



Hidden Treasure

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Farrah works at Park Street Church and brings much laughter and happiness to all the staff!

DAY 11

Wednesday, December 12
(Candle of Love)

I COR 1:17–31

“For it is written: ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.’”

—1 Corinthians 1:19

A couple years ago my dad gave me a small jade ring for Christmas. He handpicked it himself from a local antique store. Despite the careful selection, I admit that the first time I saw the ring I thought it was ugly. I opened the small velvet box expecting to see a dainty bit of twinkle nestled inside and found a fairly plain piece of round green stone instead. The ring looked old-fashioned, and not at all “me.” I attempted to exchange it, but didn’t find anything I liked better. So I brought the original ring back home, stuck the velvet box on a shelf, and forgot about it for six months. Then one day I decided to wear my forgotten ornament. I don’t remember why—maybe it matched my outfit, maybe it was convenient, maybe I did it for my dad. But over time I found myself reaching for it more and more, leaving my glittering items to gather dust, until the jade ring became one of my dearest pieces of jewelry. Gradually I had come to appreciate its understated beauty, even to prefer it.

God gave us his own version of the jade ring: Jesus Christ. But initially Christ can be less-than-twinkly: all thorns and crosses and self-sacrifice. I can relate to the Jews and the Greeks who found him incredibly unattractive. There was a time when Christianity seemed dull, old-fashioned, not “me.” It was only after a few attempted returns and a lot of shelf time that I tried Christ on. I honestly don’t remember when or why—maybe there was something going on in my life, maybe he was conveniently within reach, maybe I saw something in the faith of my parents. But over time I found myself reaching for him more and more, increasingly uninterested in all that glitters, until he was the dearest

thing in my life. Gradually I had come to appreciate his beauty, even to prefer it.

Christianity may not sparkle, but it is beautiful—the kind of beauty that makes all others seem less real. Now that I feel this way about the beauty of Christ, it is hard to have others see him as something unattractive. It’s frustrating and discouraging. But when I feel that way, I think about the process I went through with my jade ring. I remember that sometimes it takes a little time to appreciate beauty. So, this Christmas, please think about who you could invite to church or into your home, even if it is someone who seems impervious to the faith. Just invite them and keep inviting them. You never know what may sit on the shelf and grow dear over time.

RESPOND:

DO: Invite someone to your house for Christmas dinner.

PRAY: that, this day, you will have opportunity to proclaim “the wisdom from God” that is Jesus.

