



Master's Degree

In addition to my responsibilities with the Mende and Themne Bible Translation Projects, I am also working on an online Master of Arts in New Testament at the Talbot School of Theology out of Biola University. Since the school is in California, I've had classes that started anywhere from four in the afternoon to two in the morning while in Sierra Leone!

For my degree I am taking classes in theology, spiritual formation, Koine Greek, New Testament background, and exegesis. While some classes connect more directly with translation work, they are all important for life in translation, ministry, and personal faith.

I did not know what to expect for my spiritual formation classes, but I was pleasantly surprised. For a Lutheran audience, I would say it is the practical realization of the proper distinction between Law and Gospel. We did learn practices that encourage us to spend time with the Word of God and prayer. But we also learned to peel back all of the layers of who we are or who we think we are – acknowledging the good, the bad, and the ugly (Law). This is important, not so we can dwell on our own greatness or weakness, but to put every part of us before God and the truth that we are created in his image, knowing that He has and continues to forgive our sins, and He has already won our salvation (Gospel). He already knows us and loves us, so if we hide our darkness, it is only detrimental to ourselves because Christ has already made us enough before the Father. Spiritual formation also focuses on sanctification, reminding us that the Holy Spirit is the one who changes our hearts (we can't do it ourselves), not like a magic spell that has instant results, but He works alongside us little by little to bring us closer to who we were created to be. Sometimes we can know our theology well but applying it to our life can be the challenge, and this is where spiritual formation steps in to bridge that gap.

The Greek, exegesis, and New Testament background classes have helped me become more aware of the different issues that go into properly understanding a Biblical text and gives me the skills to investigate them. In order to understand a sentence, you need to understand what each word can mean in different contexts, how the grammar can affect the meaning or the emphasis, how some phrases can take on meanings affected by tradition and culture of the language (such as “break the ice”), and how some aspects of a sentence, paragraph, story, letter, etc. are impacted by culture, history, tradition, geography, climate, socioeconomic environment, and politics. All of these need to be in the mind of the reader, translator, or pastor to best understand the passage's original meaning and intent.

Visit in the US

I will be in the US from mid-May to October of this year (2023). I will be visiting churches, Bible studies, LWML meetings, small groups, or any other gathering that has an opening! Email me or text me if you are interested in welcoming me to share an update with you and your group about the Bible translation work going on in Sierra Leone. I will also need a vehicle to travel many miles, so if you have an old reliable vehicle that you don't need or are planning to sell eventually, let me know! I typically am around WI, MN, IA, MO, AZ, CA, TX GA, AL, and NY, but I am happy to travel to areas nearby to these or new ones, especially if there are a number of groups to meet with or are on the way to another location (for instance I could stop in OH on my way from NY to WI). I look forward to seeing you all!

Feel free to scan this QR code and fill this form if you are interested in having me speak at your church, small group, or with you and a few friends over a cup of coffee!



<https://forms.gle/sSPhvC2ahCsW6ugk6>



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for me as I tackle all the work that goes with taking my classes, including the odd hours.
- Pray that I can balance the translation work along with taking classes.
- Pray that I can apply what I am learning to my work as well as my personal life.
- Praise God that both Mende and Themne translation teams have capable and dedicated people to keep this important work moving forward.



The Mende Translation Team

Translation progress is being made as books of the Bible are moving through various stages of the translation process according to schedule. The lead team members evaluate progress, measure achievements, and track timeliness using a chart through Paratext (Scripture Translation software). This is an important part of the process, as it ensures translation continues to meet goals in a timely manner.

CONTACT

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Please make your check payable to Lutheran Bible Translators. Remember to sign and date your check. Go to lbt.org or call 660- 225-0810 to use a credit card or set up monthly payments! Lutheran Bible Translators is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, and your gift is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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