby passerby shouts, "All is lost. Take it to the dump!" Yet the Master hears not a word as He envisions the beautiful piece restored.

The Lord Jesus says to you even now: "My Precious One, I am that Master Builder. I am the Great Physician and I will restore you and make you beautiful again! You may feel weak and broken because of neglect or abuse of the past. Perhaps you feel that your character has leaks and holes and your cherished name has been tarnished. I will restore you in the same way that the rickety, old table was restored to better than new. The stains and the weathered damage will be smoothed out by the work of My hands as My Spirit polishes your character to reflect My glory. My hammer and saw may not feel good at the time, but I do the work to perfection, cutting out the dead wood to make you whole again.

"Others may say, 'All is lost. Take it to the dump,' but I will do what it takes to heal you and bandage your wounds. I will rebuild you as I did Jerusalem, and others will see that I am your GOD! You are not worthless! All is not lost! Return to Me with all your heart. Humble yourself in My presence, and I will make all things new!"

"Look into My eyes and recognize the reality of My endless mercy and compassion for all mankind. That truth should be crystal clear, as I gave My very life for you. I was bruised

for you. My arms opened wide in love as they nailed Me to that terrible cross. I was crowned with thorns and mocked, stripped naked and humiliated so that all My children could be healed and have eternal life. Nothing can affect or diminish My perfect love for you!

“Today I want you to know that you can take a lesson from the old wooden table that nobody wanted. I can repair a broken life. I can fix any broken marriage. I can heal a broken heart, so do not limit Me. I am the Great Physician, and I am always on call! Come to Me you who are weary and brokenhearted, and I will give you rest! I will make you beautiful again so everyone can see the goodness of your God and will see the mighty work of the Carpenter of Galilee. You are my workmanship and it is I

Who pardons all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with loving kindness and compassion, who satisfies your years with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle? (Psalms 103:3-5) It is I, the Lord your God, and my face is always turned toward you.”

My dear friend just like the story of an old unwanted table from a trash pile, once restored you will be a useful masterpiece that glorifies your God, so that He is pleased with you, His magnificent workmanship. He never intends for us to stay trapped in our sin, pain, or deep sadness. He heals and restores. He calls us forward. He reminds us that in Him we have special purpose and hope. Christ came to bring beauty from the ashes.

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Steve and his wife Diane founded Refuge Ministries and the presence-driven publishing company, Deeper Life Press. Steve is a regular contributor to many prophetic publications, including the Elijah List, Spirit Fuel, and the Identity Network. His writings have been read worldwide by hundreds of thousands of people. He has also been interviewed by the Trinity Broadcasting Network and a few other TV programs. Steve's books, maturity tracts, articles, and videos have touched countless lives around the world. The Porters reside near Rochester, NY.