

Ringling Bells and Red Kettles

'Tis the season to see people in uniforms in shopping malls ringing bells, overseeing red kettles and collecting donations for the poor. They are doing the work of the Salvation Army.

In 1878, when the Salvation Army was really beginning to make its mark, men and women from all over the world began to enlist.

A man who had once dreamed of becoming a bishop in another denomination crossed the Atlantic from America to England to join the Salvation Army instead. His name was Samuel Brengle, who left a fine pastorate to join William Booth's Army.



At first, Gen. Booth accepted his services reluctantly and grudgingly. Booth said to Brengle, "You've been your own boss too long."



So, in order to instill humility in Brengle, Booth made him work by cleaning the boots of other trainees.

Discouraged, Brengle said to himself, "Have I followed my own fancy across the Atlantic in order to black boots?"

Then, as in a vision, he saw Jesus bending over the feet of rough, uneducated fishermen. "Lord," Brengle whispered, "You washed their feet; I will black their shoes."

Samuel Brengle went on to establish the Salvation Army in America. At the time of his death, the Salvation Army was thriving in both the United States and Canada.

Just before he died, Brengle sent out a short memo to all of his top leaders. The memo had one single word written on it: *Others*.

God has called us to serve others, no matter what circumstances we may find ourselves in.

I recently read a story about a well-dressed woman who was on a safari in Africa. The group stopped briefly at a hospital for lepers. The heat was intense, the flies buzzing. She noticed a nurse bending down in the dirt, tending to the pus-filled sores of a leper.

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With disdain, the woman remarked, “Why, I wouldn’t do that for all the money in the world!”

The nurse quietly replied, “Neither would I.”

And the nurse was correct. There is a greater, eternal reward.

Just remember: As you serve others in the work you are called to do in Life Care and Century Park, God takes notice.

God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them (Hebrews 6:10 NIV).

– Beecher Hunter

