

The God's Story Report

Praise & Prayer Report #2 of 2013 Feb-May –“Tipping Point”

Dear Friend of *God's Story & Simply The Story* (STS),

Celebration!!!! For 12 years, time after time, we started, stalled and crashed on one *God's Story* language production. It has been our biggest battle. Now, finally, by God's grace **Urdu for Pakistan is completed!** PLEASE pray for wide distribution and impact in a nation so greatly needing to know the love of Jesus. In addition we finished *God's Story* in Ruyankole-nyn and Runyoro-nyo for Uganda; Asante Twi-aka, Nawuri-naw and Ligbi-lig for Ghana; Iraqw-irk, Sukuma-suk, Haya-hay, Sumbwa-suw and Luo-luo for Tanzania; Tase Naga (Mosang)-nst and Rajasthani (Marwari)-rwr for India. Over 20 more soon to be announced.

GOD'S STORY Villager in Sudan With MegaVoice, Solar Player



Western worker reports, “We've been showing the movie *God's Story* and many people have the script already memorized. This picture shows some of the Persons of Peace being trained to disciple others. God bless you.”

Tipping Point Has Come

For a long time we have gone to conferences and done vision castings to let people know about *God's Story* and *Simply The Story*. Now? Oh my! Since January this year, the interest in and use of these tools has skyrocketed.

Explosion!! We had asked for prayer on Egypt. We know that country is in upheaval politically and socially. But, by God's grace, in these trying times, God is again responding to the spiritual cries of those in Egypt. Look what God has done. *God's Story* in Egyptian is complete. In Spring and Fall of 2012, we trained core groups of storytellers in Egypt who are now training others. Most of their 5,000 house churches began doing their Bible teaching using STS and they are doing missions to other Arabic speaking countries ... not usual for Egyptians, they tell us. Incredibly, by the end of 2012, their 5,000 churches increased to 7,000.

A Sweet God's Story Response. Call to USA office: “We used the Creation section in *God's Story* for our home Bible study class. Our grandsons, ages 5 & 8, came to visit. The 5-year-old is afraid of God. My wife decided to play a DVD for the boys, and since *God's Story* was still in the player, she thought she would see if they would watch some of it. They did. In fact, they watched the whole 80-minutes! Afterward they announced, “We prayed the prayer at the end.” That night as we put them to bed, the 5-year-old said, “I'm not afraid of God any more.”

SIMPLY THE STORY

Body and Spirit Care. This amazing hospital ship of Mercy Ships stays at ports in 3rd world countries for maybe a year. Two years ago, a ship staff-member attended an STS workshop in USA.



After that staffer used STS for devotions on the ship, the leadership asked us to train 70 Africans who minister as ship ground-crew. [Ask me for the amazing newsletter sent to us from a pastor in Guinea, Africa who was one of those trained.]

3rd and 4th generation African STS instructors led the Guinea workshop! Mercy Ships saw the effectiveness of Scripture delivered by STS on the Guineans (mostly all Muslims) so they asked us to do the same training in July for 115 ground-crew in their next port, the Congo.

This humbling note just came in. "Our President and founder, Don Stephens, fully endorsed the STS method of storytelling to over 600 international staff 2 weeks ago and has communicated his desire for storytelling to be Mercy Ships' primary form of evangelism in Africa."

Pioneers of Ghana, part of a front-line world missionary organization, invited William, our Director in Togo, to bring a team to Ghana to lead an STS workshop. Check **their** web site report! "Last Sunday I also used the method in Church. I was very surprised with the in-depth questions that came up." "Please pray with us that all churches being pastored would be able to have leaders who can teach and use the oral tools to reach other villages." and more.

<http://www.pioneers-africa.org/content/ghana-update>



In Kiev, Ukraine, we see total engagement. These theologically conservative attendees appreciated the depth of STS!

Serious Students of the Bible continue to ask, (and they should) "How do you teach the whole counsel of God by just using stories?"

Let us respond, "The whole Bible is God's message, His 'story.' STS teaches both literate and non-literate learners how to naturally recall blocks of any Scripture passage, how to ask good questions that invite valid discovery and how to make personal application."

