

## **John Doe's Go Fund Me**

### **Scenario:**

For this discussion, I will give you an unedited email and we can discuss what we see in it from a Scriptural standpoint.

### **The Email:**

From: John Doe legendaryhelp123@gmail.com

Date: Sun, Sep 18, 2022 at 1:19 AM

Subject: Looking for financial help

To: brian@wordsoftruth.net

“Hey there, I hope this email finds you well. I’m just going to cut straight to the point. I’m in a financial bind and could really use some help. I am a hard working husband and father of three little ones. My wife stays home to take care of the kids full time and I have a full time job. Over the past year hard times has struck and it’s a struggle to make ends meet. With the cost of living rising I had to use credit cards to get by and have also had to use my money used to pay my taxes as well and I’m starting to run dry. Recently I had a minor surgery that costed me several thousand dollars as well and had to enter a payment plan for that and that was only for the first part i have to have a second procedure done to finish it. Everything just seems to be piling up and If I can just get ahead I can stay ahead. If I didn’t have these credit card payments I could get by and not need them. I’m looking at a huge number ahead of me between taxes i owe, the surgery and this debt I’ve incurred I’m about \$45,000 in the hole.

I don’t want to paint a picture that my kids are starving or that we are about to be kicked out of our house, but I do need help. I am financially responsible, I have just gotten into a tough spot. I am trying to retain some anonymity because i am embarrassed that I have let us get in this position. This email I’m sending this from is not my regular email and I’m trying to hide my name as well. My family and I regularly attend a Church of Christ in our town, but I am trying to send this email to multiple churches throughout the country in hopes that I can reach many and get some help. I went through and wrote down every email individually, if i sent this to you twice I apologize and also i know some churches had multiple emails and i wrote them both down. I have attached a go fund me that I have made for myself. We are 100% real people in a real situation, I just don’t want to upload a picture of my family and use my kids to get the help we need. Like I said I would like to maintain some anonymity throughout this especially for my kids. I do take blame for this I could’ve seen the signs of struggle coming and could’ve better prepared, however this is the situation I’m in now and could really use some help. I know we aren’t the only people going through hard times and there are others far worse. I’m just trying to do what I can to help us stay afloat. All the money will be used to help pay this debt off. I know these crowdfunding things can really benefit people and it can gain more then what the goal is. If i were to get more then my goal i would use it to set up an emergency savings to i could stay away from living check to check. If it really went passed my goal i would use it for a down payment on a house, we currently

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rent and rent is really high. I'm not using the money to buy flashy things or cars or vacations, or anything like that and I'm also not the type to ask for something like this, i don't want to go bankrupt and i just want to be able support my family. Ive had this go fund me up for a couple months and have gotten nothing, this is me grasping for one last bit of help, this can either not work or change my life, I'm humbled by the receiver reading this far, Thank you for taking the time to read this and thank you for any help you may be able to offer. Attached below is the link to my go fund me. If this could be announced in your church or something and any donations be made it would be so much appreciated, thank you.

Go fund me link: <https://gofund.me/8f76a3d3>

Sent from my iPhone"

