

The God's Story Project (TGSP)
Prayer & Praise Report # 2, February and March 2016
"Going Deep!"

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow!! Going Deep

USA

In a Sunday school that uses *Simply The Story* (STS), the leader of that class shared about a lady in her 70's, who has been a Bible Study Fellowship leader for more than 20 years. The lady stated that she will miss the STS class once it is over because she is learning so much. When asked what about the class made it different, she replied, "The depth...with STS I have learned to go deeper into scripture than any other study I have been a part of."

God's Story: From Creation to Eternity: One for Every Village!?

Africa

A mission leader recently reported on the results of using *God's Story* in a West African village. "At dusk, they played the *God Story*. It drew quite a crowd and it had everyone's attention. They were loving it. About 3/4 of the way thru, it got stuck and the controls on the dvd player weren't working ..."

After a couple of days the people fixed the player and played *God's Story* 3 times. Each time they liked the DVD better and better. The leader reported that the people anticipated and helped each other understand and were, "shushing the noisy kids, etc. It was quite a hit!"

As a result this mission leader reported, "... So now we're wishing we had more dvds, because we want to leave one in any village where they have the means to play it."



Training in West Kenya

In another remote village, where the chief hangs his two phones on a pole because it's the only spot for cell reception, this same mission group shared (STS style) the first three days of creation (Gen. 1:1-13) to a mixed group of about 15-20 people, including the chief, most of his family, and both wives. They all joined the discussion enthusiastically.

The next day the chief told the group sharing Bible stories, "There are two men who want to become Christ followers. One is a young [tribal] man about 30, who works everyday in the gold mines... The other is an older man, whose family live close..."

This mission group, who recently attended an STS training in West Africa, shared how God has been allowing them to teach God's Word in a way that the people can repeat. Listeners can share with others accurately and as often as they want without the listeners having the skills to read and write.

Village after village, this mission group continues to see God open doors as a result of deep discussion in the Word. They are receiving multiple invitations to return to many villages.

Our New Handbook!



Handbooks delivered!

We thank the Lord!

Three thousand printed Korean STS handbooks arrived. The handbook is also online for free download! Thank you Mary for your hard work investing in many Koreans to learn a tool that will help them in missions.

Mary recently shared a quick overview of STS to a members of a Korean executive committee, who represent about 850 churches in the USA. One man said that this was the best session of the 3 days.

Removing the Stigmatism of Shame

Asia

There is a little known part of our STS training that continues to impact people, especially in Asian countries. Several Asian leaders have shared that many of the children grow up never being encouraged for doing well because “that’s expected.” However, the children often hear when they don’t do well. As a result, many Asians give the appearance that all is perfect to avoid the shame of being corrected. This pattern contributes to higher suicide rates in some countries.

Some people are amazed that, in STS, we coach storytellers about what they do well, along with ways to improve. We carefully train our leaders how to coach storytellers so that they may have greater effectiveness when telling Bible stories. During the testimony time in a recent training in Taiwan, people continued to share about how the coaching impacted them.



Office staff with Korean handbooks.

Our Asia Liaison commented that some Westerners feel the coaching might cause shame for some people, especially in Asia. She asked the group in Taiwan what they might say regarding this issue. They responded, "They must not understand our culture. The human heart, and human nature, is the same. When someone has the right heart, then they may speak the truth to us in love. This kind of coaching in STS removes our discomfort and shows us how to do things the right way, and this is what we want."

Emotional Healing–God Cares

Masters and doctorate students recently attended an STS training in the Philippines at their seminary. Our instructor there shared a few comments after just the first day.

One church leader who was asked to speak with a Sikh woman from India said, "A sermon is like a meal in a fine restaurant--it's good, but you can't enjoy or cook it at home". This leader decided to try this newly discovered STS meal. The leader met with the woman, whose husband had left her for another woman. Three of her friends were also present.

The leader told the women the "Jars of Oil" story from 2 Kings 4:1-7. The woman explained how she was in terrible debt and her family in India mistreated her since childhood. As a result, this woman lived with bitterness.

After the leader finished the story, the woman began to cry and asked him about the God of this story. She accepted Christ as Savior and said God had sent the leader just for her!

When she returns to India in a few weeks, she plans to reconcile with her family.



How Many Ways to Describe the Effects of an STS Training on Lives?

We recently completed an STS training in Central Asia. One attendee shared about the result of discussing Bible stories, "... when we are in deep conversation with someone, we can figure out what this person needs. So when you know this person's needs, we can both go and dig deeper and God can help us to find a solution for this person's need."

Another person concurred stating, "the best thing that I like here is that you don't preach and press on the person, but you can help him to find the treasures by himself."

"... This training doesn't have us skip stones on the water, but we go deep and find treasures" said one person.

When it comes to writing notes at seminars, one person stated, "I usually take lots and lots of notes at a seminar and I have lots of great notes at home, but I don't remember all that I have learned at the seminar. But this time I have no notes, but I feel like I remember most of what you taught us. I am excited to see how God will use it in the future."

From another training, a Masters of Divinity candidate stated "You know, when I preach, people don't remember what I say; this is more powerful."



STS training in Western Kenya

Multiplying Depth in the Word!

In Western Kenya after just 2 workshops, one regular and the other an advanced workshop, our instructor wrote back regarding the progress of the students, "They feel very confident in their skills now and we have confidence in their abilities as well. They are now enthusiastically spreading out over the nearby islands to train leaders and lay people, evangelize and plant churches." One person reported that since the advanced workshop in February, he has led 40 people, including his family, to the Lord.

Refugee Update

Our time working with refugees in Europe proved eye opening and fruitful. Our small team, from 3 nations speaking 3 different languages, worked with refugees directly and with a group ministering to refugees. We desired to test several tools and methods, including ours, to see if spiritual results could be seen in a short amount of time.

By the end of 5 days, we saw several Arabic speakers hungry for the Word of God. All of the people who saw *God's Story: From Creation to Eternity* in Arabic wanted to discuss the Lord Jesus at greater length with our leader. The discussions were rich and deep. As well, each one asked for the Bible, including the one who couldn't read. We know of at least one man who became a believer, and think several others did as well, based on the discussions and the fact that some returned to watch *God's Story* again.

This experience has prompted us to develop 2 programs designed for reaching and discipling refugees. We hope to begin testing before this summer. Please keep this project in prayer.

Grateful to the Lord,
Andrea
Executive Director
The God's Story Project