To look upon the scene of La Conchita was heart wrenching. To look upon the scene knowing our task was to remove the dead and hopefully the living lying somewhere underneath that mountain of mud ranging from 12 to 20 feet deep was momentous. I saw Chaplain Robinson on the first day. In his eyes I saw a look of emotional exhaustion. Along with Chaplain Lyn Thomas, he had been working with the residents, the injured, the friends and families of the survivors, and the friends and families of the dead. We spoke briefly before I went to work on the pile. As I thought about it, I knew that the job he was doing would be much more difficult than the one to which I was assigned. It seemed as though there was a lot of praying going on under the breath of those on scene—prayer for each other, prayer for the survivors, and, with an unstable hillside still above us, prayer for the safety of those working in the slide area. The Lord was with us as we worked together. We dug until three thirty the next morning. Once again the rain began to fall, and we were pulled off the pile.

The next morning after about an hour of sleep, we set out for the base camp for feeding and the operational briefing. It was at base camp that I ran into Brian and Gabe. It was good to see them both there, and I felt as if the Lord had brought us together at this incident for a reason. Later, as I reflected on the La Conchita incident, it was apparent to me that the Holy Spirit was there with us all and that there was a presence at the incident like I had not known before. I wished we had prayed together but in the midst of trying to get a briefing in, get a crew fed, and prepare for the next operational period, prayer did not happen. Later, after the incident, Brian had said the first day had been an emotional roller coaster as he witnessed some of the rescues, heard the screams, and saw the anguish in the eyes of those who had lost family members. I had seen a man standing on the pile screaming at rescuers to dig where he was because he could hear his family screaming beneath him. Brian would later have an opportunity to pray with this man and to remind him that God spared his life and has a purpose for him.

Brian and I worked side by side on the...
Help & Hope Amidst Devastation

Firefighters For Christ, Intl., is thankful that World Vision and Samaritan’s Purse are providing spiritual and physical aid to victims of the Tsunami Disaster. Motivated by their faith in Jesus Christ, these non-denominational evangelical Christian organizations serve the needy as a demonstration of God’s unconditional love for all people. Recently FFC sent funds to help these ministries in their relief effort.

World Vision teams have been distributing survival kits to tens of thousands of people. Each kit provides things like blankets, tarps for temporary shelter, water purification tablets, food, water and cooking supplies. They also provide other critically needed relief response, such as medicine and medical care, where the need arises.

Local believers organized and supplied by Samaritan’s Purse are reaching out with God’s love as they minister to individual needs. Samaritan’s Purse President Franklin Graham said, “As you walk through this rubble, it breaks your heart. Thousands and thousands of lives have been affected. We want to give them help and hope.”

IN AN EFFORT TO RESPOND TO MAJOR DISASTERS AROUND THE WORLD IN MORE OF A HANDS ON WAY, FIREFIGHTERS FOR CHRIST IS PRAYING AND RESEARCHING THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING A FFC CERT, OR FFC EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM, COMPLETE WITH THEIR OWN CACHE OF TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED OR CAN ASSIST IN THIS ENDEAVOR, PLEASE CONTACT THE FFC INTERNATIONAL OFFICE.

Comfort in the Midst of Tragedy

“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.” II Corinthians 1:3

Fire Chaplain Corps

Jay Donnelly, Executive Director of Cal-Fire Chaplain Corps (CFCC), says that Jesus’ words from Matthew 25:35-46 are the foundation of the chaplain’s ministry created to serve and support the Fire Service of California. Support and training are also available to fire personnel in other states who desire support and training in Fire Chaplaincy.

Jay has been a fire chaplain for 17 years. He is the California Department of Forestry (CDF) Firefighters, Local 2881 Chaplain and has held that position for 8 years. He is a 29-year-veteran of the fire service and has come up through the ranks from Firefighter/Paramedic to his current rank of Deputy Chief of Employee Support Services and Fire Academy Administrator. Jay is trained to deal with Critical Incident Stress Management issues, marital problems, interpersonal relationship problems, crisis intervention, ethics and leadership, communication skills, and a myriad of other challenges that face the Fire Service family.

