On Tuesday January 12th we had a great time at the Hawthorne household. It was our latest Alpha meal – lots of new people and brilliant food provided by my wife Michele and a seriously good atmosphere. I was excited and geared up to do our best to share the joys of being a Christian with these new acquaintances over the next few weeks and hopefully beyond.

That was until 10:30pm when, within ten minutes, every drop of joy was sucked out of me. Firstly, I received a call from Kim, my PA, to let me know that John, a lovely, strong African guy who had been working for us as part of our Accounts team for the last few years, had suddenly been found dead in his flat. I was sitting there, devastated, trying to take it all in, when Lindsay West contacted me to let me know that a major earthquake had hit Haiti.

Like Lindz, I had visited Haiti on a number of occasions and every time left a little piece of my heart there. Through supporters of The Message and our events we have been able to see many hundreds of Haitian children sponsored with the amazing child sponsorship charity Compassion, and every time we take on a member of staff we sponsor a child with them in Haiti. We have also been involved in supporting prison ministry and water projects on the island over the last few years. Outside of Manchester, Haiti, perhaps more than any place on earth, is the most special for us.

We switched on Sky News and watched as the horrendous events unfolded, wondering what this would mean for so many of our friends and their good news projects up and down this troubled island.

We started to pray like, to be honest, we haven’t prayed in a long time. As we did, with the TV still on, our hearts were totally broken for the people of Haiti. Even though it sounds like a bit of a cliché, all I can say is that Haiti is on my heart and when Haiti hurts, I hurt. Haiti was in agony. There are many reasons for this: corrupt leadership, generational cycles of poverty and the insidious influence of voodoo. But most of all, people I knew and had grown to love were dead, dying or at best, suffering greatly. I found myself addicted to the news bulletins as they reported the ever-growing numbers of casualties.

On Thursday, a little less than 48 hours after the earthquake had hit, my pastor and close friend Anthony Delaney called a prayer meeting for the people of Haiti. It was there that I felt God draw my attention to Psalm 34:6 and as a result I resolved that I would do whatever it took to play my part in helping out.
For anyone with the slightest connection to Haiti the next few days were traumatic as bit-by-bit, the full scale of the horror unfolded. Various numbers of dead were bandied around, from 50 to 500 thousand. Whatever, I knew that people I had met and grown to love would almost certainly be amongst these horrifying numbers and everyone would be affected in one way or another.

On Saturday, four days after the earthquake, I was contacted by my friend Justin Dowds from Dunfermline in Scotland. We had visited Haiti together in 2006 and ever since, Justin has been working hard on behalf of the people of Haiti and in particular the forgotten Haitian island of La Gonave, which before we went was officially the driest place on earth. Justin felt burdened to provide clean water for all 120,000 inhabitants and so had got on with drilling well after well alongside developing a vision to rebuild the hospital there. By the time the earthquake struck, Justin had almost singlehandedly provided clean water for every person on the island. (If that is all he did with his life – and I'm convinced there's plenty more to come – it would not be a bad legacy for a man barely into his thirties.)

Justin, like me, had been breaking his heart over the disaster in Haiti but unlike me, he decided to do a bit more than pray and provide a few pounds. He had heard from the hospital in La Gonave that they were virtually out of medicines and money so decided to do all he could to get to the island with the supplies. I received a text late on Saturday night asking me if, due to the fact that I was a friend, had the right inoculations, knew a bit about the country and had a heart for the place, I would be willing to join him on a trip to take in the vital medicine and money that was needed. Typically for Justin, he had been ducking and diving and had managed to talk Virgin Airways into letting us all have a quarter of a tonne of luggage each and lined up a missionary flight to take us into the country. I didn't find out until we got there, that at that point he wasn't exactly sure how we were going to get out!

On Sunday morning, I went to my church, Ivy Manchester and told Anthony Delaney about Justin's text. He slightly misunderstood me and said during the service, 'Please pray because Andy and I might be going out to Haiti'. I thought, 'Get in, at least I won't be going on my own' and so it was that Anthony and I set off with more than a little trepidation on Tuesday, 19th January.

In many ways it was the worst week of the year for me to be heading out of the country. It was full of all sorts of key meetings and speaking engagements but everyone was massively supportive and I had the strong sense that this was God's will. As is so often the case, by pushing through my fears, I was going to learn so much and actually make a real difference to some very desperate people.
19th January 2010

I was woken up about 6:30am by the first of many texts that came in to offer prayer and support. The sender said she was praying Ephesians 6 – the full armour of God – over us. To be honest, at that point I wish she’d gone back to sleep and let me do the same, but the full armour of God was exactly what we needed as we went into the unknown on a trip to bring much-needed medical supplies and some hope to people who were desperately lacking both.

