

The Power of God's Word

by Loren Cuuningham

The Bible has the power to transform nations by bringing the knowledge of God's glory to every sphere of life, leading to a change in the heart and mind of the people, and ultimately resulting in a transformed nation.

Duration: 1:17:48

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 1 Timothy 4:4

Topics: "Scriptures"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal experience of meeting the King of Norway. He explains how he was invited to meet the King because someone had given him books. The speaker reflects on the idea of being a king and then describes a vision of Jesus from the book of Revelation. He vividly describes Jesus' appearance and emphasizes the power and authority that Jesus possesses.

Transcript

It's good to see you all tonight. And I begin with this story. I was invited to meet with the King of Norway.

They have the guards out there that you can put your hand in front and they won't move. But if you start to pass them, I found out they turn around quickly and come after you. So they came after me and they said, sir, what's your program here? I said, well, I got an invitation to meet with the King.

And they said, we'll accompany you. And so they took us to the next place. Our YWAM leader was with me as well.

And as we went to the next person, then they led us to the next and finally to the Secretary of the King. And I said, why did the King invite me? They said, well, someone gave him your books. I said, how long will I have with the King? They said, he tells you when to leave.

I've always thought it'd be nice to be a king. I can't find the application forms, though. But I knew I had to get his attention right away.

So when we went in and shook hands and sat down, I immediately said to him, your majesty, your nation has been announced as the richest nation on earth per capita. They have no homeless, really no poverty. You also have been aware as educationally so that your people have become literally without illiteracy.

They're all literate. Thirdly, your people are a people of freedom, both in your nation and from your nation because of the respect for Norway throughout the world. Now, how do you explain that in your grandfather's childhood, you were one of the poor countries in the world, the poorest at that time in all of Europe and many other places? You also had over 90 percent of your people couldn't read or write.

Your people didn't have freedom either. They had to get government permission just to go to another city or another place. In their own country.

Now, how do you explain that? He grabbed my arm. He's very animated, King Harald. He grabbed my arm and he said, Lauren, I don't know.

I'm asked that question by leaders lots of times, but I just say, I don't know. I said, would you like my idea? He said, I sure would. Now I had his attention.

And when we finally left, there was a whole lineup of ambassadors and leaders waiting for him because he kept us on for quite a while. But I began to describe for him, well, first of all, the picture of the world as Jesus is winning. But I also described to him how his nation went from poverty, went from illiteracy and no freedom to the wonderful nation that they have now enjoyed.

And as I began to share, I started with a 25 year old farm boy that couldn't read or write. And somebody handed him a Bible and they said, this is God's book. And it's for every area of life.

He could have said, this is God's book. And it will get you to heaven. And that would be true.

But there's something too narrow about that. Because this man remembered those words. And this man met Jesus personally.

And he said, at the time he was given the Bible, if that's God's book, I better learn to read. And he did. And as a result of that, his life was transformed.

But people saw the difference between the old Hans Nielsen Hauga and Carl, how do you say his last name? Yeah, I knew that. But I never can say it like that. Anyway, Hans, I can say that.

And Hans simply was so changed that everyone wanted to know that knew him in his valley, how did that happen? And of course, we see the beginnings of what became known as a nationwide revival. And that man in his lifetime traveled over 10,000 miles by foot or by ski. And of course, it was against the law to do what he was doing, he was preaching everywhere.

So he went to prison 10 times, the last time for 10 years. He didn't have freedom. But as he would be in prison, he would be writing and studying the word more.

And I think it was over 40 books that he wrote. And over 25% of the entire population read his books. It was an amazing coverage of that nation.

And everywhere he went, he said, learn to read, get a Bible, and then begin to teach your children to read and to read the Bible. And then he began to write what the Bible says about education, what the Bible says about business, what the Bible says about the different areas of life. He also told the people, as they had met the Lord and were studying the word, now he said, teach each other in your home, get people to come.

And so he began Bible studies in the homes or the people did. And they began to be the public speakers. So that when freedom came and parliament was allowed for all it was the people, they were the ones that were able to stand and speak and become elected and become the ones who would make the laws that would give the foundations from the word of God that allowed for not only freedom, but so much, much more.

And as a result, today, they are the number one per capita of sending out the most missionaries in the world. This is a nation we can all admire. I use them as one example.

There are many nations that you can point out. I have in my book called the book that transforms nations. It's the power of the Bible to change any country in the world.

And I really believe this. And we'll have some afterwards for you back there. Yeah, right back at the back in Korean or English.

And it's in several languages now, but the whole concept is what I wanna talk about tonight. How the Bible can change nations. I have chapters on Korea, but also Japan and chapters on Switzerland and so on.

Covering what God does when the word of God comes. Now in the book of 1 Timothy 4, the Bible says for everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected if it's received with gratitude. Now, the context of this was included the area of food, even that was offered to idols.

And it was talking about people saying you couldn't get married and many things like that. But when Paul says it here, he makes it universal. Everything created by God is good when it's received, nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude.

Now, this is where Christians all over the world offer thanks over their food. It comes out of this very portion. And Paul goes on to say, for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.

Now, I want to broaden this to Acts 17, verse 26. Jesus is there seen to be the great creator of the nations. Paul says in Acts 17, verse 26, after talking about how the Lord had created the heavens and the earth.

He went on to say that he created from one person, that's Adam, every nation in all the world. Now, if God created the nations, and it goes on to say, he gave them their times and their seasons. And I was to learn that in a very dramatic way.

I was speaking in Germany to about 11,000 people and the Lord told me, this was toward the end of the 80s, 1980s. The Lord said, I want you to declare to them that the Berlin Wall is coming down soon and the two nations of East and West Germany will be reunited and they are to get ready. These were 11,000 Christians.

The news media was there that night with the television cameras and it was later on the news on TV there. And people were angry at me because as a foreigner, I should not have been speaking about reunification. And yet the Lord said that.

