

The God's Story Project (TGSP)

Prayer & Praise Report # 5, August & September 2017

"Wrong Bus, Right Place?"

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Recent Training in Africa

Is it possible to end up in the right place when one has taken the wrong bus? A while ago, one of our leaders in West Africa traveled to Côte d'Ivoire to lead an STS training. However, when our leader stepped off the bus, she realized it was not her intended destination.

While there, this leader met a local pastor and shared *God's*

Story and STS with him. The pastor became so excited and decided to host his own STS training, and to translate *God's Story* in their local language. By God's grace, our recording team just returned from recording this new language and conducting the STS training in Côte d'Ivoire!

In the Middle East, a woman trained in STS recently wrote the following (edited for security). "I thought [I was going] to the [right] border crossing. Turns out I was in a van headed to [the wrong place]. When the driver discovered this, I was dropped off on the highway with my luggage!

"I called for an Uber taxi... The driver was a nice engineer, originally from Saudi, probably around 30, married, etc. We ended up talking about [many things]. So he began to open up, and tell me about a work problem. I asked him if he wanted to pray about it, and he said yes. So we did in the taxi. Then I began talking about Issa, and told him the Good Samaritan story. It went really well. He was very interested. I asked him why doesn't he read more about Issa, since he is one of his prophets . . . More amazing conversation. We talked the whole way, and it was an amazing God time... I would like some more training when you guys come back!"

Both ladies were on the wrong bus but arrived at the right place by the hand of God!

Languages of *God's Story*

We thank the Lord for the Ghana languages planning to be launched in November and December. They are Bissa [bib], Jwira-Pepesa [jwi], Sehwi [sfw], and Ahanta [aha]. In the past 2 months Safaliba, Cherepon, Birifor, Anum, Larteh, Tangale, Jula, San Matya, Mahdi and several other languages have been produced and out for last minute checks. Also, the Mro [cmr] and Southern Samo [sbd] languages have been mastered.



Mro language in Myanmar

How Does STS Affect Churches Among Tribals in Cambodia?

A leader recently wrote to us about the results from a March STS training with a tribal group.

"We are seeing some steady growth and some exponential growth (in some spots). One house church has doubled in size in the last 2 months (29 baptisms last weekend) and another location has quadrupled in just over 3 months. There has been quite some breakthrough in the area of "celebration" (with our quiet and conservative tribal people) and answers to prayer – advancing the harvest. We have also had our fair share of problems arising in some quarters...and the STS tools have been very handy and fruitful in helping the young fellowships working through a Scriptural response to these challenges.

"Many are benefiting from the approach, and...[are] laying the foundations for the new believers in the fellowships that are growing. The workshop in March really gave legitimacy to the story telling approach (they can see it is very Bible-based) – especially in some of the older fellowships that were not brought up on Bible story telling – and they have been growing spiritually and numerically as they put it into practice."

What do Thai People Do with Their STS Training?

One of our Thai leaders reported about a friend. "After the workshop in the last evening in the resort my friend told the story of the widow and the jar [2 Kings 4:1-7] to one of the resort staff within 5 minutes. Thank God it did touch her heart since she had 2 children and her husband worked far away from her. And she was struggling like that widow. It was so amazing she accepted God in her life. So we invited all 9 staffs in the meeting room during our closing time to thank them for their good service and prayed for them."

As We Age, Do We Get Bolder?



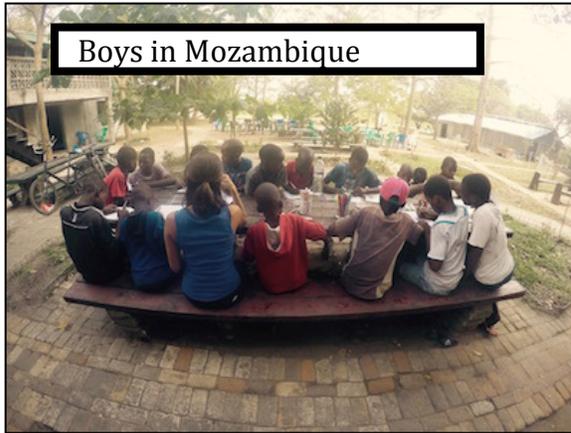
This update came from a lady in her 70's who titled her email, "I'm getting bold."

