



Reaching and Serving the Persecuted Church **IN TOUCH MONTHLY**

1 March 2010

Everybody worships something. Louie Giglio reminds us, "Worship is simply about value. Worship is our response to what we value most. The trail never lies. We may say we value this thing or that thing more than any other, but the volume of our actions speaks louder than our words." Jesus calls us in Matthew 6 to, "...seek ye first the Kingdom of God...." We are also charged to "...love the Lord your God with all your heart." May you worship *only* HIM this month.

What's so Important about the Dead Sea Scrolls?

"...for the first time in my life, I read and I ...cry. I understand everything.."

Poland

In mid February we caught up with **In Touch Mission's (ITMI) Piotr Zaremba** (Peter) in the Portland, Oregon area. He was on his way across the U.S. connecting and visiting with ITMI partners and sharing the truth of what God is doing in Poland to impact His eternal Kingdom.



Piotr Zaremba in Oregon sharing the passion for Polish Bible translation

It has been a while since we have checked in on what God is doing in the life and ministry of Piotr. Below are some excerpts from

our conversation with Piotr while he was in the home of **Brent and Melissa Corwin** of Cannon Beach, Oregon.

If you will remember, Piotr has tackled the massive project of giving birth to a modern translation of the Bible to his Polish people. Piotr has steadfastly maintained that God laid on Piotr's heart many years ago, that he was to "...translate for *revival*."

There is not much that Piotr wants more than to see his home country of Poland experience a revival in their hearts and souls. And that can come when his people get an easily understood and accurate copy of the Holy Scriptures.

In general Piotr, what have you been doing the last year in ministry?

Last year my ministry revolved around five major projects: Bible Translation Project, pastoring a church, being European Director of ITMI, being involved in University [teaching ancient languages at local Poznan secular university].

Piotr, what has been happening in your translation ministry this past year?



One of the main works was the translation of the book of Psalms. You know that we have finished and published the New Testament. To give you some news, I finished on March 14th of last year the translation of the Book of Psalms...as a birthday present to myself.

What has been happening with that translation of Psalms since then?

From March to the end of August I was checking all the Dead Sea scrolls. There are 40 Dead Sea scrolls that contain fragments or portions of the Book of Psalms. There are about 600 variant readings and I went through them all. I also wrote about 2500 comments to these variant readings [so that the Polish reader could have a Bible with cross references and study notes], it was really a lot of work and I am thankful to God, and I wonder how it was possible for me to do it all... because I am rather an active person [Pastor, mentor to Polish Pastors, University teacher, Church Planter, Counselor, European Director of ITMI minis-

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Sample of Dead Sea Scroll

tries, Bible translator]. Here I am sitting at these Dead Sea scrolls and just [doing] detailed work and I am surprised and thankful to God that we have been able to do this.

Why is it important for your translation project to be researched in the Dead Sea scrolls?

This is important for a number of reasons, One of the reasons is, the Dead Sea scrolls started to be available about 9 years ago. People come up and ask us "...what about these Dead Sea scrolls?" "Do they contradict the authenticity of the Bible?" We say, Hey people, we [have] check[ed] the Dead Sea scrolls and we have a good translation and there is nothing to be afraid, this is the authentic Word of God.

Are these questioning people asking because they don't want to accept the Bible or do they want to have the most accurate Bible?

I would say both. Some just want an accurate version. For example, we have found a text that is 1000 years older than [what many current Bibles have been translated from].

Why would it be important to have a 1000 year older text?

One of the reasons was we always wanted to know... were [there] any changes to the texts over the centuries? What was the form of the text, 10 centuries earlier? Some people think, and there is some credit to it, the older the text the better it is...the closer to the original version [the better]. Another very, very important thing, we have a very ancient translation of the Old Testament, a Greek translation called the Septuagint. Septuagint was done about 200 years before our Lord came to live on this planet. So, this old translation of the Hebrew Bible is that old. And because this Septuagint has some variant readings that [are] not confirmed in the [previously discovered] Hebrew text we use to have, some [scholars] thought that the Septuagint was not a good translation. But with the [discovery] of the Dead Sea scrolls, we found that sometimes the Septuagint is testifying for the existence of the text that is more understanding than the Hebrew text that is 1000 years younger...

which [most translation scholars] we were doing modern translations [from].

