

MRS. MARIE PAULE BALEZOU
Report #C01

SURVEY

In the CAR survey, 14 people listed her as a person that had influenced them more than any other, with survey respondents mentioning her chicken business and also her radio ministry on Radio Nehemiah. Approximate age: early 50's. She is influenced by the prosperity message of the Nigerian Winner's Chapel.

BACKGROUND

Childhood Home

Mrs. Marie-Paule Balezou was born in Cameroun in a broken family with a father who she says was a drunkard and a wizard. She encountered the Lord when she was at the University. She said: "Before I went to church every Sunday, but I did not know Christ. It was when I was in my first year at the university that I encountered the Lord. It was during this period that I could say that I was born again. My conversion was a cause of problems between my parents and me. My father, who was an elder in the church, told me that I could no more be his daughter because I brought shame in the family because of the name of Jesus that she uttered a lot. I even came to the Central African Republic because of this misunderstanding." Thus, when she arrived in Bangui, she was like a girl left to herself and her mother refused to visit her because she married a poor man, a "man of nothing. But today God was proving the contrary." In fact, Mrs. Balezou knew that God was the God of the impossible. He is the God that could open the Red Sea before her. He was the God who could do everything. That is why she embraced God; she knew that there is not another alternative before her. Only God could help her. Finally, her childhood was marked by a father who did not care for her. Only her mother did everything for her. In a word, she did not experience fatherly love.

Countries of Residence

Mrs. Marie-Paule Balezou resides in Bangui, but she has had the opportunity to go to the USA and France for holidays and recently she went to Nigeria.

Current Family

Mrs. Balezou is married to Mr. Jean Balezou, a Pastor. They have five children: four boys and a girl. The first born is in his seventh year of Medical studies, the second is working with the Boloret Group, the third is in Tunisia preparing to go to France, the third is in the sixth year of medical studies, and the girl who is the last born is in sixth grade. Concerning the contribution of the children in her ministry, Mrs. Balezou notes that when she wanted to begin a program on the radio on how to raise children, God talked to her saying: "This ministry, you should do it with your children. They are the pillar of your ministry. These are people who will never deceive you. They will always be with you when everybody leaves you; these children will never abandon you." That is the reason Mrs. Mari Paule Balezou works most of the time with her children. She transmits to them all that she knows, and they effectively became the pillar of the ministry of their parents. They are more important than the deacons and people who are working with Marie Paul Balezou. They are straightforward people capable of telling the truth to a person who misbehaves. She does not want to work without her children as she noticed the way some pastors work without their children. Her children are involved in what she does, and they have become her faithful companions.

Educational Background

Marie Paul Balezou began her primary, secondary part of her university education in Cameroon to complete it at the University of Bangui where she got her B.A. and M.A. degrees in Economics. She did not receive vocational training, but she is farming (chicken rearing) which she learn informally. She says: “I learned everything on the job. For instance, today, if I am rearing chickens, people think that I have learned somewhere, but that is not true. God taught me everything and today I am numbered among great people. I worked hard.”

Concerning her Christian or theological education, Marie-Paule Balezou met the Lord in Cameroun in 1984 and attended Zacharie Tannee’s church who taught the Word of God and learned about sanctification there. In any case, Zacharie Tannee gave a foundation for her life. When she came to CAR, she attended first *Coopération Évangélique de Lakouanga* for eight years and later she met Pastors of Winners’ Chapel and was touched by their messages. After her encounter with the Pastors of Winners’ Chapel, she said “It is true that I knew the Word of God, I was a Christian, but I understood that I was only a religious person. I didn’t know that if you practiced the Word, it would produce what it said in your life. I reached another level when I understood that. I attended the Bible school up to level 2 and remained in that church (Winners’ Chapel) for twelve years.” After twelve years, she is now at Rhema Mission with her husband, Jean Balezou. She learned everything from these different churches; she did not learn them at BEST/FATEB. In addition to her education at the University, she also attended Haggai Institute in Singapore for leadership training. All her studies were supported what she afforded was \$500 for Singapore, but the rest was financed by the Institute.

