

## The God's Story Project Praise & Prayer Report #3 of 2009

Dear Friends of God's Story,

Thanks for your interest in *God's Story* and its young off-shoot, *Simply The Story*. As you read this collection of reports covering two months, please pray for these deliverers and hearers of God's Word as the Lord leads.

**Pirating at a New Level:** Yes we hear from time of some of our completed languages being copied and sold in the kiosks in Musl.im countries. But pirating rose to a new level when we heard that a Musl.m group had **translated** *God's Story* into a new language, **produced** it and is **selling** it! [Yes! Don't worry. We are trying to buy a copy to check what the narrator is saying!]

**Is Empowering Illiterates Important?** Nepal - "I led an STS in Barabise the Tibet boarder along with XXX. With STS and solar tool with God's Story and the Bible on it, XXX started 6 churches average 20 people in each."

Is empowering national believers (including the vast waiting army of illiterate believers) important?

**No... It is vital!** To reach people isolated by rural locations, areas hostile to outsiders or separated from others by harsh terrain, we must hand off the baton.



Who is seated on this chair that is capturing everyone's attention?



Lady who said, "I am not an up front person," telling Bible a story in Malawi!

We MUST involve the whole Body of Christ in Great Commission fulfillment!

**Who Would Have Thought?:** A very quiet lady came to our California STS who is the wife of the mission team leader at her church. She came to learn about STS for others. "I am not an up front kind of person." Her husband led the church team in Malawi. She wrote....

"We used the *God's Story* solar player to fill in when we had a crowd and the translators were late. So many gathered that we started used a second player to make another group, and then another. What a good outreach. So attentive.

"We used STS stories of -Martha and Mary, Good Samaritan, Jars of Oil and Jarius' daughter.

We did skits for the Good Samaritan and Jars of Oil. It's easy to adjust to the location-inside a small church or under the trees."

**I Had to Go Run a Lap:** American Pastor - "We showed *God's Story* on an island off the coast of Tanzania in the trade language. These people are unreached and Animists. In one village we started playing the DVD for 30 people. But people kept coming. I was by myself when it started, but when it is done I was surrounded by viewers that looked to be from 3 to 80 years old. Nobody stirred. Nobody talked. They were mesmerized by the story. By the time the 80-minute show was finished, 1,000 were there watching it. The next day, I went out door to door to huts. Through an interpreter I was starting to witness to a 12-year old by using an *Evangelcube*. The boy stopped me and explained to the interpreter, 'I prayed that last night after the movie!' I was so moved, I had to go run a lap!

"We used *God's Story*, *Jesus Film* and *Evangelcube*. When our team left two weeks later, 4,000 had accepted Jesus! We want to go back as soon as possible and disciple those new-borns. [This church, that has adopted these people, is arranging to have *God's Story* translated into the people's mother and plans to investigate STS as a way to disciple new believers.]

**They Cried in the Congo:** In Democratic Republic of Congo, over 100 pastors and evangelists, who could not fit in the first workshop ever held in their country and cried when there was no room for them to be trained.

**Angels Sent at the Right Time:** The superintendent of the denomination that hosted leaders from Zambia to lead this workshop in DRC told the instructor, "CONGO is an open valley lost in the complex of biblical teachings that do not change lives. We still fight over doctrine, denominational affiliations and evangelistic crusades that leave people without anyone helping them to grow after receiving Christ as their personal savior. You are angels sent at the right time."

**Next New STS Innovation:** Literate leaders saw how easily non-literates grasped deep biblical-truths through STS and how readily these ex Musl.im, Hindu, Buddhists, animist and cultural Christians started effectively reaching others. Now, nationals are founding oral Bible schools for illiterates! The curriculum is STS. Bible stories and Scripture on players act as an anchor to preserve correctness of the learned stories. We need to supply players, gear up for workshops in new countries, and help guide the establishment of these oral schools. Please pray about this; the potential is enormous.

**First STS in Bangladesh:** "Those we trained are begging our India instructors to come back and train more people."

**Highly Educated Leader in Sri Lanka:** "One of the participants was Rev. XXX, he is a Vicar of the XXX Church for the last 44 years. He has written six books over these years. Also he is the faculty of YYY[Leadership training institute]. He said, 'This is a new day for me, I never been exposed to such training in my life time. If I had got this STS training in my early ministry days, I could have done much more effective work". When this guy shared the tears were rolling out of his eyes. All the participants had similar testimony to tell."

**Musl.im Wants God's Story To Return:** Liberia - New version of GS shown to mostly Musli.ms. Late into the night they watched it two times. The children were discussing what they heard.. An older Mu.slim man spoke highly of the work and "wished it could return soon."

**Allah of Islam Could Not Do It:** STS Uganda - A former Sheik in the workshop reported, "I had been in Islam, yet I was bound to witchcraft and theft but Mohammad couldn't deliver me, neither Allah of Islam could do it. But when I heard about Christ and opened my heart to him, I have been totally transformed! We are ready now to take this Gospel to the Musli.ms using STS that can never be refuted. Many could not come to Christ from Islam due to poor approach. We have now a very simple tool, but the answer to Mus.lim communities."

**Kosovar Musl.im Weeps:** "The middle aged and older women have mostly never been to school and think they are too stupid to learn. The mother who explained to the children did have 4 years at school before her uncles decided that further schooling would damage her marriage prospects...She had not been able to learn to read. (She eventually realised that after hearing the Bible story 3 times she could begin to remember it!) She wept bitterly when I left, and I promised to come back prepared to teach her stories that she could then teach the others. Ideally a Kosovar should do that, but they are in a remote village, and very Mu.slim.

"After my 2 weeks with them (extended by a week with the flu, which turned out to be a blessing in disguise) they realised that the Bible stories relate to their own experience. I told them the Moses story because they actually knew of midwives protecting baby boys, before and during the war, by reporting the boy babies as being "born dead."

