

God uses barking dog to save minister and family

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COOKEVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—For the first time in his life, Darrin Crockett is glad God did not answer his prayer.

On Monday night, March 2, Crockett and his family went to bed as always, but their dog Doc barked incessantly throughout the night. Crockett remembers asking God “to make that dog quit barking.”

God apparently chose not to answer that prayer. As a result, the Crockett family is alive and well after an estimated EF-4 tornado blasted through their home in Cookeville, Tenn., leaving them trapped under a pile of rubble.

Reflecting on that night, Crockett sees how God orchestrated their survival. Had Doc not barked most of the night, Crockett may not have heard his phone alarm signaling a storm warning. As a result of the warning, he, his wife Jenny and daughters Carly, Camryn and Carrigan took refuge in the laundry room, the only place they probably could have survived, Crockett said.

“We heard it coming, and suddenly the house began to shake,” he said. “Next thing I remember is I felt grass underneath me. The tornado must have picked up the entire house, dropped it in the yard with us buried underneath it.”

A two-by-four that fell across an overturned washer and dryer likely provided enough room to keep them from being crushed. When the storm passed, lightning flashes exposed what few openings there were, and the family crawled out from the collapsed building with only a few minor cuts

and scratches.

By the grace of God

Crockett, associate pastor of VineBranch Community Church and a school administrator and athletic director at Highland Rim Academy, both in Cookeville, acknowledged their survival as a miracle.

“It is amazing,” he said. “If our dog had not alerted us, who knows where we would have ended up?”

As he stood near the pile of rubble that once was his house and watched volunteers salvage items and drag the ruins to nearby trash piles, Crockett knew without a doubt God spared him and his family.

“We have tremendous peace and joy,” he said.



Volunteers clean debris from what remains of the home of Darrin and Jenny Crockett in Cookeville, Tenn. The couple were inside the home with their three daughters March 2, when it was struck by a tornado and collapsed on top of them. They crawled out of the debris with only

minor scratches and cuts. (B&R
Photo via BP)

Two things, however, cause him to get emotional—knowing how close they came to someone planning their funerals and the outpouring of support from the community.

“It’s amazing to look around and realize we are not alone,” he said.

Crockett believes he and his family are recipients of God’s grace.

“I’ve seen God’s grace in so many ways and in so many places. This affirms it even more,” he said.

The outpouring of support from Baptists and other Christians also has been “overwhelming and amazing,” he said.

Baptists have received a lot of negative press across the nation in recent months, Crockett observed.

“But when it comes down to it, the church does what God calls it to do. Nothing else matters in times like these,” he said.

Although they have each other, the Crocketts did experience a significant loss in the aftermath of the tornado. Their beloved dog Doc, who probably saved their lives with his barking, did not survive.

“He will go down as a hero,” Crockett said. “We will celebrate him and talk about him for a long time.”