

Faith to Move Mountains - My Mission to the Central African Republic

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Missionary to the Central African Republic



Mary Johnson (standing at left in the pink blouse) with other missionaries and Central African Republic members

I knew that the spirit world was very protective and wanted to help me on my journey to the regional conference with our world mission's director in Kinshasa, Zaire, in 1979. Since the weekly airplane flight between Bangui and Kinshasa was cancelled due to a strike at the Bangui airport, I had tried to go overland to reach another city near the border of Zaire where there might be the possibility of catching an airplane headed to or at least towards Kinshasa. I was not sure, but with less than 48 hours before our director would arrive in Zaire, I decided to give it 100 percent effort.



Pirogues on a river in the Central African Republic

My journey to the border took me by truck, pirogue (handhewn log boats), on foot, and a number of other ways. Once there, I still had to find a way to cross. I left at dawn, but it was already late afternoon before I reached the last river separating me from my destination: a small airport in Libenze, Zaire. To my surprise when I reached the river's edge I could see neither a town nor an airport on the other side. The people informed me that there was an island two miles wide in the middle of the river, which blocked the other city from my view; but that it was there. Since going around the island was too difficult, the only way was to persevere

and walk across. As I began to traverse the island on a narrow forest path, I suddenly feared that I would not be able to go on. The forest was dense, strange animals were crying—a typical African forest scene—and, although my desire was strong, my courage wavered just a bit. In that instant I felt immediately the presence of True Father, and realized that, symbolically at least, this forest path represented the narrow course he has followed, with the strong, evil forces of Satan all around. I felt True Father there with me, ready to walk before me, to lead the way, to lead me to safety. It was a very deep and moving experience. Through this renewed courage I did go on, and was able to traverse the island and reach Kinshasa for the long-awaited conference.

An interesting footnote to this story is that when I finally crossed the river and had made it to the Libenze Airport, I discovered the regular airplane was not coming that week due to a fuel shortage. Even when I heard this news, however, I was not discouraged because I knew by the Principle that since I had done all in my power to reach my destination, Heaven would have to do something to assist me on the rest of the journey. I waited a while longer, and then someone from the airport came running to find me and to say that “unexpectedly” a military airplane would be landing at the airport to pick up some of President Mobutu’s relatives who had come up to Libenze for a funeral. It would land, then return to Kinshasa nonstop! Only a few arrangements needed to be made with the authorities and I was “approved” to board the plane. When I heard the droning of the engines and saw the military transport circle into view less than two hours later, I knew with deepest joy that Heavenly Father has the capacity to answer any prayer, to maneuver any events, if only we lay the foundation of sincere desire to accomplish His purpose, coupled with 105 percent hard work. I was grateful as I boarded the plane which brought me to Kinshasa only four hours later—exactly seven hours before the world missions director’s scheduled arrival in Kinshasa for the conference! I felt so deeply what Jesus said: mountains can be moved, if only we have faith!



Forest path

Father’s own words explain that if we desire to accomplish ten tasks in one day toward the will of God, but physically there is only time enough for half that number, then Heaven must aid us in accomplishing the other tasks. I’ve experienced this so frequently that now I have confidence to even command the spirit world to help me with certain responsibilities—to meet a certain person on a given day, to assist in approaching high level government officials to guide people to come to the center, or to do whatever is necessary as I make my round of daily responsibilities. Of course I do have certain external advantages in that our city of

Bangui is not large, and that we are already well-known in the city, but I feel the greatest factor is simply that the spirit world is so close and so alive for the African people; they listen to and follow their intuition very often, which offers a great advantage for the spiritual world to assist us.

I rely on the spiritual world with confidence now, and know that it is key to control and to command them to cooperate with us, because we are too few in number to accomplish restoration without them. When we offer sincere prayer and set the proper conditions, they are always ready to assist, and I feel that in the future the spiritual world will enable us to make even greater substantial victories.



Mary (at left) with Central African Republic members