CFCC is in the process of creating a network of trained fire chaplains that can connect with Cal-Fire Chaplain Corps. Jay says, “They will have the support and covering of other chaplains but minister in their own fire department. If the chaplain needs more trained fire chaplains because of a LODD (Line Of Duty Death) or other crisis, Cal-Fire will be there. Training, organizational support, and encouragement will also be available to local fire department chaplains. This design helps the fire chief of a particular department know that there is a support system in place and covering for the chaplain, but the chaplain is clearly there for his department’s needs. All of the training is aligned with the Federation of Fire Chaplain’s Training Institute and is available in California.”

Jay and Cal-Fire Chaplain Corps Board of Directors have a passion for the fire service and for Chaplain’s ministry. E-mail Jay at Donnelly@volcano.net if you feel the call to be a chaplain in your fire department. Support and training are available to you. May each of us as Firefighters For Christ members share God’s comfort to those who are hurting!

“They will have the support and covering of other chaplains but minister in their own fire department. If the chaplain needs more trained fire chaplains because of a LODD (Line Of Duty Death) or other crisis, Cal-Fire will be there...”
Lt. to rt.: Jerry White, Ed Beneda, Paul Steusel, and Victor Laveaga were just a few members of the FFC team which gave away hundreds of FFC tapes, CD’s, New Testaments and other material to firefighters who came to San Diego, CA from around the country. Five firefighters received Christ at FFC’s complimentary Continental Breakfast held during the conference. FFC will be at Fire Expo East in Baltimore July 28-30, 2005. Maybe you can be there!

Lt. to rt.: Laura & Roy Paige, John White, Paul & Victoria Wassell, Pam & Chuck Hermann enjoy wonderful fellowship around Saturday night’s dinner table at Hume Lake’s Firefighters Conference. Make reservations now by calling Kristen Sandstrom @ 1 800 965-HUME (4863) Ext. 212 for this year’s Couples Retreat, November 4-6. Many firefighters couples say it’s the highlight of their year spending time together as husband and wife!

Lt. to rt.: Greg Peters, Jon Holtby, Ed Teters, and Greg Gibson are regulars at Hume Lake Christian Camps Fall and Spring Servants. If you have a willing heart and hands—and the week off—consider joining firefighters and some of their wives as they prepare the conference grounds for the summer or winter seasons. Each week will include a special program, recreation, housing, meals, and all the work your willing hands can handle. Call 559 335-2000 to register for Servants on May 16-19 and/or October 31-November 3. The Fall Servants is right before our Hume Firefighter’s Conference. It’s an awesome time for fellowship!

Lt. to rt.: Joel Harris, Ray Klucznik and Harold Pickering were some of the FFC members who distributed scripture materials pointing people to Jesus Christ as their hope and salvation.

FFC PHOENIX, AZ was invited again this year to have a booth at the City of Phoenix’s Diversity Celebration. Lt. to rt.: Joel Harris, Ray Klucznik and Harold Pickering were some of the FFC members who distributed scripture materials pointing people to Jesus Christ as their hope and salvation.
President’s Message

Firefighters for Christ’s mission goal is to encourage firefighters to live their lives for Jesus Christ. “For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way; bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.” Colossians 1:9-10

Jesus’ last words to his disciples were: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8 We are thrilled to see the doors the Lord is opening for firefighters to be a powerful witness for Jesus Christ at home, at work and throughout the world.

Russia

This fall Chris Riley, Costa Mesa FD CA, was able to give the Jesus film (the Gospel of Luke) to some Russian Fire Chiefs in Moscow and St. Petersburg when he visited them as a member of the U.S. Fire Chiefs delegation. Chris’ wife, Jolene, packed his suitcase with scripture cards written by elementary students where she is a music director. Chris said one Colonel in Moscow was very touched by the cards from the kids. Chris had the opportunity to talk with him through the interpreter and gave him a FFC card with the Gospel. He held up his fist in a traditional manner as if to say, we were brother firefighters and understood what Chris was sharing with him.

