

VIDEO #17 Role of the Church

In this video I'm going to be sharing a little bit about what is the job of the Church. How does an event get started? What happens? What do we hope to see after an event is finished? After we come back home and the Church continues on, what does that look like? All of those questions. So, we have been to eight different countries. An event gets started with a Church or a partner organization. Sometimes its an organization that works with people with disabilities. Sometimes it is an organization that we have worked with in the past. Sometimes it is just a local church that wants to reach their deaf communities. The Church would contact us. What we would then do is start asking questions. So, first thing we would ask is, "Do you have a deaf community that you would like to reach?" Sometimes the Church already knows of a deaf community. Sometimes they have deaf members come to their Church and they don't know what to do with them. Sometimes they actually have an entire Church devoted just for the deaf in their community. So, if they say yes, then what we do is we say, "Okay can you have at least 4, maximum of 12 deaf participants at the workshop?" And what we would like is for these deaf participants to be illiterate and have no sign language. We call these "home-sign". Because we are assuming the best. We are assuming that they have had some sort of sign language that they have been using in their homes to communicate with their family members. That's not always the case, but we just call them "home-sign" as a group because that's what we're assuming is happening. We also ask for a minimum of 4, maximum of 12 facilitators. Ideally, these facilitators are also deaf. You've heard the saying meant in a negative way: "when a blind leads a blind both fall into a pit." (In this phrase, both blind are at a disadvantage.) Well, when a deaf person leads another deaf person we have found that to be actually very good because the deaf person understands how other deaf people think. So, that's why we encourage that the facilitators you bring are deaf, but literate and fluent in the local sign language. This is partially because when they're fluent in the local sign language, they're going to use that sign language to teach SUN to the home-sign students. As a result, the home-sign student become not only fluent in SUN, but also fluent in sign language. This opens a whole new world for them. This way, they are not just able to read the Bible in the SUN language, but are also able to communicate with the deaf community around them using sign language.

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That is what we ask for as far as numbers. We also ask for any interpreters. Most of the time the people we are bringing from our team do not know sign language. So, we ask for a sign language to English interpreter. Also, if there are local people involved that do not know English, local people who only speak the local language or the language of that country, then we ask for an English interpreter as well for whatever language those people speak. Then, what we would do is we would start picking a date. We would start talking logistics as far as funding and location, things like that. Once we get to the workshop, we bring all of the materials that you're going to be using and we teach you how to use them. We basically teach the facilitators.

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What we would like, if possible, is for the Church to hold off on the students coming for the first two days of the workshop: Monday and Tuesday. Usually, a workshop goes from Monday through Saturday.

So, for Monday and Tuesday, the students do not come if possible. I know sometimes the logistics are not possible to have separate arrival times, but we have modified plans for that. If it's not possible for the students to come separately, then do let us know and we will accommodate. The best situation is for the facilitators to come on Monday and Tuesday and for the students to arrive on Wednesday. On Monday and Tuesday our team will teach the facilitators how to teach SUN. We will go through all of their team lessons with them. We will teach them how to work with the students, what things to watch for, and everything they need to know will be taught to them on Monday and Tuesday. On Wednesday through Friday we are going to sit back as the U.S. facilitators. On Wednesday we are not teaching, we are just watching and assisting, "floating around". Wednesday through Friday is when the facilitators will then teach the home-sign students. Home-sign students will arrive on Wednesday. The facilitators will teach them everything we taught them on Monday and Tuesday. The goal is to get them to scripture on Friday. Then the students will go home on Friday, facilitators will stay on Saturday. Saturday is when we teach the facilitators how to continue teaching the rest of scripture.

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We have an example that we often use of the perfect situation of what we would like to see as the end result. This situation is from West Africa. We went to this country and we taught the facilitator how to teach home-sign students as well as deaf-blind students. As a result after we left, the Church is still meeting together. The facilitators are meeting together weekly. They are going through the rest of the book of Mark. They are translating their worship music into SUN. They are translating anything else they need whether it be sermons or Bible studies or things like that. They are forming a congregation that is using SUN to worship and to read scripture. The home-sign students are now even calling SUN their heart language. Because they are now comfortable with it they are making SUN their own language. That is what we want to see with every country that we go to with every Church with every deaf community that the Church is available to serve. What we have made available for you in order to do that are all of our materials.

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If you go to our website (which is written on the board)

bibleineverylanguage.org/processes/SUN

There's a "tab" that says processes, and then when you scroll down there is a link that says "SUN" section. You can do it that way or use the direct link. When you get to the SUN page you will see categories like the English home-sign kit and the universal kit. The universal kit is for people who do not speak English. If you have facilitators who are fluent in English you can use the English kit. If you have facilitators who do not speak English you can download the universal kit. When you look under the categories, you'll see all of the different materials in that kit. Those are all free downloads. You can download them and then make the cards and make the lesson. So, for example, if you were to click on the lesson cards file, then what you'll see is the file that has all the lessons cards that you're going to cut. Then you're going to fold and make the cards that are used to teach the lessons. You can laminate them if you want. You can also print the sentence cards out on cardstock to make them more durable,

however you'd like to make your kit. Then you also see a section on scripture. If you click on that drop-down arrow you'll see all of the books of the New Testament are there. So, you can just print out whatever you're currently working on. Or you can print out the whole New Testament and bind it so that your students can have their own Bible.

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On Saturday of the workshop, we will teach you how to continue teaching. All of the 13 lessons are just to teach a passage of scripture. So, the logical next question is: "What do I do if I want to teach the whole Bible?" That is what you're going to be learning on the Saturday of a workshop when we teach the follow-up. When we do teach the follow-up, we're going to refer to the materials on the website and how you're going to be able to access those materials. We will also show you what to do with them once you've accessed them. Our hope for the home-sign students and the deaf-blind students is that they really reach independence with the word of God. That they are not dependent on someone else to tell them what God's word says. That they can read it for themselves, that they can understand it for themselves and communicate and have a personal relationship with their Creator and their Lord.