

Haiti Earthquake '10-2

Before I was home I was already praying about what to do and when to return. I was immediately put in touch with Pastor Doug from CC Delta in PA. His church has a child sponsorship program in Baharona, DR. The ministry is about 4 ½ years old. They have a two story, 3 bedroom home that is used to run the ministry and house mission teams as they come in and go door to door evangelizing the area. They already had teams that were using their home to go in and out of Haiti. Through Vic, whose church also serves with them, I had been in contact the next day after the quake hit, but our immediate paths didn't meet until after my second trip in.

Doug asked if I would come in to help with some of the organization and logistical things that would be required to run teams in and out of Haiti while still maintaining the integrity of the current ministry and leaders in the DR. After prayer and discussion, it was agreed that I would fly back to the DR to help in any way I could.

Still only wanting to take in medical personnel and with none available to immediately go in, I made plans to fly in myself. Cassie from Horizon in Indianapolis emailed to ask if she could come in and possibly a nurse and I agreed, the nurse never made it. Through our network, Danny from New Mexico called on Saturday afternoon and asked if he could go on our next trip. I told him it was the next day and he immediately got everything in order out the next morning at 6 AM, but was snowed in and got stuck in Philly for 23 hours.

Cassie and I arrived to meet up with our ride to an apartment that had been offered to us for the evening. I was a little uncomfortable because of wanting to avoid the appearance of evil since Danny didn't make it.

The driver left, he didn't speak English, and we didn't speak Spanish. I was told that we could stay in the home for free and that it would cost us \$60 plus fuel to use the driver for a day, airport to the apartment then a drive to Santiago to pick up Vic's van that I had left the week before as it had broken down and then he would lead us back to the airport. We were to be on the road by 8 AM and stop to pick up coffee and a pastry.

He shows up at 8:15 with stuff to make us breakfast and by about the time that I thought I had convinced him that we just wanted to leave, his sister

shows up to cook us breakfast! I called a missionary in Santiago that I know, Jim, and asked him to make sure he understood that we needed to just get on the road and to let me know how much I should pay for help that I didn't want, need or ask for, about \$45!! He also explained to me that the driver needed a new tire which it appeared that I was also to pay for. I told him to take it out of the \$60, but not sure how that got translated, but we just needed to take off.

I gave him his \$60 and we took off. He stopped to get his tire, he paid for it. In the mean time I talked to the guy who set all of this up back in the states, a Dominican doctor who attends CC. I wanted to make sure that there were no misunderstandings as apparently there were already quite a few. It turns out that the \$60 was only to go from the airport to the apartment! He wanted \$200 more to take us to Santiago and still wanted us to pay for all the fuel. I explained that if I was to do that, I would not be using God's money wisely as I could get a taxi to the bus and then take the bus for under \$20! At this point, so much time had passed that it was going to be too late for me to get to Santiago and get back in time to meet Doug at the airport so I just asked to be taken back to the airport. His reply, another \$60! I said let me out, I'll take a taxi! He finally wanted to take us to the airport and I just wanted to end the mess so I said let's go. He stopped for fuel, \$33 and took us to the airport. I went to give him more money and he wouldn't take it, which was fine by me, next time, I take a taxi and bus!

I called Wilfredo, a contact through Bob Eridics who does some work in the DR and he said that he was in the airport picking up people, I quickly ran out to meet him. He had to get going so I went back inside. As I was walking I ran into Brother Charles in line to get out of the country. We talked for a while, he introduced me to some of his team, including Linda from ISHOP, who I'd talked to and emailed several times and we also worked together on a couple of projects with supplies. It is always good to meet someone in person!

A few hours later Doug and Danielle from Delta, PA arrived and we were met by Wilkins from the DR ministry, we got our stuff, stopped at Burger King and headed to Baharona, met Kevin, Fransico and Paul from CC New Bridge, NJ, and Vincente, Lewis, Lady from the DR ministry. We got unpacked, figured out that we were leaving at 6 AM and got to bed.

Up early the next morning, no breakfast, but we got some coffee. We loaded up our things and headed into Haiti. We wanted to meet up with Pastor Serge, but couldn't reach him. As we got close to the border, we found out that he was heading to the border to meet us. We planned a rendezvous and kept driving. Apparently he said to go to the end of the road and turn right and meet him at the gas station. Someone decided that we were supposed to turn left before the end of the road and we ended up driving into PauP with no communication with Serge.

