

YOU  
BRING  
WORDS  
OF  
HOPE



STEWARDSHIP 2017

*s i n g t o t h e*  
**L O R D**  
*a n e w* **S O N G**

**D**ear Friends,

God's Word is transforming lives in our nation and around the world. In the following pages, you will meet men, women, and children who discovered God's love and grace through the Scriptures—because of your generous gifts.

From an elderly woman in rural China receiving her first Bible to a classroom full of curious teenagers in Charlotte, North Carolina, you will get a glimpse into the work God is doing through your generosity.

Although they come from all walks of life, the people you reached have one thing in common. They are now rejoicing in the Lord!

***"Sing a new song to the LORD! Sing to the LORD, all the world!"***

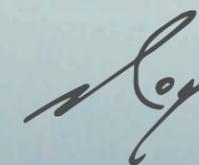
PSALM 96:1 (GNT)

Thank you for entrusting American Bible Society with your God-given treasure as you seek to win this world for Christ. I know there are many noble causes vying for your support, and we are honored that you have chosen to partner with us.

As the stories in this report show, your investments did make a difference.

So, lend us your voice! Together, let us sing a new song to the Lord our God. He has done marvelous things through the life-giving power of his Word!

Serving Together,



ROY L. PETERSON  
*President and CEO,*  
*American Bible Society*



## TRANSLATION

Through your prayers and support, the global Church is moving toward a finish line 2,000 years in the making. By 2026, 100 percent of the world's people groups will have access to God's Word in a language and format that speaks to their hearts.

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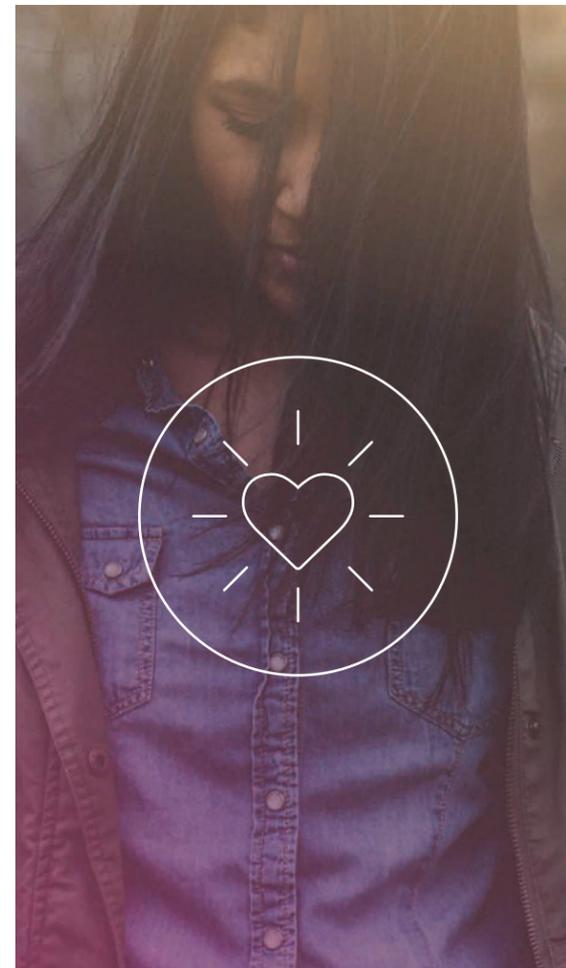
- 8 CHINA  
*The Pearl of Greatest Price*
- 14 RWANDA  
*I Have Decided to Follow Jesus*
- 20 GLOBAL FELLOWSHIP  
*Diverse Yet Truly One*
- 26 PARTNER PROFILE  
*Great is Thy Faithfulness*

## BIBLE-BASED TRAUMA HEALING

Through the healing power of Scripture, brokenhearted people are rebuilding their lives on the solid ground of Christ's love, all because of your love, prayers, and support.

>>>

- 30 U.S. PRISONS  
*My Chains Fell Off, I'd Been Set Free*
- 36 SYRIA  
*I Once Was Lost, But Now Am Found*
- 42 UGANDA  
*Simply to Thy Cross I Cling*

