

# THE DIAMOND



A rough diamond

Unlike many of the other things in these stories, the diamond is not something you will see laying around in your neighborhood. You can, however, easily get to see a diamond since many people wear them in jewelry. You can also visit a jewelry store and see many diamonds on display.

Diamonds begin as very common carbon. This is the same material left over when paper or wood is

burned. The carbon that becomes a diamond must undergo extreme pressure and heat to be changed into the precious stone we call the diamond.

Diamonds are not pretty in their natural rock. For a diamond to become beautiful it must have the flaws removed and be shaped. This is done by cutting and grinding the rough diamond until it is beautiful.

What can we learn from God's creation of the diamond?

The diamond teaches us a lesson in the way God works in our lives. It shows us what we are really like and how God works to change us into something wonderful - His children!

The diamond begins as a common material. There is nothing special about the carbon that will become a diamond. If you picked up a handful of carbon you would become very dirty. This is what we are like before we are baptized. We are common, sinful and not very pretty. When we are baptized, we are changed and faith is born in us. We are reborn as

children of God because of our Savior Jesus who died on the cross to give us this gift of becoming members of God's family. We are now special, cleaned from our sins and beautiful. The Bible teaches us in Romans 9:21, "Does not the potter (God) have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?" Through baptism we are made for a noble purpose which is to worship our Savior Jesus and to spread the good news of salvation for all people. God shows His great mercy when He takes common people and makes them His children. The Bible teaches us in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:28, "He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things - and the things that are not - to nullify the things that are." This teaches us that we do not have to be rich, smart or beautiful for God to choose us to be His children, do His work and shame those who may be rich, smart or beautiful but who do not believe in Jesus.

This is just the beginning of the lesson God teaches us through the diamond. We are now

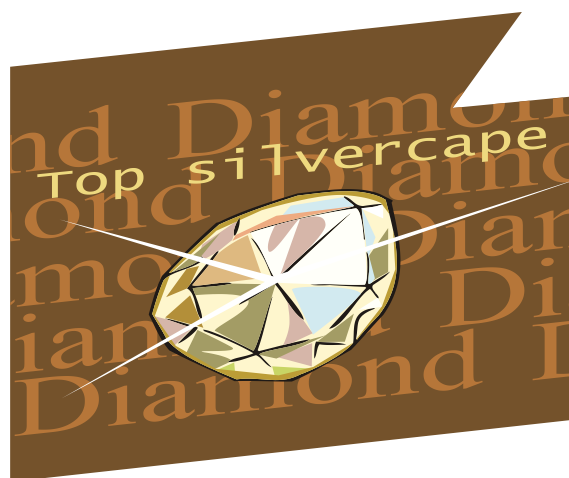
precious but we are still very rough looking. God uses many ways to change us and make us want to follow the teachings in the Bible. Sometimes God uses bad times and sometimes good to teach us and shape us into what He wants us to be. Over many years and many experiences we slowly emerge from our old ways and begin to shine with the beauty of our faith. There are many passages in the Bible that teach us this lesson. In Psalm 119:67-68 we learn, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word. You are good and what you do is good; teach me your decrees." God uses bad times to bring us back to the right way to live according to the faith He has given us. We should not ignore the lessons God is teaching us and we should not be angry with God. He is doing everything for our own good like a father who teaches his children right from wrong. The Bible teaches us in Hebrews chapter 12, "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline and do not lose heart when he rebukes you because the Lord disciplines those he loves...God is treating you as sons for what son is not disciplined by

his father?...God disciplines us for our good that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

This is not the end of the story. A diamond must be put into a setting to be appreciated. This is what God does. God puts us into many settings in our lives. Our family is one setting, our church is another, the chance to talk about Jesus our Savior is another and there are many more. These are earthly settings that give us a chance to show our faith in everyday life. There is one last setting that is more beautiful than all the rest. That setting is in heaven where we will spend all eternity with God in peace and joy. Jesus taught us in Matthew 5:16, "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise you Father in heaven." Wherever the Lord puts us we should let our faith shine even if others make fun of us. Like a diamond, we will get the attention of others who may come to hear about Jesus because of how we live and act towards others.

Jesus also told us about our setting in heaven in John 14:2 when he said, "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you." Jesus Himself is preparing our final setting in heaven for us where we will shine like brilliant diamonds as we are in the presence of God forever! Then, all of the lessons God has been teaching us all our lives will produce not sadness but rather great joy and sinless purity forever. Our faith, which is more precious than all the gold in the world, will finally be seen as our greatest treasure. It is through our faith that we will have eternal life.

That is quite a journey for all who believe in Jesus. That is quite a lesson God teaches us!



A finished diamond