



SPECIAL REPORT: Mitch Visits Haiti

What follows is journal description of Mitch's Visit to the Port Au Prince disaster site in Haiti

Journal Snapshots of Port-Au-Prince

Snapshot 1. There is an overwhelming smell of the dead and no way of escaping it. We are stuck in a traffic jam going up a hill in a wealthy residential area of Port-Au-Prince. Every other house or mansion has collapsed. Doubtless this area has been neglected by the rescue teams as the focus is on the downtown area where the most visible destruction has occurred.

The traffic jam has made us captive to the horrible stench in the air. We cover our faces with handkerchiefs and pulled up shirts. We don't dare to think about diseases and the contamination nearby.

Across the valley to our right are some hills where we see an uncountable amount of adjoining small homes destroyed by the quake. They dot the hillsides everywhere.



Snapshot 2. We are in bumper to bumper traffic, moving forward we notice that every third vehicle or so is a military transport or an NGO transport (non-profit organizations). We pass street corners with armored vehicles parked and ONU (United Nations) soldiers. Their jutting semi-automatic weapons are in hand. They are guarding this area, discouraging scavengers from getting out of control. There are people digging through the rubble of supermarkets looking for food.



Snapshot 3. The Downtown Area: Nearly half of the buildings that we pass have suffered light to extreme damage. They will definitely have to be razed. Multi-storied buildings have been toppled. Bulldozers are still clearing streets to allow traffic to pass through. Dead thick electrical and TV cable wires litter our path as we wind through streets

crowded with people and debris. We turn down a narrow side street. People pick up their meager belongings and clear a path for us.

We pause to allow a man with a push cart to scavenge scrap wood from the road in front of us. He will use this for a cooking fire. Finally, as he moves out of our way, we proceed forward. A group of people go scurrying past us dodging stones thrown by hoodlums perched high on the wrecked buildings that surround us. Suddenly the people fleeing turn to run in our direction; the rain of stones pelting the area now begins moving in our direction.

We must move, but the street is too narrow to turn around. We motion to our team's vehicle behind us. Reverse, back away, quickly, quickly! They catch our signal and begin their careful retreat through the earthquake littered lane.



In front of us appeared 4 or 5 ONU (United Nations) white SUV's and vans. They are moving rapidly and slow down briefly to survey the scene. That pause sends the battling ruffians scurrying in all directions; a needed lull in this urban uprising. There is no time to really think as the caravan picks up its pace again and snakes its way across the intersection.

We make a decision to tag along and motioning the van behind, we follow, and are out of that city block, twisting and turning through narrow side streets following the tail of the ONU caravan. Finally we are in two way traffic and we begin to calm down.



Snapshot 4: We are now just a few blocks from the recently destroyed Presidential Palace. White fractured domes sit lopsided upon crushed walls; there is still some evidence of their former glory. A large Haitian flag flows in the wind. Not far ahead we drive along a boulevard that serves as a boundary for a new tent city which has risen from the rubble.



A bedroom sheet tent city is more the term, sitting edge to edge in multi-colored patches, they dot this former public park as far as the eye can see. Unbidden questions come to mind. How are they being fed?

Where does their waste go? What will they do next? Where will they go? How long can they live like this? How much sadder can their condition get?



Where does their waste go?



Numb wide eyes stare at us. We want to communicate offer our sympathy. But we are afraid to open the windows. We were advised not to, not to step out of the vehicles because of the diseases that are circulating in the camps. For our own health we can only look on.

I shake my head and catch the face of a black Haitian, a son of Adam, my brother. He looks at me as if to say "This is a sad situation". We switch lanes and he is gone.

Snapshot 5: When we first came into Port Au Prince we stopped at the Assemblies of God Bible Institute near the airport. We had been advised to take all our food and supplies there for distribution later. There were a number of students on hand who helped us unload the 200 + care packages we had so carefully assembled. Rice, beans, sardines, oil, sugar, salt, canned beans, matches, candles, milk, bouillon cubes, etc. Convoy of Hope would oversee the distribution, along with the national Haitian church

Our team of 15 people from South Carolina had come to the Dominican Republic to conduct Revival services but somehow had reached deep into their pockets and raised \$3200 for food for Haiti. In three vehicles we had crossed the border in Jimani and entered Haiti. Their arrival was on the heels of perhaps the greatest national disaster to shake this two-nation island. They felt they had to do something.

