

## HOWe THINGS ARE... August 2016

There's an annual service to celebrate completed translated Scripture. It's September 23. We're celebrating that 25 language communities dedicated a first edition (first ever) New Testament or Complete Bible.

I thought, "what if we asked our local pastors and missions directors be the ones to carry in those Bibles and New Testaments?" as representatives of the global Church.

I'm mildly nervous we won't get 25 of them (it's less than two months away and I only have 12 of the 25 spots filled so far). However, those twelve pastors are pretty enthusiastic about the idea. And they were more enthusiastic after I gave them information and stories about THE particular New Testament or Bible they would be carrying.

There are great stories: amazing, look what wonderful things God has done, more than you can ask or imagine stories. And there is boredom, disappointment, and heartbreak. Translations take years: really long years with lots of slogging through. The stories have people who say "I just wanted to give up" and "I didn't see the point in going forward". Reality is not at all the romantic idea that Bible translation work is like entering the throne room of God with peace and rest every day. It's tedious. It's a lot of work. There are relational conflicts, misunderstandings and mistrust. There are serious tragedies: children, spouses and colleagues who are killed or injured, victims of crimes, of disease, of natural disasters, every human tragedy imaginable. People in the stories are saying, "But I thought, God, you called me to this?", "but I thought, God, you wanted my language community to have access to your Word?", "God, where are you?"

And God is faithful. All the stories say that one thing:

"It was an uphill battle and there were so many times I wanted to give up. But God was faithful."

"I couldn't see a way forward and we wondered why God is there one more delay, one more setback. But God was faithful."

And so the stories, with the tragedy and all of the disappointments and the horrific reality of a fallen world... well, they read like we enter the throne room of God with peace and rest every day.

And thus, why I'm super excited about coordinating this celebration. Twenty five language communities have access to the Word of God in their own language. Twenty-five stories of blood, sweat, and tears... and to a person, those in the stories are shouting, "and it was worth it. I promise. You must get in on this adventure. Walking with God, slogging through, will take you places you never dreamed... He is faithful".

### **Tyap (Nigeria)**

*Greetings are very important in Atyap (Nigeria) custom... and very complicated. You need to be aware of a person's age, gender, family connection and social status. Greetings change with the time of day and every life situation has its own form of greeting.*

*In Luke 1:28 Gabriel says to Mary, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you". The Bible says Mary "wondered what kind of greeting this might be". To Tyap speakers, Mary's puzzlement is highly understandable. Why would a stranger, apparently a male stranger, greet her, a young unmarried woman, as if she were an important person of high social status?*

*Praise God for the variety of languages and cultures He created.*



Kidneys: haven't changed. My native kidneys, doing their half-hearted job at being kidneys are still doing well considering they're broken. They could keep it up for years. Yes, I know eventually barring a miracle... but people can remain in stage four for twenty years. It could happen. Also, God can do anything. My native broken kidneys have to do what He says.

#### **Contact me:**

#### **Sheryl Howe**

6114A Webster Way,  
Waxhaw, NC 28173

704-765-2002

[sahowe@wbt.org](mailto:sahowe@wbt.org)

skype: showe-nc

#### **Home Office/Financial Contributions:**

#### **Wycliffe Bible Translators**

PO Box 628200, Orlando, FL 32862

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