

# GAP Missions - Africa

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## Trails & Trials

For twenty-three years LaNelle and I have scouted out remote villages of Ivory Coast that were desperately in need of the GOSPEL. Recently we found this village, TAHAPLEU, with lives trapped in Animistic belief. We shared the Gospel and to our delight it was readily accepted by a great number of villagers. Jon Michael returned after a few months and found the church had steadily grown to what you see in his photo. They have built an African style worship center in the village where they meet together regularly throughout the week for services.



Spreading the Gospel is not without opposition from Satan and his forces. To have such a ministry in remote jungle settings, we must sometimes necessarily sleep on the ground in tents, fight mosquitos, submit to tropical heat or rain, not to mention looking out for snakes, spiders, and other creepy creatures. But the beauty of seeing whole villages like TAHAPLEU find the joy of knowing Jesus is worth every danger and discomfort. Seeing people of darkness find the Light of Christ is more thrilling than the most beautiful sunrise ever seen. The GOSPEL changes everything. People's countenance changes. Habits change. Perspective changes. Songs of discord turn into songs of joy and gladness. Eyes glisten and they sometimes applaud when they hear stories of the bright future the Lord has prepared. The TRUTH really can set a people free. We praise the Lord for victories He has won.

Robert Moffat, the great missionary pioneer to Africa, said, *"We shall have all eternity to celebrate our victories, but we have only one swift hour before the sunset in which to win them."*

## HELP! School Bells are Ringing!!!

When LaNelle and I placed our hands in the hands of these girls, God opened the windows of Heaven and began to shower us with **unimaginable blessings**. True, our faith and dependence on God's supply had to increase, but my what an exciting life! We get to experience first-hand what only HE is able to accomplish. We are presently caring for 27 girls and the Lord has proven faithful to supply every need. We have been together so many years the girls now say, "Don't call us orphans because we are a family."



Once again it is time for school and, once more, we are pressed into dependence on the Lord's supply. Inscription, books and backpacks, uniforms, transportation, lunches, and sometimes tutors, can really add up. But God has never failed us. HE always provides through His people. We are looking at a cost of **\$4,000 plus \$2,000** for transportation this year. The \$4,000 is an immediate expense but the \$2,000 transportation is spread out over the school year. **WILL YOU HELP US?**

The greatest treasures on earth cannot be bought with silver or gold. These children are OUR treasures. Our life story became much richer when it intersected with a world in need. If you truly want to be blessed...you should consider having a part in the life of an orphaned child. GOD's heart is touched and HIS hand is open when it comes to the needs of widows and orphans. But, HE wants our hearts to be touched and our hands open as well.

*Psalm 41:1-3 "Blessed is he who considers the helpless; The Lord will save him in the day of trouble. The Lord will protect him and keep him alive: And he will be called blessed in the land."*



**James & LaNelle - "How Sweet It Is!"** - I Thess. 4:16-18 *"For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God."*

Often times, the Bible compares the life of a Christian to one of a soldier. Good soldiers are well disciplined, endure hardness, are dedicated to the cause, don't give up, are willing to sacrifice, they live and die with honor, and are ready and willing to please their commanding officer. As the book of Thessalonians puts it, a good soldier is worthy of our "salute".

Reading these verses brought to mind our faithful supporters throughout the many years of ministry. You have been faithful to us and to the needs of our mission. The air surrounding us is permeated with a "sweet smelling odor" because of you. Thank you for allowing us to share the Love of Christ with others. Our stories are not our own. When we put all the bits and pieces together, you are part of the puzzle that makes a complete picture. You have a vital part in making it all happen. So, today we want to stand and give a hearty salute to all who have dedicated themselves to the great "cause" of helping us share the Gospel.

We are anxiously waiting for the moment to return to Ivory Coast. We purchased tickets in July only to have the airline cancel the flights. I believe we could have flown later but the embassy gave news that we would be quarantined with other travelers for two weeks in the Abidjan sports center upon arrival. We felt this would increase the risk of contracting the virus. So, our plans are to return as soon as practical after the first of the year. The **Bible Institute** will gather all our students and begin

new classes in January, and **"JUNGLE RIDERS"** is gearing up to ride to **NEW VILLAGES** in February. We are also in the process of pre-planning our **NATIONAL CONVENTION** in July. We pray the Lord will open doors for a grand year in 2021.

**The Thompson Family** - We are so proud to have the Thompson Family onboard as missionaries and co-workers in the Ivory Coast ministries. It's not every day we find families who devote their whole heart to African ministry... and love it! This is no place for the faint of heart. The initial year was primarily a concentration on French Language and cultural adaptation. However, as missionaries often do, they found themselves scrambling to find good doctors, securing transportation, sweating out the climate change, protecting themselves and especially their children from mosquitos, enduring bouts of malaria and other infections, not to mention the hurdles of language barriers anytime they needed to visit offices or even buy groceries. Then after going through language instructors until they finally found the right fit, Covid virus hit and they were forced to find an in-house alternative at the orphanage. A new language is difficult and sometimes frustrating by any measure, but they did very well considering the circumstances. Jon Michael and Brittany have done a marvelous job of overseeing the orphanage and other ministries during our absence. Just look at the photo. You will see they are still smiling and "running the race" well. We are happy to announce that they will soon be a family of six!!! We are glad they returned home where they can find good medical assistance for the delivery of their family addition before returning to Ivory Coast. If you would like to hear their report, you can find it on their facebook page videos. (<https://www.facebook.com/teamthompsonsongo>)



## Coping with Covid-19 in AFRICA

Just like America and other nations around the world, Ivory Coast has levied restrictions due to the virus. Our churches in the city, as well as remote villages, have had to limit the number of people in gatherings. Jungle Riders are not allowed to draw crowds in numbers as before. The Bible Institute had to change the program to teaching small regional groups. Public schools closed. But, through it all, the ministries are functioning and the orphans are doing well. The orphans and workers were well guarded and, praise the Lord, no one has contracted the virus!