

How Important is English Now In Sharing the Gospel?

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Since Christ's First Coming His gospel has been shared in countless languages. As we approach His Second Coming, I find it fascinating how the world is focusing in on English, and, as you will see, our opportunities for sharing the gospel in English are unique in this age of advancing technology. My hope is that the historic and technical insights I share here will help you and many others in sharing His glorious gospel message. The gospel is not only the "good news," it is the BEST NEWS!

The Savior said, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit: so shall ye be my disciples." (John 15:8) Notice, there is a colon after "fruit." True disciples share the gospel with valiancy knowing that this is the best way to show our love to Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son and to glorify Them. In Divine appreciation, God's love fills our hearts as we do so.

After Christ's resurrection, the early saints did exactly as He asked and shared the gospel enthusiastically in spite of extreme persecution. The membership in the early Church grew exponentially as a result. They didn't have the "Land of Liberty" as a launch pad for sharing the gospel. They were persecuted severely by the Jews and the Gentiles, and in spite of this heavy persecution they had "all things in common." They lived the law of consecration, which is motivated by the pure love of Christ, which we are not able to live today.

There are surprising ways, as well as the importance of the English language, in sharing His glorious message of gladness and of eternal life – the gospel of Jesus Christ -- in our day. It helps to look at the relevant language history going forward. Most of our New Testament scriptures were written in Greek and most of the Old Testament in Hebrew.

One of the great lessons I have learned in my 83 trips around the sun is the richness of language. My native tongue is Utah County English, where you pronounce "Spanish fork" as "Spanish Fark!" Learning French in preparation for our mission to Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa, in 1997 was a real eye-opener. I learned that the French don't have a clear translation of our word Righteousness, which is one of the names we give the Lord. Jesus is the "Son of Righteousness."

From the greatly gifted linguist, Professor Felix Mijnhardt, who taught at Pretoria University and who translated the Book of Mormon into Africans, I learned the phrase "And it came to pass" had ancient Egyptian origin. Then I learned from Professor Leonora Leet that "And it came to pass" ties in the ancient Hebrew Kabbalah to "EL" (God) and past important historic events, and further that "And it shall come to pass" ties to "JEHOVAH" and flags important future events associated with the restoration of the gospel and His Second Coming. And this led me to a third

important and unique to the Book of Mormon phrase, “And now it came to pass.” I have found 1800 occurrences of these three phrases throughout our scriptures, and their distribution and usage shows the fingerprint of God and that they tie originally to the Adamic language. This distribution and usage gives Divine design and a grand harmony to all our scriptures – a proof of God, if you will. I was so excited to learn this: <https://itsabouttimebook.com/religious-science-translation-of-it-came-to-pass/>. And I was pleased that LDS Living picked up on this from my book: <http://www.ldsliving.com/The-Powerful-Book-of-Mormon-Phrase-We-Always-See-but-Never-Think-About/s/81070>.

A Jewish convert friend, Robert Kay, has given me permission to share his conversion story, which gives amazing Hebrew insights into the English used in the Book of Mormon language: <https://itsabouttimebook.com/book-of-mormon-voice-from-the-dust/>. Rob and another Jewish convert friend, David Doane, have taught me the amazing Hebrew Midrash occurrences in the Book of Mormon: <https://itsabouttimebook.com/book-of-mormon-voice-from-the-dust/>. I am sure I am an infant in appreciation of all the linguistic significance of languages on this planet, but what I have learned has deeply touched my soul. Jesus is the Word, and His words are the path to eternal life and a fullness of joy. The beautiful dimension of the gospel is that the Spirit – independent of language – carries God’s word to our souls.

Jesus’ last paramount words to His disciples before He ascended were to go forth and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. (Mt. 28:19) At Pentecost, Peter was led by the Lord to take advantage of that great gathering and with the gift of tongues shared the gospel in all the languages of those present. **Three thousand souls were added to the Church that day.** Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew were the main languages at that time.

