

# First Responders 1 - Respond

Welcome to Redemption Church in Plano Texas! We are not a mega Church, but we are mighty church! We just sent a check for over \$2000 to help young people and orphans in Russia & Belarus! Sounds mighty to me. = We aren't mega but we are mighty and there is nothing we can't do... we can do all things through Christ.

Hello friends in the room and our family watching and listening online.

## First Responders Title

My name is Chris Fluitt and I am pumped to be starting a new sermon series today called First Responders.

What do you think of when you hear the words First Responders? It is a term that is used a lot in news reports.

The first time I remembered hearing the term was 9-11-2001 when brave first responders ran into the twin towers in New York City. Police, Firefighters, & E.M.T.s ran into a building that was collapsing. They did this to save lives... and they did save lives.

## First Responder Definition

A First Responder is someone designated or trained to respond to an emergency.

Raise your hand if you have ever had an emergency and you called 911. When you called 911 did anyone show up?

I remember when our young family had to call 911 the first time our son had an epileptic seizure. It was insanelly scary. We thought he was going to die. It was a panic.

But we called 911 and first responders came. The first people to come were actually firemen. One of the firemen observed our son and said "does he have epilepsy? This is looks like he had a seizure. He is going to be ok but he needs to go to the ER to be checked out."

I am thankful to our first responders. When you call for help, help comes running. I am truly thankful.

We are so blessed to live in a country where with 1 phone call to 911, you are likely to have 3 vehicles arrive... the police, the fire station, and the Emergency Medical Technicians.

Can we for be thankful for these men & women? I think this is worthy of honor.

A first responder is someone designated or trained to respond to an emergency. ...Sometimes that emergency is your emergency.

## Emergency

There are many emergencies a first responder is called to..

Fire, traffic accidents, shootings, terrorism, medical need, crime, violence, public health concerns...

A first responder is someone designated or trained to respond to an emergency. Redemption Church I would like to challenge you to become a first responder. I believe God has called you, designated you to be a first Responder. I believe He wants to train you up to respond to all the emergencies of our world, nation, city, and community.

We have an emergency...

- Many are dying – Dallas Tx is the #25<sup>th</sup> deadliest city in the US. There were 196 homicides last year in Dallas. Almost 20,000 Americans were murdered last year. This is an emergency. Someone should respond.
- Many are killing themselves – There were 1.4 million suicide attempts in 2017. 1.4 million people tried to take their own life. 47,173 succeeded in taking their life in 2017. Suicide is on the rise. This is an emergency.
- Many are dying from disease – Heart disease kills 647,000 people every year. Cancer kills 599,000 people every year.

There are parts of the world were children are dying from a diseases and viruses that could be easily cured if they just had the medicine. Many times the sickness could have been easily prevented if the children had been given shoes. 5.6 million children died from disease in 2016... 15,000 per day. We need some first responders.

- Many are destroying the lives of the unborn. In the United States 638,000 abortions occurred. Now I know I can make some people mad on this... But I will look anyone in the eye and tell you that anything that causes the death of 638,000 people is an emergency. I don't care about the politics... I care about this body count. We need some help over here!!
- Many are hungry. In the US 40 million people are hungry and undernourished. In the United States, the richest nation on earth... 1 in 6 children do not know where there next meal is coming from... Redemption Church, is that an emergency?

- Many have no place to go. On any given night, over 500,000 people are homeless. (553,000) 20% of that number is children under the age of 18. (114,000). Nearly 100,000 people are considered “chronically homeless,” meaning they have been homeless for over a year. Does anyone see an emergency here?
- Many are turning to drugs. 19.7 million adults have a drug addiction according to 2017 stats. The rise of opioid abuse has led to 130 deaths per day. Opioid abusers often turn to heroin and in the last decade the number of heroin users has doubled. We have an emergency.
- Human trafficking is such an emergency. We don’t really know the numbers here... they estimate 24.9 million victims of human trafficking globally.

I don’t have time the time to go down the list... We could talk about divorce and the fall of our moral institutions... we could talk about corruption and greed... we could talk about racism tearing our nation apart... we could talk about the rise of racial supremacy... we could talk about forgotten men & women in the prison system with little help when they complete their sentences... we could talk about the crisis of illegal immigration and the many children that are caught in a scary situation... we could talk about domestic violence... we could talk about the devastating suicide rate within the LGBTQ community... We could talk about school shootings... We could talk natural disasters like hurricanes, tornados, tsunamis, fires, earth quakes... we could talk about religious persecution... we could even talk about how some religions like Islam are persecuting people and hanging them for being homosexual or for young girls seeking an education past a certain age... we could talk about terrorism...

