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# Serving

Mark 10:43-45

...But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.

# AOF Serving in Action/Model

In a world where many in our own communities are hurting and struggling, there is an opportunity for us as the body of Christ to come together and serve those who may have a physical need. Through this act of service, we have an open doorway to share the gospel with those who may not know Jesus and pray with them, fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ, and invite others to come and walk with us as we grow in our relationship with Jesus.

But how do we know when someone in our community has a need and how can we, as the body of Christ, come together to fulfill a need? This guidebook will take you step-by-step through the processes needed to establish an AOF serving ministry at your church. This guidebook will also help prepare your AOF leaders and volunteers with a simple and practical way to share the gospel and give you the tools needed to help mentor others, make disciples, and train up more mentors.

## Fulfilling Physical Needs through AOF

Mark 10:43-45 *"...But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."*

Remember, people do not care how much you know until they know how much you care. Too often we assume the only task a believer has in sharing the gospel is to show up and deliver the message with words. We ignore that our actions also tell a story and if our actions do not display a lifestyle of love, our words sound empty to hurting people. As believers, we can shine the light of Christ by helping someone in need. Volunteers can be organized to meet many types of physical needs.

Examples may include: home maintenance/repair, home cleaning or decluttering, yard work, help with moving, computer repair, vehicle repair, sewing/mending, financial budgeting, providing health and wellness related necessities such as food, clothing and shoes, haircuts, school supplies... etc.

## Enabling People within the Community to Contact AOF for Help

There are many people within our own churches and communities who may be struggling and in need. And there are many ways to allow people to communicate a need. Most importantly, there must be a willingness and readiness to serve and meet physical needs. It won't matter if you have the most sleek, streamlined software that notifies you of needs; if you do not act on the needs to serve them joyfully, people will get the picture that you do not want to really serve them, but rather that you like the idea of meeting physical needs.

Scripture gives a chilling warning to believers and churches who like the idea of helping but fail to put their words into action: *"<sup>14</sup>What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? <sup>15</sup>If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, <sup>16</sup>and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? <sup>17</sup>So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead (James 2:14-17, emphasis added).* So to begin, take

a good look at your hearts and assess your motivation. This ministry can give incredible fruit and opportunity for a church. Serving can also encourage the growth of members and reinspire the spiritual walk of a person who is wayward. But this also means you are willing to get down and dirty serving needs that are less than glamorous. If at the end of this assessment you are ready and willing, here are some ways to let people know you are there to serve.

First, verbal announcements at your church is a good way to let people know of the ministry not only to be served, but also for an invitation to join in on serving. You can also set up an AOF tab on your church's website. This will allow people to be able to reach out for help by placing a phone call, email or text to the AOF director at your church. Software such as Touch Point may also be used which will allow people to notify the church of their specific need and enter their contact information so the director can reach out to them. Creating flyers or bulletin inserts are other ways to get information to the church and that can also be used to encourage church members to share with their friends and neighbors. Finally, as you move about your own neighborhood—whether this is the neighborhood you live in or if this is the church neighborhood—as you see needs you can approach people with this ministry.

## **Assessing the Requests for Help and Making Initial Contact with the Recipient**

AOF is dedicated to helping people with a hand up, not a handout. It is not merely about fulfilling the physical need, it is about addressing the condition of the heart. In many cases, a handout will only enable the recipient to continue living in a broken state. It is important to prayerfully consider all need requests and seek the Lord for discernment before proceeding.

### **Be prompt. Be thorough. Be prayer-minded. Involve the community.**

When a request for help comes in, the director or admin of AOF should contact the person within 24 hours. Information on the specific need should be collected. The person may be sharing an immediate need, but there may be a deeper hurt that should also be addressed to truly help this person. It is important not to make any promises until all information is gathered. Take a moment to pray with the person. Ask them if they have any family members who are able to help. Ask them if they attend/belong to a church family and if so whether they have asked for help. If they do have a church family but have not yet asked for help, encourage them to do so and offer to walk alongside them through the process. If further information is needed, the AOF director or admin may want to set up a face-to-face meeting with the person. It is important that the director or admin always brings someone else along to the meeting especially if the meeting will be with a person of the opposite sex. Pray with the person, share the gospel with them and always point them to Christ. Ask them if they have a mentor or a discipler, and if they do not, offer one to them.