People literally came up on the platform after I finished that night and were angry at me and saying, you shouldn't do that. And they were really telling me, well, Mr. Honecker, the head of the communist Germany stood in January of 89 and said, this Berlin Wall will stand another 100 years. That year, the wall was down and he was arrested.

Why? Not because Lauren said anything, I just repeated something, passed it on. But it was because God had determined the boundaries of their habitation would change in Germany. God decided that.

God decides these big issues of life. I was speaking in Tuscula, Finland in 1985. And at that time, I just heard the word of the Lord say, I'm going to bring openness rather to the Soviet Union.

So I said that. And the people were shocked because they'd lived next door to the big bear for a long time. And they just, I could just see it in their eyes.

Oh boy, we've got another American evangelist. And given to all kinds of statements. And then the Lord said, say it again.

So I said it three times. And then a friend of mine was on the third row. Jorma Virtanen is his name.

And he was the publisher of 14 different secular magazines in the nation like Sports Illustrated and so on. And Time Magazine, those kinds of things only for their country. And he told me later, he said, Lauren, I thought you'd lost your mind.

Because the next thing I saw was a picture in my mind of people preaching on the streets of the Soviet Union. So I declared what I saw. The second thing I saw was Bibles coming in by the millions without any interference with customs or government.

And the third thing was sending out of missionaries. Well, by 1988, three years later, I got to participate in all three of those categories. I prayed over the first 42 missionaries to go out.

And we saw 25 million Bibles go in to the nation. And we also, I got to preach on the streets. And the only trouble I had with the police is they all wanted Bibles.

And we didn't, we did give it to them, but they were always interrupting to get some Bibles. And because it was the following year in 86, after I'd gotten the word in 85. Now all of this is recorded.

All of this was on videotape. It's all documented. So you can check it out on both cases.

But what God was saying, openness is coming, is what Gorbachev one year later repeated. He said, Glasnost has come. That's openness has come to the Soviet Union.

And everything started to change. So God has the final word. And we heard last night that government though, the government of God is released in action through the prayers of God's people.

And so we have a part in it, but it is God that is going to change things. So I look at a map as you do, and I see all these nations, but I add to that. If God says in his word in Acts 17, 26, that he gives them the times and seasons, and he can change those times and seasons.

You can try, you can do all kinds of things, but not until God said, okay, it's time. And then when it's past time, you're not going to unscramble eggs either, even though you may try with all your heart. There are certain things you cannot change.

And as we understand that, it's only as God decides it. And then a nation can be changed. A nation can be united.

A nation can be divided. And we need to recognize how God works in nations. But then it says he gives them the boundaries of their habitation.

So the borders are finally drawn by God. Now you'll see that people have revolutions over boundaries. They have wars over boundaries.

They have treaties and break them and all kinds of things, but it is God that has the final say regarding the boundaries of the habitation of nations. So that means if God has decided the boundaries, then the map is anointed by God. That's why I can say, I love that map.

I want to know more about the map because God himself got involved. However, we can add the word that we just read in 1 Timothy 4, verse five, that all, well, verse four, all the things that are created by God are good. God creates nations.

He said so, Acts 17, 26. And by the way, verse 27 says that, so the people will seek God. So if we have a nation that is transformed by the word of God, it's going to draw people to seek God.

And when we understand that the nations that are transformed by the word of God and through prayer, because they can be, because they were created by God, if we receive them with gratitude. So we say, thank you, Lord, for Saudi Arabia. And as then we begin to apply the word of God and begin to get the word of God to them and then begin to pray for them, we're going to see changes because I see all over the Muslim world, people who have come to Christ through visions.

Now, how does that happen? Well, people prayed, but they have to be also transformed by the word of God. It's not enough just to step into the door, which the door is salvation and say, I've got it all. You don't have it all.

You see, it's just the beginning. The door is the beginning. If you buy a home and only it ends up with only a door, you're going to feel cheated and you should be because the door is where you walk through into the kingdom of God.

And as the kingdom of God, as you grow in it, it always will be leading you back to the word of God, the very anchor, the foundation, heaven and earth will pass away, but not his word. And when we begin to learn the importance of the word of God, you will begin to see that God will give, as we heard last night, signs and wonders, but signs and wonders doesn't create character. I can give you a lifetime of examples that I have seen where people may have seen the greatest or had the greatest miracle in their lives.

And yet they would go astray or their character was weak and they were always causing others to stumble. So we must not seek after the sign, but seek after the sign giver. And as we give his word out, the signs follow to authenticate the word of God to the non-believer.

And so God wants to use the word at all times. And we've got to learn to apply that word in order to bring the character of God into our life, in order to understand the will of God and the values that God gives us for our lives, the principles of the word of God. But the ways of God are so important.

And as we learn the word of God and hide it in our heart, then we will not be tempted so much to sin against God. We will have the strength to withstand the enemy. I heard as a kid that this Bible will keep you from sin, but sin will keep you from the Bible.

And we need to recognize there's no room there for people not to find the Lord when they really begin to get the word of God in their hearts. But there's something more than just the letter of the law. The letter of the word of God, this is ink, this is paper, but there is a spirit that anointed the word of God by anointing men and women of old to write.

There's over 800, there's 886 verses in the Bible that were brought to the Bible by women. And so understand that God used both men and women bringing forth this. And we've got plenty of research on that, but you could even see it and count it yourself.

These are obvious ones. There's a lot more than that, I believe. But these are the obvious ones.

And so as God anointed people and they began to write the word of God, there was an anointing upon that word. But whenever we read the word and with prayer, read the word, the anointing works in reverse and begins to enlighten our minds so that we're not just getting the letter that kills, but the spirit of the truth that brings the life. And that life is the blessings of God in all the dimensions of life.

