

RECORD

FALL 2003

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Learning *to Hear*
God's Voice

Eyes for the Unseen

What can be seen lasts only for a time, but what cannot be seen lasts forever. — 2 Corinthians 4.18b (CEV)

Is there anything worse than being blind?" asked Helen Keller, who was not only blind, but also deaf and dumb. "Yes," was her answer. "A man with sight and no vision."

In our consumer-crazed, media-saturated age, to suggest that we should look beyond what is visible sounds like so much counter-culture rhetoric. Yet seeing the invisible reverberates throughout the Bible. This perspective challenges us to ponder our fixation on appearances — on everything from fashion to political image.

Most of us would not deny a distinction between what can be seen (tested, measured, weighed, touched, possessed) and God's timeless Word. Nevertheless, we find it difficult to resist the lure of chasing after and possessing temporal, tangible things, whether it be money, power, prestige or even good health. But when we begin to "believe" that life lived according to otherworldly values — that trusting in God's care — is the only way to inner peace, we begin to grasp the treasures and beauty that lie beneath the surface. That belief lifts and deepens our prayers of thanks on Thanksgiving.

The beauty unseen also changes the way we view others — that we can consider them equally deserving despite *obvious* differences. Still, appearances are usually the criteria by which we judge others, at least initially. And while we may readily feel a concern for people who dress or talk strangely, we may find it difficult to embrace those whose creative or "bizarre" styles of dress, music or language come close to home.

We are called to be image bearers of our heavenly Father — an image not always reflected by what is visible, but rather by what emanates from within. And that's where our spiritual compassion must begin — with a concern for what can sometimes only be seen through relationships, over time. Because what people present to us, their personage, may not always reflect their deepest, sometimes secretly held, aspirations or fears.

In our new efforts to reach young people with God's Word, we want to express God's love to them in terms that ultimately reflect their value as God's children (see story, page 8). Being sensitive to the fashions and language that young people choose also helps us to come alongside — to begin a conversation about what's under their skin — about things not so obvious but much more precious.

In Christ's Service,



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1704 Trumbull Street
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(317) 923-5642
Isaiah 40: 30-31



ON THE COVER: Cheri Berlamino suffered a deep loss, but through her grief found a love for God through his Word. (Photo by David Singer)

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 We encourage you to send your letters to: Editor, American Bible Society Record, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505. Telephone: 212-408-8754. Note: For questions for the American Bible Society not related to the Record, please call 212-408-1200. www.americanbible.org



LEARNING TO

HEAR
(GOD'S VOICE)

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHS

BY DAVID SINGER

EACH TIME SHE HEARD a radio or TV announcer ask, "Do you know where your children are?" Cheri Berlamino would silently scream, "No, I don't!" She was still mourning the loss of her 17-year-old son Craig. • The Sunday of Labor Day weekend, 1994, Craig had gone with friends to a rock concert in nearby Waterloo Village, N.J. "We were at home when my husband, Bill, answered the phone," says Cheri. "It was a call from Hackettstown Hospital. They said Craig was having trouble." • A chilling fear shot through Cheri. "I kept asking if he was alive and they just kept saying they were working on him — that we should come right away." • Lauren, Craig's younger sister, instinctively grabbed a prayer book as they all bolted for the car. "It was the night from hell," remembers Cheri. "At first we couldn't find the hospital. When we finally got there and they said he didn't make it, I said, 'What do you mean, he didn't make it?'" • Craig, who suffered from allergies and asthma and was especially allergic to sesame seeds and nuts, had always been careful to check the labels on everything he ate. When one of his friends at the concert offered to share a chicken sandwich, it took only two bites for Craig to realize he'd made a mistake. Within minutes the sesame sauce had proved fatal. • The fol-



lowing year was a blur as Cheri frantically searched for some way to reconnect with her absent son. She sought out spiritualists of every kind. She read books on the afterlife — books on how to connect with people “on the other side.”

Even though Cheri was raised in a church home, attended Christian grade schools and believed in God, she never thought of turning to any of several Bibles in the Berlamino home. For years she had stayed away from church, but following Craig’s birth she began attending again. And when the time came, as a good parent, she took her children with her.

“I thought my job was to attend church and ask my children, ‘Do you believe in God?’ If their answer was ‘yes,’ then my job was done — we never talked about Jesus, and I certainly didn’t know about having a relationship with God,” she says. Even though Craig attended a Christian high school, once, when he dug out the big family Bible to look something up, Cheri naively wondered, “Whatever did he need to know that he’d need to look it up in the Bible?” But at the same time, his mother was pleased that, for whatever reason, Craig showed an interest in spiritual things.

Now, more than a year since his death, and still desperate to understand more about where her son was, Cheri turned to a Bible sitting in the corner of Lauren’s room — an American Bible Society Bible Lauren had been given at her catechism class. Cheri says, “I thought maybe I should see what God had to say about life after death. I began reading at the beginning and soon discovered that God was not just some abstract concept.” But neither was he the God she had hoped for — God seemed to her harsh and judgmental.

Before abandoning the Bible altogether, Cheri tried again, this time turning to the New Testament, hoping to find evidence for life after death. She began in Matthew and soon became fascinated by what she read. “I was really drawn to Jesus. I began to take Lauren’s Bible with me everywhere.”

Cheri was so preoccupied with reading Scripture that, when driving, she would



Craig Berlamino

read it at stoplights. One morning, driving to work, she began to feel a warmth come over her. “It began in my head and heart and flowed through my whole body — it was like the most giant, divine hug,” says Cheri. I saw this picture of Jesus in a red robe with his hands held out, beckoning, saying, ‘Get to know me.’ I felt the love of Jesus and felt as though I were a child in the presence of the most loving Father. I later knew that, in that moment, my spirit had come alive.”

As Cheri read, she began to understand who Jesus was, how even as God, he had suffered for her. And in his suffering, fully understood her pain. In her mind she pictured a close-up image of his crown of thorns. She says, “For months I was always aware of his thorns. I began building a relationship with him — I was learning how to hear God’s voice.”

The combination of her newfound faith and the lingering pain of losing Craig led Cheri to think about choosing a new profession — something that involved helping people. She left her market-research career at Warner Lambert and spent time deepening her relationship with God, journaling, reading her Bible for hours at a time and developing a prayer life. Her impassioned love for Scripture led her to donate Bibles to her church — she wanted others to benefit from the guidance she found in it.

When she began her job hunt, through a friend of a friend Cheri learned that the American Bible Society was looking for a market researcher in its New York City headquarters. She had not intended to commute or return to doing

market research. Still, she says, she prayed about it, then accepted the position.

“The very day my benefits ended at Warner Lambert, I began work at the Bible Society where sharing the Bible is our mission — and sharing it had become my personal mission. You can’t get any better than that,” says Cheri.

While working at the Bible Society I’ve deepened my prayer life — I hear people pray conversationally. My heart is being expanded by the people I meet here — my whole interior life has been awakened and is growing.

“I’ve stopped asking God if it was necessary for him to take Craig from me to get my attention. I know the time I am without Craig here is nothing compared to the eternity I will spend with him and the Lord. I now know where Craig is. I would never have learned that, nor experienced the deep inner peace of knowing the Lord, nor known his continuous strength and guidance if it weren’t for the Bible.”

Cheri reads the Scriptures every morning and uses Lauren’s Bible as a “commuter” Bible; she takes it with her everywhere. “Every time you read the Bible you’re at a different place and situation in your life — so even when you re-read passages they can have new meaning,” she says.

“Sometimes verses seem to jump out at me — that’s one way God speaks to me. I read the Bible to stay connected. It’s easy to get immersed in trivialities of life — my focus on him will get me through to the last day.

“Each one of us has something to do for him. Reading his Word keeps me focused.

“We’re all responsible for influencing our little section of the universe. I’ve been fortunate to have numerous opportunities to share Scripture with friends and family. If I can be a little light for one other person, then I feel he’s using me to help do his work, and that’s enough.” ■

Through our Project Constant Hope program, readers can receive the free Scripture booklet The Lord is Near to the Brokenhearted by clicking on www.constanthope.org or by calling 1-800-32-BIBLE.

Mourning the Passing of Board Member

Dr. Harold Clark Bennett

— BY DAVID SINGER —

American Bible Society President Eugene B. Habecker expressed his profound sense of loss with the passing of Dr. Harold Clark Bennett, pastor, educator, administrator and inspirational leader, on Sunday, July 27. (He died three weeks after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.) * Speaking at Dr. Bennett's memorial service, Dr. Habecker said, "He lived the words of Romans 12.10: 'Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.' * Dr. Bennett was not lukewarm on issues, yet he always reflected a charitable attitude in the way he expressed his point of views. His views were always accompanied with the kind of integrity that marks godly leaders. The words of St. Paul about 'keeping the faith; completing the work' would aptly mark this giant of a man. He was a person who regularly set his mind on the things above. He always sought to find the common good without compromising on principle. One never saw him eager to pursue division in order to win his argument. Rather, he always sought to bring people together."



