

Volume 4, Number 1, 2015

ISSN 2324-6375

Orality Journal

The Word Became Fresh

**Honor and
Shame
and Oral
Preference
Learners**

**Mischke • Wilson • McFarland • Doll • Hall • Trinh
Patrick • Kabete**

THE 3D GOSPEL

MINISTRY IN GUILT, SHAME, AND FEAR CULTURES



Jayson Georges



AVAILABLE NOW

Orality Journal

The Word Became Fresh

Volume 4, Number 1, 2015

ISBN 978-962-7673-316

ISSN 2324-6375

Cover Photo

A royal knight of chivalry kneels in prayer in a chapel of the Tower of London. The Tower is one of the residences of the British monarchy – it was founded in 1066 and houses the crown jewels. This whole complex has witnessed the Bohemian Reformation of the 14th century, the Gutenberg Press revolution of the 15th century, the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century and the English Reformation of the 16th century; now, silently it is witnessing the digital revolution of the 21st century.

Because the Sovereign LORD helps me, I will not be disgraced.
Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know
I will not be put to shame.

Isaiah 50:7

After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and
be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify
many, and he will bear their iniquities.

Isaiah 53:11

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:
Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality
with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature² of a servant, being made in human
likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled
himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!
Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him
the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the
earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to
the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5—11

Orality Journal

The Word Became Fresh

Orality Journal is the journal of the International Orality Network. It is published online semi-annually and aims to provide a platform for scholarly discourse on the issues of orality, discoveries of innovations in orality, and praxis of effectiveness across multiple domains in society. This online journal is international and interdisciplinary, serving the interests of the orality movement through research articles, documentation, book reviews, and academic news. Occasionally, print editions will be provisioned. Submission of items that could contribute to the furtherance of the orality movement is welcomed.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Editor - Samuel E. Chiang

Associate Editor - William Coppedge

Associate Editor - Laurie Fortunak Nichols

Assistant Editor - Joni A. Chiang

INTERNATIONAL EDITORIAL/ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Amos Aderonmu

Calvin Chong

Gilles Gravelle

Geoffrey W. Hahn

William D. Taylor

Mary Verghese

Hannes Wiher

Graphic Design: Cindy Morris

Photos: Courtesy of Steve Evans, babasteve@pobox.com

Editorial Email: oralityjournal@gmail.com

Website: www.oralinity.net

Your Feedback Is Very Important!

We welcome your comments, questions, and suggestions! Let us hear from you. Send your feedback to: oralityjournal@gmail.com

Please include your name and organization. Any letters or emails used may be edited and excerpted. Please keep all letters and emails to three hundred words or less.

Wish to Contribute

National Christian Foundation
A/C 429666
1311 Tijeras Ave. NW
Albuquerque, NM
USA 87102

Orality Journal Disclaimer: Articles published in Orality Journal are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the editors, or the International Orality Network.

ISBN 978-962-7673-316

ISSN 2324-6375

Copyright © 2015 International Orality Network
In cooperation with Capstone Enterprises Ltd., Hong Kong

PRINTED IN HONG KONG

CONTENTS

Editor's Note..... 9
Samuel E. Chiang

Honor-Status Reversal—Dominant Motif of the Biblical Grand Narrative..... 11
Werner Mischke

A survey across both the Old and New Testament recognizing honor-shame within the Gospel message.

Leader Development Laboratory: Japanese Oral Culture..... 37
Joseph Handley with Michael L. Wilson

We discover that a highly developed literate society in Japan is actually very much an orality based culture.

William Carey's discovery of Oral Learning Preference in the Propagation of Indian Christianity..... 41
Andrew D. McFarland

After learning the social context, Carey adjusted his Gospel strategy to embrace orality.

Literacy and Orality Working Together: The Intersection of Heart and Mind..... 63
Margaret Doll

Case studies of why recovering an oral approach and integrating both literate and oral approaches can bring fruitful results.