And God wants us to get a new love and appreciation for the word of God. And I see many of our Korean brothers and sisters here, and I don't know of any nation that so quickly came from poverty to wealth and from a lack of freedom to total freedom and so on as South Korea, as well as literacy and all the rest. They became, now they're the 10th richest nation in the world.

And they were just in the grandfathers of those sitting here. They were the poor of the world. And I went there in '71, first time.

And there were no cars outside of a church where I was preaching for a week of 6,000 people, not one car outside. There wasn't even a bike outside. The people were poor.

At that time, there were only 15,000 people in all of South Korea that even had a driver's license. And that was for taxis and buses. So when you go there today, you can hardly get to town from the airport because there's so many cars in front of you.

And the only guys that seem to get through are those guys that are delivery guys on these little mopeds. My goodness, I thought they were all gonna die before the day was over. But as I watch what God did in that nation, it literally is a witness to the whole world of what a people do when they get the word of God.

For the word of God was put into their Korean script that almost no one read at that time in the nation. And through the hardship, the word of God became a part of their bloodstream. It became a part of their thinking.

It turned their minds into the one, the very grid that God wants us to have as we look at God's world. And so as a result, it released something of the creativity of a people that had been under bondage for so long. And God wants to do this for nations around the world.

He wants to do it within a nation, within a city, within even a group in a city. And he wants to do this in every sphere of life. We've been talking about the spheres as well as the 4K map.

This is geography. The other are categories that we move from place to place, changing our hats. We are in the home as one of the spheres, and then we may go to a school, another sphere, a church, another sphere.

And so we can move from sphere to sphere, but every sphere should be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. And so completely that it's like the sea that covers, the water that covers the sea. And God wants to do that, saturating this world with his word.

And that's a job that we need to think about in its importance and then plan for it, and then do something about getting the word to every home in the world. I was speaking in Mexico City, not recently, before swine flu, but I was there in Pastor Vega's church. That morning, I spoke first to his leaders, 850 of those, and they in turn would come into the next service.

He had 11,000 there in the next service. And then these leaders would take over and then they would apply the word after that. But as we were between the two services, the leaders and the general, I just said to the pastor, I said, pastor, tell me your story.

And he said, oh, it's an easy, simple story to tell. I'm an avid reader. I just devour books every week.

I'll devour four or five or six books. And I just love books. And I was a leader in my church, but I had never seen or heard of a Bible.

And somebody handed me a Bible and said, this is God's holy word. And so I thought, well, I like books. And so he started reading it.

You can read the entire Bible in 72 hours. In fact, in our biblical study courses here, the first thing that they all do is to read to one another out loud the whole Bible the first week. So that begins for many their first time that they've really heard the whole Bible.

And then they begin to study it. And if they're in the nine month course, they go through every verse five times in the Bible in nine months or three months. You still go through all the verses of the Bible and you're gonna learn the word of God.

But you must apply that word here that through prayer, the Holy Spirit will start bringing forth things that you could never bring forth yourself just by even learning the inductive way of studying the word of God. So we have to do that. Well, what Pastor Vegas said to me, he said, you know, I read through the Bible.

I got to the end and I thought, I didn't understand it, but I know it's different. So I started over. And this time I read it slowly, verse by verse.

And I started bringing some of my friends and there were seven others that joined me. And the eight of us started going through the word. And as we did, we found our lives started to change and we had to change for things because as the truths of God just kept pouring into us, we just began to change and we just kept doing it and others started doing it with us.

And now we're 11,000. Well, that was kind of short and sweet, wasn't it? It was the word of God that transformed the people and they were doing many mighty things and doing exploits of all kinds for God, 11,000 of them. Now, if God can do that, can he do much more? I was traveling with a group of YWAMers and that's not new, in a van, that's not new.

And we were going through, there's about six or seven vehicles. And we were going through Mexico on our way down to Nicaragua. And we had a blowout on one of the tires on a trailer that was carrying a lot of literature that we had and some food.

It was for four horses originally, that's what the trailer was supposed to carry. But we upgraded. But we didn't have a spare for the trailer.

So as a result, we had to get it fixed or our guys had to fix it. And while they were fixing it, I said to all the rest of the young people, I said, let's go to every home in this town and leave a Gospel of John in Spanish and also a little booklet on how to get to know Jesus personally and one for the children as well. And so we did that.

And then we had two groups, one for children on the plaza and one for adults on the plaza and open air service at the same time. And so we were blanketing this town. And when we finished and the tire was fixed, we were all moving back to the vehicles.

And a lady in a faded red dress walked up to me. And she said in Spanish, she said, we don't have Bibles in our town. And there's no place to get a Bible in our town.

And I've checked with towns roundabout and I can't find a Bible anywhere. Do you have a Bible that I could get? And of course we gave her a Bible, but we didn't have Bibles. We had little Gospels of John and so on.

How many Bibles do you have in your home? I got just, I was looking at some of them today, different languages and different sizes and different translations and just line upon line of Bibles. And she didn't have one. So as I go, I was going down the street and I was just praying and I saw a picture in my mind and it was a big, big bulbous type truck, not a semi, but a more like a huge van for moving things.

And it was just filled with Bibles and young people were handing them out. And it said on the side, solo los dishonestos temen la verdad. And I don't speak good enough Spanish.

I had to translate it. I know I didn't think about that because I had to translate, what does that say? And the translation was only the dishonest fear the truth. And then it said free Bibles.

And I pondered that word. Now that was the occasion when the communists were really strong on the university campuses in Latin America. And as we got near to Mexico city, I went to the, finally I felt we had to do something on the word of the Lord.

And I went to the Bible society and I said, I want every Bible you have and I wanna give them away. What's your plan? What do you do? He looked at me, I was young and zealous and now I'm old and zealous. But he said, we can't do that.