* Dr. Bennett served as vice chairman of the Bible Society's Board of Trustees, to which he was first elected in 1980. A calling for Christian service came to Dr. Bennett "clear and urgent" following a three-year career as a United States Navy pilot during World War II. In 1945 he returned to school, eventually graduating from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary with an M. Div. degree in 1953. * While in school, Dr. Bennett, pastored a Baptist church in North Carolina and served as a chaplain at Kentucky State Reformatory and the Kentucky Women's Prison. After serving as pastor or assistant pastor at three other Baptist churches, Dr. Bennett demonstrated administrative skill at key positions in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). For his leadership as president/treasurer of the Executive Committee and treasurer of the SBC for 13 years, from 1979 to 1992, Dr. Bennett was honored by being chosen as the fourth president emeritus of the Executive Committee of the

SBC. He taught as a visiting professor at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, published one book, "God's Awesome Challenge," and wrote many articles for denominational publications. * He served on numerous Bible Society Board committees, including the committee on Trustees and the Investment and Translations sub-committees. A Bible Society project of immense personal interest to him — and one that he helped guide at the Board level — was the 10-year effort to produce *The Learning Bible*, whose illustrations, historical notes and explanations help guide readers through the rich history of God's provision for human forgiveness. Dr. Bennett acknowledged that the Bible is still a bestseller, "but there's a need to get people to read and understand it." * Dr. Bennett, who would have been 79 on July 30, is survived by his wife, Phyllis Jean, and their three children, Jeffrey Clark Bennett, John Scott Bennett and Mrs. Paul Dwight Howard (Cynthia Ann Bennett). ■

Boys



Eliminating spiritual poverty among urban youth

IC ELEMENTZ

BY FRANCINE LANGE AND ROY LLOYD

ACROSS AMERICA, COMPETITION FOR THE HEARTS AND MINDS of our nation's youth rages. Ads for clothing and entertainment, cell phones and music promise to "connect" young people to something that will fulfill their deepest longings. Street gangs offer acceptance and loyalty. Children are sent to prison at an ever-younger age. School dropout rates and violence continue to climb, and illiteracy robs our youth of a meaningful future.

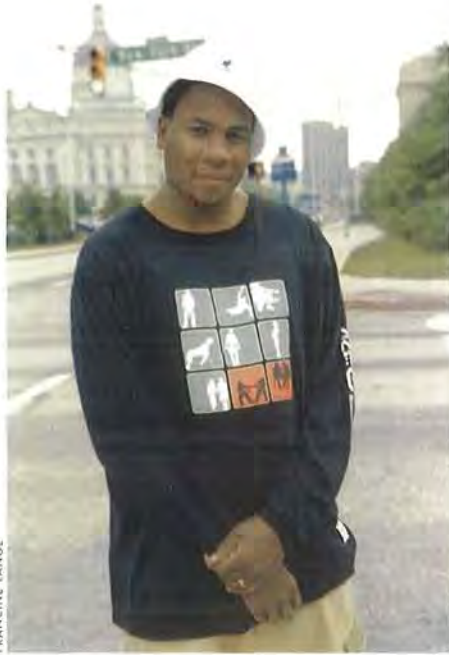
The American Bible Society has embarked on a new mission to connect kids, specifically at-risk urban youth, with the gospel. Working with local churches, the Bible Society offers a three-pronged approach: *Elementz of Life*™ infuses the "language" of hip-hop music, dance and graphic art with Christ's message, making the gospel more accessible to youth; our Caring Program connects volunteers from local churches with juvenile detention centers to mentor young offenders; and our Literacy Program provides a Scripture-based literacy curriculum.

To demonstrate the potential of this comprehensive approach, last June the Bible Society coordinated three days of youth outreach in Indianapolis, Ind., a city with 26 percent of its 1.5 million population under the age of 18. Working with ex-gang member Byron Alston, director of the Save the Youth Center, local churches and Christian hip-hop performers, the



CHARLES J. SCHISTA

Ron Pichardo (above) created a mural that reflected the aim of the American Bible Society — to point urban youth to a life of hope and grace. Ron, 22, worked on the mural (left) for several days, stretching it across one wall at the Save the Youth Center in Indianapolis. The Philadelphia-based graphic artist, who runs his own business, Ron Pichardo Design, is developing all the *Elementz of Life* visuals.



FRANCINE LANGE

Bible Society pulled together a collective expression of God's love that drew the attention of kids and community leaders alike.

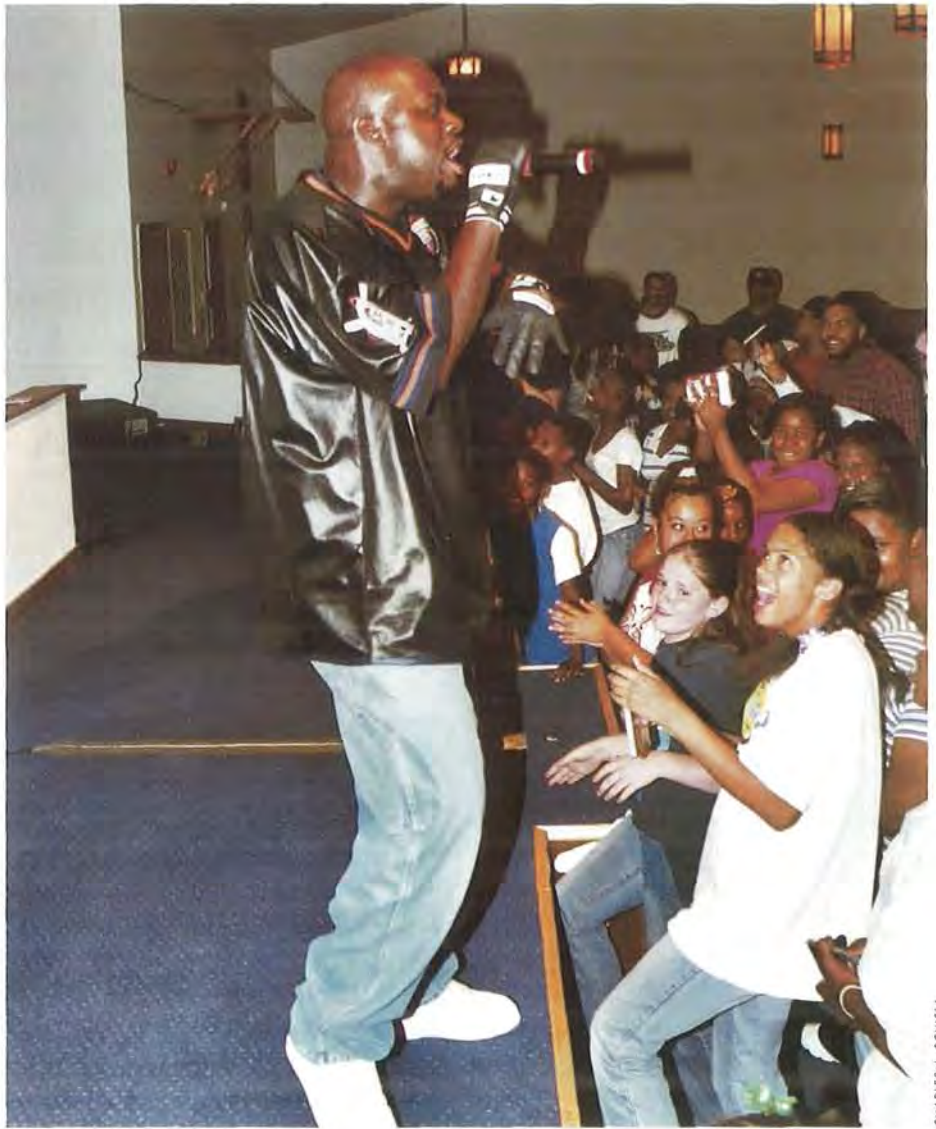
CARING FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

In one venue, at the Marion County Juvenile Center, some 120 youth from ages 7 to 17 filed in to participate in an evangelistic celebration.

Heads down, hands behind backs, they sat silently until hip-hop artists Sean Slaughter and Pettidee began exalting God's love in hip-hop rhythm. As kids clapped and cheered, break dance troupe Soul Majestics acted out parables of grace with humor and athletic agility.

Roberta Weinberg, a regional director for the Bible Society, says she saw sullen faces slowly soften as the performers ministered. By the end, nearly 90 children, many crying, had raised their hands to acknowledge Jesus Christ. One girl burst into tears of gratitude, telling Roberta, "I'm getting out on Thursday and I'm going to church on Sunday."

Keeping young people out of trouble requires "positive family or adult role models and relationships," says Lt. Chad Knecht, of the Indianapolis Police Department's Safe Streets Task Force, which investigates gang-related criminal activity.



