

# Helpless To Save

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Most Americans, as we witnessed via television the devastation and human suffering in some of the Gulf states as a result of hurricane Katrina, have experienced a feeling of helplessness. We would like to be of aid, but are virtually helpless to know what to do – other than giving financial assistance.

How helpless we felt to see thousands of people relocated to emergency evacuation centers where they lacked adequate food and water for days. Even worse, some who had not heeded the danger warnings were desperately crying for salvation from their rooftops.

Then there were interviews with medical doctors expressing frustration because they possessed the knowledge and skill to save some people, but were unable to reach the victims, or they lacked electrical power or sterile surroundings necessary for successful surgeries. How helpless they felt!

How appalled we were when the brave rescue workers, who were already risking life and limb to save some, were delayed by lawless men firing bullets.

As I watched the reports on television I remember hoping that no Christians were among those who died. Then I realized that I should be wishing that all who died had been Christians. After all, who better than Christians are prepared for death?

I couldn't help but be reminded by this national disaster to an even greater tragic situation – people are dying spiritually. Just as some may have died in New Orleans due to a lack of food and water, millions more are dying of spiritual malnutrition without the bread and water of life (Luke 4:4). However, this is not due to a lack of available “bread and “water.” Jesus is the “bread of life” (John 6:35) and He has assured that He will “give of the fountain of life freely” (Rev 21:6).

Just as some people were trapped in New Orleans because they didn't heed the warnings that were given, many more have been trapped by sin because they have ignored the warnings to “repent or perish” (Luke 13:3).

Those in need of physical help in the wake of the storm were longing for a little good news. How cruel it was when false hopes of relief were offered by some. Likewise, how cruel it is when men offer sinners anything other than the pure gospel of Christ to dying sinners. They tell people to “join the church of their choice,” or offer a perverted, dehydrated gospel, which is no gospel at all (Gal 1:6-7). How sad!

The gospel of Christ is fully capable of saving every person lost in sin, but often gospel workers are unable to reach the lost. This is not due to a lack of power (Rom 1:16). Unlike those in physical peril, most who are lost in sin are not aware of their condition. Therefore, they are not crying out to be saved, and our appeals to them are most often met with apathy.

It is tragic to see such human suffering as we witnessed during and after the hurricane, but it is nothing when compared with the agony that awaits those who neglect so great a salvation as our Lord offers (Heb 2:3). Are we as concerned for the spiritual welfare of our fellow men as we are for their physical health and well-being? If so, as helpless as we feel at times, we must not “grow weary while doing good (Gal 6:9).