The Importance of Repetition for Oral Communicators.....	77
<i>Annette Hall</i>	
How do oral preference learners learn? Why is repetition important? Will this provide greater effectiveness?	
My Journey in Bible Storytelling.....	83
<i>Paul Trinh</i>	
Bible storyteller continues his blog in this journal as well as at orality.net.	
Theories of Human Communication.....	85
<i>Book Review by Susangeline Y. Patrick</i>	
Theorizing Communication: Readings Across Traditions.....	87
<i>Book Review by Susangeline Y. Patrick</i>	
Orality: The Power of the Spoken Word.....	89
<i>Book Review by Irene Maonei Kabete</i>	
The King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited.....	91
<i>Book Review by Irene Maonei Kabete</i>	

Editor's Note

Samuel E. Chiang

In Sync with the Majority Worldview: Honor and Shame

Our discussions on the “gospel” were lively. The participants at the Houston Baptist University consultation on orality and theological education were fully engaged; this included chancellors, presidents, provosts, academic deans, professors and practitioners. The issue was not the incorrectness of the gospel, but the incompleteness of the gospel presented from a Western evangelical viewpoint. In our modern, reductionist approach to speaking about the gospel, we often neglect the biblical worldview that is included in the Scripture, that of honor and shame.

Ever since the printing press revolution, the reading and understanding of Scripture has helped the spiritual growth of the individual, the understanding of doctrine, and the anchoring of theological moorings. However, in the process we have also privatized our faith; as some would describe it, we have become little popes interpreting the Scripture and expediently transmitting the gospel as we see fit. Often times, I have been reminded on this orality journey, that one of the central objectives is to make available the full counsel of the Word of God to all peoples. Contrary to popular association, orality is not merely storytelling. It is a broad discipline that provides the Church with potential tools from different communication paradigms which can be used so that people of different communication backgrounds can engage the whole Word of God.

Somewhere along the way the Church in the West got side-tracked. We did not teach every book of the Bible. We started to reduce what was to be taught. Combining this trend with the fact that people are engaging with Scripture less robustly, we teach only portions of Scripture—usually the New Testament—often skewed towards certain genre. I was speaking recently with a NT professor who teaches at a famous evangelical university. The professor was lamenting the trend in his NT Survey course: the students cannot even read through the entire New Testament. As a result, the professor was assigning only the book of Luke (not even Luke -- Acts) to be read as a course textbook; the shocking reality is that the students are not even able to finish the book of Luke!

Scripture engagement needs attention, but also understanding of the Scriptural worldview that includes “honor and shame.” The West and the Church in the West are facing the acceleration of societies embracing “honor and shame” so much so that *Christianity Today* devoted major coverage to the topic of “honor and shame” in its 2015 March issue. Incidentally it quoted three of the participant-authors who were at the Houston Baptist University Orality Consultation. (Note their newest books are shown on the inside, outside, and back cover of this issue of the Journal.)

In the West, our literature, reflections, and theological approaches to “honor and shame” have been negligent. On the other hand, the rest of the world, the global south-east, the Majority Church continually to function within an “honor-shame” worldview. A treasury of riches awaits discovery and exploration by the Church. In this publication we intend to invite the richness from the Majority World to speak into this matter so that we can all appreciate better the “fullness” of the gospel.

In this issue, we are well-served by Werner Mischke, who provides an overview of biblical passages covering honor-shame and its implications to oral preference learners. Michael Wilson and Joe Handley disclose from the leadership lab what is succeeding in a highly literate Japan working with a predominantly oral culture. We are grateful to Andrew McFarland for tracing William Carey’s challenges with communication and how he came to embrace oral preference learners. Margaret Doll helps us to look at how the integration of literacy and orality can really work and how important it is to recover orality within the culture so as to be effective. Veteran orality practitioner Annette Hall discusses overcoming the temptations to “over-teach and explain,” which can often short circuit the learning experience for oral preference learners. Paul Trinh’s blog updates us to his own journey in orality and we are grateful to both Susangeline Y. Patrick and Irene Maonei Kabete for their book reviews.

I am personally delighted that Geoffrey W. Hahn has joined the Editorial Committee and that William Coppedge is agreeing to serve as Associate Editor.

