Crisis comes in many forms. The flood of recent fires in California is an example and a reminder of the fragile environment in which we live. Disasters, natural or man-made, seem to be on the rise in our world. No continent, no nation, no people group or even a fire department is immune to catastrophe. Lives are shaken every day. Personal tragedies, organizational turmoil, political upheaval and disappointments roll in like a relentless hurricane. We may escape for a season, but eventually we will get swept under by a tidal wave of calamity.

The question is: When we are spinning in the surf not knowing which way is up, where do we turn for help? Do we struggle on our own, flailing and kicking under the power of the crushing wave? Do we try to penetrate the deafening silence by screaming truths or falsehoods? Does this sinking experience propel us to be honest with ourselves?

In the book of Lamentations, Jeremiah records the emotions he felt after seeing the destruction the Babylonians caused to his beloved Jerusalem. He returned to a barren and desolate city just as the victims of the recent California fires returned to the ashes of their homes. Jeremiah, as we have seen others do, lamented over what had happened to the city, to its inhabitants, and to him.

However, when Jeremiah hit rock bottom, he does something we rarely see. He chooses to triumphantly cry out, “Great is Your faithfulness” (3:23). In the face of death and destruction, with life seemingly coming apart, the prophet turns tragedy into a triumph of faith. God has never failed him in the past, and God has promised to remain faithful in the future. In the light of the God he knows and loves, Jeremiah finds hope and comfort. His words give us a lifeline just when we think it cannot get any worse.

“I’ll never forget the trouble, the utter lostness . . . . I remember it all . . . the feeling of hitting the bottom. But there's one other thing I remember . . . I keep a grip on hope: God's loyal love couldn't have run out; His merciful love couldn't have dried up. They're created new every morning. How great is your faithfulness! I'm sticking with GOD . . . He's all I've got left. (Lamentations 3:19-24 MSG)

As Firefighters For Christ, the Lord gives us many opportunities to throw the rope of hope to others so they can grip the faithfulness of God. “And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” (Romans 5:5) This hope is nothing trite or shallow. It is gained only through the crucible of trial and suffering and is meant to be shared by those who have endured with those who are in the midst of crisis.

Dave Roever’s story exemplifies the power of sharing in times of crisis. During the Vietnam War, sixty pounds of Dave’s body instantly burned off when a white phosphorous grenade exploded next to him. He dove into the water hoping to get relief, but when he surfaced, he burst into flames again. When he exhaled, fire came out of his mouth along with the cry, “God, I still believe in YOU.” It was a cry that filled the deafening silence with the truth. His buddy, who was nearby, witnessed Dave’s scream of faith and gave his life to Christ.

Even though Dave has had forty-six surgeries, suffering unimaginable pain, he has faithfully shared his life in Christ. Recently he spoke to one thousand troops in Iraq. Seven hundred and fifty soldiers asked Jesus into their hearts just like his buddy did. His testimony exemplifies the heart of Job. “Though He slays me, yet will I trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him. He also shall be my salvation.” Job 13:15-16a

Whatever crisis you may be enduring, never lose hope. Remember Paul’s words in Romans: “I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither
“Won’t someone please help me? Is my husband going to be all right? Is he going to die? My home, it’s gone! What am I going to do? Where will I go?” These agonizing and painful cries are familiar to Claude Kidwell. Since 1990 Claude has been a fire chaplain and has represented Firefighters For Christ in South Africa.

“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn.

(Isaiah 61:1-3)

In the seventies, God used Ken Gaydos, a TV reporter from Seattle Washington to begin the International Chaplain’s Ministry. While reporting on accident scenes, Ken saw the need for a support structure for the staff of emergency services. He became Seattle’s first Fire Chaplain. Years later Ken shared his ministry in South Africa and Claude became their first chaplain.

It was also Ken Gaydos who introduced Firefighters For Christ’s International Chaplain, Kenny Mitchell to Claude. Claude wrote John White recently and said, “I still remember the day I spent with you and Ken. It was a very precious time. Ken was so faithful after that in phoning to get details of the work out here. I miss his voice but Victor Loveaga is also a dear brother and I appreciate him very much.”

Currently Claude is Senior Chaplain to the Emergency Services. He also serves under the banner of Emergency Services For Christ. Their chaplain’s work encompasses both personnel and crisis ministry. They support and debrief firefighters, paramedics, traffic, police and security officers after major incidents and also provide counseling for marriages and other personnel needs that arise. As a friend and a confidant, they make regular hospital visits to bring comfort to the staff and their family members. They also give emotional support to victims of accidents, suicides, shootings, hijackings and other major traumas. Their ministry is far-reaching. They assist with death notification, funerals and whatever the Lord leads them to do.

Right now Claude and his wonderful wife Helen are publishing a quarterly booklet of daily thoughts of encouragement. They are designed specifically for emergency services personnel. Inside the jacket cover, Claude writes, “We receive letters, SMS’s, phone calls from many who say that the articles are such a blessing. A lady told me the other day that when her husband died, the readings for that particular time were just for her. I would encourage you all to make it a daily habit to read the relevant page for each day as it very often happens that the message that day is just for you in a time of need.”

Please pray for Claude and Helen Kidwell. They are in their Golden Years and need God’s strength to carry on the ministry that is helping those who mourn.

