

# THE BIBLE AND LITERACY

StoryRunners is working to make the Gospel accessible to those who have no access to the Scripture. We treasure written Scripture and view it alone as the authority for Christian faith and practice. We seek to lead people to embrace that same high view of the Bible, which is the basis for Oral Bibles. It is our hope and expectation that those won to Christ through Oral Bibles will take interest in the source of the stories, want to hear more of them, and that at least some of them will want to acquire literacy so that they can read them for themselves. We view this as a very positive thing and will be supportive of their desire for literacy and vernacular Scriptures.

For a church body or a church planting movement to have long-term theological and biblical strength, it will need at least a few of its members to acquire additional training that enables them to serve the theological needs of the larger group. However, even in the United States, we do not seek to prepare everyone in ministerial training for that role. Only a few, by virtue of calling, gifts, and opportunity, are likely ever to exegete Greek and Hebrew texts skillfully and become technical scholars.

Minority languages and oral cultures pose a special challenge to learning Greek and Hebrew. For example, in Togo, seminary students receive instruction in French, which is the third language for many students. So they study Greek and Hebrew, their fourth and fifth languages, via their third language. They take Greek and Hebrew simultaneously, which makes matters even worse! Additionally, conventional ways of teaching biblical languages depends on a high level of conceptual ability. A "participle" or "ablative" or a "hiphil" has never walked the earth, been held in one's hand, or been seen with the human eye. Many of the conditions requisite for successful instruction in Greek and Hebrew do not exist in the places where we work.

**However, we are not surrendering to illiteracy!** We are simply using Oral Bibles in order to meet oral learners where they are initially. We are not giving up on the prospect that they might learn to enjoy reading and studying a printed text of Scripture. We hope to "hook" them via Oral Bibles. Our hope is that an encounter with Christ through oral proclamation of Scripture will stimulate a hunger for learning, literacy, and formal education. In the history of education in the United States, the desire to be able to read the Bible stimulated the provision of schools.

Indeed, it is our hope that every people group will one day have a written translation of the whole Bible in their mother tongue. That's why we encourage partners to consider sponsorship of a written Bible translation and literacy project. One of the quickest ways for that to happen is to partner with a Story Bible project. Many times Story Bible teams have the skill sets needed to help begin a written translation. We will introduce these workers to Bible translation ministries to help accelerate a written translation. The production of Story Bibles for an unreached people group helps move them one step closer to a written translation of the Bible and literacy.

StoryRunners is a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ

100 Lake Hart Drive Dept. #1100 Orlando, Florida 32832

(407) 797-7240

StoryRunners.com