



How Christian is Christian Children's Fund?

The Use of the Word 'Christian' by Christian Children's Fund is Misleading


The issue:

Christian Children's Fund use of the word "Christian" in its name and its aggressive marketing to Christians may be misleading many Christian donors. Therefore, MinistryWatch.com cautions donors to prayerfully consider utilizing other, unmistakably Christian child sponsorship ministries, such as Compassion International, that will achieve the donor's objective of helping children in need of both physical assistance and Christian teaching.

MinistryWatch Take:

MinistryWatch.com believes donors are entitled to make an educated and knowledgeable giving decision based on all the facts about a ministry. Regarding CCF, donors should know:

- CCF, by its own admission, is "non-sectarian" and does not adhere to an Evangelical Statement of Faith or Doctrinal Statement.
- While CCF was founded by a minister in 1938 and continues to do good work on the behalf of impoverished children, they are not an organization that attempts to bring the Gospel message along with the relief they offer to needy children.
- CCF, has in the past, argued it is not Christian so that it could avoid placement in the MinistryWatch.com database. More recently, it has argued that it is indeed a Christian organization because of the good works they do for children.
- CCF is not a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability. In explaining why, CCF has explained, "...we are not an evangelical organization in that we do not teach religion as part of our program activity and we do not try to convert program beneficiaries as part of our program efforts."
- CCF's work is more appropriately described as community development. Fundraising techniques leave the impression that the money donated is going directly to the sponsored child but the reality is that the money is spent on an entire community, which benefits the child tangentially.
- Some Christians will be concerned with CCF's partnering with "traditional healers" in third world nations as donors would not want their donations in any way supporting what many believe to be occult practices.
- CCF employees need not be Christian, further indicating that fulfilling the Great Commission is clearly not a priority of CCF. The organizations that CCF works with overseas to meet children's needs also may have no Christian orientation.
- CCF's TV and press fundraising ads often portray images of children that are designed to provoke an emotional giving response rather than a thoughtful, prayerful one.

In light of these facts, MinistryWatch.com recommends that donors to CCF strongly consider redirecting their giving to one of the many ministries that can be found in our www.MinistryWatch.com database which pursue both good works and the spreading of the gospel message. A ministry should not be judged to be Christian simply based on its good works. If this were the case, CCF, the Red Cross and the United Way, indeed most nonprofits, might all be labeled Christian. A truly Christian ministry will have as part of its goals the desire to bring those that they serve into a relationship with their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Alternative Christian child sponsorship groups like Compassion International are available to Christian donors that desire to bring both spiritual and physical assistance to children around the world in dire need of both. 

Contact Information and Resources

Government Contacts

Internal Revenue Service

Exempt organization customer service address:
Internal Revenue Service
TE/GE Customer Account Services
P.O. Box 2508
Cincinnati, OH 45201

- Tax-exempt assistance: 1-877-829-5500
- General tax questions: 1-800-829-1040
- Order forms and publications: 1-800-829-3676
- Website: www.irs.gov
- Verify tax-exempt status
- Verify tax deductibility
- Obtaining federal tax-exempt status
- Completing federal tax forms
- Specialized assistance to tax-exempt organizations

Attorneys General offices, or Departments of Justice, Charitable Activities Section

Most states have an active unit of the Attorney General's office that are willing to help consumers. Check with NASCO (National Association of State Charities Officials) at www.NASCO.net.org, look under US State Charity Offices and click on the state of interest.

- Reporting illegal activity by nonprofit organizations
- Information about charitable organizations and copies of annual reports
- Questions about professional fundraising reporting requirements
- Registrations of charitable corporations or trusts
- Questions about annual reports for charitable organizations
- Merging nonprofit organizations
- Serving as a board member of a nonprofit organization
- Dissolving nonprofit organizations

Secretary of State, Corporation Division

Check phone number on the Internet or your local phonebook under state government.

