

ACTION: GIVE GENEROUSLY

*“If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food,
and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’
without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?”*

(Bible: James 2:15–16 ESV)

Having fled Islamic jihad, military campaigns, ethnic cleanings, sectarian pogroms, violent persecution and systematic discrimination, hundreds of thousands of religious- and often ethnic-minority Christians are this day displaced, traumatized, and destitute. They have lost their homes, their savings, and their livelihoods. Many have lost everything but the clothes on their backs.

To avoid further discrimination and persecution, displaced persecuted Christians tend *not* to seek sanctuary in UN camps; rather they prefer to find refuge amongst fellow Christians with whom they know they will be safe. Consequently, the burden of care falls not to the UN but to monasteries and local churches. From Syria and Iraq to Sudan and Burma, local Christians backed by local churches are providing displaced and persecuted Christians with warm clothes, shelter, food, infant milk formula, clean water, sanitation, pharmaceuticals, medical care, and education. Though willing to be God’s hands, they depend on funds coming in from God’s givers.

Numerous Christian aid and advocacy groups, Christian charities of every denomination, and even former and currently serving missionaries, are delivering aid to persecuted and existentially imperiled Christians through secure, trusted, and well-established channels. Of course it is wise to *only* give or send money to well-established, recognized agencies or people whom you know and trust to avoid falling prey to scammers.

I have no intention of providing a list of agencies that deliver aid directly to the persecuted, for to list is to limit. Rather, I advise individuals and churches to seek the Lord in this: *pray*. Ask the Lord to direct you—to open the door and lead you in the way he wants you to go. And while Christians will do this knowing that God hears and answers prayers because he is alive and engaged in the affairs of this world, concerned non-Christians (unbelievers) should give it a try too. God will honor this prayer, I guarantee it. For it is promised: “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him” (James 1:5). As for me, I totally trust the Lord in this. Putting this in God’s hands ensures that all needs will be covered.

*“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me . . .
Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters,
you did it to me [Jesus].”*
(Matthew 25:35–46 ESV)