

biblefresh

It could change your world

BIBLEFRESH Translation Church Pack

During 2011 we're all getting back into our Bibles as we take part in **BIBLEFRESH**. But what about the many millions of people who haven't got a Bible? Not just because they can't afford one, but because there simply isn't one in their own language?

They can't spend 2011 getting into their Bibles, because they don't exist. So, this year we can all help to change that reality for people in the West African country of Burkina Faso.

You can help people like Jacob, who's been a Christian for 20 years, but never read the Bible in his own language. Or Agratou, who wants her grandchildren to be the first generation in her family to be able to read the Bible.

How? Wycliffe Bible Translators and Bible Society are working together with local people to translate the New Testament into the Bissa Barka language and the Old Testament into the neighbouring Bissa Lebir language.

This would ultimately bring the life-changing message of God's love to more than 580,000 people. Then they can get into the Bible too.

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR CHURCH

The following activities are designed as ideas for your church service or small group session for you to pick and mix. They aim to help your church experience what it is like for the millions of people who do not have the Bible in their own language. And through your church's gifts and prayers you will be helping bring communities in Burkina Faso the Bible in their heart language.

1. God speaks a foreign language

Introduce the Bible reading in the normal way but ask someone from your church who speaks another language to do the Bible reading.

You can download Bible readings in a variety of languages from www.biblegateway.com

Pretend that everything is normal and ask them to read the passage aloud in their own language.

At the end ask what people think God is saying to us in these verses?

Explain that for many people this is how they hear the Bible. It is as if God speaks a foreign language.



Or

Ask who could help you find the reading for today's service in the Bible.

Ask the volunteer to find the passage for the first reading, but give them a foreign language Bible.

They may still be able to find the right place by counting the books, but a Bible in a language we don't understand is little use. We need to hear God speaking our language to be able to understand and engage with the Bible's message. Around two thirds of the world's population has an oral culture and it's vital that Bible recordings are available to bring the Bible alive. Yet only 3% of languages have the Bible in audio.

2. Quiz

- 1) How many languages are there in the world?
a) more than 2,400 b) more than 4,700 c) **more than 6,900**

- 2) How many of these are still waiting for just one book of the Bible to be translated?
a) 1,500 b) 3,000 c) **4,500 - more than half the world's languages**

- 3) And how many of them have translations of the whole Bible?
a) 217 **b) 438** c) 1,222

Or

Ask if anyone in church speaks another language? Invite people to come up to the front, to represent each of the languages spoken in your church.

Tell your church that there are more than 6,900 languages in the world.

Ask everyone to stand up, then get half of the church to sit down.

More than half the world's languages still wait for even one book of the Bible.

3. Second Bible reading

Explain that you are now going to study the Bible and read or invite someone to read 2 Timothy 3.14–17 in the following version without any further explanation:

But you, it remains firm in which you have learned and of which you are convinced, because you know of whom you learned it. From your childhood you know the Holy Scriptures, that can provide the necessary wisdom for the salvation by means of the faith in Christ Jesus. All the Scripture is inspired by useful God and to teach, to reprimand, to correct and to instruct in justice, in order that the servant of God entirely is enabled for all good work.

Allow people to be bemused and confused by the translation! Explain that this text is from the Spanish New International Version. It has been put through an internet translation tool to provide an English version – but a very poor one! Make the point that it's not just having a translation that's important – it needs to be accurate and to use the language and ideas of the local people. That's why Bible translation is such a huge job and can take a long time.

Invite people to turn to their own Bible and read 2 Timothy 3.10–17. We rely on an accurate and understandable translation to hear God's Word.

If you have a different reading for your service, try using an internet translation site like www.babelfish.altavista.com and translate the reading into a foreign language – and back.

And if you have a Collect prayer or say the Lord's Prayer why not ask the entire congregation to pray in different languages of their choice at the same time.

4. Drama improvisation

Ask two of your church members to try to remember their French from their school lessons. One of them has to pretend to be a shopkeeper, the other a customer.

The customer tries to ask for items in French – only to be given the wrong thing every time.

