

I poke my nose into a shelter made of torn covers and boxes, which block the wind. As I trot around the shelter, I see the man. He reaches down to pet me behind the ears. He always seems happier when I'm beside him. We both search for scraps lying near the dumper. He throws me a piece when he finds some. We sit on the curb in front of a store and he asks people for coins. Most people don't make eye contact with him. They look at me and say, "Cute dog," but to him, not even a nod.

I hang behind him as he goes to place where people hand out food. He always seems thankful for this kindness. I not allowed in so I wait and watch the busy people helping at the shelter. Boxes of old clothes and food come and go. Volunteers counsel those homeless about possible jobs. I start walking and I pass a church, and the people inside are saying a prayer for the homeless. I hope God hears.

I know these thing help, but what my friend and all the homeless need is someone like me. Someone who will be there for them to help combat their loneliness and share their joy. Someone who accepts them for who they are and does not judge. Someone who loves them as Jesus does, unconditionally.

I head back to the food place and see the man walking out of the place. He throws me some food and reaches down and gives my belly a rub. It's good to have a friend. I hope he feels the same way.