I remembered that I had his church address so we stopped and asked someone where the place was. They pointed us in the general direction. A little while later, we stopped and asked someone again, we were continuing on the right direction. We went a little further and stopped to ask 4 twenty-something's and they knew right where the street was, though not sure of the address. We invited them in take us there. They were university students and one professor. They were homeless since the quake. Most of them spoke English and Spanish! When I told them where we were going, one of the guys said he knew the church and pastors as he had been taking computer classes there and learning about the Lord!

Once we found the church, another guy came up who attended the church and said he knew where the CC orphanage was and would take us there. We finally got a hold of Serge and he said to come on in. We found many church members sitting around. Eric from CC In the City, Boston, a church that supports the ministry/orphanage, was there. Since the banks were down, they couldn't get money, so he traveled in to bring them some cash. He is also a doctor and was helping out with the medical needs.

A couple who attend CC are doctors and had a medical clinic/hospital just outside of town. It had collapsed during the earthquake, but sits on a nice piece of property. It was decided that the best thing to do with the congregation, orphanage and some handicapped people that the church supports, was to create a tent city on the property. There is a nice artesian well, two generators, an inverter system, a gate, though the wall was destroyed. Toilets were immediately constructed with a working septic system. A former water holding cistern was turned into a storage area, a kitchen area was erected and a shower area was next on the agenda. Eric had brought in some tents, we brought in a few more and they were already set up and some people living in them. As they get tents, more people will move out of the city. As hope dwindles, food and water run scarce and

overall panic sets in as there is no where to turn, safety will become a bigger concern. Also with the close proximity of individuals in the tent cities closer in town, no sewers, running water, etc, disease will begin to run rampant through the area. While you can't keep everything away, this will be a good alternative for the time being, but a long term plan must be developed for these people.

We got a list of things that were needed and headed back to the DR where dinner was waiting. We didn't make it home by dark, but at least we got out of Haiti before dark. We made our plans and got some rest.

Then next morning we set out to buy supplies and cell phones, which took up half the day, we got some lunch and headed back, this time to spend the night, though not sure where!

We made it back in time to make our first tent out of pvc and tarp, though we made some mistakes, we had exactly enough fittings for one and will correct the mistakes when we return with parts as well on future models that they want us to make.

We played a couple card games of three and twos, where I was being hustled by Johan and Wilkins! We then hit the hay, only to be awoken by some real strong winds and it got a little chilly for this FL boy!!

We got up the next morning, only to do the usual sit and wait for about 5 hours until Serge made it in to pick up the nurses and we met up with Pastor Previl, a Haitian pastor who is connected to a guy who attends Doug's church. He was in the states this summer and met Doug so we took some food in for him and he wanted to show us some things around town. We actually went into two of the major tent cities and were able to minister to some of the people. One young lady accepted the Lord. The pastor was able to get a little cash to some of his members.

We then visited his church; it is part under construction and part old. It appears that the old part will need to come down, but the new part was constructed well and will more than likely be able to remain, depending on the engineer's findings and what the absent government decides to do with the city.

Next we took off for the hospital that Danny and Danielle were serving at. Post ops and patients outside under tents/awnings. Part of the hospital had collapsed. A lot of hurting people. Doug asked if he could pray for one of the patients and he refused, he doesn't believe in God, yet was really close to death.

We went back to the compound and dropped the nurses and pastor off and quickly headed for the border, it was getting late. We just made it before dark. There was a bad accident and we only realized just how bad the next morning when we saw the rest of it in the ditch on our way back in.

We got something to eat, yeah, food!! We then showered, made plans for the next day and met the two new nurses who were coming in. We then got to bed, by the time I finished everything, it was about 1:30 and I needed to be up by 5:45!

We got up to no food or water in the house, loaded and took off. We picked up some water for the trip and to leave with the nurses. On the way we saw the rest of the horrific wreck we saw in the dark the night before. The border is crazy with traffic today and we are barely moving, praying we get on the way soon! We are supposed to drop the nurses off at the hospital and do some ministry in the tent cities as time permits.

Well we ran into quite a bit of traffic before, through and after the border, then once we got to the outskirts of PauP traffic came to a halt. We asked if there were some side roads so we took them and managed to get to CC tent city. We dropped off the nurses' stuff and medical gear that we brought in and got a couple of the CC guys to go into town with us.

We got back to the hospital where Danny and Daniele were and found them not as busy as they hoped. It was a very disorganized situation that requires flexibility and patience. Danny was jumping in anywhere he could. Some of us took off into the postop tents and we were able to talk with, share and pray with many of the injured and their families. We also went into the children's ward and spent some time with them. I was with the CC worship leader, I told him just to do what he felt led by God to do and not worry about translating unless someone wanted to talk to me, I would just support him in prayer. It was good ministry.

