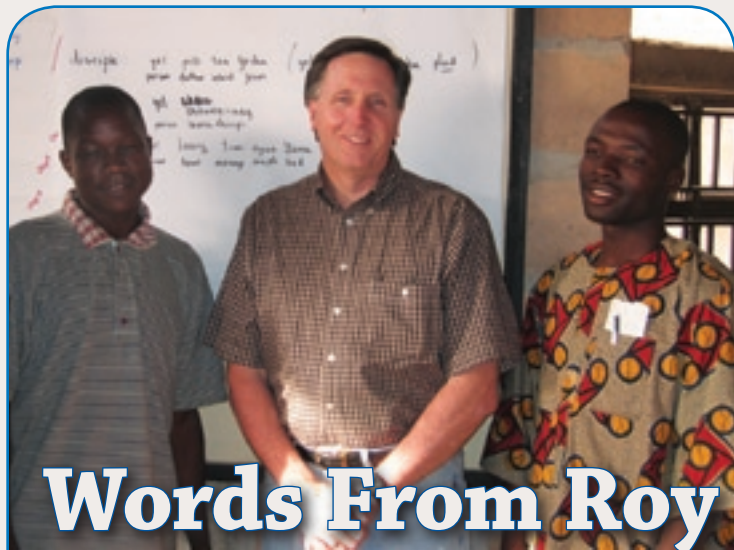




SeedLinks

Stories from The Seed Company, Linking Christians Worldwide for Accelerated Bible Translation



Words From Roy

I'm eager to share with you an example of the momentum that's building; we're on the cusp of an incredible wave. In 1981, Wycliffe translators Andy and Kate Ring started working with four Lelemi language associates in Ghana's Volta region. By the time of the 1996 New Testament dedication, these committed, well-trained mother-tongue translators were ready to help others.

Today, those four translators are each working with four other mother-tongue speakers. The Rings have now moved into a supporting role, serving their national colleagues. When these four translations are completed, 16 potential translation advisors will be ready to help other people groups still waiting for God's Word.

Vision 2025, the global movement to start a Bible translation for every group with a need by 2025, is clearer than ever!

The Volta project demonstrates a paradigm shift in Bible translation.

In the first wave, expatriates led Scripture translations. National Christians started a second wave, forming national Bible translation organizations. Now in the third wave, national churches and mother-tongue translators are assuming responsibility for Scripture in the lesser-known languages of their countries.

The Seed Company and other partners welcome opportunities to support this incredible movement. Mother-tongue translators and their local churches are defining, developing and delivering the needed translations. The Seed Company serves them, linking to God's activity among them.

I'm gratified and humbled watching the growing momentum as the local church around the world takes ownership, and seeing God get the credit.

For God's glory,

Roy L. Peterson, President

OneVerse Goes to School

Last fall OneVerse partnered with Sonlight Curriculum to offer Christian homeschoolers a one-semester program including missions education, values development and practical application.

Sonlight Curriculum seeks to build into homeschool students a love for reading. They try to instill a lifelong thirst to learn, grow and impact the world. Sonlight customers live in more than 150 countries.



The Bowers, along with many other families, helped fund the entire Meetto New Testament!

Participants learned through online lessons and activities about Bible translation. Students also sponsored verses to fund New Testament translation for the Meetto people of Mozambique. Both elementary and junior high students helped provide Scripture for the Meetto people.

Lori, a homeschooling mom, commented, "We are totally in! We'll collect coins at home and at Dad's office. I just sent out a mass email letting friends know we plan to have a lemonade stand tomorrow. My kiddos are so excited! My oldest is even willing to sell some toys to help."

"I did a presentation at my church and had fun," said 12-year-old student, Ethan. "I want to get more people involved. I can't wait to meet all the people in heaven who were able to hear and read God's Word in their language because of The Seed Company."

Homeschooling mom, Denise, was thrilled when her 11-year-old son expressed a desire to read through the Bible in a year. She noted, "Because of OneVerse, we're more aware of the blessing of having our own Bible."

