

Divine Appointment Leads to Whole Household Getting Saved After Tornado

Jeff and Terri Nabor had to rely on GPS to track down the right address. The tornado had obliterated almost all the street signs in the Moore, Oklahoma neighborhood they were navigating.

When they finally pulled up to the right place, there was no home to mark the spot.

“The whole house—there was nothing, nothing left,” said Jeff Nabor. “It was leveled.”

The Nabors are Rapid Response Team chaplains who arrived in Moore shortly after the deadly May 20 tornado to help meet the spiritual and emotional needs of residents who have been through the wringer.

Four days after the twister hit, Jeff and Terri showed up to meet a military veteran named Steve and his wife. Samaritan’s Purse volunteers had plans to clean up their property, and the chaplains wanted to see how the couple was holding up.

“Steve spent about 30 minutes telling us what they had been through,” said Jeff Nabor. “They did have a storm shelter, so he and his wife and his son got into the shelter. The storm passed overhead. He could hear his house falling on the shelter.”

Steve said it felt like the tornado had stopped in its tracks, hovering over his family for what seemed like an eternity.

“It got to the point where we were screaming out to God—help us get through this,” Steve told the chaplains.

They did get through the storm, but as an eerie quiet settled over the neighborhood, Steve discovered a new problem. The shelter door wouldn't open.

"They were trapped," said Nabor. "There was a whole house on top of the shelter."

Steve used a hammer to bang on the door, calling and praying for help. It wasn't long before his neighbor, Mario, answered his call.

"Mario's not a big guy, but he was there, and he pulled pieces of Steve's house off the shelter so they could get out," said Nabor. "Steve said he rescued them from being buried."

Terri and Jeff sensed the Holy Spirit nudging them to find Mario and meet him, but he wasn't around. The afternoon passed by quickly, and it was time to leave. That's when Jeff spotted him, standing in his yard, staring at the remains of his home.

"There was just total despair," said Nabor. "I walked up to him and I could see it on his face. He was in shock. He showed us around his house, and I knew God was prompting me to ask him a question."

Jeff's wife, Terri, felt the same prompting.

"She said, 'If you didn't survive on Monday—if you were killed on Monday, where would you be right now, on Friday?' He looked at us and said, 'I don't know,' " said Nabor.

Jeff and Terri took the opportunity to tell Mario about Jesus.

"She explained to him that Jesus died for all of us, for our sins, and that His plan of salvation is there as a free gift," said Nabor.

They showed Mario what Romans 10:9 says.

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe

in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

"We went through the steps to *Peace with God*, and Terri asked him if he wanted to pray to accept Christ as his Savior, and he did," said Nabor. "We prayed with him, and he accepted Christ right there, standing in what was left of his garage."

Jeff and Terri were elated, but God wasn't finished yet.

"The next question that I had for him was, 'Where is your wife?'" said Nabor.

Following some vague directions to look for a blue van, Jeff and Terri wound through the neighborhood in search of Mario's wife, Beatrice, who was staying at their daughter's house.

A few minutes later, they spotted the van and knocked on the door of the house. That same day, Beatrice also came to Christ.

As Jeff recalls the story, he gets especially excited about what happened next.

"This is what's really, really cool," he said. "So far, it's awesome, but this is where things just go to a whole 'nother level when it comes to faith and God."

After Mario and Beatrice made decisions to follow Christ, they wanted Jeff and Terri to meet their children, but they just couldn't track them down. Soon, it was time for the Nabors to leave. They were headed to the town of Shawnee, where they were assigned to work the remainder of their time in Oklahoma. They wouldn't be back in Moore again.

But the next day, something unexpected happened that changed their course.

Jeff and Terry were driving down the highway in Shawnee when they came across a car accident. Everyone was OK, but a local

Samaritan's Purse volunteer was stranded. She needed a ride back to Moore.

The Nabors agreed to give her a lift. They went 40 miles out of their way, dropped her off with family members, and realized the neighborhood looked familiar.

"I realized that Mario's house was only a half mile away," said Jeff Nabor. "We looked at each other and said, we've gotta go check on him."

When they pulled up to the property, it looked totally different. Samaritan's Purse had cleaned up the yard. Mario was there continuing to pick up the pieces, and this time, his whole family was with him.

"They all told us their story of where they were during the storm and how they survived, and we explained to them the free gift of salvation," said Nabor. "We asked each one of them if they were ready at this time to accept Christ as their savior and have eternal life, and all of them agreed."

There, in the same spot where Mario had made a decision for Christ 24 hours earlier, four more family members prayed to accept Jesus into their lives.

"Isn't God good?" said Nabor. "It was His timing, that's for sure. If that girl hadn't have had that accident 40 miles away, we would have never been in a situation to explain the plan of salvation to four more people. Now that's God's plan. How can anybody deny that?"

Jeff Nabor hurried over to a Samaritan's Purse team leader to get his hands on some Bibles. He asked if Nabor needed two of them.

"I said, 'No, we need six,'" said Nabor.

Jeff and Terri gave a new Bible to each member of the family, and walked away with a fresh appreciation for God's goodness.

In the midst of destruction and fear, the Lord had woven together a beautiful story of grace—a story that changed one family's world forever.

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