

## NEWS from WAYNE and SALLY DYE

Sept. 2019

All of you who are on our team are making profound changes in the world. Whether you are giving time in prayer or financial gifts or with encouraging communication, you have a part in making amazing changes in how translated Scriptures are being used effectively around the world.

WHAT WE ARE DOING NOW? We still live in the same house and work at the same place, but I am now “Senior Faculty”, i.e. I can choose how much to do. We are still teaching cross-cultural Christian workers at Dallas International University and our work is still financed through our membership in Wycliffe Bible Translators. Our health and energy have slowly decreased, but through prayer and careful use of medicine, with a few lifestyle changes, we are still able to do a more limited version of our work. I travel overseas each year to a very large mission media conference held alternately in the Netherlands or Thailand. We also have a role in mentoring our grandchildren.

IMPORTANT: Please change our email addresses to [wayne\\_dye@diu.edu](mailto:wayne_dye@diu.edu) and [sally\\_dye@diu.edu](mailto:sally_dye@diu.edu). --- [@sil.org](mailto:@sil.org) will **disappear** into cyberspace on Sept 1<sup>st</sup>. It won't be forwarded and we won't be notified.

FROM GIAL to DALLAS INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY. Our little grad school to train Bible translators is growing into a larger institution that so far includes:

- The original grad school to train Bible translators (now called GIAL)
- A full undergrad program aimed at mission preparation
- The Abraham Center for advanced study of Judaism, Christianity and Islam that lays out historical relationships as well as crucial differences
- A world Center for Excellence in World Arts that teaches students at all levels, undergrad to PhD, how to help and encourage people in any culture to use their own artistic traditions in biblical worship and Christian creativity.

Rejoicing in Christ,

Wayne and Sally Dye

Pray for:

- Energy needed for each day
- Wayne's upcoming Bible translation conference paper
- Tim and Wayne's current Scripture engagement course
- Continued healing of Sally's abdominal issues
- Progress on Sally's book on how God works in history



## **SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT: Once a Question, Now a Movement**

People around the world in hundreds of languages are being encouraged daily to hear, read, watch videos, and use the Word of God in order to know Him better. We are absolutely in awe of what God has done over the years and is doing more and more. Your participation with us has made a powerful difference. We live daily with the quiet joy of knowing that YOU and all on our team have had a part in what turned out to be a major shift in how Bible translation and missions are done. God started these changes with different people, different visions, different situations, but it has come together as God led each in an amazing way.

Our own part of the story started back in the 1970s. Many of you were on our team at that time when the SIL International Director asked me to do graduate research, studying a selection of 15 Bible translation projects. The assignment was to study in depth why some translation projects resulted in many new believers while others did not see significant engagement with their Bible translations. Was this just the Holy Spirit using the Bible in His sovereign way, as most of us in Wycliffe perceived it back then? Or were there important differences in the way translators worked that influenced how the Bible was being used? I thought the research would take about a year, and we would find a few useful tweaks in how all of us were working.

Instead, it took five years to complete the research and write-up. I found major differences in results that depended heavily on the way things were done. Though most members were skeptical, SIL sent us to many countries around the world to study more programs and report the findings in three-week "Scripture in Use" workshops. This gave opportunities to share what we had learned and hear what others were discovering in their translation projects. We were able to find better ways to present God's message effectively in each country.

Some people were already using effective techniques. Others took what they heard and changed their methods. Still others then did graduate study or by other means found out for themselves better ways to work. After a number of years, this basic idea came to be called Scripture Engagement and became a part of the ethos of Wycliffe and SIL all over the world. Today, Scripture Engagement is next to Bible translation in the core goals of both organizations.

