



GOSPEL NEWS

IN AFRICA



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Music is a universal language. It is a language that is understood by the young and the old, the poor and the rich, the lowly as well as the high. Spiritual music is a tonic for the soul. It draws the heart to Heaven, it soothes sorrowful hearts and makes happy hearts even more joyful. Like preaching the Word of God, music is another medium by which God talks to the heart of man. There is, in effect, an inseparable link between music and the Gospel. Music has been a part of The Apostolic Faith work through the years.

BEGINNINGS

The Apostolic Faith Choir and Orchestra in Africa, today, numbers over 1,500, and is perhaps, the largest orchestra in Africa. It started back in the year 1945, when the cottage meetings of the organization were held at No. 26, Little Road, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria. There existed an Orchestra of two musical instruments whose players were the two leading ministers: Brothers Timothy Oshokoya playing the Guitar, and Lucas Obakoya on the Mandolin. In 1947, two more musical

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From the Africa Overseer

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Music is a universal language that is understood by all and sundry. Hence, it is able to meet the needs of people in divers circumstances of life, and act as a panacea to life's problems.

Spiritual Music soothes tensed nerves, acts as a balm to the wounded and sorrowful, and draws the soul to the throne of God.

Powerful is the message of music. The Angels welcomed Jesus to the earth with melodious renditions, when He was born in the manger in Bethlehem of Judea (Luke 2:13, 14).

Saul, the first King in Israel, many times, fell into fits because the evil spirit from the Lord was upon him. But David played on his harp, producing cool and soothing music, to cool the king's tensed nerves (1 Samuel 16:16).

Elisha requested for a minstrel (singer) when Israel was at her wit's end. As the minstrel played, water filled the ditches that were dug and the famished Israelites drank and gave to their cattle as well (2 Kings 3:15-24).

Paul and Silas prayed and sang when they were unjustly locked up, and God delivered them by sending an earthquake that shook the prison (Acts 16:25,26).

Jehoshaphat won a war by leading a choir into the battlefield (2 Chronicles 20: 21,22).

Many are the valiants of old who, when they were confronted by the vicissitudes of life, prayed and sang and God gave them victory.

Music is held in high esteem in The Apostolic Faith, and it has been a source of joy and inspiration, not only to our members, but to the general public.

We believe that as you read this edition prayerfully, the Lord will put a song in your heart, that will draw you closer to Himself.

P. O. Akazue



A section of the choir in a concert

instruments: the Banjo and Piano accordion were procured. God provided two violins in 1949 and soon, God called the first eight saints to dedicate their lives to the learning and playing of these instruments. One of them was Brother Emmanuel Shotade, who was a piano and violin teacher for many years, and is presently the Printing Manager.

The International Headquarters in Portland already had a well-established Orchestra. In 1951, Brother Timothy visited the International Headquarters and while waiting for the camp meeting to start, he trained in several areas of music. He came back with a good number of instruments, including Trumpet, Cornet, Horn, Trombone and Violin. As a result of this, some people had the opportunity to learn the use of these instruments.



Double Bass section

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The Church then started a non-fee-paying music school, that prepared members for the Choir and Orchestra. New students started music from what is known as the *Rudiments class*, from where they proceeded to the *Voice Production and Instruments classes*. There is no age limit in the music classes. The classes have now been restructured in a way that an incoming student spends a year at the Rudiments of Music class, where the theory of music is taught, after which a nationally coordinated test must be passed. Successful students then proceed to the *Sight Reading class* where they learn to read the staff notation. They simultaneously start their instrument class. At the end of the session, students take another nationally coordinated examination which qualifies them to sing and/or play at the Junior level. Such people are eligible to perform during the Sunday School and Bible Study

periods as well as the Young **People's Services**. There is room for further studies at the *Art of Singing class*, where people study the techniques of effective singing. People in such a class can also proceed to the *Advanced Instruments class*. Passing the examinations at this stage takes such people to the Senior level, which qualifies them to perform in all services and concerts. Although the culture of classical music is not native to Africa, many students have, through these classes, become very proficient in classical music production both in terms of instrument and vocal rendition.

