

# Bits from Bill

Using Information Technology to Help Bring the Word of God  
to the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil

March, 2023



## *A New Class*

Early in February, the first group of six students arrived to begin the Linguistics and Missiology Course here at the ALEM center. In mid-March they were joined by eight more students from another mission, who are here just to take the Linguistics part. They are a varied bunch—two families, and the rest single women—but all of them have heard the call of God to work in Bible translation.

So please pray for these students. For many, the material is new and somewhat difficult. Ask the LORD to give them understanding. And ask Him to show each student clearly where He wants them to serve after finishing.

## *A New Server*

In a recent Prayer & Praise Update, I mentioned the need for a new server computer here in the ALEM administrative office building. In addition to storing files, this server will also host the on-line learning system that I recently set up for the Courses department, as well as the control software for our internal network and Internet access.

One day after sending out the Update, I received an email from a partner church, offering to help with this purchase. This was a huge blessing! At this point there are still details to be worked out in order to get this donation here in an efficient manner. But the process is underway.

So please give thanks to God for this blessing. And pray that we would find the best way to get it here, in order to make maximum use of Kingdom resources.

## *A New Method*

There are times when the Old Tried-and-True does not fit a given situation. Since Wycliffe was founded, our goal has always been to produce written Scripture for each people group that we work with. As part of this, we also teach literacy, so that they can read the translated Word.

But there are situations where this is not practical. So more and more teams are taking an approach called “orality”, where key portions of Scripture are translated and recorded, so that people who cannot read can listen.

We still hope that these groups will someday be ready for the written Word. But for now, please give thanks for this new method, which opens doors for the Gospel to reach many who would otherwise never hear it.

## *Change*

Change is something that most people are not terribly fond of—including me. Most of us prefer the stability of things that remain the same, even if they are boring. However, that is not the way life works. Things change. *We* change. We grow up, get old, and eventually die. And along that road, many other things change.

Each of the things in the previous column represent change. Something new. For the students, it is a huge change as they begin training for a ministry that for most of them will occupy the rest of their lives. For the ALEM staff, it is a new group of people to work with, each with his or her own personality and calling from God.

The new server is a change in quality, rather than function. Although much will remain the same after it replaces the old servers, it will open doors for new possibilities that the old ones did not offer.

Orality is a change in method, with the same objective; make God’s Word available to all people on Earth in a language that speaks to their hearts. It represents a flexible approach to Bible translation tailored to meet the needs of certain people groups.

But in each case, change was not made for its own sake. Change was made in order to help advance the Kingdom of God on Earth. And this kind of flexibility is necessary in order to bring about the greatest Change of all—the change of eternal destination from Hell to Heaven among those who hear the gospel message.

So please give thanks for all the changes that God has brought about in order to make the Name of Jesus known to all of the inhabitants of Earth.



*Students having Phonetics Lesson*

## Praise

- For the good number of good students taking the ALEM Linguistics and Missiology Course.
- For the gift from the partner church that will enable ALEM to get a new server computer.
- For orality, which brings the Gospel message to many who would otherwise never hear it.

## Prayer

- That the students would do well in the course, and hear God's clear leading for afterward.
- That we would find the most economical way to get the funds for the server into Brazil.
- For the orality projects underway in Brazil, and the training of new workers in this method.

May the LORD guide you safely  
through all the changes that He  
brings about in your life, knowing  
that He has your best in mind,  
Bill

*For I know the thoughts that I think  
toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of  
peace and not of evil, to give you a  
future and a hope.*

Jeremiah 29:11

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Include a separate note saying "Preference for the  
Wycliffe ministry of Bill Penning, Ministry Account  
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