

New Orleans

“NOT BY MIGHT NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT,” SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS.

ONE SPIRIT, MANY GIFTS

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St. Bernard Parish deputy sheriff, Sgt. Gregory Hauck, received a Bible from Pastor Kevin.



Pastor Kevin Cox, CC New Orleans, shares a verse with Sgt. Hauck.

When Sgt. Greg Hauck was called to the last-resort shelter at St. Bernard Parish High School in New Orleans, he didn't know he'd be there a week and help save nearly 500 people during Hurricane Katrina. He also didn't know that, stranded on the roof in the middle of the storm, he would meet God for the first time in a real and personal way.

Since the ordeal, he's been greatly encouraged by talking to Calvary Chapel-trained chaplains with the Billy Graham Rapid Response Team and local Calvary Pastor Kevin Cox. Dozens of chaplains have ministered to law enforcement there. Sharing his harrowing experiences and receiving Scripture verses and prayer from them has helped him cope with what happened and has strengthened his faith in Jesus Christ.

“Before this, I thought I had a strong faith and that I was close to God,” he said. “But I didn't know what faith was until this happened. I never thought I could feel this or have such insights. I read the Bible, and I know what it means. I don't have to pray repetitiously anymore; I just talk to Him, and I feel it.” A youth worker in the Catholic Church before the storm, Greg believed in Jesus, but now he says, “He saved me.”

During the storm, Greg directed people to the roof of St. Bernard Parish High School as floodwaters began to rise in the gathering dark. First there was a trickle all over the ground, “like someone left the faucet on,” then suddenly four-foot deep water was churning and pushing them away from the school. His patrol car, a bulldozer and several trucks swept past him in the fierce, dark water. Trying to oust a man from a submerged car, the sergeant saw a boat full of kids nearly 100 yards away. “I was yelling to them to get out of the water” when suddenly the boat flipped over and the children vanished under the violent waves. “That was hard for me. Those kids were the same age as my kids. I probably knew them,” he said sadly.

Then the people on the roof started screaming wildly as a 12-foot wall of water surged toward the school. “I heard a noise that sounded like a waterfall,” he said. Greg rushed toward the school building. In a matter of minutes, he was running down the hallway, eyeing water up to the top of the windows. “That's when the wall blew out and the water knocked me down.” A refrigerator hit him, and he was pushed under, slammed



Kevin and Sgt. Hauck greet each other with a brotherly hug.

against hallway walls by the current. With a strange peace, he felt God put his arm out to catch hold of a stairway rail. With his free arm, he grabbed people rushing past him and thrust them up the stairwell to others. In the dark, people locked arms and helped each other reach the landing. Then Greg encountered another obstacle: the gymnasium door was locked. Again he felt prompted by God and yanked the door from its hinges, breaking the deadbolt out of the thick wood. Panicked by the rising water, people pushed him down and stampeded inside. A woman grabbed his hand yelling, “Get up! We need you!” On a high platform, he stopped everyone and asked, “Who here believes in God?” All the hands went up, and he said, “We're going to pray.” He asked God for strength

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Sgt. Greg Hauck, St. Bernard Parish Deputy Sheriff



Sgt. Hauck recounts the week he and nearly 480 people were stranded in the St. Bernard Parish High School gym.



Sgt. Hauck and Dave Palmer hug after seeing each other for the first time since being stranded at the school.

and courage to help them survive. He delegated people to do search and rescue, find provisions and keep track of who was there. I didn't sleep for three nights," he said. "It never stopped. Something would happen inside the school, or you'd see another body. It was just constant wear and tear on your heart and your soul; it got to me."

On a corner of the roof, he sat down, soaked and exhausted in the dark. He could hear shotguns firing in the distance and people screaming for help. "I had my talk with God. I'm not too proud of it, but I questioned Him, 'Where were You?' I was angry because I didn't know where my wife, my sons, my daughter or my parents were." And God answered him, Greg said. He realized how God had kept him alive and given him supernatural strength and insight to keep people alive. "It was the first time in my life He ever answered my prayer right there. He filled up my heart, and that's never ever happened to me."

A second wave of water sent people into hysterics, and families got separated by floodwaters. Greg had to find a way to get dozens of kids back to the gymnasium without enough life preservers. The Holy Spirit directed his eyes to a cage full of air-filled balls. He used them to float children back to safety down the dark-flooded corridors full of snakes and debris. "I tried to make it fun for them, like a game, so they wouldn't be scared."

After a week, Canadian rescue workers helicopter-lifted the 480 survivors to safety. Greg was reunited with his family, all unharmed. He met and talked several times with Pastor Kevin Cox of CC New Orleans. Calvary chaplains gave Greg Gospel literature, which he shared with his family. "I want to make copies and give it to all the guys at the (Sheriff's) Department."

