



CHALLENGE

The Story Behind the Medical Clinic

A medical clinic in Bayonnais! Where does it come from?

What could be a very long story, we are going to make short.

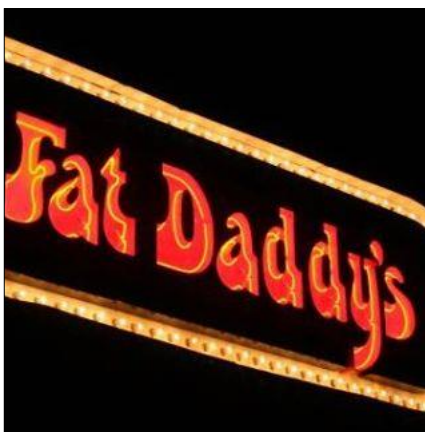
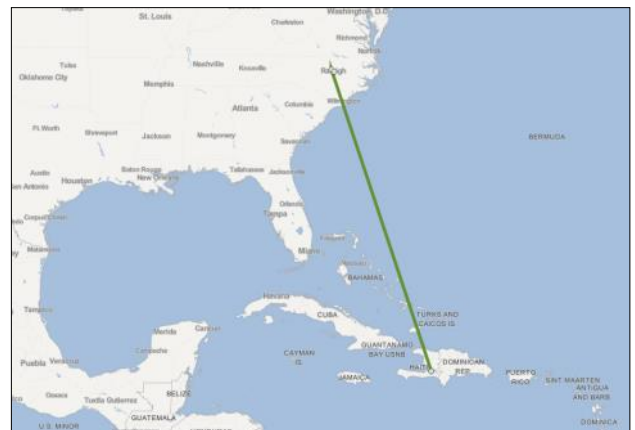
1987 - The wake up year for own my life. It still shapes my life today.

In early 1987 I had decided to become either a lawyer, a politician or businessman. However, around midnight in February 1987, I heard the Lord speaking to me about going back to Bayonnais, while I was planning to visit the Dominican Republic for the first time. Once I arrived in the Dominican Republic I was shocked to see how Haitians

were living there. They were working hard, but owned literally nothing. Slavery. They were treated poorly by the government, one instance being where they put Haitians by hundreds in pools beneath a large dam and opened large faucets over them. The higher the water would get, the more they would die by jumping and jumping until drowned, since they would have had no means to get out. Cruel!

August 29, 1987 I boarded an airplane first time in my life to Miami, and from Miami to Raleigh Durham. What an adventure for a hillbilly, traveling alone for first the time in his life!

On August 30th, I was taken to Providence Baptist Church and met with Rev. Dave Honor, and then to a Restaurant by the name of Fat Daddy. The food was great. There was probably too much and of course, I had never seen so many people attending restaurants like that in my life. Gonaives, my home city the past 55 years had only one or two restaurants with small seating capacity which is normal for Haiti as Haitian citizens have no cash to spend in restaurants. I think Gonaives had chez Frantz restaurant and Rex Bar. No big spaces. 1987, surprisingly enough, was also the year in which I knew I was going to marry Yolande. I felt that call strong enough to let her know at first that Bayonnais was the place God wanted me to go and serve, which did not bother her that much, except that she made it clear to me she did not want to have a pastor as her husband. Her older sister was a minister's wife, and he would be gone from time to time.



Pastor Actionnel was teased...

When I announced that I planned to minister in Bayonnais, friends of mine, Maula Jean-Marie and Charlenord Dieudonne, (both pastors and fathers and husbands today as I am), made fun of me going to Bayonnais with Yolande. I was going to "take Yolande to a jungle", they would say. They were truly right. Bayonnais was just a Jungle.

Besides Maula and Charlenord making fun of me, many other young men that were with me in 13th grade would never give me a break with my stupid/crazy/silly/nonsense idea of going to Bayonnais doing ministry. I do not blame them for teasing me. They did not feel what I felt. They did not see what I saw. They did not understand what I understood. They were absolutely right. But, I was not wrong. It was too late for me to get cold feet, I was way too far in the ocean swimming to turn back.

After visiting Raleigh for two weeks, Mrs. Helen Hunter drove from Charlotte to Raleigh to bring me to her Charlotte home for two weeks before flying back to Haiti. She and her husband, Ernest Hunter, gladly welcomed me and I was blessed to observe many things at their home.

As background...

I had lived for 10 years before OFCB was founded in Haiti, at Eben-Ezer Mission. Food was so scarce that there were times we would eat 3 days a week; which we, my friends Preval Jean-Noel and I, still have called 3/7. But, in the USA, I ate three meals a day, plus snacks.

On Saturday morning, as Mr. and Mrs. Hunter and I were having our breakfast, the Hunter's dog, Ping Pong, sat next to Mother Hunter staring at her with the expectation that mama would have given him something. That dog was always hungry.

