

The Faithful Following

Megan Rohrer

The other day, Erwin, Tom and Katherine were coming back to the church from lunch when a homeless man asked Katherine for some change. She gave him my card. The man's face lit up and he said, "I know her, she's my friend. Is she at the church?" The man jumped up and followed them. When Erwin, Tom and Katherine walked back to the church that day, they had a crowd of homeless people following them.

When Katherine told me this story, it reminded me of all the crowds that were always following and pushing in on Jesus (especially in the Gospel of Mark). Why does everyone want to follow Jesus, Katherine, Erwin and Tom? It may be because people want things. Many people in the crowds wanted healing, money, clothes, food, fame, etc. However, there was probably something greater that people wanted: hospitality.

People expected Jesus to heal and help people, but they did not expect him to help tax collectors, sex workers, gentiles, social outcasts, people who were unclean or during the Sabbath. This was not because these people did not deserve charity; it was because Jesus did not treat them like tax collectors, sex workers, gentiles, social outcasts and people who were unclean.

The Welcome Ministry's following among our homeless friends is also due to our focus on hospitality. Our homeless friends know that this place is different. People do not come for the food. They come for, what they call, the "teaspoon of love" that is put into it. Our guests cherish the hospitality of the Welcome Center so much that they volunteer to help out, when they could be out on the streets panhandling for money.

I am continually surprised by how much our homeless friends give to the Welcome Ministry. In fact, our homeless friends donate more clothes, books and food to the Welcome Ministry than anyone else (not including monetary donations). Our homeless friends are great examples to follow in this season of giving and thanksgiving,

Welcome Center Much Needed Items:

- Socks
- Shoes
- Sleeping bags/Blankets
- Razors
- Monetary Donations
- Transportation Tokens, Vouchers, Passes
- Books
- Bibles
- Warm Clothing