Originally, Wycliffe and SIL saw little need to work together with outsiders on their translation projects. The research results helped translators to see that the job was too big for a couple of translators per language project. Effective Scripture Engagement would require cooperation between translators and many Christian organizations, as well as national churches. In 1999, Wycliffe began a new way of cooperating with other agencies called "Vision 2025." Other agencies had their own new visions of cooperating with each other for the Kingdom. Currently, it is taken for granted that all missions work together. In Wycliffe, that means we can bear down on translation with the realization that the work involved in enabling and encouraging Bible engagement doesn't all have to come from us. Our part is to encourage, empower, and sometimes to assist others in whatever is effective for engaging with God's Word.

The United Bible Societies had a parallel vision and also began a new direction as they saw more and more countries where the Bible was easily accessible, but people were not reading or hearing it in order to know God. The UBS has worked with people in several countries to increase engagement with the

Bible. In the US, the Taylor University Center for Scripture Engagement is pioneering research and teaching on this topic. In other countries, other Bible agencies are taking the lead, all to the same end.

Several of the new methods are built on an insight from our original research; we had found that people engage with the Bible to the extent it is relevant to the real issues of their lives. This "Relevance Principle" underlies the following rapidly developing strategies:

- Trauma healing is a major strategy that is effective around the world. When the Relevance Principle was explained to Christian leaders from the Congo, they responded with their greatest need. They wanted to know how to deal with the pain resulting from the horrible events that they had gone through during vicious civil wars. At that point, Wycliffe specialists in various disciplines including trauma counseling developed a model program for using Bible passages and prayerful support in trauma healing. God's ways to deal with remembered trauma really work! Lives are changed every day through these workshops. The method has therefore spread to many countries, including the ones you read about in world news. The American Bible Society now oversees the Trauma Healing Institute, but there are many others using this same approach, including SIL. People are being blessed in amazing ways.
- Alcoholism and other drug addictions damage many millions each day. Now there is a Scripture-based, culturally adaptable version of Celebrate Recovery that is starting to spread to help people through those issues. Some of our close colleagues have been developing this program, which is starting to spread widely.
- Another serious hindrance to Bible engagement is that people don't see how to trust God for personal help in their daily life. They just follow their culture, whether that is by ancestor worship or magic or focusing on getting more money. All are ways to pull Christians away from following Jesus, though the details are unique to each culture. Two colleagues have pioneered a workshop for Christian leaders called "Culture Meets Scripture" that helps them work through the issues and stop having divided loyalties.

All of these strategies exemplify the Relevance Principle in real life. These have been developed by people who are fully committed and uniquely qualified, and God is using them all.

Scripture Engagement is also about making the Bible easier to obtain and to pass on to others. Two important strategies are the core of this aspect, and they work together well.

- The oldest strategy for evangelizing and teaching adults is simply telling a Bible story and then discussing it with them. This method was rediscovered and developed over the last 25 years and it has since had a remarkable impact on the growth of Christian communities.
- While all this was developing, God used the world to provide a powerful new tool for Scripture engagement: those little smartphones we all carry. They are now available in every country and virtually in every ethnic group in the world. They reduce the need to buy Bibles and they can spread truth as easily as bluetoothing a Bible video to another phone. They often bypass political barriers and persecution. The logistics of getting Scriptures out to people has been revolutionized. Christians are making use of this with brilliant new apps, many new Bible movies, teaching materials in many languages and in myriad other ways. This whole development is scarcely 10 years old, and its impact is huge and still growing. Now you know why the main conference for professionals on this is the only overseas conference I take part in each year.

I could go on. There are many other valuable initiatives in various stages of development right now. More people are doing Scripture Engagement work than I can count. When we first started in with our part of this, we had no idea what God intended or how many people He was preparing to be part of this amazing movement. That is why we are so content these days. Colleagues see us as a kind of grandparents of this movement, though it is really God's movement, and He is doing more and more and more. YOU who have stood with us are part of what God is continuing to do. Every prayer and gift you contribute to our team and other teams involved in the Scripture Engagement movement makes you a partner in what God is doing around the world.

***Now glory be to God, who by his mighty power at work within us is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of—infinately beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, or hopes.***  
(Eph 3:20 Living Bible)



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**IMPORTANT: we have NEW EMAILS:**

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