

‘Literally a Miracle’: Hero Credits God After Kids Saved, Drowning Dad Rescued

Good Samaritans came to the rescue of a father and two kids who likely would have drowned in a Utah river had they not shown up to help.

Some might call the rescue a prime example of a chance encounter—a “right place at the right time” scenario. But Eric Odenthal, one of the heroes at the center of the story, is calling it all a “miracle.”

The dramatic scenario unfolded June 6, when the inflatable kayak a father and two sons were using in the Colorado River flipped over and the family became scattered in raging waters, KSL-TV reported.

It just so happens Odenthal and his friend, Gaar Lausman, were in the area so Lausman could paddleboard.

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“It’s fun and it’s enjoyable if you have the right gear,” Odenthal told the outlet. “But it’s very dangerous if you do not.”

Odenthal quickly noticed the terrifying crisis unfolding in the water.

“I ended up seeing the kids floating downstream with one of the kids kind of facing down, struggling,” he told KSL-TV.

Odenthal didn’t have the right gear to help, but Lausman was equipped, so he hopped on his paddleboard and rescued the

kids, aged eight and 10. But, while the kids were scooped up, the dad was farther away and barely able to keep above water.

Just when it seemed all hope was lost, something shocking happened: a man named Daniel Wright suddenly emerged on a jet ski.

"It was literally a miracle this guy showed up," Odenthal said.

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According to the Grand County Sheriff's Search and Rescue, Wright initially passed by the father and didn't see him. It wasn't until Lausman got his attention that he turned around and found him.

For his part, Wright scrambled to reach the father, who, at that point was reaching his hand up out of the water in a final attempt at being rescued.

"All I remember, just... I had to help them," Wright said of his mindset during those harrowing moments. "I had to get him."

In the end, both the kids and father were saved.

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