

### *What is the "Orality Movement"?*

International Orality Network (ION) claims to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with cultures that cannot read or understand the Bible.

While it is true that the scriptures were taught orally in the early church, the Orality Movement is not traditional or trustworthy.

A. C. Myers wrote:

There can be no doubt that most of the Bible existed first in oral form. The oracles of the prophets, the psalms of the Jerusalem cult, the parables and teachings of Jesus all were first delivered verbally. The major dispute among scholars concerns the length of time between the first verbal delivery and the time when the material was written down.<sup>1</sup>

E. S. Williams stated:

Over the last decade or so there has been a radical change in the way the gospel is preached and taught. The new way of teaching the gospel is called storytelling, and the movement behind storytelling is called the "Orality movement." It is called the Orality movement for it aims to meet the needs of people who are unable to read and therefore known as "oral learners." People who don't want to read are known as "preferenced" oral learners. The Orality movement insists that the best way to reach oral learners with the gospel is by telling them Bible stories.

For us to understand the Orality movement we need to recognize that it is largely the product of the Lausanne Movement for World Evangelization that was founded by Billy Graham<sup>2</sup>, John Stott and other prominent evangelical leaders...

... Scripture (God's written Word) has "literate stylistic features," and therefore may confuse oral learners. It follows that reading the Scriptures to oral learners is a waste of time for they cannot follow literate-styled presentations. The effect is that oral learners are being denied the Word of God recorded in Scripture...

... Making Disciples of Oral Learners (2005), Lausanne's orality strategy booklet, stated that "it is essential that literate church leaders seek to understand orality." The book's author is Professor Walter Ong, a Jesuit priest<sup>3</sup> and humanist scholar.<sup>4</sup>

The scriptures should be read and shared. For those with learning disabilities, there are simpler to read translations.<sup>5</sup> Audio Bibles are available.

The word of God when read is "living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the ideas and thoughts of the heart (He 4:12)." Christians can trust that when they read their Bible and share it with

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<sup>1</sup> Myers, A. C. (1987). In *The Eerdmans Bible dictionary* (p. 784). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

<sup>2</sup> Billy Graham was a 33<sup>rd</sup> degree Mason (2 Pe 2:1).

<sup>3</sup> Jesuits serve as intelligence officers in the Roman Catholic Church (Jud 11).

<sup>4</sup> Williams, E.S.. Bible League Trust. *The Lausanne Movement for World Evangelization*. 11 Aug 19: <https://www.bibleleaguetrust.org/beware-of-the-orality-movement/>

<sup>5</sup> E.g. NKJV, an easier to read translation of the King James Version Bible.

others, it will perform what God intended (Is 55:11). It is Christ's message (Lk 5:1) and it is effectual (Is 55:11).

With the Spirit of God, one can study the scriptures for himself (2 Ti 2:15). A middleman is not necessary. The apostle Paul said, "There is one God and one mediator between God and humanity, Christ Jesus, Himself human (1 Ti 2:5)." The Spirit will lead Christ-followers into all truth (Jn 16:13).

Deceivers unfortunately preach man's wisdom (1 Cor 2:4, 13, 2 Pe 2:1). They use the word of God deceitfully (2 Cor 4:2) and alter it (Re 22:18, 19).

The Psalmist said, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Ps 119:105)." Every believer should use the word of God personally, practically and habitually.