

Acts Lesson 15 Handout David

Psalm 31:9-12

Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress; My eye is wasted away from grief, my soul and my body also. For my life is spent with sorrow and my years with sighing...

Psalm 42:5-11

Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence.

Joshua 1:9

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

Genesis 1:27 (NIV84)

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Psalm 139:13 (NIV84)

13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

Psalm 139:16 (NIV84)

16 your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Psalm 139:3 (NIV84)

3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways

Jenny the Jewel - I was born with Down syndrome over 30 years ago. This makes some things very difficult for me. When I was younger, I spent a lot of time asking God, Why did you make me with Down Syndrome? Why can't I be normal like other people?

I told Him all the time that I didn't like having Down syndrome. I kept thinking that if only I didn't have Down syndrome I would be happy. I thought that somehow God made a mistake when He made me. My Mom and Dad always told me they loved me so deeply, and that they could not love me any more, but somehow down deep in my heart I always wondered if they would love me more if I didn't have Down Syndrome.

When I was in high school, the kids on the school bus were very mean to me. They laughed at me, and mocked me and they called me all kinds of bad names, and told me that even my parents couldn't love me. That hurt me so deeply!

When I got off the school bus in the afternoon, I would be crying. My Mom met me at the door, and we would talk and pray every day. She told me that people used to say bad things about Jesus and call Him names too, so He understood exactly how I felt.

She told me that real truth is only found in God's Word, and not in what other people say about you. She told me that if I could find anywhere in the Bible where God calls me bad names, or said I was a mistake; she would pay me \$5,000. I spent a lot of time reading in the Bible to find out what God said about me. All the Scriptures I found said just the opposite, so I never did get the \$5,000!

Some of my favorite Scriptures are: Psalm 139:14 where God says, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." God tells me in Psalm 17, "I am the apple of His eye." In

Deuteronomy 7:6, God tells me that I am "His treasured possession." In Philippians 4:8, God tells me to think about whatever is "true, noble, right, pure, and lovely." I like to think about the truth that God tells me and spend my time thinking about what God says is true. The last Scripture I want to share is Psalm 119:114, "You are my refuge and my shield. I have put my hope in your Word." My confidence and hope is in God. I know now that instead of being a mistake, I am the Lord's treasured possession.

I like to memorize Scripture and fill my mind with the truth of who God says I am. This understanding has made all the difference in my life. Now I recognize that God has a plan for my life, and He created me just the way I am for His special purpose. I may still have Down syndrome, but now instead of saying "if only" I didn't have Down syndrome, I say, "So what, I will glorify God just the way He made me." I know He loves me and cares for me with His whole heart.

The Lord showed me that I am not a mistake, but I am a precious gift...His treasured possession. We have a choice to believe and fill our minds with God's truth, which will change our hearts, or listen to what other people say and be sad. It is a choice we must each make. In Exodus 4:10, Moses tells God that he can't do what God told him to do because he was slow of speech and tongue. In verse 11, the Lord said to him, "Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go. I will help you speak and will teach you what to say." He made me just the way He made me for just the special purpose I was created for. There is special work He has for me to do that can only be done by me, just the way He created me. If I spend my time wishing I was different, I will never get around to doing those things God wants me to do. Sometimes Satan tries to put thoughts into my head and tell me that I am no good and stuff like that. That's when I remember the Scripture in John 10:10 that says, "The thief

comes only to steal, and kill and destroy. I have come that they may have life and have it to the fullest.”

When Satan tries to put lies into my head, I beat him over the head with the truth of God. I do it over and over again as long as I have to. I know God has given me special gifts and talents, and my desire is to use them for His glory. I say it often and I mean it...I love my life!

Acts 4:32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had.

33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.

34 There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales

35 and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need. "

36 Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement),

37 sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.