



## BREAKFAST AT MCDONALD'S

I am a mother of three (ages 14, 12, 3) and have recently completed my college degree. The last class I had to take was Sociology. The teacher was absolutely inspiring with the qualities that I wish every human being had been graced with. Her last project of the term was called, 'Smile.' The class was asked to go out and smile at three people and document their reactions. I am a very friendly person and always smile at everyone and say hello anyway. So, I thought this would be a piece of cake, literally.

Soon after we were assigned the project, my husband, youngest son, and I went out to McDonald's one crisp March morning. It was just our way of sharing special playtime with our son. We were standing in line, waiting to be served, when all of a sudden everyone around us began to back away, and then even my husband did. I did not move an inch. An overwhelming feeling of panic welled up inside of me as I turned to see why they had moved. As I turned around I smelled a horrible 'dirty body' smell, and there standing behind me were two poor homeless men. As I looked down at the short gentleman, close to me, he was 'smiling'. His beautiful sky blue eyes searched for acceptance. He said, 'Good day' as he counted the few coins he had been clutching.

The second man fumbled with his hands as he stood behind his friend. I realized the second man was mentally challenged and the blue-eyed gentleman was the leader. I held my tears as I stood there with them. The young lady at the counter asked him what they wanted. He said, 'Coffee is all Miss' because that was all they could afford. (If they wanted to sit in the restaurant and warm up, they had to buy something. He just wanted to be warm).

Then I really felt it - the compulsion was so great I almost reached out and embraced the little man with the blue eyes. That is when I noticed all eyes in the restaurant were set on me, judging my every action. I smiled and asked the young lady behind the counter to give me two more breakfast meals on a separate tray.

I then walked around the corner to the table that the men had chosen as a resting spot. I put the tray on the table and laid my hand on the blue-eyed gentleman's cold hand. He looked up at me, with tears in his eyes, and said, 'Thank you.' I leaned over, began to pat his hand and said, 'I did this for you because of what Jesus has done for each of us and He is working through me to give you hope.'

I started to cry as I walked away to join my husband and son. When I sat down my husband smiled at me and said, 'The act of kindness through your faith is why God gave you to me, Honey, to give me hope.' We held hands for a moment and at that moment it dawned on me, "Why would I love those gentlemen when everyone else was repulsed by them? I can be selfish, too. It's just that when I saw those sky blue eyes, I saw a man for whom Jesus died. If God so loved us, why wouldn't I not also love?"

That day showed me the pure Light of God's sweet love. I returned to college, on the last evening of class, with this story in hand. I turned in 'my project' and the instructor read it. Then she looked up at me and said, 'Can I share this?' I slowly nodded as she got the attention of the class. She began to read and that is when I knew that we as human beings and being part of God's family, share this need to heal people and to be healed. In my own way I had touched the people at McDonald's, my son, the instructor, and every soul that shared the classroom on the last night I spent as a college student. I graduated with one of the biggest lessons I would ever learn:

Much love and compassion is sent to each and every person who may read this and learn how to LOVE PEOPLE AND USE THINGS - NOT LOVE THINGS AND USE PEOPLE. Many people will walk in and out of your life, but only true friends will leave footprints in your heart. To handle yourself, use your head. To handle others, use your heart. God gives every bird its food, but He does not throw it into its nest.