**Kosovar Worker Benefits:** What with the Sunday readings and the stories for the women, the boys and the children, my week of Bible study is filled out. Instead of forgetting what I had been studying so hard, it now stays with me. Even if I don't tell the story to anyone so don't get it fixed in my head and heart, I can brush it up quickly if I need it later."

**Uganda..."Now I know how to listen to Jesus."** This was said by African pastor after a workshop.

**We Gave Spiritual Junk!:** "I have leadership over 8 local churches. I honestly confess they are still spiritually babies! Now I know why they couldn't grow to maturity! We have not been giving them the real Word of God but spiritual junk! Please take this training to all the pastors and other church leaders under my denomination. This will be the tool that will cause us to fulfill the Great mission of making Disciples not converts!"

**The Depths They Discover:** "A pastor lamented how Abram, who was meant to be a blessing to all nations, ended up taking curse to Egypt! 'The plagues that struck Pharaoh's house were a curse because of Abram's lie!' One leader was shocked when he realized how Abram compromised by giving his beautiful wife to Pharaoh for the sake of security! He lamented, "We believers too sometime seek for security from the world instead of directing people to the one who offers true security! Abram was a man of promise and should have waited on God or asked Him for direction and solution to the famine.'"

I have come in to leadership and I didn't know what to do, but now STS is answer to my prayer.'

**Uganda:** "The church members you tell the story to will be alert since it is participatory learning. The devil won't have a chance to withdraw people's minds from the Word and it is also a tool to overcome their fears."

**Uganda:** "One pastor who is a lecturer in a Bible school said, 'I have been in ministry for long and taught in many Bible schools, but I hadn't discovered such an impacting method and approach of the scripture that brings all the biblical truths without getting outside the text!' He asked me, 'Which Bible school did this young man (Remy) do his theological studies?' I told him, 'He has gone to The God's Story Bible School, STS!' He still couldn't understand what I meant! I told him, 'This is the Bible school you have been attending; it is meant for all believers both literate and non literate.'"

**Uganda:** "Another old woman testified how she used to help people, but eventually stopped doing it. Now when the application on the Samaritan's story was done she stood up and wept, saying, 'pray to God that I may be forgiven; I have met many people and ignored them as I concentrated on my own problem! I am sorry for the selfish uncaring heart I have been having.'"

**Uganda:** "One leader said, 'This is what we need in our church and we are going to change the whole way of teaching and preaching to STS approach.' He continued, 'We have made serious blunder on the pulpit due to ignorance of using God's Word!'"

**Uganda:** "Another pastor who has been a lecturer in a Bible college said, 'It is the best method of interpreting the Bible; unlike many preachers who quote scriptures to boost their own views.'"

**Uganda:** "Another lady who has a very active child at home said, 'She didn't know how effective she could groom up her child in the fear the Lord. But now STS has given me a tool to introduce my child into God's Word through story telling.'"

**Uganda:** "A lady testify that she used to take other stories in the Bible to be of no value, but through STS training she has realized that God has given his church all the Bible stories and they are equally important for growth and edification."

**Texas Ladies Mobilize:** "Friday (the day after we got home from LA) I was telling my friend the story of The Bent Woman. It touched her deeply and she cried about the tenderness of Christ for that woman. She has been pondering it for the last 3 weeks and will still tear up when she talks about the story. God's word is so powerful, and I pray that he continues to build her up as she is fragile right now."

"We have begun to meet each week to work on our story telling. The first week there were 5 of us. The 2nd week, we met at my house and I did a story that we plan to use for our trip to the Dominican Republic. We had 10 people there and we are inviting more to come next week. I told the story of the widow with Elijah who offered her last flour for his meal, 1 Kings 17:8-16. We had a widow there who shared a story how God prodded her six months after her husband died to go on a mission trip and how he really healed her grieving heart with that experience. She had tears in her eyes talking about that experience."

**In Communist Country:** "When I did Mary and Martha at the secret house church - 21 nationals in attendance, there was more conversation taking place than I thought would be expected. A lot of inter-communication and learning was going on. People were really blown away, including both the senior and assistant pastors. I'm not kidding when I say a lot of discussion was taking place - no rabbit trails were ever gone down, pure path-walking taking place."

**Europe Responds:** STS teams led workshops in Liverpool, UK; North and South Ireland and Scotland. Follow up workshops are under discussion. Email Bryan at [bt4jc@mac.com](mailto:bt4jc@mac.com)

Mullingar Rep of Ireland...

"Amazing how you guys use discussion to ruthlessly bring application of Bible stories to life."

"I will travel anywhere on the island to do this training."

"My church and pastor need to hear about this. I will tell them all about it next week."

**Future Plans:** I wish I could say our new STS web site was running, but it is sooooo close. Starting maybe by July 10th, instructors can download the most recent document and some of the many recorded stories in various languages can be heard. As time goes by, targeted ways you can use STS and how ministries in which you work can utilize STS concepts will be posted.

1. Already non-literates are leading workshops for illiterate AND literate pastors. We plan to format the actual STS training method on audio players so non-literates can more easily go to new regions and thoroughly lead full-blown workshops.

2. All that is germane for illiterate leaders from the STS Handbook (80 pages) and the almost completed Instructors Manual (projected 150 pages), is going into an oral format. We are not just recording literate information; our goal is to have the 90% or more of the information housed inside verbal (not written) illustrations and stories.

3. This, plus a DVD showing workshops in action done in multiple languages, is now under way. We must respond to those Ugandan pastors who begged, "Please take this training to all the pastors and other church leaders under my denomination. This will be the tool that will cause us to fulfill the Great mission of making Disciples not converts!"

In His service,

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