Personal Testimony and Calling

The most captivating thing about her testimony is that Jesus can take you anywhere. According to Mrs. Balezou, her marriage was a miracle because her father who was a customs officer and who earned almost 1 million [Francs] a day accepted that his first daughter in her third year at the university got married to a poor man who came from nowhere. Thus, when Marie-Paule Balezou looked back, she knew that God was in control of everything.

Mrs. Balezou came to farming without willing it. She came to farming because of the situation that prevailed in CAR. When she came to farming, she thought first that it was just to make money. But God asked her: “Why do you want to look for a job?” For her, God knew that if she were working in an office, she would never have time to do his work.

Influence

Mrs. Marie-Paule Balezou was influenced by a Muslim woman mainly in the area of business. She was also influenced by her husband who helped her to be what she is today. This is what she said: “I always tell people that my husband influenced me a lot. People say that my husband is too hard, he is this, and he is that. But in all this, he has shortcomings like anybody. As for me, he helped me to be what I am today. If I had had a husband who gave me everything, the potential God put in me could not have come out. My husband made of me what I am today.” The other person that influenced Mrs. Balezou’s life is the founder of Winner’s Chapel, Bishop David Oyedepo. She wants to be like him. She not only heard about him but she saw him at work. It is thanks to this man that she received the capacity to believe in the word of God and to talk about this word of God with conviction as she does it today. These are the people who influenced her life at all levels.

CURRENT MINISTRY OR VOCATION

Work/Ministry

Mrs. Balezou is involved since 1993 in the farming business and this for 20 years now. She began without any purpose but today she knows where she is going. She works not because she needs money but she functions as an enterprise. She decided to produce about 2000 or more chickens per month.

Mission/Vision

Mrs. Balezou's vision is to leave a legacy in this country, and she is working toward it. She wants to open a hospital even bigger than *Hôpital de l'Amitié*. She doesn't want to leave this country without leaving a heritage so that others may say that Marie-Paule Balezou passed by. She thinks that very soon this project will come to reality. Another vision is to see a multiplication of "mamans Balezou" in this town. She wants to reproduce herself in others' lives because what God has done in her life, he can also do in others' lives, but there is the need to have the will and understanding.

Organization

She is very conscious of what Bible says: "Woe to a lonely man." Marie-Paule Balezou does not work with any organization. However, she has people who help her and who are from Winners' Chapel, her former church. She also has spiritual parents who are in Cameroon, Nigeria and the USA.

Impact/Success/Assessment

Mrs. Marie-Paule Balezou doesn't want to tell herself the impact her realizations has on the population. However, she recognizes that she faced enormous problems a time in her business in 2009 when she decided to send her son to study in Tunisia. She says: "The devil chose this period to strike my hens and put me in a critical situation." But to tell how she managed to restart her business, she is not able to explain it. She changed her strategy and worked with more meticulousness knowing where she was going. She began producing results. It was when she learned to be more disciplined that God propelled her.

Training/Leadership Development

Training is part of Mrs. Balezou's talents. When she was a member of Winners' Chapel, FNUAP appointed her to train women for six months in development. Her prayer is to train as many people as possible. She would be very happy if more people could be like her. She has already trained 50 people in the area of chicken rearing. What motivates her to invest more in training others is that she has come to the last turn of her life, and she wants to leave something to the next generation. Most of the time, people think that when you share with others what you know, it will diminish you. On the contrary, it will raise you up. For her the more she gives to others, the more she receives, for the Bible says: "Give and it will be given to you." It is convenient to note that the training Mrs. Balezou gives depends on what the candidate wants. For instance, a woman who is working at CEMAC sent her daughter to learn at her feet for two months. She sent her there to observe how Mrs. Balezou works. After the training, the woman opened her own farm. The other aspect of her training is more practical than theoretical.

Professional Relationships

Though Mrs. Balezou left Winners' Chapel, she keeps a good relationship with the church. Her concern is to work with people who have something to give. She believes that in life, a

person must collaborate with another person, a person who can add something more to your life. But if the person is just beating around the bush, she will not work with him because “birds of the same feathers walk together.” The Bible says that those who associate with wise people become wise. Thus, Marie-Paule Balezou works with many churches and friends.

