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## Growing The Church In Greece

**Big Idea** - To create instructional material, by translating good material from English To Greek, to further advance church planting throughout Greece.

### Introduction -

On July 8-9 of this year, 2018, I had the opportunity to travel to Athens, Greece with Pastor Don Long, Director of Global Outreach, to spend some time with, and interview our ministry partner, Dr. Stefanos Mihalios, church planter and Professor of New Testament studies at the Greek Bible College.

I was greatly impressed, upon the hearing of his story, and it became evident to me that God has graced him great influence within both the Evangelicals and Orthodox of Greece. In regard to the Evangelicals, as both a church planter, for The First Evangelical Church of Greece, and as Professor Of New Testament studies at the Greek Bible College. But also within the Greek Orthodox community as well. Both as a guest lecturer at the major universities in Greece, and more importantly, being included, as the only Evangelical, to sit on the council for a new revision of the Greek Bible soon to be released.

As Dr. Mihalios was sharing his story with us, I was reminded of the similarities between his story and the story of Esther. God has established him today in Greece, just like he had done for Esther thousands of years ago. In just the right place, at just the right time, to do the will of God.

After spending just a short time with him, I believe God challenged me in my spirit to do whatever I could do to help him further his ministry. This challenge stayed with me throughout the day. So as we were getting ready to leave and head back towards our journey home, I told him I'd like to help, so I asked, "What do you need?"

It's his response to this question, why I am writing to you today.

### The Problem - As Stated By Dr. Mihalios

As explained by Dr. Stefanos Mihalios,  
"Among others, one of the major obstacles to church planting in Greece is the lack of proper infrastructures to support the planting of new churches. The lack of essential infrastructures



*Dr. Stefanos And Manon Mihalios*

delays the training and growth of individual believers, hinders the maturing of local churches, and keeps the idea of church planting (expanding to new locations) an unknown enterprise.

Church planting is obviously part of the solution to the many spiritual obstacles we face in Greece; however, the lack of basic infrastructures is a major obstacle to church planting itself. *One infrastructure that is lacking is the publication of training materials.* Another infrastructure would be that of worship enhancement through the production of new songs. In this proposal, allow me to expand on the former.

### **Publication of Training Materials**

While Greek believers are generally literate people (most of them have a higher education degree), most of them are generally illiterate with regard to understanding the Bible. Partly, this is because many churches are lay-led, without any pastor with formal biblical training. But even within the churches that are being led by well-trained pastors, believers do have access to theological or ministry resources. The lack of a Christian radio in Greece is one thing, but we don't even have basic resources to train believers into living the Christian life. *We do not have books that address essential topics for growth.*

As a result, for example, when a church planter wants to train a group of people into becoming elders, he does not have any material at hand or any book to prescribe for reading. This is a reality that applies to other areas of training as well.

While this may not seem like a major obstacle at first, the reality is that it creates many delays in the process of church planting. It also discourages the church planter from attending to the growth needs of his church (new believers, members, volunteers, potential leaders), since he would have to create training material from scratch. This reality also affects established churches, Christians who are believers for many years, since they too have nothing to grow on for years.

*A proposed solution to the obvious lack of essential resources would be to produce resources in Greek (books, handbooks, guides, etc.), either by translating good material from English to Greek, or by investing in Greeks who can write in their own language.*

Your partner in the gospel,

Stefanos Mihalios”

## **Plan Of Action -**

On my flight back to the states from Europe on the afore mentioned trip, I had some time to reflect about the need that Dr. Mihalios made known and strategized a 7 point plan of action, utilizing both his connections there in Greece, as well as mine back home in the states, to provide the needed resources for the Church in Greece. The goal would be to translate as many books needed, in the most cost effective manner.

### **1. Create A Template That We Can Duplicate**

1. I'd ask Dr. Mihalios to identify the first book that he would like to translate from English To Greek.
  1. Our goal would be to use this first book to develop a template that we could then duplicate in translating all of the books that Dr. Mihalios would require.

### **2. Obtain The Rights To Make The Translation**

1. Once the first book had been identified, I would then begin the process of obtaining the rights to make the translation.

### **3. Translate The Book From English To Greek Using Current & Former Students Of The Greek Bible College**

1. Once the rights had been granted, we could hire a college student from the Greek Bible College, who would be fluent in both English and Greek, to actually do the translation.

### **4. Edit and Verify The Translation**

1. Once the translation had been completed, either Dr. Mihalios, or his wife Manon could then act as the Editor to verify the translation.

### **5. Hire Local Publisher To Perform Edit, Layout and Print Of Book.**

1. Once we have translated and verified text, the next step would be to locate a book publisher within Greece, that could edit, do the layout and then print the actual books.

### **6. Establish Funds Needed**

### **7. Print The Books**

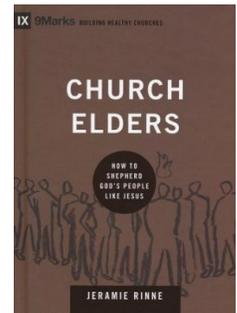
1. The printed books could be available either in electronic or printed form.
2. Once the translations had been completed, Dr. Mihaios would then have his first book, of hopefully many, in response to his need.

### **Steps That Have Been Taken To Date-**

I presented the 6 Point Plan to Dr. Mihaios and he thought it would be doable and was excited to begin.

#### **1. Create A Template That We Can Duplicate**

1. Dr. Mihaios identified the first book that he would like to translate, "Church Elders: How To Shepherd God's People Like Jesus" by Jeramie Rinne, which is part of the 9Marks: Building Healthy Churches Series, by Crossway Publishing.
  1. There are actually 5 books from the 9Marks Series that have been identified as books to be translated.