Guam & Saipan

Jerry Sillocks, FFC Chapter President in FDNY, headed up a team that went to Guam and Saipan to teach EMT and basic firefighting. Darryl Hebert, Oceanside FD, CA, and his son Alex were blessed by the hospitality of their hosts from Far East Broadcasting in Saipan and TransWorld Radio in Guam. The purpose of these ministries is to send the gospel world wide to millions of people, many who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ. During their stay, they spent time with firefighters on both islands. They shared their testimonies and left their listeners Bibles and tracts.

Chris Riley says, “I thank the Lord for the opportunities He gave me and pray for God’s blessing and protection on the people of Russia and its fire service members.”
JERUSALEM

One of our members was asked to speak to five hundred high school football players at a football camp at Hume Lake Christian Camp. When the invitation was given, over two hundred of these young champions prayed to receive Jesus.

He has chosen us since before the foundation of the earth to be His witnesses. As we keep our eyes fixed on Him (Hebrews 12:2) and follow Him, (Matthew 4:18-20) He will bring an increase beyond anything we could ever imagine! (Ephesians 3:20-21)

God bless you as you live your lives for the glory and praise of our Lord Jesus Christ!

John White, President/Chaplain

GUATEMALA

Some of the firefighters showed off their training certificates. On the last day, the gospel was presented and approximately forty-five firefighters stood and prayed to receive Jesus as their Savior.

Left to Right:
John White, Al Dawes, Jose McNally, Dan Rodriguez and Sherry Fabriziana brought five days of firefighting training to eighty-five firefighters in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

JUNE 4-5, 2005

There is an amazing opportunity for ministry virtually an hour south of FFC’s International Headquarters. In conjunction with YWAM (Youth With A Mission), Firefighters For Christ will build a home for a family that has little more then a plywood shack to live and raise their family. We’ll embark on this wonderful journey to Tijuana June 4-5, 2005.

A life-changing experience could be awaiting you and your family. A team of 30—men, women and children over 7 years of age are welcome—will have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of rough construction from framing to painting. We’re trusting the Lord to do amazing things in the hearts of all who participate.

At the end of the weekend, the completed home will be dedicated to the Lord and the family will be given the gospel in Spanish. Along with their new set of house keys, the family will also receive a Bible. On Sunday the FFC team will return back home exhausted, but blessed, for the privilege to change the lives of a precious family.

If you are interested in this unique short-term mission opportunity, please contact Firefighters For Christ at (714) 427-0007 or e-mail us at www.firefightersforchristusa@cox.net.

“I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to Me.”

MATTHEW 25:40
International Fellowship

Firefighters from as far away as Northern Ireland and England attended FFC’s 29th Annual Breakfast Weekend. Lt. to rt.: From New York City, Rich and Linda Klein took in all the events, which included a Valentine’s dinner on Friday night, breakfast on Saturday, followed by a Saturday night dinner, prayer and worship. A Sunday morning church service and brunch concluded the great weekend.

Worship & Teaching

Legendary guitarist Dennis Agajanian set the tone for the breakfast’s keynote speaker, San Diego Charger’s Chaplain, Shawn Mitchell. His message theme was commitment, defined as a fixed purpose and action… carried to the end. His text was 2 Chronicles 16:9: “The eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth to show Himself strong to those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.” Many in attendance recommitted their lives to Christ or asked Jesus into their hearts to be their Savior.

Wife’s Fellowship

Throughout the weekend God used the Body of Christ to minister to one another. His love was evident and people’s lives were blessed by the presence of the Lord. Pictured here are a few of the Northern and Southern California firefighters’ wives.

Spirit-filled Evening

The Whites hosted an intimate time of worship, fellowship and prayer at their home in Irvine. Many shared stories of the victories and struggles in the firehouse. FFC chapter leader teams from Phoenix and Fresno were prayed over and sent out as well as representatives from chapters in NYC, North Ireland and the UK. The spirit-filled evening was certainly one of the highlights of the weekend.

