

the Messenger

Haiti—Relief and Redemption

by Rodney Fitzsimmons

The quake struck just before 5 p.m. on Tuesday, January 12, 2010, as Cathy and I were in our home in Gonaives, some 100 miles north of Port-au-Prince. The house began to shake, and I yelled to Cathy, “Let’s get outside.” We headed down the steps and waited in our yard for the tremors to stop. We watched as our ten-foot concrete block wall swayed like a piece of paper. I told Cathy that we may be far from the epicenter, and it could be much worse elsewhere.

A young Haitian and I had just returned from Port (Port-au-Prince), the capital of Haiti, three hours earlier, where we had purchased Bible school supplies, groceries, and some parts for our truck. We spent Monday night in a missionary guest house and returned Tuesday morning, after finishing our business in Port. We arrived home around 2 p.m.

After Bible school that evening we began to hear news of the scope of devastation in the capital. The store where I bought groceries earlier that day collapsed in the quake, killing 100–200 employees and customers. This was a five-story building where the walls, floors, and roof are all made of concrete. The missionary guest house where we stayed has since been abandoned due to structural damage.

The following Sunday we stopped by the home of one of our church families after the morning service. Their sister was in nursing school in the capital when the quake struck. The school was completely destroyed. Some men from the family tried to get to the school but were turned back due to civil unrest as well as gangs roaming

the streets with guns and machetes. After talking to a survivor from the school who was sitting next to their sister, the family has little hope that she is alive. So far, this is the only individual we know personally who apparently has not survived.

We also met with a pastor from Port on Sunday afternoon who brought his family here to Gonaives after sleeping three days in the streets outside his house. He returned to Port a few days later to try to secure what was left of his house and ministry buildings. We were able to give him some cash we had on hand to distribute to his people to buy water, food, and medicine. We gave him New Testaments, John & Romans pamphlets, and tracts for distribution.

About a week later, we learned that many of the injured from the capital were being brought here to Gonaives and that the hospitals (such as they are) were overwhelmed. We went to the nearest hospital to offer our assistance. Many injured people had been dropped at the hospital by anyone coming that way. Their families often did not know where they were or whether they were even alive. Many had no one to help them. These patients typically had broken bones, open wounds, or internal injuries. The hospital was providing medicine at no charge, but their stock of many vital supplies was running low or already exhausted.

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After receiving a list of urgently-needed items including bandages, bone casts, gloves, antibiotics, iodine, sutures, and pain medication, we headed downtown to the pharmacies and were able to acquire everything on the list at just under \$3,000. We found a large quantity of most items and returned to the hospital with the supplies. The

next morning we went back to the hospital to visit with the patients. We shared the Gospel with many and passed out literature. Cathy led a lady to the Lord.

We were able to make contact with a long-time pastor friend in the capital. He told us of areas where thousands of people are living outside with virtually nothing, just as has been reported in the news media. When we told him we had received some disaster relief funds from churches and believers in the States, he immediately offered to come to Gonaives to assist us in distributing this relief aid to thousands of people who are in immediate need of basic supplies. He came this morning, and we were able to give him a check for \$10,000 from donations we have received. Food is available for purchase, but most people don't have money. He will be working with other pastors and missionaries to purchase and distribute food. Together they will prepare a report of how the money was

used. Receipts and reports accounting for every dollar will be given to Baptist World Mission. We were also able to send about \$250 to each of three pastors for personal needs. All of this is possible because so many have given, and we know many more have plans to send donations in the near future. From the bottom of our hearts, and on behalf of the Haitian people in their time of suffering and need, we thank you.

As masses of people flee the capital, our city alone has received 70,000 refugees. Most of these are people from this area who went to Port for work or school. The families of these refugees often do not have the means to provide for themselves, let alone for these refugees as well.

Haiti and its future are in a state of crisis. Pray that our relief efforts will open many hearts to the Gospel. Pray for the immediate effectiveness of our relief efforts. We are providing assistance to pastors in Port who have been directly affected or who can use the funds for victims in their communities. We are also using relief funds to provide medical supplies to the hospital, transportation to medical facilities, temporary housing, food, and infant needs. We are also waiting to clear a container of relief supplies which has arrived at the wharf here in Gonaives.

