

SHARING GOD'S WORD WITH THE WORLD

Record

Spring/Summer 2009

THE BIBLE
IN RURAL CHINA

Delivering *Hope*

Together for Africa

Good News for Veterans

Easter Week Prayers



AMERICAN
BIBLE
SOCIETY

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Sharing Easter's Hope

"Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is so good, and by raising Jesus from death, he has given us new life and a hope that lives on. God has something stored up for you in heaven, where it will never decay or be ruined or disappear." 1 Peter 1.3, 4 (CEV)

In this season of Easter, when the Church focuses on celebrating the hope of the resurrection, I'm feeling exceptionally joyful. I'm thrilled to join with you to bring this life-changing hope to every man, woman and child who has yet to hear the good news.



As I look to the future of the American Bible Society, my greatest desire is that we will persuade this and future generations to discover the Bible and its powerful, living message. If our own children and grandchildren are transformed by God's incredible love story, then our response to the Great Commission will thrive, having the people and resources needed to fulfill Jesus' command.

So how are we sharing Easter's hope here in the U.S. and around the world? In this issue of the *Record* you will learn more about how we are:

- Encouraging and equipping overworked pastors in China, getting God's Word to thousands (page 8)
- Joining with international partners to help make disciples in Africa (page 12)
- Caring for those in crisis and at-risk in the U.S. (page 16)
- Expanding our ministry to the military (page 22)

We could not do any part of this without your generous and sacrificial giving. May the Lord himself fill you with gladness and hope as you remember the resurrection promise.

R. Lamar Vest

President and CEO



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The mission of the American Bible Society is to make the Bible available to every person in a language and format each can understand and afford, so all people may experience its life-changing message. The Society is a member of the United Bible Societies, a partnership of the Bible Societies throughout the world cooperating to make Scriptures available to people everywhere in their own language.

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Record

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MAILBAG

Moved to Pray

Kathy DeMaria, of Shamong, New Jersey, prays every day for three women she's never met, except through the pages of a magazine. Kathy, a longtime donor to the American Bible Society, was inspired to pray for three Bible Society directors from Turkey, Palestine and Haiti, after reading their stories in a spring issue of the *Record*. As she learned about the lives of Tamar, Suhad and Magda, she was moved to keep the pages open on her table for daily family prayer.

Some time later, Kathy called the *Record* editor to share how much she loves these dear sisters who are always on her heart. With her husband and children, she prays for their safety and for God's richest blessings on their lives. Kathy followed up her interest in a letter, asking for updates on other "family members" in the body of Christ who need prayer. She wrote, "To lay requests before the Lord is such an honor, and that he hears our every prayer is so beautiful and comforting."

The American Bible Society is grateful for readers like Kathy. Your prayers are a gift for the people and ministries that, with your help, we are able to support. 📖

Give the greatest gift of all this Easter by reaching out to those in need of Scripture around the world.

www.ABSRecord.com/catalog

Update

FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

INTERNATIONAL

BRAZIL 80 Million Bibles



Bibles in production at the Bible Society of Brazil's facility.

In December, the Bible Society of Brazil announced a significant milestone, having produced more than 80 million Scriptures for people in 102 countries. Rev. Dr. Rudi Zimmer, Executive Director of the Bible Society of Brazil, commented, "We are so grateful for our ongoing partnership with the American Bible Society, helping to get our current Bible printing facilities established and supporting the distribution of God's Word to places near and far."

IRAQ Strengthening Christians to face daily violence

Despite the instability of the war, the Bible Society of Iraq (BSI) hosted an International Bookfair in northern Iraq last year. More than 8,000 people made Scripture purchases at its booth.

Among the 3,000 people who demonstrated an increased understanding of faith in God, most were Kurdish-speaking. The fast-growing Kurdish church is following up with and supporting new believers, and BSI is exploring setting up a new Bible Society branch in Northern Iraq.

ITALY One-of-a-kind Bible



Pope Benedict XVI in Rome receiving the *Biblia Polyglotta* from ABS President R. Lamar Vest and Board Chairman, Dennis C. Dickerson.

In October, a delegation from the Bible Society presented a new *Biblia Polyglotta* (Polyglot Bible) to the Pope at the Vatican during the Synod of Catholic Bishops. The theme of the synod was "*The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church.*"

The Polyglot Bible features the Old Testament in five languages: Hebrew/Aramaic, Greek, Latin, English and Spanish, and the New Testament in four languages: Greek, Latin, English and Spanish.

LEBANON Running for Bibles



Mike Bassous, right, general secretary of the Bible Society of Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, running with his oldest son George.

A team of 63 people, comprised of staff and volunteers from the Bible Society of Lebanon, participated in the *Beirut International Marathon Running for Bibles*.

NATIONAL

NEW YORK Winter's Eve



Author Sally Lloyd Jones, reading to kids from her book *The Jesus Storybook Bible*.

In December, the American Bible Society hosted hundreds of people from across New York City at the annual Winter's Eve event.

OKLAHOMA Life-change in Prison

Wendy R., an inmate at the Oklahoma County Detention Center, said, "I like reading the Bible because it gives me peace and hope and structure for my life. It gives me purpose and a guideline for living my life. Thank you for your concern for us inmates. Many of us have no one, and this means a lot."

Drew Segawa oversees the Scripture distribution for prisons and jails throughout the U.S. for the American Bible Society. He said that nationally ABS has distributed more than three-quarters of a million Scriptures behind bars since 2001.

