THE WORD IN WEST AFRICA

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Category: Quotes

Sue has just completed her MA in aspects of Biblical Interpretation. Her dissertation was on the role of translated Scriptures in the contextualisation of the gospel in West Africa, or how having the Bible in African languages has helped the development of authentic Africa Christianity, if you prefer. You can download it as a pdf if you are interested (contributions gladly accepted) or if you are a Kindle user you can buy it from Amazon (UK) (USA).

> *Whilst many of the first Jewish Christians struggled with the idea of Gentile believers not adopting Jewish customs, the same cannot be said about their attitude to language. Already in Jesusâ€™ day the Hebrew Old Testament was being used in translation in the form of the Septuagint. In Acts chapter 2 we read that, by a miracle, as the apostles explained the gospel, those listening heard the message in their own languages. This fact is so significant that it appears three times in the telling of the story. Â From the very beginning the apostles (who were already functioning in a multi-lingual environment) did not question the appropriateness of communicating the gospel in different languages, according to their audience. Indeed, when the New Testament writers came to record the momentous events regarding the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, it is striking that they chose koine Greek as their medium, providing a record of Jesusâ€™ words, not in Aramaic as he would have spoken them, but already in translation! It is perhaps surprising that we have so few words of Jesus in Aramaic, yet the writers evidently did not think that important and saw their message as totally translatable.*