CHARLES J. SCHISLA

"Holy hip-hop" artist Dewayne "Pettidee" Petty (above) and his wife, Chloris, (not pictured) perform together, describing male/female relationships as ones based on love, respect and faithfulness. Sean Slaughter (above, left) uses hip-hop music to glorify God and point listeners to Christ.

He emphasizes the preventive side of law enforcement, keeping young people connected with the community through programs such as the Police Athletic League (PAL). Officer Horace Johnson, a 22-year PAL veteran, adds, "Prevention is the *only* way to work [successfully] with young people." A disconnect can translate into some depressing statistics.

An Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention bulletin reports "an increasing number of very young offenders between the ages of 7 and 12 are becoming involved with the juvenile justice system." That number has jumped 33 percent over the last decade. Almost

1 in 10 juvenile arrests are children younger than 13. And the younger delinquents "are at a greater risk of becoming serious, violent and chronic offenders" than older youth.

Drew Segawa, the Bible Society's senior program specialist, says that for many churches, outreach to young offenders is "the forgotten stepchild of ministries" and he hopes to change that view with the Caring Program's P.A.T.H.[™] (Pointing At-risk youth Toward Hope) mentoring initiative. A team (including members from Youth for Christ/USA and Intercessors for America) will develop

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Turning From Gangs to God: A Life Choice

Byron Alston walked out of prison on New Year's Eve in 1995 with two choices: he could accompany the tall, muscular man waiting outside to a family barbecue, and a time of singing, praying and praising God to bring in the New Year, or he could rejoin his gang associates for a raucous welcome-home celebration.

Now fast-forward to June 2003. Byron sits in his office talking about the bank robbery and kidnaping charges that earned him a 16-year stay in Pendleton Prison. "I just took hostages to get away, then I let them go. I didn't hurt them," he explains, then interrupts himself to answer the phone, "Save the Youth Center." He founded the recreation and education center to keep other youth in Indianapolis from getting into similar trouble.

His decision on that New Year's Eve nearly eight years ago to go with Ken Johnson, chaplain for the NFL Indianapolis Colts, pulled him from gang influence and into a life committed to Christ.

Byron understands influence. "The bad influence in my life was Big C [a neighborhood gangster]," he says. "He had a lot of power in the community."

Byron's mother was no match for the excitement of the streets, but tried anyway. She took him to church every Sunday, but the often-preached gospel message didn't reach him, and eventually he stopped attending. He immersed himself in the street gang life, and, at age 15, was sent to prison.

Byron quickly established himself as a leader in the prison gang culture, but that kept him from something very close to home.

"My mom died," says Byron, and prison officials denied his request to attend her funeral for fear his gang allies on the outside would help him escape. His grief and disappointment softened his heart enough to listen to the Rev. Rick



Former gang member Byron Alston opens his heart to kids — "gangster wannabes" — who are headed down the same destructive path from which he escaped.

Hall, a minister who had brought in a softball team to play with the inmates. After the game, the Rev. Hall preached about redemption. Disgusted, Byron led a group of inmates out of the service.

"Then," he says, "something told me, 'No, go back and listen.'" As he stood in the back of the room, Rev. Hall's message struck a chord. "When he started talking, it just seems like the whole group of inmates stepped aside, and he was talking straight at me," he says. "And I was like, 'Man, he don't even know me, who does he think he is talking to me like that?'"

Afterward, Rev. Hall says, "I told Byron this is real, and I said, 'I'll back it up. Put me on your [visiting] list.'" After several months of visits, Byron made a decision to follow Christ. Shortly after,

Byron read an article about Chaplain Johnson's work with young people that inspired him. He asked Rev. Hall to arrange a meeting with the chaplain. The chaplain and Byron made a pact; he would help Byron following his release from prison, but only if Byron attended church every Sunday, saved a percentage of his salary and donated a percentage to God's work, and gave up drugs, alcohol and all gang connections. Byron would have to call every day and account for his progress.

Chaplain Johnson's investment paid off. Now, at 37, Byron is married to Sylvia, has two children, Tamara, 5, and Corey, 7, and serves as an assistant pastor at his church, Pathways Baptist. Byron visits schools, telling students about his experience with gang life and what "kids stuck on stupid" can expect if they head down that road.

Last summer, Byron opened the Save the Youth Center, a 2,300-square-foot building that required massive renovation. He didn't have the money but prayed, believing God would provide.

Soon, people came to help. "Kids worked on every part of this building," he says proudly. Parents donated materials, painted, installed doors and put up drywall. Now, some 40 kids show up during the week to play basketball, attend leadership training and participate in a Choices and Consequences workshop that includes visits to the Marion County Jail to witness the consequences of poor life choices.

Byron's choices have propelled him into a vital ministry, "talking to kids and helping kids."

—Francine Lange

A Need Born of the Spirit

Providing Bibles for a flourishing church

Each country has its own story. But in almost every one the most sought-after book is the Bible. In 2002, the United Bible Societies (UBS), a fellowship of national Bible Societies that includes the American Bible Society, distributed more than 25 million Bibles, nearly as many New Testaments and another 500 million portions of Scripture in over 260 countries. And still there are not enough Bibles to meet the ever-increasing demand.

One reason is the growing number of people turning to Jesus. There is phenomenal church growth covering three-fourths of our planet. Another reason is that, in many places, especially communist and former communist countries, new religious freedom has unleashed a pent-up spiritual hunger. Cuba is a good example where both factors are at work.

More Cubans than ever are seeking community through church involvement. The government allowance of more open religious expression has led to a five-fold surge in church attendance. (An example of that expression occurred in 1999, with a major interdenominational outreach to Cuba, which coincided with the visit of Pope John Paul II.) This blossoming of spiritual fervor has increased the need for Bibles.

According to the Rev. José López, secretary of the Bible Commission of the Council of Churches in Cuba and who serves as our United Bible Societies contact there, in the 1970s the Bible Commission was permitted to receive only two or three thousand Bibles a year. During the 1980s that number grew to between 10 and 15 thousand annually. The Rev. López reports that, with help from the Bible Societies (for many years the only official source for Bibles in Cuba), the Commission now prints much of their own Scripture booklets.

Thank God that the American Bible Society, through the UBS, has official permits to make shipments of Bibles to Cuba. The UBS works with the Bible Commission to provide all Christian confessions in the country with Scriptures.

AN EXPLOSION OF FAITH WORLDWIDE

Cuba exemplifies what is happening in many other places around the world. According to the Lausanne Statistics Task Force, in the 60 years

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The Bible Society in Nicaragua (right), working with rural churches and the Netherlands Bible Society, has provided Scriptures to more than 5,000 teachers to share with their students who are living in remote areas of the country.



Operation World estimates that people in China (above and left) are committing themselves to Jesus Christ at an astounding rate of almost 20,000 a day, making the need for more Bibles critical. And there are still millions to reach with the gospel in this nation of 1.3 billion people.

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID SINGER



One of the indigenous peoples of Guatemala is experiencing a special affirmation of God's love: a Scripture translation into their native language. (Nearly 20,000 Chuj live in Guatemala and cannot read or write the country's official language of Spanish.)



More Cubans than ever are seeking community through church involvement (left). With the government's allowance of more religious expression, church attendance has grown five-fold; and the need for Bibles to feed spiritually hungry Cubans continues to multiply.

<< continued from page 12

leading up to 1994, the number of Christians in the world increased by 1,350 percent (from 40 million to 540 million), while the world's population grew only 400 percent.

Across Africa, the number of people who follow Christ has climbed from 3 percent in 1900 to a present figure of 45 percent. The number of Christians in Africa has grown by nearly 23 percent from 1990 to the beginning of the new millennium, and is expected to nearly double by the year 2025.

One of Africa's success stories, highlighted in press coverage stimulated by President Bush's recent trip there, has occurred in Uganda. Unlike the rest of the continent, the incidence of AIDS infection in Uganda has been reduced dramatically, from more than 30 percent of the population to 8 percent. What was left out of the reporting is how a thriving Christian church has been a transforming influence behind this dramatic social and moral success.

Primary school students in Uganda are introduced to *New Reader* Scriptures in their first and second year classes. By the time students reach their sixth and seventh years, these students have read the whole Bible. The children of Uganda are



For many Cubans (above), the Bible is the center of their lives and the life of their church. The tremendous growth of churches in this country reflects what is happening in many other parts of the world.

read or write. She has been forced to leave school to earn money for her family, selling raisin cakes to tourists. She has little hope for a formal education. Her plight is like that of many young people in Africa who need to learn of God's love but will have little opportunity if, first, they must learn to read. It is her plight, and millions like her, that the Bible Societies, in partnership with the *Faith Comes By Hearing* (FCBH) Scripture listening program, are working to alleviate. (See *Record* cover story, Spring 2003 issue)

Since 1988, the United Bible Societies has partnered with Hosanna, the Albuquerque-based organization that operates *FCBH*, to provide audio Scriptures to reach the 70 percent of the world that cannot be reached through the printed page — those who cannot read the Scriptures. When someone pushes the button on a cassette player and the Scriptures are heard, miraculous things can happen — whole new communities can form around a single set of Scripture tapes.