If the request made is for financial help, it is important to offer assistance with putting together a personal monthly budget before offering a financial handout. Once the proper financial advice has been offered, financial help may be offered to the recipient if AOF at your church is set up with a financial budget and if the Lord directs you to do so.

Once the Lord has given clear direction on the best way to help the recipient, the director or admin may proceed in one of two ways. An AOF project workday can be organized to fulfill the need or the director

may connect the recipient with others in the community who may be able to help such as other ministries, non-profits, county workers, government agencies or skilled individuals in the area.

#### Establishing a Pool of Volunteers and Project Leaders

When establishing an AOF ministry at your church, church leadership can inform parishioners about the ministry and the need for volunteers and project leaders. Those who are interested in volunteering can go to the AOF tab on the church website or via a sign up sheet in the church building to sign up, depending on what method you choose to implement. Those who sign up will then receive emails from the director when there is an opportunity to serve. Volunteers can also be found through word of mouth and personal invite from other volunteers. All volunteers are asked to pray about each request and whether they are able to participate by serving. They are also asked to pray for the individuals or families who have requested help and to pray for all volunteers.

The AOF director or admin is encouraged to seek those from the volunteer list who are willing and able to be project leaders. These are people who can commit to organizing and leading volunteers on workdays. Project leaders will work with the director or admin and oversee volunteers to make sure the need is met and follow-up is completed.

It is helpful for the director or admin of AOF to compile a list of people in the community with specialty skills that can offer services such as haircuts, mechanical work, computer repair/programming, sewing, financial advice, construction, tree trimming... etc. This list may be referenced when specific requests for help come in that would require assistance in any of these areas. People on this list may be willing to help out at a discounted rate or even as a free service. The director or admin may also find it helpful to compile a list of resources in the community such as food shelves, transportation, used furniture, mental health, thrift stores, disposal, housing, employment, legal help... etc., so they are able to guide people to the right place when they have a need in any of these areas.

#### Organizing Project Workday

The project workday is an exciting moment of sweating, exercise, camaraderie, and seeing God at work in ways you never thought possible. Here are some things to be mindful of to help make the service project as smooth as possible.

The AOF director or admin will assign a project leader for the workday, whether this is the AOF director or admin or another person they have placed in charge. The director or admin will share all information collected so far with the project leader and give them access to the details which have been recorded. The director or admin and project leader will set a date for the need to be met. The director or admin will broadcast to the pool of volunteers with the date of the workday and what is needed. Volunteers can also be recruited through word of mouth by encouraging the recipient and volunteers to invite friends or family members to participate. The director or admin and project leader should work together to ensure the proper amount of volunteers are secured for the workday. A couple days before the workday, the project leader or director or admin will send a text to all volunteers with the time and address of the project along with any supplies or tools they may need to bring.

On the day of the project, the project leader should gather the recipient and all volunteers before beginning to work. Allow time for the group to pray before beginning the work and remind them that it's not about the work or the need but it is all about Jesus. Be aware of the opportunity to have spiritual conversations during the workday. The project leader will also introduce the recipient to the volunteers. You should also be mindful to all the recipient an opportunity to share with the group if they feel led, many people are overwhelmed with gratitude that others are there to help them. At some point during the workday, the project leader or one of the volunteers should gather the group together to share the gospel with the recipient and the volunteers. It is important to note that while you are doing the work project, there will be other people in the area and other volunteers who may show up from the recipient's group. These people are not there by mere chance. The project leader and volunteers should engage in conversation with them, ask if they need prayer, and share the gospel of salvation with them.