We've got customers year round. And we talked about it and I told him what I wanted to do. And I wanted to invade all the university campuses in the city with the Bible.

And so finally I ended up with 50,000 New Testaments in Spanish. And then I had to call all my friends that I could find and several enemies to get enough money to pay for it. And then we distributed them.

And there's something powerful about the word of God. Whenever you pray with that distribution and you need to pray really in advance to prepare for it. And we tried to do that, but we were learning.

We went to every home in San Luis Potosi State, giving them a Bible. We did the same in much of Baja California, not just right on the border. We didn't do all of Tijuana, but we did a lot of the, as far as we know, the rest of the cities all down throughout, down to La Paz and beyond.

And it was an amazing time watching the people. And they would, just some of them weep when you gave them the Bible. And it was their first Bible they'd ever had.

It was 1982, fast forward there up to that year. And I was speaking at the headquarters for Campus Crusade at Arrowhead Springs at the time. And also speaking there was Jack Hayford, Joy Dawson, and Rick Howard.

And as one of them was speaking, the Lord spoke to me so clearly, I don't want you to leave the Hawaiian Islands next year, 1983. Well, I didn't know how I could handle that. I've been jet lagging since I was 17.

I have changed time zones regularly. And I was afraid my, even my cells would float away. It's only by momentum they're held together, kinetic energy or something, I don't know.

But I said, well, yes, Lord, I'll do that. But I didn't know why. And about that time, Joy scooted over and said, Lauren, God just spoke to me, Joy Dawson.

You're to stay in the Hawaiian Islands next year. You're not to leave. I said, I know, I just got that word, but thank you for the confirmation.

And so I knew I had to stay. Then a little later on, I got a letter from Billy Graham asking me to speak at Amsterdam 83. I had to write and say, I'm sorry, I can't.

Then I got an invitation from President Reagan. Could I come and meet with him? And there were 11 of us that he wanted to meet with him at the White House. And I had to write, dear Ron, no, I didn't do that.

But I had to send somebody in my stead. I could not leave. Now, people look at me kind of funny if I say this.

Well, God wasn't that strict, was he? Yeah, he was. And I'll tell you, the big things happen when you really obey God and not just sort of obey him on the ones that you want, you know? And then I got a letter from the Vatican. Yes, I did.

And what we had done is one of our YWAMers was from Malta and he was, Mario is a wonderful guy and he and his wife wanted to start a ministry like YWAM in the Catholic Church. So he did so. And with his cardinal's approval and it began to grow and multiply.

And I went down and trained their first 95 students. Leaders. And that may be hard for some of you to accept, but it wasn't hard for me at all.

And after a while, the cardinal introduced Mario Capella and his wife to John Paul II, III, what was II? Yeah, II. And the Pope. And the Pope immediately took a liking and invited them to spend some time at his summer Vatican retreat center and just pray with him every day for two weeks, which they did.

And he invited them the next summer and the next and the next. And it became something they did every summer. And I noticed in the nineties then when the Pope made the statement, mid nineties, I think it was, he said publicly, I want every Catholic in the world to be evangelized.

They need to know Jesus personally. And I said, I know where that came from. It came out of prayer.

And I know how, but these are things that were going on. But anyway, prior to that, they were just beginning and having a meeting there in the Vatican. And I was asked to come and speak and meet with the Pope.

And so I had to write, dear JP, but not really, but I had to say, I'm sorry, I can't. I'd like to do that, but I can't. And I was still wondering, Lord, what is it? I know the Lord's testing me, but what is it you're wanting me to do? Then I got a call from dear Bill Bright.

He's with the Lord now. And he said, Lauren, the president has just declared the year of 1983. This is at the beginnings of 83, the year of the Bible.

And would you head up the year of the Bible program for Hawaii? I said, yeah, now I know. And what do I have to do? He says, do everything you can. Just get the Bible known.

So I knew what to do. And I got this younger guy, he likes numbers. So I got him to help figure out how to map out the whole Hawaiian islands.

So David Hamilton learned how. And this is just the growing of what was going on back then. And we had to find out how many languages were spoken in the homes.

Well, we found there were 15. And they spoke Hmong from the Hmong tribe of Laos. They spoke Vietnamese.

They spoke Japanese. They spoke Chinese, Korean, Hawaiian, and so on. And we got the Bible in all 15 languages.

Not this quick, but we had to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars. And staying just in one place was quite a thing. I'd go out to the airport and sniff the kerosene of the jets just so I wouldn't go into withdrawals.

But we were able to mobilize 6,000 Christians and literally covered all the Hawaiian islands, including Niihau. And there were only 45 people there. But they all came over on a boat to where I spoke at a banquet because I couldn't go there because I wasn't full-blooded Hawaiian.

But they came to me and we gave them all the Bible in Hawaiian. And it was fabulous to see what God would do. At that time, we could not find more than five churches really preaching the gospel in Kona.

Within four years after the distribution was finished, we had 26 churches preaching the gospel in Kona. It was an amazing change and multiplication was happening. It was happening across the entire state as well.

There were no large mega churches anywhere. Today, we have a church of 10,000 in Honolulu. We have another church of 3,000 over there in Maui, another one over in Honolulu on the Windward side.

It's an amazing thing that the multiplication comes, but the word of God had to come in there. And we need to understand the importance of the word of God. And the reason I'm so, I guess, energized and stirred up and concerned because I'm watching everything grow up very fast.

Look at the prayer movement. Nothing like this in history. All over the world, prayer movements are rising up.

And you look at the worship ministry. It's just growing by leaps and bounds all over the world. You look at evangelism, you look at church planting, you look at all the categories, but on distribution of scripture, it is being done.

God bless the Gideons and others, but it is way behind where it must be. I was, Darlene and I were in Indonesia just after the revival that took place in West Timor. And I went to Batu, where the Bible school is, and talked to Octavius, the leader, and I said, tell me, what did you do differently? Your team went out to West Timor, and he said, we just did what we've always done.

