

Colorado Fires 'Like Armageddon'

Natural disasters come in all shapes, sizes and impacts.

But after deploying to the Waldo Canyon Fire near Colorado Springs, Colo., Billy Graham Rapid Response Team chaplains are wondering—out loud—whether or not a fire is the hardest to deal with.

“Fire to me is by far the scariest,” said chaplain Kate Ball. “In a hurricane, you know when it’s coming; you know when it’s done. Same with a tornado, you know when that’s done.

“With a fire, it’s so unpredictable.”

As chaplains minister to many of the 347 who have lost their homes and pray with some of the 32,000-plus evacuees, they’ve heard stories that are harrowing: Fires that seemingly pick and choose which house to destroy, then dying down, sometimes for 24 hours, before exploding again.

Some flames even jumped entire mountains, only to reignite on the other side.

“And all of a sudden the entire side of the mountain burst into flames,” chaplain Pat Geyer said. “It was like a movie scene. Like Armageddon.”

Geyer said it’s not just the homeowners affected by wildfire disasters. Or even the neighbors, stressed from evacuating and dealing with survivor’s guilt.

“These fires even affect the disaster workers,” she said. “It shows the power and the glory of God’s creation as well. The visuals speak of God’s majesty to me.”

For chaplain Ball, the fire’s affect had a profound impact on

her as well.

“I think there are so many Christians in this area **praying**,” she said. “You can see as we drove, fire would come right up to the side of the road, and all the brush was burned along the side of the road but the houses in the middle of that brush would be untouched.”

God’s majesty and power, demonstrated these past weeks with wildfires in Colorado and New Mexico, and even through flooding in Moose Lake, Minn., and Crawfordville, Fla., has brought a **spiritual awakening** in these parts of the country.

For some, it was a wake-up call. God is still on the throne and it’s not too late to come back to him. Dozens of chaplains in five cities and four states have ministered to hundreds of hurting people affected, leading many to first-time salvation or rededication in their walk with Christ.

“Those people who have at one time or another put their faith in Jesus,” Geyer said, “but have put that faith on the shelf and sort of gone their own way in the world are often drawn back because of the disaster.

“That’s God’s hand on His people because He’s not willing for one to be lost. If He can save a house, some of the people are led by Him to know that He can save them.”

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