

Missions is PDA

By Ogechi Ohanwe Oruh

My name is Ogechi; I am a nurse by profession. I had gone on mission to Uganda in 2002 but due to life's changes and circumstances I was unable to go again until 2009. So seeing the need on ground and experiencing how God used the team to answer prayers made me want to be part of the 2010 team. I had to change my focus from me centered to others centered.

The most challenge I faced was both personal and financial. I had some personal issues I was dealing with, so I didn't think I was mentally or spiritually prepared to go. But as the time drew nearer, I kept having a sense that God wanted me to go. I remember praying on one occasion about my issue and felt God telling me or asking me, "How are you going to say you trust me when you are doing all in your power including praying for me (GOD) to change the situation and you are not willing to give it to me". Several times and through talking to friends, God kept reminding me of the Scripture in Matthew 6 about having our treasures in heaven and seeking first his kingdom. Also in Matthew 8:22, "Follow me and let the dead bury their own".



He went on to remind me He is able to calm the storms. After that personal hurdle is settled, then came the financial part. The question became how do I raise the amount needed a month before departure. I spoke to Uncle Richard about it and he encouraged me to send out as many sponsorship letters as possible. Truth be told, am not big on begging for money, but I gave it my best shot. I spoke to anyone that would listen, at work, in church, in the store, and then I had to work extra hours to add to whatever I received in contribution. I had a lot of promises but few came through.

My function was to triage the patients, differentiating those who had genuine illnesses from those who just want to horde medications for later use. As the hours rushed by and still many patients to see, my tasks included being able to diagnose very minor aches, pains, simple dermatological problems and to prescribe the proper medicine, but consulting with the doctors before the prescription is given.

One of the things I learned about myself in this trip can be described as follows: being in a familiar dark room, where you know the position of everything in the room but without light to illuminate your path, you still grope around and occasionally bump into something. But once there is light you can see things clearer and the brighter the light, the clearer you can see the objects, the sharper and more colorful the room and everything in it becomes. Am not big on

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patience but I am learning to depend on God's timing for my life and to depend on his provision. I am learning to get familiar with the ways God chooses to speak to me. I am not there yet, the road is still long. After all, I am still a sinner saved only by His grace through Jesus' death on the cross. I am a work in progress!

What impacted me the most during this trip is the fellowship with other team members, the coherence of the team and most importantly, the times of worship. I experienced worship like never before. Everyone's heart was in one accord, so it was quite easy to feel the presence of God or to be transposed in the spirit because there was no distraction and everyone was at the same place at the same time. It was beautiful to belong or be part of a team whose prayer agenda was to worship God and bask in His glory.

This mission trip has taught me the importance of worship in my prayer life. It has taught me to hunger for worship. I realized that most times my prayers in the past were often "God give me, God do for me" as someone described it, "as if God is an ATM machine of wants and miracles" and when he doesn't give or do for us as we had expected, we begin to doubt even His basic attributes.

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Mission is simply a profound public display of affection. To say you love like Christ loved, you have to show it in practical ways as Christ did. All through Scripture Jesus healed, touched, forgave sin, ate with, and taught those whom the world at that time neglected. It is only natural as followers of Christ that we walk in His footsteps. Being His hands and feet, teaching and bringing healing to the vulnerable.

The Word in Life Bible (Thomas Nelson, Inc.) has the following personality profiles on Barnabas:

"The Apostles chose the perfect name for Josés of Cyprus when they called him Barnabas - Son of Encouragement. His original name was Josés or Joseph, a Levite by family background and a wealthy landowner from Cyprus. He was so well regarded in the early Church for his encouragement of others that his name was changed to Barnabas. Every appearance of him in Scripture finds him encouraging others in the faith. He became an advocate and guide for Saul, the former enemy and persecutor of the Early Church. Over time, with Barnabas' coaching and encouragement, Paul became the central figure in the early spread of the gospel. Several churches in the first century can trace their beginnings back to the efforts of Barnabas. He serves as a model for how to mentor young believers and encourage missionaries. Though Levites traditionally lived off the temple system, Barnabas had real estate. But on coming into the faith, he sold it and donated the proceeds for the care of the poor (Acts 4:36-37). Later, he joined with Paul in refusing to make a living from the gospel. (1 Cor. 9:6)."

For his unique stature in the early Church, we named our annual Fall event after this godly man. Please pray for this year's Barnabas Gathering. It's an evening of fellowship, food, and information sharing. The event will hold from 6 to 9 p.m. on Saturday, October 23, 2010 at Hilton Garden Inn, Greenbelt, Maryland.



Ogechi with another team member, Susan, left, serving an Acholi woman and her children at Dino, northern Uganda.

One night at our training meeting Uncle Richard asked if anyone knew what “PDA” stands for. Someone said, “Public Display of Affection” but most people thought PDA is Personal Digital Assistant. In the context of the world I knew that, but I was thinking or expecting the answer to be something profoundly spiritual. After much deliberation by team members, Uncle Richard told us the former answer was the correct one. He went on to explain that Missions is a public display of affection for our loving Savior. As I reflected more on that discussion later that night, I realized how true that definition is. Mission is simply a profound Public Display of Affection. To say you love like Christ loved, you have to show it in practical ways as Christ did. All through scripture Jesus healed, touched, forgave sin, ate with, and taught those whom the world at that time neglected. It is only natural as followers of Christ that we walk in His footsteps. Being His hands and feet, teaching and bringing healing to the vulnerable. Through your little gift, touch, hug or kind word, God can bring a change in a person’s life. Mission is indeed a Public Display of Affection for God.

I have made a decision to request less for myself. To do that I will spend more time in worshipping, exalting and seeking to know Him more intimately. I believe in worshipping, He makes His secrets known as we worship. I plan to make requests that targets mostly other people’s needs and situation. As I intercede on your behalf, I asked that you also intercede for me asking God to reveal His purposes for my life, guard and guide my heart that I may glory in His light.

Being able to go on this mission trip is a miracle in itself and am especially grateful to Uncle Richard for seeing my heart and giving me the opportunity; my family and friends who encouraged and supported me both in prayers and financially and all the team members in Nigeria, Uganda and US for just making it an awesome time with the Lord. To the community of Dino and Arut am grateful for showing me how privileged and yet selfish I had been. To the young people at UJV for teaching me dependence on God. To Streams of Life Church for modeling worship with abandon.



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