We got to Heathrow easily enough, and as we walked up to our BA plane to Miami we were chatting about how much Lindz West would have loved to have joined us. We then noticed that the plane had in large letters painted down the side: ‘LZ’. Our plane was delayed for a couple of hours by the new and thorough security checks that these planes now have. As we took off, Anthony Delaney, my friend and travelling companion prayed, ‘Thank you for our land that we love so much, send revival, Lord’. I said Amen and felt it perhaps as much as ever.

On the plane we had lots of opportunities to read the papers and watch the BBC News channel which were full of stories of the dire and volatile situation in Haiti – probably not the best idea! I had moved from 75% fear/apprehension, 25% excitement to about 90%-10% respectively! It was definitely time to remind myself what the Lord had said so clearly to me earlier in the week as Psalm 34:6 came into my mind at a special prayer meeting for Haiti. I genuinely had no idea what the verse was and am wary of playing ‘Bible Bingo’ and plucking verses at random, but these were different, they really did feel like a word from the Lord:

‘The poor man called and the Lord heard him, he saved him out of his troubles.’

I believe the Lord heard the cries of the people in La Gonave and prompted a couple of loud-mouthed Manchester evangelists and some slightly more gentle Scots to have a go at saving them from some of their troubles. It’s an awesome privilege to be in partnership with the living God, isn’t it!

In fact, Anthony pointed out to me that on one of the BBC News channel reports there was a Haitian guy being interviewed who had a sweatshirt on that said Hawthorne at the top and Christ at the bottom, weird eh? But, one thing’s for sure, Hawthorne wouldn’t be going on a trip like this if it wasn’t for Christ.

We landed in Miami about an hour and a half late after catching up some time up en route. This meant that our Scottish friends had been waiting for us for several hours, after travelling for 30 hours straight. They understandably looked a little haggard but gave us a wonderfully warm welcome. The Americans who met us continued to call us all ‘the Scottish party’ and asked us if we really wore skirts and played bagpipes. I didn’t have the heart to tell them Anthony and I were actually from Manchester!

Just before we came through we had our first little miracle with our bags. We were dismayed when neither of them turned up at the baggage carousel. The thought of no clothes or toiletries for the next week wasn’t appealing. We wandered up and down the baggage hall for ages and finally went to see the airport’s baggage department. Just as we were about to give up, I prayed out loud, ‘Please Lord, we really do need those bags, let them turn up now’. Sure enough, we walked round the corner and there they both were in the middle of the floor, on their own. Praise God!

The other thing that nearly happened was that we were called upon to do another night shift and help load a massive C130 transport plane with aid. Justin, our irrepressible team leader, was well up for it; the rest of us kept our heads down and pretended we were asleep! Fortunately, the Americans had pity on us and sent us to bed. Before we went to sleep Anthony commented to our host about the massive safe (everything seems to be extra large in America... including the people) in the corner of the room. He opened it and revealed an arsenal of weapons that could probably take down a small nation. He showed us with glee his pump-action shotgun, semi-automatic and something that looked like a Clint Eastwood-style Magnum 45. One of the lovely Americans said to us, ‘If anybody comes to my front door and I don’t know who he is, I’ll shoot his ass’. What a strange nation full of incredibly kind, generous servant-hearted people but many of them (including many Christians) have the most bizarre and, in my humble-but-accurate opinion, totally unbiblical ideas. The last hour of our day had felt a little like a Harry Enfield sketch.
We got up at 4:45am in order to make our way to the MFI Hangar from where we would be departing to Haiti. I’m sure you realise that’s not MFI the flat-pack kitchen people, but Missionary Flights International, another group of servant-hearted people, most of whom had been managing on three hours’ sleep a night since the earthquake to play their crucial part in getting aid to the point of need. At the MFI base were a selection of doctors, nurses and aid workers, all playing their part in the massive relief effort. I felt a rush of excitement at being able to play my tiny part in all this and my faith/fear-o-meter went to probably its best ever since we embarked on all this, maybe we even got to 50/50. That is, until we heard a shout from one of the MFI team: “A 6.1 has just hit Haiti.”

