

Haiti: Praying before dawn

June 13, 2015

The streets are dark. Angry and frightened dogs bark at us as we file down the humid, trash-filled streets. We walk in silence. The only sound we hear is sweet Matilde with her megaphone, shouting in Creole for the neighborhood to wake up and join us. Our group of Americans and Canadians keeps putting one foot in front of the other. We don't know how far we will walk, but we continue on in the darkness of 4 a.m.



Morgan MartinEvery day, these men and women meet at 4:30 a.m. to pray. Gran Goave, the village Chandler and I are visiting, used to be one of the largest hubs of Voodoo in Haiti. Years ago, when Voodoo was still largely dominant, these individuals woke up to pray against the influence of Voodoo. Many Voodoo rituals occur at the early hours of the night.

To counter their influence, Christians of Gran Goave decided to go to battle for their village, waking at 4 a.m. daily to pray for their village and their people. Now Gran Goave houses a large Christian population with only a few still practicing Voodoo.

Part of our schedule for the week allowed us to participate in their daily 4 a.m. prayer meeting. As we continued to walk, I couldn't help but believe

we were part of something special and important. Others in the community joined us in our walk through the streets. Our numbers grew as we walked, and I could feel my anticipation growing.

Finally, we arrived at the designated location for today's prayer meeting. Filing into the small patio, we crammed into seats and benches. Only a small kerosene lamp spilled light into the room. We sang together, prayed for the needs of the people of Gran Goave, heard testimonies of faith, read Scripture, and prayed some more.

As the time ended for our meeting, I looked out at all who had come to pray. So many filled the patio, some even crouching outside the doorway. These people know faith like I've never known it before. Their commitment to prayer and their belief in the power and necessity of prayer humble me beyond words. I am so grateful I could be part of what God is doing in Gran Goave, because he is moving mightily.

As we walked back to the mission, while it was still dark outside, I reflected on the morning. Not only did I feel like I was part of something special and important walking the streets with these fellow believers, but I felt like I was part of something so much larger than myself. I will never forget the image of us walking together in unison, all for the same purpose. The body of Christ is created to be a strong force, going to battle daily for the kingdom of God. How wimpy is my own perspective of the body of Christ back home. Now I know what it can look like, and it fills me with great hope.

Morgan Martin, a student at the University of Texas at Austin, is serving with Go Now Missions in Haiti.