

Chapter 6: Release Early, Revise Often

Objective: *Participants will understand that releasing the translation for use does not mean it's done for good, but rather will need revisions and updates.*

Core Concepts:

- Bible translations will never be perfect, but they can be made clearer by inviting community feedback.
- It is best when the translation team releases portions of the translation, as they are finished, for the entire community to use.
- Feedback from the community allows the translation team to make corrections and improvements before the official publication.
- Bible translations also need continual revision and updates as languages change. The local church should plan and oversee these periodic revisions.

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do so. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give it," when you have it with you (Prov. 3:27-28).

Intro:

We're going to talk about when the translation is ready to be shared with the language community.

We encourage our partners to release early and revise often.

Time: 15-30 minutes

Materials:

- ✓ **Slide Deck:**
T3.Slides_06_Release.Early.Revise.Often_TS03
- ✓ **Bible with place markers**

Teacher's Notes:



Release Early, Revise Often

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do so. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give it," when you have it with you (Prov. 3:27-28).

All Scripture is taken from the New King James Version®. © 2008 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

During our training, you'll work on a Quality Assessment Guide, to outline quality standards for your translation. You want your translation to meet those standards before it's released, but no translation will ever be perfect.

- So, when should a translation be shared with the language community waiting for it?

Impact Story:

Martin Luther was one of the first people to translate the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into a common language: his language was German. He published portions of his German translation and looked for feedback from the community to improve his next publication of it.

Today, translations usually have small groups of people who review and offer updates to the translation. These groups decide when to release revised editions.

The idea of releasing the translation early and revising it often means:

Translators release their translation when they believe they have made it the best they can at the time. You don't need to wait until you've finished a whole book of the Bible.

Notes:



Discuss:

These verses talk both about being generous and about doing things now, because we do not know what the future holds. If the sower waits for perfect weather, he will never sow. In the same way, if translators wait to release their work until it's perfect, a translation will never be distributed.

- **Sometime translators feel uncomfortable with doing this. Why?**
- **What are some concerns you have?**
- **How could you address these concerns?**

Notes:

Ask a participant to read Ecclesiastes 11:2 and 4.



Ecclesiastes 11:2, 4
Give a sowing to seven, and also to eight,
For you do not know what evil will be on the earth.
*He who observes the wind will not sow,
And he who regards the clouds will not reap.



The idea of releasing early can be daunting because translators often want their work to be perfect before it's released. Knowing ahead of time that past translators released their work early so that they could get feedback will help these translators to overcome their hesitancy and reassure them that letting people read their translation is a positive step for the local church.

As the translation is used, the translators will get feedback for corrections, improvements, and updates. You'll need to determine when and how to make those changes and release the work again. Keep in mind that language changes over time, making revisions necessary.

Discuss:

- **What kinds of changes might need to be made?**
- **How could the translation team and the Church encourage the language community to give feedback?**

If there are different denominations within the language group, the translation team may want to form a group of people from each denomination. This group can receive feedback and determine how often to make updates. By planning ahead, they won't be surprised and overwhelmed when changes need to be made.

Ask:

- **What could happen if the team does not release early?**

Notes:



Feedback

Corrections

Improvements

Updates



- In the past, translations have taken so long that the language had changed significantly.

Notes:

- By the time the translation was released, it already needed to be updated to fit the language group.
- Remember that there are people who have never heard the Word. If we can get even a portion of the Bible into their hands, they have the opportunity to be saved.

Confirm: Participants understand the importance of both releasing early and revising often. They also understand the challenges, and have begun to discuss and address their own concerns about these things.