Talking to the chaplains has helped Greg cope with haunting memories—especially the kids in the boat. "It took me a few weeks

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Sgt. Greg Hauck, Deputy Sheriff

to talk about it. I thank God for these guys who come to ride with us and help me just to get it out and understand that was all part of what happened." Nearly 60 kids from his parish were still missing two months after the storm.

Chaplains marveled at how God is gathering a harvest of lost souls in the Crescent City. "We didn't set out to do any of this; the Lord's just working," said Denny Barger, pastor of CC Southern Ocean County in coastal New Jersey. Chaplains rode along with officers, many of whom accepted Christ and then told their peers about Him. "People's hearts are just open to Jesus. We've been walking on air for two days."

Specially trained to minister to disaster victims, Regina Bready of CC Philadelphia helped and prayed with victims in a disaster relief center. She encouraged other Christians to minister there. "The whole world knows what happened in New Orleans; the opportunity is here to share the Lord," she said. "So many times we sit still and watch these things on TV, but we are Christian soldiers." Police officers told her some of their colleagues sat idly in headquarters, concerned only for their own comfort, while others were rescuing people from the water. "They all wear the uniform, just as we all wear the name 'Christian.' But how devoted are we to our position as soldiers for Christ?"

Many are answering the call to show Christ's love in New Orleans. Nearly 60 teams



A FEMA disaster relief center was also home to relief agencies giving free supplies.



One of several Calvary volunteers specially trained to minister to disaster victims, Regina Bready of CC Philadelphia prays for a mother and son.



Recovering items from his apartment near the 17th street canal breach, a resident walks past a home ripped apart by the flood.



Volunteers from CC St. Petersburg, FL, help a couple retrieve personal items, including a silhouette image of their daughter.

helped restore 250 homes within the first two months after the storm. "It's wonderful, seeing the fresh faces, fresh smiles," said Elizabeth McDonald, who recently began attending CC New Orleans. Teams from Phoenix, AZ, and St. Petersburg, FL, helped her remove fallen trees from her home and clear out rotten drywall and furniture. "I see progress, hope," she said.

In the Arabi community, a Calvary team used shovels and a small bulldozer to clear out green toxic sludge and "demo" a home down to the studs. Pastor Kevin talked to the owner, Captain David DiMaggio, from the St. Bernard Parish Police Department. CC New Orleans staffer Stacie Hocke helped the captain's wife, Anna, wash her china as the men brought it out.

Tears streaming down her face under her breathing mask, Anna watched the debris pile grow. "It's nice to have someone else come do it; if I did it, I'd be holding onto each piece." After several hours, the workers had finished. A faithful Catholic, she said no one else had come to help anyone there. Asked if she knew why they'd come, she said, "Because you love us and because



CC St. Petersburg volunteers pray before helping a St. Bernard Parish police captain clean out his flooded home in Arabi.



Pastor Kevin works alongside CC St. Petersburg volunteers helping the DiMaggio family sift through muddy belongings.



Kevin teaches a Bible study at a home on the north side of Lake Pontchartrain.



Worshippers sing at the North Shore Sunday morning home Bible study.



Believers at CC New Orleans also worship at a Metairie home on Sundays.



Kevin teaches a second Sunday Bible study on the south side of the Lake.

you love Jesus.” Pastor Kevin stayed behind to offer encouragement.

Stacie grew up in New Orleans and has worked in Christian ministry there for a decade. She said God is breaking through walls of religious tradition, superstition and bondage. People have approached her and relief workers asking how to be saved—that’s unheard of in New Orleans, she said. “There’s always been a hard, oppressive shell over the city. And in one massive swoop, that shell is gone. I’ve never seen anything like this; there’s an openness to talk to people about the Lord.”

Dan and Chloe Genter, both long-time natives of Metairie, agreed. “Just in our neighborhood we’ve seen it,” Dan said. Having been a Catholic for 40 years before accepting Christ at CC Costa Mesa several years ago, Dan said, “I really believe with my heart and soul that Katrina has opened a door for people to hear God’s Word and be changed.”

Pastor Kevin agreed. Those who have accepted Christ are “sold out. They realize it’s not works; they’re free.” Kevin and his wife, Christi, came from Phoenix, AZ, to plant a church in New Orleans seven years ago. They are thankful for the Calvary Chapel believers who have helped and welcome others to come in the spring and summer of 2006. Christi smiled and said, “We’ve been immeasurably blessed.” ☺



Sunday worship service at CC New Orleans includes lunch and a time of fellowship. Holding two services in two locations benefits those displaced by the hurricane.

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Contributions can be sent to:
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