

The 4 Sport – 4 Gospel application appeals to the Bible Society



Lausanne, January 13, 2014, the Bible Society of the Canton of Vaud awarded its prize to Médias-pro for its 4 Sport – 4 Gospel application, qualified as "playful and intelligent".

Launched in May 2012 and distributed for the first time in 2013, the prize of the Bible Society of the Canton of Vaud consisting of CHF 5'000 is meant to crown the exceptional and creative aspects of a written or audiovisual piece of work. Designed in French, it should be intended for a large public and its aim is to better inform of the diversity of the four Gospels. This new application is based on a literary approach of the four Gospels and intends to reveal what type of reader you are.

Meeting of two worlds: medias and theology

This software came to life after the meeting of Gabrielle Rivier, former assistant of the New Testament at the University of Geneva and Michel Kocher, director of Médias-pro and designer of the application. Yves Bresson, computer specialist and Oscar Ribes, graphic designer, also played an active part in the final project. The application is accessible on the Web and can also be downloaded on electronic tablets via the App Store and Google Play under the name ContactGPS). A demonstration version consisting of only six questions (which however gives a general idea of the project) is available to any party interested in testing the software in their own setting.

Are your reading skills comparable to those of a swimmer, a skier, a marathon runner or even a cyclist? Just like any kind of sport, reading an ancient text is hard and requires some training. 4 Sports - 4 Gospels plans to find what text you would choose even before you start reading. It evolves in 2 steps: first, via a series of questions, it determines what type of hero figure the reader favours, be it from the world of literature, film or the news section. Then through a literary analysis of the Gospels, it links the results to one of the four texts of the New Testament recounting the life of Jesus.

Decoding part of the diversity of the four Gospels

"We received twenty projects of very high standard, especially from a literary point of view. Our preference went to Médias-pro because the application offers in an entertaining way a worthwhile and useful information on the way the Gospels were written", says Daniel Marguerat, President of the Bible Society of the Canton of Vaud. Added to the innovative and creative elements, an outstanding factor that appeared to us is the artful way in which the application uses major biblical data without restricting them to a select public.

Michel Kocher, who designed the application, admitted being very happy with the outcome: "We are very proud of having been awarded such a form of recognition by the Bible Society. I recall all those hours Gabrielle Rivier and I spent trying to bring out the distinctive essence of each Gospel and translate it afterwards in an application. It is a great reward, both from the human and the

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intellectual point of view." Goaded by this reward, Médias-pro is looking out for partners interested in using, developing and even adapting the application.

The software has been made possible with the financial help of the Reformed Church of Geneva, of Bobst Enterprise, of the Bible Society, of Médias-pro and various other contributors.

The Bible Society is planning to award another prize in 2016 and should launch a call for entries by the end of this year.

Two main points according to Professor Daniel Marguerat

"An exegetic info, uncovered by specialists in the last 150 years, but hardly passed on to the general public, is the acknowledgement that each Gospel writer offers a specific point of view, that he has a specific style and a specific outlook on the life of Jesus. Thus the four Gospels do not offer additional bits of information, but each Gospel represents a viewpoint, an outlook and an interpretation of the Gospel. In this application it is perhaps one of the first occurrences where this information is passed on in such a light and effective manner."

"The second element, recently revealed by researchers, is the fact that each Gospel represents a particular type of reader. Not only does each Gospel writer has his outlook, but he also has his own public and consequently it is not just by chance that one is more interested in a particular Gospel, if Catholic readers are rather attracted by the Gospel of Matthew, the Orthodox that of John and Protestants to that of Marc or Luke. This last element has been highlighted by this application and this is rather unusual. Creative and well documented."

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