

How To Help People Out Without Getting Scammed



This information applies to people on the Internet and those you meet in person.

Online (Internet) requests:

1. NEVER give anyone money ONLINE, except if it is a trusted charity like Care Net or Compassion International OR or a respectable ministry like Heartcry Missionary Society.
2. ALWAYS assume that random people on Facebook (or other social media websites) are scammers and liars who make a living scamming caring people like you, because MANY people use the Internet for that unscrupulous purpose.
3. If you get contacted by someone online with a “sob story”, tell them to contact a local church or local charity. Local agencies are able to screen people, to sort out the scammers from the people who have legitimate needs.

In person requests:

1. Don't give them money, especially if you know nothing about them.
2. If they need money, offer to pay a bill – meaning: they give you the bill and YOU pay it directly yourself but if it's a credit card bill, see what items they have been buying – so you don't end up paying for their wasteful or bad habits.
3. If they need food, go food shopping with them and pay for the food.
4. Find out if they are wasting money on things they cannot afford... cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, lottery tickets, movies, online subscriptions (netflix, hulu, etc.), junk food, eating out, car payments on cars they cannot afford, etc.
5. AVOID helping people out who are smokers, drinkers, druggies, gamblers, or who eat out all the time, etc.

6. Invite the person to your church (assuming they live near you) or at least offer them a good Gospel tract and find out what their spiritual condition is.

7. Perhaps the best way to find out about who you are helping is to invite them to breakfast at a diner and talk to them and ask them questions over the meal. Are you willing to do that? Or do you just want to feel you have done your duty by handing some stranger a few dollars and then go on your way?

8. If your local church is not an option for helping strangers, then you may wish to direct the person/people to local social service agencies:

government run social service agencies (which are usually located at your county courthouse)

local food banks

local thrift stores

Salvation Army branches

local churches that offer free meals

9. I do wish to advise **women** to be very careful about their interaction with strangers. It may be best to direct them to some men in your church... elders or others, who might be better suited to handle people who could act unpredictably when told that help would have to be on the terms of the GIVER, not the terms of the RECEIVER.

Conclusion

God wants His people to be good stewards and wise as serpents yet gentle as doves. It is actually the lazy way out to just give people money. That often is the last thing they really need. What they usually need is to be better stewards of THEIR OWN MONEY and of their own lives, so they don't have to rob other people or go begging others for money to pay for their own sins of mismanaging money or squandering money. And one final note: Christians should first and foremost be helping to meet the needs of those in their local church and in their own families. We are told in Galatians 6:2 to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ".

"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." - Matthew 10:16
