



Helping out



Me

“Make Like Joe!”

By Tony Campolo (from *Everything You've Heard Is Wrong*)

Joe was a drunk who was miraculously converted at a Bowery mission. Prior to his conversion, he had gained the reputation of being a dirty wino for whom there was no hope, only a miserable existence in the ghetto. But following his conversion to a new life with God, everything changed. Joe became the most caring person that anyone associated with the mission had ever known.

Joe spent his days and nights hanging out at the mission, doing whatever needed to be done. There was never anything that he was asked to do that he considered beneath him. Whether it was cleaning up the vomit left by some violently sick alcoholic or scrubbing toilets after careless men left the men's room filthy, Joe did what was asked with a smile on his face and seemed grateful for the chance to help. He could be counted on to feed feeble men who wandered off the street and into the mission, and to tuck men into bed who were too out of it to take care of themselves.

One evening, when the director of the mission was delivering his evening evangelistic message to the usual crowd of still and sullen men with drooped heads, there was one man who looked up, came down the aisle to the altar, and knelt to pray, crying out for God to help him to change. The repentant drunk kept shouting, “Oh God! Make me like Joe! Make me like Joe! Make me like Joe! Make me like Joe!”

The director of the mission leaned over and said to the man, “Son, I think it would be better if you prayed, ‘Make me like Jesus.’”

The man looked up at the director with a quizzical expression and asked, “Is he like Joe?”

You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Be kind. Everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.

—John Watson

In about the same degree as you are helpful, you will be happy.

—Karl Reiland

Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves.

—James Matthew Barrie