We pray and we went. I said, where was the Bible? He said, well, we didn't distribute Bibles or scriptures. We just started seeing God at work and people getting saved.

And I just, I couldn't quite understand that because I traveled with Duncan Campbell around the Hebrides Islands just before he died. He taught at our school every year from the very first school for five years. And then he spoke the word, his last word was, I've run the race, I've kept the faith.

I finished my course and went to his room and had a heart attack. And within a couple of days, he was gone to be with the Lord. And so when I traveled with him just prior to that, I went throughout the Hebrides and everywhere where the revival came, they had saturated themselves by reading the Bible morning, noon, and night in every home, the word of God was read.

And so there's something powerful about the word of God along with prayer. The nation even can be sanctified by the word of God and by prayer. And so if we don't have this part, it's the walking on two legs that you have to have prayer and the word, just like you have to evangelize and disciple, but you need the word of God or we're not gonna see anything that lasts.

But I couldn't understand the deal in West Timor, in Indonesia. And so I was in Lausanne at the time and a man visited us. He'd been a missionary to Indonesia.

His name was Germonidi. And he was from Switzerland and had a place there retreat now in Switzerland. And I said, brother, can you tell me something? Where did you work in Indonesia? He said, I was in West Timor.

He said, you were? I said, you were? I said, yeah. He said, I'm confused with myself here. Get my tang jungles.

But he said, yeah. My wife and I were there 12 years. I said, were you there in the revival? No, he said, we'd gone two years before that.

I said, well, help me on this. How did we see such a wonderful demonstration of God and many coming to Christ? And yet I can't find anywhere that those that were involved in the leading of this did anything about the word of God. How did you see something like that? He says, what do you mean? My wife and I put a Bible in every home in West Timor.

It took us 12 years. And then two years later, the revival came. I'm saying this not to in any way put water on the fire of desire that you have in your heart for revival.

I'm saying, let's have fruit that remain. Let's get the word of God out. Now, how can we do that? Well, you're hearing about the oral Bible or the story Bible.

And we can get that out. You're hearing about electronic Bibles. You can get the whole Bible now on like a fat, a real fat credit card in any language in the world that has been translated.

And so we can do that. We can get Bibles that they can listen to, gospel recordings. And we do that coupled with gospel recordings down in the Amazon.

And we're doing it in many languages there. And we can literally get the word of God in all kinds of ways and in all kinds of places. We need to begin to think, what is it that we can do to get the word of God out? And how could we get the Bible to every home in the world in the next 10 years? Is that a possibility by 2020? Well, we've got some work to do, don't we? We've got some work to do.

And we're going to hear a little more in just a moment here from those that work in the very front end of this program of Bible distribution. And that is Bible translation. I'm gonna ask right now, Gil, if Gil will come up and Gil Gravel, Gravel? Bill Gravel, we're just gonna wing it here.

I've got to tell you the rest of the story. I'm gonna burst if I don't. Oh, please.

Timur. You worked in Indonesia from 1983 till 2001. Okay, tell me.

What's the rest? Yeah, the Timur revival, if you read the book, Like a Roaring Wind by Mel Port. I read that in the 70s when I was a college student. God eventually called me into Bible translation.

I ended up in Indonesia. My wife and I worked with some people for several years. Became experienced, became a consultant, and one day I was asked to go to Timur.

Thank you. These two pastors are translating the Bible into Kupang Mele, which is a dialect of Indonesian, but it's different than the Indonesian Bibles they had learned in seminary. I said, sure, I'll go.

So I went to work with them, and I started working on their translation with them. Then I started making repeating trips, and just after the two places split a few years ago, I drove from East Timur to West, which had been a war zone a few months earlier, a little scary, but nobody was flying in, and those guys were waiting for me. I was going through the area, and somebody said, this is where the revival started.

And I went, oh, really, I read about that. And no kidding, so that's pretty neat. So I went on and I got to Kupang, sat down and started working with these two pastors, and they were in their 60s.

And I said, hey, I just heard that I drove through the area where the revival started. I remember reading in the book about a baby that had died and had been brought back to life. I read in the book about an old man who was preaching in perfect standard Indonesian, even though he didn't know the language.

I said, I read all these miracles, and is that stuff true? Did that really happen, did you see that? And they said, yeah, we were there. I like that. And I said, well, tell me about it.

And they said, well, the biggest problem is we were two pastors who had gone through seminary, but we didn't believe. We heard about the revival, so we went to see what was going on. And we saw these things before our eyes.

And we didn't believe that Jesus was real or that people really could be raised from the dead. And he said, God got ahold of us. And I said, that's a neat story.

Then he said, at the end, well, there's something more we have to tell you. We didn't finish the revival, it's still going on, because there's 40 languages on Timor Island that do not have the word of God in their own language. And we have been unfaithful all these years because we brought the gospel, we preached to them, we taught them in Indonesian, which is not their mother tongue, but we have failed to give them the scriptures in their own language, so they don't even know Jesus personally yet.

They only know him as this savior from somebody else's language. And that's what we're going to do now. And now, to this day, there's 28 translation projects going on in Timor by Timorese people.

And Max, who was there, died last year, before he even finished his own New Testament. His daughter just finished it this year. Wow, wow, isn't that neat? That's the rest of the story.

Yeah, and you and your wife actually finished two languages out of that. Melak? Maya and Moscona. I knew that.

I just was testing you, but. Well, that's it. Mayak.

Mayak, okay. And so you have been really involved with Wycliffe now for many years, but what is this, what's the difference? First of all, Wycliffe had done a study that it was going to take 150 years, not just 125, but 150 years to finish, or really to start the last language for translation of the Bible. So there's 6,000, how many languages? Well, there's 6,500 to 7,000 languages, and about 25 to 2,500, 2,700 that have no scripture.