But Ping Pong was very smart, always looking at mama because moms usually pay more attention to their kids than dads. As we were eating Helen discovered that Ping Pong had an eye infection. So, she took some nice tissues and cleaned it up. At noon, we gathered again for lunch and the dog came staring at Helen again.

As she saw the stuff had come back again into the dog's eyes, she said: "oh, oh oooo! my dog is sick. I am going to take him to the doctor". My English was much poorer at that time; and I thought I did not quite understand what she said, and I replied: "What?" She said, "My dog is sick, Actionnel, I am going to take him to the doctor." I said, "do you mean you have doctors for even dogs in this country? Yes, she said. The doctors are called Vets and dogs and cats are called Pets. So, I am going to take my pet to the Vet, declared Helen Hunter.



I was overwhelmed...

Tears from my eyes flooded my face and nose. I could not continue eating my lunch. I felt so embarrassed that I had to leave the dining room, retreating to my bedroom crying and weeping. Yes, my body was in Charlotte with Ping Pong going to the real Doctor for an eye infection. But, my soul, my mind, my spirit and my beings had already been back to Cathor, Bayonnais, remembering young women in my generation that had died while giving birth to babies.

Chimene Marinette, Lamercie Sejour, Dila Bouaille, Madame Alady plus many more had died while giving birth to babies. These were not people whom I had merely heard about. I knew them personally. Some of them used to attend the same church with me when I was growing up in Bayonnais. I had good relationships those victims. One of them was a second cousin. Two had been married to Previlon Francois and Alady Francois, my second cousins and Previlon was a classmate through 6th grade.

My mother, Orelia Saint-Louis Fleurisma, gave birth to 11 children at home, never seeing a doctor or nurse. Doctors and nurses were only available in the cities. It was insulting to see those young women had died while in labor, with only witch doctors around for "help".



I have mentioned my firsthand experiences only. There are many communities in Haiti such as Terre rouge, Basterre, Derriere Morne, Zoranger, Capity, Yobe, Fondalzan and many others where pregnant women, children and other citizens unnecessarily keep dying. I was extremely shocked and challenged by Ping Pong going to the doctor. A dog. I was not upset at all; but, it was an opportunity for religion and faith to be put to work in my life. It was revolting seeing animals having a better standard of living than human beings in Haiti. It was a big shock to realize that the US government and the American citizens value their nature so much including their animals. Whereas in Haiti, more than 85% of the population have always been living like free-range Haitian dogs in Haiti.

At the age of 23, I was full of energy. I had started and finished school very late for sure, but I was not dumb. Ironically I am probably dumber today than ever before. I could have chosen to flee or to run away from the Hunters, and try to make a living somewhere else in the USA, the greatest country with the greatest equality for all on Earth. Then I could possibly have helped some cousins and siblings out of the poverty so prevalent in Bayonnais Haiti. That is what thousands of Haitians have done while they are granted a visitor or a student-visa to go to the USA.

The Lord Used a Dog...

But, the Lord used a dog (which I have never been friendly with - I was bitten by dogs 5 times in my childhood and one more just recently) to talk to my heart, to me, to my ego, so that I could become a type of Nehemiah. Having a great job is wonderful. Being able to provide for your own family is prestigious. Paying tuition for your son and daughter in College is fantastic. Paying the bills for your wife or child or husband after having been in the hospital for 3 months or more is great and lovely. You would feel like you are in charge. You would feel like you have a sense of responsibility toward your loved ones. But, when God controls your own ego, your private desire seems to be gone.

Yes, after a quarter of a century Bayonnais finally has a medical clinic with its own local staff ... former students from the school in Bayonnais, ICB, as nurses, dentist, doctor, registrar, and archivist. The school is the backbone of the ministry in Bayonnais. Do you understand what we mean by the school is the backbone of everything at OFCB? Probably some of our readers still don't. Here is what we truly mean: By sponsoring as many school children at OFCB in Bayonnais as possible through World of God, more nurses, doctors, dentists and great professional values will be attracted to these Haitian communities. Such professionals have made it possible to obtain from the ministry of Health the necessary approval to license the badly needed health clinic and improve the lives of all living in Bayonnais.



Empowering Women in Bayonnais, Haiti

Myers Park UMC is considering commerce as one aspect of their Oct. 14-21 trip. For Bayonnais to have a future - on their own without handouts from others - commerce is vital.

Are you interested in making a difference in Bayonnais?

Read more about this opportunity on our website:

<http://www.worldofgod.org/images/EmpowerWomen.pdf>



Contact Us

WORLD OF GOD

www.worldofgod.org
338 S. Sharon Amity Rd. No.
280
Charlotte, NC 28211
(704) 575-0062

— OR —

FRIENDS OF OFCB

www.friendsofocfb.org
PO Box 34563
Charlotte, NC 28234

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