

aug 1

Jesus came to dinner

ruth looked at the envelope again. there was no stamp, no postmark, only her name and address. she read the letter one more time...

dear ruth,

I'm going to be in your neighborhood saturday afternoon and I'd like to stop by for a visit.

love always,

Jesus

her hands were shaking as she placed the letter on the table. "why would the Lord want to visit me? i'm nobody special. i don't have anything to offer."

with that thought, ruth remembered her empty kitchen cabinets. "oh my goodness, i really don't have anything to offer. i'll have to run down to the store and buy something for dinner."

she reached for her purse and counted out its contents. seven dollars and forty cents. "well, i can get some bread and cold cuts, at least." she threw on her coat and hurried out the door.

a loaf of french bread, a half-pound of sliced turkey, and a carton of milk ... leaving ruth with a grand total of twelve cents to last her until monday.

nonetheless, she felt satisfied as she headed home, her meager offerings tucked under her arm.

"hey lady, can you help us, lady?" ruth had been so absorbed in her dinner plans, she hadn't even noticed two figures huddled in the alleyway. a man and a woman, both of them dressed in little more than rags.

"look lady, i ain't got a job, ya know, and my wife and i have been living out here on the street, and, well, now it's getting cold and we're getting kinda hungry and, well, if you could help us, lady, we'd really appreciate it."

ruth looked at them both. they were dirty, they smelled bad and, frankly, she was certain that they could get some kind of work if they really wanted to. "sir, i'd like to help you, but i'm a poor woman myself. all i have is a few cold cuts and some bread, and i'm having an important guest for dinner tonight and i was planning on serving that to Him."

"yeah, well, ok lady, i understand. thanks anyway." the man put his arm around the woman's shoulders, turned and headed back into the alley.

as she watched them leave, ruth felt a familiar twinge in her heart. "sir, wait!" the couple stopped and turned as she ran down the alley after them. "look, why don't you take this food. i'll figure out something else to serve my guest." she handed the man her grocery bag.

"thank you, lady. thank you very much!" "yes, thank

you!" It was the man's wife, and ruth could see now that she was shivering.

"you know, i've got another coat at home. here, why don't you take this one." ruth unbuttoned her jacket and slipped it over the woman's shoulders. then smiling, she turned and walked back to the street ... without her coat and with nothing to serve her guest. "thank you, lady! thank you very much!"

ruth was chilled by the time she reached her front door and worried too. the Lord was coming to visit and she didn't have anything to offer Him. she fumbled through her purse for the door key. but as she did, she noticed another envelope in her mailbox. "that's odd. the mailman doesn't usually come twice in one day." she took the envelope out of the box and opened it.

dear ruth,

it was so good to see you again. thank you for the lovely meal. and thank you too, for the beautiful coat.

love always,

Jesus

the air was still cold, but even without her coat, ruth no longer noticed.

then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? when did we see you a stranger and

invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?"

the King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." matthew 25:37-40

- author unknown

here we have that sweet "author unknown" again. you know, nowadays we see many begging for help, more here in america than i ever thought we would. certainly we have to be led by the Holy Spirit and not just contribute to their situation or greed. that being said, our God can use anything to turn a life around.

a long time ago i read a story by someone. they had a kind heart and were always wanting to give to others, even when it caused their own hurt. seeking God in all things, they heard this from the Holy Spirit. "you just be obedient. I'll be merciful." and indeed He will be.

i think again on all the immigrants now flooding our nation, as well as others. i assuredly don't have all the answers. certainly they are lawbreakers. some are really in need and others, i know, have nefarious agendas. we must have His discernment and guidance in how to handle each encounter. i don't want the world to "seem" more compassionate than christians. they are all children of God, just as we are, needing a savior and mercy. we cannot be the first, but we can certainly give the latter. their journey into the

light may have been much more treacherous than ours.
justice will not be served in this age - only in the
next. let us get as many there as we can. let them
see Jesus in us.

until everything i do becomes the thing that pleases
You. maranatha!