P U T  I T  O N  Y O U R  C A L E N D A R

Don’t miss FFC’s 30th Anniversary Breakfast Retreat Weekend February 10-12, 2006. We’re hoping that all of you who have been a part of FFC’s ministry in the past will be there. Your presence will be a blessing to others. Pray about bringing firefighters on February 11th, who have never attended a FFC breakfast. IT COULD BE LIFE-CHANGING!
Disaster Strikes Again...
Continued from Page 1

second day digging in an area under which that man’s wife and three children lay. It was a surreal experience. As we dug through the debris field, we found many belongings: pictures of the children that lay beneath us, clothing, a family pet, videos, musical instruments, and a statue of Buddha were just some of the items. It was disheartening to know that these things once mattered so much to those below us but like the statue of Buddha, they could not bring salvation to those living in the house as it was engulfed and crushed by the wall of mud. I wished that we had found a Bible or a picture of Jesus, something that would have let us know that they had found salvation. We dug for twelve hours that day. And though we were all exhausted, the intensity never waned. Late in the day the team working adjacent to us exhumed the first of five victims that would be uncovered in that area. Brian and I were two of the six rescuers that would carry a rescue basket holding that victim down the main street to the local store where a doctor would pronounce him dead. Our shift ended at 9 p.m. I got five hours of sleep that night. As we slept, the night shift that had relieved us uncovered the bodies of a mother and three of her children. They had died instantly.

The next day I had a chance to watch Bud work and to spend some time talking with him. With the continued fear that the hillside could slide again at anytime, my crew had been posted as look-outs nearby, where much of the activity was centered. Bud was also working in this area. Bud represents our Lord well. He has a heart for those in need. That was obvious as I watched him work with the residents and other rescuers. Each time he greeted me he showed concern for my mental health and well being when I could see that it was he who carried the greatest emotional burden. Bud was pleased that his department (Federal Fire) had given him permission to remain at La Conchita in his volunteer capacity as Fire Chaplain with Ventura County. As I saw how well he and Chaplain Lyn Thomas worked together with those in need, I could see that they represented Jesus in all that they did. I can only hope that the hearts they touched will someday reach out to the One who gives eternal life.

Bud and Chaplain Lyn were instrumental in putting together a memorial service for those lost to the slide. Bud later wrote to the Christian firefighters and friends, “I saw many of you during the four days at the La Conchita incident and know that there were a lot that were not on site when the rescue activities were halted, thus missing the memorial service. We held the service where most of the dead were swept into eternity. The contrast of the din of rescue activities and machines for sixty-nine plus hours, to be replaced with total silence was very memorable. If I was scourged and beaten beyond recognition, the same place when they killed Him on a Roman cross, the same place as they laid Him in a nearby tomb, the same place when He gloriously arose on the third day. I don’t know how others can get through these times without His divine help. I trust that you all will rely upon God’s grace and mercy.”

In my twenty years as a first responder I have never felt that my life was at risk as much as it was as I worked on the pile of mud in the shadow of an unstable mountain at La Conchita. I have talked with many firefighters since who felt the same. I find comfort in knowing that just as Bud explained, God was there with us during this incident. He was watching over us. He was bringing us together. He was teaching us about service and sacrifice. I believe that He was represented well by the Christian firefighters and rescuers that responded to this incident.

Firefighters For Christ—Ministry Aids

Many new articles have been introduced in FFC’s clothing line, especially for the ladies. A new women’s logo has been created that is smaller and subtle. We now carry Flex Fit fitted wool hats for him and her, baby bibs, and beanies. Our old favorites such as T-shirts, polos, and 2 button pullovers are still available. The goal of the apparel ministry is to provide clothing that glorifies the Lord and that will give opportunities to share our faith in Jesus Christ. In the near future, items will be available on FFC’s website in the form of an online catalog where you will be able to utilize Pay Pal for credit card payments. There will still be the non-clothing ministry aids such as lapel pins, window decals, watches and rings. We will continue to introduce fun and exciting items for both men and ladies, so hopefully we can meet your clothing needs for years to come. Until the FFC website is updated for online orders, there are several ways you can purchase clothing and ministry aids. You can call the FFC at (714) 427-0007, or download an order form from the website under Witness Tools and mail in your order or e-mail us at firefightersforchristministryaids@cox.net. May the Lord bless you!
Mark A Mollet

