

Here am I. Send me.

December 13, 2010

My favorite stop where we have served at was in San Angelo. Here, we were able to spend much more time in one ministry than we had previously been able. At the soup kitchen, we spent our entire morning with the people cooking food for homeless people— or people who are just down on their luck.

When we arrived, there was only one lady there. She was only supposed to open the door and then leave. After we were shown around, we got a call that the other team was not going to make it. We had no idea what we were supposed to do, and none of us had cooked food for a group of the size we were about to feed. So, the lady who had unlocked the door for us decided to stay and help us cook. We began to divide up chores and set to preparing a meal.

After about two hours of preparation, it was time to begin letting people in to be served. As the people filed in, we saw good-looking young people, older folks shuffling in, families with little children and people from all different backgrounds. Not one was denied a meal. All of the meals were hot, and every plate was served piled high. At one point, we had to stop serving because there were not enough seats for everyone.

I mostly stayed in the kitchen to help with random tasks that came up. I wanted to go out and talk to the people, but I couldn't summon the courage to do it. I am a shy person, and so I stayed in the kitchen until the very end. I felt terrible because I know how much most of those people just want someone to talk to. Finally, I made a plate of food for myself and went to sit at a table where a man and his son were sitting. Almost immediately, I entered into a great conversation with them as if it was natural. It made me feel better about myself, and even though our conversation was cut short, I

was glad I had been able to talk to someone.

What I learned looking back was that these people don't have forever to wait on us to go talk to them. They are there for an instant and leave just as soon. We can't sit on the sidelines feeling sorry for ourselves because we're scared to talk. Jesus didn't ever sit in the kitchen and wait until everyone was gone. He didn't even second-guess himself. He interacted with the crowds without a thought.

I am reminded of Isaiah 6:8 "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said 'Here am I. Send me!'" I hope and pray that I can have the courage and the wisdom that Isaiah and Jesus had—no second thoughts and no questioning in their minds, simply a pure heart for God's children. People are people no matter where you go. They are more like us than we would often times like to admit. I know that if I were that person sitting alone, I would have loved to talk.

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