For me, the most exciting Christian evangelist event after Christ’s resurrection was when Jesus’s uncle, Joseph of Arimathea, because of severe persecution, took the immediate family of Jesus, which included Jesus’s mother, Mary, along with Lazarus, Martha, Mary Magdalene, and others, traveling by boat to Marseilles, then up to England. Did you know that the meaning of England is a people who worship God? Mary Magdalene became one of the greatest missionaries, as the first person to see the risen Lord. Tradition has her being buried in a church named in her honor in England. From ancient Hebrew prophecies, the Druids prophetically anticipated their arrival in England. Interestingly, Britain is a Hebrew word meaning a covenant man or woman. George F. Jowett documents many of these fascinating events in his book, *The Drama of the Lost Disciples*. Historical evidence indicates that Joseph of Arimathea was later ordained an Apostle.

Saul, a major persecutor of the Church, became Christianity’s greatest missionary, as the Lord appeared to him on the Road to Damascus. The converted Paul (Acts 9) and Apostle to the Gentiles wrote over half of the books in the New Testament. Most of the book of Acts, written by

Luke, tells of Paul's incredible missionary success amongst the Gentiles and even among the Jews.

Because the Jewish leadership had rejected the Christ, Jesus told them, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation (meaning the Gentiles) bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Matt. 21:43; JS Matthew 21:53) Paul was a scholar and used his language skills to great advantage knowing well Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, Latin, and probably more.

According to tradition, Christianity was first introduced in Armenia by the Apostles Bartholomew and Thaddeus during the 1st century AD. Armenia became the first country to establish Christianity as its state [religion](#) in 301 AD. The main spin-offs of Christianity that we generally know about were the Greek Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, which spoke Latin. Then a group of Greek monks took the gospel north giving the world the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian language.

The Apostle Thomas is reported taking the gospel to India. Then we have the remarkable story around 300 AD of St. Patrick Christianizing Ireland 200 years before the Catholics moved in and claimed him a saint. David W. Bercot has a great book documenting what little is known of Patrick's history: *Let Me Die in Ireland, the True Story of Patrick*.

While the Catholic and Episcopalian leaders wanted to preserve the Latin, going through and coming out of the "dark ages," with the invention of the Gutenberg printing press in 1439, Martin Luther gave the world his translation of the Bible nearly a hundred years later in 1534 from the Hebrew and Greek into German, and it was widely distributed – giving us the Lutheran Church, the "High German" language, and the beginning of the Protestant reformation. During the reformation, translations of the Bible in other European languages followed.

William Tyndale was the most influential in translating the Bible into English. He was fluent in eight languages and 76% of the King James Version of the Bible (KJV) is Tyndale's translation. <https://itsabouttimebook.com/william-tyndale-king-james-bible/> This English KJV translation of the Bible has influenced more people in the world for good than any other book ever printed. Even though the King's English used in the KJV is 400 years old, it is still having a major impact for good in the world. <https://itsabouttimebook.com/the-book-that-influenced-the-world-religion/>

The poetic beauty of KJV language is considered by believers and non-believers to be quintessential. The lyrics for Handel's Messiah came from the KJV, and this oratorio has been sung by more people in more countries and over a longer time than any other composition. The Lord chose to use this language as He inspired Joseph Smith in translating the Book of Mormon, and that translation along with the KJV shows evidence of phrases tying back to the Adamic language, which could not have happened without both William Tyndale and Joseph

Smith being inspired by God. <https://itsabouttimebook.com/religious-science-translation-of-it-came-to-pass/>

I find it fascinating how the Lord can turn evil into good. The prime example is the infinite atonement of our Lord and Savior. Satan's ultimate committed evil against the very Son of God turned into the doorway for all of Father's children to partake of the greatest of all the gifts of God – eternal life: <https://itsabouttimebook.com/the-infinite-atonement-of-jesus-christ/> if they so choose to do so. We have the interesting history of the UK, which for political, commercial, and military reasons became the kingdom on which the sun never set:

In the process of their domination, they also took Christianity, the English language, and the King James Bible to much of the world. Not that there was necessarily evil intent in their domination, but it was largely selfishly motivated in the pride of English aristocracy.



