



# Spirit of Grace

## Herald

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### Redeemed Recliner

Reading the Bible is something that I do a lot. Since putting my faith in Christ, it just seemed natural to me to spend part of each day in God's word. My first year in Christ (1973) I read through the entire Bible and have not stopped since then. In my home I have a couple of chairs which I use for this purpose. One is in our living room and one in our bedroom. Both have reading lights beside the chairs. These used to be a necessity but now with the availability of electronic, self-lit tablets they aren't quite as important.

One of my chairs is a simple, narrow, black recliner which I picked up at a garage sale. It seemed to sort of call out to me as I drove past it, and I had to turn around and check it out. After determining that the price was reasonable I bought it and took my new treasure home. But once I set it in its place in our bedroom, I noticed a real problem with it. It absolutely reeked of cigarette smoke. Somehow, I had not noticed this when inspecting it at the garage sale, but now that it was in our non-smoking home, the smell was atrocious. I nearly threw it out the first day.

My own cheapness and refusal to admit

defeat kept me from doing this. Instead I went to *Google* and did a search for ways and means to remove cigarette smells. I found two primary recommendations: vinegar and baking soda. I gave my new, used chair liberal doses of both – sometimes one, sometimes the other, and sometimes both together. They helped, but they didn't get rid of the smell altogether. After a while I started leaving the chair outside on our patio for days or even weeks at a time. Within a couple of months, the smell had diminished to the point where I could sit in it and not smell the smoke – too much.

After more time had passed, the only way I could smell the cigarette odor was to place my nose right up to the fabric of the chair. (Yes, I actually did that. I admit it – I'm kind of obsessive about these things.) And after more time went by, even with my nose to the fabric, the smell was gone. Today, these many years later, that smell is just a distant memory. I challenge the most refined and sensitive nose to detect even the slightest trace of cigarette smoke anywhere on that recliner.



The chair has provided me many happy hours reading the word of the Lord. It is comfortable and is the perfect fit for the spot in which it is placed. I'm so glad I resisted the urge to pitch it in the trash. The once-smelly recliner has been redeemed and made fit for service. In a sense that chair is a symbol of what Jesus Christ does with each of us. When we first come into the kingdom, nearly all of us are pretty smelly. We may have good intentions, but we come into God's kingdom with the smell of the world all over us. God has his "vinegar and baking soda" treatments, but there is one other factor which makes a huge difference, and that is time. Time with Christ, time in His word, time walking with God, just simply time brings wonderful results to those who follow Jesus. So if you, or someone you care about, isn't making as much progress as you might hope, don't give up on them (or yourself). Give it some time.

## Spreading the Knowledge of Jesus



We are in the process of exploring the possibilities of creating a book about Jesus, based on Dennis' devo articles. We plan to distribute this book in nations which are primarily Hindu, Buddhist, or Muslim. The book will contain chapters which reveal many different aspects of the Savior, and we hope it will be instructive for believers and evangelistic for those who have not yet come to faith in Jesus.

We need your prayers. Pray that the Lord will open the right doors for us, and make a way for the efficient publishing of the book and its effective distribution. And pray that it may be a tool in the hands of the Holy Spirit to bring many to a knowledge of Jesus Christ. Jesus will be the theme and the main focus of every chapter. Anyone who reads this book will never be able to say that they have no idea who Jesus is.

Your generous gifts can make a huge difference for us. Please remember us in your regular giving.



“Does he not leave the ninety-nine and...seek the one that is straying?”