- Verifying that a nonprofit corporation is in fact incorporated and current in its filing
- Obtaining copies of filed articles of incorporation and amendments
- Forming a new corporation
- Obtaining state identification numbers
- Merging nonprofit corporations
- Amending articles of incorporation
- Dissolving nonprofit corporations

Federal Trade Commission

Consumer Response Center
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580
1-877-382-4357
Website: www.ftc.gov

- Information on fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices
- How to file a complaint

Christian Ministry Marketplace

MinistryWatch.com

1 (866) 364-9980
www.ministrywatch.com
A free donor advocate service. Aid donors in understanding the key issues concerning a ministry's operations. Ministry research reports on over 500 ministries.

The Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA)

1 (800) 323-9473
www.ecfa.org
A membership ministry advocate. A self regulator or peer accountability membership group. Primary responsibility to the ministries that pay dues to the ECFA and thereby fund its operations.

WWW.thegoodsteward.com

Internet source of constantly growing information on all areas of stewardship.

Generous Giving

www.generousgiving.org
Nonprofit that seeks to encourage givers of all income levels to experience the joy of giving and embrace a lifestyle of generosity, according to God's word and Christ's example. It was launched in 2000 by the Maclellan Foundation.

Royal Treasure

1 (770) 977-4502
www.royaltreasure.org
Nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching Biblical Stewardship to women.

The Gathering

www.gatheringweb.com
Conferences, email forums, conference calls and other activities for those that give a minimum of \$200,000 annually to Christian ministries or have the capacity to do so.

National Christian Foundation

1 (800) 681-6223
www.nationalchristian.com
Facilitates Christian stewardship. They can help donors set up a Stewardship Fund, a donor advised fund, liquidate assets, provide gift annuities, trusts, scholarships, and endowments.

Calvin Edwards, & Co.

1 (770)-395-9425
CalvinEdwards@MaximumGood.com
For profit organization providing philanthropic counsel to high-capacity Christian donors.

Geneva Global

1 (610) 254-8202
info@GenevaGlobal.com
www.genevaglobal.com
For profit organization assisting individual donors.

Excellence in Giving

1 (866) 780-1000
www.excellenceingiving.com
For profit organization with tailored services of affluent families and individuals.

The Legacy Group

1 (262) 789-3160
www.philanthropyatwork.com
For profit organization to assist private wealth management and those to achieve charitable goals.

Secular Resources

GuideStar

www.guidestar.org
Largest public search engine of nonprofit organizations. Provides access to many tax-exempt organization's IRS Form 990s. Some knowledge of accounting may be necessary to understand the documents found on this site.

BBB Wise Giving Alliance

www.give.org
A charitable watchdog site. The Alliance reports on nationally soliciting charitable organizations that are the subject of donor inquiries. These reports include an evaluation of the subject charity in relation to the voluntary BBB charity standards.

Charity Navigator

www.charitynavigator.org
Helps guide intelligent giving by evaluating the financial health of each charity in its database.

Charity Channel

www.charitychannel.com
Known best for its nonprofit email arena discussion forums.

The American Institute of Philanthropy

www.charitywatch.org
A charitable watchdog group that rates US charities in different categories. Fee for reports. They also provide tips to insure safe giving.

The Charities Review Council

www.crcmn.org
Conducts detailed reviews of national and local charitable organizations soliciting in the State of Minnesota. They also provide tips and guides for donors to help them make wise giving decisions.

Internet Nonprofit Center

www.nonprofits.org
Provides an extensive array of nonprofit topics.

Independent Sector

www.independentsector.org
A national leadership forum, working to encourage philanthropy, volunteering, nonprofit initiative and citizen action that help to better serve people and communities. There is a section on ethics and accountability, including donor's bill of rights, related publications, articles and other resources.

Chronicle of Philanthropy

www.philanthropy.com
Biweekly newspaper of the nonprofit world.

The Nonprofit Times

www.nptimes.com
Articles and topics related to nonprofits.

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