

Planting God's Word



Description:

A story and an object lesson about Bible translation

Aims:

- Learn about the long translation process
- Pray for those waiting for God's Word in their own language
- Pray for those who work to translate God's Word into other languages

Audience:

Kindergarten (with plenty of adult helpers) through grade 6

Space Needed:

Classroom—best in a place where no one minds a little bit of messiness

Country/Area:

Not specified, confidential

Minimum Time Requirements:

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|---------------------------------|------------|
| • Object lesson | 10 minutes |
| • Story and discussion | 2 minutes |
| • Activity page | 5 minutes |
| • Slide presentation and prayer | 2 minutes |

Scripture to Study:

Galatians 6:9

Materials:

- Pumpkin, bean or melon seeds, enough for each child to have two or three seeds
- Styrofoam or paper cups
- Water
- Potting soil
- Tarp or sheet of plastic
- Pencils
- Bible
- Computer
- Digital projector
- *My Volcano Adventure Resource* CD available at: http://www.wycliffe.ca/store/book_kids.html
- Coconut, whole
- Copies of activity page 5 (last page of this lesson)
- Prayer request for a Bibleless People Group from www.wycliffe.org/Pray/BiblelessPeoplesPrayerProject.aspx (optional)
- Copies of footsteps (10 pages following this lesson) optional

Pre-class Preparations:

- Lay out supplies for planting seeds. Place cups around the table, about one foot apart. Place a pencil beside each cup.
- Spread plastic, or tarp, on the floor in the area where the planting project will take place.
- Set up computer and projector with *My Volcano Adventure* Resource CD cued up to play Footworks: "Run With It" (available at: http://www.wycliffe.ca/store/book_kids.html)
- Make one copy of the 10 footsteps for use with the activity page discussion (optional)
- Make one copy of activity page 5 for each child.
- Obtain a prayer request for a Bibleless People Group from www.wycliffe.org/Pray/BiblelessPeoplesPrayerProject.aspx (optional)

Class Time:

OBJECT LESSON

Gather the children around the tables. Say,
Come and stand in front of a cup. Let's plant some seeds.
What steps should we follow as we plant the seeds?

Responses should include:

- Put a hole in the bottom of the cup. (Use a pencil to do this.)
- Fill the cup with soil.
- Make a little hole in the soil.
- Place the seeds in the hole.
- Cover it.
- Water it.

Give each child an extra cup to go under their plant cup to catch water drips.

Work through the steps as the children name them. Make sure not to leave anyone behind. Ask,

Where are the pumpkins (or beans or melons)? We planted the seeds. Why don't we have any pumpkins?
I don't even see a plant!"

Materials:

- Pumpkin, bean or melon seeds, enough for each child to have two or three seeds
- Styrofoam or paper cups
- Water
- Potting soil
- Tarp or sheet of plastic
- Pencils
- Coconut
- Bible

Accept responses from the class. Make sure they understand that plants need time to grow and produce fruit. Hold up the coconut. Ask,

Can you guess how long someone has to wait to get a coconut after planting a coconut tree?

After a few guesses tell them,

It takes eight years!

Ask,

Can I just ignore my seeds and leave them sitting here for weeks, then come back later and get a pumpkin (or beans or melons)?

Students will likely respond that you need to water and care for the plant.

Continue by saying,

You are right. It takes time and care for a plant to grow from a seed, doesn't it? Sometimes we have to wait for good things.

Read Galatians 6:9.

Talk about the harvest of good things that come to those who don't give up on doing what God calls them to do. People who translate the Bible often work a long time before they get to see the "fruit" or results of their hard work.

STORY AND DISCUSSION

Tell the story of Simon Liga. (Note: Simon Liga is a pseudonym.) If you know another story of someone who waited, or worked, a long time for God's Word in his or her own language, you are welcome to include it.

Simon Liga taught God's Word to his people. Way back in 1939, he wanted to translate the Bible into his own Amuli language. He could not do that, but Simon did not give up hope.

A long time later, 41 years to be exact, a couple arrived in Simon's village to learn the Amuli language. By this time (1980), Simon was 65 years old. Still, he began the new work of helping the couple translate God's Word into Amuli.

They finished the translation in July 1996. Can you do the math? How old Simon was by then? (Pause). He was 81!

When the newly printed New Testaments arrived in the village, Simon knew about it. But he also knew that he would never get to use it. He was about to die. Still, he refused to let that disappoint him. This is what he said, 'Even though I won't get to use the book, my children and grandchildren will have it. I am satisfied.'

Simon felt that he had finished the work of his life. He went to be with Jesus, before midnight, on the day the New Testament arrived.

(Adapted from *Insite, Quotes Worth Communicating*, February 2004. Originally quoted in "God's Word in Our Language." *In Other Words*, January 1997.)

Discuss these questions:

Question: How long did Simon wait for God's Word in his own language? **Answer:** 57 years.

