

*For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light.*

*Psalm 36:9*

# *the* LifeWord

with Michael Green



September 5, 2008

Dear Friends:

## **THREE YEARS, SEVEN DAYS**

The car was already packed with the usual three day stuff, picture boxes and Rusty, the guinea pig, as we joined hands and asked God to watch over the place while we were gone. We had done this before, three years ago. Like most around here, the mood was solemn with a mix of disbelief and aggravation. We were doing this again.

As we walked out to the car, we noticed four small cups on the console. Tyler had gone into the church supplies and found four communion servings. Geoffrey, Linda and I looked at each other, as we choked off the emotion that was trying to creep out, and celebrated the Communion in the driveway. Tyler was expressing what we were feeling. We needed this moment.

While driving in the mess to Memphis, it was hard not having those *"déjà vu, all over again"* emotions. After all, it was a Saturday when we left last time. Our friends, Dean and Mary, took us in as the vigil continued. We did a brief drive by, Elvis was not home.

We realized we were just a microcosm of what all of the folks in the region were going through. As always, you're always looking for a few positive morsels to hang on to and the preparation evacuation procedures were quite smooth this time. I'm thinking, thank God, we're not looking like buffoons to America. Bobby Jindal was in the house and he was in charge! Kudos to all the Mayors and Parish Presidents for working together. We've had some snafus in the return but, with 1.9 million Louisianians evacuated, that can be expected. America also saw that money had been well spent as the levees held.

Naturally, everyone was relieved that they didn't wake up to the *"water over the roof line"* pictures however, that sent out the message that all was well. Not true by a long shot.

The wind and water damage has been quite devastating. Many are living in great distress as they are out of money, food and fuel. Damage is wide spread especially in the southern and western parishes. The misery index is off the charts and some of those folks have a long road ahead. Again, Christian relief is on the way.

The metro areas of Orleans, Jefferson and St. Tammany still also have major issues with power, fuel, grocery stores, awful traffic, potable water and the potties, themselves. Many still can't go home. Nasty refrigerators await. We won't have home phone service for another week. Can't wait to see my cell phone bill.

Since last Saturday, the texts, voicemail and emails have gone full throttle getting reports. Our hearts groaned as we drove and thought of those who had worked so hard to overcome the struggle of the last three years, they just didn't need any more. The aftermath of joyful reports from some of them has been gratifying. They still might be dealing with power and potty problems but home will be there when they get there. We must keep active in our prayers and provisions for those still in the struggle.

Thanks to our friends, around America, who have been sending messages of love and concern. Keep us on the prayer radar. I promise to return the calls.

With all of the positives, many concerns remain and we must learn from the mistakes and missteps.

Physically, we cannot quit working on our pre and post storm infrastructures. Spiritually, we have some big questions. We serve a loving God and His Hand was clearly on us, no doubt about it. However, haunting "*coincidences*" linger. Three years ago, to the day...we left on Saturday, prayed on Sunday and watched on Monday. There's more.

The pathetic parallel was the "*to the day*" scheduling of what is proudly called, "*The Decadence Festival*". Look this word up and debauchery, depravity, wantonness and licentiousness show up. New Orleans, founded on the River of the Holy Spirit, continues to gladly roll out the rainbow carpet for the festivities. An accident? It is certainly a prayer point to ponder.

Jonah ran from God and the storm came. It only ceased when he was lovingly pitched overboard. New Orleans...this is your wake up call.

*Michael*

PS: Another note will soon follow regarding service info and other announcements including, ONE SERVICE ONLY, this Sunday, at the NorthShore location at 9am.



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**"Building Christ Into Every Life"**