



## Ransom Notes

### Out of the Trash Unique Recycling

Turkish garbage collectors opened a library with all of the books people throw out in their trash.



I love books. I love to read. I love helping young people read more effectively. Then I saw the headline, “Turkish garbage collectors opened a library with the books people throw in the trash.” I guess I now need to

Imagine this happening in our country, the United States of America. Giant trucks back up to huge, blue, metal tubs sitting near the curb. Before scooping up these containers with their mechanical jaws and pouring the junk into the truck, the driver hops out, looks through the contents, and pulls out any books that have found their way into the rubbish. The books are placed in the cab and the refuse into the truck

Or, alternative—junk is dumped all day long into the bed of the vehicle. Then, when it is unloaded in the company disposal area, a swarm of employees plows through the pile, rescuing dusty copies of Charlotte’s

Web or Macbeth from the heap. Other volunteers take the salvaged items, clean them up, and catalogue for placement on the shelves in the trash company office. Sounds like the “perfect job” for a bibliophile.

I have no idea how this unique recycling works for the Turks, but I congratulate them. Strange, unwanted items do seem to appear in the trash. My friend found a pair of brand new shoes in the garbage at our senior living center. They fit her feet perfectly and now take up space in her closet. Garbage has found a “new life.”

David, in Psalm 69:1-3, pleaded, *“Save me, O god, for the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold. I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me. I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched. My eyes fail, looking for my God.”* My heart reaches out to David, just reading the passage. Perhaps you know of someone who feels they are drowning in a sea of sadness, challenges, or even sin. David knew to whom he should reach out.

Saul probably models the most incredible, life-rescuing experience. This fellow was breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. In Acts 22, he even states he was zealous in his attempts to persecute followers of the Way. Then Ananias, directed by God, brought the message that totally recycled this life. In fact, our Saul became Paul, and extended his energies forward to preaching and teaching. Just think what can happen when people have opportunity to reverse course and use their God-given talents and energy to witness for Christ. Maybe we could think of God, along with Ananias, as the garbage collectors, who found wisdom and value in discards and garbage.

Ridgeway, Colorado boasts a beautiful, environmentally friendly home, called “Earthship.” This 10,000 square foot home is made of used tires, aluminum cans and other recycled materials. The junk of someone else became a dwelling for a creative person.

I assume, however, that not everything in the home was recycled. I would hate, for example, for my bathroom to be fitted with a giant aluminum can rather than a porcelain seat. On the other hand, I suppose, a rubber roof might let hailstones bounce right off. When the garbage guys shelved the books, the original words were obviously still on the page. They combined the old with the new. Paul, the recycled Christ-follower, engaged his same focus and energy he used to persecute others. What changed was the focus, direction, and goal.

As we examine our own life or as we reach out to help others, we need to seek guidance that our neighbors, family, as well as God, will recognize we have turned a corner in our thoughts and behaviors. None of us is perfect, but through God’s grace, we are forgiven. But that is not the end. We are saved through grace in order to serve.

There is a new way of saving marine life from being caught in fishing nets. Green-colored LEDs are attached to the nets. Illuminated nets seem to lead the turtles and sharks away from danger.

Let us get our “LEDs” and light the way to help salvage and recycle lives for Christ