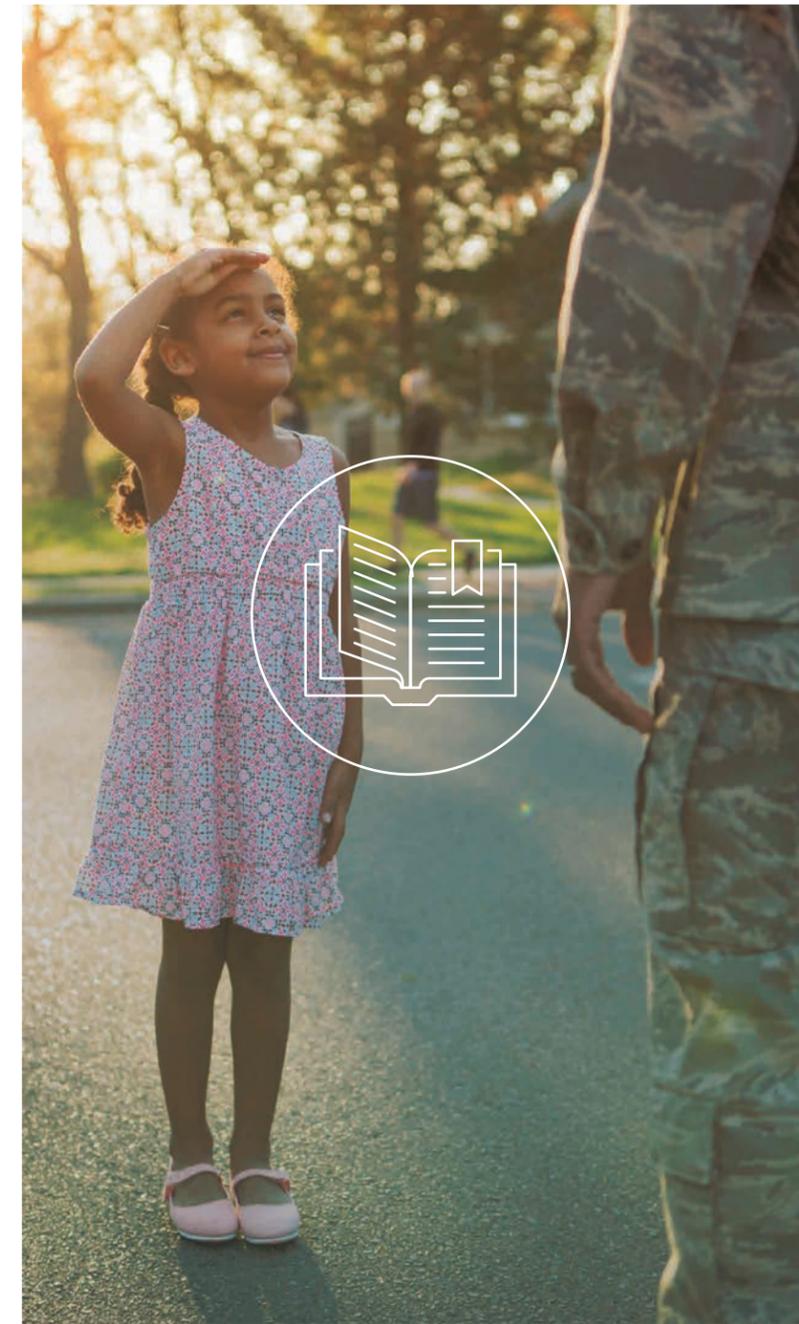


## TRANSFORMING AMERICA

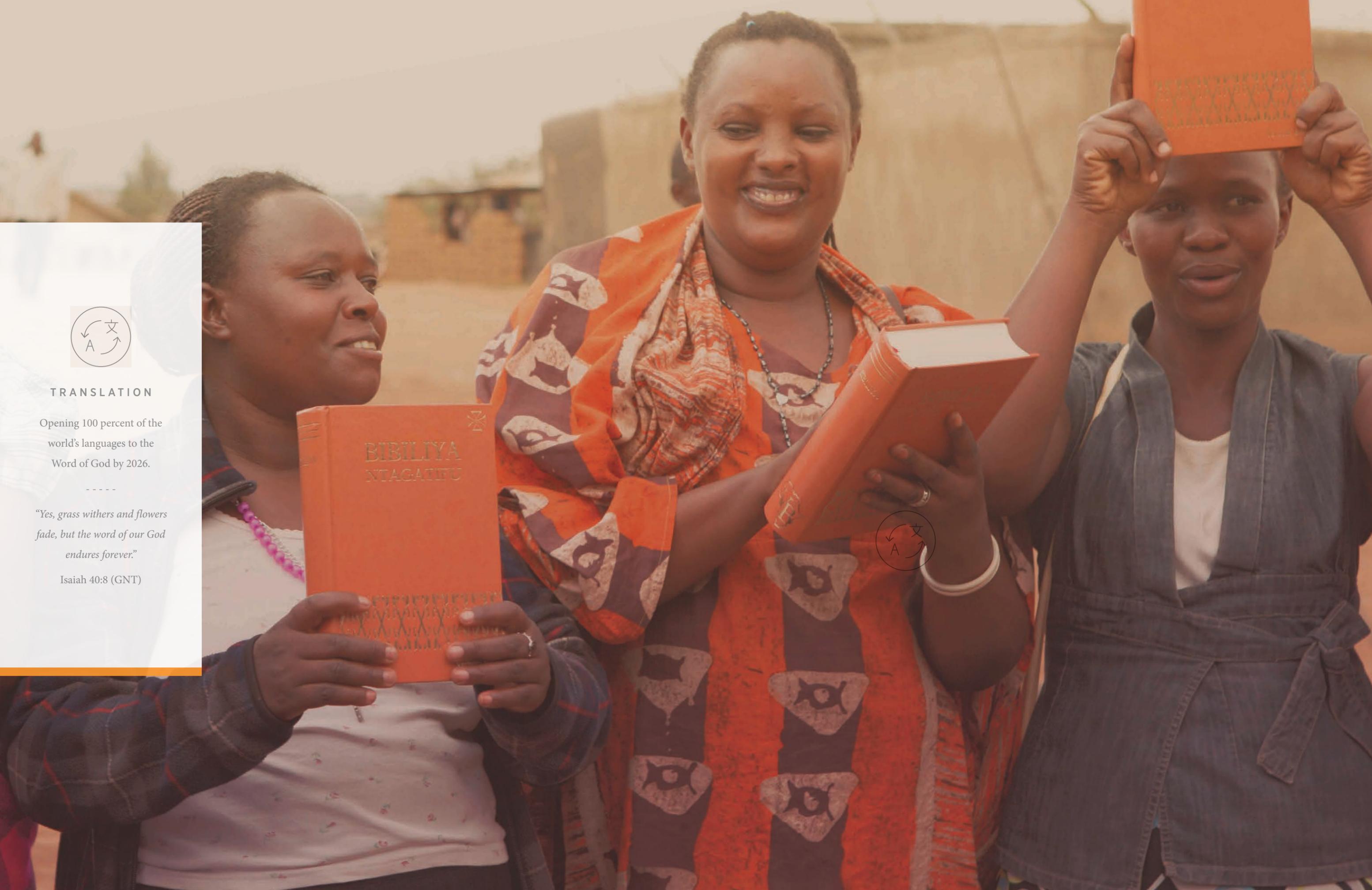
Your generous partnership is shaping the spiritual future of our nation. Together, we are working to see 100 million Americans actively engaging with the Bible by 2026.

>>>

- 50 MILITARY WIVES  
*Fight the Good Fight*
- 56 U.S. CHURCHES  
*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*
- 62 DIGITAL  
*Taste and See that the Lord is Good*
- 68 PARTNER PROFILE  
*God Shed His Grace on Thee*



- 
- 72 GENEROSITY REPORT
  - 74 BOARD OF DIRECTORS & SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM



TRANSLATION

Opening 100 percent of the world's languages to the Word of God by 2026.

-----  
*"Yes, grass withers and flowers fade, but the word of our God endures forever."*

Isaiah 40:8 (GNT)



*the*

PEARL

*of*

GREATEST

PRICE

Because of you, a 74-year-old woman  
in the mountains of China  
finally received her very first Bible  
in the language of her heart.

T

o the outside world, Zhang  
Yaofang looks poor.