The nurses decided to take off so we headed to a tent city in downtown. I waited outside for Pastor Previl and his cousin to join us. Previl's cousin lives in Port St. Lucie and got stuck in Haiti after the earthquake. We were going to take him into the DR and try to get him on a plane the next day.

It was getting late so we headed back to cc tent city to drop the nurses off. We were going to give them another day at the current hospital while Serge worked on other options.

We were supposed to take Serge's cousin and car back to Baharona with us, but he thought it was too late to go so she was waiting until the next day. We however, took off for the border and arrived just in time to have the gate into DR closed 5 cars in front of us! Thank God that Lewis is a soldier and his dad a general in the army. Lewis immediately called his father, who was upset as the border, which is usually closed but was supposed to remain open. He got on the phone to get it opened. We waited about another half hour or so and still it wasn't opened so Lewis called his dad again who in turn called again to have it opened. Apparently they only had one key and someone took it home with them. All in all we waited over an hour and finally it was opened up and down the road we went. Our 3 ½ trip ended up taking about 5 hours! We stopped to pick up some pizza, ate it at home and got to bed. I also helped Previl's cousin secure his ticket to Ft. Lauderdale and let him call his wife.

Got the best night's sleep so far and actually slept till about 7 and got ready to head to Santiago to pick up Vic's van. We were going to take the bus on Sunday but Doug wanted to look for tents in Santo Domingo and wanted us to drive one of the vehicles in so that he and Lewis could talk and then Lewis could drive the supplies back home. So we headed out a little late on Saturday.

We ran into a lot of traffic and it appeared that we were going to run out of daylight so that our return trip would have to be on Sunday. Doug decided it was best to look for tents on our way to the bus station and he also wanted to stop and see about purchasing a vehicle, both of which were on the way to the bus stop. We managed to catch the 2:30 bus and are scheduled to arrive at 5. Jim said he'd meet us if he could and we could stay at his home and we'll try to leave out early, early in the morning.

I contacted Daryl earlier in the day and he said that tents were gone in the DR and more than likely the US, at this point. A ministry in Santiago has decided to begin making tents out of PVC and tarps like the one we made at tent city. Apparently they have a bunch of volunteers to help and they can do an assembly line that will make about 100 of them a day!

We made it via bus and taxi to Jim & Theresa's, she was away at a conference and someone from Agape Flights was staying there. We were blessed to get some good internet, a hot shower and a nice chicken dinner. We got up Sunday morning and Jim was making us pancakes! We finished breakfast and headed out. We took the Agape guy to the hanger at the airport and go to look around a little and then off we headed for Baharona.

Johan and I decided to try to find a hardware store to pick up a couple of things, but no luck, all the ones we found were closed. We got a little lost in Santo Domingo, had to bribe a cop 100 pesos because we stopped in a crosswalk, but eventually made it home. The van ran real good, the brakes were a little different, no anti-lock, but otherwise everything was fine.

We decided to go by the airport and seaport in Barahona and see if there were any supplies sitting around. We found that the Canadians had unloaded over 200 containers to take into Haiti at the seaport. When we arrived at the airport we witnessed a C130 US Air Force transport plane unload 3 pallets of small bottles of water and then it took off, what a waste of time and money!!

The next day we got up and purchased a lot of things that needed to be done around the DR house and began working on the plumbing and electric. Lewis had some issues with his sister and asked me to do his Bible study for him, which I did through Vincente translating. It took a little bit, but the people eventually opened up to me a little!

Lewis and I finished around 1 AM and had to be back up at 4:30 to head into Haiti for my last time on this trip. We had to pick up Danny and drop off more supplies. I drove the '86 Chevy van and there and Lewis drove back, we made the trip in under 7 hours!

When we got back we finished working on the home, though some things didn't get done because we couldn't get some supplies in the DR, I'll bring them back with me next trip in. I finished and got cleaned up just in time to

greet Jim, Joey, Jacob and Rachel as they arrived with Agape and John and a nurse from Doug's church. We ate dinner and I briefed the team, Jim led us in devotions and then I finished up some things that needed to be done and got to bed around 1 again, to get back up at 4:30 to head back home.

We made it safe and sound, though Danny barely made it in time for his plane. I've got a few days home and then back to the area in 5 days! Stay tuned!