
June 10, 2008

Posted by revrandy - 2008/06/10 17:46

One major aspect of the Gospel message is its focus on the "least of these." Jesus had a heart for the hurting. Good News has a heart for those that are in situations where outside help is needed, and I am grateful for each of you that participate in these ministries. You've seen the stories in the newsletter and bulletin about Angel Food, Forgotten Children Ministries and Red Bird Mission, all great ministries. I hope you have considered being part of some of these mission teams either as a participant or as one who sends your prayers and resources. However, there is one ministry that doesn't often get the "limelight." It has been operating for a long time and it helps those people in our area with food, clothing and resources to meet pressing needs. That ministry is Caring and Sharing.

Good News supplies volunteers and funding to Caring and sharing and we have been part of this project for many years. Their building is located just east of the 98/393 intersection and they distribute food and clothing to the needy in our area. They also have a "thrift" store for those who can afford to pay something for their needs. Go by and see them and you'll get a wonderful idea of their operation. Even better, I know they need volunteers (OOPS, I mean disciples) to help them each and every day. You could be one of those disciples from Good News, even if you can give only a small amount of time each week.

Caring & Sharing of South Walton has been serving our neighbors in need with food and financial assistance since 1994. This year, the value of assistance to be provided is projected to exceed \$200,000 in the form of food, clothing, furniture, and short term emergency payment of such items as prescription medication, overdue utilities, and rent. A key source of income to meet these needs has been the operation of a warehouse thrift store which sells donated used appliances and furniture. To meet the increasing needs for assistance in our community, Caring & Sharing has acquired a used truck to pick up donated items, expanded the warehouse, and increased the hours of operation for the warehouse thrift store.

In the past, approximately 80 to 90 volunteers have donated a half day or more each week to sort incoming items, staff the merchandise areas, operate the warehouse, and handle food in the pantry. This service for people in need in our community is truly rewarding. With the current increased need and expanded hours, there is also a special increase in the need for volunteers. Currently, there is a critical need for men to volunteer in the warehouse as well as to assist on the truck with furniture and appliance pick ups. Volunteers can select a schedule of a half day (morning or afternoon), and a commitment of as little as a half day a week would be of great value at this time. If you are interested in exploring the rewards of helping the less fortunate in our community by obtaining more information about volunteering, contact either Pennie Lucas, Manager of Caring & Sharing or Tom Shaver, Warehouse Supervisor, telephone 267-2866 between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM Monday through Friday or 9:00AM to noon on Saturdays. At Good News you could also contact June Thomason.

I want to end with a very Biblical reason for being part of ministries to those who are hurting. It is the rationale God will use to judge us as He separates those bound for heaven and those bound for hell. He won't be giving a Bible quiz (though you can't know God if you don't know His Word). It won't be your church attendance (though you can't know God if you aren't part of God's people). What God will do is as follows:

"But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.'

Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'

Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. For I was hungry, and you didn't feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn't give me a drink. I was a stranger, and you didn't invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me.'

Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?' And he will answer, 'I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.

WOW! Now that's a test I want to pass!

In Christ's Love, Randy

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