



FRONTLINES

SPRING
2019

TRUSTING GOD THROUGH THE CHALLENGES

Charles, a Laarim speaker in South Sudan, knew his life would change when he became a Christian. “I used to drink and smoke,” said Charles. “My friends rejected me, which made me worried, but I prayed and trusted God to help me out of my problem.”

Charles traveled to Kakuma, a larger city in the area, and met with Laarim communities. He talked to other Christians, received Christ and joined the local church. “Life has been peaceful knowing that I have eternal hope even in the midst of difficult challenges,” Charles said.

The Laarim people face many challenges, living in rugged, hilly terrain of the South Sudanese Boya Hills. Many Laarim have to walk long distances daily to find

food. Their social and cultural lives are centered on cattle. The Laarim people breed the cattle and eat their meat. Cattle are also used as a bride’s dowry. People use the hides for blankets when they sleep. A neighboring people group often raid and steal the Laarim cattle, threatening this group’s livelihood. These raids have even unfortunately taken the lives of innocent people. For years, efforts at peace and reconciliation between the two groups bore little fruit. But God’s Word in Laarim is beginning to bring change. A project adviser shared, “Revenge and cattle raiding is slowly diminishing as the Laarim seek peace with their neighbors.”

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Wycliffe is partnering with several organizations in the area to bring God's Word to the Laarim people. Through the efforts of Africa Inland Mission (AIM) missionaries, a number of people have become Christians and a local church has formed. Audio players provided by AIM with Scripture recordings, that SIL* has helped translate, are providing access to God's Word in the Laarim language. In partnership with Cru, the "JESUS" film in Laarim and the Magdalena film have been completed.

By the end of this year, the entire Laarim New Testament will be drafted. Wycliffe's ministry partners are eager for the translated Scriptures to continue furthering the work of evangelism, church planting, and producing women's and children's ministry materials.

David, a translation team member, said that the work of translation has "helped his family understand the Word of God," which they share during their family devotions. He testified that they are living according to biblical Christian family values.

Another team member said, "I am interested in the Word of God and teaching the people the Word of God. I am trying to see my community have the New Testament in their language; this will help them spiritually to grow in faith."

Beginning May 1, you can partner with the Laarim and other people groups to provide God's Word in a language and form they clearly understand. Give online at [wycliffe.org/changedlives](https://www.wycliffe.org/changedlives).

*A primary strategic partner

WORDSEARCH

A PLEASING SACRIFICE TO GOD

Two translators had given up after months of trying to translate the phrase "broken spirit" in the Karang language of Cameroon. "We put it in God's hands and moved on to reviewing the Gospel of Luke for audio recording," said Bob, a Wycliffe staff member.

Even in English, it can be difficult to understand what a "broken spirit" means when it's mentioned in Psalm 51:17 or Matthew 5. Some might interpret the phrase to mean "depressed" or "without hope." Others may think it means "guilt-filled" or "riddled with shame."

Although the Karang translation team had moved on from this challenging question, their thoughts were directed back to it when they reviewed a translated draft of Mary's praise song in the first chapter of Luke.

When Abba, a local translation team member, read the opening line — "All my spirit glorifies the Lord" — he hesitated because the translated version communicated, "All my things glorify the Lord." This wording implied more than Mary's spirit, erroneously including her clothes!

"Wouldn't it be better," Abba suggested, "to say all my breath glorifies the Lord?"

At that moment, Bob thought of a solution. "Abba, this is what we need for broken spirit!"

When Abba looked at him curiously, Bob quickly constructed a phrase to explain: "The acceptable sacrifice with which to come and offer to God is viewing one's breath as nothing."

Abba smiled and nodded his head. As the team tested this new phrase with others, everyone agreed it worked well. A "broken spirit" was now understood as total abandonment of one's self to the point where one's own breath is nothing. Applied to Matthew 5:3, the verse reads, "Blessed are those who know their own breath is but nothing, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

This "broken spirit" is not hopelessness, depression, shame or guilt. It is such a yearning for eternity that not even one's breathing is worth comparing to it. It is a willing offering; it is the ultimate pleasing sacrifice to God.

BOARD SELECTS NEW PRESIDENT

The Wycliffe USA Board of Directors is very pleased to announce that they have reached a unanimous decision to appoint Dr. John Chesnut to be the next president and CEO of Wycliffe USA. John officially began a three-year term as president in April 2019 following a transition period with Bob Creson, who has served in the role with excellence for the last 15 years.

