



RECOVERY STARTS HERE: "No American is going to be left behind," President Trump assured hurricane survivors near Asheville, N.C.

RISING FROM THE MUD AND ASHES

DEAR FRIEND,

Samaritan's Purse had the honor of hosting Donald Trump on his first trip as the 47th president, when he and his wife, Melania, came to North Carolina to encourage survivors of Hurricane Helene and see what the new administration can do to accelerate the recovery.

It's going to take years for North Carolina to rebuild from Helene, which damaged or destroyed more than 100,000 homes. Samaritan's Purse is working right now to rebuild up to 500 houses and replace up to 500 mobile homes, including some in Tennessee.

The president and first lady braved freezing weather and muddy conditions to meet Helene survivors near Asheville. "You are not forgotten any longer," he told them. "We'll be by your side every step of the rebuilding, and no American is going to be left behind."

We met at the home of Chris and Kim West, just a few miles from where I grew up. The Wests' quiet homeplace along the Swannanoa River is now gutted after Samaritan's Purse volunteers cleaned out debris and mud two feet deep. Samaritan's Purse will build the Wests a new house.

Helene ushered in a brutally cold winter in the Appalachian Mountains. Samaritan's Purse has provided heated campers to families who had nowhere else to stay. Corey and Lucinda Braddock were living in a leaking camper until we gave them a new one. "I'm so grateful," Corey said. "It's a new start for us."

We praise God that hundreds of hurricane and California wildfire survivors have prayed to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3).

California: 'You're doing God's work'

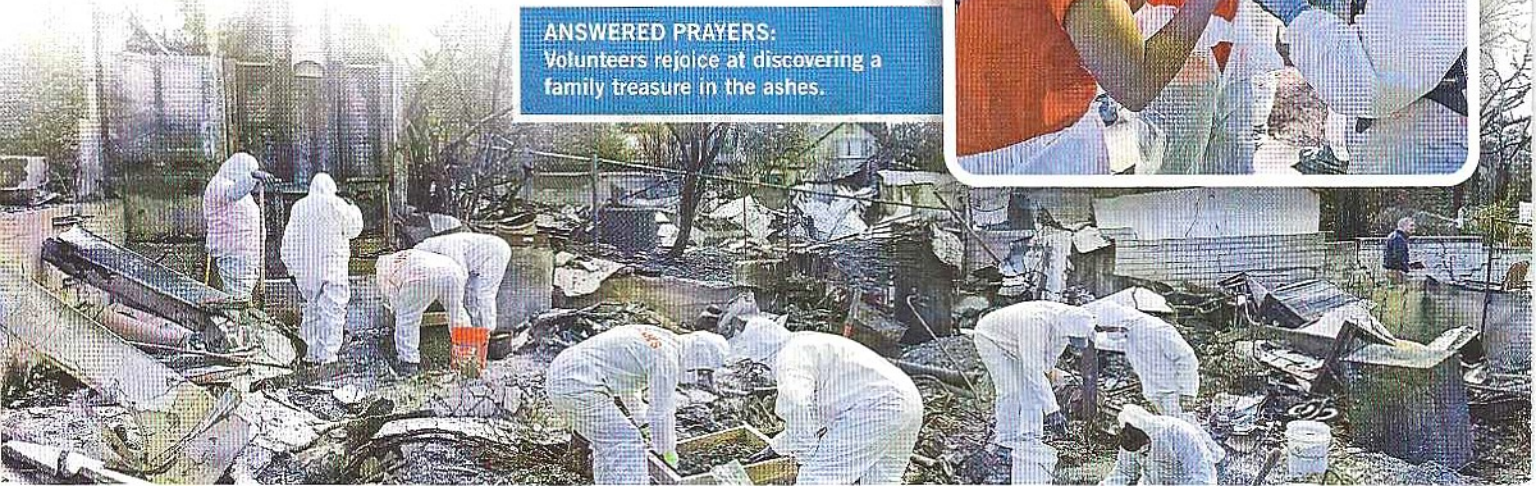
More than 16,000 homes were destroyed in the wildfires that ravaged California in January. I went to Los Angeles to thank our teams and the firefighters, and to pray with survivors and volunteers. After visiting the charred ruins of Altadena and the Pacific Palisades, it's hard to imagine how quickly the flames engulfed these communities. One firefighter told me that flames are unstoppable in 80 mph winds.



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ANSWERED PRAYERS:
Volunteers rejoice at discovering a family treasure in the ashes.



Before families can think about rebuilding, they need our help to recover personal contents from their homes. Sorting through the ashes, our trained volunteers have recovered rings, a porcelain Nativity scene, and a blue topaz stone turned clear by the intense heat. When Jaime and Debbie Gomez returned home, only the chimney was standing. But they rejoiced when our teams found a ceramic Christmas-tree angel that her mother once brought from Cuba.

