



Sandwich Love

BY CANDY HABICH

In June 2017 I attended the LWML Mid-South District Convention in El Dorado, Arkansas. During one lunch recess, my roommate and I were enjoying a stroll through the streets of this quaint town. We encountered a man who was obviously going through tough times. He approached us and asked if we could spare some money for a meal. He shared some of his story with us; he was fighting addiction and living in a shelter.

As God would have it, we were in front of a sandwich shop. Here we were, two LWML ladies attending a district convention, and I sure wasn't going to ignore the man! We went into the sandwich shop and ordered some lunch for him. The really sad thing was that it was apparent the proprietor of the shop had probably just told the man to go away. I maintained as friendly an attitude as possible while taking care of the lunch order. Who knows? Maybe that man shows up every day asking for food or solicits customers coming into the shop. Maybe the proprietor had reason to rebuff the man. All I know is he was hungry, and we were there.

Why did God put this man in our path? Did he need us, or did the proprietor need to be reminded to feed the hungry? I've come to realize that we all stereotype people, judge them, and fill in missing facts based on our experience, but is that what God tells us to do? Nope. He simply says, "love your neighbor." If that means buying a sandwich for someone "for no reason," I know I can handle it.

And the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all

whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions (Mark 12:32-34).

How often do our own "burnt offerings and sacrifices" get in the way of what God is really telling us? We hear Him calling to reach out to a hurting neighbor or to call a friend who has been absent from church for far too long. What do we do instead? Oh, we do our "good deeds." We drop off clothes at the resale store and collect canned goods for the food pantry. Easy, right? It's not that God doesn't want us to do those things, too, but He wants us to love PEOPLE — His very own children — people who have names and faces and are created in His image. Sometimes that means getting out of our comfort zone and facing all people, even when we don't know their names or circumstances or history or religious affiliation. We can see their faces, and, to us, their faces should look like God Himself. How then can we NOT reach out to them?

Dear Father in Heaven, please forgive me for the times when I have looked away or ignored one of Your children in need. I pray the Holy Spirit will encourage me and not only make me bold in my actions, but also help me to see Your face in every face I meet. In Jesus' precious name I pray. Amen. *Q*

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