She and her family eke out  
a living as farmers 2,800  
meters above sea level in  
China's Cloudy Mountains.

She never received any formal education. She  
cannot read, write, or speak Mandarin, the majority  
language in China.

But the way Yaofang sees it, her life is full of treasure.

She has her husband, daughter, and grandson. She  
has her animals, including a large white pig and  
34 colorful chickens. She has her cooking. ("Fried  
potatoes are my specialty.") She has breathtaking  
fields, mountains, and trees right outside her  
front door.

And now she has a Bible of her very own.

In October 2016, Yaofang received a treasure beyond her wildest dreams—a Bible in her native language of Black Yi.

“I never thought that I would have a Bible,” Yaofang explains, “let alone one in my own language.”

There are 800,000 Black Yi speakers like Yaofang in rural China. Through your support, this minority people group can now hear God’s voice in their heart language thanks to a Bible translation project supported by United Bible Societies China Partnership.

Yaofang treats her Bible like the treasure it is. She carries it in a colorful bag wherever she goes. And although her Bible is only a year old, it’s already well-loved. As theologian Charles Spurgeon put it, “A Bible that’s falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn’t.”

Bookmarked pages contain Yaofang’s favorite Bible passages. “My favorite verse is Matthew 3:16-17—the baptism of Jesus,” she says.

*“As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. Then heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and lighting on him. Then a voice said from heaven, ‘This is my own dear Son, with whom I am pleased.’”*

Matthew 3:16-17 (GNT)

It’s no surprise that Yaofang cherishes her Bible so dearly. At 74 years old, Yaofang can still remember when the Bible was a banned book in China.

“I NEVER  
THOUGHT THAT  
I WOULD HAVE A BIBLE,  
LET ALONE ONE  
IN MY OWN LANGUAGE.”



“I became a Christian in 1976. It was definitely difficult during that time as we could not worship freely,” Yaofang says. “People used to copy bits of the Bible for us in Yi.”

That’s why Yaofang and the Black Yi people received the gift of God’s Word with wonder and joy.

“I was so happy on the day when the Bibles arrived!” Yaofang says. Many of her fellow villagers received their new Bibles with tears streaming down their faces.

Because of you, Yaofang and this ancient community in Southern China will never be the same. And although they live a world away, they’ll be forever grateful for the priceless treasure you gave them—the message of God’s love in the language of their hearts.

*dig deeper*

100M

Christians live in China. That’s nearly 1/3 of the U.S. population.

500,000

new Christians are baptized every year in China.

40,000

Bibles are printed each day by Amity Printing Company in China.

*join us in*  
**P R A Y E R**  
*for China*

1.

Pray that more believers in rural China will be able to read the Bible in their heart language through translation and literacy ministries.



2.

Please pray that the Chinese authorities will continue to deal favorably with United Bible Societies China Partnership as it makes God's Word available in China.



3.

Ask God to raise up faithful leaders to be pastors for China's ever-growing Christian church.

*I have*

DECIDED

*to follow*

JESUS

Because of you, Marie in Rwanda decided to follow Jesus after hearing the gospel proclaimed in her heart language.

**H**ave you ever felt distant from God? Even as a Christian, have you ever felt far away from your Savior? That's how Marie in Rwanda used to feel.

"I was a Christian, but I could not understand who God was," Marie says. She visited multiple churches in her village, but couldn't find the intimate relationship with God she was looking for.

After getting married, Marie became so busy with a mounting pile of household chores and responsibilities that she couldn't even think about her faith.

"Friends invited me to church, but I was too busy with household activities," Marie admits. "I could not go to church, or even pray."

When a friend encouraged Marie to give church one more try, she reluctantly agreed. That's when everything changed.

At church, Marie heard an announcement about a Bible that could talk to you. Intrigued, she decided to experience the talking Bible for herself.

The talking Bible turned out to be a Proclaimer™—a solar-powered audio Bible produced by Faith Comes By Hearing®, one of American Bible Society's partners in the End-to-End ministry partnership. End-to-End empowers partners like you to share the gospel with remote language groups through JESUS Film screenings, Scripture listening groups, and Bible reading programs.

Through the End-to-End ministry, Marie and her fellow villagers heard the Gospel of Matthew read aloud in their heart language. As she heard the words of Jesus come to life in her village, Marie experienced God's presence in a way she never had before.

"I learned about how Jesus selected his disciples and told them to 'follow me and I will make you fishers of men,'" Marie says. As she continued to listen, Marie was struck by Jesus's radical call to discipleship:

*"Those who do not take up their cross and follow in my steps are not fit to be my disciples. Those who try to gain their own life will lose it; but those who lose their life for my sake will gain it."*

Matthew 10:38-39 (GNT)

Marie realized that to experience the relationship with God that she craved, she needed to recommit her life to Christ.

"I must follow Jesus," Marie decided. She began going to church on Sundays instead of spending all her time on household chores.

Today, Marie is a trusted member in her local church. "The church has confidence in me," she says. Marie was chosen to lead the public Scripture readings in her church. She even sings in the church choir.

Through your generosity and through the power of God's Word, Marie can now sing the words of the timeless hymn with joy and confidence:

*I HAVE DECIDED  
TO FOLLOW JESUS.  
NO TURNING BACK,  
NO TURNING BACK!*



## *dig deeper*

**11,000**

people gave their lives to Christ through the End-to-End ministry last year because of your support.

**300,000**

people received Scripture resources through the End-to-End ministry last year because of your support.

**200**

new churches were planted through the End-to-End ministry last year because of your support.

*join us in*  
**P R A Y E R**  
*for End-to-End*

1. >

Pray that End-to-End participants will meet God as they see, hear, and experience the Scriptures.

2. >

Pray that readers who receive Bibles through the End-to-End ministry will experience the love of Jesus as they read God's Word.

3.

Ask God to raise up new church leaders in communities that proclaim the gospel through the End-to-End ministry.



# DIVERSE *yet truly* ONE

You are a cherished member  
of the global Church.

# T

hrough your partnership with American Bible Society, you link arms with a worldwide fellowship of believers as passionate about God's Word as you are.

Everything we do, we do through partnership with the global Church.