Drew said responses captured through a survey indicated that the participation level has doubled over the last year.

LOUISIANA

Faith and Family



Event attendees engaging with the new Bible Engagement booth.

On a Friday in November, the American Bible Society co-sponsored the second annual Faith & Family Night with the New Orleans Hornets.

Inside the arena, more than 12,000 fans were introduced to the American Bible Society and invited to engage the Bible in specific ways. There was a constant flow to the ABS Bible Engagement Center before, during and after the game. ABS Scripture Song award winner, Shelly E. Johnson, performed at halftime.

Medicine and Education Scholarships

The American Bible Society is granting scholarships in the memory of William and Alice Brown. The deadline for application is June 5, 2009.

Please e-mail scholarships@americanbible.org for criteria and application.

PHOTO: MALORE TULL

EVENTS

MAY 1-3, 2009

The 2009 Global Bible Summit

Broadway Millennium Hotel, New York, NY

(See page 25 for more information.)

MAY 9, 2009

Bible Societies' Day of Prayer

Please join us in praying for Bible work in the U.S. and around the world.

MAY 12-14, 2009

Bible Read-A-Thon

Celebrate the 193rd anniversary of ABS.

Bible House at 1865 Broadway, New York, NY

JULY 6-12, 2009

Brazil

Join the American Bible Society Gospel Expedition in Brazil to see how God's Word is changing lives.

For more information, contact Rebecca Detrick at 866-960-7966.

JULY 17-27, 2009

Kenya and Rwanda

Join the American Bible Society Gospel Expedition in Kenya and Rwanda to see how God's Word is changing lives. For more information,

contact Rebecca Detrick at 866-960-7966.

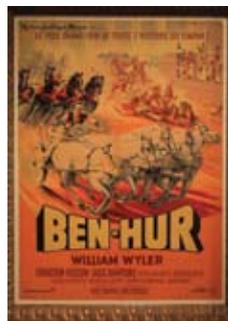
JULY 30 - AUGUST 1, 2009

Camino a Emaús:

The Word of God and Latino Catholics

The American Bible Society and the Cushwa Center at Notre Dame University are co-sponsoring a conference resonating on the October 2008 Synod of Bishops theme, "The Word of God in the life and Mission of the Church."

Visit Emaus.AmericanBible.org for more information.



REEL RELIGION:

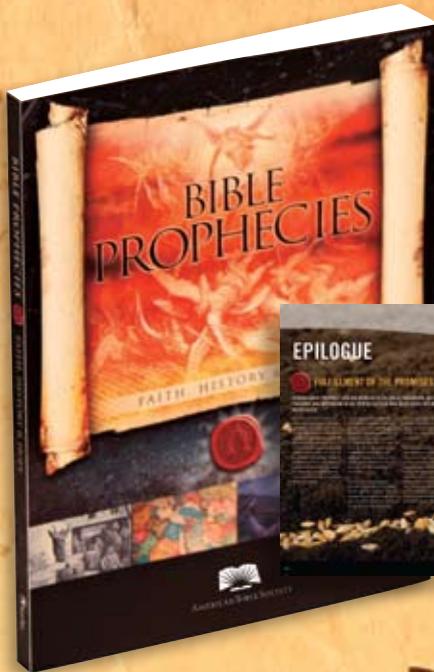
A CENTURY OF THE BIBLE AND FILM

Biblical narratives and history have been a source of inspiration for movie-makers throughout the world. Reel Religion, an exhibition at the Museum of Biblical Art (MOBIA), is composed of over 80 vintage posters examined for their promotional savvy and artistry advertising international biblical films. A selection of film memorabilia also will be on display. February 6 through May 17, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY.

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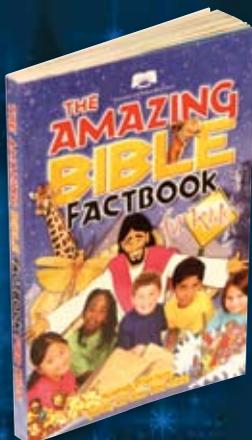


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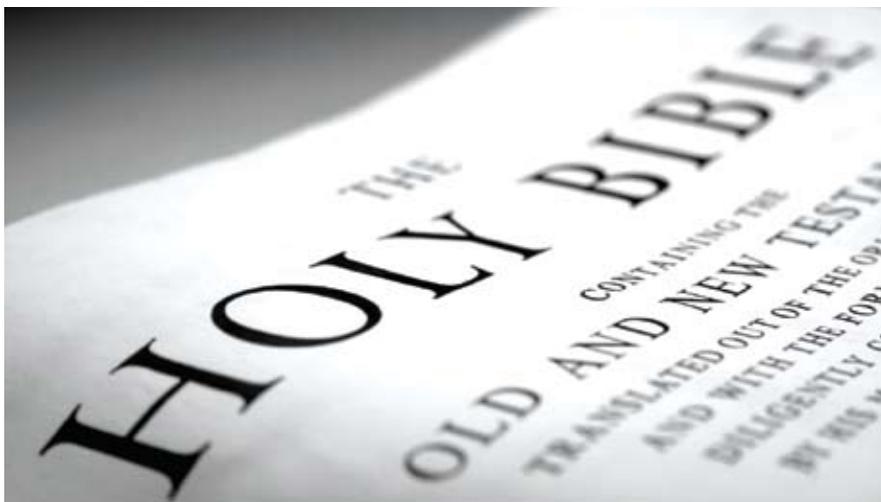
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Bible Q&A



What can you tell me about the people of Moab in Genesis?