Another solution for sharing the Good News with those

who can't read is through our partnership with Campus Crusade for Christ International (CCCI). You may read a tribute to its founder, Bill Bright, on page 18. The CCCI *Jesus* film, translated into more than 500 languages, has been used by the Bible Societies to reach millions, with the English version

using the American Bible Society's *Good News Translation* (GNT) for its text.

If we are to fulfill our mission of providing God's Word, especially to those who cannot afford the cost of a Bible or Scripture audiocassette, we need your help. If you would like to make a difference by providing Bibles for new Christians, please include your contribution in the enclosed envelope in the center of this magazine. ■



Churches in Cuba (left), as well as in other Spanish-speaking countries throughout Latin America, look to the Bible Societies for the Scriptures they need.

learning what it means to be reborn spiritually. And that translates into how they live.

MINISTRY PARTNERSHIPS HELP FILL THE GAP

But there are also countries like Mozambique where the picture is not so bright. Elisa Domingos, age 12, has already learned that life can be very difficult for those who cannot

ONWARD

CHRISTIAN SOLDIER

A singles military ministry serving those who serve

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANCINE LANGE

When Cynthia Chamble talks about the new American Bible Society Bibles produced for the military, there's excitement in her voice and a smile spreads across her face. Ms. Chamble, a corporal in the New York Guard, has seen firsthand how the specially designed Scriptures are encouraging military personnel, particularly during these stressful times.

"The way they are designed says, 'God is with us,' " she explains. The *Good News Translation* includes special material developed jointly with the aid of Catholic and Protestant chaplains from all branches of the armed forces, copies of the military code of conduct and counsel on effective leadership.

What sets these apart from other Bibles is the series of photographs of military men and women in uniform praying, training, marching and worshipping, and the emblems of all the branches of the U.S. armed forces displayed on the cover.

"It brings home the point about what military people are doing," she says.

Ms. Chamble's connection to the military is two-fold: following the Sept. 11 assault against the nation two years ago, she says, "my city was being attacked and I wanted to do something." So she joined the New York Guard reserves. But Ms. Chamble's interest in the military goes back to 1999 when, as the founder of a local ministry to Christian singles that attracts participants from more than 200 churches, she added a special chapter for service personnel in the reserves. Called the Soldiers, Sailors,

Airmen & Marines 4 Christ (S.S.A.M.4C.), it numbers about 35 members.

As the nation went on alert after 9/11, Ms. Chamble began to see the role of S.S.A.M.4C. shifting — from that of a fellowship group to more of a support function to reservists called to duty and as liaison between the military and the families and loved ones. She received calls from S.S.A.M.4C. members asking her to help with personal and business issues as they were deployed to Afghanistan, Iraq or in support posts in the United States and overseas.

Ms. Chamble also fielded calls from reservists outside the ministry anxious to get word to a family member or emotional support for themselves.

"It wasn't my original vision" for the ministry, she says, "but the Lord saw fit to take us to a higher level" of service.

To carry on her ministry, Ms. Chamble relies on the Scripture booklets and Bibles she receives from the Bible Society. She says she saw one chaplain's assistant open a case and pull out a military Bible. Very reverently, "he just kept rubbing his hand over the cover," says Ms. Chamble. ■

The American Bible Society has distributed nearly 25,000 copies of the new military Bible, and of that amount, 3,910 have gone to military bases. You may order one for \$9.99 per copy online at www.bibles.com or by calling 1-800-32-BIBLE. Ask for the U.S. Armed Forces Bible, catalog #112881.



Cpl. Cynthia Chamble looks to Scripture to guide her. "And as Christ's soldier, do not let yourself become tied up in the affairs of this life, for then you cannot satisfy the one who has enlisted you in his army." 2 Timothy 2:4

A Vision to Reach Hurting People Ministering in City Streets and Cyber Spaces

When a church in South Carolina took Christ's message of redemption to the "highways and byways" of its city streets, the church's assistant pastor helped expand the ministry by venturing onto the Internet. With a boost from American Bible Society's *ForMinistry.com*, the church, Triumph the Church and Kingdom of God in Christ, now has a Web site that fields e-mailed prayer requests from the area and other states as well as from Africa.

Sonya Hammond, the assistant pastor since October 2002 and a member at the Newberry church for 19 years, e-mailed us about the church's work and the tremendous blessing she has experienced in reaching out to hurting people. Triumph, a Holiness church located in one of the poorer communities in Newberry, sits in a neighborhood where many of the residents are very old or suffering from drug and alcohol addiction. They want to come to church, she explained, but because of age or addictions cannot summon the strength.

To reach out to the community, Senior Pastor James Moore began sharing God's Word on the streets, passing out Scripture pamphlets imprinted with the church's name. He would collect names and addresses of people who requested prayer, then return with a "prayer band," a group from Triumph to pray and encourage individuals.

"Still," Ms. Hammond wrote, "we had a desire to reach more souls. I thought about the Internet — the millions of people out there who were as hungry for the Word as some we encountered on the streets." Knowing the church's tiny budget could not fund a Web site, Ms. Hammond checked out other possibilities.

"Then, I heard about *ForMinistry*! That solved one

problem — Web hosting. Still, I was not literate in Java or HTML (programming tools used to build a site) or anything else dealing with Web design. But God said 'If you take the first step, I will carry you the rest of the way.' So, I stepped out on faith and the promise from *ForMinistry* that I didn't need to be a programmer to build a great site." Ms. Hammond studied tutorials and visited instructional Web sites, then downloaded free graphics for the church site. Shortly after its completion they received an urgent e-mail.

"Trish (not her real name) was requesting prayer for a friend who was deep into drugs and the occult. She told us that her friend had a husband and a child who were suffering greatly, and Trish felt as though her friend was destined to die.

"I printed [the e-mail] and read it to the congregation. We took the e-mail to the altar and there we prayed for

Trish and her friend. Trish e-mailed me about a month later to say that she knew we must have prayed because her friend was doing better." Ms. Hammond and Trish kept up an e-mail correspondence and the church continues to pray.

They've also received prayer requests from a church in Africa, whose pastor wants to affiliate his church with Triumph.

Ms. Hammond continues to upgrade the site TriumphChurchNewberry.com "and make it more pleasing to the eye as I learn and grow — but oh, what a blessing it has been to my soul!" And to *ForMinistry* she added, "We truly thank God for you." ■

— CHRIS THYBERG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Cthyberg@ForMinistry.com

An Internet ministry of the American Bible Society

"Equipping the Church online For Ministry"®



Sonya Hammond, assistant pastor at Triumph the Church and Kingdom of God in Christ.

FOR THE RECORD

100 YEARS AGO

The Transforming Power of the Bible

In recent years the American Bible Society has championed *Faith Comes By Hearing* audio Scriptures as a way to touch the illiterate with God's Word here and around the world. Just this past year a new literacy series of Scriptures produced by the Bible Society are helping people to learn to read using the Bible. Following is a testimony in a similar vein 100 years ago.

In the fall of 1903, a renowned Sunday school teacher wrote: "In my woman's Bible class there are four women over seventy years of age, who can not read, and who, since learning of the beauty and comfort the Bible contains, regret exceedingly that they can not read it for themselves. (The teacher would faithfully read Scripture to them during the classes.) They seem hungry for its sweet truths."

The teacher's letter continues: "The other day one of them said to me, 'My mind is dark, but I know my Savior and will soon go to him.' Her life has been dark, too, and until a year ago she was ignorant and careless about her salvation — now she never wearies 'listening,' and the same can be said for the other three. Spending their long lives in a Christian land, they seem never to have 'heard' the good tidings before. Their poor, cramped lives are expanding under the transforming power of the Word."

This faithful teacher's testimony is only one of the thousands that could be given of the abiding power of God's Holy Word. ■



Dedicated Bible distributors transport the Scriptures across the country.

Bibles for Young Pony Express Riders

Wanted — young, skinny, wiry fellows not over 18. Must be expert riders, willing to risk death daily. Orphans preferred. Wages \$25 a week ..."

So read an ad in an 1860 San Francisco newspaper to recruit riders for a new "express" mail courier service the transportation firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell was launching. Alexander Majors, one of the firm's partners, had heard frequent requests from gold miners and business people in Western towns for a speedier mail service. (Mail could take two to three months to deliver by steamer.)



Pony Express riders carried mail and their Bibles.

So the company hired 80 young men to ride between Missouri and California to deliver mail from East to West and back again. Each rider on the Pony Express, going at breakneck speed, would travel nearly 2,000 miles in 10 days. He traveled day and night across mountains and plains and faced blinding snowstorms and extreme heat and cold, sometimes while outrunning hostile Indians. Stopping briefly at station houses along the route, he would jump on a fresh horse and continue until he finished his tour.

