

GAP Missions-Africa

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Ivory Coast, West Africa

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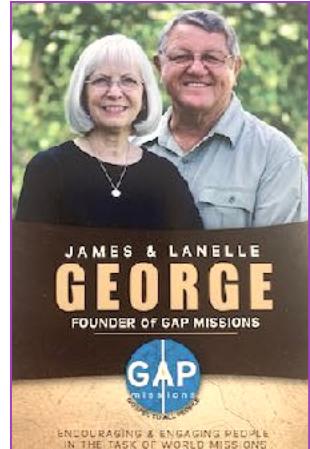
Off We GO!!!

LaNelle and I are off to Ivory Coast this Saturday, Jan 17th, to prepare for the **GRAND NATIONAL CONVENTION – February 2026**

What a joy it will be to celebrate 30 years of missionary endeavors with the churches the Lord has allowed us to establish. Excitement is in the air as members of 44 churches prepare to attend. Plus, our 4 children, two grandchildren, and guest from America will be attending.

The Holy Spirit has hovered over this land with power and authority touching thousands of lives. We have seen first hand how the **Power of the GOSPEL** can not only change individual lives but entire village life. [Matthew 4:16](#) reads, “*The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.*”

Many children who trusted Christ in the early days do not even remember what the former animistic life was all about when Satan had such a hold on their community. They have had Jesus..and a church..and the Word of God.. as a foundation on which to build a whole new life.



REFLECTIONS

Thirty years ago we met this village chief, **Zoe Gaspard**. We sat down under a mango tree with him and the village elders. Curious children abandoned their games and villagers stopped their activities to gather around hoping for insight into what this strange looking white man was doing in their village. After the customary drink of water and a formal greeting, the chief had questions. “Who are you? Where did you come from? And, why are you here?” He hushed the children and in that quiet moment I replied. “My name is James.. I came from America.. and I was sent to your village to share with you a message from the Almighty God.” “A message from the Almighty God!” he said. “What is this message?” I didn’t share the message at that moment but we agreed on a day in the near future when all the village could be present to hear.

Life in this village named Guiri was primitive. It was tucked away in a clearing deep in the dense jungle. No electricity, shallow hand dug wells, and people were reliant on gardens and small farms to exist. Villagers were animistic in belief. They practiced witchcraft and sorcery and had a religion called the “Masque”. They were trapped in false beliefs.

The moment arrived and we shared a wonderful day together getting to know one another. They provided a goat that was slaughtered and prepared for a feast. Then when darkness fell, that message from the Almighty God was shared. Many responded and trusted Christ as Savior. That was the beginning of our mission endeavors in Ivory Coast. The church grew and neighboring villages were reached. Many children came to church learning songs of worship. Their sweet voices were heard singing to the beat of an African drum. All the villages came together in worship on Sundays under a brush arbor in Guiri.

When people are truly saved they have a desire to share their joy with others. The GOSPEL began to course it's way through the jungle trails and the good news of the Gospel spread like wildfire.

Now, 30 years later, 44 churches will gather to celebrate Jesus and to share their remarkable stories of when darkness was turned to LIGHT in their village. Psalm 96 reads, “Declare His GLORY among the heathen, His WONDERS among all people.” We have seen the wonders only HE can perform.