—Mickey Formato, by e-mail

Genesis 19.30-38 tells the unusual story of the births of Lot's sons Moab and Ben-Ammi. Moab is said to have become the father of the Moabites, and his brother the father of the people of Ammon. Moab is both a personal and national name. The land east of the Dead Sea was known in biblical times as Moab. Archaeologists have shown that the land was well watered agricultural land, and supported an advanced civilization. Today the land is known as Jordan.

Moab is mentioned in records of the Assyrian Empire (the greatest political power between 911 – 609 B.C., located in present-day northern Iraq). Contact between Moab and Israel is mentioned in Judges where the Moabite King Eglon invaded Israelite lands and oppressed them for 18 years. Moab is mentioned again in 2 Kings 3, 13.20, 24.2, and also in the prophets. It was

a nation God would judge for its sins against Israel. (Isaiah 15, 16; Jeremiah 48; Ezekiel 25.8-11; Amos 2.1-3; Zephaniah 2.8-11.) The Moabites were conquered by Assyria during the 8th century B.C. and later by Babylon. By the Hellenistic and Roman times, in the first century B.C., the area that had been occupied by Moab became part of Arabia.

In 1868, Rev. F. A. Klein discovered the Moabite Stone, from which we have learned something about its history, language and culture. The monument, found in Dhiban, Jordan, is made from black basalt. Dedicated to Chemosh, the god of Moab, there is a 34-line inscription of Mesha, the 9th-century B.C. king of Moab, that recounts his successes and achievements, beginning with the rebellion of Moab against the Israelites, the capture of nearby Israelite cities and projects rebuilding the region. The Moabite Stone now resides in the Louvre Museum, Paris.

How does the quote from Zechariah 9.9 found in Matthew 21.5 relate to Palm Sunday?

—Jonathan Hobbs, by e-mail

Matthew realizes that Jesus' action of riding into Jerusalem on a donkey suggests the prophecy of Zechariah 9.9 and introduces the passage in Matthew 21.5, "Your King is coming to you! He is humble and rides on a donkey. He comes on the colt of a donkey." (CEV) The Christian church believes that the events of Palm Sunday fulfill the prophecy found in Zechariah 9.9. Jesus was the gentle Savior, riding a donkey into Jerusalem to announce peace and salvation.

When Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the people greeted him with palm branches (John 12.12, 13). The multitude that John saw in the vision was standing before the throne, clothed in white robes and holding palm branches (Revelation 7.9). In Hebrew culture the symbolic meaning of the palm branch evolved over time. The celebratory presentation of palm branches in the Zechariah passage symbolized the king's triumph over the people's enemies. In the New Testament Messianic setting, conquest of the enemy came to include triumph over sin.

CORRECTION
BIBLE Q&A FROM WINTER 2009:
"Other than Jesus, who in the Bible was given a name by God?" We incorrectly stated: "God named Zechariah's son Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Isaiah 8.1-3). The correct answer is: "God named Isaiah's son Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Isaiah 8.1-3).

Puzzled by a Scripture passage? Submit your Bible-related questions to Jacquelyn Sapiie at jsapiie@AmericanBible.org or via U.S. mail.



www.ABSRecord.com/bibleqa



RETURNING HOME

After a free Bible distribution in Meijia,
a village near Hefei, Anhui Province, China.

He said to his disciples, "A large crop is in the fields, but there are only a few workers. Ask the Lord in charge of the harvest to send out workers to bring it in."
Matthew 9.37, 38 (CEV)

Leading a Multitude

Equipping the growing church in rural China

BY BARBARA DELP

Pastoral overload. It's quite possibly the dilemma of every pastor in the world today.

There are always people to visit, budgets to balance and sermons to write. There never are enough hours in the day.

But what if you serve a flock made up of 10,000 members and you are its only ordained pastor? What if you are the only pastor on staff? And what if there is a great and unmet need for God's Word?

According to Kua Wee Seng, that describes the church in much of China today. Wee Seng is coordinator of the United Bible Societies' China Partnership and visited the American Bible Society (ABS) this past November.

A Rapid Growth

We are not talking about mega churches," said Wee Seng. "The 10,000 plus members are spread

out in many, many churches. You could have about 30 churches and one ordained pastor. In the province of Henan – one of the most populous provinces – the ratio is one [pastor] to 20,000 [members]."

The actual number of Christians in China can range from the official estimate of 20 million Protestants and 6 million Catholics to as many as 90 million from unofficial sources.

The shortage of pastors began with the Cultural Revolution, between 1966 and 1976, which virtually shut down the visible Church in China and forced Christians underground. In spite of the difficult circumstances, Christianity is growing rapidly in China today. However, the 20 seminaries and Bible colleges across the country have not graduated enough church leaders to meet the needs of the millions of Chinese Christians.



THE CROWD of 8,000 travelled to Jianzhuang village when they heard that Bibles were being distributed in Henan Province, China.

“So, from 2.7 million [church goers] in 1979, to the unofficial figure of 90 million today, the Church in China continues to grow,” says Wee Seng. “As was the case of the early Church, so it is, we believe, the case of the Church in China today. The Church is growing because the Word of God is spreading and increasing and growing in power. “Of course, with the growth of the Church comes challenges. There just are not enough pastors and preachers and trained leaders. And this is why it is important for us in the Bible Society to help equip them, first with the Bible, and then with help reading it, teaching it and preaching it. Otherwise, the Church is facing the danger of false teachings and cults, and will be weak and easily swayed to and fro by every doctrine.”