He meant a 6.1 on the Richter Scale – an aftershock. We all gathered round a laptop and watched the confirmation from CNN. I must say at this point I felt a seismic shift in my bowels. 6.1 – that sounds big. The actual devastating first earthquake was ‘only’ 7.2. It also looked like the epicentre according to CNN was along the road we would need to travel down to get our supplies to the tiny port of Montreux and then on to La Gonave. I fully expected Justin to call the whole thing off, but he seemed unperturbed and continued loading our precious supplies. A couple of hours later we walked along the runway and onto our shiny new plane which had been donated by NASCAR American Car Racing along with all the fuel and crew from the slums and devastation of Haiti as one could possibly imagine, but once again it seems the Lord was using surprising people to fulfil his purposes and care for the poor.

We stopped off for a quick refuelling stop in the Bahamas and then on to Port-au-Prince. As the plane came in to land, the streets were teeming with people and we got the first glimpses of broken-down buildings and terrified faces. We had been able to get about half our cargo of medicines and food on the plane and left the rest to hopefully be brought on the next trip out. This was a matter of much prayer – Justin was so concerned about it that he took all his clothes out of his bag and left them behind so he could fill his clothes bag with medicines. ‘I’ll be alright,’ he said. ‘It might just mean I have to wear the same clothes for four days.’

Inevitably, Pastor Dan, the remarkable pastor who was due to pick us up, was having his own problems. He had run out of fuel and was having a bit of a nightmare getting to the airport due to the effects of the 6.1 aftershock. He eventually got there about three hours late, a few minutes after we’d unloaded all the rest of the bags – including Justin’s clothes – off the second plane. Again, Praise God! Another remarkable thing that happened during our wait at Port-au-Prince airport was that we were given a pickup truck full of fuel by a family who were evacuating the country. They literally just pointed it out and handed us the keys. This vehicle and its precious fuel proved crucial to the success of our trips over the next few days.

It was now our chance to see with our own eyes the devastation of Port-au-Prince. Haiti’s capital city is in many ways the heart of the nation as the centre of commerce, education and religion. Two million people have crowded into space fit for no more than fifty thousand, most living in basic breezeblock or concrete houses or, worse, slums made of corrugated iron.

Pastor Dan told us that not a single family he could think of wasn’t grieving the loss of a loved one. He also told us about a school thirteen stories high that toppled like a pack of cards, killing between three and four thousand little children (that’s as many people that died as a result of the 9/11 World Trade Centre terrorist attacks) and the church across the road where one thousand people used to gather every day to pray at 4:30am and which was now just a pile of rubble. Yet it appears that God works miracles so that our little pile of bags turned up in the right place at the right time, Dan, who is an awesome man of faith, said sometimes he thinks, ‘God, are you really paying attention to Haiti?’

Dan and Joy, his lovely wife are two of God’s greats. After attending Wesleyan Bible college and pastoring a church in Pennsylvania they felt God’s call to the poorest of the poor and in particular Haiti. They obeyed and moved to this tough place with their two small children. As they landed at the airport for their first trip, virtual civil war broke out. A group of opposition bandits were firing indiscriminately from the terminal building. They were told to leave their luggage and run for their lives – quite a welcome! I was struck by three things: just how hard they were prepared to work on behalf of the poor; how generous they were with the little they were able to get their hands on; and what an effort the things we take for granted are for them, day in, day out. No running water or electricity can be all part of the experience. The effort of getting anywhere and the filth on every street might appear evocative, but after a while, it must get very frustrating.

Dan and Joy, like so many amazing missionaries, face it all, even this human catastrophe, with faith and an amazing unquenchable spirit. The best sermons aren’t preached from the pulpit but through people’s lives, and what a message they both are in everything they do.

Before we went to bed, Dan gave us the earthquake drill. In short: if the building starts to shake, run for your lives. You have between fifteen to twenty seconds to get out. The bad news for me was that my bed was the furthest from our escape route. To be honest, I don’t normally like to share a room with others. This time I was delighted to be sharing the room at the Wesleyan Mission house with my five travelling companions!
Today has to rank as without a doubt one of the most gut-wrenching, extraordinary days of my life.

We had breakfast with Juel, an all-round lovely 20-year-old volunteer who thought he was going to work for three months with the mission on La Gonave. Within an hour of arriving he found himself witnessing the worst earthquake to hit Haiti in two hundred years, and as a result became part of the huge disaster relief effort. He was working at the field hospital that we would visit later that morning and over breakfast he told us about some of the horrendous injuries he had dealt with – not the best thing to make you feel hungry at 6:30 in the morning!