English in America as another “Promised Land”

The American Revolution War brought about world-changing and dramatic events. Most of those who came to America from Europe did so seeking religious freedom. America became the land of liberty with the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution, except for the slavery problem, which Lincoln fixed years later. http://www.allanstime.com/Government/Perfect_Law_of_Liberty.htm

America became the bastion for Christianity carrying the gospel to the nations. Then with the restoration of the fullness of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith we see it now going across the world. As prophesied by Isaiah the Lord has raised an “ensign for the nations,” and He will, and is, gathering “the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.” (Isaiah 11:12) The English language has been the main gospel communication vehicle, but, as we will see, the opportunities coming are even greater.

English is a composite of many languages and has become the main communication and trade language for the world. Because of the science and technology attached to the English language, as well as cultural adaptations, the current vocabulary approaches an amazing million words – nearly ten times that of Spanish and French. Even so, only about 10% of the world can speak English and less than half of those consider English their native tongue.

Getting the gospel out to all people, in spite of language differences, is a part of Isaiah and the Lord’s prophecies. I did a study of the effect of new languages introduced in Book of Mormon translations and found a direct correlation of conversion rate when a new language was introduced. In other words, the Lord prepares the hearts of the people so that when they hear the “glad tidings” of the restoration of the fullness of the gospel, they are converted and baptized.

In the meantime, people are clambering around the world to learn English because it is the main trade language. It is a difficult language to learn because it is an admixture. Our youngest son, Nathan, is the computer architect for a company, who has developed software to help in accomplishing this goal. They are having success in many countries.

Maybe we need to distinguish between American English from British English. I am reminded of the humorous line from the musical, *My Fair Lady*, when Professor Higgins proclaims, “Americans, they haven’t used English for years!” Certainly, there are many different English dialects and accents across the globe.

Regarding the American English language, I find a not well known, but extremely relevant story in the life of Noah Webster. We owe him honor for helping this nation be the Christian nation it has been. He spent most of his lifetime focused on American English. He learned 27 languages to properly share in the seventy thousand words in his ground-breaking *American Dictionary of The English Language*, published in 1828. Twelve-thousands of those were original with American origin. Emily Dickinson said that Webster’s dictionary “Lexicon” was her “only companion” for years. One biographer said, “The dictionary was no mere reference book to her; she read it as a priest his breviary—over and over, page by page, with utter absorption.”

Webster is credited with introducing the best of American English as this great “Land of the Free” was born -- founded on religious liberty with the Bible being the most important book for the generation of the Declaration of Independence and the USA Constitution. He is also credited with being the father of American Scholarship and Education.

Noah Webster's, *The American Spelling Book*, set a publishing record with one hundred million copies being printed over a hundred year period. It was a major influence in setting a moral code for the nation along with the KJV Bible for many generations.

Noah Webster believed, *"God's word, contained in the Bible, has furnished all necessary rules to direct our conduct."* He further stated, *"In my view, the Christian religion is the most important and one of the first things in which all children, under a free government, ought to be instructed... I mean primitive Christianity in its simplicity as taught by Christ and His apostles... in the revelation of His will to men... in man's accountability to God for his conduct in this life; and in the indispensable obligation of all men to yield entire obedience to God's commands in the moral law and in the Gospel."* Webster further makes the important point that we are a constitutional republic – not a democracy.

Early on in this country, US citizens studied and highly valued their Bibles. As an unusual example, Private Walter G. Jones had two bullet holes all the way through his KJV Bible saving his life during the Civil War. Almost all the soldiers on both sides of that conflict had KJV Bibles in their haversacks, and there are many more stories where soldiers' lives were saved when bullets hit their Bibles instead of them.

Over the last 20 years in America, the percentage of Christians has declined from 70% to 50%. There is a higher percentage of Christians per-capita in Russia now than in the United States. The Savior prophesied that, "...when the Gentiles sin against my gospel, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel... I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them. And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them." (3 Nephi 16:10-11) And just as Isaiah prophesied the Lord will gather His people from the four corners of the earth. We are seeing that prophecy being fulfilled in our day.

