

A missionary blogs it like it is

By [Katherine Willis Pershey](#)

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Blogger Heather Hendrick is a breastfeeding instructor and midwife-in-training at [Heartline Ministries](#), an evangelical mission organization in Port-au-Prince. She and her husband Aaron, a Southern Baptist minister, have four children.

After the earthquake struck Haiti last January, the Hendricks began to reconsider their comfortable life in Texas. "Besides knowing all the right things to say," Hendrick [posted](#), "our lives do not really look much like Jesus'. . . there are some huge discrepancies between who Jesus is, and who I'm striving to be."

Heather and Aaron visited Port-au-Prince last May to scope out their potential placements. She hoped to discover that things wouldn't be as hard as she feared but instead found the situation in Haiti to be [much worse](#). Despite this, or perhaps because of it, she and her family sold their house and most of their belongings and moved to Haiti.

Once in Haiti, Hendrick had a difficult time living without her belongings, which were tangled up indefinitely in customs. She was having, as she [put](#)

[it](#), "an internal sumo-style, sweaty fat fight with Jesus" about the shock of readjusting.

Then a Haitian girl stopped by.

Hendrick's new home was a shanty by American standards, but she was chastened when the girl expressed wonder at the house's beauty:

Whistle
blew. Wrestling match was over.

Seeing my home
through her eyes in that moment did it. In God's ever gentle way of doing
everything peace washed over my soul.

Hendrick has continued to write about her family's experience in Haiti with honesty and humor--I rarely read her blog without tearing up or laughing out loud. In October, she prefaced a [post](#) by acknowledging the lack of mental health services in Haiti, before telling of her run-in with a naked man who was out buying a Coke.

I turn the
corner and bam. I encounter the naked.

Want to know
my first thought?

"My gosh, his
butt is amazing. Uh-Mazing."

It is. Who
knew butt cheeks could live that high up on a person's legs? My cheeks would instantly have a hard time breathing if ever forced to that altitude. Naked Man had zero overlap between butt and leg. None. His butt ended. Full stop. Then began
his leg. Go look in the mirror. Chances are, this is not the way anyone would describe your butt to leg transition.

Yes, fine. It
would take a very long look to make all these observations about a naked

person.

When mission organizations send out promotional materials to potential supporters, they don't usually include a missionary's ruminations on local butt cheeks--or such things as Hendrick's [declaration](#) that she would have gladly signed divorce papers if an attorney had been present when their power went out in the middle of the night, stilling the overhead fans that make steamy nights in Haiti almost livable.

But Hendrick doesn't mince words about *anything*. She exposes her faith, doubt, frustration and hope with equal courage, and the effect is inspiring and challenging.

Here's Hendrick [comparing](#) her original commitment in Haiti--a nine-month stay--to the gestation period of the babies in her care:

I see our life in Haiti wrapped up in those wombs. Growth takes time. Learning takes time. Serving takes time. Loving the Haitian people takes time. There are no quick fixes, and thankfully God is the one doing the knitting. . . . We are staying in Haiti. I can hardly believe I just typed that sentence. God has truly changed my heart, and He's used expanding bellies of all things to do so. . . . We don't want to leave right after the "baby" is born. How could we? I'm seeing how the nine months we committed to stay has only been the beginning of so much.