

Roman 14:7 We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves.

One of my favorite newer hymns is "We Belong to God" or "Pues Se Vivimos," when we are living, we belong to God, AND when we are dying.

I prefer to describe myself as spontaneous rather than impatient! I throw away things then soon need or want them. I speak as I'm thinking and often "eat my words." I "say" this characteristic is the result of 30 plus years in the operating room. Perhaps the OR was the best place for a "quick draw" decision maker. Haiti is not.

Two issues face us daily. Hungry people become more skeletal and time passes quickly, with water and educational issues unsolved after 10 months. Pastor Ralph says, the EMH "probably" will invite replacements for us, but that can wait.

GBGM LTV training addresses the frustrations of adjusting and working within different cultures. A year seems not all that long "in the book", but, for me, is in reality, a lifetime. The cultural characteristic of re-negotiating a proposal for months is an exercise in self-control. It is also the opportunity to learn that God does not always call us to succeed, but only to "go" and then to "be."

We claimed many school kits in the ware house at the Guest House in Port au Prince months ago and it was cool to offer more than two thirds of the supplies needed to a surprised superintendent for 9 schools to begin the year. Many teachers are still unpaid for 4 months of the last year but we are guaranteed the church always pays them, eventually. This is business as usual for Haiti.

No one really knows if anyone will pay tuition for children when most can't feed them. Today, a man asked for 500 goudes to pay a healer for "medicine" for his wife who is obese and suffering from the heat. Our clinic doesn't charge 500 goudes for any treatment or medications. I was elated to meet the healer, assess the patient, refuse money, and see four patients as I walked away from her home.

There is a man teaching us Kreyòl, and last night as I took my evening walk I discovered I now have many teachers. The evening was beautiful, with "red sails in the sunset," conversations and most children naked in the dark.

We "must" make decisions soon concerning water issues; we must try somehow to "stretch" \$4500.00 to feed 12,000 people more than one meal. We must, remember, whether we do, or whether we don't, we still belong to God.

Shirley, La Gonave Haiti, Aug 22nd 2008.