Along with the mail pouches, the firm's Mr. Majors — a dedicated Christian — made sure each rider carried a copy of a small, leather-bound Bible, which he had purchased from the American Bible Society.

In a 1938 *Record* account, the Rev. Ralph Bayless, secretary of the U.S. Pacific district, wrote: "Beyond all doubt, the lives of many rugged pioneers were piloted and sustained by the Word of God in those trying early days of the West, all because an earnest Christian gave the Bible — God's best gift to man."

One of the rare Pony Express Bibles (only 10 copies still exist), which the Wells Fargo Bank and Union Trust Company presented to the Bible Society in 1938, resides in our Library collection and may be viewed by visitors. ■

update

NATIONAL

■ FLORIDA

The American Bible Society honors William R. "Bill" Bright, 81, who, after a life of faithful service, went home to be with the



▲ Dr. Bill Bright, 1921–2003, spent more than 50 years building and leading Campus Crusade for Christ International.

Lord on July 19, 2003. He was the founder and lifetime leader of Campus Crusade for Christ International (CCCI), the world's largest Christian ministry.

Working as ministry partners, the Bible Society provided CCCI with numerous Scriptures for its Christian outreach on college and university campuses, including hundreds of thousands of *CEV* New Testaments for CCCI's Freshman Survival Kits. The *Good News Translation*, from the American Bible Society, is used as the English text for the

Jesus film, a feature-length documentary on the life of Christ commissioned by CCCI in 1976, which has since been viewed by billions of people in 234 countries.

In paying him tribute, Bible Society President Eugene B. Habecker said, "For me, Bill Bright modeled finishing strong—he remained productive and effective into the last years of his life. He leveraged every possible resource for building the kingdom of God. We shared a passion to see all people come to know and be obedient to Jesus Christ. He lived and breathed the Lordship of Christ in every aspect of his life."

Dr. Bright's work through CCCI will continue under the leadership of Steve Douglass, a long-time associate whom he tapped in 2001 as his successor.

Dr. Bright is survived by his wife, Vonette, and their two sons, Zachary, pastor of Divine Savior Presbyterian Church in California, and Brad, a staff member at CCCI and director of the Pinnacle Forum, a ministry to world leaders.

■ VIRGINIA

An animated video/DVD created to help children cope with the negative emotions generated by the 9/11 tragedy garnered some top awards this year—from Omni Intermedia, for outstanding children's programming, and AXIEM (Absolute eXcellence In Electronic Media), for best children's television program and best video.

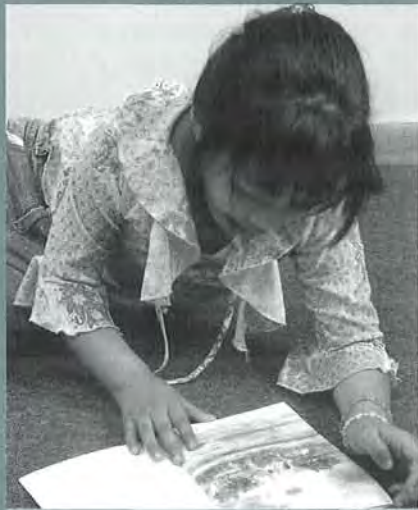
The *Courage* video/DVD was conceived and created in 2002 by Angela Costello, director of children's programming at the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), and co-produced with the Bible Society. The video, set in New York City, runs nearly an hour and uses animated characters and interviews with children and emergency personnel to carry a message of hope to viewers of all ages.

Bolivar Medina, Jr., a detective in the New York Police Department (NYPD) and president of Police Officers for Christ, has distributed hundreds of copies to the NYPD. He spoke about a colleague who had requested a copy for his 9-year-old son, who was still in counseling for the trauma he suffered from 9/11. "He was afraid his father was going to get killed," Det. Medina said.

The *Courage* video deals with the fear and sadness many individuals encountered as a result of the terrorist attacks as well as addresses the everyday fears all children face.

Most of the 5,000 copies produced have been distributed free through the NYPD, New York Fire Department, other emergency services, the military and ministries such as Kids with a Promise Day Camp (a ministry of the Bowery Mission) and church youth groups. ■





For Many AMERICAN CHILDREN, God's Word Means Nothing...

Children who cannot read may never learn the eternal truths that can only be found in the Bible.

The need is overwhelming: more than half of all fourth graders read below grade level. And 44 million American adults are considered functionally illiterate.

We have an opportunity to direct hearts and minds to Christ by teaching children, teens and adults to read — using stories from the Bible.

The American Bible Society is working to make a difference through a vital new outreach, **Mission: Literacy**. In partnership with Bank Street College of Education, a leader in early childhood education and English as a Second Language (ESL), we have developed the literacy materials that are helping children and other new readers improve their reading skills while learning the life-changing stories of the Bible.

Please join us in growing this outreach from church to church, community to community, across the country. Your gift today will help us change lives forever using the most beloved stories of the Bible.

Yes, Dr. Habecker, I want to help change lives by teaching children and adults to read using stories from the Bible. Enclosed is my gift of: \$ _____

Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail address _____

Please return this coupon and your check made payable to the American Bible Society. Contributions to the American Bible Society are greatly appreciated and are tax deductible as allowed by law.

 AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

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update

I N T E R N A T I O N A L



EDUARDO CESAR/BIBLE SOCIETY OF BRAZIL

▲ **Music therapist Lúcia da Silva Figueiredo uses the Bible and the arts to teach children with disabilities.**

■ BRAZIL

Little did music therapist Lúcia da Silva Figueiredo know that when she started giving lessons to visually impaired children in São Paulo, more than 12 years ago, her work would become her life ministry.

Ms. Figueiredo founded Ambientasom, an organization that offers people with disabilities Scripture-based classes in literacy, sign language, music, religion and the arts. She discovered that,

with support, her students and others with disabilities could improve their learning skills and become successfully integrated into mainstream society.

By bolstering her students' self esteem and connecting them with the Bible, Ms. Figueiredo has made a significant difference in the lives of many children with various disabilities. One of the resources used by Ambientasom's teachers is the Bible Society of Brazil's *Bible Adventures* collection of illustrated Bible stories. As with other materials, the illustrations have been specially adapted so that visually impaired people can 'see' them by touch.

Ms. Figueiredo hopes to replicate this success by involving churches in this ministry of spiritual education and social integration of people with special needs. She visits churches, often taking pupils with her, to make them aware that this can be undertaken with relatively modest resources.

■ RWANDA

Konstane Raen, a teacher and regional secretary of the Norwegian Bible Society, is traveling throughout Rwanda, conducting a program designed to encourage Christians there to reach out to those affected by HIV/AIDS.

This epidemic reaches across socioeconomic, educational, ethnic and gender lines, and is expected to claim more than 800,000 victims in Rwanda alone. Some infected people have been rejected by their family and friends, while others have been turned out of their homes, have lost their jobs or have been refused hospital treatment.

The program, called *Where is the Good Samaritan?* engages local church groups in examining and reenacting the biblical parable of the Good Samaritan — to draw parallels from its message to the everyday life of HIV/AIDS victims and those who come in contact with them.

Driven by her conviction that "faith is

▼ **Two Rwandan Christian workers, Immaculée Muhavye, left, and Valérie Nshiminyimane, center, join Konstane Raen from Norway in praying for a dying AIDS sufferer, Celine Ukabaz.**



AGDEPOSTEN/ERIK HOLLAND

necessary in order to master life," Ms. Raen said her aim with the program is to "initiate processes which enable people to take care with their lives" and to begin to challenge the stigma of HIV/AIDS. The program will use materials being developed by Norwegian Church Aid and the United Bible Societies, and has already begun to have a significant impact, gaining media coverage and winning the support of religious and political leaders. Archbishop Emmanuel Kolini, primate of the Episcopal Church of Rwanda and diocesan Bishop of Kigali, proclaimed that it will "create new commanders in the war against an invisible enemy."

■ SYRIA

The ancient monastery of St. George Al-Humayrah in the Wadi An-Nadara (Valley of Christians), Syria, was originally established as a small hermitage (retreat center). But its spiritual significance slowly faded, and by the early 1990s it was mainly seen as a tourist attraction.

Today, however, thanks to a renewed emphasis on the Bible, St. George's has become a thriving center of biblical teaching and outreach that serves some 70,000 Syrian Orthodox Christians.

"In 1993, not one New Testament was to be found here," says Archimandrite Athansios Fahed, who teaches Christian ethics in the monastery's School of Ecclesiastical Studies. "There was no spiritual power here — even the buildings were not taken care of. But now, the situation is entirely different, and today we have a living church."

The revival of the monastery has sparked other much needed community services for villagers in the region. The community participates in the facility's children's summer camps, which often host between 80 and 200

children for each 15-week session.

Monastery staff teach Bible classes attended by adults as well as 7,000 or so children ages six to 15, and provide thousands of Bibles to students who need them. The monastery aims to guide students "from early childhood until they are married."