Now imagine what it would be like to try to read the Bible in a foreign language. When people hear the Bible in their mother tongue, lives change:



'After the New Testament was launched, churches began to preach, study and sing in the Bissa Lebir language. This is making a revival in the Bissa Lebir people. Suddenly, God is speaking to people in their own language' says Josias from Burkina Faso.

5. PowerPoint

Show this 2 minute PowerPoint presentation to your church to explore further what it means to individuals and communities to hear the Bible's message in their own language. Your church's gifts can help us reach communities across Burkina Faso who wait for the Bible's message.

<http://www.slideshare.net/wycliffeuk/biblefresh-burkina-faso-7057584>

6. Stories from Burkina Faso

Print out the inspirational stories and photos from Burkina Faso. Ask different people from the congregation to come and read out a story to the church.

<http://www.biblefresh.com/resources/translation/why-translation/stories-from-burkina-faso/>

7. Prayer video for Burkina Faso

Show this 2 minute YouTube video to your church to encourage them to support and pray for Christians in Burkina Faso.

<http://www.biblefresh.com/bftv/?md=134#t>

8. Fundraising ideas

Look in the budget

In the year that we celebrate 400 years of the free availability of the Bible in our language you could think about giving 4% of the church's budget as a birthday present to help our brothers and sisters who have never had Scripture in their own language.

Putting the fun back into fundraising

Coming up with one creative way to raise money for the Burkina Faso Bible translation project will have a number of positive knock-on effects. It will help church members appreciate their own Bibles more. It will help them feel connected with Christians around the globe. It will help them to give cheerfully!

Ban the Bible

To help the congregation value their Bibles more, why not have a Sunday morning service where personal Bibles are gently confiscated for the service, and readings are done in another language. Alternatively have a 'Bring your Bible' month, where regulars are charged a nominal amount to 'hire' a church Bible when they have left theirs at home, with proceeds going to the Burkina Faso Bible translation project.

Bible memorising competition

Encourage the children to memorise either the books of the Bible in order or a chapter from the Bible. This could be sponsored to raise money for the Burkina Faso Bible translation project. Alternatively, get the youth in teams to create some Bible art that can be auctioned.

Book exchange

To encourage more sharing of good Christian books, ask the congregation to bring in some of their favourite Christian books for an exchange programme. Everyone donates their books to be swapped around the church - but for every book that is exchanged 20p goes to the Burkina Faso Bible translation project.

Do a Bible audit

As a fun way to get people thinking about the wealth of resources we have, suggest that the congregation look through their bookshelves and donate the following amounts to the Burkina Faso Bible translation project:

£1 for every Bible you own

20p for every Christian worship CD you own

1p for every Christian book you own.

Buy the BIBLEFRESH handbook

All proceeds from the handbook will go to the Burkina Faso Bible translation project.

9. Other activities to pick and mix

Bring and share lunch

Why not celebrate language and culture at a bring and share lunch. Invite people to dress up in clothes from around the world, bring music, sing songs or share a game. Donations from the lunch can help bring the Bible to those who still wait. Visit websites like www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes for recipes from around the world.

Prayer group

Pray for the millions of people who wait for the Bible in their language and in a format they can use. Every five seconds someone goes blind but Braille Bibles exist in only 30 languages.

Pray for Wycliffe Bible Translators and Bible Society who are working together with local people to translate the New Testament into the Bissa Barka language and the Old Testament into the neighbouring Bissa Lebir language.

Songs

Use some foreign language songs in your worship - if you have a foreign group/community in your church ask them to sing and tell you what the words mean.

10. Please give

Please encourage your church to give generously to the translation work in Burkina Faso so that people like Jacob and Agratou can have a Bible in their own heart language.

- £30 could translate a short passage – such as the parable of the sower
- £70 could pay for a new language account of Jesus' feeding of the 5,000
- £200 could see the creation account in Genesis re-told in a language that truly touches lives

Either give online here: www.biblefresh.com/give

Or if you wish to send a cheque, please make it payable to Stewardship and attach it to the form which you can download from here:

<http://www.biblefresh.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Biblefresh-Appeal-Fund-Stewardship.pdf>