NEW STRATEGIES (STS and *God's Story*)

County Planting Hits the Target. As we develop tools, the Lord is showing us innovative ways to combine them to most effectively and efficiently use funds and human resources. Our latest strategy, Country Planting, hands off *God's Story*, STS, recording of Bible stories and Oral Bible Schools to leaders of vision in regions and in whole countries. Those newly equipped leaders take on the responsibility to minister and train people in their regions.

Our Director in Ethiopia states, Country Planting targets local leaders to take up ownership of the STS process. This is the only way we can see propagation and continuance for the process. I've seen this in Gurage. The last time I was Gurage, the church leaders said to me: "***Now this (STS) is not your method again, it is ours. Even if you go back to your Country and don't come to us again, we will continue with STS, we will use it in our ministries and teach it in every village***". What a joy that filled my heart!

As I'm writing this, I'm in the Oromo region for an advanced training with our first OBS Alumni. They had this to tell me this evening, "***We need OBS in every village; we are ready to take this everywhere for our people. We are now waiting for you to give us guidance on how to do it. We need to multiply this everywhere in Oromo region; we are ready to do it.***"

I think ownership happened in these two places and Country Planting should help us hear more of this from different places. CP can and will bring about decentralization that will lead to more effectiveness (fruitfulness).

India: New Tool Tested. [We filmed a few STS stories in various world languages calling them *Interactive Discovery of the Bible* (IDB) We sent them out on DVD to many leaders to be tested. A man received a copy of a copy of the DVD with the story, *Fall in the Garden*, Gen 3.]

Our India director met this man, Evangelist Ganganna, at an STS workshop. The man shared: "Sir through this God's message 62 new souls came to our fellowship and now we have started 2 Bible study fellowships. I thank God for this story; it is very powerful and effective in our village

ministry. 97% of our people are non-literates, I tried several literate ways to present the God's message but it was not that much effective. But after I got this DVD, our village people started to show interest to listen and responded to the Word of God. We have made 30 more DVDs of this message and we have given to all our neighboring villages, everybody liked and dozens of new souls are joining in our worship services just because of this IDB from God's Story Project."

Notice Age Range and Interest. Storyteller in Ireland just learned STS. Part of the workshop training was ministering in a church.

HA! For several years an instructor in Ireland tried to introduce STS to the pastor of a lively evangelical church. One day this pastor brought a missionary to a workshop to "show him" this new oral training. HA! That day, the pastor discovered STS for himself! Then, a few weeks later, that pastor phoned the instructor. It seems the pastor had told two stories in his church meetings.



The next day, he visited a guy who had strong feelings against church and pastors and a bunch of other things (!). That man's son, who had heard the pastor deliver the second story (Zacchaeus) the night before, was also present. When the dad heard the pastor mention "storytelling at church" he seemed open. The man said he didn't know who Zacchaeus was and showed interest in hearing the story. The pastor wisely asked **the son** to tell him the Zacchaeus story.

So ... in review ... this untrained (in STS) pastor does two stories in his church, from ONLY one morning in a workshop ... then the son (who heard the story at church) is telling the story he heard to his not-friendly-to-church Dad!!! After some initial discomfort (at the suggestion) the son told the story to his Dad. The pastor said, "I had an encounter with the Lord in that moment as I watched the Bible story deliver the Gospel to the anti-Gospel, anti-pastor, anti-to-many-things person in a way that NO ONE had ever been able to reach the man before!"

Upcoming. Keep checking our STS web site, lower right side, for upcoming workshops. HELP! We have not found a September host church yet in Saint Louis for our annual workshop that follows the International Orality Network conference. We need assistance in finding a venue.

June 24 starts our 6-week Comprehensive STS Leadership Training at CA headquarters. Graduates of these trainings in USA and Africa have been going out and conquering in the name of Jesus! This class is filled, but we are taking applications for the fall class. Starting July 22, we host Alumni Advanced and Standard Workshops (5 & 2 ½ day options) next door to our headquarters. Do join us. Come meet and fellowship in person with our Egyptian, Indian and West African Directors.

Yes! Interest Hit the Tipping Point! AND now staff at headquarters is "tipping over" trying to field the interest! Please pray for all in letter AND for hands-on assistance in what God is blessing.

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