Wow, and so we heard a little bit about it tonight when they started this seed company. Now, the seed company is a part of the family ministries of Wycliffe. You didn't split off or anything, you just expanded.

But what's the difference now? You already had, how many years, when did Wycliffe start with Townsend? Yeah, Wycliffe started with Townsend just, well, 1936 in Asylum Springs, Arkansas, when the first group went to learn linguistics and do translation for Mexico. Yeah, and so in all of those years, you've had people that have been heroes of all of ours, going out and slugging it out and finding it really tough, but sticking with it. And I think Wycliffe has more PhDs, including yourself.

Your wife is just about to finish hers at the Free University in Holland. I just spoke there a few months ago. And by the way, that's the university started by Abraham Kuyper, yeah.

And this was a Christian. And he started with seven students and himself teaching theology and then a lawyer, I think, teaching law. That was the beginning of the Free University.

How many students they have now a year? Thousands, it's a very large. 30,000, am I right on that? Something like that. It's a very large, very respected university.

And they're very strong in linguistics, of course, because the Dutch are pragmatic and learn lots of languages. They always embarrass me. But that means we shouldn't despise the day of small beginnings anyway, that's for sure.

And as you and other, Wycliffe, I think, has more PhDs in linguistics than any organization in the world. That's what I've, yeah. And so you've been very diligent, that's the point.

Now, suddenly you take a paradigm shift with a culture of many 80-some years. You're now doing something, a new way to speed up the process. And the new process, you now have looked, as Wycliffe,

from 150 years, how many years before the last language will be starting in translation? The goal is by 2025.

2025. 2025. From 2000, what was it, 2150? 2,500 remaining languages? No, no, when was the last one? Anyway, 150 years old.

Oh, 150 years on, right. Okay, now it's down to 15 years. Yeah, and counting quickly.

Yes, because we're all pressing them. You gotta do it by 220. Start praying for them, you know, to fast forward.

And we wanna see, by 2020, all the languages of the world having the word of God in it. So tell me the difference between the Wycliffe way that you and your wife, Gloria, did languages there in Timor, and what you're now doing in The Seed Company. Yeah, there's a very large and dramatic shift taking place right now in who the translators are.

So for approximately 200 years, and then culminating in our times with Cameron Townsend's vision, Westerners were the primary translators of translations, but we're not the native speakers. So we brought it, we came in having to learn a lot about language, a lot about linguistics, a lot about exegesis, and it was a lot of work, but that's what God did through the West in the cross-cultural work for about 200 years. I think my wife and I are the last ones of this generation of 200 years, started by William Carey, to be carrying that torch, because number one, very few are actually joining organizations to do it the way we did it.

So the recruiters are concerned, forgetting that maybe God's doing something new. They're out trying to figure out and hire people, you know, consultants to get more people in, and it's not happening. And at the same time as they're running around trying to do that, all these native speakers, the indigenous people who have been there during the last 200 years of Western mission are rising up to translate the word in their own language themselves.

And it's happening so quickly that the demand is outpacing the ability for even our organization to keep up with them. So the Seed Company was launched by Wycliffe 10 years ago to do exactly that. The Seed Company leadership saw something on the horizon.

Something's changing, less cross-culture workers are doing it, the native speakers are doing it, they're crying for it, they're demanding it, they're doing it if they have help or not. It's not a matter of if, I mean, they're already started. So they launched the Seed Company and said, here's your mandate, here's \$600,000 from a major donor, and here's your mandate, go out and figure out how to engage them in translation and equip them to do the work.

That was 10 years ago. Now it's surging everywhere. And it was one language here, and then it was a second language here.

And on a weekly basis, in my role, I review all the projects that come in. And just this week, a new project came in from Tanzania. There's 10 language projects starting, and they want to work together.

And it's New Tribes, and it's Word for the World India, which is an Ethiopian Bible translation organization led by Ethiopians. And it's Wycliffe, and it's IMB, and it's the Seed Company. And they're running around trying to grab anybody else who'll join the partnership.

And they got 10 languages, and they said, we're gonna do orality, we're gonna do translation, we're gonna do recordings, we gotta get this done, and we want it done in like six years. Oh, isn't this great? Wow, you ought to hear them at a soccer game or a football game. This is better than a football game.

Let's give the Lord a hand. Amen. You know, we had three from Nagaland here, and they were a part of one of the groups that had no Bible in their particular language.

And so they kept saying, we need to have a Bible. Well, Dr. Ron Smith was leading our School of Biblical Studies at the time up here in Makapela at the other end of this island. We have a place there.

And as we were praying over it, we contacted Wycliffe and they said, well, we don't have any more to help there in Nagaland right now, but they encouraged us to go ahead. So we went ahead and kept referring back to them, and they said, oh, that's fine, that's fine. And we got a whole New Testament, and we printed it, and it was cleared by some of the Wycliffe people helping us.

So in a sense, that was the seed of the seed company, because we got it to every home in Nagaland in the early 80s. And it was done by three Nagas with Dr. Smith. And I just looked at that as something Lord just told us to do.

And we felt that we were not qualified, but somehow it got done. And they say it's a pretty good translation. So I think that what God is really doing in the Bible translation, he's doing in the whole of missions, because everybody's a missionary.

When we started out in 1960, I was preaching out in Nigeria in 61. And I was challenging the Nigerian young people, the Africans, I said, God wants to send you out as missionaries to other countries even. And an older American missionary took me aside afterwards.

And he said, Lauren, you can't do that. And I said, do what? He said, these are natives, we're the missionaries. I said, their Bible says the same as my Bible.

And that dear brother said, I never thought about that. Because the mindset was Westerners are missionaries, others are receiving nations. That was the terminology in fact.

