

## **RICK GAGE CRUSADE DRAWS HUNDREDS TO FOOTBALL STADIUM**

### **Four-night Event Makes History in Tulia**

Evangelist Rick Gage has a big heart for small towns. When key leaders met with him about bringing a spiritual crusade to Swisher County, many were skeptical it could be done.

Although planning took almost nine months, citizens were astonished as hundreds attended the Panhandle Plains GO TELL Crusade. The results were staggering. By the crusade's conclusion, 343 spiritual decisions had been recorded, including 175 first-time professions of faith.

"It was an amazing week," said Crusade Chairman Bryan Schrader. "I knew God was really about to do something big in our community when we started out Saturday evening with a pre-crusade youth rally. When Rick Gage talked to an area high school football team, 15 of them made life-changing decisions for Jesus Christ. The crusade was the greatest, most impactful event our county has ever seen."

"What I witnessed happen in our county cannot be humanly explained," said Pastor Eddie Helms of Calvary Baptist. "Our community needed hope, and God moved in mighty power. Our people have watched Billy Graham on television, but to see that same kind of thing happen here has deeply touched and moved us. This is just the beginning for us."

Pastor Helms continued, "The economic downturn has hurt our community, but we believed God and stepped out in faith to see this crusade happen. When Rick Gage left town, all the bills were paid! People were sacrificial in their giving, knowing their gifts will reap eternal rewards. One lady in my church was asked by her hairdresser when she was coming in for her regular permanent. She said, 'I'm skipping this one. I gave my perm money to the crusade.' We are continuing what the crusade started and will feel its impact for years to come."

Excitement pervades the area as churches are welcoming those who were saved at the crusade and are preparing to baptize them and help them grow in their faith. Pastor Ed Soules of the First Assembly of God Church is working feverishly on a dream center he envisions being used by all the churches of the area for life ministries as the spirit of revival continues.

"It was amazing how laypeople from many churches came together and worked hard to make this crusade a success," commented Pastor Soules. "The unity was tremendous and was greatly needed in our county that has seen its share of hardships. This is the biggest thing we've ever experienced."

Wednesday's service, the culmination of the crusade, was its greatest night. More than 600 students were treated to a Pizza Blast. More than 80 first-time professions of faith were made that night.

A counselor for the crusade, Barry Street took his mission of loving young people seriously. He hired two school buses from another county and brought 40 students from Kress, a neighboring community, to the Wednesday night crusade service. Of those, all but seven made first-time salvation decisions for Christ at the crusade. "What Barry did for those students was phenomenal," said Schrader. "The demeanor of those kids going up and going back was totally different. It was a God-thing!"

Counseling Co-chairman Don Sanders said excitedly, "We had trained what we thought were a lot of counselors, but nothing could have prepared us for what we experienced the last night of the crusade. As young people began to respond to the invitation, I told the counselors, 'You're each going to have to counsel two people.' But as waves kept coming, some had to help even more."

Sanders continued, "Rick Gage was very straightforward and did not play games when talking about a person's eternal destiny. It was amazing how the Spirit of God came over the football field as people responded, making lifetime decisions. It is a sight I will never forget. I saw many young people literally sobbing their way to Christ. Our community will never be the same again."

Greg Culwell, Executive Director of Driscoll House, a faith-based halfway house recovery program, was elated when every single one of the men going through the program made a decision for Christ. "The sight of the men huddled together at the altar—with their arms wrapped around each other praying—was priceless. The work the Lord did and continues to do in their lives will be felt in their homes and communities. One young man, who was 19 years old, had the greatest change I have ever seen in an individual. We are deeply grateful to God!"

"The crusade was absolutely wonderful," Linda Foster said excitedly. "Big crowds. Many decisions. Beautiful weather. God is good! I worked with children, and that was so heartwarming. An orphanage from the Plainview area brought some children, and several of those precious ones were saved. When one of the little girls was asked what happened to her, she replied, 'I found Jesus in my heart!' They have already begun a follow-up program with the children."

The Saturday before the crusade, every house in Tulia was visited and left with a crusade flyer. For weeks before the crusade, people met at the downtown gazebo and prayed. The meeting grew and became so popular, uniting denominations, that many asked after the crusade, "Can we continue?"

The Thursday night after the crusade, people gathered again at the gazebo to continue what the crusade started. The Friday after the crusade, Don Sander's real estate office was visited by five people who could not talk about anything but the crusade.

During the day, Gage and his GO TELL team conducted ON TRACK School Assemblies in area schools. Topics addressed life's choices and the dangers of drugs, alcohol abuse, teen suicide and premarital sex. Daily noon luncheons were blessed times when people shared testimonies from the previous evening and church leaders received decision-card information.

Follow-up is being taken seriously by pastors and lay leaders. The Sunday after the crusade, First Assembly hosted a dinner for all those who made decisions. They also will be offering a New Beginner's Class to help them grow in their faith.

"Nothing is more important to me than winning people to Jesus," says Evangelist Rick Gage. "My heart is overwhelmed at what God did and will continue to do in Swisher County. Saturating our communities across America with the life-changing Gospel message must be done at all costs. It takes time, money and involvement to reach people; but it will be eternally worth it one day soon."

Rick Stanley, an evangelist and a stepbrother of Elvis Presley, gave his moving testimony at the crusade. He is in demand as a speaker and has spoken at four Billy Graham Crusades. "Rick Gage has a heart for the towns that most people overlook," Stanley says. "His mentality is that there is nothing small in the Kingdom of God. And God always moves in mighty ways—like He did here in Swisher County."

Chuck Sullivan and the Joel Vaughn Band provided anointed praise and worship music during the five-night event.

Rick Gage and his crusade team have moved on to another town and another crusade, but his thoughts are not far from Texas. "I look forward to being back to my native Texas," he says.

Gage has witnessed multiplied thousands of decisions for Christ through his many evangelistic outreaches in America and abroad. Rick Gage GO TELL Ministries include crusades, summer youth camps, school assemblies, GO TELL Sundays and overseas missions trips.

For more information about Rick Gage GO TELL Ministries, please call 1-866-I-GO-TELL, email at [info@gotellministries.com](mailto:info@gotellministries.com) or visit the Web site at [www.gotellministries.com](http://www.gotellministries.com).