On the journey together,

Samuel E. Chiang
From Hong Kong, SAR, China

Literacy and Orality Working Together: The Intersection of Heart and Mind

Margaret Doll

Margaret Doll has served with WBT/SIL since 1989. She is the Associate International Coordinator for Vernacular Media, VM Resource Coordinator, and is a Media Consultant. She has an M.Div. and D.Min. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Her doctoral thesis includes strategies for cross-cultural leadership training in oral societies.

In this article, we take a look at one missionary's strategy to integrate literate and oral methodologies where literacy is valued but orality is the preferred learning style. We explore the rationale and strategies for recovering the value of oral communication methods for the sake of the gospel.

Introduction

Iwork in a department that was originally tasked to help determine and provide media options to enable language groups who were oral communicators to access translated scripture that had been completed. Many of the language groups that had received translated scripture were not using them as they were simply not interested in reading. In fact, 75% of the remaining languages that still need scripture are spoken by oral communicators. Media has an important part to play in language programs and even in being foundational to language program ownership and language development. Literacy programs have always been a major part of the strategy that accompanies a translation project. But can an

emphasis on literacy become a hindrance to spiritual growth in some language communities? Has an emphasis on literacy given an implicit message that oral communication methods are less valuable?

The Case

Billy Coppedge and his wife are missionaries in East Africa, where they are involved in training pastors in partnership with Africa Gospel Church. Their mission organization has been training pastors there in a non-formal program since 1999.

Over the years, an extensive literate-based curriculum was developed for traditional pastoral topics such as Old and New Testament, basic doctrine, preaching, etc.

Typical lessons were based on a topical outline and communicated via lecture. But as the program expanded throughout Uganda, questions began to arise as to its effectiveness. Evaluations and fieldwork indicated a gap between theory and practice. This gap forced reconsiderations on the training methods being used.

In 2008, a decision was made by the mission organization, World Gospel Mission (WGM), and the Africa Gospel Church, to consider using oral methodologies for training. In 2009, Billy introduced oral methods using storytelling in a training program for Alur pastors in rural northwestern Uganda. These pastors were predominately oral preference learners. But Billy was surprised when they continued to ask for worksheets and written notes from each story.

Why were they requesting literate materials? He realized that they lived in a culture that prized literacy. It was a modern expectation. Literacy had cultural value—storytelling no longer had the same value. Now Billy faced a conundrum. He did not want to see oral preference learners at a disadvantage by handing out written lessons. But he also did not

want to dismiss the educational expectations of those coming to the workshop (Coppedge 2012).

Influence of a Literate Worldview on Oral Societies

It has long been believed that a person has to learn to read the Bible in order to become spiritually mature. Those who could not read certainly could not become leaders in their churches. But the introduction to literacy has not always had a positive impact; in some African communities it has caused class divisions. Not only that, but those becoming educated have often been more interested in education for economic reasons than for missiological reasons.

According to Herbert Klem, “After 100 years of literacy oriented missions, more than 75% of Africa does not read well enough to manage basic Bible passages, and many more who can read, simply do not enjoy the process” (1995, 59-60). Even among those who are educated, there is a preference for hearing their language rather than reading it. A survey of about 30 African university students and graduates showed that all of them prefer oral forms of communication to print-based. They said it is more aesthetically and relationally rewarding (Lovejoy

2010, 2). This is understandable—most African cultures are strongly oral and strongly relational.

Many who have gone on to become educated no longer relate well to their communities.

Sometimes, it is because they try to communicate in a literate style that is not understood

by their communities. Such was the experience of one pastor who spent two years in a Bible college. When he returned home to his congregation, they could not understand his sermons, and there was little spiritual growth among them until he attended a Bible Story workshop and began to include that method of teaching in the local language.

Typical pastor training methods are usually based on a literate worldview at the expense of the oral worldview of the people among whom they are called to minister. Almost everything these pastors are taught to do is based on a literate worldview, and because of it, they have a hard time passing on what they have learned to their communities and congregations (Snowden in Coppedge 2012). Spiritual maturity cannot be achieved

Spiritual maturity cannot be achieved in a one-way lecture-based environment.

in a one-way lecture-based environment like that. Active participation is necessary for effective communication to occur.

But a high value for literacy and the use of literate methods permeates everything, from the involvement of community members in the translation task to training indigenous pastors (with scripture engagement and language development in between).