She shared, "I told the Martha & Mary story to a very nice young lady flying to Newark after a week's vacation. She was a very cheerful listener to the story, and really liked it. She is not a believer, but she responded very positively to how Jesus talked with Martha, although she said His emotional makeup is different from ours because He is a "great person." (That was when I had asked her how He might have felt when Martha accused Him of not caring.) She said He would be very calm and level in His emotions at all times, in all circumstances. I encouraged her to ask questions

about Bible stories and to share the story with others. She seemed very ready to do that.

Could a Boy in Mozambique Relate to Mephibosheth?

One STS trainer has been serving in Mozambique at an orphanage for boys. She has been able to have in-depth conversations and discussions with the older teens regarding the Word and the stories being learned. This time has created a time of spiritual openness and vulnerability with these specific teens in the class.



She shared, "It has been awesome to see so many of these boys impacted by God's Word. These boys want to be in the story class, they want to learn about God, they are changing, growing, and learning so much!...(as well as being mocked, despised and laughed at by the other teenagers who live here too.) So we must be doing something right."

While developing the story of Mephibosheth in 2 Samuel 9, this trainer asked some questions of the storyteller to

help him connect. She asked the 16-year-old boy what it may have felt like to have lost a grandfather who once had so much wealth and property? Could this boy imagine what Mephibosheth might have thought and felt when King David said he was going to give him back all the property and belongings that once belonged to his grandfather? As this trainer asked these questions, the boy's light brown eyes swelled up with tears.

The trainer discovered that this boy was raised by his grandparents. His grandfather was a man who was very respected within their community and he owned a lot of property and a good size farm. This boy's grandfather passed away unexpectedly in 2014. Shortly after his grandfather passed, his grandmother had a few strokes and could no longer care for the boy or maintain the property. The boy was brought to the orphanage by his grandma who pleaded with the leaders to raise him. The impact, depth of mercy, and love in the story of Mephibosheth touched this young man to his core.

At another point the trainer shared about going into the community with Bible stories. The boys said to this trainer, "People here don't want to hear Bible stories!"

Her response, "Everyone wants to hear a story, boys!" So that Friday the boys and the trainer went into the community and while sitting in an African mud hut, they shared the story of David cutting off a piece of King Saul's robe in the cave.

The trainer wrote, "People didn't just listen, they answered questions, they spoke their opinions and were completely engaged! The boys were so happy when we left, they couldn't believe what just happened!"

Please pray for upcoming international trainings including Mombassa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, India and more.

Could Christians and Jews Learn Scripture Together?

An evangelist among Jewish people learned how to use her STS training last February to evangelize her community. She recently shared one Jewish mom's response to these Scripture studies, "My kids loved these meetings. They begged to come, literally saying that they learn so much and its not boring for them... so I hope these story times don't stop." The Jewish children even complained that the study was only once a month!

A seven year old Jewish girl came with her older brother and sister to the Bible study. The evangelist reported, "She was quiet for a while, intensely interested and then she entered in. Amazing discussion across the generations."

How might STS Bible Stories Help People with Addictions?

One lady storyteller who ministers to people with addictions at a clinic shared the following report. The storyteller offers listeners cookies. One of listeners she nicknamed "the Traveler".

The Traveler took the cookies, really listened and participated and smiled through most of the story. Sometimes his expressions showed confusion. At the end, the Traveler said to the storyteller, "You have messed up my mind for the whole day. I have to go now."

Another man, Mitch, when offered a cookie he said "No thank you, I'm addicted to the oatmeal cranberry cookies at Albertson's in San Clemente."

Ironically, the storyteller made oatmeal cranberry cookies! Mitch changed his mind and took four cookies saying they were for his wife and his dog, but then admitted he would probably eat them all. They laughed. Mitch then decided that he would listen to the Bible story too.

Mitch listened and participated in the discussion. They talked for a long time. Then the storyteller asked about applying the story, "Does it ever happen today that people want to be healed?" Mitch rolled his eyes, laughed and said, "Yes I'd like to be healed of my prostate problems."

The storyteller then asked about the healing Mitch specifically wanted. He said, "My addiction" and he bowed his head immediately.

Mitch said he had been clean a couple times before but became addicted again because he was not a happy person.

They prayed to Jesus for healing. The Bible story opened the door for Mitch to share his heart and to ask for true healing.

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Grateful to the Lord,

Andrea
Executive Director
& the whole staff of The God's Story Project (TGSP)