

# CARE KITS FOR THE HOMELESS

*And a few notes on caring for those you meet*

By Jeff Ward, *Watermark External Focus Director*

On any given night, there are about 6,000 homeless men and women on the streets of Dallas alone – and that’s only a portion of the number in the DFW Metroplex. Caring for these people (and teaching our kids to do the same) requires wisdom, love, and courage.

We always want to stress the importance of trying to connect with and build relationships with our homeless friends. Most are glad to share their story, whether they have faith, how they ended up on the streets, and what their struggles are. If you get the chance to talk, it’s important to ask and use their name, make eye contact, share your story of grace / share the gospel, and treat them as image-bearers of God.†

***However, the reality is that we’re not always in situations where we can offer to buy someone a cup of coffee or have a full conversation. And even if we do, it’s still helpful to have some tangible things to leave with them. For several years now, I’ve kept Care Kits in the glove box of my car. Below, you can see what I put in mine as you work to build your own!***

I tend to put together 10 of these kits at a time, and place them in our cars. You might put them together with your community group or family as well. And as you hand these out, be sure to tell people that God loves them, and that this gift is a small demonstration of that love.

## MY CARE KITS

### HANDWRITTEN NOTE

I like the personal nature of a note. A note shows you took the time to write a few lines – and that says a lot! In my notes, I try to express my disappointment that I wasn’t able to grab some time with them at that moment – but enjoy a burger on me, read through the materials, call me with any questions, and consider joining us at Watermark Community Church some Sunday. If you’re willing, consider including your number so they have the ability to connect with you.



### MCDONALD'S GIFT CARD

*And other wise resources*

The person standing on the corner may indeed have real and immediate needs. 1 John 3:17-18 can help inform our response here, and there are a number of good things you can offer (e.g. water bottles, granola bars, socks, etc.).

Personally, my favorite such item is a \$5 McDonald’s gift card. It’s a great way to get some food to a hungry person. It cannot be easily sold on the street, meets an immediate need if someone is hungry, and is not as valuable or unrestricted as handing someone cash. This seems like a good balance of biblical and other wisdom principles.

† If you’d like to really study up on loving and helping others best, we encourage you to read our blog post, “**Should I Give Money to the Guy on the Corner?**” and listen to the brown-bag seminar we’ve included: [watermark.org/blog/give-money-guy-corner](http://watermark.org/blog/give-money-guy-corner). You can also read ***When Helping Hurts: Alleviating Poverty without Hurting the Poor...and Yourself*** by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert and ***Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help (and How to Reverse It)*** by Robert Lupton.

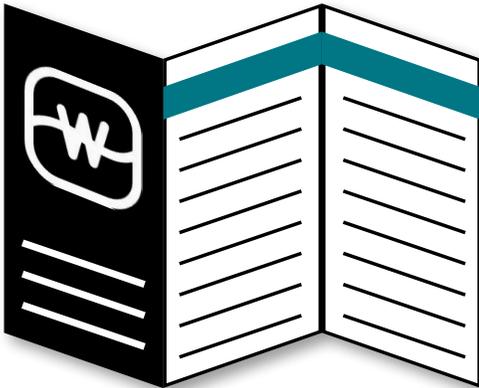
# MY CARE KITS

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## GOSPEL TRACT(S)

You want to provide a clear gospel presentation. And many people have come to Christ through simply reading a tract! Don't discount the power of God's message and God's word all by themselves!

I like both the **One-Verse Evangelism technique** ([tinyurl.com/1verse-evang](http://tinyurl.com/1verse-evang)) and the **business-size cards** you can purchase here: [sbtwebstore.com/products/one-verse-witness-cards](http://sbtwebstore.com/products/one-verse-witness-cards). Another excellent resource is the **"May I ask you a question?" tracts** produced by EvanTell that can be purchased at [tinyurl.com/mayiaskyou](http://tinyurl.com/mayiaskyou).



## CHURCH INFORMATION

We are instructed to "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2 ESV). We want folks to connect to the body of Christ, hear the gospel preached, be discipled, and find community, accountability, recovery, and love. One of the blessings of our church is the array of ministries that we have to offer people.

Watermark tri-folds are a great tool and are available at the Welcome Center. You might consider jotting down your phone number on them as well, in case they are able to come and want to connect with you.

## OTHER RESOURCE INFORMATION

Sometimes, I might include cards with information about our free medical clinic, **QuestCare Clinic**. I know that many of these folks need medical and dental care. They also need to be prayed with, cared for, and loved holistically. They will find all that at our clinic ([questcareclinic.org](http://questcareclinic.org)), even if they are not ready to step into a church setting.

**OurCalling** ([ourcalling.org](http://ourcalling.org)) is a terrific ministry serving the homeless here in Dallas. They also provide a waterproof version of their online resource that provides a host of information for folks to find meals, shelter, clothing, recovery, discipleship, and more. You can purchase copies of this fantastic resource at [ourcalling.org/directory](http://ourcalling.org/directory), and the online version is at [helpimhomeless.com](http://helpimhomeless.com).



Regardless of whether you can have a conversation or only hand out one of these kits, our hope and desire is that our homeless friends feel the love of Christ through our interactions with them. We too were once impoverished – spiritually if not financially. We too need grace and mercy, daily. And we too want to do all in our power to proclaim and demonstrate the gospel tangibly, physically, and effectively to all those people God places in our paths (Philippians 2:3-11).

Please let us know if we can help you – and we'd love to hear your ideas, too!  
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