



How to help the Church help people.

By Alexander S. Brown, Minister

THE devastation that was caused by the tornado that ripped through the Oklahoma town of Moore on Monday, May 20th is on a scale that is hard to imagine. Seeing pictures of the total destruction the storm brought upon that suburban community is breath-taking, and as we look at those pictures and realize that each pile of rubble was once a home, it makes us long to do something to help.

But what can we do? How can we best help?

We often hear requests for money, but that doesn't feel like it's enough – in some ways it feels like a cop-out; it feels like we are taking the easy way out.

However, in the article below, Jesse Johnson (Teaching Pastor at Immanuel Bible Church in Springfield, VA) shows that giving money in times of tragedy is not only a helpful response, but a biblical one:

When I heard that a tornado in Oklahoma City killed over 50 people, many of whom were elementary students, I shuddered with sorrow. How can a person hear that children died and entire neighborhoods were wiped out and not be affected?

So I stopped and prayed. I thanked the Lord for my own family's safety, and I prayed for those first-responders and teachers who were trying to rescue people. I prayed for the churches in the area, and asked that God would give them wisdom in how they respond. I asked that the pastors would have the ability to comfort, the elders would lead, and that God would use this for good by drawing people to Himself.

And then I thought, how can I help? What can I do to help those in need, especially the believers who were affected? I read this passage:

“Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Luke 12:33-34)

And then this one: “If anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?” (1 John 3:17)

But I don't own a rescue dog, and I don't even live in Oklahoma. How can I possibly apply those verses in times of tragedy? It is practically the American Way to donate to the Red Cross or other aid organizations. But is that what Jesus had in mind?

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June Calendar

Sunday

9:30 a.m. Sunday School
The Hole in Our Holiness

10:30 a.m. Morning Worship
Exodus: God, our Savior

6:00 p.m. Evening Worship
The Gospel of John

Children's Church, Nursery available

Weekly Bible Studies and the Midweek Prayer Meeting are set to resume in September.

Sun 6/2 Communion, AM Worship

Sat 6/8 “Second Saturday” Men's Breakfast & Bible Study (8:00 a.m., Brown home)

Tue 6/11 GIPC Stated Session Meeting (6:00 p.m., GIPC)

Sun 6/16 Care Net's “Change-for-Life” campaign ends on Father's Day — *return \$\$-filled baby bottles to GIPC.*



6/18-6/21 PCA's 41st General Assembly (Greenville, SC)

Sun 6/30 **GIPC Fellowship Lunch** & General Assembly Report

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In the New Testament, when there were physical or practical needs in the church, they were met through the church. When there were poor in the congregation, the elders organized a system to care for their needs (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 5:9). Believers obeyed Jesus' command and sold their excess goods to care for one another, but they didn't give the money to outside groups; they gave it to the church, through the church.

The early church met the physical needs of other believers by giving their money to their church (they literally laid it at the Apostles' feet), and then they allowed the elders to identify the most urgent needs to meet. And when there was famine or desperate poverty in distant lands, the strategy stayed the same. Believers pooled their money and gave it to their churches, who in turn passed it along to churches in need (Romans 15:25-26; 1 Corinthians 16:1-3).

The wisdom of this approach is obvious. How could a church in Galatia possibly know the most effective way to minister in Jerusalem? How could they really discern between those truly in need, and those whom charity would only further enable? Obviously they couldn't possibly be expected to know those things. But the elders of the church in Jerusalem would, so Paul wanted to collect the money and give it to the church, who would then give it to the poor.

The same is true today. Take the tragedy in Oklahoma yesterday. Do you want to help? That is good, and a sign of godliness. But how can you know who is in need? If you give to a secular organization, you are trusting your money to a group that obviously does not share your goal of reconciling the world to God through preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. How do you know which homeowners have insurance, and which don't? How do you know who is in desperate need? How do you possibly know who to give your money to?

The answer is simple. The procedure Paul described in Romans 15 and 1 Corinthians 16 is still effective. Here is how I suggest this should look:

1. Churches should have a designated fund set up for disaster relief. Then when a disaster happens, they already have the procedure in place to receive money from their congregants to help meet the needs of those affected. That way people follow Paul's example and give directly to their own church as a way of ministering to those around the globe.
2. Churches should then send the money that was collected to like-minded churches in the affected area, for the purpose of meeting the material needs of their congregations. That puts the burden of discernment on the local elders, who are the ones best placed to know how to use the money. It is always a good principle to give your money to the godliest people who are closest to the need, and this accomplishes just that.

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Finance Committee

GIPC Update: Loan Balance

Loan Balance 1/1/13	\$807,308
Principal Paid YTD	\$ 15,622
Loan Balance 5/20/13	\$791,686
2013 Average Payment:	
Interest	\$ 2,574
Principal	\$ 2,678
Total Payment	\$ 5,252

Men's Ministry

"Second Saturday" Men's Breakfast & Bible Study

Saturday, June 8, 2013

8:00 a.m. at the Brown home

Disciplines of a Godly Man

(This will be the final Men's Bible Study until September.)