We could talk about how we as Christians believe in an eternal soul... We could talk about how each stat I gave was so much more than a number... There is a soul tied to each number... there is an eternity in heaven or hell tied to each number!

We could talk... and we could talk... and we could talk... But what we really need is some to respond.

## **Someone needs to respond**

We have an emergency over here. People are calling out for help.

Emergency response vehicles are really good at letting you know there is an emergency.

- They sound an alarm. You can hear the sirens for miles.

- Yet in some of these emergencies there is no alarm being sounded. Redemption Church someone needs to sound the alarm. Someone needs to boldly cry out.

Someone needs to open their mouth and share the goodnews of the Gospel. Someone needs to open their wallet, pull out a dollar, hand it to the person in need, look them in the eye, and open their mouth and say “God loves you. Can I pray for you? I believe God wants me to help you. How can I help you? Can I give you a ride to a connect group or church service? Are you lonely? Do you have anyone to talk to?” Sound the alarm! Emergency response vehicles make a sound! We are way too quiet!

If it is an emergency I need to hear the siren of prayer. There needs to be Jesus followers falling on their face in prayer and crying out for God to intervene and for people to turn to God. Not a “now I lay me down to sleep prayer...” We need an urgent emergency response prayer.

- Emergency response vehicles shine light. You can see the lights from far off and in any condition.
- You have seen those flashing lights. They get everyone’s attention. These lights mean that help is on the way.

Do we remember that we are called to shine the light of Jesus Christ? We need to shine a light that says “God can deliver you. God loves you. God has more for you. God cares. God can heal.”

We need to shine a light that says “He rescued me and He can rescue you. Help is on the way.”

Redemption Church someone needs to respond!

## **God is a first responder**

God is a savior! He is mighty to save! He sent His son into the world not to condemn it, but to save it!

Psalm 68:19-20 (NIV2011) Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens. Our God is a God who saves; from the Sovereign Lord comes escape from death.

God doesn’t just stand around and look at humanity disapprovingly. He daily bears our burdens. He is a God who saves! From the Sovereign Lord comes escape from death!

God is THE first responder! He came to save you before you knew you needed saving. God sent His son into the world to save you... he did this FIRST THING! Jesus is...

Revelation 13:8 (NIV2011) ...the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.

God is a first responder. He sent Jesus from the creation of the world... but from the creation he has also called you to be a first responder...

Ephesians 1:4 (NIV2011) For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV2011) For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

From the beginning he has chosen you... he has designated you... he created you in Christ and you are God's handiwork... created to do good works prepared in advance.

God created you to be a first responder. Do you believe that? I tell you Redemption Church if we don't believe that I don't know what to do... I have to ask you..

## **Are you a first responder?**

Are you designated and trained to respond to an emergency?

Will you respond to the cries for help? Will you sound the alarm? Will you shine the light? Will you go and help?

Jesus Christ has commissioned you. He has called you to go into the world... You are designated...

Jesus Christ wants to fill you with the Power of His Holy Spirit so that you will have all the power and training you need...

God has purposed you from the creation of the world to do something a policeman cannot... a fireman cannot... an EMT cannot... Are you a first responder?

Where are you Christians?

You told me you believed your God is a God who saves and a God who never fails. Is it true? Show me by being bold!

You told me you believed your God heals. Let's see some healing!

You told me you believed in giving and serving. Where are you Christians?

You told me you believed God loves white people, black people, red people, brown people... all the colors of the rainbow... Let's see that love!

You told me you believed I could do all things through Christ.

You told me you believed nothing is impossible.

You told me you believed Jesus fed the hungry and touched the diseased and forgotten.

You told me you believed the Bible! Let's see it!

You told me you believed in prayer! Let's pray like never before!

You told me you believed in a book of Acts revival! Let's have it!

You told me you believed I could lay hands on the sick and they recover. Let's lay hands on the sick!

You told me you believed Jesus is coming back! We better hurry!

The world is burning!! Where are you Christians!

We are about to pray in this altar. And I have never said what I am about to say... If you don't feel moved to pray in this altar you can just get your stuff and go out to the lobby and have a coffee... You can just continue to act like there is no emergency...

But I pray to God that I have some believers who are stirred in their hearts to respond!