



Joshua & Kelsie Steele

November/December 2016

## Translators, Inc.



*Every morning on weekdays, Abigail and I read through a portion of Bible First. We are now on Lesson 10!*

One of the most common questions I am asked as a missionary is how I would describe a “typical day on the foreign mission field”. This question always amuses me because the mission field is intrinsically atypical! During my time overseas, I’ve learned that God leads our ministry through seasons. Just when we think we’ve settled into something stable, the game changes.

For many years, our ministry kept a fairly steady back-and-forth rhythm of high-energy evangelism in the summers and lesson-writing coupled with discipleship efforts in the colder months. But while those efforts continue forward, we’ve recently seen God open a new front: translation.

Because we are English speakers ministering the Gospel amongst Ukrainians, translation has always played a significant role in what we do. For example, all of our *Bible First* lessons were originally written in English, and then later translated into Ukrainian.

Now, as *Bible First* spreads far beyond the borders of Ukraine, the need for translation work has again come to the forefront. We’re very encouraged about the progress being made, and in this report I’d like to share an update on three specific language groups.

### Ukrainian

Back in the mid-2000’s, the very first language group

to receive a translation of *Bible First* was Ukrainian. Later, we implemented significant improvements to our English lessons, but many of these were never incorporated back into the earlier Ukrainian lessons.



Anatoliy Zhylaviy

This fall, we hired Anatoliy Zhylaviy, a Ukrainian translator and philologist from our church, to begin a complete revision of our Ukrainian *Bible First* course. He is working through the entire course: editing, revising, and even retranslating as needed.

Demand for *Bible First* amongst Ukrainians remains strong, and we are excited to bring these updated lessons to our students.

## French

Meet Catherine Leavitt - a French national who has spent more than two decades living in Oregon. Catherine contacted us several months ago with a desire to translate *Bible First* into French. She's been working diligently on the project and is making good progress. Her father, a French linguist who still lives in France, is assisting her as well. We are very grateful to their family, and we're looking forward to making *Bible First* available as a ministry tool for believers in France!



Catherine Leavitt

## Spanish

Several months ago, we received an email from a lady named Maria Sanchez. Maria uses *Bible First* in prison ministry, and because many of the inmates only speak Spanish, she asked if *Bible First* was available in that language. Upon learning that it was not, she asked for permission to translate it herself. Kelsie is also a Spanish speaker (she formerly translated for *Voice of the Martyrs*), and after reviewing a sample of Maria's work, we gave her the green light.



Maria Sanchez

Over the past several months, Maria has kept us on our toes as she has sent email after email with new drafts, questions, corrections, and more. She has now completed

translating up through Lesson 9 - almost halfway!

## The Language of the Web

As our Ukrainian, French and Spanish translators work to make *Bible First* available to those respective language groups, another effort is moving forward to make sure that these translations will enjoy the far-reaching scope of the World Wide Web. For some time now, we have been building a web-based application that will serve as a digital platform for *Bible First*. This app will allow churches and missionaries to reach people with *Bible First* over electronic media.

As of this writing, we estimate that *Bible First Online* is about 70% complete. There's still much work to do, but once it's finished, it will extend the reach of *Bible First* far beyond the conventional printed page.

We'll be writing more about this project in future updates, but for now, please pray for our development team as we build this app. We are particularly grateful for programmers Trevor Brown and Andy Buck who are assisting us.

## Almost Baby Time!

Oh, and there's one more thing: it's almost baby time! Kelsie is due to deliver our first son in early January. Please pray for our family--and Kelsie in particular--as we prepare to welcome our new little boy!



## How You Can Pray

- Praise God for the work being done to translate *Bible First* into various languages.
- Pray for Anatoliy, Catherine, and Maria as they translate. We are very grateful for their diligence and commitment to this ministry!
- Pray for Kelsie and the baby as we near the birth.
- Pray for my mom, Cathy. She flies to Ukraine on December 28<sup>th</sup> to help our family during the birth.
- Pray for Trevor, Andy and myself we continue the development of *Bible First Online*.
- Pray for peace and liberty in Ukraine.

*To God be the Glory*