Worldview dictates values and beliefs. It is what we believe to be true. A person's worldview is the framework of thought upon which his or her belief system is built. It provides structure for all thought. One's worldview is substantially formulated by the story of his or her culture.

Replace a person's core heritage story with what God's word says about origins, value, relevancy, and you can change their worldview. For too long, the culture of Western society has embraced a core story that excludes God. And even for those who claim Christ as Lord and Savior, society has pushed a story that values things such as education, money, power, and/or a name.

Western literate humanity easily compartmentalizes life, separating the spiritual from the secular, the private from the public. We have a two-tiered view of reality, keeping the supernatural or spiritual separated from the physical world, the world that can be confirmed scientifically. But as

who are hearing and receiving the gospel, sustain relevancy if their identity is in anything of this world? Our core identity is important—who we say we are is important. So who are you? Who do you say you are? This is what will motivate you, and this is what you will communicate to others.

Western literate humanity easily compartmentalizes life, separating the spiritual from the secular, the private from the public.

author David Wells says, God is omnipresent and omnipotent and if we do not acknowledge him in all realms we are denying him. We need to recover a sense of the greatness and holiness of God that “will lift our vision, fill our hearts [and] make us courageous for what is right . . .” We cannot allow ourselves to be influenced by a constantly changing world that expects us to reinvent ourselves to adapt to it at the expense of the truths we know from God’s word. “God is the center and focal point of all reality . . .” (Wells 2008, 117, 133).

As Christians, we have been called to be God’s own, a treasured possession (Deut. 7:6, 1 Peter 2:9, Titus 2:14). We should look to God for our identity and accept that we will behave and function in a way different from the world. How will the language communities among the nations,

Bible Translation—A Communication Task

Everyone would agree that Bible translation is a communication task. God wants to be known and he has communicated with humanity in various ways. Hebrews 1 says it this way: “Long ago, at many times and in many ways God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir to all things, through whom he also created the world.” Scripture is witness to his will to be known and his intentional communication of himself. In the New Testament we see clearly what a master communicator Jesus was, tailoring his communication methods to fit his audience. He communicated in a way that reached all who were willing to listen.

Listening is the way most people have received God's word over the centuries. Holly Hearon points out the close relationship between written and spoken words in the New Testament:

Written texts "speak": "Now we know that whatever the law says [λεγω] . . . it speaks [λαλεω] so that every mouth might be silenced" (Rom 3:19). Reading is not a silent activity, but a re-oralization of written words: "Philip, running up [to the chariot] heard him reading . . ." (Acts 8:30; see also Rev 1:3). Spoken word is employed to corroborate written word: "Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas who themselves by word of mouth will announce the same things [written in this letter]" (Acts 8:17). In these examples, the boundary between written and spoken words is porous. The written word is perceived as having voice, a voice that is vocalized in the act of reading. Yet it is a voice that is dependent on living voices in order to assume agency . . . This suggests that written word is perceived as being, more or less, an extension of spoken word . . . While spoken

word may find expression as written word, it is, more often than not, written word that is perceived, encountered, or employed as an extension of spoken word. Additional examples of this complex relationship between written and spoken word are found in Luke-Acts: for example, writing on a tablet (πινακιδιον) is substituted for the voice (Luke 1:63) while letters are written in the absence of physical presence (επιστελλω; επιστολη) [Acts 15:20, 30; 21:25; 23:25, 33] (2010, 58-59).

The loss of the fundamental orality of the written word has also resulted in an overemphasis on the document itself rather than the author of the document.

It is possible that our bias as a print culture has diminished our understanding of scripture as an active, vocal presence in the lives of communities and individuals. It was the word read or spoken aloud that moved people's hearts. The oral reading and recitation that was once the primary means for reflection on the written word, by the educated and the non-educated, has become a silent activity,

particularly in modern Western culture. The loss of the fundamental orality of the written word has also resulted in an overemphasis on the document itself rather than the author of the document. Those who encounter the word of God through hearing it read, sung, or through visual stories are not less spiritual than those who read it for themselves, silently (Graham 1987, 8, 123, 155, 163).

