

The Parable of the Rock Skipper

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Everyone has that special talent that they can do well. That is, almost everyone. One of my special talents was rock-skipping. I realize it doesn't seem like much now, but to a ten-year old boy, it is very important.

I remember well the hours spent viewing my reflection in a glimmering lake, gurgling river, silent pond, or even a decent-sized mud puddle. I made a commitment to be the best rock-skipper around. Just in case you are unfamiliar with rock-skipping, God forbid, allow me to tell you the goal. Consisley stated, the goal is to skip the most times in the least amount of distance. For example, it would be better to skip the rock halfway across the river in ten skips than to skip it all the way across in five.

Now, as I already stated, I was very good at skipping rocks. Nobody could beat me. One day, I was out fishing with my Grandpa, and since no fish were biting, we took to skipping rocks. I choose the flattest, roundest rocks to be found. I drew back and let her fly...wow! What a shot! My placement was impeccable and the number of skips could barely be counted. Then, my Grandpa picked up a stone. It was an ugly, sharp-edged rock with rough patches covering the entire surface. I chuckled at my Grandpa and said to him, "that rock won't work. It is too rough. You need one of these flat, round rocks instead." My Grandpa simply smiled and let it fling. I couldn't believe my eyes! The rock seemed to hit the water a hundred times before sinking to the bottom. I was in awe! Once again, Grandpa proved to be larger than life itself. "You know, boy," he said through a wisened grin, "the rock you choose is really not that important. The only thing that matters is how you throw it."

So, I began to work on throwing the rougher, uglier rocks. At first, I failed, but before long I could skip them just as well as the other stones. In fact, to use the easier rocks became something I seldom did any longer.

As odd as it may seem, rocks are a lot like people. They both come in all different shapes and sizes. They all have a history and a story to tell about where they have been and the storms they have endured. With time, and a little help from the elements, rocks begin to change. The corners become more circular and smooth. The bumpy ridges transform into glass-like, tranquil surfaces as the harshness is softened. So it is with people. The waters of life rush over us and the waves of life beat against us. People, like the stones, must either skip along the top of the water or sink to the bottom.

Today, I seldom skip rocks. Maybe I am too dignified, too busy, or just too old, but my Father in heaven is still skipping stones. He is an expert and skips all kinds of stones. He does not just choose the round, flat, proper stones. He can skip the ones with rough edges just as well. And skip them, He does. In fact, He seems to delight in choosing the mangled, sharp-edged rocks with jagged patches strewn throughout them, and then, confounds the onlookers with the utter perfection of His placement and skill. The more unlikely the stone, the more glory for the Skipper.

He takes the down-trodden, the socially unacceptable, the world's rejections and uses them, yes, skips them, along the surfaces of the difficulties of life. He does this to show His glory and skill and to amaze the confused world as they look watch. How God loves to astound! As the rocks meet the surface of life's difficulties, they are shaped, smoothed, and honed to maturity in Christ.

I am a great rock-skipper, but my Father is the greatest Skipper of them all. Taking all kinds of lives and using them for His Kingdom's work, regardless of their abilities or worthiness, and by His grace, He makes them salt and light to this world of darkness. The next time you see a person who is one of those rough rocks, smile and think of the Parable of the Rock-Skipper and thank your Father in heaven!

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 (NASB)

“For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, that no man should boast before God.”