

Broadcast 18 – Bible Study

OLIVER:

Hello everyone! This is Oliver. I am thankful to have Pastor Fin joining us again today. Welcome Pastor.

PASTOR FIN:

Thank you for inviting me to join you. This has been an exciting time for me and the people of our church. You and the other translators have given us a great gift. It is the first time that we have had any portion of the Scripture in our mother-tongue language. People are realizing that God can speak to them in their own language. They are starting to be more excited about studying the Bible and understanding it better.

OLIVER:

Yes. I love their enthusiasm. It was very exciting when we returned from the translation workshop with the book of Mark in our own language. I remember how excited I was to hear you read from Mark and preach your sermon inspired by that reading. Many people were blessed, like me, to experience this important moment in our people's history.

PASTOR FIN:

Thank you, Oliver. That was an occasion for celebration. It will be wonderful when we have the entire New Testament in our language. Can you imagine having each teaching touch us so deeply?

OLIVER:

I agree Pastor. Lately I have struggled with remaining excited about this project and finding time to do translation. It is easy to be distracted. I wonder what advice you can give me and others who experience a lack of excitement.

PASTOR FIN:

I understand. At the translation workshop, that was all you needed to think about and the only responsibility you had. You had a place to work, the materials you needed, food and a place to sleep. Everyone at the workshop was focused on the translation and working together to achieve a common goal. Day-to-day life, away from the workshop, does not give us that same opportunity. There are other responsibilities and distractions. That is something we all experience.

OLIVER:

I want to stick to this translation task God has called me to, but I just am not hearing His voice and guidance as strongly as I was during the beginning of this project. And you are right, my responsibilities at home keep me so busy; it is very different from when I was at the workshop with only one single responsibility.

PASTOR FIN:

It is important to know that you really want to stick with the task and be faithful to Bible study; I believe that one of the keys to keep translators motivated and their work moving forward is for each team member to continue to make time in Scripture and prayer a priority in their life. That is a time that we set aside daily to talk with God and hear His voice.

OLIVER:

When we first returned from the workshop, I spent time in study and prayer each morning. Then I began to be so busy and overwhelmed. Often, it was nighttime, and I neglected to find a way to spend time with the Lord. I think that I need to get up earlier in the morning so that I can start my day spending time with the Lord.

PASTOR FIN:

Yes, that works for many people. I have been reading the gospel of John that the team just completed, during my early morning quiet time. My wife takes time to read Scripture during the heat of the day when everyone is rest. And my father used to read to us from the national language Bible before we went to bed at night.

OLIVER:

So, there is no specific time that I should have personal devotion and prayer?

PASTOR FIN:

Correct. And there is no rule that you can only have devotions once a day! Oliver, there will continue to be days when you are busy or feel distracted. On those days, even if you can read just a verse or two in your Bible, you will be able to carry those words with you for the rest of the day. Even if your prayer is a short one, that is okay. You can continue praying as you travel to your job. As you do your work, you can keep up a conversation with God, praying silently throughout the day and listening for His voice.

OLIVER:

That is helpful. I often pray on my way to my job. And now that we are getting audio recordings of the translation, I might be able to listen to some Scripture then.

PASTOR FIN:

Good idea. Finding time to spend in personal devotion is one way to grow and stay motivated. Another is spending time together in worship. When you were at the translation workshop, each day started with a time of devotion for the group of translators.

OLIVER:

Yes, it was wonderful to be able to share in that way. But it is not something that is possible now that we are back home. We cannot meet that way every day.

PASTOR FIN:

I agree, Oliver, we would not be able to have devotions with all the translators every day. Maybe we could try to get all of you or most of you together for devotions once or twice a month and our regular meeting time? There is value in getting together and discussing what you are reading, the context of it and how you can apply it to your life. We could look at some passages from the book of Scripture that the team is working on at the time. We can pray together and encourage each other.

OLIVER:

I like that idea. It would help me to feel more connected to the team, even when we cannot be together every day.

PASTOR FIN:

Once we have the New Testament in our language, we could start a weekly or monthly time of coming together to compare what we have been reading. I was looking on Bibleineverylanguage.org earlier this week, and there is a resource called the application guide on there. It is a series of application questions for all the same passages of Scripture that the Reviewer's Guide covers.