One Serving Many

This void is hardest felt in rural areas like the Henan Province and its 100 million people. Henan has the largest percentage of Christians of all China’s 23 provinces, yet its three million believers are served by just 168 ordained clergy, 480 elders and 7,000 churches and meeting points.

How does one ordained pastor serve that many people? Siyumi Yanthrawaduge, a research analyst with Global Scripture Impact (the research arm of ABS) learned the answer firsthand when she toured Eastern China last spring. During her travels, she spoke with ordained pastors and volunteer lay leaders who stand in the gap.

“A pastor’s job (in Henan) is eight to ten times the amount of work than a pastor in Shanghai or any other

major Chinese city,” says Siyumi. “Pastors are compelled to manage their congregation on a macro level. They perform mass-scale retreats and mass-scale Bible studies. Most of the pastors are trying to juggle an extensive list of responsibilities like shepherding, fundraising for expanding churches, preaching, lecturing at seminaries and training centers, performing sacraments at all churches under their authority at least once a month.

“Sometimes I am so overwhelmed and I plead and plead with God for coworkers . . . I don’t get my prayers answered immediately, but they always get answered in God’s time.”

— a rural pastor

“Most congregations are lucky to see their pastor once a month,” she says. “The day-to-day shepherding is done by volunteer lay leaders – men and women who are most likely outside tilling their soil in this predominantly rural area until it is time to serve at the church.

“There are about 7,000 volunteer preachers in Henan Province who are looking after the everyday activities of the churches,” says Siyumi. “These individuals are not ordained clergy,



After the Cultural Revolution in China

1966	1976	1979	1987	2007	2008
Cultural Revolution begins. Bibles banned. All churches closed.	Death of Mao Tse-tung.	Churches begin to reopen.	Amity Press opens and in first year produces 500,000 Bibles.	50 millionth Bible rolls off Press.	9.0 million copies printed this year alone for China and for export.

but some are provided with training to preach, undertake basic financial management of church activities, coordinate worship in services and provide general leadership to congregations.” However, not all volunteers have training, and there still are official functions that require pastors to perform.

“One of the biggest challenges for the seminary students is language and appropriate resources not being available in Chinese. Some good theological texts have not been translated into Chinese, and this is a huge gap that students in seminaries face today. Thus, for the faster completion of programs at seminaries, students need more resources in Chinese,” Siyumi said.

“As was the case of the early Church, . . . the case of the Church in China today . . . is growing because the Word of God is spreading and increasing and growing in power.”

Vital Resources

Seminary graduates return to their rural villages to serve, but village churches often do not have the resources to give them a salary. The graduates are well equipped to serve in voluntary capacities, but they also need full-time jobs, most often farming, to support themselves. “In rural areas, people have difficulty providing for their basic needs, so how can they pay a pastor?” asks Siyumi.

The government registered churches – Protestant churches are served by the China Christian Council/Three Self Patriotic Movement (CCC/TSPM) and Catholic Churches by the Catholic Patriotic Association/Chinese Bishop’s Conference (CPCA/CBC) – recognize the need for more pastors and are taking steps to increase the institutional base for theological study in China. For example, a new campus for Nanjing Union Theological Seminary is now under construction in Jiangning District. This is a project approved and financially supported by the central government. “But with every new student, there is increased need for resources,” noted Siyumi, after touring Nanjing Seminary.

“I speak Latin, German, Greek and English,” one female undergraduate student told Siyumi. “I want to be a pastor, a teacher and a translator. All these roles are severely lacking in the Christian Church in China. There are passionate students who are willing to take on these various roles in the future, but vital resources are lacking to support a well-rounded education for students at seminaries.”

The American Bible Society will continue to support the many facets of the Church in China. In addition to subsidies for paper on which Bibles are printed, vans are being equipped for delivery to rural areas.

Money has also been allocated to help supply resources for the two national seminaries, Catholic and Protestant.

“Twenty-two percent of the world’s population lives in China. And one-third of the world’s non-Christians reside in China,” says Wee Seng. “We have a long way to go to help meet the needs of the Chinese Christians, as well as the need of the gospel for the non-Christians.” 📖



PRAY FOR CHINA'S RURAL PASTORS

“In a district in Henan Province, students fresh out of seminary are offered about \$115 a month, a cell phone and a motorcycle to serve their local churches,” says Bible Society researcher, Siyumi Yanthrawaduge.

Watch video clips of Kua Wee Seng sharing glimpses into lives that are being changed through the Bible in China.



www.ABSRecord.com/china

The Challenge *of the* Great Commission

Introducing “End to End’s” unprecedented effort to bring Christ’s hope to 15 nations in Africa

STORY BY LEAH HOOD, PHOTOS BY ANDREW HOOD



Riding through the rural countryside of Burundi, you cannot help but be impressed by the vastness of the African landscape. One easily could get lost traveling the cratered roads that twist along the lakes, mountains and forests. Despite the fact that Burundi is one of the most densely populated countries in sub-Saharan Africa, you can travel for miles without seeing any sign of people. Around one bend, our driver pointed to a densely forested mountain range and said, “That is where the rebels live. It is not safe to go there.”

While 70 percent of Burundi’s population identifies itself as Christian, the remaining 30 percent is often located in remote, hard-to-reach areas of the country, burdened by poverty, with little access to public services and threatened by violence and warfare.