The musical instruments used in the services include: violin, viola, violoncello, flute, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, trombone, French horn, baritone as well as the harp. The organ and the piano are natural additions. Members of the Music Department, youths and adults alike, freely give of their talents without monetary consideration. In fact, each student is expected to purchase his own musical instrument, books, music stand and other accessories. The binding force on these musicians is *sanctification* which gives them oneness of purpose to give their best to God.

MUSIC FOR CHILDREN

Children are not left out of the Music Education. As soon as they start Sunday School at the age of 4, they are encouraged to attend weekly music classes, where they are taught how to sing and play instruments.

These children start with the playing of recorders and as they grow up, they learn to use other instruments such as violin, flute and piano.

On Sunday mornings, they present music at the adult Sunday School class. They also form the choir and orchestra in their own chapel.

THE KEYBOARDS

A Grand Piano was purchased in 1954. This piano served for many years at the Headquarters Church in Lagos until recently when it was replaced.

The Church started with a small portable organ. Later, a manual reed organ with pedals was purchased in the sixties. In 1970, the first electronic organ *Solina Model 110*, was installed. This was replaced in 1971 by *Eminent 650 Classique*. On the 18th of December 1977, a *Concert Model 4700 Wurlizer* organ was dedicated for God's use at the Headquarters Church in Lagos. This organ served for many years as the principal organ. On Sunday, April 16, 1995, during the Easter Concert, a grand pull-out ceremony was performed for the great Wurlizer. It was replaced by a Digital simulated pipe organ Opus

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Music Students waiting to be tested in Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria

across nigeria

REVIVAL IN OKE-OGUN AREA OF OYO STATE

It had been in our hearts to propagate the Gospel in Oyo North Local Government Area, in particular Igboho and Saki.

A maiden trip, which could be called an awareness programme, had been made to the area before the 2002 camp meeting. The evidence **of God's hand on the land** was seen in the number of delegates that attended the last camp meeting from Oke-Ogun. A total of 30 people were in attendance. The Lord used this to encourage us to launch out again into the area.

On October 19, 2002, an 18 member Gospel team, left Ibadan for Igboho, where a one-week revival services started on the following Sunday. Before the arrival of the team, God had reserved a special building, hidden among the weeds to accommodate the team. The leader insisted on clearing the surrounding of the building, not knowing that a well was in the compound. God kept the workers from falling into the hidden well and when later there was a shortage of water, the well became useful to both the Gospel team members and the villagers.

Brethren from Oyo, Ogbomoso and Ikirun joined at Igboho to reinforce the efforts of the team from Ibadan. Ser-

vices were held from Monday to Saturday, except on Wednesday when there was a film show. At the end of the first Sunday, 6 people were saved.

Meetings were also held at Saki. God used a non-member to supply the need of the team for accommodation. A courtesy call was paid on the traditional ruler, the Okere of Saki, and the team was warmly received. There was a lot of rejoicing at the restoration of Mr. James Oladoja, an Octogenarian who had come across the Gospel at the inception of The Apostolic Faith work in Nigeria. He later donated a plot of land for a Church building. The meetings in both towns were greatly blessed with a total of 33 souls being saved, 9 sanctified and 4 baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire.

P. O. Olufowote
District Overseer,
Oyo/Osun States, Nigeria.

A Retreat was recently

BLESSINGS IN KWARA AND KOGI STATES

held at Ayetoro. The Spirit of God descended mightily; 31 souls were saved, 18 sanctified and 10 baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire. 3 were

healed and myriads of blessings were received by others. An armed robber was also saved during the Retreat. It was reported later that his testimony shook his village.

Testimonies from the saints of God in our services prove that our God answers prayers. A brother testified that he had sought the baptism of the Holy Ghost for a long time without any result. One day, God reminded him of the school locker which he stole and the unpaid levies which he evaded while in school. He quickly made provision for a new locker and paid what he owed the school. After restituting his way, as he was preparing to go to his farm one Thursday morning, the Spirit of God urged him to pray. Within a few minutes, the Holy Ghost descended mightily and baptised him.

M. O. Onayemi,
District Overseer,
Kwara/Kogi States, Nigeria

A state-wide revival

A TIME OF REFRESHING IN EDO STATE

started in Benin, the State Headquarters, on Sunday February 17, 2003. The three-month revival is scheduled to take the Gospel teams to all

the branch Churches in Edo State.

