

JAARS SPEEDING THE WORD TRANSCRIPT

Speaker

Rob Taylor Pt. 2

Broadcast Date

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Interviewer

Arthur Lightbody

Primary Topic(s)

Translation project with the Stoney First Nation

Other Topics

How financial support works for Wycliffe members

Location Discussed

Alberta, Canada

People Group (if named)

Choctaw, Stoney First Nation

Announcer:

Welcome to *Speeding the Word*, coming to you from the JAARS Center in Waxhaw, North Carolina, where JAARS speeds Bible translation for all people. And now our host Arthur Lightbody.

Lightbody:

We are talking with Rob Taylor again today. Rob and Karen are in the Waxhaw-Charlotte area as they have been sharing with their home church. Rob has interrupted his ministry now with the Stoney First Nation group in Alberta, Canada, by spending time at his church. Last week he told us a little bit about that. A lot of people don't understand how it works with faith missions. I don't know if this is the common term now. Do you think it is the common term—faith mission, Rob?

Taylor:

As far as I know that is still the general term.

Lightbody:

Let's say faith mission. What does that mean? Wycliffe Bible Translators is a faith mission. What does that mean?

Taylor:

That means that all of us Wycliffe missionaries do not get paid a set salary. We need to talk to churches and individuals, tell them about our ministry. And then if the Lord leads them to be partners with us, they will send financial donations to Wycliffe Bible Translators and that money will be forwarded on to us.

Lightbody:

Have you had moments when you've doubted you should be in this faith ministry? You are working so hard in Bible translation, and yet you are paid in a different way? Have there been struggles? You have six children, a wife, you travel, and you have to raise your support.

Taylor:

We never doubted that the Lord wanted us to be involved in missions because of finances. There are times when finances are tight, but I imagine everybody has been through some times like that. Our church has been very supportive, but what people don't realize is that for most missionaries probably the amount of financial support that we get from churches is a relatively small percentage of our total income.

For example, a friend talked to me the other day, and he imagined that our home church gave 80% or more of our support. "Well," I said, "not quite. Their support is significant but it's only about 10% of our total income." We have a few churches that partner with us, but even all the churches together that we have as financial partners only account for about 25% of our income. It is through various individuals, whom the Lord has directed to partner with us in this ministry, that make up the bulk of our financial support.

Lightbody:

Neither Rob nor I want people to be "scared off" by this faith aspect. I don't know how it is for you, Rob, but I hear folks say, "I would rather have some other Christian ministry where I didn't have to raise the support." I just tell them, "God does it. We don't have to do it. It is just one way of it happening, because He cares about Bible translation. He cares about people that do not have God's Word."

Well now you have gone to Alberta, Canada, to work with another group. I have to tell you when I was reading your bio the other day and I saw you were living near a town called Lethbridge. I've been there. In Southern Alberta there is a visitor center called "Head Smashed in Buffalo Jump Center." I learned about the buffalo being driven off the cliffs, and then they were slaughtered. That's how it got its strange name. I visited the museum and saw some things about the plains Indians of that area, although called First Nation People in Canada. I see that you are in that area. Can you tell us who you are ministering to—tell us about the Stoney.

Taylor:

We are working with the Stoney Indians. They are related to the Lakota in South Dakota and also the Dakota Indians here in the States. They are all part of the Sioux language family. They have been up in that area for a couple of hundred years at least.

Lightbody:

What will your role be there? Will there be Stoney First Nation people helping with translation, much as the Choctaw project you left behind in Mississippi?

Taylor:

Yes. We are working at training the Stoney people—right now one Stoney Christian man how to study and translate the Bible into his own language.

Lightbody:

Will you be able to live on the reserve? Or are you located a way from that?

Taylor:

We are not able to live on the reserve and housing around the reserve is very scarce and also very expensive. The Lord opened up an old schoolhouse for us to live in. It's about 100 miles away from our Stoney reserve, which sounds a little strange. Why would you live 100 miles away from where you are supposed to work? But as we prayed about it and thought about it, we realized we could have the Stoney translators come and live with us at the schoolhouse. There is room there, and they would be able to spend more time focused on the translation while they're away from their home for a week at a time. And then I in turn can go and spend a week in their area and work with them on the translation there. It's actually working out very well. We're making progress.

Lightbody:

Now these are believers that want to help you with the translation?

Taylor:

These are believers that I am training. God has given the vision to do a translation. We don't go at it as them helping us. We are helping them and equipping them to do the translation themselves.

Lightbody:

I am sure the experience you had overseas and with the Choctaw will really be beneficial in helping you help them. Was it difficult for your children, four daughters and two sons, to make a change of many degrees in temperature from Mississippi to Alberta?

Taylor:

It has been a big change to move from Mississippi to Alberta. It's been difficult, but this was something we've been thinking and praying about for over two years, so even though they weren't excited at first, by the time we were ready to move they were ready to go too.

Lightbody:

You know a lot of people would say, “Oh, the First Nation People are Native Americans. Let them speak English.” How do you answer that?

Taylor:

On the surface it seems like that is a reasonable thing—if they can speak English, why not let them read the English Bible? But here are a number of issues that people generally don’t understand. One issue is that for people who speak English as a second language, their understanding of English is heavily influenced by their first language.

One example with is the Choctaw and the Stoney is taken from the very well-known verse John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” That word “world” seems like a fairly simple English word. If you ask most people what “world” means, they could tell you what “world” means, they could tell you without too much trouble. But for the Stoney people and the Choctaw people, their word for world means earth; in some contexts it means land, dirt, ground, but it does not include the people of the world. So when a Choctaw or a Stoney person hears that verse, what they hear is “For God so loved the earth...” It can very easily come across that Christ came and He died, not for people, but to save the earth. Really the earth is what we need to be concerned about. Instead of Jesus saves, it may be for them, “Jesus recycles.”

Lightbody:

Thanks for that clear example of what Bible translation is all about. I want to thank you for the time, Rob. Now maybe people know better how to pray for our missionaries and the work they are involved in.

Announcer:

We hope you have enjoyed *Speeding the Word*. We’d love to hear from you. If you are interested in finding out more about JAARS, or Bible translation, give us a call at: 1-800-890-0628, or look us up on the Web at jaars.org.