The invention of the printing press in times past had an enormous impact on sharing the gospel. Now, during my lifetime we have moved from the analog to the digital era with the invention of the Turing machine, the microprocessor, the computer, GPS, digital TV, and the internet, as examples.

Essentially all electronics are now digital, and the computing power in your smart phone or cell phone is much-much more than was had in the Apollo spacecrafts. We are moving more and more to artificial intelligence (AI), and the impact of these technology improvements and AI is increasing and of great importance in society. How they are being used in society is key. Are they bringing us closer to God or not? The moral decay in society is a great concern to most.

We are at a critical juncture with the impersonal nature of all this digital electronics at our fingertips and in our face. The world is turning more to science for answers than to

God. <https://itsabouttimebook.com/trust-in-the-lord/> I have plotted the conversion rate for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since it was organized in 1830, and the rate has been exponentially increasing until the year 2000. Since then the rate has turned down. I did a regression analysis of the number of converts per thousand members extrapolating the last three decades forward, and if the turn-down rate continues, there will be no converts seventeen years from now.

Again, the Lord knows how to turn evil into good, and we can expect another “marvelous work and a wonder” as prophesied (3 Nephi 21:9), as those who are willing to help to bring souls to Him in increasing numbers in preparation for His Glorious Coming. We will see the gospel go with increasing success as Isaiah prophesied as it goes to all nations.

I believe, as the Lord prophesied in Third Nephi, He will gather the elect from the “four corners of the earth,” He is preparing His people for His coming. He will gather them as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings for all those who: “Listen to the voice of Jesus Christ, the Great I Am, whose arm of mercy hath atoned for your sins; Who will gather his people even as a hen gathereth chickens under her wings, even as many as will hearken to my voice and humble themselves before me, and call upon me in mighty prayer.” (D&C 29:1-2)

When I went to the lab in Boulder, CO, while pursuing my graduate work at the University of Colorado, we were using analog computers to do some of our science. We got our first digital computer, which I used in 1968 to write a time-scale algorithm, AT-1, to combine the readings of an ensemble of atomic clocks to generate official time for this nation. That was a PDP-8S in a relay rack taller than me with 5k of memory! I believe the Lord gave me the inspiration for that algorithm, and with improvements by my outstanding colleagues, it is still ticking official USA time for you today based on digital technology.

Here we have an example of how the digital era is serving us by keeping official digital time along with all the other digital devices we enjoy, such as GPS, digital TV, Google, the Internet, our cell phones, smart phones, computers, etc. While the world is clamoring to learn English, if we can catch the vision of the early Christians in wanting to share these glad tidings of great joy, we can reach out in love to all those who desire to hear and learn these glorious truths of eternal life using the English language and digital technology -- like the internet.

One of the things I learned from Nate was that a major factor in resolving the conflict in the Middle East is resolving the illiteracy problem, and this is probably true for the whole world.

Being able to communicate with our neighbors is key to bringing about peace on earth. The more the world learns English the better off the world will be, and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in English is one of our grand opportunities and will greatly help in bringing about the “peace on earth” we all desire.

Clearly, we should reach out in other languages as well, but the main means we have today is English. Since the world is clamoring to learn English, for those who desire, they can hear it in the context of the great gospel message. Because the internet is digital and many more can read English on the internet than those who can speak it or write it, this provides a great opportunity for many more to hear His Word. We have hundreds of ways to share our message in digital form, and the Spirit, which is intercontinental, will carry our testimony to the hearts of those receiving it.

The Lord knowing how to turn evil into good, will help us turn around this downward trend in conversions to the Lord, so that His great work can never be frustrated by the evil one. Let us catch the Spirit of those early Christian converts and use our time and talents to share this most important message of love, glad tidings, eternal life, and a fullness of joy.