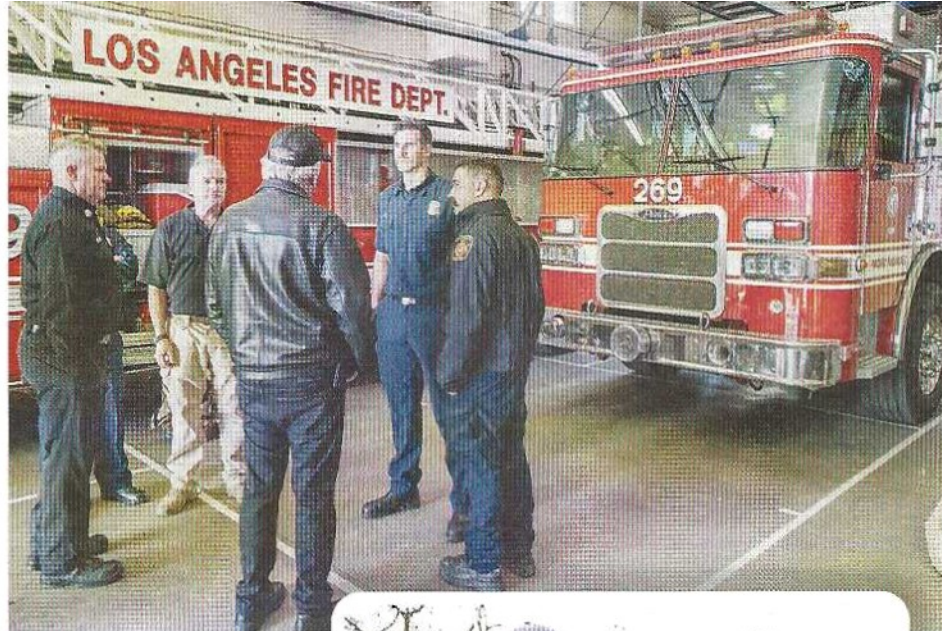
"This is the first time I've seen my wife smile in two weeks," Jaime said. "This is very meaningful, and we wouldn't have found these things without the volunteers. What you guys are doing is amazing and awe-inspiring. You're doing God's work, and are an answer to prayer."

Many more homes were spared through the brave effort of firefighters. One fireman described how his crew worked 72 straight hours, losing track of the time because the smoke had blotted out the sunshine. He thanked Jesus for giving him the strength to carry on. We installed water filters so that sooty firemen could finally take showers.

One of our volunteers is a former firefighter named Miguel who explained to me the power of this ministry: "What we do here is like attending a funeral for the homes of these families. We have the honor to come alongside the homeowner and grieve with them and recover what we can."

One of our first worksites was the charred home of a fire department mechanic named Adam. He and his wife had lost everything. Firefighters share a special brotherhood, and the Lord opened doors for Miguel to share the Gospel and lead Adam in prayer to receive Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. As King Nebuchadnezzar declared after the Lord delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego from the fiery furnace: *"There is no other God who can deliver like this"* (Daniel 3:29).

We praise God for the ways He is working through Samaritan's Purse to bring the hope of salvation to those who have lost so much. Thank you for your generosity and prayers. May God richly bless you.



OUT OF THE FURNACE:
I wanted to thank the firefighters, some of whom worked 72-hour shifts on the frontlines. Debbie Gomez told me how much she appreciated our team searching through ashes to find a family treasure.



Sincerely,



Franklin Graham

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

■ PRAY

Please lift up the people in North Carolina and California who are counting on Samaritan's Purse as they deal with life-changing disasters. Pray for the ongoing relief and evangelism projects of Samaritan's Purse around the world.

■ CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

Entire neighborhoods have been reduced to ashes. Your gift supports the work of Samaritan's Purse in California as we set up relief stations in the burn zone and minister to residents as they start over.

■ VOLUNTEER

Samaritan's Purse will be working for years to rebuild and replace destroyed houses, and as we enter the tornado season, our U.S. Disaster Relief Teams are always on alert. If you or your church can lend a hand, sign up at spvolunteer.org.

■ WHERE MOST NEEDED

Samaritan's Purse works in more than 100 countries to help victims of disaster, disease, famine, poverty, and war. Your gift to "Where Most Needed" equips us with the resources—including personnel, materials, supporting services, and equipment—to fulfill our mission of relief and evangelism.



Samaritan's Purse[®]
INTERNATIONAL RELIEF

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All gifts are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Contributions are solicited with the understanding that Samaritan's Purse has complete control over the use of all donated funds. Our Board-approved policy is that all gifts designated for a specific project be applied to that project, with up to ten percent used for administrative and fundraising expenses. Occasionally we receive more contributions for a given project than can be wisely applied to that project. When that happens, we use these funds to meet a similar pressing need. It is our policy to meet the needs God lays before us, so that Christ is lifted up and the Gospel advanced. Samaritan's Purse is a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.

Combined Federal Campaign #10532

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