

Our Unification Church Missionary's 40 Days in the Liberian Wilderness

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The bishop and I have reached the half-way point on our trip (today is our 20th day "on the road"), and many adventures lie behind us. I'm sure Heavenly Father has equally as many, if not more, in front of us.

We are out of the jungle at the moment, in the town of Juarzon. We'll be here for a few days of teaching, meetings with local officials, night-time prayer meetings, and preaching, and then move on to Grand Gedeh County (we're still in Sinoe).

We have walked through the forest, traveled by canoe ("kaynoo" as we Liberians say). I was carried for two days by hammock on the heads of four young men; we've ridden the "country buses" (glorified and modified pickup trucks), and this morning we even took a short but 'exciting trip by small plane (flying about 50-100 feet above the forest treetops).

On the forest path ("path" is too civilized a word, actually much of the trail was rugged walking -- across creeks, log bridges over narrow parts of rivers, many tree roots underfoot. We saw a scorpion along the trail right after leaving the motor road at Kulu; also an elephant's footprint (but not the Big Baby himself); also many "driver ants."

They're powerful, small black ants that travel in long-columned armies, and they can eat anything (boa constrictors avoid eating their prey where they find drivers). As yet, they have not eaten me... although several have had a taste (they bite).

In Troh we spent about six days, after a trying hike through the deep forest from Kubu. No motor roads reach Troh yet; but the government has plans to eventually develop a road there.

We were welcomed and well received by the bishop's friends there and also by the local tribal authorities. The paramount chief (responsible for eight clans), the clan chief, and the town chief and other townspeople petitioned us to build a junior high school for them, offering 1000 acres of land on which to develop the school and a mission.

In Totoe we held the district convention for the bishop's "Sanquin District" pastors and church representatives. I taught in Kru, which I am learning. The town chief came as well as several local officials and petitioned us to build a clinic and junior high school, and offered 800 acres of land in Totoe.

It was encouraging to realize that people are ready to serve, it's just a matter of taking on these projects with approval. The bishop assures us we can find qualified teachers for the junior high school and qualified medical help for the clinic. But of course money is needed (surprisingly not all that much to start with, though) and also a plan for development of the church work.

We walked along the emerald green Atlantic, on soft sand, from Karbough to Baffu Bay. I spoke in the Methodist Church there to about a dozen adults and a few children, and was warmly received. From discussions the bishop and I had over the past few days, I feel more confident about accepting responsibility for 33 churches and seven schools and for the land we have been offered.

God has prepared this country in a very wonderful and special way for us. The seeds have been planted, and we are really the harvesters in the vineyard.