

Giving Here

Impacting There

By

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It's General Conference time again and we are asking your help in sending missionaries back to the field. I want to share a story that attempts to portray the heart of missions. It demonstrates the impact of your prayerful and financial partnership.

Desiré Rakotondratsimba is a quiet, humble man who was reached, pastored, and trained by missionaries and nationals in Madagascar. In 2000 he received an invitation from his sister to help in her electronics store in Libreville, Gabon. He moved there and later brought his family. Gabon, a nation of 1,300,000 had no United Pentecostal Church. What should he do? Join another church? Never. Go home? No turning back now. Wait until a missionary arrives? Could be a long wait. Area Coordinator, Randy Adams had the answer. He encouraged Desiré to start a church in his home. He did. God blessed.

Not only did Desiré establish the first UPC in Gabon, but he and his family moved three times to have larger facilities for the church. Eventually, his sister left and sold him the store. Now, they have a thriving business and a revival church.

As the work in Gabon has grown, so has his burden and vision. This year Desiré launched a deliberate and strategic door-to-door visitation program. He and the saints go out each Saturday to witness and invite people to church. One Sunday four came to church. They heard the Gospel and eagerly agreed to be baptized. Desiré loaded them in his car only to be surrounded by a group of locals. They refused for him to take the newcomers for baptism. They threatened to destroy his car. He responded, "Go ahead! My God gave me the first car and He is able to give me another." He explained the necessity of Jesus' name baptism and they let him go.

Faithfulness has paid off. In the last three months forty-eight were baptized in Jesus' name and thirty-six received the Holy Ghost. On a recent Sunday 120 attended service. Gabon now has two churches and two preaching points.

Remember, giving here is impacting there!