The revival lasted 4 days at Benin. A total of 34 people reported specific blessings including—11 being saved, 7 sanctified, 3 baptized with the Holy Ghost and 4 healed. A young man who responded to an invitation to come to Church during a street meeting was saved that night. The next day, he brought 4 of his friends to Church and he also prayed through to sanctification. God visited our Churches mightily during the revival.

The Church at Ogbe was filled up in anticipation of the revival. God came down mightily and many souls were saved. At Agenebode, the Church premises could not accommodate the people who followed the team to Church after the open-air service. They had to arrange for canopies so that the people could be accommodated. **God rewarded His children's** efforts by pouring spiritual blessings on 7 people.

As the revival progressed, many more souls were added to the Kingdom of God. At Igarra, God treated His people to a wonderful surprise. About 200 people gathered for the revival. To God be the glory that before 4 p.m. on that Sunday evening, 12 people had been saved and some of the old timers who had been seeking the Holy Ghost baptism were filled. Only Heavens had the accurate number of people who

were blessed. The revival will end on May 18, 2003. We look forward to manifold blessings in the stations that are yet to be visited.

**G. O. Osunbunmi,
District Overseer,
Edo State, Nigeria**

We have had various

GOSPEL OUTREACH IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

evangelical outreach in trying to expand our area of influence and consolidate the gains of previous outreach. The change of pulpit programme, weekend revival activities, retreats, film shows, Campus A. V. S. activities, were some of the methods used in extending the frontiers of the Gospel in Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina, Niger, Nasarawa states and other areas in the District. We recorded a lot of achievements. There was a great boost in atten-

dance in our Churches. The many Christian experiences received by new converts set most of the Churches aglow.

My daughter was seriously ill during the camp meeting. While we were away to Lagos for camp meeting, we left her behind with a sister because she was receiving lectures at the University of Abuja. She took ill and the cerebral fever affected her brain. The illness was very serious but through the prayers of the saints, she was completely healed.

In our meeting at Kontagora, a herbalist who was saved, testified of the miracles God performed in his life. A group of natives who were converted at Derebiu are also rejoicing that they found the Gospel.

**Soji Olamijulo
District Overseer
Abuja/Kaduna District**

From the Readers

I wish to thank you for the Gospel News in Africa magazine which was enclosed in my letter. I enjoyed reading it. I sincerely pray that God Almighty would continue to give you people the needed wisdom, understanding and financial might to carry on the good works you have been doing for Him.

A. O., Ikoyi, Lagos.

We are requesting for your magazine in our Church. We hereby inform you that our Church members have a deep interest in your Publication. I am a Sunday School Teacher in our Church. One day I got one copy of your magazine from a friend and I used it to teach during Sunday School. They told me to write you for more copies so that we can use them for our spiritual growth.

O. O., Agodi, Ibadan.



Bunmi Abogunrin (left) and Pelumi Ayanwale singing duet at a children's service in Ilorin, Nigeria

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485, by Johannus, with 4 manuals. Digital Sampling Speaking Stops were installed, and it is no marvel that the tones of the organ can range from those *"as tender as a mother's yearning, to those as fierce as the deep and raging sea"*.

ANNUAL CONCERTS

There are usually three concerts presented annually in Lagos by the combined Choir and Orchestra. They are: Easter Concert on Easter Sunday, the Camp Meeting Concert on the first Monday of the annual camp meeting, and the Christmas concert on the Sunday before the Christmas Day. Other states in Nigeria and countries in Africa hold their own concerts at convenient dates.

Music lovers in the city of Lagos and other localities attend these concerts and thoroughly enjoy the sacred and semi-classical presentations. Sometimes, up to 21,000 people attend each concert; among whom are: government officials, academics, traditional rulers and diplomats.

Notable among Nigerian national figures who have attended these concerts are: President Olusegun Obasanjo; Chief Ernest Shonekan, a one-time Head of State; Professor Jerry Gana, current Minister of Information and National Orientation; Professor Tunde Adeniran, former

Minister of Education; Professor Babalola Borishade, current Minister of Education; Professor Peter Okebukola, the Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission; Mrs. Kofoworola Bucknor-Akerele, former Deputy Governor of Lagos State; Prelate (Dr.) Sunday Mbang, the Primate of the Methodist Church of Nigeria and President of the Christian Association of Nigeria, and others too numerous to mention.