We know God's protection was with us. As we returned and crossed the border into the Dominican Republic another tremor reaching 4.3 on the Richter scale shook the city of Port Au Prince one more time.

The following are some glaring observations from the trip.
1. It will take years for the recovery of the city of Port Au Prince. The infrastructure of the city is barely functioning. Pray their needs will not be forgotten too quickly.
2. People will begin starving soon and violence will escalate unless a mammoth amount of aid is forthcoming. Please pray for this aid, and help however you can by supporting any of the many ministries working already there. Currently a number of missionaries are working

together to get needed medical and food supplies into Haiti. If you would like to send any donations to help the Haitian people please send your gifts to Convoyofhope.org at their website (they will send you a tax deductible receipt). They will make sure these funds go to help needy earthquake victims in Haiti.

3. It will be a long time before people can sleep peacefully in this city. Pray for the emotional well-being of the hundreds of thousands affected.

4. The death toll will take many months to estimate. There are parts of the city that have not even been touched by rescue teams. They call themselves forgotten neighborhoods. Pray for the families that have lost loved ones.

5. While many temporary hospitals have been set up along the Dominican border, they will need drugs. Some patients are being sent to the other towns of the DR, they too will need medicines.

6. Surely anyone who has not had to live through a disaster of this proportion needs to be quietly thankful to God for His mercy.

Remember to keep the Haitian people in your prayers!

If you have any questions email us at: mitch@dominicanmissions.org or call 863-248-1119

together to get needed medical and food supplies into Haiti. If you would like to send any donations to help the Haitian people please send your gifts to Convoyofhope.org at their website (they will send you a tax deductible receipt). They will make sure these funds go to help needy earthquake victims in Haiti.

3. It will be a long time before people can sleep peacefully in this city. Pray for the emotional well-being of the hundreds of thousands affected.

4. The death toll will take many months to estimate. There are parts of the city that have not even been touched by rescue teams. They call themselves forgotten neighborhoods. Pray for the families that have lost loved ones.

5. While many temporary hospitals have been set up along the Dominican border, they will need drugs. Some patients are being sent to the other towns of the DR, they too will need medicines.

6. Surely anyone who has not had to live through a disaster of this proportion needs to be quietly thankful to God for His mercy.

Remember to keep the Haitian people in your prayers!

If you have any questions email us at: mitch@dominicanmissions.org or call 863-248-1119

together to get needed medical and food supplies into Haiti. If you would like to send any donations to help the Haitian people please send your gifts to Convoyofhope.org at their website (they will send you a tax deductible receipt). They will make sure these funds go to help needy earthquake victims in Haiti.

3. It will be a long time before people can sleep peacefully in this city. Pray for the emotional well-being of the hundreds of thousands affected.

4. The death toll will take many months to estimate. There are parts of the city that have not even been touched by rescue teams. They call themselves forgotten neighborhoods. Pray for the families that have lost loved ones.

5. While many temporary hospitals have been set up along the Dominican border, they will need drugs. Some patients are being sent to the other towns of the DR, they too will need medicines.

6. Surely anyone who has not had to live through a disaster of this proportion needs to be quietly thankful to God for His mercy.

Remember to keep the Haitian people in your prayers!

If you have any questions email us at: mitch@dominicanmissions.org or call 863-248-1119

together to get needed medical and food supplies into Haiti. If you would like to send any donations to help the Haitian people please send your gifts to Convoyofhope.org at their website (they will send you a tax deductible receipt). They will make sure these funds go to help needy earthquake victims in Haiti.

3. It will be a long time before people can sleep peacefully in this city. Pray for the emotional well-being of the hundreds of thousands affected.

4. The death toll will take many months to estimate. There are parts of the city that have not even been touched by rescue teams. They call themselves forgotten neighborhoods. Pray for the families that have lost loved ones.

5. While many temporary hospitals have been set up along the Dominican border, they will need drugs. Some patients are being sent to the other towns of the DR, they too will need medicines.

6. Surely anyone who has not had to live through a disaster of this proportion needs to be quietly thankful to God for His mercy.

Remember to keep the Haitian people in your prayers!

If you have any questions email us at: mitch@dominicanmissions.org or call 863-248-1119