American Bible Society is honored to be part of United Bible Societies—a global network of Bible Societies in more than 200 countries and territories. This global fellowship comes alongside local churches with resources that help people engage with God's Word.

By partnering with us, you strengthen and encourage your brothers and sisters around the world—pastors, translators, and Bible-based trauma healing facilitators. Thank you for your generous service to them!

We can do so much more for God's Kingdom when, united by the love of Jesus, we work together toward a common goal: helping all people experience the life-changing message of God's Word.

>> "WE ARE FIRST  
 AND FOREMOST  
 A FELLOWSHIP...A  
 FELLOWSHIP UNLIKE  
 ANY OTHER—ROOTED IN  
 CHRIST AND RELEVANT  
 TO THE SOCIAL ISSUES  
 OF OUR TIME."

— Michael Perreau,  
 Director General of United Bible Societies



*dig deeper*

**428M**

people received access to God's Word in their heart language through United Bible Societies translation projects last year.

**400M**

people received Scripture resources through United Bible Societies last year.

**200**

countries and territories are served by United Bible Societies.

*join us in*  
**P R A Y E R**

*for United Bible Societies*

1.

Pray that believers around the world would work together as one, even as the Father, Son, and Spirit are one.

2.

Please pray for our Bible Society partners ministering in regions of the world where it is unsafe to be a Christian.

3.

Ask God to do mighty things as his people seek to grow and strengthen his kingdom in 2018.

# G R E A T

*i s t h y*

# F A I T H F U L N E S S

By including American Bible Society in her Will,  
a deeply committed board member is sharing God's Word  
with those who need it most—for generations to come.

**W**hen American Bible Society Board Member Cheryl Holland reflects on the story of her life, she sees God's fingerprints on every page.

"This is a God story," Cheryl says. "God has always stood by me."

Cheryl traces God's faithfulness back to when her dad accepted Jesus at a Billy Graham revival.

"The church was a part of our home," she says. "It runs deep in our family."

Since then, God has only grown Cheryl's love for the Bible and the people who need it most.

Especially meaningful was a trip to Bolivia, where she shared God's Word with orphans and traumatized women.

"It set in cement my commitment to Bible translation and distribution," Cheryl says. "That's where my passion has been."

God further stoked Cheryl's passion for Scripture translation when she distributed newly-translated Bibles to minority language groups in the mountains of rural China.

After receiving a Bible, one 85-year-old woman gave Cheryl's daughter a big hug. With tears in her eyes, the woman explained that she had waited her whole life for a Bible she could understand.



*"GOD IS CALLING US TO SHARE HIS  
TREASURES WITH ALL PEOPLE."*

"Can you imagine waiting 85 years for a Bible?" asks Cheryl. "To be able to read the Bible in the language that you use to sing lullabies to your children is a powerful, powerful gift."

While Cheryl has seen the power of God's Word unleashed in China, she knows there is still much work to be done.

"China needs additional translations and they need more pastors," Cheryl explains, pointing out that the average pastor in China travels from church to church and oversees 6,800 total believers.

To help meet this great need, Cheryl and her husband named American Bible Society as a beneficiary in their Wills. Cheryl says she trusts American Bible Society and its global partners to carry the torch of God's Word for centuries to come.

"We have utter confidence that the money will be well-spent," says Cheryl. "That's a vote of confidence."

Cheryl says it's a joy to share the resources God entrusted to her family.

"It's fun!" says Cheryl. "It's fun to sit down with your lawyer and write in 'American Bible Society.' It's wonderful to be a part of God's calling in that way."

As Cheryl invests in God's kingdom, she knows her journey is one small part in God's grand story.

"God is calling us to share his treasures with all people," Cheryl says. "We are one thread in the tapestry God is weaving together around the world."



**BIBLE-BASED  
TRAUMA HEALING**

Empowering the  
brokenhearted to find hope  
in Scripture.

-----

*“He has chosen me and sent me  
to bring good news to the poor,  
to heal the broken-hearted, to  
announce release to captives  
and freedom to those in prison.”*

Isaiah 61:1b (GNT)



M Y

# Chains

F E L L

# Off

I ' D B E E N

# Set Free

Because of you, a traumatized inmate named Harmony experienced the amazing love of Jesus.

**t**o the outside world, Harmony looked like a happy, healthy American teenager.

“I had always done well in school,” Harmony says. “I was a good student, a cheerleader, and even received a college scholarship in cheerleading.”

But underneath the sunny surface, Harmony’s life was troubled, turbulent, and tragic.

“Things started off rough in my life from the very beginning,” Harmony says. “My dad was a violent alcoholic, and my older brother and I witnessed a lot of abuse.”

During her teenage years, Harmony’s mom and dad aimed their physical and emotional abuse in her direction.

“I felt humiliation,” Harmony recalls. “I began seething with anger.”

# h

armony learned to release her pain and humiliation through violence. She got into fights in her small town almost every week.

“This was the only way I knew how to release my building, internal rage,” Harmony explains. Eventually, these fist fights were not enough to mask her pain.

“I started using cocaine, alcohol, and eventually crack,” Harmony says. “I was arrested in March 2016 on an assault charge.”

At first, Harmony’s incarceration only fueled her rage. “I was like a bomb ready to explode,” she says.

That’s when God intervened in Harmony’s life.

“It was during my jail stay that I heard about this class on trauma healing,” Harmony says. Through your faithful prayers and support, Harmony worked through American Bible Society’s Bible-based trauma healing curriculum with a chaplain in her prison.

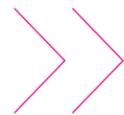
“I not only came to faith in Christ during this class, but God brought the trauma in my life to the forefront,” Harmony says.

Just like Harmony, nearly every incarcerated female in the U.S. experienced trauma prior to their imprisonment. But by God’s grace, the healing balm of Scripture in the Bible-based trauma healing group helped Harmony deal with the root cause of her deep anger and pain.

“I had no idea that the trauma of my childhood was the underlying factor in my anger,” Harmony explains. “It was always under the surface ready to explode, but the class taught me how to deal with it ... by writing laments, talking, and bringing it to the cross.”

After experiencing the healing embrace of her Savior, Harmony changed completely. Where violence used to control her heart, peace now reigned.