The Challenge of the Great Commission

Burundi’s story is the story of much of the world. End to End (E2E) is an unprecedented, coordinated effort to bring Christ’s hope to those who do not know the transforming power of the gospel.

The E2E project addresses this problem and seeks to help finish the work of the Great Commission in 15 nations and a variety of languages in Africa.

These remote places are home to largescale ministry challenges. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) states

that there are around 2000 distinct languages in Africa alone – roughly one-third of the world’s linguistic heritage. It is estimated that over two billion people, or 30 percent of the world’s population, have virtually no exposure to the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ.



There are 6,900 known, living languages in the world. Some 2,479 have at least a portion of God’s Word translated. According to Wycliffe Bible Translators, there are approximately 2,000 translation programs currently in progress for languages without adequate Scripture worldwide. While the statistics cannot fully reveal the reality of how many languages have no Scripture translation – and in the absence of clarity on this among translation organizations – all groups involved can agree that it is urgent that we all continue to do our part in fulfilling the Great Commission.

The Bible Societies place themselves at the epicenter of this challenge.

These challenges, together with growing social needs, make Africa a strategic place to invest in sharing the gospel, raising up Christian disciples and establishing and strengthening the local church.

“Each organization works under the motto ‘no logo, no ego.’”

There are organizations working to address these challenges. However, for many ministries working in these remote areas, outreach efforts are limited to the scope and resources of the individual organization. Where a large-scale, comprehensive approach is necessary, many of the organizations specialize in a single approach.

“Go therefore, and make disciples . . .”

The E2E project harnesses the strengths of local Bible Societies and well-known international ministries, including the American Bible Society (ABS), Campus Crusade for Christ, the JESUS Film Project, The Seed Company, Faith Comes By Hearing® (FCBH) and the Maclellan Family Foundation.

The project implements a multifaceted strategy that includes Bible translation, JESUS Film showings, audio and printed Scripture study groups, church planting and growing

Reaching the World
The statistics outline the need in the remote places where E2E seeks to bring the gospel.

<p>6,900 Languages in the world</p>	<p>2,000 Approximate number of languages in Africa. (Roughly 1/3 of the world’s linguistic heritage)</p>	<p>2,479 Languages worldwide that have at least a portion of Scripture</p>	<p>2,000 Approximate number of language translation projects in progress</p>
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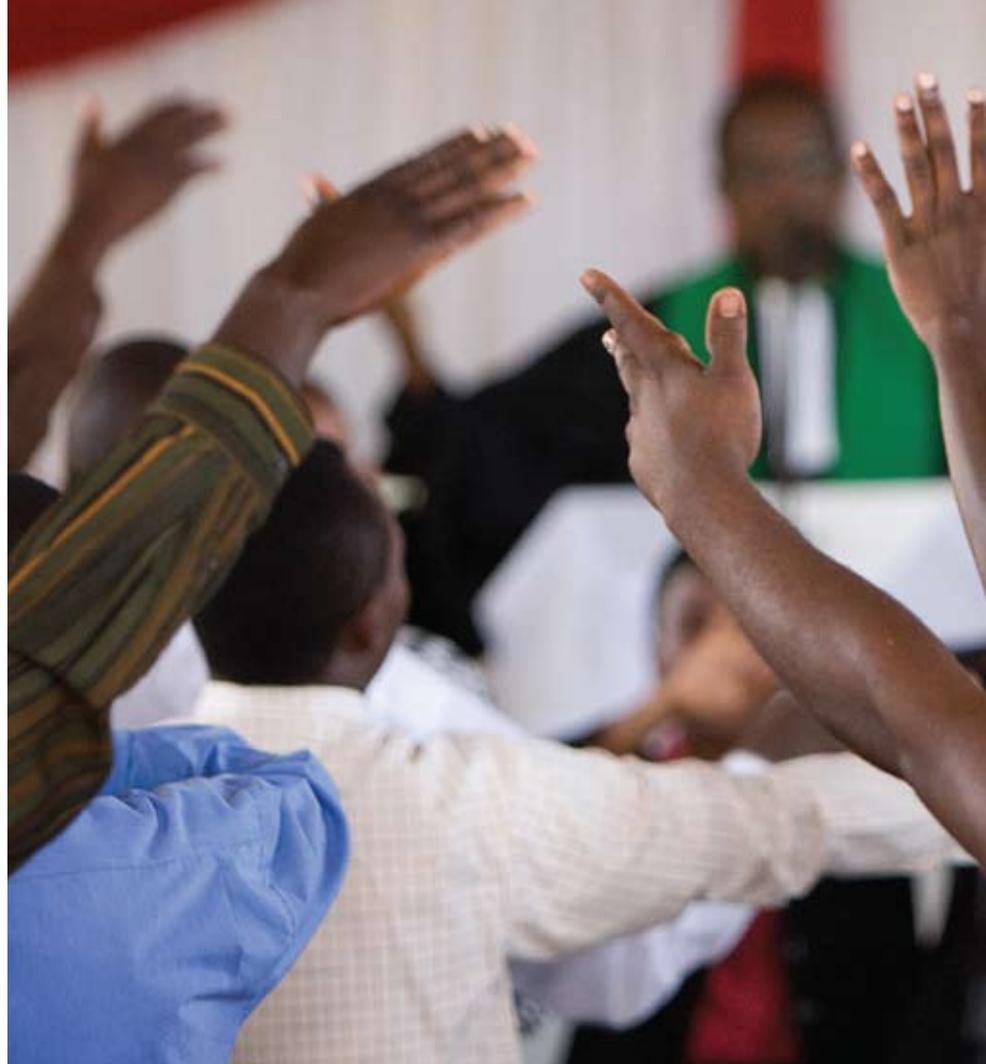
locally-led church movements in each country. The power of this project is in the strengths that each partner brings to the corporate whole. Each organization works under the motto “no logo, no ego.” The partners understand that they are stronger together, and so make every effort to adapt their unique ministry strategies for the sake of the larger project. The result is an unparalleled opportunity to change lives.

