

When Nature Strikes

Scripture Reading — Hebrews 13:15-16

*Do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.
—Hebrews 13:16—*

On March 11, 2011, a powerful earthquake struck the Pacific coast of Japan. It triggered a massive tsunami with waves that engulfed entire towns. Over 20,000 people lost their lives, and tens of thousands were displaced.

In just a few weeks the members of my denomination, the Christian Reformed Church in North America, raised over a million dollars to help those in need. Our relief agency, World Renew, used funds effectively, thanks to a partnership with Japanese Christians. Our media outreach, Back to God Ministries International, began producing a special radio program in the Japanese language to bring spiritual comfort to those living in the affected area.

Natural calamities in faraway communities challenge us and trigger all kinds of responses. Some people prefer to do nothing. Others limit their involvement to a pious prayer and theological reflection. Still others start blaming God.

Today's reading explains what our immediate response to a tragedy should be. It's then that we as Christians are called to do good and share with those in need. We serve and worship a God who always reaches out in love and compassion. That's why we have to go beyond condolences and kind wishes. If we truly know his saving grace, it is only natural for us to reach out to hurting people with a helping hand and caring heart.

Prayer

Father, help us praise you not only in word but also in deed. Make us reflectors of your love in this world. In Jesus, Amen.

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