

Christians Rally to Aid Chinese During Earthquake Aftermath

Franklin Graham's ministry Samaritan's Purse was given official authorization by the Chinese government to send supplies to help the people left homeless by the May 12 earthquake and subsequent tremors.



[] On Monday Samaritan's Purse, a Christian humanitarian aid ministry led by Franklin Graham, was given official authorization by the Chinese government to send supplies to help the nearly 4.8 million people left homeless by the May 12 earthquake and subsequent tremors.

Later this week, Samaritan's Purse will airlift water filtration units, hygiene packets, medical kits, blankets, and other emergency supplies to Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province and one of the hardest hit regions.

They will also airlift plastic rolls to cover at least 14,000 families and arrange for other shipments from Bangkok, Thailand, and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates to deliver more water filtration filters and tablets.

Graham, who was actually in China at the time of the earthquake and saw 1,250 people receive salvation at an outreach the day before, vowed to support the many families affected by the disaster.

"We want to do anything we can to assist with this crisis, so we are committing funds for initial support of the local church as they assist with the relief efforts," Graham said. "I would ask all Christians in the United States to pray for the people of China and the church here as they reach out to their fellow citizens with God's love and compassion."

Richard Cai, pastor of Thanksgiving Christian Church in Chengdu, met with his congregation Sunday to intercede on the country's behalf and encourage congregants to help the less fortunate victims of the earthquake, reported National Public Radio (NPR).

Displaced from their normal meeting place, more than 30 congregants met in a Christian social service office to find solace in the midst of the calamity. The group listened to a sermon taken from Genesis 18 about how Abraham interceded on behalf of Sodom.

"The Bible tells us ... we will experience all sorts of difficulties and setbacks. These are unavoidable," Cai said. "But we are fortunate that throughout, God is always with us."

By the end of the church service, NPR reported that the small congregation had given 17,000 Yuan, which is the equivalent of 80 U.S. dollars per person, a large amount for a working-class Chinese community.

"Our mission will not be shaken," Cai said. "It is a mission from heaven."

The ministry plans to use the money to buy medicine and medical instruments and deliver them and other supplies to some of the hardest hit regions.