

Sawbill Lake Reflections—Part 2

Another time of reflection comes to mind as I remember our family's little trip into northern Minnesota. As you will recall from the previous *Beacon Lights* issue there were some lessons learned from our trip that I would like to share with you.

One beautiful afternoon we were down by the lake relaxing and enjoying the unique stillness that is particular to Sawbill Lake. In awe of the stunning beauty all around us we just sat and looked at the still waters, the island in the middle of the lake, the hundreds of trees all around us and the loons bobbing in and out of the water. The view was just so different than what we see everyday where we live. The beauty was astounding, and we were thoroughly enjoying our vacation and the change of scenery it provided for a few days.

About this time I happened to look down for a moment, and there on the ground very near to my feet was a dirty used band-aid. Gross! I curled my legs up in disgust of being so close to touching that germ infected bandage. I was thoroughly disgusted and felt appalled. It was repulsive, and it spoiled the moment for me. (I felt like a loon with my feathers ruffled!)

After calming myself down, I started to think that sinners are like a dirty band-aid. God in his holiness is repulsed by our sin. We are nothing more than rotting infection, and he is perfect and lovely in every way. It gave me pause to wonder that he would love us. We, who have marred God's beautiful creation with our sin and even enjoy our sins, are the object of his love. That is amazing to think about.

God in his amazing love showed us how much he loved us by giving up all of his glory and taking on the punishment of our putrid sins for us. He loved us in our rottenness, and claimed us as his own children. He redeemed us with his blood, and made us heirs in heaven with him. "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:3-7).

There are other verses of course, too, which tell of God's great love for us and how our sins have been forgiven. Many places in the Bible tell how we have been washed clean and are made new creatures in Christ. We are no longer the disgusting band-aid

in God's eyes. We are his children. We have become precious to him. We, his people, have so much to be thankful for. Praise be to God our Savior, who has redeemed us from our sins!