“When I first came to jail, I was often locked down for fighting. That was who I was,” Harmony reflects. “But after taking the class and getting to the root of my anger, I have since walked away from countless encounters.”


*“I KNOW NOW  
THAT IF I DID  
NOT LET GOD HEAL  
THE TRAUMA, I WOULD  
BE BACK IN JAIL ON  
ANOTHER ASSAULT  
CHARGE.”*



Eventually, Harmony says she even learned to forgive her parents, breaking the painful cycle of trauma and violence in her life.

“I know now that if I did not let God heal the trauma, I would be back in jail on another assault charge,” Harmony says.

Today Harmony is already making plans to return to prison—not as an inmate, but as a trained Bible-based trauma healing facilitator.

“I see so many women in jail come in and out and in again whose hearts are overflowing with pain. There are so many who have unresolved trauma in their lives,” Harmony says. “My desire is to eventually go into the jail and conduct trauma healing classes.”

Because of you, God’s Word set Harmony free from her trauma. She now declares with gratitude:

“These classes have truly changed my life.”

D I G  
D E E P E R

97%

of women in U.S. jails and prisons experienced trauma prior to imprisonment.

75%

of men in U.S. jails and prisons experienced trauma prior to imprisonment.

3 out of 4

incarcerated women are mothers of minor children.

JOIN US IN  
*Prayer*

FOR IMPRISONED PEOPLE

1.

Ask God to bless inmates, such as Harmony, who need the life-changing message of God's Word to heal their deep wounds of trauma.

2.

Lift up the Bible-based trauma healing facilitators who are leading healing groups in jails and prisons.

3.

Pray that God will provide the financial resources to bring this ministry to traumatized inmates all across the U.S.

I O N C E W A S

*Lost*

B U T N O W A M

*Found*

Through your support, Joram in Syria  
experienced the hope and healing  
of Christ after a violent kidnapping.



Name has been changed.

J

oram lives in Syria—a country suffering from a brutal civil war. When Joram’s coworkers forgot to drive him home from work one day, he flagged down a passing car and asked for a lift.

Joram sensed something was wrong when the driver started heading in the wrong direction, insisting that he knew a shortcut.

Soon they were driving through trash-covered streets surrounded by abandoned buildings. The driver ordered Joram to empty his pockets and asked how much ransom money Joram’s coworkers would pay to get him back alive.

To put his kidnapper at ease, Joram tried making a joke, saying that his coworkers would happily pay the man to keep Joram *away* from the office. That’s when the driver pulled off the road, turned the car off, and opened his glove compartment.

There was a gun inside.

“What is going to happen to me?” Joram thought. “God, please have mercy on me.”

The driver yanked Joram out of the car, threw him onto the dusty ground, and—to Joram’s amazement—sped off. Hours later, a patrolling soldier stumbled upon Joram and escorted him home.

JORAM  
ENCOUNTERED  
A LOVING GOD WHO IS  
INTIMATELY NEAR THE  
BROKENHEARTED.

The incident shook Joram to the core. He didn’t tell anyone what happened—not even his parents. Joram’s dreams were haunted by a recurring nightmare in which the kidnapper shot him instead of releasing him.

After suffering in silence, Joram finally found his voice. He shared his story with a caring nun in his community. Because of your support, Joram also attended a Bible-based trauma healing group for Syrians in February 2017. Through a ministry grounded in nearly 300 Scripture passages, Joram encountered a loving God who is intimately near the brokenhearted. In one of the most war-torn places on the planet, Joram met Jesus.

After dealing with the wounds of trauma in his heart, Joram decided to get out and share the love of Jesus with his suffering neighbors in Syria.

And he’s a completely different person. The shy, timid Joram who suffered in silence is now a smiling, confident leader in his community.

He helps hurting men and women experience the love of Jesus through Bible-based trauma healing.

He plays, sings, and dances with the little children in his healing group.

He is transforming lives in Syria by pointing people to the God who heals broken hearts.

D I G  
D E E P E R

6.3  
million

people are internally displaced  
in Syria due to the ongoing  
civil war.

230

partner ministries facilitate  
Bible-based trauma healing  
around the world.

80

countries around the world  
host Bible-based trauma  
healing groups.

JOIN US IN

# Prayer

FOR SYRIA

1.

Ask God to protect and comfort the suffering people of Syria as a violent civil war tears apart their lives.

2.

Pray that newly-trained Bible-based trauma healing facilitators, such as Joram, will be agents of God's love and hope in their communities.

3.

Pray for political stability in Syria so the Church can faithfully minister in deep ruin and sadness.

# Simply TO THY Cross I CLING

Through your support,  
Richard in Uganda experienced  
the deep, deep love of Jesus,  
the Wounded Healer.



*I* fled with nothing, absolutely nothing.”  
Richard is a refugee in Uganda. Underneath his warm smile and soft eyes, Richard harbors memories of the Job-like suffering he endured in his homeland of Burundi.

Two years ago, Richard was captured by violent soldiers from a neighboring tribe. They beat and tortured Richard.

“They were looking for me just because we were not in the same tribe,” Richard explains. Against all odds, Richard escaped their cruelty. But his tragedy was just beginning.

When doctors informed Richard that the brutal torture left him unable to have children, Richard’s wife abandoned him. Then Richard’s enemies decided to chase him out of his homeland for good. They destroyed the last vestiges of Richard’s life in Burundi.

“The night that I left, they set fire to my house,” Richard remembers. “My mother passed away in the house.”



o, Richard fled north to Uganda with nothing—absolutely nothing.

But in Uganda's Nakivale refugee camp, God worked a miracle in Richard's wounded heart. Through your support, Richard started attending a Bible-based trauma healing group hosted by Bible Society of Uganda.

In the healing group, Richard and his fellow refugees used biblical laments, such as the Psalms, to share their stories of suffering, cry out to God in their pain, and bring their darkest memories to their wounded Savior for healing.

"These lessons helped me understand that even when I am alone, I am together with God," Richard says. "I learned how to forgive others. I learned how to cope with my problems."

Richard says that one of the most meaningful parts of the healing group was taking his pain to the cross of Jesus for healing. During a culminating exercise, Richard and his fellow refugees wrote their darkest memories on pieces of paper and burned them at the foot of a large cross, symbolizing the unbreakable hope of Jesus's death and resurrection for them.