We left for the hospital and, to my surprise, the driver took us through the Cité Soliel, officially one of the most dangerous places on earth – complete with bullet holes in every building. It is a teeming mass of humanity living in conditions that beggar belief. In the centre of Cité Soliel, by the port, is what is called the ‘Bus Station’ – dozens of colourful tap-tap buses and many thousands of people. Our driver explained that they were all trying to get out of Port-au-Prince at all costs. Many of then had lost all their family and everything they owned and were terrified of the continued aftershocks and were leaving with nothing and going to nothing, to try and seek out a living in the country.

On the three-hour trip to the Wesleyan Mission at Petit Goave it seemed that the devastation got worse and worse. We also got the first taste and smell (literally) of death. Under so many of the collapsed buildings were bodies that were rapidly decomposing in the 90-degree heat.

We finally got to the field hospital and unloaded our medicines. It was an amazing sight to see normally highly-paid doctors working for nothing, under trees with the most primitive of equipment and doing whatever it took to care for the poor and the hurting. We spoke to one impressive American doctor who was a GP and who, amongst other things, has had to do several amputations in order to save peoples’ lives. The previous day they had had to amputate part of the hand of a two-year-old girl who had been released after eight days under the rubble of her home.

There was a queue of about 150 people, many with horrifying injuries waiting quietly and graciously in line to be seen.
As we were about to leave, we were asked if we could take two very seriously injured people to the main functioning Seventh Day Adventist hospital in Port-au-Prince. So we carefully loaded up onto the back of our pickup truck a man who was paralysed from the waist down and a girl with a broken back. Just before we left, I needed to visit the toilet – not a pleasant experience at the best of times in Haiti, but this visit was particularly memorable. As I sat there I literally felt and saw the earth move. There was a large bucket of water in the latrine and the water also starting rolling like the sea. I quickly realised I was experiencing quite a large aftershock, so I made the swiftest of swift exits. As I came out, a huge piece of masonry fell with a crash from the building opposite.

As well as our two injured passengers in the back of our pickup on their stretchers, we managed to get two family members in there as well. It took about two hours to get (very gently) to the Seventh Day Adventist hospital on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince. One of the sights that will stay with me forever was the extensive grounds of the large hospital with people everywhere in quickly-erected tents which were filled with around two thousand patients and their families who were all in various levels of distress. Many had lost limbs and even worse. When the earthquake hit, the hospital opened the gates and thousands of the dead and dying poured in. However, it was also a remarkable international effort. The Brazilians were doing surgery, the French were doing triage, US teams were doing medicals etc, etc, all giving their best for these suffering people.

We took our precious people to the trauma clinic and prayed passionately that God would step in and heal – if He didn’t, their outlook was bleak, particularly for the paralysed young man who was also incontinent. Dan told us he faced a future of no job, no wife, and an early death. My heart broke for this handsome young guy.

We also had the devastating experience of visiting three Compassion projects that had been totally destroyed. We knew what places of joy, life and hope they were before this happened. Instead all we could feel was despair and loss. We met a project director and a pastor who told us that he had lost his mother, his brother and lots of his school children and flock; he wore a baseball cap that said,

‘Jesus is my boss’.

I wondered how much more of this stuff I could take and I was just dropping in with a few provisions, prayers and pounds. For them this was their daily reality. It was at this point that for the first time Anthony decided to give all his money away. I say ‘for the first time’ because over the next few days he pulled his wallet out on two more occasions to even see if there was a couple of pounds to give away and found it full of money. I know it sounds weird but it really happened and so he kept giving it all away. As we walked down the street that looked like a scene from a Hollywood disaster movie, two dead bodies were pulled out from one of the devastated buildings and there it was again: the foul stench of death.

Our next stop was the Compassion offices. We had been unable to get hold of anyone but decided to turn up on-spec to see if anyone was around and hopefully to encourage them. To our delight when we finally got there many of the friends we had made over the last several trips to Haiti were there in makeshift offices, under a canopy in the car park of their damaged building. We heard from Guilbaud, the Haiti Director, that only one of his staff had actually died but about 50 projects had been destroyed and many children and congregation members had been lost. At the back of the offices were tents where Compassion staff that had lost their homes were living. We also prayed with Moise, normally the jolliest of Haitian hosts, who looked like a broken man, and Rico, our driver on previous trips, who had lost his 26-year-old brother.

