

6 Reasons Haiti May Be Closer to Revival than the US

After a week of “fire” in Haiti, it’s clear to me why they may be closer to revival than we are.

As a revivalist for the last 23 years, it’s usually quite easy for me to discern the spirit of revival. When it’s there, it overwhelms me, and when it’s not, I’m grieved. Until last week, I’ve been grieved for years.

I preached 16 times over eight days in suffocating heat and was wrecked as I watched hundreds of precious people aggressively contend for the fire of the Holy Spirit. Their worship was explosive, and their commitment was remarkable.

In April, I encountered the spirit of revival for the first time in years. The last time I felt it was during an event with Brian Simmons in Detroit several years ago. It quickly faded however, and I’ve been outside of a revival atmosphere since—until Easter morning in Haiti, that is.

Nearly 2,000 people packed that church in 85- to 95-degree heat and worshipped with fire!

Monday saw hundreds of people return, and by the end of the week we were at 2,000 radical Haitian revivalists dancing and interceding deeply.

Here’s why Haiti may be closer to a sweeping revival than the United States is:

1. Hunger

The entire week was filled with hundreds of people contending for freedom and an encounter with Jesus. People kept coming to me, some in tears, telling me in broken English, or in French

with an interpreter how thankful they are for encountering Jesus. One amazing young lady was absolutely transformed after I prophesied to her on the first day. She went from a stoic, emotionless disposition to joy and tears on the last day. I told her I'd never forget her after watching what God did in such a powerful way in her life. She simply said through an interpreter, *"I'll never forget the fire you gave me."* I was wrecked again.

Their hunger wasn't for a new car, a new house or for promotions or to discover their ministries. They simply wanted Jesus. The average income in that part of Haiti is about \$70 a month. To honor me as a man of God (his words), one person gave me Haitian money that equated to \$12, and I was deeply moved. *That was possibly 1/6th of his monthly income.* That translates to several hundred dollars when compared to our American economy. His hunger for Jesus resulted in thanks and honor of the messenger—and this messenger was probably more moved by him than he was by me.

2. Commitment

Nobody drove to the church. In fact, you nearly would need a four-wheel-drive to navigate the roads that led to the church. They were extremely rocky and broken up with deep holes. Everybody walked to the church—many for up to two hours, and then, after a three-hour service, they would walk home, another two hours, in pitch darkness (no street lights at all) and often in a massive downpour (it was the rainy season when I was there).

The Sunday service lasted six hours in extreme heat, and then, after a break, most returned Sunday evening for more. Then, their commitment was so intense that they returned *every single night that I was there*. Eight nights in a row!

There were no competing, "more important" activities such as ballet, baseball, movies, relaxation or ANYTHING at all! There

was nothing better or more important than going to worship Jesus at the church. They were committed to the corporate gathering, and that in itself may be enough to see revival launch there.

In America we all drive, yet most wouldn't think of sitting down in an air-conditioned car for two hours to drive to church every night. The commitment we have in this nation just isn't comparable.

3. Honor

I have never, in all of my years, seen a church honor its pastor with such passion, humility and love. It would be impossible for me to overstate what I experienced. One young emerging leader told me in broken English, *"I love my pastor, and he loves me. I love to stand next to him."* It was precious. The pastor and his wife are so humble yet unapologetically bold and focused on seeing transformation come to Haiti—and everybody there honors that devotion.

They had a special service to show their appreciation this past Sunday, and for six hours people sang songs to them, presented fruit as gifts, shared testimonies and literally laid out a red carpet as thousands gave them a long standing ovation. The pastor and his wife never would have asked for this, but the people exhibited their hearts of honor for them in a memorable way.

4. Boldness

Finally I found a church where you could preach convicting, challenging messages, and the people actually rejoiced! This pastor isn't playing games, and he refuses to entertain apathy or a casual approach to God or the church. He just gave a 30-day ultimatum. Either become 100% committed to attending regularly, to giving financially and to serving in ministry—or leave. You are either all in, or you are out. And guess how

people responded. Yep, they are in.

Sadly in America we are so independent that any ultimatum like that would most likely result in most people checking out. The pastor would be accused of being controlling instead of appreciating his determination to accomplish the mission.

These Haitians are radically devoted to seeing their nation experience revival and transformation. They aren't in the church for the sake of their own experience. They are craving for God to move, and they embrace the sharp, difficult messages that are required to see this revolution come.

5. Supernatural

Demons are everywhere, and they know it. They experience such unbelievable supernatural realities that it doesn't take much to ready them for a move of God. I asked a jam-packed altar full of people how many were experiencing nightmares. This prophetic word was burning in me, but I had no idea what kind of response I'd get. Over half of the massive crowd raised their hands. One-third said they were specifically aware of demons. Voodoo is rampant in the area, and the power is real.

So, if the enemy is that real, then it's easy to understand just how real and supernatural God is.

This being the case, everything just feels much more powerful. The intercession and worship is intense. The atmosphere is alive. They understand deliverance, and they expect other-worldly encounters.

6. Desperation

The earthquake in 2010 killed 225,000 people. The region is devastated, and poverty is extreme. It's a Third World country that seems to have more needs than can ever be met.

The situation feels hopeless. In a remote region I asked the

pastor how in the world the police would find us if there was a problem. He said, *"You don't want to need the police."* That wasn't very comforting! I realized how much they actually have to rely on God.

The police or an ambulance cannot come to our rescue. That's the situation in a nation where medical care in poor and emergency systems are nearly nonexistent. As I stated before, the average income is \$70 a month.

The pastor told me about a critical prayer meeting that he held just prior to the earthquake. Fourteen hundred people showed up. Not one of them died in the earthquake. Three people from the church who didn't attend the meeting did die.

They understand the realities of life and death, and they are extremely desperate for Jesus. The prayer meetings are full. In fact, the pastor just added another weekly prayer meeting with the expectation of revival breaking out—and the desperate are coming.

How can America see revival?

I am so disinterested in most strategies, round-table sessions or great ideas.

I want prayer meetings.

Lots and lots of prayer meetings with hundreds and thousands of people in attendance.

The prescription of revival is simple:

"Congregate the people who are willing to make a total surrender. Pray and wait. Believe God's promises. Hold daily meetings." – Evan Roberts

Is anybody ready to fully surrender, pray, wait, believe and attend daily meetings in America? If not, revival will have to wait.

John Burton has been developing and leading ministries for over 20 years and is a sought-after teacher, prophetic messenger and revivalist. He has authored nine books, has appeared on Christian television and radio and directed one of the primary internships at the International House of Prayer (IHOP) in Kansas City. Additionally, he planted two churches, has initiated two city prayer movements and is currently directing a prayer- and revival-focused ministry school in Detroit called theLab University. John also has a web- and graphic-design business and is continually developing new and exciting ventures. He and his beautiful wife, Amy, have five children and live in the Detroit area. He can be reached via his website at .