The anthems of praise sung from consecrated hearts, and the music skilfully played with spiritual fervour, have been effectively used by the Spirit of God. Souls have been led to Christ as a result of attending the concerts.

QUALIFICATIONS

The principle which was originally established in the beginning of this work still remains. Only those who have the genuine experience of Salvation, who are also truly sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, take part in the ministry of music and singing.

Young people have always

been encouraged to obtain the best possible education and also excel in music, that they might glorify God with their talents. It has been rewarding to see the progress made by those who have applied themselves to the field of music. Aside from private study of music, young musicians and singers are given group training. Practices are held each week in the Church, under the direction of a competent conductor. Many of the musicians who participate in this department of the Church, felt the call early in life. A number of them who answered that call, are still playing their instruments after 30 or 40 years. Young people today, who follow in the steps of those early day musicians, are giving their talents wholeheartedly to the Lord.

MUSIC DIRECTION

The Apostolic Faith Orchestra which was pioneered by a small group of musicians, was organised by the Rev. T. G. Oshokoya. He personally directed the instrumental and vocal groups for a number of years.

The present Music Director, John Adelaja Aina, started playing the organ when he was young. He found great pleasure in dedicating his talents and time to the service of the Lord. As the principal organist, he has served for more than 35 years in the Music Department.

HYMNS AND SONGS COMPOSITION

The Orchestra performs music written by the Masters



The Music Director and his wife—John and Joan Aina

including Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Haydn, Schubert and others. The Choir also renders songs composed by them. In addition to this, many orchestra pieces and songs rendered by the Orchestra and Choir were composed by different members of the Church who were inspired to give praise to God.

The Founder, the Rev. (Mrs.) Florence Crawford, was a songwriter. One of her well-loved hymns was composed shortly after she had established this Gospel work in Portland. Under the burden of severe trial, she put into verse the craving of her soul



Late Brother Umoh Attah on the organ during a concert

in "The Heart's Cry".

Her son, Rev. Raymond Robert Crawford, also composed a number of Gospel songs. A special burden came upon his heart, to write a hymn which gave admonition for prayer. Then, as now, there was a special need for prevailers, and the Lord gave to him the words of the soul-stirring hymn—"Prevailing Prayer". Others who wrote songs at the International Headquarters included Brothers Philip Brown and Clifford Baltzell.

On the continent of Africa, God gave talents to individuals who yielded their lives to compose and arrange music for the Choir and Orchestra in English, French and many local languages.

Notable among these were Rev. Timothy Oshokoya, who poured out his burdened soul for the Word of God on the continent of Africa, when he turned the wordings of 2 *Thessalonians 3:1-16* into a song. His successor, Rev. Josiah Soyinka was inspired to give out the words of a song for the dedication of the Johannus organ, the first verse of which was:

*Lord, today,
The organ we hallow to Thee,
O hear thy servants as they pray,
And let Thine ear attentive be.*

Rev. John Aina, the Music Director in the Africa Headquarters, has composed, arranged and adapted many songs and orchestra pieces over the years. One of such is the "A. V. S. Watch Song". His enthusiasm has encouraged many other music lovers to consecrate and develop their talents in this area. Some of such are Kayode Oje, Dele Fakorede, Femi Adeola, S. K. J. Okorie, J. G. Umoh, his son, Attah Umoh and many others.

Recently, the Africa Overseer, Rev. Paul Akazue, with a heavy burden for the work of God in Africa, was inspired to write, during an evangelistic trip to an African country, the words of the song: "God Remember Africa". The first verse is given below:

*Dear Lord remember,
We pray Thee Father
Remember AFRICA,
Your own Continent
How she has suffered,
For these many years
Rise up in your power,
To deliver AFRICA.*

The entire world has been blessed through this unique music ministry that God gave to The Apostolic Faith. It is a great treasure that is diligently guarded in all locations and branches of the Church.

Be with us, gracious

footprints



A man of love, a man of God:

The life and times of the 'most excellent Theophilus' Ogunnaike

He loved God and was loved by God; he loved people and people loved him too; he was kind, gentle and humble. He was a prayer warrior. A few months before his death, he went quietly unnoticed into the Ibadan Church which he pastored for over 40 years and knelt down at every Chorister's seat to pray for each of them. He then proceeded into the auditorium and knelt at each pew to pray for all the members. He did not possess the things of this world, but he possessed things eternal. He spent everything for the Gospel, everything he had. When people gave him money, he gave it back to the poor. He spoke few words, but those few words made people want to worship God. When he died, people who were not members, commented that a great man had departed.