John Walter, director of ministry advancement for the American Bible Society, states, “E2E provides a unique opportunity for the Church in the West to work with the Church in the unreached areas of our globe, hand in hand as equals, to respond to the call of the Great Commission as one big family. The local church understands the culture and the language and has a better chance of surviving the hazards of the often-challenging environment of unreached people groups.”

Coordinating the Process of Life Change

To date, this project is being piloted in Nigeria, India and Brazil. The Nigerian pilot is furthest along, and the results are inspiring: the JESUS Film has been shown in Nigeria, and after six months four church-planting movements have planted 14 churches and established seven listening groups using FCBH Proclaimers™ in Hausa, each with an average of 10 people per group.

The Nigerian pilot focuses on the southeastern state of Taraba, home to over a million people and more than six ethnic groups. Taraba is a remote state that shares a border with Cameroon. It is characterized by rugged terrain, poor infrastructure and a lack of government support. Many residents are illiterate and live well below the poverty line. Many have never had an opportunity to hear the gospel message. But with the E2E program, it is hoped Taraba



will become a state known for its vibrant Christian churches and devoted followers of Jesus.

One JESUS Film worker explained that during a visit to the Taraban community of Kusung, the village chief decided, after much prayer and an endorsement from one of their tribal

people gave their lives to Christ . . . One day the chief priest came to our men and said ‘Please hold on to this your God, for he is a living God and will surely help you.’”

The E2E project is tailored to the specific needs of the local community. If needed, Scripture is translated into their

“The best people to reach the unreached are their peers – people who speak their language, understand their culture and can relate to their unique historical, economic and religious realities.”

men, to allow the E2E team to stay. He writes, “The chief of the village convinced the community to accept the End to End program on a trial basis. Praise the Lord that, during the very first film (JESUS Film) shown, 42

heart language. Then, the JESUS Film is shown in local villages, followed by the establishment of new churches and study groups using audio and written Scripture. E2E gives villagers a unique opportunity to meet and learn about

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE

At the Rwandan Presbyterian church in Kigali.



the person of Christ in a comprehensive format, in their own language and in a culturally sensitive way. In the end, indigenous Christian leaders implement a program to continue the intensive discipleship and leadership development. This follow-up program supports the leaders of new church plants and helps them send out more leaders to neighboring communities.

The Church Speaks Hope

The American Bible Society has a critical role to play in this project. Connected to national Bible Societies in some 145 countries and territories, ABS has a unique opportunity to identify and equip frontline ministry leaders in many of the E2E project areas. Bible Society staff on the field have a real-time perspective on the strengths and needs

of local communities, as well as needed support from governments and church leaders. Additionally, ABS has a history of experience in implementing organized, powerful and sustainable projects.

Pascal Folly, senior research analyst for Global Scripture Impact, writes, “The End to End project gives international and local partners the opportunity to play their part in fulfilling Christ’s Great Commission, planting new churches by using a variety of Scripture tools. This is an opportunity to empower the local church to fulfill its call, using its best talents to serve its people. The best people to reach the unreached are their peers – people who speak their language, understand their culture and can relate to their unique historical, economic and religious realities.”

Unfailing Hope

With poverty, civil unrest and social challenges on the rise, people need the transforming power of the Word of God more than ever.

Driving through Burundi, one cannot see the people living hidden on the mountainside, but God can see them. God knows each person by name and loves him or her completely. E2E invites us to join in Christ’s work, helping to bring people into restored relationship with God and with their neighbor.

The fulfillment of the Great Commission is possible. The E2E program is a strategic and effective way to help clear a path for God’s Spirit to transform local communities, regions and countries. Partnering with other ministries produces a coordinated, organized effort to introduce people to Jesus, grow their faith and establish locally-led, mission-minded churches throughout Africa, Latin America and the rest of the world. 