Partnerships/Links

Marie-Paule Balezou does not work with any organization, but she rather partners with individuals. She does not receive any financial support from anywhere. What she does, she gives her tithe to Winners’ Chapel, because the Bishop is her spiritual father.

SWOT: Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (Challenges)

What makes Mrs. Balezou’s strength and weakness is that she is a straightforward person. She always tells the truth and expresses her thoughts. She says: “Even if it is for you to leave me, I will tell the truth. Even if you have to go, you will acknowledge later that this woman was right. I don’t like backbiting. People say that all truth is not good to say, but as for me, I want to tell the whole truth.”

Concerning obstacles or difficulties, Mrs. Balezou recognizes that she faced a lot of problems and obstacles. One of the problems was what she experienced in 2009 with her hens. But for her, the more it is difficult, the more there is a positive result. For her difficulties are like ladders to climb. Whether in an enterprise or the church, there always are difficulties. But the more there are difficulties, the more there are results, the more is the victory. It means that every problem before her equals a result and a victory. God allowed many problems to come her way, but he knows that any problem will take her to victory. A person who asserts that he doesn’t face problems in life is a liar. A person’s life is full of problems, and we must do with this reality. She always tells Christians that if they do not know God, problems will kill them. Bible says: “We can do all things through Christ that gives us strength.”

There are always opportunities in life and we always meet people who can help us. However, it is only when a person has a vision that God will put people before him to help him. Having understood that, Marie-Paule Balezou does not stay there to wait for people, but she will rather continue to move forward, and while she is moving, she meets people God put on her way to help her. She does not look to these people but looks to God, who will always bring these people to her.

Reading and Writing

Mrs. Marie Paul Balezou reads a lot of books and other documents. She compares herself to Daniel and Paul. She learns through books, and the Holy Spirit is also her Teacher. She will not spend a week without reading. Books and documents make her move forward.

She reads books written by Bishop David Oyedepo and Kenneth Hagen. She reads a lot of books written by Americans. She likes books that will make her discover God the more. Books that will tell about what God has done in a person’s life. She will take the person as a model and do as he does.

It is worth noting that Mrs. Balezou wrote a book that was sold everywhere in the country, but because the book had errors in it, it was withdrawn for corrections. It is a good book to will help Christians change their mentality on failure. She wants to show through this book that with God it is possible to change things. For her, books are more important than CDs because CDs can disappear, but books will remain.

Electronic Media

Mrs. Marie Paul Balezou acknowledges that the use of electronic media remains one of her weaknesses. Though she has an email address, she does not have time to consult it, and most of the time her children do it for her. She is not connected to Facebook, but she does have a facebook page because of RHEMA Mission.

Finances & Other Resources

Mrs. Balezou asserts that she is not ready to seek for finances, but she knows that the money is there and what she needs to do is just possess it. We need to do the right things. She has never raised funds. On the contrary, she and her husband invest a lot in the church. For instance, she and her husband opened a supermarket with 50 people as shareholders.

Political Arena

Mrs. Balezou asks herself this question: “If Christians are not involved in politics, what will the world be? Who will be the head? Who will give the good advice?” Therefore, Marie Paul Balezou thinks that Christians should do politics. What she criticizes is that: “A child of God who was a good person becomes a corrupt person, wicked, a thief when he gets involved in politics what is not good.” But when a child of God is in politics and represents God’s interest, that’s a good thing. Her concern is to see God’s children enter politics to defend God’s interests. To become a Minister is nothing. If the person understands that it is God who puts him there to do the work, good. But if the person is there just to eat and drink and become like others, then, this is not good. Let Christians who are in politics understand that they are there to serve God’s interests.

Future

Mrs. Balezou’s dream is to see God’s people regain their position in CAR because they are not just anybody. Just like Israel, God wants to show Central African Christians that they are the people he wants to protect just like he protects Israel against the Arabs. Christians in CAR should know their position in God and stand firm. They should do the right thing which is to begin deliberately to work knowing that they carry the best thing. Everyone in his field of activity should begin to work and with God’s help, they will succeed.

Report Information Preparation

Names: Max José Koyadibert and Kalembe Mwambazambi

Date of Interview: Wednesday, 16 October 2013