

**The word of God is living and active. It is sharper than any sword that has two edges. It cuts deep enough to separate soul from spirit. It can separate joints from bones. It judges the thoughts and purposes of the heart. Nothing God created is hidden from him. His eyes see everything. He will hold us accountable for everything we do.**

Hebrews 4:11-12 (NIV)



# Winter **JAARS** Report

## Spring - 2013



### God's Word Is Truly Powerful



Our good friend Gary is responsible for archiving and other things. He forwarded this story.

**Melanie** is a Kagayanen speaker who works with translator Jacqueline.

Since the Kagayanen New Testament launching in 2008, the Kagayanen team has been working to digitally archive 32 years worth of Kagayanen materials. Recently, **Melanie** was working in the studio alone on audio file transcription. That day's task turned out to be a recorded testimony of another Kagayanen woman named Bing.

At first this tape was no different than any other transcription **Melanie** had worked on. But then, as she strained to make out the poor quality of the 22-year-old recording—rewinding and re-listening many times—it was like **God was repeatedly talking directly to her**. **Melanie**, too, was pretending to follow Christ, just like Bing on the tape. As **Melanie's** ears and fingers worked on the transcription, her heart knew what she needed to do. Tears streaming down her face, she gave her life to God, just as Bing had done.

**Melanie** was only 6 years old when that tape was made. Yet 22 years later, **God spoke His love to this Kagayanen and she responded**. All because of an archiving task in her own language!

This next story comes from Nigeria and is an illustration of what the Blaen team will be faced with as they become Bible translators. It is told by the President of Wycliffe, Bob Creson.

As the Mbe translation team was translating the Gospel of Luke, they came to chapter 2, verse 7, where Luke describes the first moments of Jesus' earthly life: "She gave birth to her first child, a son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them."

The Mbe translators used the word "ókpáng" for manger. "What's an ókpáng?" asked their consultant, John. One of the translators drew a picture. It was a cradle hung by ropes so the newborn could be laid in it and swung.

John asked. "What do the Translator's Notes say about the manger?" The Mbe translators read the notes and saw that "manger" referred to an animal feeding trough. So Jesus' first bed was an animal feeding trough.

The Mbe team objected. "We have always used the word ókpáng. We have used it for years, and that's what we should use."

The consultant pointed out that it was not just a matter of tradition. God expects us to find the best words that express the original meaning as accurately as possible. Furthermore, this word tells



### Praise 'n Prayer

- Sally's sister-in-law, Donna, recently entered hospice care, facing the end of her earthly journey. We got a call from John at 9:30 PM the on 17th, that Donna is in Heaven. We ask prayer for the peace of God to flood over John and his children. Yes, Donna is in Heaven, but there is much sorrow.
- Pray for guidance and help for the team of Blaen pastors awaiting training for translation. Pray that their motivation and excitement will not be lost.
- Pray for our summer travels. We expect to be away from home for about six weeks, spending time with family and visiting churches in California, and visiting the Blaens in the Philippines.

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us something profound about God. “When He came to live among us and bring salvation to us, He came in the lowliest way possible. He did not come and sleep in a nice ókpáng like every Mbe mother wants for her newborn. Instead, He showed us his unbelievable humility, so we need to find your best word for an animal feeding trough.”



One of the Mbe team said, “We feed our animals out of an old worn-out basket that is not usable anymore except to feed the animals. We call it ‘Édzábrí.’” Then John said, “Put that term in your rough draft and test it with Mbe speakers.”

The next weekend they read the story of Jesus’ birth to all kinds of church groups and individuals in Mbe villages. Often people asked about the word for manger. They understood what Édzábrí meant, but they weren’t sure it was the right choice. “We always say they laid Jesus in an ókpáng,” they said.

Each time they were asked, the translation team explained the reason they had chosen the new term. Jesus really did lie in a place where they fed animals. In this way, He demonstrated the humility that would characterize His years on earth.

As the Mbe people listened, they were visibly moved. Picturing the newborn baby Jesus lying in the animals’ feeding basket, they recognized in a new way that Jesus was willing to do whatever it took to reach them. As an adult, He would humble Himself by washing the disciples’ feet and then by dying on the cross. And this humility started right from birth.

No word in Scripture is too unimportant to translate carefully and accurately. And no language community is too unimportant to merit the Scriptures in the language they best understand. The translated Word frees people to respond to the God who humbled Himself for them. One day every knee will bow and every tongue—speaking every language—will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

### Blaan News

We have purchased our tickets to the Philippines. Guess who is going with us? Kathy! It has been 17 years since she has been in the Philippines, and we are excited about

her going with us. Many Blaans will want to connect with her, plus we hope she can spend time with the translation team, getting acquainted and figuring out how to best communicate with them. We leave from California on July 5 and return on July 26.

Please keep praying for the training of the Old Testament translation team. Things seem to have stalled, and because we are at such a great distance we are limited in what we can do to help.

### What we’ve been up to...

We continue to stay busy in the positions we love. Sally is finishing her 5<sup>th</sup> year at Metrolina Christian Academy. Leon continues to enjoy working with the Wireless Communication team at JAARS. He is also involved in the Union County Amateur Radio Society, a team committed to effective community communication in times of emergency.

Both of us have developed, by coincidence, the same malady which sobers us a bit. We both have been diagnosed with epiretinal membrane (‘macular pucker’), Leon in his left eye and Sally in her right. Sally’s is being closely watched. If it becomes more serious it may require eye surgery. All in all, we enjoy great health and strength for the tasks God has for us.



### Dear Family and Ministry Partners,

**What a privilege is ours—and yours—to know the Savior. How blessed are we to be called to serve Him. The only thing we can do in this life that really counts for eternity is to bring souls with us into the Kingdom of our Savior, Jesus Christ. People are the only thing from Earth that will last forever. Your faithful part with us will keep us going.**

**Christ is Risen; He is Risen Indeed!**

*Leon & Sally*

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**For Financial Partnership with Leon & Sally:**

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**Checks to WBT with a separate note saying: “For the ministry of Leon & Sally Winter.” Thank you!**