

Snippets From KeyCom

May 2026

Say What?

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Have you ever had the experience of speaking with someone while neither of you understood what the other was saying? It wasn't that you or he were using any esoteric words. Neither of you were indulging in complex sentence structure. Yet your attempt at communication resulted in mutual incomprehension.

More than likely, your inability to communicate was because both of you came from entirely different frames of reference. Though you used the same vocabulary, the words meant different things to each of you. To illustrate, you may have heard the old saw about the British and Americans being two peoples divided by a common language. For example, during World War II, the British on a joint task force wanted to table a particular item. The Americans responded that the issue was too important to table. Much consternation ensued until both sides realized they actually wanted the same thing.

Something which makes the Scriptures unique is that they are relatively easy to translate. The vocabulary already exists in most cultures. This does not hold true for other types of literature. For example, awhile back we had to abandon a series of programs we were producing on the evidence for God from nature. We discovered that the Urdu language simply does not have the necessary words to distinguish between such things as feather and wing, the various parts of a flower, and so on. The linguistic workarounds became too painful and time consuming.

Even when a language has the necessary vocabulary, it does not guarantee understanding. American culture and language used to be filled with biblical concepts and references. Older books often alluded to Bible characters and incidents. But, though the Bible is still a best-selling book, people are becoming more and more ignorant about it. This was brought home to me several years ago when I was asked to teach some new converts the basics of how to study the Bible. I was shocked to discover how much I assumed or took for granted. The things I thought everybody knew weren't so. As a result, I had to start at a much lower level than anticipated. My wife has discovered the same thing in a Bible study she is leading. The women she's teaching from the Gospel of Luke don't have the background to understand. She's having to explain basics she thought were common knowledge. One instance was the concept of winnowing. Fortunately, I had a picture she could use of someone using a winnowing fork.

How can we overcome the problem of people not being able to understand the Gospel message? This concern is not unique to us. In regard to his preaching, the Apostle Paul asked the Christians at Colosse to pray, "that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak." (Colossians 4:4 NASB) This involves not only explaining basic ideas and concepts, but also patient repetition. As Paul wrote to the Philippians, "...To write the same things again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you." (Philippians 3:1 NASB)

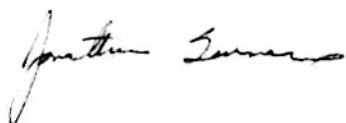
A disadvantage of traditional radio is that you can't rewind the broadcast. While you're still pondering on what was just said, the words keep coming and you're likely to miss what comes next. This is one reason we make the programs available on our website. A person can listen to the portion he didn't quite grasp as many times as he wants. It's also why we repeat broadcasts on our streaming stations. We program a four-hour block of content which repeats six times per day. If someone didn't understand what was said the first time around, chances are he'll have the opportunity to hear it again if he wants to.

Giving people the opportunity to go over the message as many times as they need to understand is also why we make our programs available in book form. Not everyone is a verbal learner. For some, it helps tremendously to see it in writing. This May, Saleem had an opportunity to speak in one of the northern provinces of Pakistan to tell people about our broadcasts and the resources we offer. It was a place where the Taliban has a lot of influence. A mullah questioned Saleem about why he was there. Women arrived at the church building where he spoke wearing the burqa – the body-length shroud Muslim women wear while in public. At first, he thought they were Muslims! Be that as it may, he was able to distribute 200 books – this in an area which, in recent years, has been very hostile to the Gospel.

Speaking of books, last I heard the reprint of our book covering 1st and 2nd Peter was at the bindery. We should take delivery any day.

Thank you for helping make it possible for us to proclaim Christ's message, whether by the spoken word or in print. Please continue to pray that we will be able to explain it clearly and that people will be able to understand and accept the message which can lead them to salvation!

Yours in the Name of Him who gives us understanding,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Jonathan Turner'.

Jonathan Turner
Key Communications
PO Box 13620, Portland, OR 97213
(503) 233-7680