#### **2. Obtain The Rights To Make The Translation**

1. I began to contact people within my personal network to ascertain the correct person to speak with in obtaining the rights to make the translation.
2. I exchanged emails between 9Marks Publishing.
3. I exchanged emails with the author Jeramie Rinne.
4. On Friday, August 24 2018, I had a conference call with Rick Denham, 9Marks International Director, and Simona Gorton, 9Marks International Project Manager and received a verbal confirmation that we could move forward in translating any or all of their books.
  1. 9Marks is a partner with, and speaks on behalf of Crossway.
  2. Rick Denham of 9Marks was very interested in learning more about Dr. Mihaios ministry and and how 9Marks could further help the ministry in Greece.
    1. Statement from Rick Denham-"In the end, the church in Athens will be free to distribute free electronic copies of their translation or print hard copies for sale, plus we will make the title available worldwide through Amazon."

5. I then connected Rick Denham and Simona Gorton to Dr. Mihalios so they could speak about the project.

### **3. Translate The Book From English To Greek Using Current & Former Students Of The Greek Bible College**

1. Dr. Mihalios informed me that he had spoken with and identified a current student, and a former student of the Greek Bible College who would do the translation.

1. Leonidas Roubas – Graduate of Greek Bible College
2. Ritsa Gante – Student of Greek Bible College

### **4. Edit and Verify The Translation**

1. Dr. Mihalios agreed that either himself, or his wife Manon would be able to edit and verify the translation of text from English to Greek.

### **5. Hire Local Publisher To Perform Edit, Layout and Print Of Book.**

1. Dr. Mihalios informed me that he had spoken with a friend in Athens, Fotis Romeos of the Logos Publication House, and they agreed to assist us with this and future projects on a cost only basis.

1. Logos Publication House, is part AMG International in Greece, a mission driven publishing company.
2. Logos would offer their time as part of their mission, so the only expenses to occur would be to help cover the cost of materials needed to print the hard copies of the books.
3. Logos Publication House has the potential to make the book available to a larger audience in Greece through sales from their bookstores.

### **6. Establish Funds Needed**

1. Once I had obtained the needed information I would create a best guess estimate of funds needed.
  1. Once book has been translated, edited, laid out and then printed, Logos Publication House, will set the final price.

2. I then met with Don Long to inform him of what I have been working on behalf of Dr. Mihalios, and he was very encouraged and excited about the possibilities of moving forward.
  1. I asked Don Long two questions.
    1. Does this sound like something that the GoTeam would be willing to help fund?
    2. If I did need to raise outside support for this project, could I have donation made directly to Valley Church and then Valley Church could then cut a check for the amount to either 9Marks or Logos?
      1. The benefit for the donors would be the tax deduction for their donation.
  2. Begin the process to raise the funds needed to complete this first book.

## **7. Print The Books**

1. I am currently working from Step 6 - Establish Funds Needed

### **Proposed Estimated Budget -**

Church In Greece - - Will raise 10% of total cost.

- To show their commitment to fulfilling this project, Dr. Mihalios has committed to raising 10%, from within the church plants in Greece, towards the total cost of translating this book.

9Marks - \$100

- To obtain the rights to translate their books from english to greek is a fee of \$100 for each 1,000 books printed.
  - We have discussed printing 1000 books.

Translator - \$750

- We would hire a student from the Greek Bible College.
  - Based on my initial research if we were to hire a professional publishing company to do the translation it would cost roughly .11 - .15 cents per word. The book "Church Elders: How To Shepherd God's People Like Jesus" contains just under 30,000 words, estimating their cost between \$3,300 - \$4,500.
  - Hiring a student from the Greek Bible College would allow us to translate this book for an average of .02 per word.

Logos Publishing - \$1,900

- For 1000 copies

- Around 160 pages € 1,600
- The above are current prices in euros, and may be changed slightly due to the fluctuation of paper cost. Included in the above pricing is all aspects of publishing: proof-reading the translation, artistic editing, cover art, page layout, ISBN numbering, and other desktop publishing services.

### **Best Guess Estimate-**

\$2,750 Estimated Cost

~~-\$275~~ Ten Percent To Be Raised By Church Plants In Greece

**\$2,475 Total Cost For This First Book.**

### **Parties Involved-**

- Valley Church
  - Don Long - Global Opportunities Pastor
  - Tim Yates - Director Of Creative Resources
- Stefanos Mihalios Ph.D. - Professor Of New Testament & Church Planter
- 9Marks Publishing
  - Rick Denham - International Director
  - Simona Gorton - International Project Director
- Logo Publication House
  - Fotis Romeos – Director of AMG International in Greece (<https://www.amginternational.org>). One of their ministries is the “Logos” publication house (<http://ologos.gr/wp/>).
- The First Evangelical Church Of Greece
  - Giotis Kantartzis – Pastor of First Greek Evangelical Church (<http://www.aeee.gr/>) and Director of “Polis” church planting network (<http://polis.org.gr>).

### **Unexpected Opportunities -**

- Dr. Mihalios in his conversation with Pastor Giotis Kantartzis from The First Evangelical Church in Athens discovered, to reinforce the need for these books within the churches of Greece, that they had already translated one of the 9Marks books, “The Gospel” and have been using it unofficially within their church body.
  - Using their translated copy would give us a head start on our second book to print.

### **Future Books To Be Translated From 9Marks-**

- From the “Building Healthy Churches” Series.
  - The Gospel

- Has already been translated by The First Evangelical Church Of Greece.
- Prayer
- Missions
- Expository Preaching
- Church Membership
- Biblical Theology
- Other 9Marks Books
  - The Pastor And Counseling
  - The Compelling Community
  - Biblical Theology In The Life Of The Church
  - Nine Marks Of A Healthy Church