Thanks to a matching gift from Sonlight, the families raised a quarter of a million dollars to fund the Meetto New Testament and start a second project! Thanks to this help the Meetto people and others are well on their way to having God's eternal Word. ■

Now your children, grandchildren, students or Sunday school class can get involved. See page 7 for details or visit oneverse.org/kidsdiscover

oneverse KidsDiscover



Out of Hiding

A marginalized people in Nigeria gain a new identity



Translation efforts will provide a good foundation both for spiritual development and literacy education.

When Reverend Henry Ndubuka was elected Bishop of the Anglican church in Gombe State of Nigeria, the church there was struggling for its very existence. In seven language groups in the area, the church had all but disappeared. Bishop Henry sought God for help.

God led the Bishop to the Nigeria Bible Translation Trust and The Seed Company, opening doors to meet the church’s needs. His vision created a model that’s since been emulated in other areas.

On one visit to the isolated mountain village of Buurak, Bishop Henry arrived to find that the tribal chief had assembled the entire village to meet him. The Buurak people were hiding in the mountains to keep from being “swallowed

up” by the dominant language and culture surrounding them. Some time ago, they’d been driven from more fertile farmland by people demanding they conform to a different religion and who ridiculed their mother tongue as inferior.

Poverty, disease and illiteracy plagued them. On top of this, how could they defend their language when it wasn’t written down? “I don’t know what will happen to

my people,” the chief said honestly. “Will you work with us?”

Bishop Henry commented later, “As he spoke, it all connected. The chief was seeing a threat of losing their identity and what the Lord had made them to be. The Lord opened my eyes to see.” He realized that what they needed most to ensure the preservation of their culture was “the Lord Jesus and the power of the Word of God.”

After that visit, Bishop Henry went to the headquarters of the Nigeria

“[The Buurak needed] the Lord Jesus and the power of the Word of God.”

—Bishop Henry

Bible Translation Trust. He told the director about the need he’d uncovered. “I’ve seen that you’ll have a role to play: helping these people to have the Word of God in their own language, so that they will be able to respond to the Lord.” The Seed Company participated in the project through the Luke Partnership with the JESUS Film Project.

Today, things are different in Gombe. On November 18, 2008, the Gombe Cluster Project—including Buurak—celebrated the completion of the Gospel of Luke, the “JESUS” film, Scripture follow-up booklets and literacy materials in their own languages.

(Continued on page 8)



“Now is the time!” Bishop Henry explains the critical role Bible translation plays in Africa today. View an online interview at theseedcompany.org/bishop_henry

God at Work:

Stories From the Americas



ALIVE AGAIN

Aché, PARAGUAY—Victor watched faces in the eager crowd of almost 200 Aché speakers who'd gathered for the first Aché music festival in Ypetimi, Paraguay. As a local band played, confusion spread in the crowd, giving way to surprise. Soon the delighted audience wept with joy as the group performed eight songs in their own Aché language.

The following week, band leader Fabio—a Venezuelan missionary—helped with a music workshop. He and ethnomusicologist Leo Vartanian recorded 17 Aché Scripture songs. Now others are requesting the CD.

More than a third of the Aché are Christians, but many still mix traditional beliefs in forest spirits with their Christianity. Mother-tongue Scripture will help them understand the power, love and protection of God, offering them freedom from the bondage of fear. Music is a popular, easy-to-memorize format for Aché Scripture, making it accessible immediately. ■

The delighted audience wept with joy as the group performed eight songs in their own Aché language.



DISCOVERING GRACE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Huichol, MEXICO—Hilario saved his draft of 1 Kings on his laptop, and without even taking time to print it, he took off for the nearest Huichol-speaking village to share his draft with the believers there.

One major question troubled the listening group: “We have noticed that one king after another disobeyed God and committed the same sins their fathers had committed. Why didn’t God punish them immediately?”

Hilario’s eyes filled with tears as the project advisor answered, “It’s grace, my friend, even in the Old Testament. And aren’t we grateful for that grace?”

Since the completion of the New Testament in 1967, 30 churches have sprung up in the Huichol region. Today, the mother-tongue translators are working to bring the full message of the Bible to the Huichol people as they continue to translate the Old Testament. ■

Hilario (not pictured) and other Huichol men are serious about translating God’s Word of grace for their people.