This is not to diminish the value of the written word, but to remind us that literacy was never a requirement for salvation. However, there needs to be more emphasis on making scripture available in an aural media so that its power might be released in a familiar communication context. Even for many who have become literate, it is hearing the word aloud that moves their heart. Such was the case with Naldo:

Naldo was a young man from a primarily oral language group in South America who had helped translate the Bible in his language. He was very bright, had become educated, and spoke six languages. He was asked to help with a project to record 40 Bible stories from the Old and New Testaments he had helped translate. His part was to read the stories in his language and

record them on a tape recorder. The recordings would be given to a local storyteller who would then learn and retell the stories for radio broadcasts and recordings for distribution. Naldo started with 25 Old Testament stories.

After a couple of weeks, Naldo was asked how the project was going. He said, "Wow, I am getting a lot out of it! I'll read the story into the tape recorder then I'll listen back to the story, and for the first time in my life, I'm understanding it." Naldo had helped translate the Bible and had read it, but it wasn't until he heard it that it seemed as if God was speaking to him in ways he'd never thought of before (Lassiter 2008). Literate people from an oral culture may still learn best orally.

It is possible that a sense of ownership could take place very early in a language project if a familiar communication method was being used. For instance, stories pass on values, norms, and practices (de Regt 2013, 17). Stories can include much more context, therefore preparing those hearing the stories to eventually be able to read translated scripture for meaning since a context will have been established (Weber 2005, 66-67). In fact, according to relevance theory,

One of the critical conditions on which successful communication depends is that there must be adequate contextual effects. If the context which the receptors bring to the translated text is so different that there are few or even no contextual effects, not only will they have no assurance that they have understood the text, but they are also very likely to terminate the communication process (Kerr 2011, 11).

Stories help create a biblical worldview context. As a communication theory, relevance theory confirms the need that sufficient information be supplied to enlarge the contextual environment of the receptor, thereby enabling successful communication (Weber 2005). Once context has been established through stories, there is a better chance that a translation can communicate well without overly explicating passages. According to relevance theory, an overly explicated translation can be burdensome and detract from understandability. Translator Thomas Bearth says,

Understandability is the ultimate primary goal of our current translation

practice. It is notably the criterion for making certain parts of the message-and particularly metaphorical speech-more explicit than in the original. What do we mean by making the message 'fully understandable'? I am afraid our Western education has led us to equate understandability with explicitness in terms of Aristotelian logic. While understandability of this kind is highly desirable in the translation of many passages-for example, most of the argumentative discourses in the Pauline epistles-in other passages it enters into conflict with patterns of communication less favored by our Western education but which are privileged means of communicating truth by both the Biblical writers (including Jesus himself) and some of the communities for whom we translate. One of these means consists of presenting truth by analogy, without, in many cases, explicating the analogy. Peoples who favor the teaching of important concepts by analogy are much more used to interpreting analogies. It is this exercise which traditionally seems

to determine the intellectual climate of many African societies. It is a mark of the dignity of the adult member of such a society that he is able to interpret analogies for himself without having to have them explained to him by someone else (1979, 3).

of the biblical world in order to mediate the translation process without the influence of Western personnel. He says that the culture to be targeted needs to first receive biblically-based materials, not translation in the traditional sense (except for draft materials or limited publications), until such

“ . . . culture to be targeted needs to first receive biblically-based materials, not translation in the traditional sense, until such time that that culture is able to be engaged in the translation process itself, without a dominant western influence.”

And as translator/linguist David Weber says, “. . . the most powerful way to communicate is not to beat people over the head with an explicit message but to get them engaged and get them to construct the message from subtle clues” (2005, 71). But the biblically correct subtle clues still depend on familiarity with the biblical background context.

Translation consultant Glenn Kerr wrestles with the reality of the three cultures engaged in Bible translation: “The ancient biblical culture, the modern target culture, and the mediating Western culture of those who advise and guide the mother-tongue translators.” He understands that the mother-tongue translator must come to an understanding of the culture

time that that culture is able to be engaged in the translation process itself, without a dominant western influence (2011, 17).