What are you hearing from the Polish speaking community around the world when they get a chance to read your newly translated New Testament?

We get email on nearly daily basis with questions ...when are you going to publish a whole Bible? With these questions appear[ing] so often, I seriously consider just [putting aside my other duties and] focusing these coming two or three

years and having the Bible [all] done.

Why would it take three more years to finish the translation of the remaining Old Testament?

Because this is a lot of work. This is thousands if not millions of hours that you have to spend [to translate, verify against all available ancient manuscripts, check and re-check many times, lay out for printing, install all the cross reference and study notes, verify the correctness of each cross reference and study note, and then review again and again for any mistakes.]

Explain for us who are naïve to this work of a Bible translator, why can't you just translate it from Hebrew to Polish, and be done?

It depends on the quality of your work. To translate[straight] into Polish is quicker. We translate with two techniques, literal and literary. We put together cross references and go to the Dead Sea Scrolls

and check all the variant readings so that we can intelligently answer those that would ask us [if our translation is good and valid]. So when you put all these things together, it simply takes time.

Would you say that the quality of your translation project would stand up to the quality of the translations we have here in the U.S.?

First let me say, you Americans are [fortunate] with all your translations. I could say that [our] translation of the book of Psalms is maybe better than some of your translations...it is difficult to compare because your translations are from Hebrew to English, and ours is from Hebrew to Polish...how can you compare it? If you would just take the scope of the work done on the Dead Sea scrolls, I have not seen an English translation with such a detailed work as we did.

With the European preoccupation with learning, education, and academia, are you required to translate and produce at a higher level?

I don't think so, I think the work of translation is quality work wherever people do it.

Simply, Christians are honest people and each translation committee, unless this is a committee or agency that wants the Bible to say what they want

[instead of just translating the text], ...if we [consider] taking just the people that genuinely want to expose and give us what the Bible says, they are usually serious people and there is quality of work where ever you go.

What are some of the comments from people who are using your New Covenant [newly translated New Testament]?



From the Director

Greetings Team,

Greetings from the bright and sunny Oregon sea coast. We continue to serve on four continents as your hands, feet and mouth piece. We count it a privilege to serve the Lord as His and your servants. We pray often that God will encourage and enlighten you to the impact that we are making as partners.

ITMI welcomed baby Isaiah William Yuvaraj into the world on February 12th. Isaiah is the son of ITMI's new national missionaries, Paul and Molly Yuvaraj to Chennai, India.

Please pray for ITMI's Charl van Wyk as he and I prepare to take a team to the Democratic Republic of Congo. This is one of the more difficult places to get around and do ministry, and because of that, the opportunity to make a difference is great. We ask that God, even now prepares, hearts to hear HIS truth.

Blessings,



Baby Isaiah with his happy, happy father

Circle

Thursday morning westbound on Loop 289. It's school morning drive time. They're in the back seat, munching on a Granny Smith apple. So far we've discussed what Jesus is doing in heaven right now, where He's sitting up there and is He tall enough to step right over the city of Lubbock.

The girls and I have a way of cramming a lot of theological discussion into the 15-minute drive to 1st grade.

Annie wonders out loud, *"So will we get to see all our friends up there, right?"*

Her question unknowingly intersected with my homesickness. I really miss all my friends back in the Phoenix valley. The people here in this new place have been more than kind. Still, they are all new. Everything is new here.

New takes time to become comfortable.

Emma must have caught my expression in the rear view mirror. *"Are you okay, Daddy?" "I'm fine, baby."*

I thought she'd press the question. But it's like she knew what I was thinking.

"You'll make new friends here, Daddy."

Who is this kid? Ten minutes ago we were standing in front of the bathroom mirror battling over ponytail vs. "some up, some down". Now she's Yoda, the life coach with a Hello Kitty backpack.

"That's right, Daddy." Annie joins. I love when they do this. The twin dynamic never ceases to intrigue me. They share a brain. And

whatever thought they offer is delivered in stereo. *"It's just like the song we sing at Girl Scouts, Daddy."*

I was going to ask what song but all Annie had to do was sing the first word and by the next eighth note Emma was in perfect sync and perfect pitch.

*"Make new friends, but keep the old.
One is silver and the other is gold.*

*A circle is round, it has no end.
That's how long I want to be your friend."*

A relational reality of living in a fallen world is that those we love are never "all together", all the time.