Late Brother Josiah Soyinka, who conducted his funeral service, called him the "most excellent Theophilus". He was a perfect example of what a Christian should be. He was a man of God. That was Rev. Theophilus Afolabi Ogunnaike, popularly known as "Brother O", the man of love.

"Brother O" was a lover of children and the young people. He regularly took the young people out for picnics, where he taught them to love God. He believed in humility. He preached and practised it. He was a disciplined man, who preached the Word of God in all its fullness. Indeed, "Brother O" was married to the Word of God.

He was a zealous Gospel worker. He learnt music and became a member of the Choir. He played violin in the Orchestra

and sang tenor in the Choir. He became a Sunday School teacher in 1959.

"Brother O" got married to Sister Susana Oluyebo on January 1, 1958. Although, he did not have any child of his own, he had dozens of children among the people of God.

He was a member of the Board of Trustees of The Apostolic Faith in Nigeria. On May 21, 1997, after a mighty one-week revival at Ibadan in which over 900 people received different Christian experiences, the "most excellent Theophilus" Afolabi Ogunnaike quietly went to his reward.



Below is an excerpt of his testimony.

I was born in 1924, into a Baptist family at Ibadan. I tried to serve God to the best of my ability, but without an experience of salvation.

When I started working, I met a man in my place of work, who informed me that he had found Jesus. He said Jesus was able to save and He had saved him. I told him that there was nothing special about that. I was a minister in a small group, and preached about Jesus everyday. Therefore I thought my salvation was already settled. However, I easily grew annoyed in my place of work because we were working under a rather difficult and stressful situation and I was always touchy. After much persuasion, I told him he would have to follow me to my Church before I would agree to go with him. He agreed, but said, I should come and see first.

Eventually, I went to Church with him. I heard a sermon by late Brother T. G. Oshokoya and discovered that my life did not measure to the Truth that I heard. I could see that there was no joy in my heart. I was often angry and quarrelled often. Though outwardly, I appeared gentle, I was very prone to anger. I quarrelled with the door if the lock failed to open quickly enough. My friend had told me that when he got saved, he could not fight nor get angry very readily any more. I knew him very well before he was saved and I observed the change in him. I used to tell

him that he was too soft and that I could not take what he accepted from anybody.

It took me quite sometime before I could get saved, but I continued to attend the Church. I made several restitutions, yet, I did not pray through. One day, it seemed that I had gotten to my wit's end. Due to my gentle nature people thought I was already saved but I knew I was not. I was extremely miserable. I was alone in my room and I started to think. As I sat thinking about it in that room the Lord came down, and saved my soul. I jumped up for joy. The sound of the blacksmith hammer nearby sounded as music to my ear. A light shower of rain that fell on the roof of my house was also like music to my ear. I came out in the rain and went to our Church at Idi-Ikan to inform the saints about my salvation. Even before I got to them, they could see from the way I was walking joyfully that I had obtained my salvation. God also gave me the experiences of sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. In the year 1953, I was baptized in water at The Apostolic Faith camp meeting in Lagos.

I am grateful to God that since then God has continued to retain a love for the Gospel in my heart. There is power in the Blood of Jesus. He has been my refuge and my protection. I have passed through many trials, but Jesus had always given me victory.

I used to be very high minded and ambitious but God humbled my heart. A time came when God called me to

full-time ministry. I did not want to relinquish my job; however, God persuaded me that, that was His will for me. I thought to myself that I would have to endure a lot of deprivations but God totally surprised me. He met my needs in many ways and did not allow me to look to anybody for any need. He taught me that I should rely completely on Him and that it was vain to rely on the arm of flesh. He supplied abundantly all my needs, even more than I could think or imagine. God provided two cars for me without my asking for them.

There was a time I was sick unto death, and the pain became extremely severe. The Lord came one day and performed an operation on me. He showed me the cause of the pain and told me that He had removed it. That was the end of the sickness.

