



SIMPLE THINGS

“Simple Things” or was it “Little Things”, my pastor’s sermon Sunday provided me the one thing that had been alluding me for weeks the topic for this quarters newsletter. His text came from a Bible passage that we have printed on our all our brochures – Matthew 25:31-46. The gist of his message was really quite simple. A day is coming when Christ will make His Advent known. When that day comes everyone will know it is Him. The day will be different than His first Advent when only a few wise men and shepherds were present. Once here He is going to gather the people of the earth together and then divide them. Some will receive an eternal reward and others will receive eternal doom. Both will be surprised at their fate. Those receiving their eternal reward will be surprised to learn that their sealed destiny was not be-

cause of some great thing or things that they had done, but by some simple things that they did not leave undone: things like providing for people who often go unnoticed or who are ignored; things like food for the hungry; water for the thirsty; shelter for the homeless; clothing for those in rags; compassion for those who are sick; or a visit to those imprisoned. Those destined for eternal doom receive their sentence because they overlooked the simple needs of their neighbors. The depiction painted by Christ in words is both sobering and illuminating and quite frankly it scares me. But listen; here is the neat part, the part I want to shout out loud. Christ has not yet made himself known.

After the visit of the three spirits to Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens's 1843 novel, *A Christmas Carol*. Scrooge wakes up and only wants to know one thing. He throws open the window and hollers down to a passerby on the street. “What day is it he cries” to

which he receives the answer, “Why it’s Christmas Day”. Scrooge realizes that he has been given a golden opportunity to change. “Scrooge does so and becomes a model of generosity and kindness, towards his nephew, his neighbors, and even the Cratchit’s. As the final narration states, ‘Many laughed to see this alteration in him, but he let them laugh and little heeded them, for he knew that no good thing in this world ever happened, at which some did not have their fill of laughter. His own heart laughed and that was quite enough for him. And it was always said of him that he knew how to keep Christmas well if any man alive possessed the knowledge.’” (Wikipedia, Ebenezer Scrooge)

I have been blessed to see so many McDowell people doing something simple, something kind this past year for our ministries. There are so many of you, to try and mention all of you by name I fear would be futile. You know who you are. Thank you for your services of love. Our client’s lives are being

touched and yours are being blessed. Merry Christmas from the Board, staff, and yes those who can truly say, you saw me and did not turn away or ignore me. Rev. Bill Warren



Did you know that you can adopt a room at the Friendship Home for Women and Children?

Well You can!

We are in the process of giving the Friendship home a much need face lift. Our building is 62 years old. We purchased it in 1999. When we purchased it churches, individuals, and civic groups helped us update the rooms. It is hard to believe that was over ten years ago

Now we are at it again and we need your help.

Give us a call 828-659-6490 and we will share with you all the details on how you can plug into this exciting opportunity.

CHRISTIAN CLOTHING CENTER

I send you all greetings from all our wonderful staff and volunteers. Happy holidays!

With the holidays fast approaching we have a couple of sales that I am sure you will want to be part of. The first is on **Black Friday, November 25th** everything in the store that day will be **50% off**. The second day you can cash in on a great deal is **Tuesday, December 27th**, when once again everything in the store will be **half off**. Remember profits from all

sales are used to fund McDowell Mission Ministries various projects, not the least of which comes directly through the Clothing Center.

Just recently we were able to help two families with furniture and other items. One family unit was a grandfather and grandson who were residents at the John Thompson Center. They worked their way out of the shelter but needed help with household furnishings. The other was a single mother with three children. When we learned that the children were sleeping on the floor we were able to provide them with beds and linens. These were donations that you shared with our organization. Please remember that we take everything from books to cars. No gift is refused and all gifts are tax deductible. Please shop often, and above all keep us in your prayers. Now be safe, show God's love to someone every day and God Bless you everyone. Kathy Leis

News Left of Center

By Whs, Director of the John Thompson Center

What is shelter and what does shelter mean to you?

