

Message from Jim Glynn
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After stopping at Richard's garage, now taken over by Doctors Without Borders, we drove on through the Carrefour district of Port-au-Prince, west 20 miles to the city of Leogane. We found the city devastated, and more people filling every empty square with tents. In places where space is at a premium, people lined up tents along the boulevard medians. Only about four feet wide, each home-made tent in a single-file line looked like some kind of fair booths or camping retreat. Yet this little area between two curbs, with cars swirling dust as they zip by in each direction, is their only home.

In the center of Leogane, across the street from a huge tent camp in the main square, stood the oldest church in Haiti, St. Rose of Lima, five hundred years old. It dated from a time long before the French or slaves came to this country, an outpost established by Spanish priests. Only two walls are left standing. We interviewed the priest who was standing outside. It was a sad contrast to the words of hope, the prophecies of restoration, and the daily worship and praise we have encountered with other Christians in tent camps and on the streets. The priest told us that Haiti has lost all hope, and that there is no sign of how anything can be restored. He said, "They are bringing aid in the form of food, but who will rebuild our churches and houses?" He was concerned that if anyone sent aid to rebuild Catholic churches to the Haitian government, it might not reach its intended purpose.

I felt a sadness for this man of God who seemed to have lost faith at a time when it is most needed. I did my best to encourage him and pray that God will shine a light of hope into his heart, the hope which we know is our certainty of all things working to good for those who love the Lord.

Everywhere we go we see destroyed churches. Seeing this from heaven's perspective, I can only say that now the church will really have to prove that it is a people, not a building. I'm so encouraged when I see worshippers gathering in tent camps and other public places. Driving back from Leogane, we were following a truck full of people who were all singing praise songs, lifting their hands and voices to the Lord, such a stark contrast to the physical realities before our eyes.

George got a rather novel idea. We rented three motorcycles with their drivers. A person behind each driver: one reporting into a wireless mic and two recording it on film. They did this while driving through the most devastated parts of the city.

We realized that the extent of the destruction is not totally visible to casual observation while driving down the street. It can appear that three houses in a row are untouched, and then there's only a pile of rubble in the place of the fourth house. But on more careful observation, the three houses still standing may have roofs collapsed to the inside, walls so badly cracked and shaken that a normal storm might knock them down, or the back of the house, not visible to the front, completely blown off.

We saw a large crowd of people blocking an intersection, and realized that the two UN trucks next to them was for a distribution of food. Eight days after the earthquake, people told us that this was only the second food distribution, the first having occurred yesterday. Still we could not say that there was any unrest or even disorderliness, although from time to time you'd hear someone complaining rather loudly. They formed lines as directed by Spanish-speaking soldiers (don't know where they were from) and walked in single file to receive plastic bags with ready-to-eat meals and water.

I'm not sure I understand how one calorie-laden meal, or one days' food at best, can sustain the people. They all say they are hungry, and yet we're amazed how, so far, we don't see any violence. Right there in the tent camps and along some of the streets are women cooking rice, beans, and chicken, while other women are selling every kind of fruit and vegetable. You'd think maybe some hungry gang might come by and simply rob those merchants, yet we see nothing of the kind. We can only pray that this overall peaceful spirit will prevail in the days to come.

Back on the streets of Port-au-Prince, as day turned to dusk, we could see people who have no tents, but only a piece of carpet or a blanket, taking over intersections and laying out their "beds" like a mosaic covering the street. We heard a news report that said 20,000 survivors who need surgery but can't get it are dying every day. Many doctors are coming from other countries, and tent clinics like the one we saw at Richard's garage property are popping up here and there, and in some places, like the Port-au-Prince soccer stadium, large spaces are being converted into hospitals. Yet there's a great unmet need for surgeons and the possibility of doing surgeries, and at 20,000 loses per day, the death toll of this earthquake is rising at a terrifying rate.

It takes all the faith God supplies to look past what our human eyes see in this situation and to look from heaven's perspective. Some people might say, "Well, the Haitians are so poor and have so few possessions to begin with; so it's probably easier for them to lose everything and have to live on the streets." Yet it seems to me that when one has little, that little becomes extremely precious. Is it because of our great quantity of possessions in the U.S. that we think it would be so much harder for us to cope with a situation like this? Here's what I wonder: If I were to lose everything and have to live outside with my family, would I spend every evening in worship, prayer, and regular fasting with other Christians? Would I ride on the back of a truck, singing praise to the Lord while hunger and thirst pains were crying out from my insides? Would my life with my Savior sustain me and give me hope for resurrection when all my human eyes could see is death?

My own call to Haiti is to preach a gospel of renewal and revival to the Church of all denominations. Now is when that message is needed more than ever. Now is the time for the best of faith and hope and promise that we have seen among some of the Christians here to be spread to the whole nation. First to restore the Church of Jesus Christ and be done once and for all with division, jealousy, love of position, defense of doctrines that separate and have no basis in the mind of Christ, and bowing before those who have the largest churches and greatest connection to American wealth. Then for a repentant, humble, purified, holy Church to serve the nation and break the hearts of Haiti's people, until Satan is defeated in this place he calls his own, until a fire of revival draws the restoration miracles of God, until the world shakes with the spiritual earthquake that will one day pour out of this Pearl of the Caribbean.

Jim Glynn