

God is Faithful Article

In 1988, in Armenia, Samuel and Danielle sent their son Armand off to school. Samuel squatted before his son and looked him in the eye. "Have a good day at school, and remember, no matter what, I'll always be there for you." He hugged his young son, and the boy ran off to school.

Hours later a powerful earthquake rocked the area. Buildings crumbled; electrical power went out everywhere; people panicked. In the midst of the pandemonium, Samuel and Danielle tried to discover what had happened to their son. Kissing his wife, Samuel grabbed his coat and headed for the school yard. Armand's school was a pile of debris. Other grief stricken parents stood nearby, weeping.

Samuel found the place where Armand's classroom used to be and began pulling a broken beam off the pile of rubble. He picked up a rock and set it aside, then another and another. One of the parents said, "What are you doing?" "Digging for my son," was his reply. The man exclaimed, "You're just going to make things worse! This building is unstable," and tried to pull Samuel away. Samuel just asked, "Are you going to help me?" The man's wife shook her head sadly, "They are all dead. It's no use." A concerned firefighter said, "Fires are breaking out! You're in danger." Samuel just kept digging throughout the night and into the next day. Parents placed flowers and pictures of the children nearby but no one wanted to help him. He got a stubborn bolder out of the way and heard a faint "Help!" A little later he heard, "Papa?" Recognizing the voice, he called out, "Armand!" Finally, he could see him and said, "Come out my son." "No," Armand said. "Let the other kids come out first, 'cause I know you'll get me." Child after child emerged until, finally, a sputtering Armand appeared. Taking him in his arms, Armand said, "I told the other kids not to worry. I told them that if you were alive, you'd save me and when you saved me, they'd be saved. You promised you'd always be there for me." ¹

¹ Jack Canfield (ed.), Mark Victor Hansen, *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. (Health Communications, 1995), pp 273, 274