The Bible Society in Lebanon, which helps supply Bibles to Christians in Syria, hopes to provide 3,000 Bibles for the Syrian Orthodox Church.

■ AUSTRALIA

Leading Christian broadcaster and journalist Kel Richards has designed a Bible to appeal to "anyone who's stopped reading the Bible because they think it's dull."

The Aussie Bible, which will be published by the Bible Society in Australia (New South Wales), re-tells most of the well-known parts of the New Testament in Australian English, or "Strine." It takes familiar parables and the key events of Jesus' life and presents them in chronological order using many colloquial words and expressions unique to Australian English.

For example, the author describes King Herod as being "as jumpy as a wallaby on hot rocks" upon hearing the news of Jesus' birth. The shepherds at the nativity are "drovers" and their shelters "humpies."

Mr. Richards said that Australian English is a distinct language that has the potential to make the Scriptures come alive for Australians who find conventional Bible translations uninspiring or hard to understand. ■



NORWEGIAN BIBLE SOCIETY

▲ George Andrea, right, who heads the Bible Society in Lebanon's work in Syria, and Dag Smemo, Bible mission director at the Norwegian Bible Society, work to get Scripture materials to the people of Syria.

CORRECTION :

In the Summer 2003 *Record*, in "Reaching the Remote Steppes of Siberia," we stated that, as part of an *Opportunity 21* initiative (*To the Ends of the Earth*), the Bible Society of Russia (BSR) had translated the Scriptures into the Tuvian language. It was, in fact, the Institute for Bible Translation, a United Bible Societies ministry partner, that had done the translation work. The BSR is distributing the Bibles.



CHARLES J. SCHISLA

P.A.T.H.[™] training materials for churches. Says Drew, "Our team is comprised of people who have a heart for juvenile correctional ministry and a heart specifically for mentoring kids."

Lt. Knecht says that faith-based programs are definitely part of the solution for redirecting young people. "If that program functions for five years and saves one child," he says, "that's one child that our aggressive law enforcement side didn't have to deal with, and it is a positive thing."

THE GOSPEL IN A NEW LANGUAGE

As the senior program administrator for *Elementz of Life*[™], Liana Roa has invested many hours with Christian hip-hop performers, artists and dancers who present the gospel in vibrant rhythms and colors for urban youth.

Liana saw firsthand the fruits of the *Elementz* effort in Indianapolis as musicians shared their art and stories with kids at Oasis Baptist Church, Glendale Mall, Shepherd Community and the Brookside Center, excited by a hip-hop that spoke of Christian values and following Jesus. "The performers were able to get the kids to open up, and they were talking about Christ," she says.

Elementz had immediate credibility, adds Drew. "These performers are coming from the streets, they know what it's like" to struggle with the issues their young audience deals with daily.

During a question and answer session at one of the *Elementz* performances, Sean Slaughter was asked why he chose Christian hip-hop. "I wanted some music that



CHARLES J. SCHISLA

Soul Majestics (above, left) use dramatic props and "sets" to dance and act out messages from God's Word. Sean Slaughter (above) applies the vibrant language of hip-hop to share Jesus' redeeming love with the young.

was going to make me feel good and help me walk the Christian walk," he replied.

LEARNING TO READ AND HOPE

Another key component, the Literacy Program, developed with the Bank Street College of Education in New York City, provides a Scripture-based Literacy Series to help churches and community groups teach or improve members' reading skills.

Shepherd Community has enrolled more than 30 students in the literacy project in after-school and summer programs.

Shepherd staffer Marilyn Pitzulo, says, "So many of our kids have obstacles to learning, or just a lack of support at home, that they start out behind the 'eight ball' in early elementary school and never catch up. When we help a child learn to read, we increase that child's chance for success the rest of the way through school, and hopefully, in life."

She points to 12-year-old Sara enrolled in the summer day camp, who is "thrilled

by the fact she can 'read the Bible!' a first for her."

A LONG-TERM INVESTMENT

The American Bible Society is connecting people to God through his Word, and exploring new ways to reach everyone, whether through a Web site or audiocassette Scriptures. Now, with a new sense of urgency we are focusing on the spiritual poverty of urban youth — directing resources to connect our young people with the ageless Word. ■

To contribute to or learn more about individual programs, contact: Elementz of Life[™], Liana Roa, Lroa@americanbible.org, 888-596-6296, ext. 8759, Elementz of Life[™], P.O. Box 234040, New York, N.Y. 10023; Caring Program, Drew Segawa, Dsegawa@americanbible.org, 888-596-6296, ext. 1310; Literacy Program, Jean Bross-Judge, Jbrossjudge@americanbible.org, 800-688-7108. You may also write the American Bible Society, National Programs, 1865 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023.

SETTING THE CAPTIVES FREE A LIFE GOAL

GERALDINE PAGE'S DAY STARTS at 3:00 a.m. "That's when I

pray, read the Scriptures and exercise. The Scriptures pick me up and keep me going and I stay 'prayed up' the entire day," says Mrs. Page. After that, her schedule fills quickly to carry out a clear-cut goal — telling everyone she meets about the Good News.

She and her husband, Bill, who died last July, have dedicated the past 20 years of their lives to sharing God's Word with a special group — men and women in prison. After listening to Chuck Colson, the founder of Prison Fellowship Ministries (a worldwide outreach to prisoners, ex-offenders, crime victims and their families), speak about his work, the couple knew they wanted to respond to the challenge from God's Word: "When I was in jail, you visited me." (Matthew 25:36 CEV)

Over the past decades, the Pages have visited prisons across the United States and overseas. Mrs. Page recalls a trip to South America in 1998 with Prison Fellowship, to visit women's prisons in Chile, Ecuador and Peru. She describes an encounter at the Ludi Guancha prison in the foothills of the Andes Mountains in Peru. This facility holds political prisoners as well as those serving life sentences for murder, kidnapping and bank robbery.

While walking the prison grounds one Sunday with her ministry group, Mrs. Page heard singing in Spanish. "At first," she says, "I couldn't tell what it was. But after a while I realized it was hymns, and it was coming from the chapel." The prisoners sat on the dirt floor singing and worshipping. Mrs. Page,

BY JAMES WALKER

through an interpreter, asked them, "What can I offer you?"

They made a modest request for benches for the women to sit on as they listened to the chaplain's preaching.

Mrs. Page raised money to provide the benches, and the grateful prisoners sent her a photo and letter of appreciation that she still keeps on her desk.

Closer to home, Mrs. Page keeps up with her prison ministry in her hometown of Jacksonville,

Fla., through an organization called Evangelism Explosion. Every Tuesday she and eight other women visit the Lake Butler prison and the pre-trial detention center in Jacksonville. They talk about God's grace and love and lead inmates to a life-changing encounter with Christ.

Although she misses her husband, Mrs. Page is grateful for his ministry-minded foresight when he established a gift annuity. "When Bill saw the literature from the American Bible Society, he knew that this was something that would support me after he was gone," she says.

Mrs. Page can focus on her many ministry programs with peace of mind — knowing that her financial future is secure with the Bible Society's *Gift Annuity* provision. She also knows that the *Gift Annuity* is used to share the Scriptures, setting the captives free — the countless men and women in spiritual and physical prisons around the globe. ■

More information about planned giving programs sponsored by the American Bible Society can be obtained by calling the Planned Gift Programs Department at 1-800-820-6227.



Geraldine and Bill Page

Does Faith Shape Your Future?

BY LEWIS VON HERRMANN

Our mighty God rewards those who are faithful and, as with Abraham, God counts our faith as righteousness. We spend our lives learning how to be faithful to God and His Word, and it is through our faith that we please God. "For without faith," the Scripture says, "it is impossible to please God."

Is there a greater place to exercise our faith than in our financial plans and actions? It is in this critical part of our lives (paying our bills, providing for our family and planning for the future) that we can also consider God's purposes. As we plan out our lives — to be financially self-reliant and not burden our families and children — we can look to God in faith.

There are three ways our faith can guide our plans for the future.

First, we can, from our perspective of faith, figure out "How much is enough?" When a wealthy, worldly man was asked, "How much is enough," he answered, "Just a little bit more!" The world would tell us that "the one who dies with the most toys wins," but Jesus told the rich man that building more barns to house all his crops was a futile pursuit.

As believers, we can determine our needs based on the lifestyle God has given us and then consider how

additional resources might be used for building the Lord's kingdom. Some of those assets could be dedicated to the work of sharing Scriptures through the American Bible Society in the form of a Gift Annuity or Charitable Trust. These plans provide an income for life while also spreading God's Word (see ad on page 27).

Second, we can exercise faith when answering another key question, "Why wait?" Proverbs 3.28 tells us, "Don't tell your neighbor to come back tomorrow if you can help today." Men, women and children across the globe urgently need the hope, forgiveness and knowledge of God's promises found in the Scriptures. If you have the means to help share this message of love, why wait? The Lord knows your needs. Consider a gift for his work as an act of faith, believing that God will meet your own needs.