#### After the project

Within a few days after the completion of the project, the AOF director or admin or project leader should meet with the recipient to follow up on the completed project. It is the goal of AOF to transition from "giving" recipients a fish to teaching them how to fish. At this meeting, discuss where they have been, where they are now, and where they are going. If a root problem is identified, help the recipient take some steps in the right direction to address the problem. Encourage them to have people that are good influences on them in their inner circle. This is a perfect opportunity to offer the recipient a mentor or discipler to walk alongside them and encourage them going forward. This also helps move this person into a deeper relationship with your church and hopefully into a relationship with God and consequentially, your body of believers.

Also, when you are at your follow up meeting, invite the recipient to sign up as a volunteer with AOF so they may have the opportunity to serve in upcoming projects. Many people want to give back and this is an easy way for them to show their appreciation as well as build deeper friendships with your other volunteers.

Finally, a six month follow-up should also be made with the recipient to check in with them and see how they are doing and a check-in with the mentor if one is assigned.

#### Tracking all Requests for Help, Projects Completed and Recipient Follow-ups

It is important to track all information on a platform such as Google Sheets for easy reference and to ensure organization. A spreadsheet can be set up to include:

- Date request was received
- Contact information of requester
- Date of initial contact and information collected
- Date of in-person meeting and additional information collected
- Name of project leader assigned
- Date of project workday(s) scheduled
- Date of volunteer broadcast
- Names of volunteers who are able to help
- Project number and punch list

- Workday(s) notes and project completion date
- Miscellaneous notes such as money spent, items discarded or donated, other organizations involved, etc.
- Contact info of mentor or discipler assigned to recipient
- Date of initial recipient follow-up and notes
- Contact info of mentor if assigned
- Date of six month recipient follow-up and notes

### Sharing the Gospel Using the Tabbed Bible, Gospel Card, and Wrist Band

As we serve others in love and fulfill a physical need, we have an open door to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with the recipient. This good news offers the free gift of new hope and eternal life to those who receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior. During every AOF service project, the project leader should coordinate a time where all the volunteers and recipients are gathered together so the gospel message may be shared.

We recognize there are many useful tools that help us share the gospel, but AOF offers gospel sharing tools that consist of a color-coded, tabbed New Testament Bible with corresponding gospel card and wrist band. By using the color-coded tabs, it is simple to walk anyone through scriptures that share the gospel message. The gospel can be shared by using one, two, or all three of these tools. You will find six short training videos on how to use these tools at <https://www.aofministries.com/general-7-3> . Here is a quick summary of what you need to know:

When you are using the tabbed Bible ask the person/persons you are sharing the gospel with to read each scripture out loud and allow time for some interaction with the scripture, asking questions, and prayer.

Here are the passages:

- #1 - Yellow - Sin - Romans 3:23 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*
- #2 - Black - Death - Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
- #3 - Red - Love - Romans 5:8 *But God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*
- #4 - Blue - Faith - Ephesians 2:8.9 *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*
- #5 - Green - Life - Romans 10:9-10 *that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*

Once all 5 scriptures are read, discern whether or not an invitation can be made to confess out loud and receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Please be mindful, when we present the gospel we do not want to make it seem like a transaction with God. We are inviting others to join into a relationship and a lifestyle with the creator of the universe. This decision is a commitment rather than a simple prayer we pray so we can obtain the “get out of hell” card. We become God’s children that are passionately following Jesus.

Finally, there is one final tab containing three scriptures that should then be read out loud.

- #6 – Orange – New in Christ – 2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.*

*Grow in Christ – Acts 2:41-42 So then, those who had received his word (Peter’s) were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”*

*Share Christ – Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, ever to the end of the age.*

After sharing the gospel of salvation, invite the person/persons you are sharing with to keep the Bible, gospel card and wrist band for themselves. Offer them as many as they would like so they too can share them with others. Encourage them to read their Bible and pray. Invite them to reach out to you with questions or for encouragement. And finally, pray for them that they would know and grow in the knowledge of God and in relationship with Him. If you would like to purchase your own gospel card, wrist bands, or Bibles go to <https://www.aofministries.com/shop>.