The contrast of the din of rescue activities and machines for sixty-nine plus hours, to be replaced with total silence was very memorable. In that silence, it was an awesome thing to hear 300 plus helmets being removed in reverence as Chaplain Lyn prayed.” He continued, “Again we are reminded of our own mortality and some have asked, ‘Where was God during all of this?’
I n the fire service, especially in areas where wildland fires are a threat, firefighters are taught early in their careers about situations that shout, “Watch out!” These lessons are reviewed every fire season and anytime an unfortunate incident takes the life of or seriously injures a firefighter.

Given a primary objective of firefighter safety, good Incident Commanders and supervisors will ensure that safety is built into operational plans and communicated to everyone involved in the emergency. The core components of this planning are contained in the acronym known as L.C.E.S. This stands for Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes, and Safety Zones.

Like on the fireground, there can be situations that come up in your fire station that shout, “Watch out!” Better to plan ahead and have a strategy to avoid those situations where possible or to respond appropriately (in a manner worthy of the Lord - Colossians 1:10) should you suddenly become aware of impending danger (temptation). It may help to take the same L.C.E.S. model used in firefighting and adapt it into your spiritual I.A.P (Incident Action Plan) in order to provide a means to “pre-plan” and mitigate those “Watch out!” situations that come up from time to time for the believer in the fire service.

All good plans establish an objective. Ours begins with a genuine love for God, and a desire to know him intimately and serve him well. Like training for a fire, commitment to Christ, prayer, meditation on Scripture, worship, and fellowship are all required as preparation for the day-in, day-out life we live. Without this “basic training” the following concepts will have little use for accomplishing the goal the Apostle Paul set before us in Colossians 3:17: “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

**Lookouts**

Matthew 26:41 Jesus said, “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The Spirit is willing, but the body is weak.” This human tendency underscores the need to have an awareness of the situation you are in, to be watchful for dangers and familiar with the terrain so as to avoid perilous situations. Potential firehouse traps include gossip, negativism, poor attitudes, inappropriate language, coarse joking, inappropriate material in print as well as on the TV or computer, or a sloppy work ethic. These can all rear up and bite us if we are not on the lookout. Scripture reminds us to stay sharp at all times.

**Communication**

Proverbs 27:17 “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” Accountability is the key. Having a buddy watching your back on the fireground is a must. No less so in the firehouse. If there are fellow believers on your shift, talk about issues that are temptations; be honest and supportive. Work together to help avoid the temptations. By doing this others in the firehouse will take notice, and the effect will generally be positive. (Matthew 5:16)

**Escape Routes**

1 Corinthians 10:13 “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.” Sometimes, you simply find yourself in peril no matter how hard you try to avoid it. This is not a time to go over your options; it’s time to run! I Timothy 6:11 says: “Flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.” When a “watch out!” situation occurs, it is imperative to have a pre-planned escape route in order to extricate yourself and avoid the trap. Doing so subtly will honor God and keep your witness in tact.

**Safety Zones**

Psalms 16:1 “Keep me safe, O God, for in You I take refuge.” These are pre-planned places of refuge designed to safely ride out the storm of a situation that has gotten out of control. There are times, even at work, when you need to find a quiet spot, a place to read the Word or to pray, a refuge to get out of harm’s way and let the fury pass. That place may be a bed in the dorm, the jumpseat, a patio chair, or a phone call home or to a faithful friend. Even another shift or a couple of days off may be your place of refuge. Do whatever it takes.

Having a plan to avoid some of the traps and temptations that are part of working and living in a fire station are vital for a Christian firefighter in order to meet the objectives laid out in Scripture by our heavenly Father. Remember it is He who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy — to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen. Jude 24-25.