John and his wife, Kelly, have been Wycliffe USA members for 18 years. Prior to that, John served as a pastor in the United States for 13 years. John has a distinguished career serving in leadership in SIL Philippines and on the executive leadership team of Wycliffe USA. John and Kelly have seven children and four grandchildren.

John has a passion for Wycliffe staff worldwide to be known as people who love God, love his Word and love people. He feels Mark 12:29b-31 exemplifies that spiritual journey of Wycliffe USA: "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these" (NLT).

When John served as director of SIL Philippines, he and Kelly saw people's desire for God's Word in their language. As Bible translation spread in Asia, local people experienced transformation within their families and communities. Today, communities are identifying the need for God's Word in a language and form that speaks to their hearts. In the Philippines and other areas of the world, local people are assuming ownership and leadership of translation projects.

"God is raising up a wide range of partners around the world to participate in this work," John said. "Wycliffe USA is working in collaboration with partners to see Bible translation started in every language that needs it by 2025. Our passion is to see lives transformed, not just the delivery of a product.



John and his wife, Kelly

"For people groups where there are no churches, no evangelism and no discipleship taking place, the roots of Christian faith cannot grow deep without a full understanding of the Scriptures. Bible translation creates a solid foundation for evangelism, church planting and discipleship by providing access to God's Word in languages people can clearly understand. It is through the powerful Word of God that people's lives are transformed."

When God's Word comes to a community, there is a new understanding that they matter to God and are created in his image.

"Communities learn that not only do they matter as a people, but their language matters," John said. "They have opportunity to learn to read and write their own language and gain a new sense of value because now their language is legitimized in the eyes of others.

"Seeing communities transformed by the translated Word of God — there's nothing quite like it! I couldn't be more excited to serve at this time during the greatest acceleration of Bible translation in history."

REFLECTIONS ON 16 YEARS OF SERVICE

Receiving a nomination for president of Wycliffe USA in 2003 was the last thing Bob Creson expected.

The adoption of Vision 2025 — to see a Bible translation in progress for every language that needs it by 2025 — changed everything for Wycliffe and its partners. When Bob decided to let his name stand for nomination, his first thoughts were, If I'm selected, I don't want to squander the opportunity.

Bob's heart's desire was to be a faithful steward during this historic period of Bible translation, living the mandate of his life verse which says, "... the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8, NLT).

During the presidential selection process, a three-week trip to several countries in Africa provided Bob the time to think about the future of the Bible translation movement and things he would want to focus on if selected for the job. Bob recently reflected on his notes from that trip and shared how he'd seen God work to bring so many of his initial thoughts to fruition.

THE STORY OF OUR FUTURE RUNS THROUGH OUR PAST

Bob realized that the work of Wycliffe would be done standing on the shoulders of people who had gone before — like Wycliffe's founder, Cameron Townsend. He felt that sharing inspiring stories from Townsend, mixed with those from present day, would help convince young believers that Bible translation was worth the investment. Bob made it a practice to tell authentic stories about what God was doing around the world, sharing them in conversations, presentations, on his blog and social media.

A NEW WAY OF WORKING

Bob saw that the paradigm of our work was changing. New Bible translation pioneers would serve not just as Bible translators but also as trainers and facilitators; these new translators would include those from local people groups as well as missionaries. This new way of working and connecting with people groups was standardized as a framework for the way Wycliffe USA — and our primary partners — engage with the



Bob and his wife, Dallas

Bible translation movement. The framework emphasizes accelerated impact through local ownership, partnership and good stewardship.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

During his 16 years in the role, Bob has seen key strategic partnerships grow and strengthen with organizations like Faith Comes by Hearing, the Jesus Film Project and Every Tribe Every Nation (ETEN). The goal of ETEN, a strategic alliance of resource partners and the largest Bible translation organizations, is to get the Word to every person in the world. And out of it was born the groundbreaking Digital Bible Library (DBL) — a way for people around the world to access Scripture digitally.