Recent studies in China show significant economic benefit to those who learn English. In an article in the *China Economic Review*, entitled “The economic returns to proficiency in English in China,” they show a significant increase in the number of Chinese who are studying English. Now, that number exceeds the population of the United States (350 million). The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) supports this trend to learn English because of their long-term goal of world domination. <https://quillette.com/2019/07/22/when-the-lion-wakes-the-global-threat-of-the-chinese-communist-party/>. The Lord will use that trend in due process to spread the gospel in surprising ways as part of His next “marvelous work and a wonder.”

What is the Main Challenge to Christianity Today?

I see the main challenge Christianity has today is the encroachment of secularism, materialism and naturalism – turning more and more people away from God. We used to be a Christian nation. <https://itsabouttimebook.com/the-bible-the-land-of-liberty/> Are we today? <https://itsabouttimebook.com/who-are-the-gentiles-message-from-ancient-prophet/>

I feel the Lord had me write my book www.ItsAboutTimeBook.com to not only harmonize science and religion, but also combat the satanic influence on Christianity. I have kept track of the visits on my book’s web site since the first of last year and am pleased that we have had over eleven thousand visits from all of North America, most of Central America, all but Venezuela in South America, all of Europe and Asia, fourteen countries in Africa, and essentially all of the South-west Pacific Nations (Australia, etc.). Over ninety nations now visit the website, and the rate is increasing exponentially “as we speak” just as is the great gathering of the Lord prophesied by Isaiah and by the Lord in Third Nephi. I am pleased to be part of the Lord’s team in this last great gathering of those who will enter into the fold of God.

Ultimately, the Prince of Peace will bring “peace on earth; good will toward men” and help us bring about that ideal society promised. <https://itsabouttimebook.com/the-ideal-society-and-priorities/> It is exciting that we can be part of it, if we will be true followers of Him and both live and share His glorious gospel message.

For now, we see Him using many means, inviting all who will to come back to the Father through the Son. And we see He is using the English language in both spoken and in digital form in fascinating ways as some of His tools. The ancient Christians did not have the internet and all these amazing digital conveniences that we have. Yet they had great success because of their valiancy in the testimony of Jesus and of His glorious resurrection.

I find it fascinating that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is using these digital tools in many ways. One example, that most don't know about, is this year (2019) they have developed digital software to do your genealogy research for you. For members, all they have to do is log into <https://www.familysearch.org/en/> and at the top right side of the screen, you will see “temple.” If you hold your mouse over “temple,” a window will open, at the bottom of which is “ordinances ready.” When you click on that, you can chose what kind of ordinances you want to do for your ancestry and cousins; print them out and take them to the temple. We have used it extensively. It is incredibly convenient.

When I was Stake President in Boulder, we had a lot of people who worked at IBM. I called Elder Richard G. Scott, who was responsible for genealogy in the Church at the time, and offered our computer-skill services that we had in our stake. Working with him and Brother Cahoon, we helped the Church develop the software for “Name Extraction,” which later became “Indexing,” and now the data base is so large that the Church's computer software can do your research for you. It is the member's job to help with the accuracy from their own personal information. The Lord's work is accelerating on both sides of the veil. It is wonderful to be part of it.

We anticipate the day prophesied by the Savior in Matthew 24 when the gospel will go to all nations before He returns, and the messengers will be blessed like Peter with the gift of tongues so that all may “hear the fullness of the gospel” in their “own language.”(Mt. 24:14; D&C 90:11)

For now, let us English speakers have the valiancy of the early Christians, and use the hunger the world has to learn English to share with whomever desires the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We have the incredible means to do so. As they receive it both they and we will rejoice and be edified together. (D&C 50:22) They will be receiving the greatest of all the gifts of God – Eternal Life. “This is my joy,” said Alma and Ammon after seeing thousands of souls brought to Christ. (Alma 29:9; Alma 26:37) It is the work of the Father, “This is my work and my glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.” (Moses 1:39) Let it be our most important work as well. More than any other work, this work is filled with the greatest of joy!

The last verse of the lyrics of the hymn "How Great the Wisdom and the Love" by Eliza R. Snow seem most apropos:

How great, how glorious, how complete

Redemption's grand design,

Where justice, love, and mercy meet

In harmony divine!