**For Discussion:** What do you see in that email?

- Christians are directed and governed by the inspired word of God (**II Timothy 3:15-17**). We will be judged by the word of our Lord (**John 12:48**). We need to know if the Lord is pleased by the actions we might take (**Numbers 9:1-8, Luke 6:46, Colossians 1:10, Colossians 3:16-17, and I Thessalonians 4:1-2**). We have to know He is pleased with what we might do BEFORE we do it (**Proverbs 20:25 and Romans 14:23**). So, we take situations such as this and examine it through the Scriptures (**Isaiah 8:20**).
- If there was a brother or sister in Christ with a genuine need, Christians must step in to help if it is possible (**Proverbs 19:17 and I John 3:14-18**). Faithful Christians don't like to see the need for help (because something has normally happened that is bad when needed), but love to help when given the opportunity to do so (**Acts 20:35**). This is not an issue of discussion. The reason there is any discussion at all on this matter is that many people of the world will seek help from Christians and they will lie to do so.
- Through the inspired word of God we [faithful Christians] are taught to be cautious (**Proverbs 14:15, Micah 7:5-6, I Corinthians 16:13, Colossians 2:4-8, Colossians 4:5, I Thessalonians 5:21, etc.**).
- We are instructed by the Lord not to be deceived (**Matthew 24:4-5, Mark 13:5, I Corinthians 15:33, Ephesians 5:6, II Thessalonians 2:3, I John 3:7, etc.**).
- The first thing that screams out to me is the desire for this person to be anonymous. A person's reputation matters (**Proverbs 22:1 and Ecclesiastes 7:1**).
  - When someone conceals their identity, their reputation; they make it impossible for Christians to be fruit inspectors as the Lord expects (**Matthew 7:15-20**). The fact that someone is preventing me from doing that tells me all I need to know.
  - When we look at the pattern of the Scriptures, a person who is not known locally to the brethren will have someone who is known to the brethren speak of their faithfulness (**Acts 9:26-31, Acts 18:24-28, Romans 16:1-2, I Corinthians 4:17, I Corinthians 16:3, II Corinthians 8:23, Philippians 2:25-30, Colossians 4:10, and Philemon 1:15-17**).
  - A person cannot commend themselves (**II Corinthians 10:18**).

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- When a faithful brother, sister, or brethren are in need and an outside congregation has to be involved; the pattern is that someone else brings their needs to the saints and not the person [anonymous or not] themselves (**Acts 11:27-30** and **I Corinthians 16:1-4**).
- Without knowing why a person is in debt, there is plenty to be concerned about (**Proverbs 15:27**, **Proverbs 21:5**, **Proverbs 21:20**, **Proverbs 22:7**, etc.). When you provide no evidence, no credibility; you only give one the means by which to make observations that may not be the whole story. You have taken away the ability to make a just judgment (cf. **Proverbs 18:13**). By choosing to do this, you have proven yourself to be an unfaithful person!
  - Was this person counseled (**Proverbs 1:5** and **Proverbs 11:14**)? Did he listen to it (**Proverbs 19:20**). We cannot know because we have no information from which to find out.
  - What will this person do with any help he receives? If we had his history, we could know some things (**Luke 6:43-45**). We cannot know. We have no history to look into or people that knows this person to ask.
- He doesn't want to paint a picture. He doesn't want to use his kids. He is embarrassed. He is not the type to ask for something. He is not a flashy spender. He is "virtue signaling" and just showing more that he is ignorant. He wants to give off a certain appearance, which faithful Christians know better than to fall for (**Matthew 23:25-28**). I say ignorant because anyone wanting to genuinely help might be able to offer things for children (clothing, diapers, etc.), but by a person not giving information they are taking that away unless it is altogether a lie.
- Going into debt without the means to pay it is far from responsible (**Psalms 37:21**).
- Hey, he takes blame for this. But, he is responsible??? That is a contradiction. If a person in this state is trying to confess and repent, this is not the Scriptural approach to take (**Proverbs 28:13** and **Matthew 3:8**).
- Then we have the practice of institutionalism here. There is no authority in the Scriptures for a human organization to be a party in help given and received. Rather, the pattern of the Scriptures is for money to be sent, handled, and accounted for by multiple, faithful; well-commended brethren (**II Corinthians 8:1-9:13**). So, this is yet further evidence that this request is not being made by a Christian whether they use the name "church of Christ" or not. By the way, I have seen cockroaches in regular attendance so... Even if he used the right language, which he did not, that is an ignorant statement and proves again he is not a brother in Christ.
- There also has to be a point when someone accepts responsibility for their own mistakes and works to resolve them (**Galatians 6:3-9** and **I Thessalonians 4:11-12**). It can be beneficial to "learn the hard way" (**Psalms 126:4-6**).
- Think about the principle of being an enabler with such a person (**Jeremiah 23:14**).
- Finally, sometimes people seek help from churches as though churches exist just to help people with money. To see how far that is from the truth, consider what was written about the local church helping widows (**I Timothy 5:3-16**).