Again, I felt like my heart was being ripped out of my chest.

One great thing that did happen was the opportunity to get an update on the prison ministry that we had been supporting since out last trip to the island. I had never met Jean Edner, the director of the project, who had come highly recommended by Guilbaud and I had been hoping and praying it would be possible to make contact with him. It just happened that when we went to Compassion he was visiting and was able to tell us of the remarkable way God was moving in the prison with women coming to Christ, being discipled and being provided with regular sanitary packs as a result of our support and Jean Edener’s team’s efforts. What a blessing at the end of a harrowing day!
Today we drove down to Montreux and got the boat to La Gonave. I was bouncing around in the back of the pickup with a delightful young Haitian called Bernard and then lay in the boat in the baking sun, listening to Coldplay on my iPod with the sun beating down on my face and watching the amazing flying fish bounce along the sea. I could have been anywhere in the world, except I wasn’t – I was between one version of hell and another.

Inevitably there had been delays to travel – congestion, chasing down fuel and rough seas. That meant we only had about an hour on the island before our MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) flight to Port-au-Prince to meet up with the next group who were flying in to help.

We split up. Most of the guys went to the Wesleyan Hospital to deliver the medicines and check on the state of the post-earthquake hospital. Anthony told me later he was amazed at how depleted their resources were. It really did seem like we were on a life-saving mission. Charlie and I went up to an orphanage that Justin’s charity had been helping. Madame Sollier, who ran the orphanage, is quite a lady. She had become so sick of seeing orphan kids from La Gonave making their way to Port-au-Prince and getting involved in gangs, guns and drugs that she took 20 of them into her home and started to educate, feed and care for them. Together with seven earthquake victims who had arrived the day before, she now had 58 children and six full-time staff. We met the new arrivals who Madame Sollier had brought back from Port-au-Prince the day before, including a 15-year-old girl who told us that she had lost seven family members, including her mother and father, and that her two tiny sisters had been trapped under the rubble for two days. Once again, I was stunned by the suffering that these little ones were experiencing with so much dignity.

There was much more to come. We got the chance to meet the cutest kids I have ever seen who, along with the staff, were sleeping in the open air in fear of another quake. Apparently they had gone back into the building after a couple of days but after the big 6.1 aftershock, they were too terrified to have concrete over their heads. We delivered food and finance which were both about to run out, and made our way to La Gonave International Airport – a tiny strip of beach complete with goats, chickens and lots of little children on the runway.

Waiting for us were two tiny MAF planes. MAF are an extraordinary organisation who, like MFI, provide a lifeline for missionaries literally all over the world.

The rest of the team arrived back from hospital and bought with them a nine-year-old girl and her mother. She was in really bad shape having been trapped under the rubble for three days. Her feet had been crushed and she had several of her toes amputated. Her feet became badly infected and she now needed urgent medical attention. Justin said we really needed to pray that we could find an orthopaedic surgeon. Jimmy suggested that he had a phone number of someone but thus far our phones hadn’t even worked so we prayed hard and set off badly in need of a miracle.

Twenty-five minutes later, we landed at Port-au-Prince Airport and at the bottom of the steps saw a group of doctors. Justin said to Dan to ask them what were doing. Incredibly they said they were a team of orthopaedic surgeons who were just flying to a hospital. The little girl was on the plane with a drip in her arm surrounded by a world-class surgical team within a matter of minutes and we were full of thanks to Jesus for answering our prayers.

Our original reason for going to the airport was to meet a group of fourteen American doctors and volunteers. We piled all their bags and provisions on the back of a large truck and jumped on the back, Haitian style.

Our days in Haiti started early so by 9pm we were asleep in bed when Justin ran in and said Dan wanted everyone outside. Apparently there had been a warning of another massive aftershock at 9pm. I wasn’t quite sure why suddenly someone could predict when the shocks were coming but wasn’t going to argue, so spent the next half-hour in the yard with worried-looking Americans waiting for the dreaded rumble. It didn’t come so we all made our way somewhat gingerly back into the house. It’s a strange thing going to sleep and each night planning your escape route, making sure your torch is in place, knowing that if a big one hits, you have 15-20 seconds to get out of the house before it starts to come down on you. Again this is daily life for millions of Haitians and the reason why hundreds of thousands of the ‘lucky ones’ whose houses are still standing are choosing to sleep in the open air.

