

Two Bible Organizations Merge to Deepen Impact

✖ After a year of discussion and surrendering their ideas to the Lord, Bible League International (BLI) and World Bible Translation Center (WBTC) announced on Friday their plans to merge in an effort to deepen their impact and ministry around the world.

“We began to understand that if any of us in the Christian ministry world are going to be successful it will not be on our own. It has to be through partnership,” President and CEO of Bible League International Robert Frank told Charisma News.

The decision to merge came as a result of a unanimous vote by both organizations’ boards.

Historically BLI has provided training materials and has worked through networks of churches and other community organizations around the world in 63 countries to get the Word of God in the hands of people in order to bring them into fellowship with Christ and His church. For more than 30 years, WBTC has provided accurate translations of God’s Word into various languages of the world.

As Frank sees it, the two organizations have complimentary missions.

“The decision [for WBTC] to merge with our organization was

really based on the commonality of what we do,” explains Frank.

“When we looked at the two organizations we said, ‘You know, we compliment one another.’ WBTC does not have a global footprint but they have products. Bible League has the global footprint but does not have the ability to develop product.”

Although mission and impact are the main reasons for the merge, on the heels of that comes a more attractive donor community. Frank explains that a common denominator for many today is the economy.

“The investor community is saying, ‘OK, at one point in time I supported five of six agencies with my gift. Now I’ve only got the ability to support one or two agencies with my gift. What gives the biggest impact? Where am I going to have the biggest impact with my dollars?’

“The way you’re going to have the biggest impact with your dollar is working with organizations that cover a multiplicity of programs and a multiplicity of ministry fields.” Frank sees the merge of these two ministries doing just that.

World Bible Translation Center President Eric Fellman believes partnership is the only way to be effective today because he sees God moving in a new way in the 21st century. Fellman reflects on a well-known prayer of Jesus in John 17, where He prays both

present

believers and all future believers may be one.

“I like to say Jesus’ method of evangelism was oneness and I have the sense that He’s drawing us all together instead of being separated by the entrepreneurial individualized ideas. He’s drawing us together in Him on many different levels.”

Each organization will maintain their specific brand and entity for the time being—BLI will continue to be based in Illinois while WBTC will remain in Texas. There will be some blending of responsibilities and oversight down the road, but as it stands now, the two will remain status quo.

Bible League International was founded on a “ridiculous prayer” that was lifted up in 1936. Now, 75 years later, these merging ministries are not shy to lift up in prayer, what some may say are ridiculous goals.

“I think what would seem ridiculous to some people is the impact that we want to have,” says Frank. “Oftentimes people get hung up on traditionalism and they look at new things and new approaches as being totally ridiculous and not applicable to do. And our prayer is that people will accept this idea of merger, that people will accept this idea of new product and that we’ll be able to reach people that

before have not been able to be touched in traditional means.”

World Bible Translation Center will will function as a ministry of

the parent organization Bible League International beginning Sept. 1.