Question: What did Simon do to make it possible to have God's Word in Amuli?

Answer: He worked with the couple that had come to learn the language.

Question: Why do you think he was willing to work for so many years to translate God's Word?

Possible answers: Because God's Word was so precious to him. He wanted to be able to read the Bible in his own language so that he could be sure that he knew what it said. He wanted his family and friends to be able to read the Bible for themselves.

Question: Why do you think people have to wait a long time for a Bible translation to be completed?

Answer: There are many steps to translating the Bible. All of them are important. Translators can't skip any of the steps.

Add,

Just like it takes a long time for a tree to grow,
it takes a long time for translators to complete a Bible.

ACTIVITY PAGE

Distribute activity page 5. Say,

Let's look at this page and learn about the steps involved in translating the Bible into another language.

Work on the activity page together. You will find the answers below and on the large footprints that you may want to use as you discuss the process. The footprints will serve as a good review for each succeeding lesson. Talk about the different factors involved in translating the Bible. Discuss why people may wait a long time for the gift of God's Word in their own language.

Order of translation steps:

1. Decide where to go
2. Assemble the team
3. Create an alphabet
4. Write a draft
5. Teach people to read
6. Revise the draft
7. Use God's Word
8. Make final changes
9. Print new Bibles
10. Celebrate together

SLIDE SHOW AND PRAYER

Show *Footworks: Run with It* from the *My Volcano Adventure* Resource CD.

Pray for people who still wait to have the Bible in their own language. Pray for those working to translate the Bible into other languages. You may want to use a current request from the Wycliffe Bible Translators website.

Tell the children,


You may take your plants home. Remember, you need to care for them if you want them to grow! Every time you water your plant, remember the people who still wait for God's Word in their own languages. You can even take a minute to stop and pray for them. Pray for God's Word to grow and bear fruit in each of their lives.

Materials:

- Copies of activity page 5
- Optional—a copy of the 10 footsteps found at the end of this lesson to use in the discussion with the activity page
- Pencils

Materials:

- Computer
- Digital projector
- Resource CD
- Screen, sheet, or blank white wall
- Prayer request for a Bibleless People Group from www.wycliffe.org/Pray/BiblelessPeoplesPrayerProject.aspx (optional)




1. Decide where to go.



2. Assemble the team.




3. Create an alphabet.



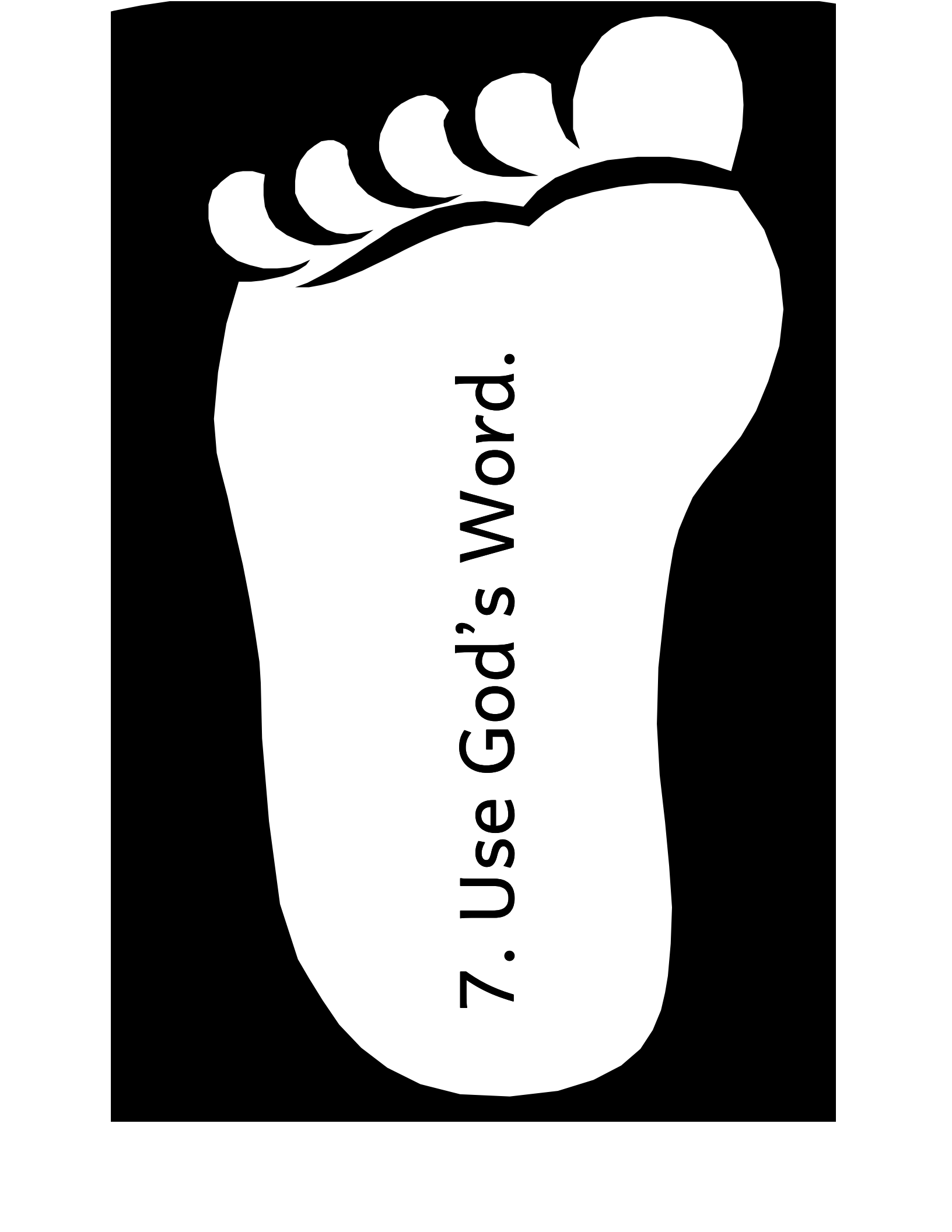
4. Write a draft.