In 1945, before I was saved, I was trying to gather some broken pieces of bottle, when a sharp splinter stuck into my finger. Unknown to me, the splinter remained in the flesh even after the wound got healed. The pain in the finger got so serious that I could not use it effectively. I could not afford an operation, nor stand the pain associated with it. Then in 1962, during the annual camp meeting, I discovered that I had a very painful boil on that finger. Within a week, the boil broke open and as I was taking my bath, I noticed a hard object. That was how God removed the splinter of the bottle that had been in my finger since 1945.

God Did it For Me

A prophet finds the True Light



I was born into a Muslim family in Igboho, Oyo State of Nigeria. Although I attended a Baptist primary school, my mother soon took me to a Fulani cattle camp for protection because of the polygamous nature of our family. There, I was taught the deep things of the Moslem religion and that Jesus was not the Son of God. I used to confront Christians openly and this made my co-Muslims admire my zeal and courage.

However, within me I was very restless and fearful of the Judgment Day, which I believed was soon to come. I knew that judgment would come upon all wicked men, but I did not know the way of escape from the judgment. Sometimes, I would read the Bible and start to weep without understanding what was happening to me.

One glorious day, during the Ramadan period in 1977, as I was preparing to pray according to Islamic injunctions on a sheepskin, I

heard a strange voice as loud as the sound of many waters. The voice called my Muslim name three times. I was very perplexed and asked: "Who is calling me?" I looked up and saw a thick cloud in the sky. There was nobody in the cloud but I heard a voice saying from there: "I am the Lord Jesus Christ; Mohammed that you are serving cannot lead you to Heaven. Stop deceiving yourself. Ask anything in my Name and I will do it for you". I trembled and my heart melted. That was the last time I bowed my head to worship God in the Islamic way.

Although, I did not immediately start to serve God the right way, God revealed His power to me soon after. I had a motorcycle accident that almost took my life. I could not move my left leg. In fact, I was almost paralysed. My parents tried all they could, but all the medication given to me did not have any effect.

At a certain stage, I remembered the "Voice" that talked to me on the sheepskin. I then asked everyone in the room to leave because I wanted to speak to that "Voice". Though they were reluctant at first, they finally gave in to my request. I called Jesus' Name and to my utter consternation, I was instantly healed. I ran outside, and people could not believe what they saw. Although this incident convinced me of the reality of Jesus, I still did not know how to serve Him properly.

For a long time, I remained without any religion. One day, the Voice of God asked me to leave the environment in which I was and to proceed to Mokwa, in Niger State of Nigeria. I eventually settled down in Ilorin on June 6, 1979. Although the sermon I heard in the first Church I attended pricked my heart and I became terrified, at the end of the service I was only asked to raise up my hand as a sign of surrender to Jesus. I was not saved. I became very zealous in the work of the Lord in the Church but my zeal was without knowledge. I later joined a few other people to start a Pentecostal Church. I was very eloquent in preaching, yet, there was sin in my heart. I was bothered because of my bad temper and love of money, but I did not know what to do. After sometime, I became a Senior Evangelist and I started my own Church. I sought for power and I got power. I soon started practising signs and wonders as well as falling anointing – a situation in which you throw an handkerchief to a member or you touch him and he falls down. The dead were raised, the blind received their sight and the lepers were cleansed at the Name of Jesus. But because I was not genuinely saved from my life of sin, problems upon problems mounted in my life.

After a while, I was ill and became unconscious for three days. **(Continued on page 11)**

(Continued from page 10)

My people took me to a white garment Church and through the mercy of God I became well again. While recuperating in the Church, I learnt more of their mode of worship. I became filled with their spirit even more than the people I met there. I could prophesy evil occurrences and some strange spirits filled me. My hair became dread locked and grew down to my shoulders within a few hours, which was a sign of my becoming a prophet. I was given two staffs of office, one as a Prophet and the other as an Apostle. I foretold peoples' future and it came to pass. I read all kinds of spiritual books and their spirits fell on me. But I had no peace. I was restless and confused. At one stage, I thought my wife was the one blocking my success in my prophetic career. I drove her out and married another wife.

