



If we all decided to Help Those in Need

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When I'm not writing for my internships, working on side projects, novels or looking forward to my dream job as a journalist and grad school, I'm working in a group home for young boys. During my tenure in this position, I've come to realize that no matter what a person has been through, regardless of the bad behaviors they might exhibit, there is good in their hearts, especially that of a child whose innocence is only now being corrupted by the world. I recently saw the goodness of one young man I work with as he helped a person in need.

It was a warm Southern California evening not long ago. I had two boys I care for at the facility off grounds for baseball practice. For the good behavior they had exhibited the few days prior, they earned some money to buy a meal from the local fast food restaurant. Only one boy chose to do this, the other wanted to go Seven-Eleven to buy a slushy.

As we parked outside of the store, the boys immediately noticed a homeless man sitting outside of the convenience mart with his dog. Not knowing any better they said things like, "look at the bum". "There's a bum". I immediately corrected them and told them that the term *bum* is offensive and that it's not the fault of the man that he's homeless, nor does he choose to be.

The three of us went into the store and after the young man had gotten his slushy, he looked back at me and said, "Mr." which is what they are to call their male staff, "Do I have enough money to buy that man outside some food?" I counted what he had left over of his \$10 and told him that he had around \$8 left. "What do you think he would want?" he asked.

"Let's take a look," I said. We looked around and then I said, "Why don't you buy him a sandwich? And a bottle of water." Liking the idea, the boy chose a turkey and cheese sandwich and a gallon of water. The boy then took his sugary drink and what he had bought for the man to the register and paid. "Now let's go tell the man that you have something for him," I said as we exited the store.

We walked over to the man and I said, "Sir, this young man has something that he would like to give you."

The boy handed the man what he got for him, smiling and delighted the man took the items and said, "I really do appreciate it. What you just did is a good thing. You're living by the lesson that Jesus taught us, to help your fellow man in need." The man put the sandwich into a large plastic bag which contained his belongings next to him and said, "Thanks again, as you can see I have a lot of things right now." He then told the boys to always remember the lessons taught to us by Christ and to stay in school and then go to college. He told them to never stop learning and learn as much as you can, that way, you won't find yourself down and out and always have something to fall back on, the exact things that I remind them of on a daily basis. The man then named off some skills that he had such as being handy with cars and carpentry. He then said that he hopes to be back on his feet soon.

After we had gotten back into the company van, I told my client that what he did was a very generous thing and that I was very proud of him. I ensured that word spread throughout the home so that all staff knew what he did.

Later on that night I thought to myself, what if all people had a heart like this young man? What if everybody did what he did when he saw somebody in need? If this was the mentality of every single person, we could end hunger, homelessness, and poverty as we know it.