

Prayer With Wife on Phone Helped Give Hope to Man Trapped Under Tornado Debris

The wife of a Kentucky man trapped under a collapsed candle factory recalled the harrowing moments during which she prayed with her husband over the phone, telling him to “keep fighting,” and that God would “work it out.”

The details given by Courtney Saxton, 38, are spine chilling, as her husband, Mark, 37, fearfully called her Friday night in the wake of the collapse. He was trapped in the debris and rubble of the Mayfield Consumer Products factory after tornadoes ripped through multiple states that evening.

“He was calling us hollering and screaming and crying because he was stuck,” she told The Associated Press. “It was scary for me because I’m thinking, *Oh my God, is he going to make it?* So, I prayed with him over the phone, too. I just kept talking to him, kept telling him that God will work it out, be strong, don’t give up, keep fighting.”

And keep fighting he did. Mark Saxton survived the ordeal with minor scrapes and bruises, though he lost his cousin, Robert Daniels—a corrections officer overseeing inmates working at the site—in the tragedy.

Saxton told NBC News he didn’t think he’d make it, especially seeing what happened to others around him.

“I really didn’t think I was going to make it,” he said. “If you see the people that were beside me ... I can’t believe I’m even here.”

The tornado’s force and impact came quite fast. Saxton recalled looking out the window, seeing the twister

approaching, and quickly backing away—but it was too late.

“Tiles and concrete started falling. Walls imploded,” he told NBC News, noting that he was at one point picked up and moved by the tornado. “Everyone started running, so I just dropped to the ground. I got in a fetal position, and the concrete slab fell on top of me.”

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