And everybody must be the receiving nation, everyone must be the sending nation, because God wants it totally mixed. And what is your encouragement for us tonight about Bible translation? I'd like to add something to what you just said in response to that. I was in Ethiopia a couple of years ago and checking out the Word for the World, complete Ethiopian run and led Bible translation organization.

So from the C Company perspective, and as a translation consultant, I was curious, I wanna know how they're doing. So I showed up there and I spent two weeks with these three guys working in three different languages on the Book of Romans, not an easy book. And we went through it gruelingly verse by verse and they found out what it was like to have a consultant check.

Verse by verse, asking them lots of questions, just going up, figuring out what they're doing. It was a tough session on them for two weeks. And I started telling them about the second week.

I said, you guys are very good translators. You're the native speakers, you're intuitive. All you had to have with the tools, a little training and you're producing a translation that is better than any cross-cultural worker could possibly produce for you.

And you're doing it for your own people. That is the end, the final stage of Bible translation. Oh, praise God.

Because it is now a native speaker, indigenizing it into their hearts, their culture, their language, their social structures. I said that all week long, the second week, I really wanted them to believe me, but they didn't. And then when we were finally finished and I handed my report to them, with all the, there's always lots of corrections.

We all have those. I praised them and said, you guys go do the rest of Ethiopia now. And then they said, you know, you've been saying that all week, but we didn't believe you because we were always told, years ago, we wanted to translate the Bible into our language, but we were told that was the work of foreign missionaries, the foreign experts, that we couldn't do it because we didn't have the skills and the training.

He said, but you have been convincing us all week that we do have the skills and the training and we are doing good work. So it was the first time where they actually believed that the Western missionary was saying, you are the translators. We're here to support you.

Go finish your country. And they said, it's exactly what we're going to do now. Ah, isn't that a good word? Thank you very much.

And thank you, Gil. We do honor you. Gloria, would you mind standing up and just saying hi to the people there? Hi.

She is better looking, don't you think? Yeah. Sorry about that, Gil. She's better looking, I said.

Yeah. Yes, you were smart. God has given us his word.

There's only one book that is God's book. All others are spinoffs from it. We thank God for books.

I engage in them myself. But there's one book that is God's book. And we must understand that the word of God is powerful.

It's quick. It'll penetrate even to the marrow of the bone. And this word needs to get out.

We need to begin to pray and turn our prayers toward how can we get the word of God to every person or rather every home in the world. If you get them to every home, that means every person will eventually get to read the word of God, their own family Bible. We want to see this accomplished.

Do you think it can be done in just the next 10 years? It will be done when people rise up and say, I will do my part to get it accomplished. Because all over the world, they're waiting for it. In many parts of the world, they've heard about it, but they don't have it.

And they're like that little lady in the red faded dress. I don't have a Bible. Do you have a Bible? No one in our town has a Bible or any of the towns around us.

And that's stuck in my heart. And so when we began to start out on this, getting a Bible to every home, some of the island breezers are here like my, they had so many luau's across this state that even we were tired of luau's by the time that your years of the Bible, we called it because it went into the second year to finish it. And as we began to see what God did though, it was just a model in microcosm of what God wants to do in a macro way around the world.

Why? What is it that is so powerful about the word of God? Now think about what the word of God is to you. Why would it be more powerful than any other book? Even good books about Jesus and so on that people have written. What's so powerful about it? Well, I find that in the book of John chapter one, it says in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God.

Now the word came and put on flesh and dwelt among us. Who is that word? What's his name? In other words, Jesus is the word within the word. Now he's the one that as the Holy Spirit brings life, it brings forth Jesus in every book of the Bible.

And when you begin to understand that and you start with Genesis, you realize as Colossians says, Jesus is the creator of Genesis. He's the liberator of Exodus. He is the high priest of Leviticus.

He's the good spy of numbers. He's the lawgiver of Deuteronomy. He's the conqueror of the book of Joshua.

He's the righteous judge of the book of Judges. He's the kinsman redeemer of the book of Ruth and of the Samuels. He's the second David, the greater David.

And in the book of Kings, both books, he's the King of Kings. And in Chronicles, he's the one that keeps the records, including writing your name in the Lamb's book of life. In the book of Ezra, he's the one that rebuilds our temples.

And he, just as Ezra originally rebuilt the temple. Or Nehemiah, he builds our walls of protection around us. In the book of Esther, he's the King that gives the edict that saves his people from obvious destruction that was coming.

And the book of Job, he's the one where he says, now my eyes, I'm gonna see him personally, but now I understand. I've just been hearing with the ears, but now I see. And then God, whenever he gets that revelation of Jesus, then God gives him double for his trouble.

And then in the book of Psalms, he's the object of our praise. In the book of Proverbs, he's the wisdom of God. In the book of Ecclesiastes, Jesus is the great preacher.

In song of Solomon, he's the lover of our soul. In the book of Isaiah, Jesus is the one that is high and lifted up. And the train fills the temple, the house is filled with smoke.

The glory of the Lord is seen there as he is sitting upon the throne, but he's also the suffering servant where he is wounded for our transgressions and he dies for our sins. In the book of Jeremiah, he's the very weeping prophet that as he gives the words and people spurn the word of God, Jesus himself is weeping there as you see him in Jeremiah's life. Lamentation, he's the tears of God.

And in Ezekiel, he's the bronze one that before him, Ezekiel fell as a dead man. In the book of Daniel, you see his hand writing on the wall a message to Belshazzar. Many, many tinkle you a farce and you've been weighed in the balance and found wanting.

He's also the stone not made with hands crushing the foundations of the kingdoms of this world. Their foundations are their worldviews and his kingdom will rise out of the word of God that gives us his worldview. And he's also the fourth man in the fiery furnace.

That's Jesus there with you in whatever situation. In the book of Hosea, a man is weeping over his wife that has turned to prostitution. And as he's weeping and asking God, what is it that I have done wrong? He hears a voice behind him and saying, oh Israel, he uses the word Ephraim, but oh Israel, why have you gone whoring after other gods? And he is that spurned husband by many who have been so, so unfaithful to Jesus.

