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Please mark support “For the ministry of Michael & Lori Johnson.”

## Why Translate the Holy Bible?

Jesus came to them and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Therefore go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I commanded you. Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

—*Matthew 28:18-20 (WEB)*

Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον

—*John 3:16 (Koine Greek)*

**Bible translation is necessary to truly fulfill the Great Commission** and make disciples in all nations.

Imagine for a moment that you had never heard about the love of Jesus Christ and the sacrifice He made for you at the cross. Now if someone came to you proclaiming the Gospel in perfect Koine Greek (or any language you don't understand), would it do you any good? The phrase “It's all Greek to me!” comes to mind. Of course, if there were no translation of the Holy Bible in your language, someone who knew both a language that had the Holy Bible and your language would have to translate it for you, so that you could understand the Good News. I suppose **the foreigner could try to persuade you to learn his language first** before telling you about Jesus, but how likely would you be to do that? Somehow, I can't imagine a great evangelist like Billy Graham preaching without an interpreter to a stadium full of people who don't speak English.

It doesn't always take a lot of translation for someone to put their faith in Jesus Christ and be saved, because God has used just a few verses or a Gospel tract, together



Some Scriptures in PNG languages

with the conviction of the Holy Spirit to get people saved. But the Great Commission doesn't end there. Jesus told us to “**make disciples**” and to **teach them to observe all that He commanded** us. That is tough to do without a Bible— or at least a New Testament.

You are truly blessed to speak English, because not only do you have a whole Bible translation in your language, you actually have many choices of high quality Bible translations to choose from. For speakers of “minority languages,” the situation is not as good.

There are approximately **6,809 living languages** spoken in the world today. Of those, 405 have a translation of the whole Bible. 1034 have a translation of the New Testament. 883 have some smaller Scripture portions translated. All of the Bible translation agencies combined have work currently in progress on over 1,500 translations. **There are still over 3,000 languages, representing over 380 million people, with no Bible translation and no work in progress, yet.** (Sources: <http://www.ethnologue.org/> and <http://www.wycliffe.org/wbt-usa/TranGoal.htm>.)

Even in cases where many of the people have learned a second language (such as an official national language), it is still an advantage to have the Scriptures in their “**heart language**”— the language they think in and express themselves best in. I have often heard reports of how much more impact the Word of God has in a person's heart language. The Good News of Jesus Christ has **more impact** and is more clear when it is in your heart language.

God's Word is Truth. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. (Romans 10:17)

**Where would you be without the Holy Bible in your language?**



Michael (far left) helping Bible translators learn to use some new Bible translation software.



New Testament dedication presentation

KIDS' COLUMN  
 PRESIDENT—NATE; EDITOR AND ARTIST—BEN; WATER BOY  
 AND IDEALIST—EVAN



In this kids' column, we're going to address one of the burning questions that I'm sure you've all been wondering, "Are those people in Papua New Guinea and *those* missionaries in Ukarumpa, communists, capitalists, or what?" Why, I'm glad you asked. The missionaries on the SIL centre here live in complete contrast to the surrounding villages. In local villages, almost everything really belongs to the group. If a person asks to borrow your shovel that you just spent 2 weeks working to buy, then you are obligated to let him borrow it even if you know he's going to go and try to dig through solid rock again. The land that the group lives, hunts, and builds their gardens on belongs to the group as a whole. Even the land that you live on is not really yours but the group's.

On the centre, there are frequent garage sales and auctions. The laws of supply and demand prevail. "I'm serious: I've only worn these jeans once." "That game was bought new from Wal-Mart only 3 years ago." Even houses are sold in an auction style. There is even a computer bulletin board where people buy and sell various items from live chickens to CD's. Well, that's all for this time. You can look forward to columns on anything from what not to say in Tok Pisin to the vast differences among the various cultures here.



Isn't this a beautiful mansion? It even has a bathtub, a dishwasher, and a basketball hoop! Please join us in thanking the Lord for providing the opportunity to buy this house, and agreeing in prayer that it will be paid for on time. We move in on June 30, 2004.

## Discipleship

By Lori Johnson

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

—John 8:31-32 (NASB)

Since this past January I have been leading a national women's Bible study, and it has been great! These women are learning to *continue* in the WORD. Not only have we seen exponential growth in numbers, but also spiritual growth. I have between 12-16 ladies attending every week and they come from 3 different nearby tribes. They all speak



Lori leading a women's Bible study in a *haus win* (house without walls).

Tok Pisin, but when they pray they pray in their Tok Ples (heart language). We've been studying, "Who is Jesus?" and in it we've seen many different facets of who Jesus is. At Easter time we had a *mumu* (like a Hawaiian luau, but no pig this time). The women came over to my house early to dig the pit and get the coals hot. Then came the *kaukau* (sweet potatoes), carrots, *kumu* (greens), and *kakaruk* (chicken, butchered here).

After we ate we sat down to watch *The Jesus Film* in Tok Pisin. Watching a movie is a big treat, and these ladies really enjoyed it. Like any women in the world, these ladies like to fellowship, too.



Ladies gathered in our living room to see *The Jesus Film* in Tok Pisin

Two weeks later, one of these young ladies brought a friend to the Bible study and both of them then rededicated their lives to the Lord. Since Tok Pisin Bibles are fairly expensive for the average PNG person, we have made sure each one of these ladies has a Tok Pisin Bible. We have given away over 100 Bibles in the past year. **THANK YOU** so much for investing in us and thus investing in the people of PNG. We continue to see lives changed because of the WORD being given and taught.

## Staying in Touch

Please let us know if your address or email address changes. If you would like to get updates from us via email, please let us know at our email address to the right. We send out email updates more often than paper newsletters. Please let us know how we can best pray for you. Thank you for your partnership with us! ☺

Jesus Christ is Lord!  
 Michael & Lori Johnson

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