Greater strategic partnerships, new global initiatives, financial resourcing and considering the completion of the Bible translation task all grew during Bob's time as president and with the help of the executive team and the board of Wycliffe USA. Bob acknowledges that it was God's sovereignty and a team effort over every area of the ministry that helped accelerate the work during his tenure, resulting in the greatest acceleration in the rate of Bible translation in history. He was just trying to live out Micah 6:8 — to walk humbly and do what is right for the Bibleless people of the world.

Bob and his wife Dallas are taking time to rest and pray about the future God has for them.

CELEBRATE THE DOROMU-KOKI NEW TESTAMENT

The Doromu-Koki translation team in Papua New Guinea wanted to model their New Testament dedication after 2 Chronicles 29, in which King Hezekiah led the people to cleanse and rededicate the temple. The Doromu-Koki team raised funds for the dedication with help from the local community.

Traditional dancers greeted translation adviser Rob Bradshaw and his wife, Betsi, as they entered a local church. When it came time for Joseph, the lead Doromu-Koki translator, to read from the New Testament, he was overcome with emotion. Joseph chose to believe Christ while attending a translation training workshop and is passionate about continuing translation work on the Old Testament.

During the dedication, Rob spoke to the congregation in their language and challenged them to read God's Word daily, showing them a reading guide tucked in the front of each New Testament.

Nearly half of the Doromu-Koki people live in the capital city of Port Moresby. The rest live in the village about two hours' drive away, followed by a three-hour steep hike. Following the service, the people watched the "JESUS" film in Doromu-Koki for the first time, and New Testaments were distributed during the film.



INCREASING YOUR KINGDOM IMPACT WITH A DONOR-ADVISED FUND

Ed and Donna, longtime donors to the work and ministry of Wycliffe Bible Translators, felt led by the Holy Spirit to “do something significant” beyond their normal ministry giving. However, their cash flow was tight, and they weren’t sure how to make it happen.

The couple decided to meet with a Wycliffe Foundation gift planning advisor to discuss their situation. The advisor encouraged them to look beyond their checkbook and consider giving from their assets. He also recommended that they consider a donor-advised fund (DAF), which would allow them to make a single asset gift for the benefit of multiple ministries.

Ed and Donna owned several pieces of real estate and were considering selling one of them to make a charitable gift. But the thought of paying capital gains taxes on the sale gave them pause. Their gift planning advisor explained that a benefit of a DAF was avoiding these capital gains taxes.

Ed and Donna agreed that their piece of real estate would be an excellent asset to give through a Wycliffe Foundation donor-advised fund. Once the real estate was given to Wycliffe, it was sold, and the couple was able to

make significant grants through the DAF to Wycliffe Bible Translators and two other ministries. The resulting grants were many times greater than their annual cash gifts.

Donna reflected on their gift and said, “We never thought we could make gifts of this size and magnitude. By giving an asset through our donor-advised fund, we were able to dramatically increase our impact for Great Commission work!”

*If you would like to learn more about donor-advised funds, gifts of assets or other kingdom-building tools, please call us toll-free at **877-493-3600**, or email info@wycliffefoundation.org.*

LOOKING BEYOND YOUR CHECKBOOK

Did you know? 90 percent of the wealth held in America is in assets like securities, savings accounts, retirement assets, real estate, business interests, insurance and collectables. Only 10 percent of our resources reside in our checking accounts.

WEBCAST AND CONFERENCE CALL ON COMPLETING THE GREAT COMMISSION IN OUR LIFETIME!

Join us as we explore the possibility of God’s family working together to complete the work of the Great Commission. During the exciting one-hour program, you’ll hear from:

- » **Chris Fabry**, on-air personality with Moody Radio, author of the book, “The War Room,” and our host for the event.
- » **Dr. John Chesnut**, Wycliffe Bible Translators’ new president and his wife Kelly.
- » **Jim Wise**, Director of Ministry Services and Senior Private Wealth Advisor with Wycliffe’s ministry partner, Ronald Blue Trust.
- » **Janet Vaughan**, Atlanta-based philanthropist and Bible translation advocate.

- » **Andy Keener**, executive vice president of global partnerships for Wycliffe Bible Translators.

The webcast is offered free of charge exclusively for friends of Wycliffe Bible Translators and Ronald Blue Trust. There will be two showings of the webcast on **Thursday, May 2, 2019: 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. ET**. Please attend at the time that works best for you on that day — online or by phone.

Reserve your spot today by visiting wycliffe.org/hiswordyourlegacy.