

How Can a Man in Rags be so Happy?

I have long admired and appreciated the brethren in Mozambique. I remember the love that was shown to me one day when I visited a refugee camp just inside Malawi. I think the year was 1985. Lendal Wilks, Jim Albright and I visited with thousands of people along the narrow border area between the two countries. We visited in their small shelters, where I had to crawl on my hands and knees to get inside. There, we ate, and we cried, and we prayed together. They told us of plans to have a special church service nearby, so we began walking in that direction. Along the way,



Cooking out in the open. Eight buckets for a large group.

people were smiling and waving, wanting to shake our hands – men, women, and little children. Their joy came from deep inside them in spite of the fact that their clothes on the outside were in tatters, for some it barely covered any skin. Sometimes their clothes were worn down to strings. They would then take those strings and tie them together and keep on wearing them. People were even singing as we walked along. One small lady wanted to show us how much wood she could carry on her head. It was more than I could lift, and she carried it with ease. People laughed, children played, everyone wore a broad smile. I asked these people, who had been run out of their homes, and forced to live in a small shelter on a foreign land, "How can you be so happy?"

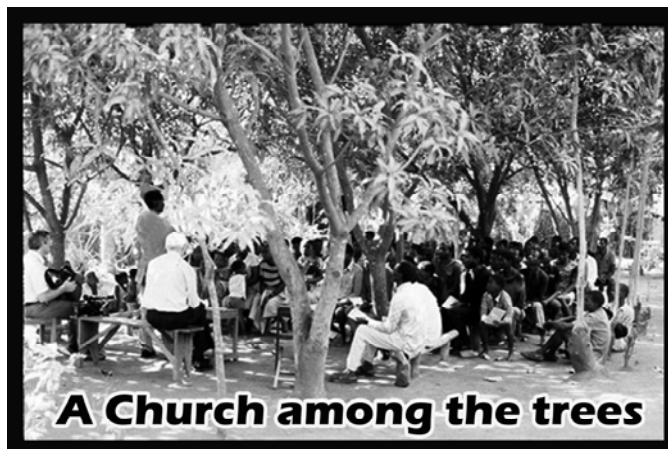
They replied, "We are safe here and we have discovered Jesus Christ."

A Holy Moment!

At that church service, I experienced *a holy moment*. It was the most elaborate service I have ever witnessed. I shall never forget that day. Here it is some twenty years later and my memory is as fresh as if it were yesterday. I can still hear the leaves rustle overhead. When we got to the appointed place, we were invited into the place of worship . . . there were pews bamboo logs laid across the building were the trees that surrounded us, and the roof was the branches and leaves that extended over our heads. That ceiling was colored a beautiful green and blue. The atmosphere, the hospitality, and the love that surrounded us, made this a moment to remember; truly, *a holy moment*. I could feel the presence of God in that service. It was not cold, but I caught myself shivering.



This lady laughed when I could not lift



A Church among the trees

I have located some old photos of my trip to the Refugee Camps in 1985. The photo of the "Church under the Trees" is one of my favorites because it

of floor for seats. We were told that the walls of their church part of what encouraged us to send a man into Mozambique was over. Christians from Mozambique were so in love with agreed that they could provide everything needed if we could to teach them. It really stretched our finances at the time but and now Jekete to answer this call. They have set up seven the Mozambique churches provide places for students to They provide the food and even pay for the teachers who three to six months at a time.

This attitude was once the Civil War Christ that they just send someone we sent Solomon Study Centers and come and study. come in to teach for



Amos Jekete with his wife. This "Little Giant" is our man in Mozambique.

Response to the teaching of the Gospel in these border regions of Mozambique has been outstanding. Over 200 churches have been established in a few years. Countless precious souls have been saved. Large numbers of men have attended the several Bible Study Centers.

I am very proud of these brethren who have carried out the Great Commission in their own back yards. This has been a powerful testimony to the good we here in America can do. We can't go there, but we can send godly people, along with our fervent prayers, and, **Miracles Can Happen.**

In the Mission work we have been careful not to do things for the people that they could do for themselves. Our goal is not to provide funds, nor to buy things for the people. This has caused difficulties because people did not understand the bigger picture. But in the end we have been blessed for it.

Our goal has always been to equip men with the Gospel so that they could go out and teach their people about Christ. Our goal has not been to provide people with things and goods, or to raise their standard of living.

All this is not to say that people there do not want much more in a material way: vehicles, buildings, computers, full time workers, etc. It is normal for people to want more, but the beauty of the outreach in Mozambique has been that none of these things were necessary. We planted small seeds and God has given the increase.

I pray often for the work of God in Mozambique and in Malawi. I think much good has been done. My memories of Mozambique are warm ones and I pray that the love and excitement and fervor that have been felt in the beginning will continue.

Your brother and servant in Christ, Sidney Vaughn

