



BOISE RESCUE MISSION
MINISTRIES

8 Ways To Truly Help Homeless People

How do you react when you see someone holding up a sign, “Will Work for Food”? Do you lower your window and give them money? Do you pretend you didn’t see them? It can be intimidating to be confronted by a homeless person - the need often seems too overwhelming - but we all want to treat them fairly and justly.

Here are some simple guidelines to equip you to truly help the homeless people you meet:

1. *Be prepared*

Anticipate the opportunities you may have to engage with homeless people, to be “salt and light”, and to share God’s love whenever you can.

2. *Provide an alternative to money*

Too often well intended gifts are converted to drugs or alcohol. Instead of giving spare change, consider bringing carry-out from a restaurant and sharing it with them. Depending on the person’s expressed needs, you can also offer gloves, socks, tissues, a granola bar, bottled water and the like.

Remember also that each of the Rescue Mission’s facilities serves hot meals to our hungry and homeless neighbors every day. **Download “Meal Tickets” from BoiseRM.org/media to carry with you.** These tickets have all of the information someone would need to connect with the Mission’s shelters.

3. *Compassion and respect from someone like you can change the course of their life*

Taking time to talk to a homeless person in a friendly, respectful manner can give them a sense of civility and dignity. And besides being just neighborly, it gives the person a weapon to fight the isolation, depression and paranoia that many homeless people face.



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4. Recognize that homeless people (and their problems) are not all the same

Each person living on the streets got there a different way, but all of them are hurting. The person you meet may be a battered woman, an addicted veteran, mentally ill, lacking job skills...the list goes on.

5. Pray for those in need

Exposure to the elements, dirt, occasional violence, and lack of purpose fuel despair in homeless people's lives. God can use your prayers to bring many of the broken to Himself. Ask God what He would have you do in each situation.

6. Take precautions for your own safety

It is a fact that some living on the streets are criminals and fugitives running from the law. Always be prudent and stay in areas where other people can see you. Please don't take unnecessary chances.

7. Encourage them to get help through the Mission

Boise Rescue Mission Ministries is a much safer place to be than on the streets. You never have to worry that our shelters are full. It is our policy never to turn away a person seeking safe shelter for lack of space.

Once we have provided for their immediate needs, we work hard to connect these men, women, and children with the resources they need to address the root causes of homelessness. The Rescue Mission's New Life Program gives people the tools they need to overcome addiction and become productive, self-sufficient members of the community.

8. Support the Mission year-round

Supporting Boise Rescue Mission Ministries year-round is the best way to care for homeless men, women and children no matter what season it is. The Mission receives no government funding. We are supported by caring individuals, churches, businesses and groups who, like you, see the value of sharing their resources with those who are less fortunate.

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