Now Richard sees his suffering in the biblical light of God who loves him and died for him.

"All the difficult things we face in our life are for God and his purpose," Richard declares with confidence. "All the things we face in our daily lives happen according to God's will."

Of course, Richard's wounds have not healed completely. He still weeps for the children he will never get to hold.



"I have never had a child," Richard says. "I have been crying for so long to have a child."

But day by day, Richard is putting his life back together through the strength of Christ and his Word. After his first wife abandoned him, Richard married a loving wife named Cynthia. He is even looking for ways to minister to his fellow refugees in Uganda.

"So many refugees have different problems," Richard explains. "I'm open now to share with others."

Because of your prayers and support, Richard can face the future full of hope—for himself and for his hurting neighbors. He is eternally grateful for your love and care.

"It has really helped me for my heart to be healed," Richard says. "Thank you very much for the trauma healing program."

>>> "ALL THE  
DIFFICULT  
THINGS WE FACE  
IN OUR LIFE ARE  
FOR GOD AND HIS  
PURPOSE."

D I G  
D E E P E R

1  
billion

people in the world have  
experienced trauma.

6  
Thousand

people have been certified  
as Bible-based trauma  
healing leaders.

198

languages have access to  
Bible-based trauma healing  
curriculum.

JOIN US IN  
*Prayer*  
FOR REFUGEES

1.

Ask God to care for the 1.3 million refugees in Uganda through Bible-based trauma healing ministry.

2.

Pray that God will strengthen and equip church leaders in our world's most hostile conflict zones.

3.

Ask God to heal Bible-based trauma healing participants, such as Richard, as they turn to God's Word for comfort and hope.



TRANSFORMING  
AMERICA

Working to see 100 million  
Americans engaging with  
the Bible by 2026.

-----

*"Find out for yourself how good  
the LORD is. Happy are those  
who find safety with him."*

Psalm 34:8 (GNT)



F I G H T

*t h e*

G O O D

F I G H T



m

Meet Marta. She's a single mom in California. Marta is an English teacher and works five jobs to support her two little girls.

"We don't live here. We survive!" Marta laughs, reflecting on her hectic life. That's why Marta was overjoyed when the man of her dreams, Eric, asked her to marry him.

"Eric is the only man for me," Marta says. "Life has put us through a lot, but we have trust in everything we do."

But in January 2017, a huge roadblock came between Marta and her happily-ever-after.

Eric was deployed to Afghanistan.

"Our life spiraled into a crazy military life," Marta recalls. "It was nerve racking!"

For almost a year, Marta and her girls fought the good fight in California while her Eric served in Afghanistan.

"It was rough," Marta admits. "My kids kept asking me, 'When is he going to come home?'"

Through your support, a military mom in California is finding daily strength in God's Word.

In the midst of her fiancé's deployment, Marta discovered a shelter in the storm.

"My ritual in the morning is I wake up, I make my coffee, I sit down, and I pray," Marta says. "The power of prayer is the only glue that holds it all together."

During her quiet time, Marta drew strength for the battle from God's Word.

Her favorite Bible study resource is *Journey of a Military Wife*—a free Scripture resource for military spouses created through your generous support. Each book contains 60 biblical devotions by author Brenda Pace, the wife of a military chaplain.

In her books, Pace shows how the Bible provides wisdom and encouragement for the daily grind of military family life.

"I've read a lot of devotional and spiritual books," Marta says. "But I've never read a book that speaks to you so personally."

Marta's well-worn *Journey* books indicate how much these biblical devotions have filled her heart with hope.

"These books have been my companion everywhere I go," Marta says. "There's not a page where I don't have a sentence underlined."

Marta loves how the books connect her life to the grand story of Scripture.

"We get so caught up in our lives that we don't see connections between the Bible and what we are doing," Marta explains. "Even all those prophets in the Bible—they suffered and they got mad. Being scared and afraid happened to people before us—people who were holy!"

>>> "I WOULD NEVER  
HAVE SURVIVED  
ERIC'S DEPLOYMENT  
WITHOUT THOSE  
BOOKS. THEY GAVE ME  
PERSPECTIVE AND THEY  
GAVE ME PEACE."



Marta cannot overstate the powerful impact of God's Word on her life during that challenging season.

"I would never have survived Eric's deployment without those books," Marta says. "They gave me perspective and they gave me peace."

In October 2017, Eric finally returned home to Marta, and they were married within days of his arrival. They cannot thank you enough for strengthening Marta with God's Word in her hour of need.

"American Bible Society's financial partners deserve to know that they really do change lives," Marta says. "It doesn't matter how much you contribute—I will be eternally grateful."

d i g

d e e p e r

160,000

military spouses are drawing strength from the *Journey of a Military Wife* series because of your generous support.

700,000

active duty U.S. military Service members are married. That's 54 percent of all Service members.

1817

was the first year American Bible Society provided Scripture resources to the U.S. Military. That's 200 years of service—all thanks to faithful partners like you!

join us in

# PRAYER

for military families

1.

Ask God to bless Marta, her girls, and Eric as they begin a new season of life together.

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2.

Pray that the free *Journey of a Military Wife* Scripture resource will continue to bring comfort to courageous women like Marta.

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3.

Ask God to protect the brave women and men who serve our nation in the U.S. Military.

# I WILL SING THE WONDROUS STORY

You helped a Sunday school class in Charlotte, North Carolina, experience the life-changing story of the New Testament.

In early 2017, Rev. John Burton Jr. of First Baptist Church-West in Charlotte, North Carolina, discovered a mind-blowing ministry secret.

He learned how to get the youth in his church to read the Bible.

No, Rev. Burton didn't bribe his Sunday school class with elaborate prizes. He simply gave each student in his class a Bible—a very special kind of Bible.

During the 40 days of Lent, Rev. Burton's church joined 14 other Charlotte churches in a Scripture reading journey called the Community Bible Experience. Using a reader-friendly New Testament created by Biblica, the young people in Rev. Burton's Sunday school class studied and discussed God's Words with fresh eyes—no bribes necessary.

The secret ingredient in the Community Bible Experience is *The Books of the Bible*—a modern translation of the New Testament that contains no verse numbers, chapter numbers, or footnotes.