SIMPLE TRUTHS

Chocó, COLOMBIA—As a teenager, Edgar couldn't wait to share his new faith with his Epena* family and friends. One sister-in-law also believed in Christ. But many others accused the two of adopting outsiders' customs. Edgar had moved away from his hometown, but on his next visit home, he developed 10 Scripture stories to share. He also carried 15 more copies of the Epena New Testament, some literacy materials and storybooks to encourage people to read.

“Several women who'd been critical of Edgar's sister repented and came to faith in Christ.”

But on the way, a porter stole the duffel bag containing all of the materials—plus the family's personal goods. Instead of wearing his suit as he thought a Bible teacher should be, Edgar had to borrow local clothing. Rather than using his well-planned teaching materials, he used a borrowed copy of the Epena New Testament.

** Names of people may have been altered to protect work in sensitive areas.*



God is using translated Scripture to open Epena hearts that have been closed to the gospel for generations.

The Epena believers gathered in a circle. Using only God's simple, powerful Word, Edgar led a discussion of their basic beliefs: how they are similar to or different from what Scripture teaches.

Teofilo, one of the community leaders, confessed that he'd been saving money to buy liquor and throw a great party. But as a result of Edgar's teaching, he realized his life had been misdirected. Several women who'd been critical of Edgar's sister-in-law repented and came to faith in Christ.

Now those believers are working together to define what “church” looks like in an Epena context, as translators finish Old and New Testament portions in their language as part of the Chocó IG Cluster project. And Edgar is grateful he lost that duffel bag. ■



Read more about these projects and other projects around the world at theseedcompany.org/seedlinks



Cleaning for the Kingdom

Two families find a creative way to work together to share God's Word in East Asia.

What motivated a commercial insurance underwriter to turn down a pay raise and a lucrative relocation package to keep a janitorial job? It's the same thing that energizes a fireman to take on a second job after working 24 hours straight. For Wes Breeden and Tom Burgett, custodial work is a serious mission.

Several years ago, the young men proposed a plan to their leadership at Creekside Community Church in Gainesville, Florida, to do the church's janitorial service instead

of outsourcing it. Their purpose: reinvest what might have been salary, for a special missions fund. The team later contracted for carpet cleaning, pressure washing and lawn care.

"My two children, ages 6 and 4, know where all the trash cans are in the church, and they dump it all out," said Tom. "It's a game for them. And they know exactly where the money's going." Tom also noted, "Our family is willing to go overseas to advance the gospel, but we feel very strongly that God has led us to stay here."

"We've exchanged being a nice Christian family, and

"My two children know where all the trash cans are in the church . . . It's a game for them. And they know exactly where the money's going."

kind of going through the motions," Wes added, "for really playing 'offense' for God's kingdom. [The kids] really get a sense that our family's about service—about taking the gospel to where it is not."

The duo funded a translation for a security-sensitive Bibleless people group in East Asia. It's clear to them that it's been more than worthwhile. Not long after they committed to fund the project, this note came from a Christian mother-tongue translator:

"I never imagined that some people would hate us, curse us, throw stones at our home and even lock us in prison for three nights ...

"Recently I have been translating the words of Isaiah: 'Do not be afraid that some plan conceived behind closed doors will be the end of you. Do not fear anything except the Lord

Almighty. He alone is the Holy One. If you fear him, you need fear nothing else'" (Isaiah 8:12–13, NLT).

The combined passion of this partnership has been contagious. Creekside's leadership enthusiastically supports the growing outreach, including Bible translation and other mission projects. And now more families are participating financially.

Tom's decision not to relocate cost him his professional career, but he and Wes share a clear sense of priorities. "I just can't let go of what we're doing." ■

A Testimony of Change

"I used to think the Old Testament was outdated. Through translating the stories of the Old Testament, I've realized its importance. It reflects God's power, His love for His people and different ways people acknowledge their guilt. These things have helped me in my relationship with God. My whole family is pleased; our lives have improved."

—Luke, age 29, East Asia



Growing Your Family's Vision

A great new way to engage your whole family in Bible translation

Loose change clinked from seven-year-old Claire's piggy bank into a decorated jar designated for OneVerse. Then she stuffed in some dollars she'd been saving for a Nintendo. When her mom questioned that decision, Claire replied, "It would be stupid for me to save for a Nintendo DSi when people need a Bible! It's more important that they have a Bible."