We are grateful for the response of the international community in their search and rescue efforts. Many times the headlines tell of the rescue of people buried under the rubble for days who survived against all odds. What exciting and uplifting stories! But though they have been spared from death for now, there is still a day coming when their life here will end and judgment day will come. Without Christ there will be no escape.

We have been involved in search and rescue efforts here in Haiti for over 26 years. By preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ we have seen hundreds, even thousands of souls pulled out of the fire (Jude 23). And though these rescues did not make headlines on the evening news, there was rejoicing in Heaven over every soul saved (Luke 15:7). Those delivered have God's promise that "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:26).

Rodney and Cathy Fitzsimmons have served in Haiti under BWM since 1986, where they have established 12 churches and a Bible school. BWM enacted a disaster relief policy in 2008.



Ready to Go

Ben & Lauren Childs (Papua New Guinea) **98%**
bchild@s@baptistworldmission.org

Scott & Mary Clark (Uruguay) **85%**
sclark2@s@baptistworldmission.org

Jeremie & Damaris Dodeler (France) **90%**
jdodeler@s@baptistworldmission.org

Alan & Bethany Sanchez (Nicaragua) **90%**
asanchez@s@baptistworldmission.org

Gone

Bekah Kuehlman reached **100%** of her support and arrived on the field of Japan February 18! Please pray for her as she settles into her new ministry among the ladies and children of Nagoya, Japan.

Ben & Katie Shore also attained **100%** support status! As of the writing of this newsletter, they are scheduled to arrive in Scotland on March 24. Please pray for their acclimation to Scotland and for Katie, as she is expecting their fifth child on April 21.

These missionaries have almost reached 100% support. They are **Ready to Go!** Perhaps the Lord of the Harvest will enable you or your church to help them get to their field of service. Contact them today!

Family Relationship Seminar

by Dr. David Canedy

Dr. and Mrs. Allen Griffith of Biblical Family Ministries once again offered their counsel and training on the importance of maintaining right relationships in the home and on the field. The Griffiths' son Pastor Craig Griffith of Open Door Baptist Church, Lebanon, Pennsylvania, taught one day of the seminar this year. What an excellent illustration it was to hear Craig teach, since he is living proof of how effective family ministry can be!

Servants of God sometimes wrestle with priorities in ministry. What is more important—God or family, ministry or family? It is not that hard to discover from Scripture that God must take first place in our lives (Matthew 6:33; Matthew 10:37; Colossians 1:18). However, once God is in first place, what comes next? Ministry or family? One way to reconcile this dilemma is to understand that family is our first and most important ministry. If we don't succeed in our family ministry, we will not even have a pastoral ministry. The qualifications of a bishop and deacon make clear that the servant of God must minister well to his family in order to effectively minister to the church.

The BWM Family Relationship Seminar seeks to reinforce the biblical emphasis on our family ministry so that our missionaries will be truly successful in their missionary service. Pray for our missionaries' family ministry!



Even a small monthly contribution from every church that supports BWM missionaries would make a huge difference for our missionaries. Thank you for your support!

Preachers Ordained in Haiti

by Kevin L. Brosnan

Many are wondering whether January's devastating earthquake will evoke a spiritual awakening in Haiti. If so, the harvest of souls will present a great responsibility to the spiritual leaders of that country. Can I suggest that God was already at work, calling and equipping national pastors? Missionary Rodney Fitzsimmons participated in the ordination of four Haitian pastors in December. When I consider God's calling upon these men's lives, I can't help asking as Mordecai did, "And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).

These men are Wisky Derilus, Benice Doly, Sainmilus Egulmat, and Wilson Young. Missionary Fitzsimmons personally led two of them to Christ, and they are all products of his ministry. Each has completed the four-year Bible school training program, and all are students or graduates of their four-year seminary. Three of these men are already pastoring churches, and one is in the process of planting a new work.



Commenting on Pastor Egulmat's work in Gatro, Fitzsimmons observes, "The church has been seeing many salvation decisions and an increase in attendance. The people of the church are serious about reaching their community." He praises Pastor Young for his "tremendous zeal" and "witness for the Gospel of Jesus Christ." Pastor Doly came from a religious background and now has a burden to reach those who have religion, but not Christ. Pastor Derilus has returned to the rural rice lands to establish a church among his own people.