## Disciples Making Disciples

*2 Timothy 2:1-2 “You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”*

Through AOF we have the opportunity to invite others to join us in our journey to become more like Christ so they too can experience His love that transforms our lives. Through one-on-one mentorship, we can grow together and multiply by helping to equip others to go out and make more disciples. Mentorship can be as simple as weekly check-ins, accountability in the Word, and praying together. AOF offers a structured four session and nine session one-on-one discipleship tool that may be used. You can find those resources at <https://www.aofministries.com/shop>.

## Offering a Mentor or Disciple to AOF Recipients

After completing an AOF project, the director should offer a mentor or discipler to the recipient. Mentor or disciplers are volunteers who are willing to commit to meeting one-on-one with recipients for a given amount of time to walk alongside them, pray for them and encourage them in the Word. Oftentimes, an AOF recipient may not have family or friends in their inner circle who are able to encourage them in these ways. It is AOF’s goal to not just help people for a moment by fulfilling an earthly need, but ultimately to continue to walk with them and encourage lasting change in their lives. Mentor or disciplers and recipients should be paired woman to woman, man to man, or married couple to married couple.

### What Should a Mentor or Disciple's Walk with the Lord Look Like?

- has confessed and believes that Jesus Christ is his/her Lord and Savior
- accepts the entire scripture as absolute truth
- believes in the three-person trinity (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit)
- comprehends the Gospel and is capable of sharing the gospel with others
- devoted to following Jesus daily
- plugged into a church/accountability group and willing to be accountable to these leaders
- freed from past ensnaring sins (alcohol, drugs, pornography...etc.)

### How Should a Mentor or Disciple Represent Christ and Himself/Herself?

- proper motive for being a mentor (to honor the Lord through selflessness)
- grounded and visibly stable in his/her life
- creates conversation that builds others up (does not gossip, slander, or corrupt)
- respects the authority of pastors and others in leadership
- committed to your church's core values

### What Resources and Characteristics are Required of a Mentor or Disciple?

- ability to pray out loud with mentee
- ability to love, listen, discern and respond when spending time with mentee
- willing to give of his/her time to meet with mentee
- eagerness to learn and grow in mentorship over time
- ability to set boundaries for a healthy relationship between mentor and mentee
- plans to remain living in the area for the given amount of time committed to mentoring

### Multiplication Ministries Four Session and Nine Session Mentorship Tools

AOF offers two different interactive tools created by Multiplication Ministries that may be used for one-on-one mentorship. The four session tool is called "Knowing God Personally" and includes these four lessons: Beginning with God, Fellowship with God, the Power to Live for God and Growing as a Child of God. The nine session tool is called "One to One Discipleship". This is a course for one believer to help another believer learn the nine foundation stones upon which to build the rest of their lives. These 9 lessons include the Assurance of Salvation, Attributes of God, the Bible, Prayer, the Spirit-Filled-Life, Fellowship, Witnessing, Temptation and Obedience.

## In Conclusion

Serving others through Acts of Friendship is not just about fulfilling a physical need, it is ultimately about pointing others to the love, hope, and new life we have in Jesus Christ. Serving your community brings hurting people into a relationship with your church members and it allows your church to get closer to your community. This helps a church to be IN the community. Through an act of service, we can love like Jesus and share the gospel message of new hope to someone who may be lost or feel hopeless. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we have the opportunity to come together to serve others side by side as



the Bible calls us to do. And finally, through AOF we can invite others to come and walk with us as we grow in our relationship with Jesus and help to equip others to make more disciples.

**\*Serving people in your community may require physical labor from volunteers and also involve personal property or assets of recipients and volunteers. Check with your church leadership to ensure that the church has insurance to cover AOF projects.**

We at Acts Of Friendship Ministries want to help any way that we can. If you have any more questions or comments please reach out to us. Our hope is to see followers of Christ growing and leading others to know and follow Christ.



WE ARE DEDICATED TO  
INSPIRING AND EQUIPPING  
FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST  
TO LIVE A LIFESTYLE OF  
DISCIPLES WHO MAKE DISCIPLES

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