Significant Sessional Actions

- Ordained and installed Bill Wood as Deacon and Clay Huddleston as Ruling Elder on May 12, 2013.
- Set the date for the next Stated Session meeting to be Tuesday, June 11, 2013.

Mr. Brown is scheduled to attend the 41st General Assembly of the PCA in June. Pray for wisdom and unity among the church leaders as they meet to discuss, debate, and vote on issues of vital importance to the PCA. Mr. Brown will present a GA Summary Report to the GIPC Congregation at a Fellowship Lunch on June 30th.

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3. If you don't know of a like-minded church in the area (or if your church is not receiving money for something like this), consider giving funds to a group like *The Children's Hunger Fund*. They are one of the world's largest Christian charities, and they distribute their resources through a network of like-minded churches. This network is already established globally, and the churches who are part of it have been trained on how to respond in times of crisis. CHF has as one of its main principles that the resources they give out go to churches, and that the local churches then take the lead on how to use/distribute them. I have worked with them first-hand, and have seen the integrity they use in handling \$5 gifts as well as \$20,000 donations. I've seen them respond to fires in Los Angeles, the earthquake in Haiti, and typhoons in the Philippines. They have a legacy of maximizing their resources to strengthen affected churches, while furthering the advancement of the gospel.¹

Regardless of where you give your money, the goal should be the same: believers in parts of the world where there is excess should use their material blessings to alleviate physical suffering of believers while furthering the missionary efforts of the church. The only way I can think of doing that is to follow the pattern set up by Paul, and get the resources into the hands of the churches in need.

THE PCA's Disaster Response team is on the ground in Moore and working with local churches there to begin the long process of clean-up and rebuilding. If you want to give to this ministry and support their work, more details can be found at their website:

<http://pcamna.org/disaster-response/storms/>

¹This article first appeared on the CrippleGate blog, on May 21st:
<http://thecrippleGate.com/responding-to-a-tragedy-by-giving-money/>



**You're invited
to GIPC's**

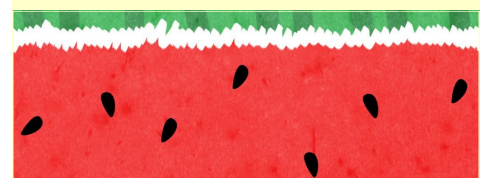
'Ole Fashion' Family Picnic

**at Neptune Park
on St. Simons**

**Saturday,
July 13th**

**Cook-Out
under the Oaks
11:00 a.m. until
2:00 p.m.**

**Lots of fun
and activities
for all ages!**



JUNE
 "Blessed is the one who reads...and blessed are those who hear." (Revelation 1:3)

Family Worship
Old Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Deuteronomy</i>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		13,14	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		17	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		18	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		19	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		20	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		21	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		23	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		24	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		26	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		27-28:19	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		28:20-68	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		29	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		30	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		31	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		32	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		33,34	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	<i>Joshua</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		2	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Family Worship
Psalms Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Psalms</i>	88	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		89	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		90	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		91	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		92,93	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		94	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		95,96	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		97,98	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		99-101	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		102	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		103	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		104	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		105	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		106	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		107	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		108,109	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		110,111	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		112,113	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		114,115	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		116	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		117,118	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		119:1-24	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		v. 25-48	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		v. 49-72	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		v. 73-96	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		v. 97-120	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		v. 121-144	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		v. 145-176	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		120-122	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		123-125	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Private
Old Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Isaiah</i>	33	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		34	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		35	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		36	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		37	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		38	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		39	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		40	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		41	<input type="checkbox"/>
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26		58	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		59	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		60	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		61	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		62	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Private
New Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Revelation</i>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		17	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		18	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		19	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		20	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		21	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	<i>Matthew</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		10	<input type="checkbox"/>

Week beginning JUNE 2

I John 4:4b and Psalm 42:11
 He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.
 Why are you cast down, O my soul,
 and why are you in turmoil within me?
 Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him,
 my salvation and my God.

Week beginning JUNE 9

Psalm 55:22
 Cast your burden on the LORD,
 and He will sustain you;
 He will never permit the righteous
 to be moved.

Week beginning JUNE 16

James 4:16-17
 As it is, you boast in your arrogance.
 All such boasting is evil.
 So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it,
 for him it is sin.

Week beginning JUNE 23

I Peter 2:9-10
 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
 a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the
 excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His
 marvelous light. Once you were not a people,
 but now you are God's people; once you had not received
 mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Week beginning JUNE 30

Psalm 96:1-3
 Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD,
 all the earth! Sing to the LORD, bless His name;
 tell of His salvation from day to day.
 Declare His glory among the nations,
 His marvelous works among all the peoples!