In the book of Joel, Jesus is the latter reign revival. There is no revival without Jesus. He is revival.

And if you want revival, then you want Jesus because that's who he is. In Amos, he's the cascading justice that flows down because he is a righteous Jesus. In Obadiah, he is the righteous judge of the nations.

And in the book of Jonah, he's the God of the second chance. Aren't you glad you received a second chance? In the book of Micah, he's the one that does justice, loves mercy, and he walks humbly with his God. And in the book of Nahum, he's the wrath of God.

While in the book of Habakkuk, he's the one that we write about and make the vision of him plain so that others may run and that the knowledge of Jesus will cover the earth, even as the waters cover the sea. In the book of Zephaniah, he sings over us with joy whenever we're pleasing to him. And in the book of Haggai, you see he's the one that is shaking the earth.

And he's the one that is the latter glory that is greater than the former glory in the church. In the book of Zephaniah, he cleanses the robes of the high priest. And he's the one that says, it's not by your might, it's not by your power, but it's by my spirit, saith the Lord.

In Malachi, he brings the generations together, sons to fathers and fathers to sons. While in the book of Matthew, he is the Messiah. He's the one that they've been waiting for for so long.

In the book of Mark, he is the supreme commander. While in Luke, he's the son of man. And in John, the son of God.

In the book of Acts, he's the builder of his church. In the book of Romans, he's not only the second Adam, but he's also the one that brings us to Abba, our father. And we become joint heirs with Jesus as a result of that.

In first Corinthians, he is the love that is greater than faith and hope. In second Corinthians, he's the true apostle. While in the book of Galatians, he's all nine of the fruit of the spirit.

In Ephesians, he's not only the chief cornerstone, but he's also the full armor of God. When you put on the armor of God, you're putting on Jesus. And that is who the armor of God is, our protector in every way.

In the book of Philippians, he's the one that emptied himself of the glories of heaven and came and took the form of man, but then went through all that we would ever go through and finally went beyond, taking on himself the sins of the world and dying and going to a borrowed grave. And then going to the bottom of hell where he took the keys of death, hell, and the grave. And Jesus was highly exalted by the father above every name and every knee will bow before him.

And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the father. Say his name, Jesus. This is the one we're talking about.

And in Colossians, Jesus is holding the worlds together, even the Adams together by his word. You wonder how it happens. That's Jesus.

And he also holds your families together and your ministries together. That's what Jesus is doing for all of us when we don't even give him the glory for it, but we should. In first Thessalonians, he's like the nursing mother and the caring father.

In second Thessalonians, he's the coming king. Are you looking for him? He's coming again. And in first Timothy, we find that Jesus is the one who is the mediator between God and man.

He is the mediator, but he's also the model elder. He is the elder among all elders and you can always pattern after him. In second Timothy, he's the multi-generational God, the God of the grandmother and the mother and Timothy.

While in Titus, he cleanses the church. He's the one that can do that. While in the book of Philemon, he's the one that sets the slaves free and both literally in history, but in all of our lives, he sets us free as slaves of sin.

While in the book of Hebrews, he's not only after the order of Melchizedek, but he's the author and the finisher of our faith. That's Jesus. And he's the one that is the rest of faith.

And if you want rest and need rest from all the stress, it's Jesus that will give it to you. In the book of James, Jesus is our good works that is greater and without it, faith is dead. And so that good works has to be Jesus himself working through us.

In first Peter, he says to the, at that time, persecuted church going through martyrdom and Nero's time, he says, cast all your cares upon me, I care for you. And in second Peter, he's precious. In first John, he says, if you'll confess your sins to me, I'll be faithful and just to forgive you of your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

He says, if you love me, you'll keep my commandments. And if you know me, you'll love me. Here's the circle that begins in our lives.

Second, John, he's the perfect pastor, the model pastor. And in third John, he's the pioneer that takes care of other pioneers that are strangers when they're out there doing the work of God. And in Jude, I've forgotten which chapter it was, but it talks about there, the three prophets, all false prophets, and they're alive and real today in the world in many forms, in many ways.

And one is after Abel, Cain rather, who killed his brother, Abel. There are those that are trying to kill their brothers through one way or the other, destroy ministries or destroy characters and so on. The second one is the role of Abraham, I'm trying to, Chorazin.

And he's the one that was the dividing of the brothers. You remember this situation? Well, the world opened up and swallowed him and all of his followers, but he was trying to bring division among the people of God. And then of course, there was the one that was trying to curse the people.

And as he would curse the people, then instead God would turn it to a blessing. But all of those three are still there out in the world today. And then we come to the book, well, to the end of that chapter and that book, which is Jude.

And you see that he has dominion, he has the glory, he has the majesty. And then we enter into the last book of the Bible, which is the book of the revelation of Jesus Christ. It's not the revelation of the antichrist.

It shows how Jesus overthrows the antichrist, overthrows the devil, overthrows everyone that is against him. And we see him in all of his glory, so much so that the man of God, John, falls before him as a dead man. And oh, I can't say it enough.

Come up here and help me, Paul. Paul, he can quote the whole book of Revelation. Don't do it tonight.

It takes two hours. But I want you to tell us about the revelation of Jesus. From Revelation chapter one.

I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and the kingdom and the patient endurance that arouse in Jesus, was on that island Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. On the Lord's day, I was in the spirit and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet which said, write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and even Laodicea. I turned around to see that voice that was speaking to me.

And when I turned, I saw someone like a son of man, was Jesus, dressed in a robe, reaching down to his feet with a golden sash around his chest. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were like a blazing fire.

His feet were like bronze glowing in the furnace. And the sound of his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand, he held seven stars.

And out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

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