To Noah Webster shelter was a noun, it means something that covers or protects. Bob Dylan sang of shelter in "Shelter from the Storm", as did the Stones in "Gimme Shelter" and Joe Cocker in "Shelter Me". In nursery rhymes the 3 pigs made shelters out of straw, sticks, and stones, an old lady used a shoe for shelter, and Peter used a pumpkin. Shelter figures heavily in the fables and stories of our past and will continue to do so in our future. Shelter is the fabric of family, what baby doesn't feel sheltered as it lies snug in its mother's arms. It is also the hope and promise of Christianity; we are sheltered in a God's loving embrace. So imagine now how traumatized and hopeless those who have lost it must feel.

Unfortunately for the people that we serve, this is not what they must imagine, it is a daily reality. For those that are alone, it is scary. For those with children and family, it can be overwhelming and devastating. You feel helpless and hopeless, I know, I've been there myself. It's a cold dark place not knowing where you can go. Not feeling safe

enough to even sleep because you are vulnerable.

Most people believe homeless folks are drunks and druggies who choose to live the way they do. This assessment is true for some. But our struggling economy with its accompanying high unemployment has changed the face of those that we see. We see adults who have worked their entire life only to have their job shut down and now find themselves unemployable because of their age. Teens and young adults with little or no job experience who can't find an employer who is willing to give them an opportunity to gain any. No income means no rent or mortgage payment - "no pay/no stay" - no shelter.

There is an old Irish saying; "It is in the shelter of each other that the people live". That's what we do. McDowell Mission Ministries has been around for nearly two decades and has grown to provide a great many services to the people of McDowell County. But the need that birthed us, the root of our ministries, was to provide a place of shelter to the homeless. This is what we still do thanks to you and your gifts of love. You are that extended hand that lifts a person up and that arm over the shoulder that provides someone "shelter from the storm". Each and every one of us thanks you.

CHANGE MAKES



S

A large part of our everyday life is change. The seasons change, our environment changes, all things change, and for the most part - it's good. It's been part of our story since we were born. When we arrived in this world, we changed the

lives of our family. As we grew up our bodies, minds, and needs changed. How often do we use the phrase, "I changed my mind"? When problems arise in our life, we look at what we have to change in order to fix or improve our situation. This has been the topic of many of my newsletter articles. I have tried to show you how this ministry with your assistance, helps bring about the change - change that improves lives. Change just makes sense.

With the changing of seasons from fall to winter, we are confronted by the yearly battle of helping people keep warm. In past years we received government and foundation grants that helped us to assist the needy in our community.

Unfortunately those wells are drying up. The funds we once counted on are now slow in coming or just non-existent. Times have changed so we are turning to you our loyal supporters for help to supply the needs these changes have created.

We have to change with the times and this time change makes "cents". In tough times parting with dollar bills can be hard but pocket change can help. So we are asking you to give up your change and we are encouraging you to hold a "Change Drive for Heat" in your office, work place or place of worship. Kids can even get involved by starting a change drive at school or in a Sunday school class. Opportunities abound to discuss this need and how a change drive can help. Speak to your family, friends and coworkers, make this happen. Create a challenge or contest to see who can raise the most. The need is greatest from December through mid-March. May I be so bold as to suggest that you bring your cents in monthly this way everyone wins, those who are giving and those who will receive the gift of warmth? When spring comes I will share a report on the changes made possible with your change. All monies given towards heat assistance will be used solely for that purpose. Change makes sense and cents makes change. whs

BROKEN TO LIFE

She was competent and confident. He was quiet yet self assured. They both were successful and shared a marriage that had all the trimmings of Godly life and love. Their hearts and their marriage, though young, appeared to be strong and growing in the right direction. Appearances, however, can be deceiving.

One day I received a phone call. "Pastor, I don't mean to be a bother but would it be possible for my husband and I to meet with you?" "Sure, is everything alright?" "Well, I don't know. Things haven't seemed right between John (*real name changed*) and I lately and I'm not sure what is going on." The person on the other end of the line was not the confident sounding woman I knew from church. In fact, Martha (*real name changed*) spoke with a tone of troubled insecurity. "Does John know your calling to set up this meeting?" "Yes, he does. Pastor, please, can you help us?"

A few days later we met. I couldn't believe what I saw before me. Two young and attractive adults with seemingly everything going their way were now sitting before me in a posture of defeated exasperation. It was a week before Thanksgiving, the preamble of a season celebrating the birth and love of Christ. Yet what I saw before me was broken and bewildered. The love of Christ seemed to have left the building and in its wake...hopelessness.

