A Smile and a Donation Pickup!

OUR MISSION To offer life changing hope through the Gospel of Jesus Christ to homeless men, women, and children through programs to deliver food, shelter, counseling and discipleship.
Everything in our house had sentimental value to my mother. And I mean everything. As she passed away over a year ago, I am now in the process of cleaning out the old Baker home. I’m the only old Baker left of the family who lived there so many years, so it falls to me and my wife to clean out 60 years of accumulated life.

Furniture, dishes, cookbooks, ceramic chickens, pictures, are a drop in the ocean of items that fill each room, closet and drawer of the house. The piano I learned to play on as a child still sits in its original perch from 1975. Family pictures hung in love still adorn the walls, pictures that mean little to anyone else.

By the time you read this letter, most of those things will have come down. To paraphrase Ecclesiastes, for everything there is a season: A time to build a new home, a time to hang pictures, a time to furnish and decorate, a time to build memories, a time to entertain friends, and a time for presents for the children on Christmas morning. And alas, there comes a time to clean out, a time to take down the pictures, a time to close out, a time to prepare for the “for sale” sign in the front yard, a time to say goodbye to the house that holds a lifetime of memories.

In my years at Gateway Rescue Mission, we’ve conducted numerous donation pickups from estate sales. I’ve taken calls from donors who wished to donate things from the old family home and from the widow who had finally made peace with donating her husband’s clothes. I now know how they feel as it has come my time to decide what to keep, what to try and sell, what to donate and what to throw away. One person’s cherished memory is another person’s trash or trinket that winds up on a flea-market display.

Mother and Daddy kept everything meticulously stored in its proper place. In a drawer, I found where Mother had lovingly filed all the Gateway newsletters I had written in chronological order, right up until the summer of 2017 when we moved her into assisted living. I once made the mistake of donating one of Mother’s end-tables to our thrift store that I didn’t think she’d miss. Bad mistake. She’s probably fussing at Jesus now because He wouldn’t let her bring it.

Sorting out the old in preparation for the new, is hard, dirty work. However, the work must be done if we are to produce something of value for the next generation as we close out the old. Clean up the old house, fix the air-conditioning and plumbing leaks and it can bless a family for the future. Leave it alone and it will rot and become an eyesore.

We too often treat human life the same way. We think that to clean up a life, one only needs to say a quick prayer and everything becomes instantly new. Yet, the work of reclamation is hard and sweaty. Just like the old house filled with half a century of accumulated stuff, cleaning out a life takes time and effort. The grime left by old sins and habits doesn’t disappear just by saying “I repent.” Building a new life takes work that includes cleaning up the old and getting rid of baggage that we can’t take with us, no matter the sentimental value.

In God’s economy, rescue missions and thrift stores go hand in hand. We deal with discarded people. It’s only fitting that we also deal with discarded items that somebody no longer needs. Yet, God uses the discarded things to provide income for our rescue mission. He also recycles those old items to bless someone else who needs them.

May we all remember that the disheveled, tired and worn out person who sometimes gets on our nerves today was once a proud parent’s baby, a groom’s beautiful bride or a young girl’s dream beau. And the old nightstand in the back of the thrift store was once a young couple’s newly purchased prize possession. As you deal with times of transition in life, remember that God never lets anything go to waste and He births something new out of the old.

Rex Baker
Executive Director
Gateway Rescue Mission

Visit gatewaymission.org for more information on how you can help someone today.
A Smile and a Donation Pickup!

Our thrift store in Pearl is a vital part of our Gateway ministry. It’s also symbolic of how God doesn’t let anything go to waste. At Gateway Rescue Mission, we deal with society’s throwaways. People who have been passed over, tossed away and forgotten come to us seeking a place to at least temporarily call home.

It’s fitting that we run a thrift store. People donate second-hand items, things that may have been stored in the attic, closet or garage and are no longer needed. They donate these items to us. We resell them and the money goes back into funding the ministry of Gateway Rescue Mission.

Dolls, pianos, records, vacuum cleaners, dishes, clothes, coffeepots, shoes, lamps, and furniture, are just some of the types of items we sell. Beneath the organized chaos of our store on any given shopping day, is a heartbeat of life and activity. People in our New Life Program seeking a new chance at life help process donations.

Some program graduates work their way into a paid employment position. Let’s name a few. On this page, you can see Quince, our store manager, decked out in his mask who somehow manages to make everything tick at Pearl. Jerome can be seen pumping iron during a break on the store dock.

Steven can mule-haul a piece of furniture with the best of them. Aristotle, shown on the front cover, is our calm, always smiling, and very strong truck driver. At our thrift store, God knows how to repurpose a piece of furniture and most of all, He knows how to repurpose a human life.
I breezed through our thrift store a few days ago, and appropriately found an old 45 rpm copy of “Hot Fun in the Summertime” by Sly and the Family Stone. Then I came across a piano that still has music to give.

When you donate to our thrift store, it’s just like giving us cash. Thrift store sales contribute a major part of our yearly income. Our dock is busy most days with donors dropping things off while shoppers browse for things to buy. Our route truck spends most days on the road picking up bigger loads.

We seriously appreciate your donation of household items and furniture. If you’d like to schedule a pickup, please call our store at 601-932-1668. In case you’re thinking, “I seriously need to clean out the garage, but what would I do with all that stuff,” Gateway Rescue Mission is the answer. And it all goes to help fund God’s ministry among those seeking a second chance at life.

Gateway Needs

- New socks and underwear. People come to us with nothing. These items meet a real need and also provide a new feeling of worth to the wearer.
- Shampoo, soap, toothpaste, and toothbrushes.
- Combs and hairbrushes.
- Razors, shaving cream and clippers.
- Fingernail and toenail clippers.
- Reading glasses.