

A New Outlook

I was always told that everything in life happens for a reason, but it was not until a few months ago that I was truly able to grasp the validity of this quote.

I am from New Orleans, Louisiana and Hurricane Katrina completely destroyed my home, my city, and my way of life. My family and I are currently residing in Houston, TX until the future of our city becomes clear. Many people have asked me how I can remain such a positive person after such a horrible disaster. The truth is I have so much to be thankful for this holiday season. People often say that you don't appreciate what you have until it's gone, so I am eternally grateful that I did not have to lose anyone close to me in the storm for me to realize how much they have meant to me.

The upside down Christmas tree in the photograph symbolizes how Hurricane Katrina has turned the way I look at Christmas, upside down. Like many other children and teenagers of today's world, Christmas has always been a time of presents, presents, and more presents. However, ever since the hurricane took away the lives of thousands of people, whom could have so easily been members of my family, I have discovered a newfound appreciation of what Christmas truly means to me. I have always understood that Christmas was about spending time with family and celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, it was not until this Christmas that I was able to truly understand and appreciate this important aspect of the holiday season. I have never been so thankful to have my family with me and I will always look at Christmas from a new point of view because of this storm.