

SCRIPTURE

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Scripture:

When we think of indications of religiosity, there is nothing more strongly indicating a tie to religion than scripture. The term scripture encompasses all written material from any sacred text. Scripture is a profound religious expression because it directly and explicitly connects the organization to a foundational or essential text of a faith or religion. This sends a strong message to those looking at the website of an organization. While this “strong message” definitely indicates a close tie to a religious identity, it does not dictate the activities that the organization participates in. However, organizations with the strongest faith activities, such as evangelism, are likely to quote scripture on their website. There are also ample organizations that have scripture on their website but pursue actions that are not explicitly faith-based.

As mentioned above, the organizations in this category are not shy about showing their faith identity to the public. They typically associate with one faith (i.e., do not have scripture from multiple sources) and also often incorporate some/many of the features of organizations in the lower expression categories (i.e., many of them also exhibit religious symbols and/or icons as well as a profession of faith in text and/or guidance by religious principles in statements).

Case Study: Compassion International

Compassion International is a Christian child-sponsorship organization that works to release children from poverty “in Jesus’ name.” Based on their website, Compassion International has a clear faith-based mission and approach to their work. Not only is there mention of Jesus and Christian principles all throughout the [website](#), there is even quoted scripture.

The organization’s website prominently features Christian values and beliefs. There is a section titled “What Makes Us Distinct?” and it has sub-sections with headers such as “A ‘Three-cord’ Approach to Ministry,” “Christ-centered,” and “Church-driven.” Additionally, Compassion International emphasizes the importance of spiritual development and growth for the children that they serve. On the home page the organization says that donations provide for “Age-Appropriate Christian Teaching.” They provide resources for children and their families to grow in their faith, including Bible study materials, prayer guides, and devotionals.

The core purpose of the group is to alleviate poverty. This is a non-religious goal on the

surface, but this organization, in comparison to the YMCA (in the “Statements” category one step below “Scripture”), brings religion into all of their activities. For example, they say that they work to improve the physical, social, and economic condition of children around the world and they emphasize that this is done “in Jesus’ name.”

In addition to the faith-based approach to their work, Compassion International also often operates in partnership with local churches in the communities they serve. The organization’s website highlights the importance of these partnerships and the role they play in supporting the children and families in their programs.

Overall, Compassion International’s faith expression is a central aspect of their mission and approach to their work. The organization’s Christian values and beliefs are prominently featured on their website, and their partnership with local churches reflects their commitment to their faith-based approach to child sponsorship and poverty alleviation.

Compassion International is a strong example of a faith-based organization on the far end of the faith expression spectrum. There are plentiful mentions of Christianity and Jesus on the website but it best fits into the Scriptures category because of its use of quotes from the Bible on a main page. This indicates that the organization is extremely aligned with their faith purpose and is not shy about positioning themselves as a Christian organization. This strong faith expression comports with a strong showing of faith-backed activities and aims. Organizations that show their faith expression with a signal as unmistakable as scripture also have faith inspiration behind most, if not all, of their activities.