Hopelessness, have you ever been there? Have you ever been so deeply consumed by despair that your entire soul seemed enveloped within a quicksand of sinking darkness? Hopelessness is one of Satan's most powerful weapons. Vulnerability to hopelessness rises from a soul condition of brokenness that is born within the heart of every human. I see the effects of hopelessness everyday in the eyes of men powerless within the prison system. Hopelessness is merciless, but praise God it does not have to have the final say. The Cross, an instrument of hopelessness, suffering, and death was transformed by the power of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection into a pathway of hope, healing, and eternal life.

When we are willing to face the truth of our brokenness through the faith and perspective of Christ's love, hopelessness loses its foundation within our souls. The enemy's foothold of attack becomes broken. When we are willing to allow God to shine the exposing light of His truth into the covered, self protected areas of our own fear, doubt, shame, pride, hurt, and sin, we discover in their place the limitless power of amazing grace. The grip of hopelessness is not broken without cost, but the gain of true life and freedom in Christ is eternally greater than whatever suffering is required. As Christ said in John 16:33, "...In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

It was this transcendent truth that John and Martha discovered in a very pain-filled yet life-transforming way. John had been lying to Martha for months. He was having an affair and after our first counseling session told Martha that he wanted out of the marriage. He was done with her. Martha was devastated. All self confidence and assurance was gone. Hopelessness was in full affect. However, Martha made a surrendering life choice that no matter what the cost she was going to seek God with all her heart and trust Him with both her heart and that of her husband. Within a matter of months Martha came to know God in deep and intimate ways she never dreamed she could. God shattered the heart of her husband. One day he was sitting in church begging for God's mercy. The vision of the vibrant Godly woman his wife had become flashed into His mind. With great humility he ran to his wife and found in her embrace the healing power of true forgiveness. They renewed their vows and to this day praise God for the valley of brokenness God used to lead them into His true and transcending life.



MCDOWELL MISSION MINISTRIES, INCORPORATED

PO Box 297
124 Fleming Avenue
Marion, North Carolina 28752

Phone: 828-659-6490
Fax: 828-659-3864
E-mail: mission@mcdowellmission.com
www.mcdowellmission.com

Do You Know Me?



Did You Know?

I am a pregnant teen with nowhere to go.
I am a single parent
I was married until the abuse
I am an unemployed student
I lost my job due to layoffs/closings
I was employed but my child got sick
and I didn't have a babysitter
I served my country and came home to find
I had no where to live
I got sick and couldn't pay my bills
I was released from jail and had no home
I am elderly with no check coming in
and no family wants me
I have no family and can't find a job
I had a spouse until they found someone new
I was living in my car because I lost my
home
I had a good life then my spouse died
I have had substance abuse problems
but am trying to get clean
I have a background that keeps me
from finding employment
I had a breakdown due to failures in life
and came out with no place to go
I have no family who wants me or I can live
with
I live paycheck-to-paycheck
and hope nothing happens
My rent was due, my car tore up
and I had to choose between rent
and a way to my job to support my family

I am a hard worker
I am a full time student
I have a college degree
I am a recovering addict
I am actively seeking employment
I am a good parent
I am doing all I can for my kids
I am a good person
I am honest
I am thankful for everything I have
I am someone's mother, father, brother, sister, daughter, son
I help others when I can
I am doing all I can to improve my situation

Am I your friend, your co-worker, your neighbor, or am I you?

I am Homeless or soon to be
Do you know me?
Or am I you?



Be sure to check out our website.

**We keep it updated so you can see what
God is up to.**

**Right now you can find
our residents Christmas wish list.**

**Also don't forget our to become one of our
friends on Facebook**

**We Believe that Matthew 25:31-46
is a modern day commandment.**

McDowell Mission Ministries Is a Christian ministry
dedicated to impacting the lives of people in personal need by providing shelter, counseling,
and practical economic assistance in the name of Jesus Christ.

We serve McDowell County for the Lord Jesus Christ.
We survive on the generosity of its people,
churches and businesses.
We greatly appreciate any and all support