

How powerful God's Word is in our languages

Edmond Teppuri, January 2015

Reading the word of God in Nukumanu is just phenomenal, powerful, touching and colorful to all age groups in our church. Everyone understands God's message and no one is left out. It's not like when the Bible is read in English, Pidgin or some other language.

After the dedication of the Nukumanu New Testament, I held a workshop one Sunday after church to help my people discover how powerful the Word of God is in our language. I told them that those who are educated should not be proud of how well they can read in English, because the main focus is not on how well they can read the Word of God in English, but how to get God's words to the people so that they can understand what God is telling them. I told them that I have a point to show how powerful the Word of God is in our language.

So I took my TEV Bible and read John 14:6-7 to them in English. Then I asked for a show of hands to see how many understood what these verses mean. Guess what! Only those who have been to school or are currently in school raised their hands. I felt for the uneducated and those in elementary school, because for so long they truly didn't get God's message even though the Bible has been read to them every morning and evening for numerous years now.

Anyway, I then read to them the same verses in Pidgin and the number of hands increased, but still the old people, the little children and the elementary students kept their hands down. Then I read the same verses in John's Gospel in Greek and asked those who understood what was being read to raise their hands. Not a single hand went up.

Finally I read the same text to them in Nukumanu and asked them to raise their hands if they understood what was being read. Everyone raised their hands.

So I reminded them that the New Testament was written in Greek. If there had been no translation done, and God's words were read in Greek nowadays, who could understand what God wants us to do and how could we understand God's Word? We would all be like the unfortunate people who have never been to school and who listen and listen, but do not understand.