Missionary Fitzsimmons directly started two churches and now assists nationals in that task. He is the only foreign missionary who teaches in the Berean Baptist Bible School and Seminary, which currently has 450 students. His approach has yielded 14 new churches, and his goal is to maintain a rate of at least one new church per year. He wrote, "Our church-planting ministry involves evangelism, discipleship, training, and ordaining national workers for the ministry."

We rejoice in what God is doing in Haiti and ask God's people to continue praying for a country that currently seems to be at the center of divine focus.

Needs of BWM

- PRAISE: An end-of-year donation met our need to replace the stair treads on the back staircase in our home office building!
- Six netbook (mini laptop) computers, new (\$200 ea.) or used (\$150 ea.)
- \$400 for necessary tree removal and landscaping

The home office provides vital services to all our missionaries. Your support of BWM's General Fund benefits every missionary by offsetting the amount our missionaries pay for these services.

Rev. Steve Anderson

April 10
Calvary Baptist Church
Huntsville, AL

April 19–20
BWM Spring Board Meeting
Trinity Baptist Church, Concord, NH

May 2
First Baptist Church
Oak Creek, WI (a.m. service)

May 2–7
BWM Orientation Seminar
Camp Joy, Whitewater, WI

May 30
Bethel Baptist Church
Hartselle, AL

June 6
Trinity Baptist Church, Flushing, MI

Dr. Ron Brooks

April 18–21
Plainville Baptist Church
Plainville, MA

April 19–20
BWM Spring Board Meeting
Trinity Baptist Church, Concord, NH

May 2–7
BWM Orientation Seminar
Camp Joy, Whitewater, WI

Rev. Kevin Brosnan

April 19–20
BWM Spring Board Meeting
Trinity Baptist Church, Concord, NH

May 2–7
BWM Orientation Seminar
Camp Joy, Whitewater, WI

June 28–July 13
Poland/Hungary/Romania

Dr. David Canedy

April 1–2
Faith Baptist Bible College
Ankeny, IA

April 7–11
Colonial Hills Baptist Church
Indianapolis, IN

April 13–16
Northland International University
Dunbar, WI

April 19–20
BWM Spring Meeting
Trinity Baptist Church, Concord, NH

April 25
Bethel Baptist Church
Hartselle, AL

April 28–May 2
First Baptist Church,
West Bend, WI

May 3–6
BWM Orientation Seminar
Camp Joy, Whitewater, WI

Rev. Jesse Garza

April 1–15
Mexico

April 19–20
BWM Spring Meeting
Trinity Baptist Church, Concord, NH

May 2–7
BWM Orientation Seminar
Camp Joy, Whitewater, WI

May 7–27
Peru/Colombia

Dr. Walt Schmidt

April 19–20
BWM Spring Meeting
Trinity Baptist Church, Concord, NH

April 25
Bethel Baptist Church, Jackson, TN

May 2–7
BWM Orientation Seminar
Camp Joy, Whitewater, WI

May 11–June 9
Japan/Thailand/Far East/Siberia

June 20
Bethel Baptist Church
Riverview, FL

Dr. Bud Steadman

April 9–10
Couples' Retreat
The Wilds, Brevard, NC

April 19–20
BWM Spring Meeting
Trinity Baptist Church, Concord, NH

April 22–24
Illinois Pastors' Retreat
Camp Assurance, Georgetown, IL

April 25
Bethel Baptist Church
Georgetown, IL (a.m. service)

April 25
First Baptist Church
Danville, IL (p.m. service)

April 28
Central African Baptist College
Board Meeting, Brookside, WI

May 1
The Wilds Board Meeting
Brevard, NC

May 2–6
BWM Orientation Seminar
Camp Joy, Whitewater, WI

May 6–8
Bob Jones University Board
Meeting, Greenville, SC

June 15–17
Fundamental Baptist Fellowship
National Meeting, Morrison, CO

June 22–24
Independent Baptist Fellowship
of North America Conference,
Charlotte, NC

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