This clean, inviting format made it less intimidating for Rev. Burton's students to dive into the story of the New Testament.

"The Bible can be kind of daunting," explains Rev. Burton. He says that the modern language and the slim size of *The Books of the Bible* made the New Testament way more accessible to his class.

"It was readable ... story-like," he says. "The language was so common."

And by removing everything except the words of Scripture from its pages, *The Books of the Bible* does addition by subtraction, making it easy for students to get lost in the life-changing story of Jesus and the apostles.

"They totally forgot about the chapter and verse, because it was free-flowing," Rev. Burton says. "It's so exciting for them to read ... kind of like they were reading a novel at home or at school."

Rev. Burton witnessed just how deeply the young people in his church were engaging with the story of Scripture when they gathered to discuss the weekly Bible reading.

"The conversation is rich," Rev. Burton says. "The youth have plenty of light bulb moments."

According to Rev. Burton, "light bulb moments" are easy to spot. He simply pays attention to students' reactions as they read and discuss the text of Scripture.

Some of Rev. Burton's favorite student reactions were:

*"I never thought about it that way!"*

*"Wait, that really happened?!"*

*"I get it—I understand it!"*

“IT’S SO EXCITING  
FOR THEM TO READ  
... KIND OF LIKE THEY  
WERE READING A NOVEL  
AT HOME OR AT SCHOOL.”



These simple but powerful insights were made possible through your prayers and support. Thanks to your partnership with faithful pastors, such as Rev. Burton, a 2,000-year-old story is coming to life for a new generation of young disciples.

"This is a book that's been around for generations," Rev. Burton says. "But to see the new excitement that people have in reading the Bible in a new and different way was phenomenal."

*d i g  
d e e p e r*

5,600

people participated in the Charlotte Community Bible Experience during the 40 days leading up to Easter.

15

churches in Charlotte completed the New Testament reading journey in early 2017.

80%

of Community Bible Experience participants finished reading the entire New Testament in 40 days or less.

join us in

# PRAYER

for U.S. churches

## 1.

Ask God to bless the U.S. cities where American Bible Society is linking arms with local churches: Charlotte, Dallas, Kansas City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, and New York.

## 2.

Pray that young people in Charlotte will continue to grow in their faith as they engage regularly with God's Word.

## 3.

Lift up local ministry leaders, such as Rev. Burton, who are working to inspire fresh Scripture engagement in their cities.

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*t h e*

LORD IS

GOOD

Because of you,  
curious Americans are giving  
the Bible another chance.

do you know someone in your life who refuses to give the Bible a chance? A coworker? A neighbor? A family member?

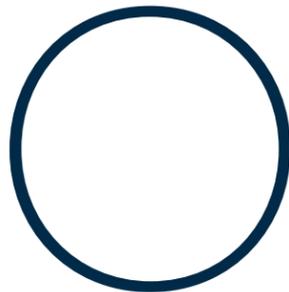
If so, you're not alone.

Since 2011, American Bible Society and Barna Group have been tracking Bible engagement in America. The trends haven't always been good.

People who used to have a friendly view of the Bible now describe themselves as neutral. And people who used to feel neutral about the Bible are now skeptical of its message.

That means more and more Americans don't know about God's love for them. They don't know their sins can be forgiven. They don't know they were crafted for a purpose.

But there's good news too.



ur research shows that 155 million Americans are curious about how the Bible can make their lives better. Can you imagine the spiritual impact on our nation if a new generation of parents, teachers, and cultural leaders gave God's Word another chance?

That's where you come in.

Like you, we believe the Bible is an invitation to a fuller life. People need a chance to consider its message without getting distracted by cultural baggage or heated political rhetoric.

That's why you helped us launch Look Inside—an online promotional campaign designed to positively influence the way Americans view and engage with the Bible.

Look Inside is organized around the 100 most-searched-for questions about the Bible. The campaign meets curious Americans where they are, inviting them to look inside the Bible when pondering big questions and hot-button social issues.

Guests who click on this digital invitation are welcomed into LookInside.Bible—a website with videos and Scripture content helping guests think through some of the toughest questions about the Bible.

As guests dig into God's Word online, we're keeping a pulse on how their feelings about the Bible change as they engage.

Data from our 2017 pilot campaign is promising. After visiting the Look Inside website, guests are:

- 10% more likely to increase their Bible reading in the next year.
- 13% more likely to search for information about the Bible online.
- 9% more likely to talk with friends and family about the Bible.

But the most encouraging feedback came straight from our audience—the people who accepted your invitation to look inside God's Word for themselves. Thanks to your generous support, God's Word is making an impact in the lives of spiritually-hungry people all across our nation.

*"I will continue to visit this website and also read the Bible more often than not now. I have been questioning my sexuality and spirituality since both are dear to me. I have felt a bit of deception on God's part, but I see he is using this project ... to remind me he still loves me."*

>> Bible Friendly Male // 35 // Dallas, Texas



*"Made the Bible feel real ... I loved it! Felt honest and down to earth."*

>> Bible Friendly Female // 27 // Prairie Village, Kansas City

*"It was very powerful. I want to read more in the Bible.... Didn't forcefully push me towards a certain belief."*

>> Bible Neutral Female // 27 // New York, New York

*"The website sparks a small desire to revisit [the Bible] because I gave up so easily before."*

>> Bible Neutral Female // 29 // Charlotte, North Carolina

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d e e p e r*

155 M

Americans are spiritually-hungry and curious about what the Bible says.

500,000

people visited LookInside.Bible in 2017.

43,000

people decided to dig deeper into God's Word via LookInside.Bible in 2017.

join us in

# PRAYER

for curious people

## 1.

Pray that God will touch the hearts of people responding to the Look Inside campaign. Pray that their hearts will be open to embrace the life-changing message of the Bible.

## 2.

Ask the Lord to provide the partners and resources needed to fully grow the Look Inside campaign.

## 3.

Pray that the Look Inside campaign will improve perception of the Bible in America and inspire new exploration of God's Word.

# G O D S H E D H I S G R A C E O N T H E E

One couple's bold vision for the Faith and Liberty Discovery Center and their \$5 million challenge.

Partners like you are helping our nation rediscover the power of God's Word through the forthcoming Faith and Liberty Discovery Center.

