

INTRO TO “GUIDELINES FOR GIVING”

There are thousands of missions and relief organizations outside of local churches that ask Believers for financial support. How do you know when to give to these organizations?

Saddleback advocates a reformation to missions and a new way of thinking related to giving to mission organizations in general. For many years, relief agencies and their dedicated employees have taken up the mantle of caring for the “least of these” – orphans, widows, the poor, the sick through the donations of compassionate Christians. These relief organizations (sometimes called NGOs or Non-Government Organizations) have filled in the gaps where the church of Jesus Christ has failed to demonstrate love and kindness and in situations where the church has ignored the mandate from our Father to be His hands and feet in the world. But there is widening awakening of Christians to serve the poor, the sick, the weak, the orphan and the widow through local churches around the world and an intense interest in giving themselves as well as their donations. In light of this growing sense of personal responsibility for obeying Jesus’ commands to love one another, many Christians ask how to participate in giving outside of their local church. Here are the four guidelines we have developed at Saddleback:

1. Church members should tithe to their own local churches before giving to another ministry.
2. Church members should be personally involved through their local churches with their time and resources before giving or going outside of their own churches. These might be local mission efforts or global mission efforts.
3. When a church member does give beyond their local churches, giving should be directed toward activities that help and are focused on building up the local church in another country/region. Give (your time, talent and treasure) to help the local church in another country/region so that they may do the work. Ask yourself, “Does this help the local church be the church in their own area?”

4. Where the local church is not present, not strong enough or does not have the specialization to implement a program, we encourage local church members to give and go through Christian agencies committed to the Great Commission & Great Commandment who are working through local churches.