

## The Gift of Compassion

When we volunteers feed the homeless, what do we think? They have made some very powerful choices to get into the predicament they are in.

But what if we took each and every individual and made a TV Hallmark movie of their life. What if we felt like we knew the individual by name, like Jim. And we discovered that Jim had a whole life before he ended up under the bridge. He had jobs and a family and he too liked to watch the Superbowl. He was regular guy. He went to school and he was a likable person. He might have been a regular church-goer. He dated and married and had children. Things went wrong for Jim. And, at first, it wasn't too bad, but the down hill slide had begun and quickly he was under the bridge. He is now a frightened person. No one cares about him and someone may hurt him. He is so alone. He doesn't "live" anywhere, he stays places. He has a demon that shadows him now. It may be alcohol or drugs or something imagined, but he is still alone. Jim just tries to survive the streets, get some food and water, feed the demon and stay somewhere. Jim can no longer make choices. Something drives him that is more powerful than he is. Jim is just surviving.

Our faith teaches us to share our gifts. And we are abundantly wealthy! No only because we have money, but we have everything! Our faith teaches us from the words of Christ, "Whatever you do for the least of my brothers, you do for me." When we see the homeless we must see Jesus. We must feel the compassion for Storyman Jim, that we would feel for Christ. What would it be like to serve Jesus – if only we had the opportunity. And we do – we serve Jesus when we serve the homeless. We feed Him.

At times we hear, that is good enough for the homeless. It is a good enough sandwich, it is a good enough way to throw it into a bag and not to serve, it is good enough to keep your back to them and your mind on the job of handing it out.

How can we judge the homeless and how they got there? We would judge Christ? Would we prepare the best for Christ? I am sure we would. We would make that peanut butter and jelly sandwich so much love. We would hand that bag over to him as if it were an honor. We would hold a glass of water to his mouth. We would touch his hands. We would show him love and respect. If we truly believed the gospel message, we would bow to the homeless.

All life is valuable. All life is precious. Who are we to judge who is worth the food and who isn't? Which of the homeless are least of His brothers? All of them.