The Lord started to deal with me. Although I could predict the evil that would befall others, I could not predict the evil that was happening to me. I became seriously ill. The people who took care of me stole all my money. I was in great torment and though I wished to die, death would not come. For some inexplicable reasons, I woke up at 12.00 midnight everyday. A voice would tell me to start weeping and I would cry till 6.00 a.m. In the morning, people would still come to me to foretell their future. My second wife then introduced me to another white garment Church, which she said could relieve me of my problems, but my case got worse. I was told that if I could go to a certain deep river to take a stone from the river bed and rub my body with it, I would be well. All these efforts came to naught.

I was told that I should organize crusades and by so doing, I would become well, but it was all to no avail.

Eventually, due to my confusion, I drove away my second wife. But thanks be to God, I got an invitation to come and hold revival services in Jebba. One day, as I was in front of the house I resided in at Jebba, I saw some Apostolic Faith members, including their Pastor coming towards me. My host told me right there a lot of discouraging things about them. When they got near us, the Pastor invited me to their Church but I immediately refused. However, my inquisitive mind got the better of me and I went to see what they were doing on a Thursday Bible Study. People kept on telling me to stop attending the Church, but a Power stronger than me kept taking me there. I started reading their Higher Way magazine and Sermons. I was struck with the fact that their doctrines which dated back to 1906, were still being practised by the people I saw there. I kept asking the Pastor questions and the answers I got were so marvellous that, just as the Queen of Sheba felt, there was no more spirit in me.

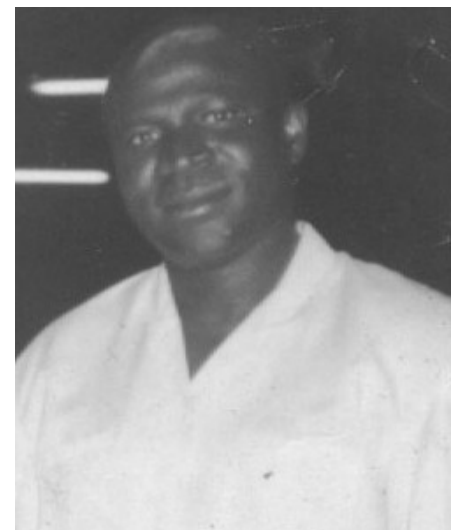
One day, the burden of sin became too heavy for me to bear and within our compound I started pacing up and down, asking Jesus to lift my burden of sin. Oh, the joy of salvation! All my burdens rolled away. I could laugh, and did laugh, even though I had not laughed for ten years. That day I slept soundly. I was so thrilled that I ran to the Pastor to tell him what had happened. He told me about the doctrine of sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. The Lord sanctified and baptized me

and I spoke in a new tongue. I had spoken in many strange tongues before and even prided myself in the fact that I understood the language of birds, but this was a different experience.

I started making restitutions and stopped the 'special prayers' and concoctions that I was making for people. I threw away the staffs of office. I burnt my magic books which turned into mystic smoke.

I have had many problems since I got saved but God solved all of them. God told me never to leave the Apostolic Faith Church. When I started wondering why, God showed me a vision. I saw the Apostolic Faith as a Church built with palm fronds. It was not at all attractive outside. In that vision, God told me to enter. Inside, I saw that everywhere was paved with gold. God told me that, that was the way to Heaven and that I must stay there. I have not had any cause whatsoever to regret since my conversion. The love of the brethren is always there, but Christ is my ultimate satisfaction. I will remain in this Gospel till the end of my life.

Elijah A. Jaiyeola
Jebba, Kwara State,
Nigeria



Brother Jaiyeola—now

A Workshop for Leaders

On March 3, 2003, Overseers from French-speaking West African countries gathered for a 4-week leaders' workshop. Declaring the workshop open, the Africa Overseer, Brother Paul Akazue said that the workshop was organized to allow leaders rub minds together on the principles and methods of our work with a view to having a common understanding.

The topics discussed included Church Structure, Church Financing and Financial Control, General Office Practice, Church Buildings – methods and procedures, Evangelism, Food and Nutrition, First-aid, the Ministry of Music, and Counselling. The participants included Brothers Marcellin Hounmenou (Benin Republic), Ezekiel Ojo (Cote d'Ivoire), Jean Kindoho (Niger Republic), Victor Assiamoua (Togo Republic), John Oladiran (Gabon) and some brethren from Nigeria.



The participants at the workshop. Inset—(left: Brother Akazue writing on the board; right: Brothers Marcellin, Victor and Ezekiel.