5. Teach people to read.



6. Revise the draft.




7. Use God's Word.



8. Make final changes.



9. Print new Bibles.



10. Celebrate together.

Planting God's Word

After planting a coconut palm tree, it takes years before the fruit finally comes. Then everyone celebrates because the fruit gives life and strength to their bodies. Translating the Bible is like that. It takes a lot of time and effort, but it offers eternal life and strength to people everywhere!

Translation is taking the words and meanings of one language and putting them into another language.

Place the "Bible translation steps" in the order that makes sense to you:

Decide where to go.



Print the new Bibles.

Create an alphabet.



Assemble the team.



Teach people to read.

Celebrate together!



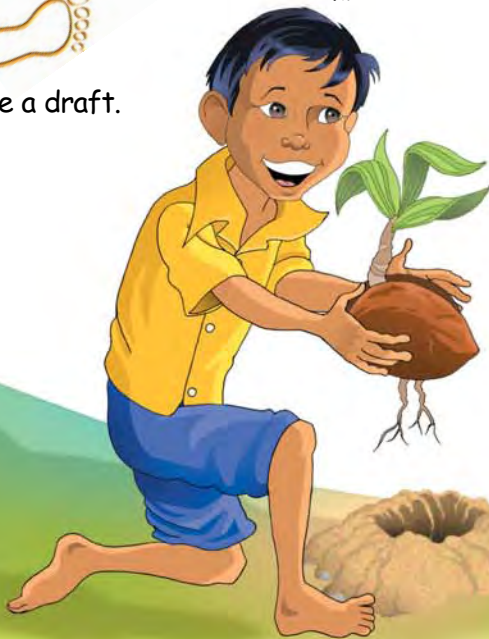
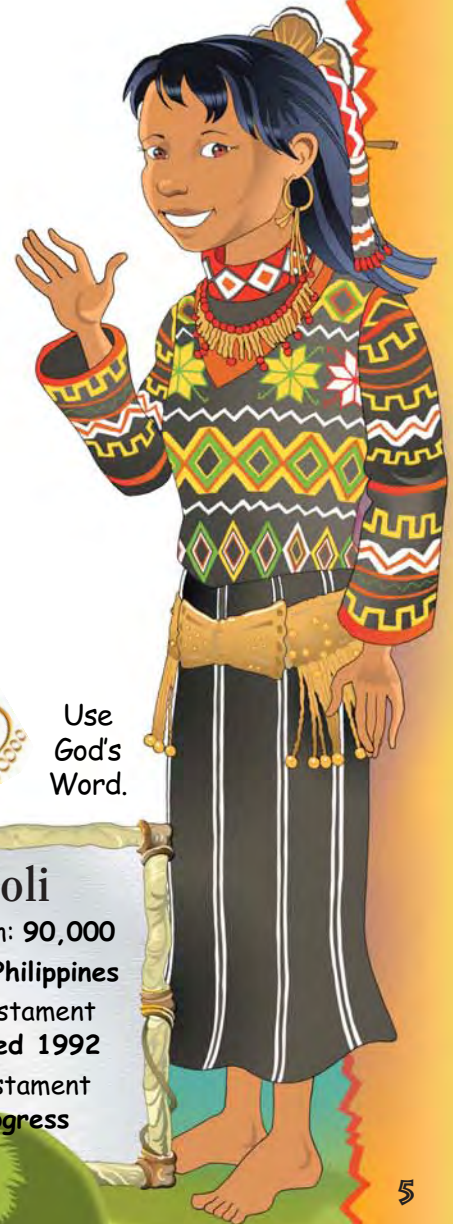
Revise the draft.

Write a draft.

Make final changes.



Use God's Word.



Tboli
 population: 90,000
 location: Philippines
 New Testament completed 1992
 Old Testament in progress