

# Support Operation Iraqi Care

**We want to show the love of Jesus in a tangible way to the Iraqis.**

After a 21-day war that cost an estimated \$30 billion and the lives of several hundred coalition troops, Iraq is at a crossroads. For the first time, the citizens have the freedom to choose. But what will be the outcome of their choice? Will the country regress into anarchy, with radical Muslims crushing what little freedom the tiny Christian minority now has?

This is not a question of East versus West or of Christianity versus Islam. It's a question of what direction Iraq will take at this critical juncture.

The military part of the campaign toppled a corrupt regime. Now it's time for the church to respond. Why? Because as this month's cover story so aptly describes (see page 40), the souls of millions hang in the balance.

That's why Ted Haggard, president of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), has called on Christians to pray.

"The body of Christ doesn't have guns and tanks to make changes," Haggard told me. "But we can pray—and we can give."

Last month I reported that in May Haggard initiated "Operation Iraqi Care," a program through which churches in America can work with the churches in Iraq. In a part of the world where some countries have no religious freedom at all, Iraq has allowed a Christian minority (about 2.5 percent of the

population) to exist.

After Clive Calver, president of World Relief, visited Iraq recently, he said he had never met more sincere Christian believers. Yet, as we report, these Christians live in the worst possible conditions. There is a need for hundreds of thousands of Christians in this country to respond generously.

The strategy is for all evangelical churches in America to give as well as pray. We want to show the love of Jesus in a tangible way to the Iraqis, regardless of their ethnicity or religion.

Isn't this what Christ commanded us to do? He told us that whatever we do for one of the least of His brothers, we do for Him (see Matt. 25:40).

I believe the strategy the NAE and World Relief have devised is brilliant. Instead of sending Western Christians into Iraq to give handouts, we can help our Christian brothers and sisters in that country, who will in turn show the love of Jesus to their fellow citizens by addressing their many needs.

Though the call to help Iraq has come from the "evangelical" community through NAE and World Relief, I am calling on the "charismatic" community to lead the way. Sadly, too many Christians—charismatic or not—tend to think giving is something others should do.

It isn't. It is something each of us must do. If every church took up an offering, if every Christian family gave even a small amount, consider the resources that would be available to help the church in Iraq!

What can you do?

First, you can pray. That's most important. We wrestle against principalities and powers (see Eph. 6:12), and prayer is the only weapon we have against those forces.

Then you can give. Give personally and get your church to give.

We are channeling 100 percent of what our readers contribute through Christian Life Missions, our nonprofit partner, to World Relief.

World Relief will work through the churches in Iraq. Space does not allow us to report specific plans. But we will update our Web site, , as we get new information. Or you can go to the NAE and World Relief Web sites to see their perspectives at

Our story (see page 48) lists other organizations we believe are worthy of support. We have chosen to channel our giving through World Relief. But you can give to other organizations or directly to World Relief. The point is: Give!

By working together, we can do what none of us can do alone—show Jesus' love to and through our brothers and sisters in the church in Iraq.

Most of my staff of Strang Communications have already followed my lead in giving to Operation Iraqi Care. Won't you join us in giving through Christian Life Missions? One hundred

percent will go to World Relief for this important program. Please send your tax-deductible gift to Christian Life Missions, P.O. Box 952248, Lake Mary, FL 32795-2248, or [click here](#) to donate securely online.

---

Stephen Strang, founder and publisher of Charisma, is on the board of directors of World Relief.