There are few things more freeing than getting rid of your old stuff. And if we take Jesus’ advice about not storing up treasures on earth, we can even view decluttering as a biblical mandate.

As you prepare to purchase new winter clothing (and subsequently purge your old winter gear), please remember the homeless. Each year when temperatures plummet, we run very low, if not completely out, of things like coats, hats, gloves, scarves and boots. It’s heartbreaking to tell a cold homeless person that we don’t have warm clothes for them or see a person wearing sandals on our snowy streets. So put your warm clothing in the trunk of your car and next time you are downtown, drop them off at the Rescue Mission. You’ll benefit by decluttering the stuff you aren’t going to wear anymore and you’ll help make sure the homeless have warm winter clothes.

If you need more motivation, here’s three tips from buzzfeed.com to get you started.

1. To begin cleaning out a messy closet take every single thing out of it, then you can work backwards by putting the things you want to keep back in.

2. When choosing items to keep, ask yourself a few vital questions.
   - Does it still fit?
   - Have I worn it in the last 12 months?
   - Would I wear it again?
   - If I saw it in a store now, would I buy it?

3. If there isn’t anything wrong with the items that you do not want to keep, consider giving them away.

   And if you do give them away, please give them to the Rescue Mission, where we will pass them on to the neediest people in Utah. We will find a good home for all types of clothes—men’s, women’s, and kids. Winter is coming and we need your help to make sure everyone stays warm this year.

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**FINDING SUCCESS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD**

As noted in this month’s testimony, I am often asked about our success rate. This question makes me ponder success and how we define success at the Rescue Mission:

Is merely feeding, clothing, and sheltering the poor a success? Many people would say that it is not, but I disagree. Our emergency services are designed to keep people alive and safe so that we can build trusting relationships to encourage people to change their lives through a relationship with Jesus.

Ultimately, we do hope that success is defined by a changed life. While Randy Thornton (who shares his testimony in this month’s Rescuer) never graduated from the New Life Program, the impact the Rescue Mission had on his life was immeasurable. The things he learned here about God, living within the Body of Christ, and being dependent on other people, changed him from the inside out. When Randy left the New Life Program for the third time without graduating, there’s no way we would have considered him one of our “successes.”

But now, I see him continue to stay sober, volunteer at the Rescue Mission and encourage other addicts to join the New Life Program. Randy himself often tells people that it is God who changed him and that God will change people if we trust God means it. What we started in Randy at the Rescue Mission and encourage other addicts to join the New Life Program, it will not be wasted, we can be successful with him than we ever knew.

I am thankful that God has used me to help my brother get the help he needs. I am thankful that God has used me to help my brother get the help he needs. I am going to the Genesis Project church, which meets at Hub 801 in Ogden, for Bible study. I like the people there along with the relaxed atmosphere combined with a firm commitment to the Gospel and God’s word. I remember asking for God to continue to be with me. But in everyday life, it is a little bit of caffeine rush gave me just a little taste of what is there as well, still staying sober. Today, I am living independent of government programs, there certainly is, especially for those who are so profoundly hurt they will never be self-sufficient.

Still, our success rate is based on the notion that God desires each of us to strive for our highest, God-enabled capacity in life. We all should consider and treat the life we give to others as valuable and for a purpose. So we strive to help hurting people have changed lives.

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Drawing me there. After I left the first time, I remember coming down to Salt Lake (I have spent my life living in Ogden) to buy meth. It seems like every time I would come down, God would make sure I had to pass by the Rescue Mission. Each time I saw the “Jesus Saves” sign I felt drawn to come back.

Eventually, God used my longest stint at the Rescue Mission, combined with several months in jail, to help me. It was early last year when I entered the New Life Program for the third time. The Mission’s leaders were gracious in allowing me to stay. But after about five months, I took an unauthorized trip to my girlfriend’s house and got into a fight with another guy there. I was picked up for a parole violation and taken to jail. With five months of sobriety already under my belt, my stay in jail helped me continue to stay sober.

I started going to a Bible study in jail and when the person who was leading the Bible study was let free from jail, I started leading the Bible study. I remember what I had learned through the many Bible studies and counseling sessions at the Rescue Mission and was able to teach others.

I was even able to quit drinking coffee. While I am not judging people who drink coffee, for me, a meth addict, getting that little bit of caffeine rush gave me just a little taste of what meth was like. God convicted me to quit, so while I was in jail, I gave away my last two bags of coffee that I had stored up. It was a big victory for me to be free from all stimulants.

When I was released to a halfway house I completed my time there as well, still staying sober. Today, I am living independent of government programs, there certainly is, especially for those who are so profoundly hurt they will never be self-sufficient.

I am thankful that God has used me to help my brother get the help he needs.