Finally, we can look to the Word, which says, "God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9.7b) Scripture does not appear to support the idea that giving should be painful. Instead, give until you enjoy giving and watch God use your gifts to change lives. Give until you know you are living by faith in God... to believe that it is God who provides for all our needs. ■





Empowering New Readers in Egypt

Raising literacy levels remains a significant challenge in Egypt, where almost 60 percent of its 70 million residents are unable to read.

Many young Egyptians learn basic reading skills. However, new readers often lose these skills if they do not have access to follow-up support and appropriate reading material. Another concern is that the Bible is traditionally written in a formal style, unlike the informal spoken Egyptian, prohibiting many new readers with limited reading skills from understanding what they read.

To address this need, the Bible Society of Egypt (BSE), working with the Coptic Orthodox Church, has developed a literacy program that teaches and reinforces basic literacy skills.

Students gain confidence in reading the Bible through the use of a special handbook, developed by the BSE, which contains Scripture passages translated into simple Arabic, and makes links between the Bible and material found in newspapers and magazines.

The Bible Society of Egypt has also produced a guide for teachers, which introduces basic principles for adult education and gives tips on how to plan effective classes. More than 24,000 people have participated and can now begin to read their Bibles with proficiency.

"The results of this method of Bible teaching can be quite remarkable," said Ramez Atallah, BSE general secretary. ■

Your October gift will bring Bibles to Egypt. Your November offering will provide Scriptures to Cuba, Haiti and the Caribbean. Your December gift will support Bible work in the Holy Land. To find out more about joining the Bible-a-Month Club, fill out the reply form below, or write:

American Bible Society
Bible-a-Month Club
1865 Broadway
New York, NY
10023-7505

Bible-a-Month@
americanbible.org

JOIN THE CLUB! SHARE THE JOY!

As the church grows around the world, so does the need for Bibles. Many of the believers in China, and many more in Russia, do not have a Bible. In Africa the need is staggering. For as little as \$4 a month, the cost of giving one Bible, you can extend your witness to these nations. As a member of the Bible-a-Month Club, you will share God's Word with people who long to read the Scriptures in their own languages. Each month you'll receive stories and testimonies of the people who are benefiting from the

Bibles you provide. To join the Bible-a-Month Club, simply fill out the coupon. **Or call toll free 1-888-227-8262.**



yes! I want to join the Bible-a-Month Club. I will give \$ _____ a month to provide _____ Bibles at \$4 each.

My first Bible-a-Month Club gift of \$ _____ is enclosed. **FL203REC**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail this coupon along with your tax-deductible gift in the envelope provided in the Record. Or mail to:

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY
BIBLE-A-MONTH CLUB
1865 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10023-7505



BIBLE-A-MONTH@AMERICANBIBLE.ORG



ACCELERATE THE SPREAD OF GOD'S WORD AND STABILIZE YOUR INCOME

ARE YOU: • Hurt by low interest rates? • Anxious about market volatility? • Willing to do your part for the Bible cause?

If you answered "YES" to any of these questions, it's time to consider a Gift Annuity with the American Bible Society!

Call 1-800-820-6227 today for your FREE, no obligation personalized illustration.

Benefits of a Gift Annuity with the American Bible Society:

- *Guaranteed fixed income for life.*
- *Secured by a segregated reserve fund and the strength and stability of the American Bible Society.*
- *Single-life payout rates of 5.7% (age 60) to 11.3% (age 90+).**
- *Two-life payout rates of 5.4% (age 60) to 11.1% (age 95+).**
- *Tax deductions on current income.*
- *Satisfaction from helping the Bible cause now and in the future.*

There are many ways you can fund a Gift Annuity!

- *Cash (from CDs or money market accounts).*
- *Stocks, bonds or other securities.*

Yes, I want to consider an American Bible Society Gift Annuity to share God's Word ... and also provide a safe and secure source of income.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date of birth _____ Telephone () _____


E-mail address: _____

I prefer the following type of annuity: One-Life Two-Life

Amount of annuity: \$5,000 \$10,000 \$25,000 \$100,000 \$ _____

Date of birth of second person for Two-Life Annuity _____

Please send me a FREE Gift Annuity illustration.

 AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

Planned Gift Programs, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023

1-800-820-6227 www.americanbible.org

American Bible Society Gift Annuity Program — Est. 1843

*Minimum age of issue is 50 for a Gift Annuity donor or beneficiary and a minimum amount of \$5,000. A Gift Annuity is not an investment but a gift in exchange for a contractual fixed income stream for the life or lives of the beneficiaries.

quiet time

We hope you will use this guide in your daily study of the Bible, and that you will write to tell us what you think of this feature and how you use it.

OCTOBER

Believe the Good News and Strive for Peace and Justice

- 1 Exodus 20.1-21
- 2 Exodus 23.1-13
- 3 Numbers 27.1-11
- 4 1 Samuel 25.2-35
- WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY**
- 5 1 Corinthians 11.17-34
- 6 Isaiah 28.14-29
- 7 Isaiah 32.1-20
- 8 Isaiah 56.1-12
- 9 Isaiah 58.1-14
- 10 Isaiah 59.1-21
- 11 Isaiah 61.1-11
- SUNDAY**
- 12 Jeremiah 22.11-23
- 13 Ezekiel 11.1-13
- 14 Ezekiel 11.14-25
- 15 Deuteronomy 10.12-22
- 16 Psalm 9
- 17 Psalm 72
- 18 Psalm 94
- SUNDAY**
- 19 Amos 5.1-17
- 20 Amos 5.18-27
- 21 Micah 2.1-13
- 22 Micah 3.1-12
- 23 Micah 4.1-13
- 24 Micah 6.1-8
- 25 Micah 6.9-16
- SUNDAY**
- 26 Habakkuk 2.1-20
- 27 Zephaniah 3.1-13
- 28 Malachi 1.6—2.9
- 29 James 2.1-13
- 30 James 4.1-17
- 31 Psalm 46

NOVEMBER

Believe the Good News and Give Thanks for God's Blessings

- 1 Psalm 8
- SUNDAY**
- 2 Psalm 93
- 3 Psalm 95
- 4 Psalm 96
- 5 Psalm 97
- 6 Psalm 98
- 7 Psalm 99
- 8 Psalm 108
- SUNDAY**
- 9 Psalm 111
- 10 Psalm 112
- 11 Psalm 113
- 12 Psalm 116
- 13 Psalm 118.1-18
- 14 Psalm 118.19-29
- 15 Psalm 126
- SUNDAY**
- 16 Psalm 145
- 17 Psalm 146
- 18 Psalm 147
- 19 Psalm 148
- 20 Psalm 149
- 21 Psalm 150
- 22 Revelation 7.9-17
- *BIBLE SUNDAY**
- 23 2 Timothy 3.10—4.8
- 24 2 Corinthians 8.1-15
- 25 2 Corinthians 8.16-24
- 26 2 Corinthians 9.1-15
- THANKSGIVING DAY**
- 27 Psalm 100
- 28 Psalm 104.1-23
- 29 Psalm 104.24-35
- FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT**
- 30 1 Thessalonians 3.6-13

**National Bible Week is November 23–30, 2003.*

DECEMBER

Believe the Good News and Spread Joy to Everyone

- 1 Psalm 24
- 2 Psalm 87
- 3 Psalm 122
- 4 Psalm 130
- 5 Ruth 4.13-22
- 6 Luke 3.23-38
- SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT**
- 7 Micah 5.2-15
- 8 Zephaniah 3.14-20
- 9 Zechariah 9.9-17
- 10 Malachi 3.1-7
- 11 Malachi 4.1-6
- 12 Luke 3.1-6
- 13 Luke 3.7-20
- THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT**
- 14 Isaiah 9.1-7
- 15 Isaiah 11.1-16
- 16 Isaiah 12.1-6
- 17 Isaiah 35.1-10
- 18 Isaiah 52.1-12
- 19 Isaiah 60.1-22
- 20 Isaiah 62.1-12
- FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT**
- 21 Luke 1.1-25
- 22 Luke 1.26-38
- 23 Luke 1.39-56
- 24 Luke 1.57-80
- CHRISTMAS DAY**
- 25 Luke 2.1-20
- 26 Luke 2.21-40
- 27 John 1.1-18
- SUNDAY**
- 28 John 1.19-34
- 29 John 1.35-51
- 30 John 2.1-12
- 31 Titus 3.1-15

BIBLE IN THE NEWS

Biblical Queen as Business Model

■ The story of Queen Esther from the Old Testament can give sound business advice to women in this century, say authors Connie Glaser and Barbara Smalley in their book "What Queen Esther Knew: Business Strategies from a Biblical Sage."

According to the *Athens-Banner Herald*, the authors chose Esther's story — saving the Jewish people from genocide by outsmarting an evil prime minister and winning her husband, King Ahasueurus to her side — because the queen "handled the situation 'brilliantly and strategically' and [the account] provides inspiration for contemporary times."

