



HOW TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR TO DISASTER SURVIVORS

FIELD GUIDE

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SPIRITUAL FIRST AID™

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INTRODUCTION

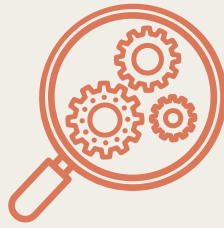
“Good Samaritan” is a common term for volunteers who go above and beyond to help after a disaster.

Every state in the United States has a Good Samaritan law to protect uncompensated volunteers who spontaneously provide aid in emergencies.

The parable of the Good Samaritan, from which this term gets its name, is one of the Bible's most well-known parables.

Found in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 10:25-37), the story offers an example of how to love God, embrace strangers as neighbors, and help others in need.

A closer look at the Good Samaritan parable can inspire and guide Christians seeking to help others in the wake of disasters.



EXAMINE YOUR MOTIVATIONS

Before volunteering, stop and ask yourself why you want to help.

Jesus told the Good Samaritan parable after an interaction He had with an expert of the law.

This expert wanted to know how to earn eternal life.

Jesus redirected the conversation, shifting his thinking from “What’s in it for me?” to “How can I love God and others well?”

Disaster relief is not about you.

Volunteer to meet the needs of survivors, not to satisfy your own extrinsic needs (e.g., to be seen as a do-gooder).

Make sure you’re helping for the right reasons.

Good reasons for assisting those in need are inwardly motivated, such as the desire to help others for the sake of helping others or wanting to serve because you believe it’s the right thing to do.



GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR

Reach beyond your comfort zone; focus especially on helping underserved and vulnerable neighbors affected by disasters.

Don't cross to the other side of the road—like the priest or Levite did in the parable—if you encounter someone in need whom you perceive to be different than yourself.

Disasters impact those with fewer social or economic resources more significantly.

Because they have fewer resources, it also typically makes their recovery longer and more difficult.

Following the Good Samaritan's example means broadening your notion of "neighbor" beyond those who share your geography and background.



PROVIDE FOR YOUR NEIGHBOR'S BASIC NEEDS

The Good Samaritan took care of the man's most immediate physical needs by bandaging his wounds, taking him to an inn, and caring for him through the night.

Focus on attending to survivors' most basic needs, like injuries, transportation, shelter, and safety.

Don't assume you know the best way to help or what your neighbor needs most. Instead, ask how you can help and what your neighbor feels his immediate, tangible priorities are.

Then take steps to try and meet those needs.

Giving money right away is one of the most effective ways you can help in the immediate aftermath of natural disasters. Yes, giving a monetary donation can feel a bit sterile.

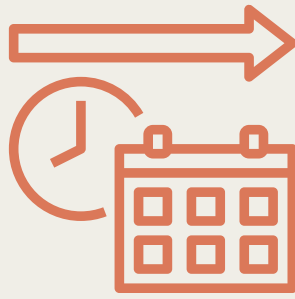
Yet giving to those on the ground means your dollars will be utilized immediately and where they are most needed. To make sure your dollars are well-spent, donate to established relief organizations and nonprofits.

— “ —

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. ... Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.

-Matthew 25:35-40

— ” —



SUPPORT YOUR NEIGHBOR'S LONG-TERM RECOVERY

The Good Samaritan gave two denarii to the innkeeper to help the man while he was gone.

He informed the innkeeper of his plan to return and cover expenses incurred in his absence.

Another way you can help, like the Good Samaritan, is to financially contribute to long-term recovery efforts.

Note that the Good Samaritan anticipated more resources were likely to be needed as time passed.

Research has shown the vast majority of giving is done in the early phase of disaster response, often running dry during the later stages of recovery.

Commit to supporting long-term assistance, since social and financial capital often dry up well before tangible signs of disaster recovery are evidenced.

CONCLUSION

By examining and embodying the principles of love, neighborliness, and assistance outlined in the parable of the Good Samaritan, you'll be better positioned to offer effective, compassionate aid in disaster situations to those who need it most.



But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii[c] and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

- Luke 10: 33-35





Mental health is complex. Helping doesn't have to be.

BIBLICALLY-INFORMED

EVIDENCE-INFORMED

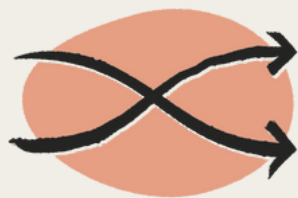
TRAUMA-INFORMED

Spiritual First Aid teaches frontline peer-to-peer spiritual and emotional care and trauma-informed best practices.

When a friend approaches you with a crisis, do you experience...

- Uncertainty in what to say
- Missing signs of emotional struggles
- Personal burnout
- Hesitation in crucial moments
- Misinterpreting situations as trauma
- Compassion fatigue

In a world where mental health complexities can be overwhelming, Spiritual First Aid takes the guesswork out of spiritual and emotional care.



FLEXIBLE FORMATS

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ALL-INCLUSIVE

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HANDS-ON

Gain practical helping skills through activities and role-play simulations.