

GoodSam Gospel *messenger*

Monthly Newsletter of Good Samaritan Ministries, Ltd. | 2307 Hull Street | Richmond | VA | 23224-3639 | 804-231-9995



A Message From Pastor Mike



I'm So Confused

John 12:8 *"For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always."*

A pastor told the following story: "I was telling someone the other day about an experience I had in my first pastorate. A lady came into my office, asking for help. She looked desperate. She was dressed in dirty, old clothes. She had a baby in her arms. She was a single, unwed mother. She was 15 years old when she became pregnant and had run away from home. She'd been gone for 2 years but the night before coming to my office she decided to return home to her parents--baby and all. She told me she came to the church hoping I could give her money for a bus ride. I hesitated. The church usually tries to help people like this, but as a general rule, it's usually best not to simply give away money. Besides, I only had ten bucks in my pocket. There was no money around the church. Normally, with cases like this I'd call the treasurer of the local minister's fund. All of the ministers in our town tried to use a common fund for things like this. But it was 5:00 on a Friday and I knew I'd

have trouble getting the money from the minister's fund. Then the baby started crying. I finally gave her what money I had and wished her well. About a week later, I saw her. I was at the Salvation Army visiting the minister there – you know they call ministers "Captains" in the Salvation Army. He and I were talking when I caught sight of her in the far corner of the room. So I asked the Captain, "You know that girl?" "You bet I do," he told me. "Let me tell you. She has quite a scam. Every Friday, she has a baby sitting job and she takes the baby she's caring for and drives around town from church to church giving ministers a sob story and asking for money. And if the ministers show any hesitation at all, she'll reach down and pinch that baby on the behind. Makes the baby cry!" I looked at the Captain and said, "You know, it's hard to believe anyone would fall for that!"

With this story in mind I ask this question, "What are Christians supposed to do with the poor?" You see a homeless man.

Not that unusual. He was panhandling. Again, not that unusual. He was at an intersection going from car to car with a can in his right hand collecting donations and a cell phone in his left hand pressed up to his ear. One of the frustrations of poverty is the struggle of whom to help. But that is not the only frustration with dealing with the poverty around us. Another is the feeling of being overwhelmed. We notice the homeless man asking for a handout who has a cell phone. We become irritated at seeing people in front of us in the grocery store buying food with food stamps and then driving away in a Lexus.

Again, my question "What are Christians supposed to do with the poor?" To that question you often want to just raise your hands in frustration and say, "Nothing can be done. There are too many of them." Sometimes we want to say – "The poor always ye have with you." Which might be an interesting thing to say. Because this is what Jesus says. So, our tendency is often to close our eyes

to them and ignore them. We become frustrated because we cannot tell the poor and needy from the lazy and conniving. This is not a burden, "for the poor always ye have with you." It is a gift. A gift? How can that be? You always have the poor with you, you always have before you opportunities to give, you always have before you opportunities to serve God. This is the key to understanding what Jesus is saying in John 12:8.

Service to Christ is a joy. This is the answer to what we are to do with the poor. We serve them with joy. We give to them, not with a grudging heart, but with generosity and joy. This is also the answer to much more. It is the answer to how we deal with almost any situation...handle with generosity and joy.

When you give to GSM you know your gift will go to helping the poor by giving them a hand up, not a hand out.

In His & Your Service,

- Pastor Mike



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

This time of year, GSM receives many calls from our donors who are looking for ways to get involved over the holidays. We so appreciate your hearts and your desire to serve. The contact for our holiday events is Keith A. Collins 804-231-9995. Here are a few ways that you can help:

Operation Drumstick: First you can help by donating items for the boxes. Then we need help in assembling the dinner boxes that we distribute. Some boxes come already together and others bring goods that need to be assembled. Assembly of the boxes begins on Monday, November 19th.

Thanksgiving Dinner: This meal is open to all and because of the limited space in our dining hall at Good Samaritan, the meal that day is served at Community Baptist Church, located at 7521 Comanche Drive in Richmond, VA. You can help on Wednesday, the 21st, setting up and then on Thanksgiving Day with cleanup. Another way to help...come and join us! Sit with our men and their families and others who may come in off the street and visit with them.

Gifts of Hope (Christmas): Adopt a GSM participants family for Christmas. We provide a list of their family's wishes and needs and you get the joy of giving Christmas to their family. We can use help on December 22nd and 23rd as we organize and transport the gifts to the church where they are in wait for our Christmas Eve Service.

Christmas Dinner: We have the same needs for this dinner as for Thanksgiving. Come help with setup, serving, and cleanup or just come and fellowship with those at our tables.

In Memory of:

Pastor Thomas Farmer

Former Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church
Jackie & Mary Horrocks

Timothy P. Michael

Kulla William Ficare

Gloria & Allen Davis

Crystal D. Grady

Ben Maymes

Jackie & Mary Horrocks

In Honor of:

Robert L. Priestley

Vietnam Veteran 1946-2000
Toni Priestley

Luke Matthews

Kelly Curtis

Walter Ampey & Rosetta Dabney

Cynthia Thompson

Ministries of GSM

Southside Thrift Store

Clothing, furniture, and much more
4680 N Southside Plaza, Richmond, VA
804-232-7228 to donate or for more information.

Good Sam Auto Sales

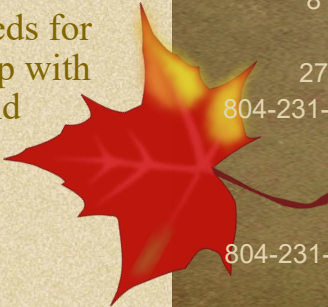
Quality Used Autos
2307 Hull Street, Richmond, VA
804-231-9995 ~ John Konek for more information to
donate or purchase.

Affordable Rental Housing

Clopton Terrace Apartments
8 W Clopton & 2635 Midlothian Tpk.
Midlothian Townhomes
2701 Midlothian Tpk. & 10 W 27th St.
804-231-9995 ~ David Smith for more information.

Job Work Program

Job training for our participants
2307 Hull Street, Richmond, VA
804-231-9995 ~ John Konek for more information.





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GSM Executive Staff

Dr. Michael D. McClary, Executive Director

Rev. John Konek, Operations Director

Dr. Reece George, Men's Program Director

Mrs. Nita McClary, Finance/Administrative Director

Good Samaritan's Annual Operation Drumstick

Operation Drumstick is our annual outreach to the community around us which focuses on needy families with children who are still living at home and those with additional difficulties during the Thanksgiving holidays. We once again reach out to our donors and supporters for help in putting together Thanksgiving dinner boxes for those in need. We do make sure the families who receive the boxes are truly in need. We do hope that you will give this opportunity prayer and thought. Thank you for your faithful giving and support.

Basic Thanksgiving Needs

Frozen Turkey

Boxed Stuffing

Bag of White Potatoes

Rice or Instant Potatoes

Dinner Rolls

Fresh Pie

Sweet Potatoes

Bag of Marshmallows

Canned Vegetables

Canned Cranberry Sauce

Turkey Gravy (jar, can, pack)

Dinner Paper Napkins

Disposable Roasting Pans

Turkey Roasting Bags