This world-class destination on Independence Mall in Philadelphia will invite a global audience to experience the history-changing influence of the Bible in America—from the signing of the Declaration of Independence to the Civil Rights marches to today.

In 2017, American Bible Society Board Member Mark Hanson and his wife, Nancy, made a \$5 million matching gift to the Faith and Liberty Discovery Center through their business, Sea Foam Sales Company. We asked Mark and Nancy to share this bold challenge with you.

**Q** *What inspired your \$5 million matching gift from Sea Foam Sales Company to the Faith and Liberty Discovery Center?*

**A** **NANCY:** For me, it's all about the next generation. I have a deep love for children and education. I can't think of a better educational opportunity than teaching a new generation of Americans about the role of the Bible in U.S. history and the way it can transform our world today. I think we can shape the future of our world by reaching those young kids with the hope of God's Word.

**Q** *Why did you choose to make a matching gift? What kind of response are you praying for?*

**A** **MARK:** We want other families to catch the vision for how the Bible can transform America and our world. We're praying for many gifts, large and small, to the Faith and Liberty Discovery Center. Together, we can build a cornerstone—a stake in the ground that says we believers are going to use God's powerful Word to transform our nation.

**Q** *How would you describe the need for God's Word in America today?*

**A** **NANCY:** We are praying that our fellow Americans would discover God's peace. We live in a fast-paced, restless society. So many people are looking for satisfaction in all the wrong places. They need to know that God's Word is a guiding light showing us the only path to true peace—in this life and the next.

**Q** *How do you think the Faith and Liberty Discovery Center will help our nation?*

**A** **NANCY:** Just imagine all the kids ushered into God's love. Think of all the guests we can inspire. We're praying God opens their hearts and they reconsider their lives in light of God's Word. As they learn about the saints who came before us and the heroes who live among us, people will begin to understand that there is a power for those who believe in the Lord.

**Q** *How has partnering with American Bible Society impacted your life?*

**A** **MARK:** American Bible Society promotes the Bible and its transformative power. It doesn't adhere to any other agenda. Because of this, we believe American Bible Society can lead our country and world to a more peaceful place. The bonus is seeing so many people come home to Jesus and to eternal life.

**Q** *What would you say to someone considering a gift to the Faith and Liberty Discovery Center?*

**A** **NANCY:** Let's help a global audience in historic Philadelphia see the impact of God's Word in this country. By returning to the powerful influence of the Bible, we can help our neighbors live their lives guided by the hope and light of Jesus's love.

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**41M**

people visit Philadelphia every year.

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**408,000**

guests are projected to visit the Faith and Liberty Discovery Center in its first year.

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**0**

destinations in Philadelphia currently portray the Bible's amazing influence in American history.

join us in

# PRAYER

for our nation

## 1.

Lift up the guests who will encounter the transformative power of God's Word through the Faith and Liberty Discovery Center.

## 2.

Join Nancy and Mark in praying for the children who need to experience the love of Jesus. Pray for an enthusiastic response to Sea Foam Sales Company's \$5M matching gift to the Faith and Liberty Discovery Center.

## 3.

Ask God to provide the \$30M needed from prayer and financial partners, such as Mark and Nancy, to bring the Faith and Liberty Discovery Center to life.

*c o n s e c r a t e d*  
**L O R D**  
*t o* **T H E E**



MARK WILSON, CPA, MBA  
*Senior Vice President and CFO*

Friends,

It is no accident that the report in your hands is called *Stewardship*. It's one of our four core values as an organization. American Bible Society gratefully stewards your financial resources, just as you faithfully steward the resources entrusted to you by God.

That's why 100 percent of your gifts to American Bible Society go straight to Bible ministry. Our operating costs, such as salaries and rent, are covered through a strategic ministry fund formed by generations of faithful stewards before us.

This fund also allows us to dramatically increase the impact of your gifts. For every \$1.00 you gave through donations and Scripture sales this year, we invested \$1.53 in Scripture engagement efforts around the world! We pray this ROI gives you the deepest confidence in your partnership with us.

>> 100 PERCENT OF  
 EVERY DOLLAR YOU  
 GAVE WENT DIRECTLY TO  
 BIBLE MINISTRY IN THE  
 PAST YEAR.

As you know full well, our stewardship together goes far beyond dollars and cents. Because of your generosity, God is transforming lives through the power of his Word—now and for eternity.

So, let us joyously anticipate the gracious blessing of our heavenly Father:

*“Well done, you good and faithful servant! said his master. ‘You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in and share my happiness!’”*

Matthew 25:21 (GNT)

All these good gifts are from the Lord and for his glory. Praise him!

In Christ,

*Mark R. Wilson*

GENEROSITY REPORT

*July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017 (\$ millions)*



MINISTRY RESOURCES

Contributions	\$41.0
Legacies	\$6.5
Scripture sales	\$4.0
Net realized investment return and valuation changes	\$46.7
Other	\$2.6

**Total Ministry Resources \$100.8**



MINISTRY INVESTMENT

Bible Ministry	\$78.6
Development	\$13.6
Administration	\$6.7
Surplus held for future ministry	\$1.9

**Total Ministry Investment \$100.8**

# BOARD of DIRECTORS

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

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**Jeff Brown** // Chairman of the Board, American Bible Society;  
Principal, Partner, RoseRock Capital

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**Mark Hanson** // Treasurer, American Bible Society;  
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**Nick Athens** // Co-founder and Co-owner, EcoVac Services

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**George I. Kovoor** // Rector, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Darien CT

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**Mario J. Paredes** // CEO, Advocate Community Providers

**Roy L. Peterson** // President and CEO, American Bible Society

**Paul A. Soukup S.J.** // Professor and Chair,  
Communication Department Santa Clara University

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**Robert Briggs** // Senior Vice President, Mission Advancement

**Laura Dabkowski** // Senior Vice President, People and Organizational Development

**Stephen Kao** // General Counsel

**Geof Morin** // Senior Vice President, Ministry Mobilization

**Jim Puchy** // Chief of Staff

**Mark Wilson** // Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer

FOR THE EARTH SHALL BE  
FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE  
OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD,  
AS THE WATERS COVER THE SEA.

HABAKKUK 2:14 (KJV)



AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

[AmericanBible.org](http://AmericanBible.org)