

The Amazing Bible

Description:

a sleight of
hand illusion

Aim: to teach the
need, process, and
do-ability of Bible
translation

Audience: Pre-
school through adult,
any size group

Time: 5 minutes.

Equipment:

The Amazing Bible
and *The Amazing
Blank Bible**

Scripture to Study:

Psalms 119:129-136

Wycliffe 

Partners in Bible Translation

www.wycliffe.org
phone: 1-800-WYCLIFFE
1-800-992-5433

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Leader's Instructions:

Wycliffe Bible Translators

PRE-CLASS PREPARATION:

1. Practice with *The Amazing Bible* until you are confident.
2. The outside covers of *The Amazing Bible* and *The Amazing Blank Bible* are identical. To avoid a mix-up, make a tiny black pen mark on one letter of the blank book's cover. That way you'll know which one you have without flipping through the pages to check.
3. Be sure to have a box or bag nearby so you can toss the colored version in, and pull out the blank one to let others try. You don't want the children to see that you have two different versions of the book.

CLASS TIME:

1. (Hold up the colored version.) How many of you have seen one of these before? Raise your hands. What is it? Raise your hand if you know the answer. How many of you have ever read or heard the story of Jesus? It comes from the Bible doesn't it?
2. This is a really surprising little book. You'll have to watch carefully now! In this book right here, I have the Bible in over 2,000 languages. Can you believe it? (Flip the pages from the bottom, front to back, showing blank pages.) This is what the Bible looks like in more than 2,000 languages around the world! What's the matter? The pages are blank? That's right. Today, there are still over 2,000 language groups without a Bible they can read. We call these groups without the Bible "Bibleless people groups."
3. (Drop the book to your side.) What can we do about that? Lots of people say, "We already have the Bible in English. Why don't we just go and teach everyone to read English. Then they could read the Bible and learn about Jesus." That sounds like an easy solution, but really it's not. Even if they wanted to learn to read English, and they did learn some...
4. (Flip the pages from the top, front to back, showing black & white pages.) ...it would be like a coloring book without color. They would only get a sketchy idea of what the Bible was saying, kind of like a black and white drawing.
5. (Drop the book to your side again.) That's why Wycliffe workers go to live with Bibleless people all around the world. They learn a new language and culture, become part of a local team, and then together with the local people decide on a good alphabet, and translate the Bible into that language.
6. Then when people read their brand new Bible, (Flip the pages from the middle, front to back, showing colored pages.) it comes alive, in full, living color, just like it is for you and me when we read it in our own language!
7. (Drop the book to your side.) But wait a minute! Something's missing here. Just because someone translates the Bible, does that mean everyone can read it? Many languages weren't ever written down until Bible translation began in them.
8. (Flip the pages from the middle, back to front, showing blank pages.) They had no books, no road signs, no labels on their clothes. So the Bible still

Notes:

looks like this for them.

9. (Drop the book to your side again.) What do they need? That's right! They need to learn how to *read*.
10. So, in order for the Bible to be full of color and meaning, (Flip the pages from the top, back to front, showing color), Bibleless people must take the important step and learn to read.
11. Do you want to know how this book works? Well, there *is* a method. Believe me, it's *not* magic. If you know the method, the book works. It's just like Bible translation. That may seem a little mysterious and hard to do too. But translators take classes to learn scientific methods of studying languages, creating alphabets, and translating the Bible. Once you know the methods and use them, it's not impossible any more. And when you're done, Bibleless people will be able to read and understand God's Word for themselves.
12. Lead the group in a prayer time, each one asking God how He wants them involved in getting the Bible to people who still wait.

TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:

- Dropping the book to your side between flipping pages avoids the obvious secret that you are moving your thumb up and down!
- After your presentation, a student may ask you how the book works. Only tell them if you fear they suspect you of the 'sin of using magic.' Giving away the secret will spoil the illusion for subsequent opportunities you may have to use this graphic example. Amazingly, your audience will watch you more closely *throughout the entire lesson*, perhaps to see if you have any more tricks up your sleeve!
- Leave the blank book lying around for children to “happen upon.” With a smaller group, you could even pass the dummy around after you've finished the presentation with the real one, and go right on with the rest of your lesson while it's being passed.

*These resources can be purchased at Wycliffe's online store at <http://www.wycliffe.org/Resources/Shop/Children.aspx/> or by calling 1-800-WYCLIFFE (992-5433), ext. 3778.