BE A PART OF GOD’S CALL

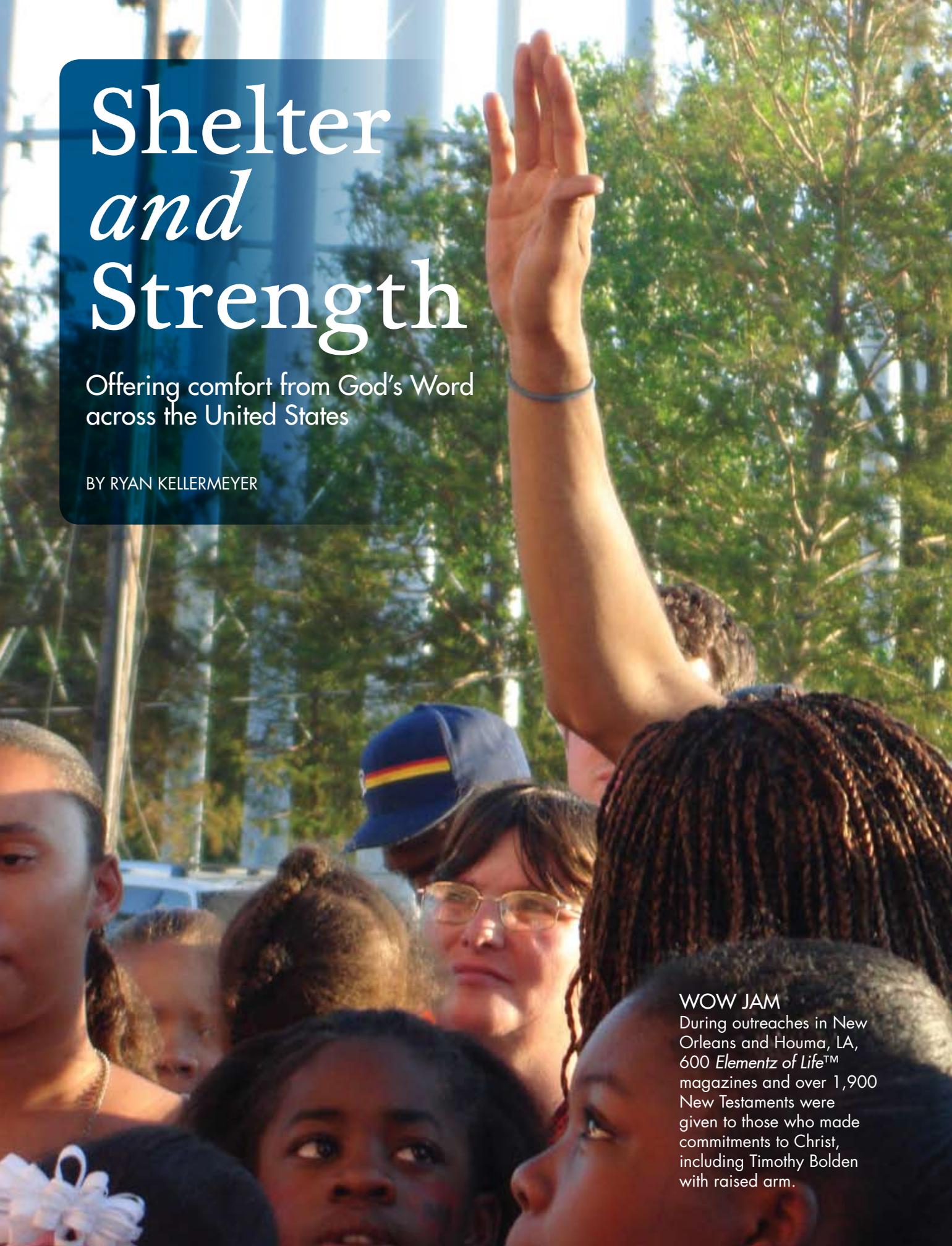
We invite you to join us and be a part of this strategic opportunity to fulfill the Great Commission. The E2E project brings God’s Word to people who do not yet know the true hope in Christ. Commit to pray for these people and the teams that are working to bring them the Good News in their heart language. Your prayer support is a vital part of the success of this initiative.

We invite you to consider financially supporting the E2E project. We have a goal to raise at least \$258,700 to launch this project in 15 countries. Your financial partnership enables the Bible to be translated and distributed to communities in desperate need of God’s Word.

“Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”
Matthew 28.19 (GNT)

Learn more about the exciting partnership project.

www.ABSRecord.com/timeisnow

A photograph of a diverse crowd of people at an outdoor event. In the foreground, a person with their hand raised is visible. The background shows trees and a bright sky. A dark blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the title and subtitle.

Shelter *and* Strength

Offering comfort from God's Word
across the United States

BY RYAN KELLERMEYER

WOW JAM

During outreaches in New Orleans and Houma, LA, 600 *Elementz of Life*[™] magazines and over 1,900 New Testaments were given to those who made commitments to Christ, including Timothy Bolden with raised arm.

You give them something to eat,” was Jesus’ response to his disciples’ suggestion that he send the hungry crowds away to find food. Jesus was acquainted with sacrifice for the sake of God’s kingdom; he understood the physical, as well as spiritual needs of the people he was teaching.

Through his actions, Jesus teaches the disciples the importance of giving both his good news and a good meal. Christians around the world still follow his example, and the American Bible Society is joining with like-minded partners to provide God’s loving care, as well as the gospel, in times of trouble.

“In these desperate times, the lines for prayer are longer than those for water.”

While we rightly look with compassion on those struggling outside our national borders, there are also many in our own country who have a desperate need for food, shelter and strength. Where do we turn when our world falls apart? With vital help from the American Bible Society, ministries all over the United States are touching hurting and troubled lives.

Bible Society responds

Imagine you arrive at a food distribution facility and begin to navigate your way around. But after some investigation, you find the lines for prayer are longer than those for water.

This is exactly what Delores Burnett, ABS mission manager for the hungry and destitute, saw on her recent visit to New Orleans. In this city where the effects of Hurricane Katrina linger, the Bible Society teamed with Convoy of Hope to help meet needs in the

community. “Most of the prayers were to keep families together, find jobs and not become depressed,” she says.

Starting with the Word

Research shows that two-thirds of students who cannot read proficiently by the end of the 4th grade will end up in jail or on welfare. The American Bible Society has pioneered literacy work for over 100 years, continuing with a partnership with the Salvation Army to provide a Bible-based literacy curriculum called Mission: Literacy. In cooperation with the Bank Street College of Education, ABS developed this 16-week literacy curriculum that has been proven to raise reading abilities significantly while exposing students to Bible stories and the Gospel of Christ.