Interestingly, by now almost all fear had gone. I really did feel I was walking in faith more than just about any time in my life. I went to sleep confident that even if a massive quake hit our house that I would be okay if my purposes on earth were not complete.
We woke up glad that there had been no aftershocks and mad dashes to the exit, and after breakfast left for the airport. There are three entrances to Port-au-Prince International Airport and we were very much hoping we could keep away from the main one where we had been told there were thousands of desperate people who would do anything to leave the country. As it was, after being turned away from the two side gates which were both surrounded by aggressive-looking gangs, we made our way, praying hard, to the main entrance. It was chaos and a huge queue meandered away from the security cordon.

By now we were getting a little anxious as we were supposed to be hooking up with our missionary flight at 11am and it was now 10:45am. We went to the front of the queue, hoping to explain that we were aid workers and had a plane to catch but an extra-large Haitian security guard with an extra-large gun screamed at us to ‘get back to the back of the queue’. Things were not looking good when a US security officer came over having seen Anthony’s Compassion T-shirt. It just happened that not only was he a Christian but a Compassion child sponsor, keen to know any information about his own sponsored child. He escorted us past the burly security guard and into the terminal. Yes, there are angels: we’ve met one, he’s called Cory and at present he is working for the US Military at Port-au-Prince International Airport. We went through the terminal (which itself looks like it could crumble at any time) and out on to the runway.

It was an extraordinary sight: helicopters were flying off in all directions and medics were running around with desperately injured people on stretchers; huge piles of food and provisions were everywhere; thousands of aid workers, military personnel, and indeed the Prime Minister and President of Haiti were sleeping in tens around the runway. It looked like a war zone.

We weaved our way between the giant US Air Force transport carriers, and helicopters and walked the half mile or so to the small missionary flights area. It felt like our mission had almost been accomplished. Never in all my life had I felt so carried along by people’s prayers. There was just one more thing I wanted to do and that was to meet my friend and guide on previous trips to Haiti, Thimothee. I had finally managed to contact him earlier that morning and with relief learned that he and his family had all survived but like so many, his house was seriously damaged and they were living rough on the streets. I was desperate to meet him to encourage him and give him some money for his family and the 150 or so orphans he supported.

We had agreed to meet at the airport but when I went to the gate there were hundreds of desperate Haitians screaming ‘Monsieur, monsieur’ and begging for help. Even if I could find Thimothee, pulling out a wad of dollars and handing it through the fence would almost certainly have sparked a full-blown riot. I turned to my friend Adrian and prayed, ‘Lord, somehow make a way so we can see Thimothee and get this money to him’. We walked straight back into the waiting area and Justin shouted ‘Thimothee’s here!’ Somehow he had managed to get through the security cordon with his Haitian passport. It was more than encouraging seeing him.

He told us that when the quake hit he was in a worship service with his family and 2,000 others and the building literally fell apart: the walls came away, the pillars collapsed and the roof lifted off. Everybody ran out into the street and amazingly not one person had been injured. As a result, 860 people had given their lives to Christ through the church that week, including several voodoo witch doctors.

It was heartening to at last hear of something good coming out of this appalling event.

Thimothee, despite the fact he had lost just about everything he owned, was full of faith that God was going to use this to transform the nation – what a way to end our time in Haiti.

However, it wasn’t quite the end because we had one more hurdle to overcome to get out of the country. The MFI manager told us that Anthony had been given the wrong stamp in the US and they had been worried that they would be fined thousands of dollars if they let him leave without the right paperwork. It took lots of coaxing, begging and prayer to eventually convince him to fly us all out to Miami. Five hours later, our jet arrived to take us home and what a jet it was. A 32 million dollar executive Learjet, owned by the band Pearl Jam, that again had been loaned for the relief effort. Talk about one extreme to the other.

When we landed in Miami we hadn’t eaten anything all day so decided to go out for a meal. We walked in, dirty, unshaven and covered in dust from Port-au-Prince. The waitress looked us up and down and said ‘Have you guys been camping?!’ I didn’t answer.
More teams are travelling into Haiti over the next few weeks, and in order to raise more vital funds for these life saving missions, we are hosting a **Heart for Haiti** event at the Manchester Apollo on Thursday February 4, 7.30pm

Full details can be found at [www.message.org.uk](http://www.message.org.uk)

Do come if you can.