Claire and nearly 7,000 other Sonlight homeschool students partnered with OneVerse last fall to help fund Bible translation for the Meetto people of Mozambique. Their families incorporated an online missions curriculum provided by The Seed Company into their homeschool agenda. Games, crafts and exercises about Bible translation complemented a strong core curriculum, touching history, geography and social studies.



God is using the gifts of children to transform people around the world like the Meetto people of Mozambique.

she promised to trust Him if He would prove Himself strong in healing her grandchild. When the child was healed, the old woman believed. Jacob looks forward to the day when the Scriptures are completed in Meetto, so that those coming to Christ will have God's Word to help them grow.

Bible translation is already making a difference among the Meetto people. When translator Jacob's niece was dying with cholera, her grandmother prayed for the first time in the name of Jesus. She remembered that Jacob's stories of Jesus from the Bible showed His power, so



The Davis family (above) and the Leak family (below) saw God use OneVerse curriculum to give kids a great appreciation for God's Word and a heart for those without it.

This spring, OneVerse is offering the free curriculum to a wider audience, inviting young people and their families to become involved in Bible translation through OneVerse's KidsDiscover program. The students learn about missions and are invited to actively participate by raising \$26 for each verse of Scripture they decide to sponsor.

KidsDiscover participants will receive a welcome kit in the mail including a OneVerse Journal for each child. They'll be able to record what they learn from each week's email and web-based activities, stories and media. Family activities encourage discussion and interaction. KidsDiscover offers families a great way to be directly involved in bringing God's Word to people like the Meetto and growing their own vision at the same time. ■

Steps to Involvement:

To enroll for the KidsDiscover program, go to oneverse.org/kidsdiscover by February 28. There is no cost to you for this unique missions education program. You'll receive a welcome kit in the mail. Pray together about how many verses to sponsor (\$26 each). Then let your children help decide how they will help raise the money. It's undoubtedly the best mission trip you'll ever take for \$26.

oneverse KidsDiscover

Growing the Momentum of Bible Translation Called to Advance

Jim Akovenko, the new Senior Vice President for Advancement, served as the president of JAARS during his 33 years supporting Bible translation.



Jim Akovenko's role as Senior Vice President for Advancement is focused on resourcing the growing momentum of Bible translation while ministering to our financial and prayer partners. He has served in key positions supporting Bible translation for 33 years, including President of JAARS, a technical support agency for the global family of Wycliffe organizations. Jim trained with JAARS and then spent 13 years in Southeast Asia as a missionary pilot. Jim's M.A. in Leadership Studies also helped prepare him for his new work.

His new position helps build the foundation for exponential Seed Company growth. In light of more than 2,200 still Bibleless people groups, The Seed Company anticipates new project involvement in more

With Jim on the leadership team, The Seed Company is in a strong position to advance Bible translation.

than 270 additional languages by 2012. The organization is preparing to meet this need so that the growing Bible translation momentum will not be interrupted.

Jim provides leadership for four key departments—Communications, Marketing, Development and the newly expanding Prayer department. Communications connects investors with the field work through reports as well as through media tools that tell The Seed Company story. Marketing provides involvement opportunities such as OneVerse for individuals, families, churches and schools. Development connects foundations and major investors with Seed Company projects and funds. The Prayer Team will organize efforts to ensure that every translation project has committed prayer partners.

With Jim on the leadership team of these four departments, The Seed Company is in a strong position to face the changes that accelerating Bible translation will require. ■

Coming Out of Hiding (Continued)

“How I wish you could see the video of the launching,” said Bishop Henry. “They were so excited! Children memorizing the Scriptures in their mother tongue. Older people eager to own the Bible to read. And in fact, the impact of the “JESUS” film is so great that among the Buurak in the last few months four churches have been planted in places where there were no churches. And 136 people gave their lives to Christ when the film

was shown among the Pero people. God is at work in the healing of relationships.”

Projects like the Dadiya that started as part of the Gombe Cluster—and some in neighboring states—continue to build on the Luke Partnership's good beginning. Bishop Henry agrees, “This project has to do with the church rising up with the gospel in obedience to the Lord, bringing people to Him.” ■



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