

This is Lieutenant Roger McCort from The Salvation Army in Eureka with today's Community Comment.

In ancient days a boy named David came face to face with a giant. It was Goliath and he was the greatest warrior of his generation. In one battle, his fierce reputation kept an entire army at bay. Each sunrise he would stride out, coated in gleaming mail, carrying weapons which were larger than some of the men he faced. He challenged anyone to fight, but they all cowered before him, seeing him as undefeatable.

David's brothers served in that frightened army. One day when he brought them a care package he saw Goliath step out from the lines of his army and bellow his challenge. He saw how his brothers and those in their ranks avoided approaching the problem. So the boy stepped forward and took the challenge.

You know this story, and you've heard the result: David, a shepherd armed with a staff and sling, faced Goliath, an undefeated titan carrying the most advanced weapons of his day. And David won. Where everyone else had seen a problem that was too big to fight, David saw a target that was simply too big for him to miss.

I know I sometimes spend a lot of time talking about how we can face the challenge of homelessness. It's an issue that most consider too large to tackle. So many people, so many problems, so many reasons they are unhoused – how can any one person or agency or law ever hope to face it all down? We can't. Instead, we need to view homelessness as a giant which is too big to miss.

When I say that every person can help someone, I mean it. It's the only way we will ever defeat our Goliath. We must each evaluate what we can share to help even one person on their journey from homeless to wholeness. We must be like David, stepping out of the comfort of the lines we've drawn to meet the problem face to face.

I don't mean handing a roll of cash out the window when you see someone panhandling. Study after study has shown that this doesn't work. It may fund a meal or a night indoors or it may fund an addiction. And even though two of those three things are good, none of them do much to bring real change to a population that desperately needs it.

So what do I mean? How can an individual or family help end homelessness as we know it?

How about volunteering? Many agencies do large-scale work with people who are homeless. You, offering even one shift a month, would make an impact. Volunteering regularly at a feeding program or a shelter or in a clothing closet or food bank makes a difference. Not only does it help the agency, but it gives you a chance to meet and interact with the people who are homeless. It gives you opportunity to hear their stories, to hear how they got where they are and what they've tried to get out. You'll find that there are people who really are victims of circumstances outside of their control. There are others who were raised into their poverty and don't know how to get out. Still others know, but need help to turn knowing into doing. They need someone to be their David, helping slay the giant which has held them locked in place for so long. That's you. We need your help.

Homelessness isn't a problem that's too big to face; it's a problem that is too big to miss. Help put an end to one person's homelessness today. Volunteer!

Grace and peace to you. This has been Lt. Roger McCort with today's KINS Community Comment.