

Title:

Salvation Army, Not Just A Religion, A Charity Worth Giving To

Word Count:

1116

Summary:

The Salvation Army may be a religious organization but their main function seems to be to help those in need. As such they are a charity worth donating to. A charity that deserves your donations, not just at Christmas time but year round. Help them help others. You don't have to be a Christian to give to them, you don't even have to believe in God. All you have to believe in is helping other people.

Keywords:

charity,salvation army,religion,christmas,giving,help

Article Body:

Last year during Christmas season I started to enter a store that I had shopped at regularly for years. I stopped at the store entrance because I felt that something was wrong. Then I realized that there was no bell ringing and no Salvation Army volunteer with his or her red kettle. I went into the store and asked the manager if he knew why the Salvation Army volunteer was not outside. He stated that the company had gotten complaints from people who were unhappy that a religious organization was soliciting donations in front of the company's stores. He stated that the company had decided that they would no longer allow the Salvation Army to have a space outside the stores. This way the company would not offend people. I told the manager that they had just offended me. I walked out and have never again shopped at that store or at any of that company's other stores.

Every year I know it's the Christmas season when I see the Salvation Army volunteers ringing their bells and standing next to their red donation kettles or buckets. Every time I see one of those red buckets I put \$5, \$10 or \$20 in the bucket and thank the volunteer for being there and allowing me to make the donation. I thank them because I believe that they are doing me a favor by allowing me to help people through the Salvation Army. They are the ones that have to stand for hours ringing their bell while all I have to do is put money in the bucket. They don't get paid for doing this they just do it out of love for their fellow humans. I not only donate at Christmas time, I also send in anonymous donations (For my own ideological reasons most of my donations to most

entities are made anonymously.) at other times of the year and when there are various disasters.

I am not connected in any way with the Salvation Army nor have I ever recieved aid from them. The Salvation Army is a christian religious organization and although I am a Christian I am a Catholic. Some people ask me why I give to the Salvation Army instead of the Catholic Church. I tell them that I do give to the Church, but I also give to the Salvation Army. As far as I am concerned the Salvation Army is one of the finest charities around. They try to help any and every person regardless of race, nationality, color, sexual preference or religious beliefs. They have never tried to convert anyone I know of and they never seem to engage in any type of politicking. The only thing I have ever seen them do is help people. They have their beliefs but as far as I have seen they do not try to force those beliefs on others.

The Salvation Army is a religious organization, they do have ministries, they do have members, and they do preach the gospel of Christ to people, however, as far as I know they do not preach to people that do not want to hear them and they never require people that they are helping to join them. When I was young, I knew a girl whose family belonged to the Salvation Army. Not once did they ever try to "convert" me, not once did they ever try to talk me into going to services with them and not once did they ever try to do anything other than to be nice to me. At that time I was an Agnostic and they knew this but they never tried to change my mind and they never judged me.

According to the Salvation Army, "83 cents of every dollar collected by the Army goes directly to client service", this is one of the highest percentages of any non-profit in the world. Among the services that they provide are disaster relief services, day care centers, summer camps, holiday assistance, services for the aging, AIDS education and residential services, medical facilities, shelters for battered women and children, family and career counseling, vocational training, correction services, and substance abuse rehabilitation. More than 30 million people a year are aided in some form by services provided by The Salvation Army.

The Salvation Army is actively involved in fighting the international crime of human and sexual trafficking. The battle is fought on two fronts: shaping public policy in Washington, DC, as well as providing basic services and advocacy for victims. They run 120 adult rehabilitation centers across the nation, these centers focus solely on defeating substance abuse. Individuals with identifiable and treatable needs go to these centers for help when they no longer are able to cope with their addictions. They receive housing, nourishing meals, and necessary medical care, and they engage in work therapy. The Salvation Army also

operates 18 locations across the United States, which provide a comprehensive treatment program for men and women struggling with drug and alcohol addiction. Clients are primarily homeless, with limited or no access to other treatment or social service programs. Educational assistance along with classes such as relapse prevention and anger management prepare graduates for independence and meaningful employment. Each year, thousands of older adults are served by The Salvation Army through a myriad of programs. At Salvation Army community centers, seniors may find educational classes, adult day care, hot-lunch programs, and the "league of mercy," a community care ministry that sends volunteers to hospitals, nursing homes, and directly to the homebound to provide a listening ear, a caring heart and a helping hand.

They provide needy families with Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners, gifts for children, coats and shoes for kids with none to wear, and visitation to the elderly and imprisoned who have no one to care for them. Families who are in desperate need of basics such as food, clothing and household items during the holidays are placed in the care of the Army's Adopt a Family program. Each family creates a wish list of items and is matched with a volunteer donor team. Businesses, families and school groups adopt families in this program, generously meeting the family's needs and instilling hope in those who have none.

The Salvation Army may be a religious organization but their main function seems to be to help those in need. As such they are a charity worth donating to. A charity that deserves your donations, not just at Christmas time but year round. Help them help others. You don't have to be a Christian to give to them, you don't even have to believe in God. All you have to believe in is helping other people.