



## War-Torn Refugees Find Prince of Peace in CBSI

South Sudan's two largest ethnic groups have suffered a long history of mutual hatred and fighting. In addition to this ethnic rivalry, more than 60 years of politically motivated civil wars have added greatly to the hardship. Hundreds of thousands from both ethnic groups—and others—have fled, many to refugee camps in neighboring Uganda.

- Currently, there are more than 1,000,000 refugees in Uganda.
- Over the last year, they have fled at a rate of 1 per minute (there are 525,600 minutes in a year).
- About 500,000 are children scattered throughout a handful of refugee camps.
- But the shared experience of being a refugee does nothing to lessen the hatred among ethnic groups.

Through mutual difficulties, these people from often-warring tribes have been thrown together. And so individuals from wide-ranging religious backgrounds are forced to live in close proximity.

CBSI Calebs Dennis and Lynda Blake have been working with the South Sudanese since 2014. Lynda explained that a wide variety of churches have come together to study God's Word through CBS. Diverse denominations and faith traditions are working together. Only God can do that! And what's more, some Muslims are even attending the classes.

All of this has happened since February this year when the first training took place at the Rhino Camp, Uganda's largest camp for South Sudanese refugees. There have been additional trainings in March and July, each resulting in more trained leaders taking God's Word to more churches within the camps and to more ethnic groups. And God is working in those once-warring tribal groups.



Members of the Dinka tribe received CBSI training in June this year.

### Reaching across the Divide

The Dinka tribe is the largest and most hated tribe in South Sudan. The leader of South Sudan is from this tribe. His army and police have been committing unspeakable acts of violence against the second-largest tribe, the Nuer tribe, among others. But the Dinkas have been attacked too. Some Dinkas have fled to refugee camps, but they are isolated there because of the hatred the other tribes feel toward them.

The Blakes decided to reach out to these ostracized people. They studied the Bible with Dinka

refugees who Lynda said then “begged to have a CBSI training.” But who would do this training? Who would be willing to share God’s good news with such enemies?

As it turned out, God called two new CBSI coordinators for the task. They are from tribes that had formerly hated the Dinkas! What a miracle it is that He could move the hearts of two believers—one from the Nuer tribe and one from the Bari tribe—to share His Word with their former enemies.

As of June, the Dinkas had six C&Y classes meeting each week. They also long to start CBSI adult classes.

### Only the Tip of the Iceberg

With violence and war as their longstanding narrative, we can understand why most South Sudanese people long to find peace. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, welcomes them with open arms. They learn this truth through His Word and are therefore welcoming CBSI with open arms.

The Blakes report that there are currently 15 adult classes meeting throughout the Rhino Camp weekly, with a total of more than 360 participants. There are more than 3,000 children attending C&Y classes each week. And this is only “the tip of the iceberg,” Lynda said. “There are constant requests to bring CBSI to other camps and train their leaders.”

The opportunity is great—and so is the need. Obviously, refugees have near to nothing when they arrive at the camps. Consequently, they cannot afford to pay for materials and training. Therefore, it is imperative that others come alongside them to provide the resources the Blakes and CBSI national leaders need in order to go after the rest of the iceberg.

Will you consider interceding and financially supporting the people of South Sudan and others who need God’s Word in Africa? Will you also consider how God might have you support in other ways all of our brothers and sisters in Africa?

*South Sudanese pastors are grateful to CBSI for bringing Bibles and Bible studies so they can study God’s Word. Different pastors told the story of fleeing their country when the soldiers came. They left their schools, churches, and gardens and ran away. Many left their Bibles at home. They had to leave without them. It isn’t easy to get Bibles in the refugee camps. The UN gave them food and tarps for tents—but not Bibles. One pastor said, “We really thank God for the CBSI program that has brought us the living Word. Praise the Lord.”*



Grateful for you,

Keith Spartzak  
International Director