Another translator has said, “After 25 years here, I think I’m more motivated to translate Bible-based videos that people will actually watch, rather than Bible books that nobody will read. And it seems to me that in every project, these should be done first, and then if they are popular, then we could consider translating the actual Bible text to be distributed in easily-usable formats (MP3, posters, booklets), and the last step would be printed scriptures in book form.”

Local ownership, an important element of successful language

programs, scripture use, and sustainability, is more likely to happen when the community is involved in the processes of translation from the very beginning of a language project.

By affirming the value of oral communication and inviting participation through the use of media, all members of a community can contribute to the outcome. Introducing stories and using media in the early stages of a translation project, and as a vehicle for distribution, can establish context at an early stage.

Ownership of a language program need not be a problem when we acknowledge the value of the dominant communication method of oral societies and invite their participation without literacy being a requirement. God's word has been listened to by many more people throughout history than it has been read. Our first priority should be to communicate his word in a culturally acceptable method.

Literate and Oral Methods Working Together

Communicating by using oral methods does not mean eliminating literacy. It may mean putting it off for a while or it may mean using both methods together. Many

societies have a desire for literacy even though their communication preference is oral. They value literacy even though they practice orality. We do a disservice when we assume that oral preference learners can learn well from literate methods. Many of them struggle to understand a literate teaching style. In fact, a survey done in South Asia indicated that the "literate" pastors who were trained by a literate method displayed an alarming level of synchronized doctrinal positions, while those trained orally maintained correct doctrine.

Some language groups who have translated scripture may not fully engage with God's word simply because they only have access to it in written form. Instead of continuing to push literacy, we should affirm the value of hearing scripture read and make God's word available to them in audio media. We should communicate a higher value for their oral communication style and acknowledge to them that hearing the word was at one time the primary means for most people.

As scripture engagement coordinator Katherine O'Donnell says in her thesis on scripture use in Tanzania, "The Bible can be engaged with effectively through

listening as well as reading” (2013, 14). O’Donnell remarks that in the history of Tanzania, becoming a Christian was closely associated with being literate. However, literacy proficiency is still poor in Tanzania and the communal culture relies heavily on learning about God from others.

In the culture, the authority of the pastor is given a divine legitimacy, regardless of whether or not his teachings are theologically sound. For many Tanzanians, as well as many other African cultures, “truth is measured by the authority of the giver, not by truth itself” (2013, 16).

According to O’Donnell, although pastors refer often to Bible verses in their sermons, they also spend much time sharing their own reflections, which may not be closely tied to the texts: “[T]he issue is exacerbated by the quality of theological training that is available, which various scholars identify as Eurocentric, poorly taught, or failing to communicate deep truths clearly by being taught in Western languages rather than in the mother-tongues of students” (2013, 16). She points out that all of this converges to hinder spiritual growth in the African churches. In addition, the oral preference of the Tanzanian communities

she studied confirmed that many of the people are just not interested in reading scripture. Oral strategies need to be employed. Bible translation and scripture engagement are handicapped by a literacy bias. O’Donnell quotes scholars and practitioners from the field of orality who conclude that:

A Bible translation program that begins with the oral presentation of the Bible through storytelling and continues with a translation and literacy program is the comprehensive strategy for communicating the Word of God in the heart language. It offers viable possibility of making disciples of oral learners while at the same time providing the whole counsel of God (LCWE & ION 2005) (2013, 44).

She concludes her own study, recommending that scripture engagement happen in an integrated way. Scripture use should happen at the oral level through the use of storying, song, drama, or whatever is culturally appropriate, and scripture use workers should take advantage of audio scriptures for group listening and downloading on mobile devices, among other ways of using audio scripture.

There should also be a better partnership between scripture use workers and literacy workers in order to facilitate reading at a level that enables critical engagement with the literature. Oral communication should be encouraged within church life and more should be invested in training pastors, lay leaders, and others who will teach their congregations orally (2013, 58).

Oral methodologies should be used much more extensively in language programs and scripture engagement. This will help facilitate the work of pastoral training and discipleship later on and is the best entry method into a language group for building interest and mitigating the plight of those who are without Bible.