Ms. Glaser told the *Athens-Banner Herald* "The message is that women can empower themselves by being effective communicators and leaders."

The World's Tiniest New Testament

■ It would take an enormously powerful microscope to read this Bible, but the New Testament — written on a 5-millimeter-square microchip — includes every word in the *King James Version*. Conceived and "published" by Pawan Sinha, a professor of neuroscience at MIT, and his wife, Pamela Lipson, the founder of a software company, the letters in this reproduction are etched in 24-karat gold and each letter is "about the size of a red blood cell."

Professor Sinha told National Public Radio correspondent Michele Norris during an "All Things Considered" interview that creating the Bible resembled a photographic reproduction process and that "you create a larger image and you project a smaller version of that image onto a crystal."

The idea came to professor Sinha in a dream where he saw himself writing the words of a sacred text on a grain of rice. When he awoke from his nap, he calculated how small the letters would have to be to fit the surface area of a grain and transferred the information to a microchip.

Scriptures Help Charity Help the Desperate

■ Catholic Charities of Denver places Bible verses on billboards encouraging commuters to help the needy. *The Denver Post* reports "One billboard features a saying from Matthew 25.35 in large italic letters: 'I was hungry and you gave me something to eat.' Next to it is a photograph of a young, thin, curly-haired girl, the words 'you can help,' and the charity's phone number and website."

Music that Points to the Bible

■ Country music frequently uses spiritual themes, which are popular with religious listeners, but Randy Travis' "Three Wooden Crosses" appealed to a wider audience when it topped *Billboard's* country singles chart last May, becoming the first single from a Christian label to do so.

The song, reported *USA Today*, tells the story of a minister who is fatally wounded in a bus accident, and who "gives his bloodstained Bible to a prostitute. She eventually gives birth to a son who becomes a preacher, setting up the story's moral: 'It's not what you take when you leave this world behind you. It's what you leave behind you when you go.'"

Mr. Travis "now often performs at churches, telling a life story that includes a juvenile criminal record and a conversion experience at the height of his career."

Country radio is now more willing to play more songs with a spiritual message, the possible aftereffects of 9/11, which are causing more people to examine their own lives regarding faith and values.

USA Today quoted contemporary Christian musician Jeff Carson, who said, "I don't know if it's the state of the world since 9/11 that makes us sit back and think about things and be more appreciative of life and more spiritual. I know I've had a different outlook on life every time I wake up in the morning."

PLEASE PRAY

COSTA RICA — Please pray for each home to be reached with God's Word. Pray for God's guidance in distributing the newly printed Bribri New Testament and for the program *In God's Hands*, aimed to reach street children.

PANAMA — Pray for the Bible outreach program being implemented this year, the 100-year anniversary of Panama's independence. Pray that the 11,000 copies of the Centenary Bible and the half million Scripture leaflets being distributed to schools and government offices will transform many lives.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC — Thank God for the successful launch of *La Biblia en Republica Dominicana* and for the local production of Scripture booklets. Please pray for a greater participa-

tion of young people in the Bible cause through volunteering, praying and offerings.

ITALY — Please pray for the ongoing revision of the Common Language Old Testament and acceptance of the literary ecumenical translation of the Gospel of Matthew and that the new missionary editions of the inter-confessional version of the Bible and the new school program will promote Christian unity.

MALTA — Give thanks for the growing influence of God's Word among the Maltese people. Thank God for the effective nationwide distribution of Scripture materials for children and adults. Please also pray for church outreach to tourists.

HONG KONG — Pray for continuing progress for the Hong

Kong Bible Society in revising the text of the Chinese Union Version New Testament to be produced in the future. Pray also that the Scripture materials being produced for children will effectively communicate God's Word. Pray for stronger partnerships and cooperation among churches and Christian organizations in Hong Kong.

VIETNAM — Thank God for the continued printing and distributing of Bibles and New Testaments in the Catholic churches. Praise God for the government's approval for printing 30,000 Bibles and 40,000 New Testaments for the Protestant Church. Please pray for additional permission to print more Bibles in Vietnamese, Chinese, French and English, and to distribute them to the many Christians in this country who hunger and thirst for God's Word.

IN MEMORIAM

MEMORIALIZE A LOVED ONE BY HELPING TO PROVIDE BIBLES TO PEOPLE WHO DON'T YET HAVE ONE

In Memory of my beloved sister,
Louise Doris Bechlein
Given by:
The Estate of her beloved brother,
Harry E. Bechlein

My Parents,
Herbert & Edna Christian
My Husband, Ralph L. Cairns
Given by:
Eileen E. Cairns

In Memory of my beloved uncle,
Jacob K. Fast
Given by:
The Estate of Jacob K. Fast

Beatrice Heimbrich
Given by:
Nora Sylvester

Mary Holl
Given by:
Mrs. Lorenz Holl

Mel & Gladys Jones
Given by:
Russell M. & Virginia L. Jones

Gladys Koehler
Given by:
Selma E. Koehler

My Husband, Clavin R. Lehman
Given by:
Celia B. Lehman

Clyde Schuler
Given by:
Mr. & Mrs. Warren Schuler
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Ives
Carolyn J. Sindt

My Sister, Lucile Todd
Given by:
William A. Prentice

Memorials of \$500 or more for one individual or family unit will be published in the American Bible Society Record. For further details about the memorial program, please write to: Donor Relations, American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York NY 10023-7505.

TREASURING THE WORD OF GOD

IN SOME COUNTRIES SCRIPTURE booklets for children are sometimes seen as little more than throwaway items to be read once or twice and then discarded. But in Uganda, where 35 percent of its nearly 23 million people live in poverty, and most children in school must share textbooks with classmates, those who own copies of the Scripture booklets treat them reverently. Many children cover them in protective plastic and read them over and over again.

Ezra Ndagije, marketing and program manager for the Bible Society of Uganda (BSU), said, "Sometimes we return to a school that we last visited some years ago, and we see students still carrying and using the Scriptures we distributed back then."

Believing that educating Uganda's children provides hope for the country's future (50 percent of Ugandans are under 14), and that teaching the Scriptures solidifies that hope, the Bible Society distributes a popular *New Reader Portion*, based on Bible stories, to help raise reading levels among children.

When BSU staffers visit area schools to distribute the booklets, they gather many encouraging reports. At the Buloba Demonstration School, outside Kampala, the 1,000 students receive a solid Christian emphasis with their studies. The pupils read and learn about the Bible — a significant accomplishment in a country where the official literacy rate is only about 62 percent, and drops to less than 40 percent in some rural areas.

"These Portions do more than improve the children's reading skills," said Rebecca Namubim, who teaches English in the lower primary school. "But even for that they are especially good, because they are in Uganda English, which the children can relate to easily. It makes the Bible stories seem more a part of everyday life. The pictures in the books also help them to understand the meaning, which



LARRY JERDEN/UBS

▲ Students in Uganda eagerly examine their *New Reader Scripture* booklets, which they received from the Bible Society of Uganda.

reinforces the process of learning to read the text."

Tom Mwima, who teaches religious education, has also found the Bible Society's booklets helpful. "We use them in the first and second year classes in the primary school, and then we build on that knowledge," he explained. "By the time the students are in the sixth and seventh years of primary school, they have read the whole Bible and can internalize it. And their comprehension is at a high level."

Vilona Kivunto, headmistress at the Kalambi Girls' Junopr School outside Kampala, said, "These books will really help with the students' reading and help them to grow spiritually."

The Bible Society of Uganda also reaches out to adults who cannot read by partnering with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the country's largest provider of adult literacy training.

"We are so involved in literacy work because people who can't read do not have the ability to connect directly with God's Word," said Booker Ajuoga, ADRA director. "By using Bible Society *New Reader Portions* in our literacy campaigns, people can read God's Word for themselves — they don't have to have it interpreted by anyone else." ■

BIBLE SUNDAY

Kids to Kids, Sharing the Good News...



"Let the children come to me... because the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."
Matthew 19:14 (GNV)

JOIN IN CELEBRATING AND SHARING GOD'S WORD

On November 23, thousands of churches across America will invite their children to share the Good News with their brothers and sisters around the world.

On Bible Sunday, they will bring offerings to provide Bibles for less fortunate children and adults in countries such as China, Ethiopia, Bangladesh and Colombia — countries where so many people don't have Bibles of their own to read, study and cherish.

To request free Bible Sunday materials for your church, send the coupon below. For more information about Bible Sunday, go to www.americanbible.org and click on Bible Sunday.



AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

YES! Our church wants to share God's promise, protection and salvation with children around the world. Please send us information on Bible Sunday for our church.



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For more information call us at 1-866-895-4448, email us at BIBLESUNDAYINFO@AMERICANBIBLE.ORG or write us at American Bible Society, Bible Sunday, 1865 Broadway, 8th floor, New York, NY 10023.



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