The Bible says that no one can imagine what God has prepared for us in heaven. That we can count on. No one does surprises like God. And just think what He can do with all this time to prepare?. There is a freedom in "forever". Not the least of which is never having to say the word "good-bye" again.

Till then God calls us to *"...one another"* one another. Pray for one another. Bear one another's burdens. Encourage one another. Cry with one another. Laugh with one another. Serve one another. Forbear and forgive one another.

We do this where God has placed us. Making new friends. Silver, perhaps, for the moment. But they will all be gold up there. With no end.

***"Eye has not seen nor ear heard what God has prepared for those who love Him."* - 1 Corinthians 2:9**

- Todd Thompson



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People are genuinely positive...thus far I am surprised by good acceptance...obviously we were doing our best...some say this is one of the two best modern translations of original Hebrew to modern Polish.

Can you share with us any stories of people who have read your new translation and have been able to grasp God's truth in a new way?

You know, I can give you many examples. And as a matter of fact, I put them all into a file because as these emails come, they are so encouraging we wanted to collect them to encourage us [when the translating gets long and tedious].

We recently in our Church finished a course for Sunday School teachers, not for Sunday School teachers from our church only, but from all of the country of Poland. One of the teachers at that course approached me and she said to me, "...at last when I read the book of Romans...I understand it."

Share with us another story.

We got this email from a [Polish] man who lives in Switzerland he didn't know that there was a [good, usable Bible] translation in Polish. He was saved in Switzerland and he only had a Bible in German or French. So when he got our translation of the Bible, he wrote these words, "...I have your translation of the Bible...for the first time in my life, I read and I ...cry. I understand everything, this is simply my language that I can understand." We were rejoicing



Actual Polish New Covenant Translation

Our publication will be the first one ever...and that is really significant. With comments written for them...how can they not grow?

and crying together with him.

Would you agree that the evidence of growth in the leadership of your church is related to the quality and understanding of God's word as found in your translation?

Definitely so. We can see it in our small groups where we exclusively use this translation. But also [we see] how it helps their growth.

Are you doing anything else for the growth of believers in Poland?

We are hoping to publish this year a New Covenant with comments to teenagers. Obviously here in your country it is [common place] that you take it for granted...there is no such thing here in Poland.

There are no youth study Bibles or youth reference material in Poland?

No, not even one. There are some for kids, and that's all. There are none for teenagers.

You try and come to the U.S. every

February to minister to the believers in the States, how has this trip been so far?



Piotr works on the translations and manages all his other ministries, whenever and wherever time allows.

I landed in Chicago with two suit cases full of the newly published New Covenant [New Testaments] [for the large community of Polish speaking people.] This year was special...I am connected to a

Polish community that is part of Harvest Bible Chapel. The pastor of this ministry is a good friend and he allows me to preach [in our mother tongue] and be a part of their ministry. I preached a couple of weeks ago and there were [Polish speaking] people that were there for the first time. This young lady, Katarzyna [Katherine] [who] had come [to this church] for the first time...after I had preached from Ephesians, she came in tears and accepted Christ into her life.

Piotr and all the current and future believers would love for you to partner with him in his translation work. Poland has been hit very hard by the challenging times and this hinders Piotr and his translation team. ITMI would love to help the Polish Translation Project cover some of their expenses with a gift of \$10,000. Would you consider partnering with ITMI and Piotr so the Gospel could be read by 38 million Poles?

-Steve Evers

For Praise . . .

1. Paul and Molly Yuvaraj: Praise for God's protection, provision and grace in the events of baby Isaiah's birth.
2. Piotr Zaremba: Praise for souls coming to know Jesus by Piotr preaching the word over the Chicago Polish Radio.
3. Gary Howell: Praise and gratefulness for God bringing Gary to help ITMI tell our story better.

For Prayer . . .

1. Piotr Zaremba: traveling mercies as he combs the U.S. sharing God's word and God's plan for Poland.
2. Bread of Life: Help in dealing with the EU's ineffective and conflicting operational policies.
3. Steve Evers: protection and wisdom as he and Charl travel to Democratic Republic of Congo to minister to Pastors.
4. ITMI: Extra help and wisdom in tough economic times.