Back to the Case

So what strategy can be used to integrate literate and oral methodologies? Billy looked at Luke 10, where a teacher of the Law (a literate person) asked Jesus, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus answered, “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?”

He didn’t give this man a story or parable; he engaged him at the appropriate level for a teacher of the Law. The man answered correctly, reciting what he knew was written in Deuteronomy and in Leviticus; “You shall

love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” But the man, unsatisfied, asked a more specific question, “Who is my neighbor?” And Jesus told a story to put it in context, the story of the Good Samaritan.

The principles that the lawyer knew in his head were now given context at the heart level. As Billy says, “Jesus knew his audience and used a combination of literate and oral methodologies to engage the man’s heart. Jesus’ example gives the pattern for integrating literate and oral methodologies.” For Billy, it is not about replacing one communication method for another, but engaging people’s hearts by integrating the strengths of both.

The pilot program that World Gospel Mission, in partnership with Africa Gospel Church, used was

Oral methodologies should be used much more extensively in language programs and scripture engagement.

initiated using Bible stories with the methodology called *Simply the Story*. Concerns did arise, but overall feedback was positive.

The success necessitated redesigning the pastoral training program so that it would be story-based, but would also introduce literate aspects over time. There were three primary complications that warranted using this integrated model. The first was society's literate bias. The reason for introducing literate aspects is because although many people are oral preference, they want to be literate preferred. They believe that oral methods are "of a previous generation." So, in consideration of the educational expectations of the students, some printed materials will be handed out.

The second complication was how to evaluate the learners' proficiencies if only oral methods were used. An effective method has been to set aside a literate model of exact measurements, and evaluate the newly trained-pastor, as well as someone he or she has disciplined through personal face-to-face time.

The third complication is resources. Non-written resources are limited.

Since the pastoral training program is a three-year program the first year focus is on knowing Jesus and developing a biblical worldview. During the second and third years, pastors address pastoral issues and theological topics, with a focus on equipping the pastors with the tools they need for finding the answers in scripture. According to Coppedge, the program is more of an all-empowering curriculum than an all-encompassing one (Coppedge 2013).

Impact—Biblical Worldview

In looking at the complex problem of language program ownership, language development in oral societies, and global impact, it would be important for literate para-church and mission organizations to acknowledge the value of oral communication and the reality that oral preference communicators learn best through hearing. It is also important to be familiar with the history of the way scripture has been engaged and the value of the spoken word and to follow Jesus' communication pattern and know the audience. Jesus' teaching methods built relationships—language program ownership comes out of a foundation of relationships and a respect for a community's communication preference. Isaiah 55:10-11 says,

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Recommendations for Media Tools

SIL's Vernacular Media Production division offers media tools that can be used at all stages of a translation project. They now offer Kande's Story, an HIV/AIDS resource, for oral preference learners. They

will soon have the first of a series of biblical background resources tools, based on the UBS Bible Lands as Classroom DVD, for oral preference communicators.

For some ideas on strategy for using media tools in the translation process at various stages, read Bible Story Media Tools: A Media Tool for Translation and Beyond, which can be found at www.scripture-engagement.org/content/bible-story-media-tools.

Resources (and demos) for media options for translation and scripture engagement teams can be found at the VMS online catalog at vmecat.sparkdev.org. Inquiries can be directed to VMS-Projects@sil.org.

References

- Bearth, Thomas. 1979. "Should We Tell the Solution Together with the Riddle?" *Notes on Translation* 77: 3.
- Coppedge, Billy. 2012. "A Missionary Responds to Mark Snowden." Lausanne Global Conversation. Accessed January 23, 2015, from <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/resources/detail/12313#>
- Graham, William A. 1987. *Beyond the Written Word*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hearon, Holly. 2010. "The Interplay Between Written and Spoken Word in the Second Testament as Background to the Emergence of Written Gospels." *Oral Tradition Journal* 25(1): 58-59.
- Kerr, Glenn. 2011. "Dynamic Equivalence and Its Daughters: Placing Bible Translation Theories in Their Historical Context." *Journal of Translation* 7(1): 11.
- Klem, Herbert. 1995. "Dependence on Literacy Strategy: Taking a Hard Second Look," *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 12(2): 59-60.
- Lassiter, Terry. 2008. "Orality." Presentation made in Orlando, Florida, at the ALTECO Conference in March.
- Lovejoy, Grant. 2010. "That All May Hear." Cape Town Advance Paper.
- O'Donnell, Katherine. 2013. "An Investigation into how Tanzanian Christians Perceive and Engage with God's Word." MA dissertation, Redcliffe College. Accessed January 23, 2015, from www.scripture-engagement.org/content/umuhimu-wa-biblia
- de Regt, Lenart J. 2013. "Bible Translation and Orality." *Journal of Translation* 9(1): 17.
- Weber, David J. "A Tale of Two Translation Theories," *Journal of Translation* 1(2): 66-67.
- Wells, David F. 2008. *The Courage to be Protestant: Truth lovers, Marketers, and Emergents in the Postmodern World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.





