

Know their name.

I listened to a podcast recently about a man who was homeless for a period. He was one of those people begging for money on the side of the road. He didn't want to be there, and it was a long sad story about how he ended up there, but that was not the point of the story. He told stories of how people offered him money, shelter, prayers, food and drink. Some people cursed him, told him to get a job, spit at him. But the thing he noticed most was the simple fact that no one asked his name. While people were willing to help, no one seemed to want to know who he was. He went on to make a statement that struck me: Out of all the insults, curses, one finger salutes, stones thrown at him, people yelling at him, the one thing that hurt him most was no one caring enough to even ask his name.

I guess it make sense; you don't want to know the name of the person you flip off or swear at. But why not ask their name when you are trying to help. Asking someone's name is the first thing you do when you meet someone at a gathering, why not ask the person you are helping?

After hearing this podcast, I started paying attention to my own actions. I don't normally ask for names when I help. I never really thought about it. I figure I won't see that guy on the street corner again, so why take the time?

A few weeks ago, I saw a post on the wanted board at the rec center. Someone was looking for a slide projector, and I thought we had one. When we bought our house, there were about 10 slide projector carousels in the garage, and a box I assumed was the projector. I gave the guy a call, and he said he would come over and pick it up right away. It turned out there was not a projector in the box, just more slides. I felt kind of silly at that point. I asked why he needed the projector, and if he had one that needed fixing. His wife had passed away in the fall, and he was going through hundreds of old slides of him and his wife. His projector had broken while he was sorting them. He had tears in his eyes when he told me this. I told him I would look at his projector and see if I could fix it. He said he had bought the parts and would bring them over. He did, and I was able to fix it the next day. All during this, I never asked his name, so I finally asked him. I ended up getting to know him well. About a week later he called me and asked if he could stop over and show me something. I thought he was going to show me some pictures, but instead he showed me the most delicious pan of chocolate brownies

I had ever seen. His daughter in law made it for me. It was as good as it looked. Luckily my brother was here to help eat it.

I am sure glad I asked Stan his name.

So next time you see a homeless person, a stranded motorist, or someone looking in the bottom of their pockets for enough change to pay for groceries and you decide to Make Christ Known by helping them, ask their name. They are one of God's Children, one of your brothers or sisters, you should know their name.

Thanks

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