

# **GO TELL Columbus Crusade**

## **Whiteville, North Carolina**

After a year of intensive planning, work, organizing, training, and praying with all of our hearts, we opened the first night of Go Tell Columbus Crusade midst predictions of the "1,000 year flood" at South Columbus High School Gymnasium in Tabor City, NC - not the football stadium as we had planned for all those months. We held off making the final decision of whether to proceed or not until 3:00 Sunday Afternoon on October 4th mainly due to County Emergency agencies broadcasting for people to stay off the roads for their own safety. Our executive team talked it over, prayed and decided to go forward with plans altered to meet inside the school instead of on the field as we had spent months preparing for. The confirmation for us was when 400+ counselors walked through the door holding their Bibles, umbrellas, and huge smiles - they drove through the rain and wind to be ready to lead others to the Lord. We even had a couple of people telling us we should cancel for the protection of those driving to the crusade. Instead of cancelling we flooded the airways, social media with the confirmation that the crusade would go on but for everyone to make wise choices about their personal safety and if the roads in their area was not safe, please stay home and PRAY!. As 7:00 neared on October 4th, I could barely believe my eyes when people began to arrive and we actually needed an overflow room to hold the audience - close to 1200 people. 80 decisions for Christ were made that night. Absolutely the right decision to press on and ignore the enemy's attempt to cancel.

Each night the crowd grew as did decisions with the culmination of over 300 decisions on Wednesday night. Total decisions that followed through counseling was well over 800 people of all ages, walks of life, race, and gender. Other opportunities surrounding the week of the crusade yielded 25 decisions at the North Carolina Boys and Girls Home and 19 at 2 prisons. 150 + were observed coming forward during the invitation but returned to their seats without following through with counseling. With decisions made prior to the crusade from messages preached by Rick Gage and Steve Paysen plus those at the crusade we believe the number of decisions for Christ close to 1,000. **IN THE MIDST OF TERRIBLE WEATHER!** To me, it was as if God said, "ok, you have worked, planned, and executed on every level possible. Now step aside and watch what I am going to do - and boy did HE! The rewards extend beyond what our hearts and eyes witnessed at the crusade as Christians are networking together now as never before regardless of denominations, races, cultures, or other man made boundaries. We believe this number of decisions will double as they now become working Believers and bring family, friends, co-workers, and even total strangers to the saving knowledge that Christ died for all and He is waiting for them to simply say yes.

This saving power of grace was exemplified as we witnessed example after example of people responding to God's call on their life. It came powerfully, simply, and without hesitation. Like it did for a 82 year old man who had spent his entire life in church even serving as a deacon. He never felt sure he was saved. Now he knows. Like it did for the news reporter who covered Go Tell Columbus story from the beginning. Conviction set in and on Monday night he surrendered his life to Christ. Like it did for a Grandfather, Father, and 2 Children in the same family. The Grandfather and Father being men who had been prayed for by family members and church family for years.

Like it did for a husband, wife and teenage son whose family unit was facing divorce. They reunited in the counseling room and divorce proceedings dropped. A family now committed to Christ!

Like it did for hundreds of teens. Big tough Football players, cheerleaders, all races, all ages surrendering to God's call streaming down the bleachers, and folding chairs with tear stained faces.

Like it did for the women who came forward even before the invitation was given.

Like it did for the man who traveled from 2 hours away because a friend begged him to come "just 1 night". This man lost his son in April to Suicide, his finance to another man a month ago and had actually purchased the gun to take his own life.

We heard recently about a young man driving his car through a bad neighborhood as he talked with his Mom on the phone. In front of him stretched across the road were 5 black teens trying to block the road. The mom on the phone begged her son to hit the gas and let them know he would not stop - for them to get out of the road. He did so and all but one scattered off the road. As the driver neared the sole remaining black teen in the street, he slowed down, rolled his window partially down and waited to see what the guy would say. He called him a fool and said don't you know I'm a gangster? The driver responded that he was not a gangster and needed to get off the road and quit frightening people. That night at the crusade the driver in this story was serving as a counselor. As he watched the hundreds of people coming through the doors for counseling his eyes met the eyes of the same black teen he had encountered earlier that day. The black teen came because there was free pizza and stayed to ultimately meet God face to face. The black teen extended his hand to the counselor and apologized for his actions earlier that day and continued to give his life to the Lord as well as a friend who came with him.

There are many stories that are still coming in and it's hard to find a place in our county that has not been touched by the results of God's move. Everywhere I go people are commenting on the amazing changes in people's lives. The vision of people almost running to the altar will be forever burned in my brain and heart and I am a new person because of what I've seen and felt as a member of the best team God ever put together to do His work. I've been asked several times throughout the process if I would do it again knowing what I know now. The answer was always yes but sometimes reluctantly due to the frustrations of the moment. If you asked that same question today, my response would be, "how much do I need to pay to be a part of this movement".

**TO GOD BE THE GLORY!**

The real work has just begun. Stay tuned as you will hear much more from our County and what we are going to do with God's help, to turn the tide against the enemy and win the battle for God.

Brenda Jolly

Go Tell Columbus Chair.