OLIVER:

That would be a great resource for studying our new translation. Is it in our national language?

PASTOR FIN:

Not yet, but I know teams are working on getting those things translated. We could ask someone to help us translate it into our mother tongue language to use as a study tool when the whole New Testament is done.

OLIVER:

That is something I would like to help with. Siara may also want to help. We have others on the translation team who may be willing to join the effort, as well. What else can you suggest for now? To keep us motivated, encouraged, and moving forward?

PASTOR FIN:

I would like to suggest some ways to help enrich your devotional time and be sure the time is meaningful for you. At the workshop, the devotion for the group was from the Gospel of Mark that you and the others were translating. Did you find that helpful?

OLIVER:

Yes, Pastor. It was so good to have those devotions to start off every morning. We got together to learn more about Mark. And it was relevant to what we were doing because we were working on translating that book. It also was helpful because it was done in our mother-tongue language. We were, each of us, encouraged and energized to continue the work each day.

PASTOR FIN:

My suggestion would be to read a passage in the book that you are currently translating. That will help when you read and concentrate on passages you are assigned. As you know from your work with translation, there are many aids online that all are available without cost. On bibleineverylanguage.org there are notes and questions and explanations of key words. While they are not in our mother-tongue language right now, there are nearly 500 languages that have at least some materials available on that site.

OLIVER:

That is a good reminder, Pastor. I used that site during the translation workshop, but I did not think about using it to help with my own devotions. Now that I think of it, there may be other ways we can use bibleineverylanguage.org to help in our studies and discussions. This resource really helps us gain a deeper understanding of what we are translating.

PASTOR FIN:

It can also help to talk with someone about what you are learning. You and Siara could share what you read and talk about it together. It is like the VERBALIZE stage of the MAST method. When you talk about it, it sticks in your mind more and can come back to you throughout the day.

OLIVER:

Thank you, Pastor. I love that idea. It serves two purposes for us. Siara enjoys talking about what she is learning. She is very passionate about the Word of God and will find blessing in the discussion. And we can use these talks to benefit our work. I will suggest this to all the translators. This could be of great service to us.

I know you are a busy man and I am so grateful for your time. Any other ideas before we close, Pastor Fin?

PASTOR FIN:

This is not anything new, but I would also remind you how important prayer is. Ask God for wisdom and perseverance. And ask others to pray for you too. They can serve this project by praying for you to have the discipline and conviction to continue translating.

OLIVER:

Ah, yes. Thank you for this reminder, Pastor Fin. Talking with you today has been very helpful. I am so thankful that you were able to join our program today. It helps our local churches, and anyone listening, to hear these suggestions from a Pastor who walks with God as you do.

PASTOR FIN:

It has been my pleasure, Oliver. I consider it a blessing to be able to answer God's calling in this way. Supporting translation of the Gospel in the Heart Language of local believers has helped us sense God's purpose in our lives. The Holy Spirit has truly been moving in our people through this work.

OLIVER:

Yes, we all agree it is a great blessing, Pastor. We thank God for bringing the MAST method to our language group and pray for your continued guidance as we continue this important. And speaking of prayer, would you close our time together today in prayer?

PASTOR FIN:

I would be honored to. Please join me. Dear Lord, Thank You for the privilege of being able to translate Your Word into our language so it speaks to us in a personal way. Bless those of us who are involved in the task of translation. Bless those who will hear Your words for the first time in the language of their heart. Keep us close to You, Lord, through regular and meaningful time with you in study and prayer. In our busy lives, help us to pause and hear Your Word when you tell us to be still and know that You are God. Open our hearts and minds to what your Word has to say to us. When we pray, help us to listen for Your voice. We ask this in Your Holy Name. Amen.

OLIVER:

Amen. Thank you, Pastor. And thank you to everyone who is listening today. We pray that you will join us for our next program when we will talk more about staying on track with a plan for Bible translation.

If you have questions about your current project or want to start a project in your own mother-tongue language, please call or text (local country partner info) or send an email to reachingalldialects@gmail.com or radio@wycliffeassociates.org.