All professors are granted standing permission to reproduce any portion of this journal without securing prior permission.

THE GLOBAL GOSPEL

Achieving Missional Impact
in Our Multicultural World

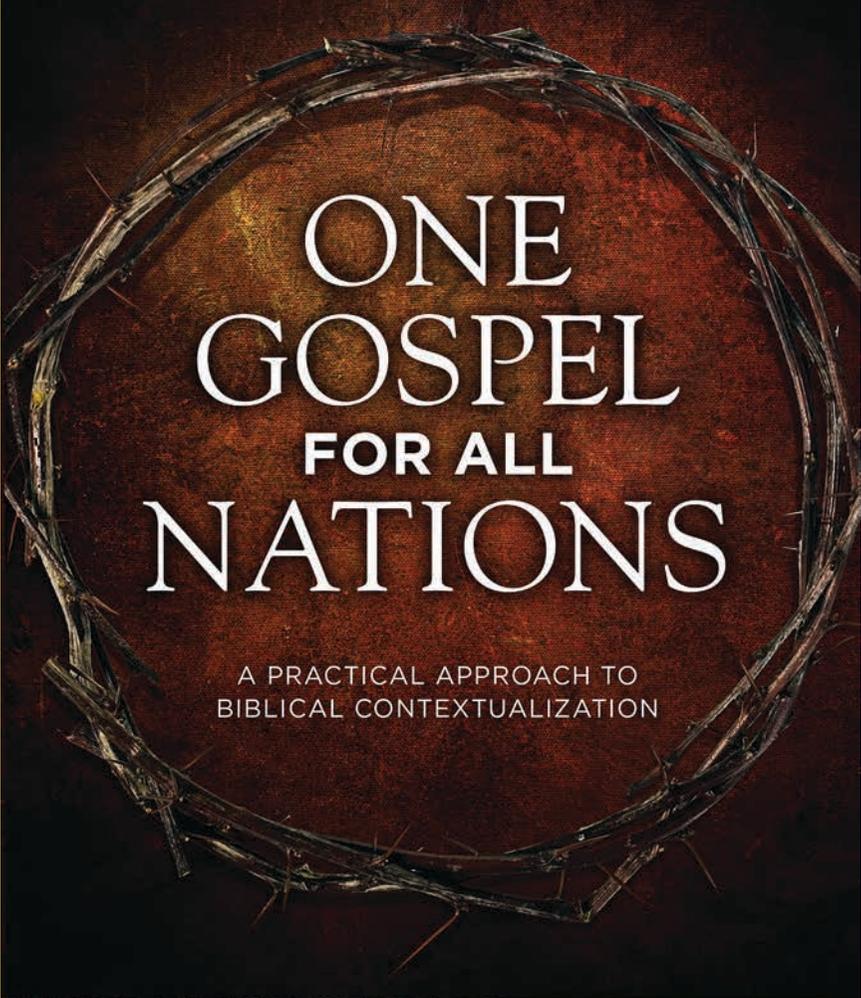


WERNER MISCHKE

FOREWORDS BY
SAMUEL CHIANG & STEVEN HAWTHORNE



AVAILABLE NOW



ONE GOSPEL FOR ALL NATIONS

A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO
BIBLICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION

JACKSON WU

FOREWORD BY MICHAEL W. GOHEEN



AVAILABLE NOW

