

Cornerstone Transition Home

January 2022 - Happy New Year!

"For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." Luke 7:28

I can't stop thinking about the "tent lady".

The weather app states that it's currently 18 degrees outside on this Monday morning of the new year. Yet, in my house, it's a cozy temperature of 68. I'm comfortably nestled onto the couch with my furbabies and blankets. There are blankets under me, around me, and on top of me - not because I'm cold but because I love soft blankets. Tucker is curled up on one side of me, and Bella keeps resting her head on the laptop in front of me. In addition to my central heat, I have a cute little electric heater that gives off the glow of a fireplace. Yet as I sit here, my thoughts turn back to the week after Christmas and to the lady in the tent. I'm reminded that the warmth that surrounds me isn't the same for everyone. For the lady in the tent, blankets are a necessity rather than a luxury.

Let's go back. The dirt road was muddy with ruts too numerous to miss. We were following the Cornerstone van in front of us that was pulling a trailer filled with boxes. With each unit of apartments, the van would stop, and our ladies would climb out of the vehicle. Each one would grab boxes of chips we had recently received in a donation and continue knocking on each door on the west side of the complex. *"Hello! Would you like a box of chips?"*

Then we turned the corner and saw something that changed us. We saw someone. Over to our right, there was a make-shift tent just big enough for someone to curl up inside. The living quarters were on the outside of the unstable structure and consisted of one rocking chair and a small counter. I voiced, *"Wow! Someone lives there?!"*

Just then, the lady stepped out of her tent and without hesitation, one of our residents jumped out and handed her a box. At that moment, my heart grew warm and heavy at the same time. Our girls get it. They know how to see people. They don't just glance and keep going like I so often do. These ladies serve without question and without judgment.

When I got back home that day, I fixed my cup of pumpkin spice cappuccino with Cool Whip swirled on top and sat down at my desk to continue my reading in Luke. Then it happened. A familiar verse jumped right off the page and entered my heart. It was Luke 7:28. I realized on that day that the tent lady was greater than John the Baptist. Then I flipped back over to verses that God continually brings to my mind in Matthew chapter 25. This time, I focused on verse 45. *"Inasmuch as you did not do it to the least of these you did not do it to Me."*

In that moment, I understood the reality of what Jesus meant. The tent lady is greater than John the Baptist. Even worse, when I glanced at the lady and drove right by, I really overlooked Jesus. I didn't stop the vehicle and greet Him. I didn't offer Him the blanket in my backseat or the water in my cup holder.

Oh, Lord, help me to stop tossing a quick look at You before turning my head away. Help me to really notice You. Help me to slow down long enough to at least ask Your name. Help me to be prepared with supplies on hand so that I can give You some water, a bite to eat, or a blanket or something - anything rather than nothing. Lord, all it takes is a quick Google search to discover verses upon verses where you command me to serve those in poverty. It's obvious that "the poor " are so important to You! If they are important to You, then shouldn't these people living in substandard conditions be important to me, as well? Why do I treat these verses as if they are suggestions?

Could it be that when God asks us to serve the poor and we actually follow through with His request that we put the gospel on display? Isn't that what He did for me, for us? In our poverty, He reached out and lifted us up. He called us by name. We were hopeless and could do nothing in our pit of sin, yet He had compassion. He gave us more than bread, water, and a blanket. He gave us Himself.

That's a touching story, but what does it have to do with Cornerstone Transition Home? Everything.

Since that day, the "tent lady" has been served. She still lives in a tent, but on this cold morning she has heat in the form of a butane heater. She has warm clothes, socks, and a blanket. She has food. How? Our residents responded to Jesus' call without our prompting. It turns out that the best way to show our love for Jesus is to love other people as ourselves. Even more, it's loving people "as unto the Lord". When we meet the needs of others, we move beyond our selfish desires and motives. Rather than chasing a destructive lifestyle or any other idol we deem as most important, we can chase after people the way Jesus pursued us. In serving others, we encounter Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer.

Thank you for your support! God has given us the gift of serving women on parole who live onsite at Cornerstone. In addition, God has expanded our borders through the ministry extensions of Rebecca's House of Hope and The Corner Kitchen. We desire to demonstrate our love for Jesus by reaching others. It's true that we can't meet everyone's needs, but we can respond in love to the people God places in our path. As you partner with us, you get the opportunity to serve alongside us. Thank you! May God richly bless you, indeed, in 2022!

Gratefully His Servant,

Bethany Davis

Cornerstone Transition Home
PO Box 1090
Newport, AR 72112

www.cornerstonetransition.com



Cornerstone Transitional Housing Ministry, Inc.
dba **Cornerstone Transition Home,**
Rebecca's House of Hope, & The Corner Kitchen
501c3 nonprofit, public charity
EIN: 81-3596972