

# Watching God “Roll the Stone Away” in Haiti

by Pastor Steve Igo

The Bible tells us that God raises the dead! Do you believe that? I do! On the third day, he raised Jesus from the grave so sins could be forgiven. And one day, he will raise all those who are in Christ to their eternal home in heaven. But today, I watched the Lord “roll the stone away” for ten high school girls at a high school called *Ecole Normale de Delmas* in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. And with “Easter-like” emotion I can say to you, “They are alive!”

God began his rescue mission by stranding our missionary friend, Chris, in Port-au-Prince on the day of the earthquake. He was so overwhelmed, especially when he came upon a four story school building that had completely collapsed. Cries called to him from the building. Feeling so alone, he did all he could to free them with his bare hands. It worked. Slowly, students were extracted from the ruins. As darkness settled upon the scene, it soon came time for Chris to leave for home. But he could still hear voices within the ruins as he began his 15 mile hike and hitch-hike up to our missionary compound. And he was haunted by those voices.

When he knocked on our door that night, our dust covered friend looked exhausted. He asked missionary Ben Hopp and me to join him at 6:30 AM the next morning on a mission to free more students. The next morning, we joined a two truck caravan of 15 rescue workers, a combination of missionaries and Haitian nationals. Racing the clock down the newly paved Haitian highway, we arrived to a scene of utter exhaustion. Fifty Haitian men had labored all night to free as many students as they could, but they had reached the limit that bare hands could accomplish. By God’s mercy, we surged upon the building with a generator, power tools, shovels, sledge hammers and fresh bodies. The Haitian men rallied. All morning, we listened for voices, drilled holes, sent workers down into the belly of death and the grave, and lifted young girls to the light of God’s new day for their lives. In mercy and grace, God gave these exhausted, dust-covered girls a second chance. Praise His good name! How will God use them in days to come, I can only wonder. But how will we who witnessed these ‘resurrections’ allow God to use us?

These ten female students escaped with minor injuries, or none at all. But sadly, we also lifted a dozen bodies whom God in his wisdom has seen fit to send ahead to the next world. Several of them were still sitting in their desks with pen and notebook in hand. How sudden God can take any of us home. Are you ready to meet God today? Christ will prepare you if you turn from self and embrace him by faith.

The death toll is mounting in Port-au-Prince. Personally, I think it will hover at about ten thousand. But I cannot speak for other cities. I fear that tomorrow will permit us to rescue few - if any - from the rubble. The building infrastructure is woefully unsafe in Haiti. When buildings collapse, they “really” collapse – cement is low grade and metal reinforcement scandalously thin. I don’t expect many stories of 3 and 4 day rubble survivors like we sometimes hear of in the US. I hope I am wrong.

Please pray for missionary Ben Hopp and me as we travel to Port-au-Prince in the morning to work with a fellow missionary’s medical team on site near the international airport. I expect we will do much listening, praying, and scripture reading with the many casualties suffering in great pain from injuries and awaiting appropriate medical attention. Pray that we can comfort them with the resurrection hope that Christ offers to all who trust in Him.

I have included several photographs of the rescue efforts at the school. Any victims you see in the photos are “survivors”, Praise God! We have been careful to honor the fallen by not posting photos of the deceased.

Grateful for your prayers,

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The School Sign where we served on Wednesday.



The front side of the collapsed school building.



The rear side of the building that totally collapsed, seen from the side alley.



When an electric generator and power tools arrived, these Haitian men found “new strength.” PTL



Haitian men descending into the belly of death & the grave. Friday is here, but Sunday is coming...





God still rolls stones away. The dawn of a new day for this young woman.



A rescued girl in the safe arms of God.



Missionary Ben Hopp (white baseball cap) encourages the workers with generator, tools and spiritual/physical help.



God used this miracle generator supplied by missionary Ben Hopp and 60 men to free 10 high school girls today! Praise His name.



Our Haiti Mission Team! (I am in the white shirt and baseball cap) They are great! Praise God that they are safe in the United States right now. Pastor Eric wants to come back to help very soon. So please pray for him!