Southern California Firefighters Got Morale Boost from Texas Supporters

Firefighters battling deadly Southern California wildfires got an extra measure of comfort and support from people in Texas they’ve never met. Sandra Dinkins, of Dallas suburb Garland, was struck by the overwhelming task the California firefighters faced combating fast-spreading fires in gale-force winds. She, and the Garland Prayer Support Team she leads, wanted to do something tangible to show their support. The group supports and prays for community leaders, especially police and firefighters.

Dinkins’ group decided to send Psalm 91 Firefighter Bandanas to California; the same red bandanas they had presented to firefighters at home in Garland. Each bright red bandana is inscribed in yellow with the text of the 91st Psalm, also known as the “Psalm of Protection”, which includes the poignant Verse 14, “Because he loves me,’ says the Lord, ‘I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.’”

The firefighter and police bandanas are an outgrowth of the popular Psalm 91 Military Bandanas sent to US troops worldwide in Desert camouflage and Army and Marine Digital designs. Today, American forces worldwide wear or display the bandanas. One group of Marine supporters, The Houston Marine Moms, has sent more than 5,000 Psalm 91 military bandanas to Iraq, where troops routinely wear them.

As the flames roared on in southern California, firefighters on rest breaks received the bandanas from Chaplain John White, of Firefighters for Christ, based in Southern California. Firefighters for Christ contributed funds in 2005 to help present Psalm 91 bandanas to all firefighters and police in Garland. This year, people in Garland got to return the favor.

For more information about Psalm 91 Military, Firefighter or Police bandanas or to place an order, call toll-free 1-877-262-6510 or send a message to info@springboardagency.com.
**International Breakfast**  
Irvine Hilton Hotel, 18800 MacArthur Blvd., Irvine, CA  
Right across the street from the John Wayne Airport

**Saturday, January 26, 2008**  
8:00 AM – 11 AM

Our speaker is Jeff Lilley, Executive Director, Hume Lake Christian Camps.  
Favorite vocalists from Hume Lake Conferences, Jon and Deanna Ramsay, will be singing.  
Invite veteran, active and next generation firefighters. Family and Friends are welcome!

Weekend Events Begin Thursday, January 24, 2008

PRE-PAID RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED & MUST BE RECEIVED BEFORE JANUARY 20.  
Please complete this reservation form and enclose your check for the total amount.

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### Thursday, January 24th

5 – 7 PM: Complimentary Fellowship Dinner  
FFC Office, 23011 Moulton Pkwy, Suite C-13, Laguna Hills

### Friday, January 25th

6 – 8 AM: Men’s Meeting at Boys Club  
295 E. Yale Loop, Irvine  
(behind Fire Station)

8:30 – 9:45 AM: Men’s Breakfast  
Pay individually at restaurant  
Ruby’s Aquadiner, 4602 Barranca Pkwy, Irvine

10 AM – 1 PM: Men Meet with Pete McKenzie  
FFC Office, 23011 Moulton Pkwy, Suite C-13, Laguna Hills

9 – 11 AM: Ladies Brunch  
Complimentary at the White’s House  
60 Fairlake, Irvine (Call 949 733-3947 for a ride.)

6 – 9 PM: FFC Dinner and Concert*  
Jon and Deanna Ramsay  
$24.00 per person  
Hilton Hotel, 18800 MacArthur Blvd., Irvine

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**Saturday, January 26th**

8:00 – 11 AM: Intl. Breakfast*  
$22.00 per person

5 – 6:30 PM: FFC Dinner  
$10 per person (PAY AT RESTAURANT)  
SoupPlantation Restaurant, 2825 Main, Irvine

7 – 9 PM: Prayer & Praise  
John and Jane White’s House – 60 Fairlake, Irvine

**Sunday, January 27th**

8:15 – 9:30 AM: FFC Church Service – Hilton Hotel

9:45 – 12 Noon: Brunch  
$16.00 per person  
El Tinto Restaurant  
18512 MacArthur Blvd., Irvine

**Mail to:**  
23011 Moulton Parkway, Suite C-13, Laguna Hills, CA 92653  
or register and pay at [www.firefightersforchrist.org](http://www.firefightersforchrist.org)

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* FFC must guarantee to pay for your reservation before the weekend, so we ask you to pay for each reservation that you must cancel after January 22.  
Reserved tables of 10 must be paid in advance.  

Call 800.445.8667 for Hilton Hotel room reservations — $109 for Single/Double Occupancy
The guys who attend FFC International men’s gathering on Friday, January 25, 2008, will be privileged to interact with Pete McKenzie. Pete disciples men, encouraging them to be men of God. He shared his heart in a recent Influencers letter.

“The men of Issachar understood the times and knew what Israel should do…for such a time as this.” I Chron. 12:32, Esther 4:14

I think you’ll agree that by almost every practical measuring stick, our culture and world is quickly spinning out of man’s control. We live in unprecedented times where adequate, secure, wise, and courageous leadership is all too rare. We believe that God assigned the major responsibility for leadership to His men, but as the world spins faster and faster out of control, the centrifugal force of that ever increasing spinning has basically ejected men from their most crucial value—godly leadership.

God & His Presence...
Continued from Page 1

the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38-39)

Jesus is your Savior. As you grip His hand, He will rescue you. He knows you will learn incredible life-changing lessons from the pounding surf of adversity. These lessons will enable Him to use you as the life ring to be tossed toward a friend floundering in a sea of distress.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.” (II Corinthians 1:3-4)