Perhaps most important to the success of Mission: Literacy is the supportive mentoring part of the program. Each student belongs to a small reading group led by a trained volunteer. The leader not only provides individualized help with reading, but models a Christian witness as well. Enid Almanzar, ABS mission manager for at-risk children, says, “ABS has changed its approach from mere distribution to meaningful engagement. We’ve partnered with like-minded ministries to ensure mentoring and discipleship takes place so students can develop a lasting understanding and relationship with Christ.” As these students grow in their reading abilities, they grow in relationship and their walk with the Lord. The foundation of this relationship gives them strength to overcome the challenges they face.

New Life

What happens when we’re gone?” asks Tonya Wilder-Butts, ABS mission manager for at-risk youth. Tonya works with WOW JAM International (Winning Our



RESIDENTS
of New Orleans
in a line for prayer.

World International) to deliver the gospel to thousands of people each year. WOW JAM's four to six hour urban evangelism events also provide practical helps that include free haircuts, bicycle repair, family photos, food and gifts for the children. With a desire for an outreach event, local churches invite WOW JAM to their neighborhoods. The day following the event, a baptism service is held at the local church. Family photos taken on that day are later delivered to the family by a pastor of the local church.

In this way, ABS and WOW JAM are partnering to strengthen the local church's efforts in reaching those who are hurting and looking for shelter in Christ.

Speaking Their Language

Elementz of Life™ is a Scripture tool with a specific audience in mind. "We know that traditional methods of outreach are not going to work with today's young people" says Tonya. "We need something that speaks their language." Using stories of people who have struggled and found shelter

in Christ during difficult times, the contemporary magazine format of *Elementz* is a valuable tool that speak to the hearts of youth who find very little connection to church. This tool has helped bring people out of lifestyles that cause harm to themselves and others, and guides them into "the life that is really life."

Set Free

In prisons across the United States, God's Word is making a difference through the ministry of the Bible Society. Drew Segawa, ABS mission manager for the incarcerated, relays one prisoner's response to the Scripture's impact in his life, "I feel as though there is a purpose in my life, and with God, I feel very protected. There are times when I turn and pick the Bible up and read and feel better."

"We know that traditional methods of outreach are not going to work with today's young people" says Tonya. "We need something that speaks their language."

When our world falls apart, we can turn to the one source of true shelter and strength – God's Word. The American Bible Society is partnering with like-minded organizations to address the whole person and guide them toward lasting comfort and peace. 📖



After hearing a message at the WOW JAM, Timothy Bolden responded, "I should not be alive today. I survived a serious car accident without a scratch. I have done so many bad things to people and lived an angry life after my father abandoned me and my sisters. I want to change my life because I am tired of running from God. I want to get saved and tell him that I am sorry for the pain I have caused." Timothy, from Houma, La., made a commitment to Christ and was baptized on the spot.

Support ABS's domestic ministries through prayer and giving.

www.ABSRecord.com/shelter

engage + THE WORD

Biblical literacy is at an all-time low in the United States

In order to reach an online generation, the American Bible Society is providing Bible engagement tools in new delivery forms.

Help us engage this generation and change the statistics.

Engage.AmericanBible.org offers tools for engaging today's youth with Scripture.



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Receive God's Word on your cell phone each day.



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Share with an online community how the Bible has impacted your life.



Download the New Testament to your MP3 player. Delivered in 30 minute episodes.



Take the Essential 100 Challenge™. This is a Bible reading program featuring 100 carefully selected short Bible passages.

get your Bible out of neutral

Engage.AmericanBible.org

Shaping a Good News Culture

ABS talks with Gabe Lyons, Christian author and mobilizer

BY DAVID SINGER



Gabe Lyons is a man on a mission to recapture the redeeming influence Christianity has in shaping culture. As coauthor of a challenging new book, he rattles off national studies he commissioned that show Christians are too often known for what they oppose rather than as the bearers of good news.

Working with partners that include the American Bible Society, Gabe Lyons and his collective of innovators, artists, and church and societal leaders are using a web magazine, called *Fermi Project*, to explore ways to highlight how the God of the Bible is behind all the good and beautiful in culture. Gabe wants to give the Bible's life-changing message a fresh hearing among today's searching generation.

At a recent American Bible Society staff gathering, Gabe presented his challenging vision.

Q: In your writing, you reference the idea that Christianity's early growth can

be credited to a deep involvement in the fabric of culture. What changed?

A: At the beginning of the last century, following the Scope's trial, many Christians retreated from the centers of culture and lost influence in shaping it.

"We've allowed some of the good news of the gospel — God's creation and God's redemption of that creation — to be edited out."

But, the Great Commission is still our calling. We want the church to become the moral center again, and to do that churches need to become communities of renewal that inspire their vocational leaders to lead.

Q: Why has Christianity lost its lead role in shaping culture?

A: We've allowed some of the good news of the gospel — God's creation and God's redemption of that creation — to be edited out.

Q: How is *Fermi Project* a response?

A: Journalist Andy Crouch has said that you don't change culture by criticizing it. You change culture by creating it. By thoughtfully and winsomely engaging culture with the gospel's good news we want to constructively shape culture, and at the highest levels. The local church is responsible for "making the invisible

kingdom visible." The biblical message of God's redemption and restoration will regain the wide cultural influence it used to have if we can emphasize its beauty and attractiveness.

Q: Where did the idea for *Fermi Project* come from?

A: When I read Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey's book, *How Now Shall We Live?* — they don't just talk about sin and redeeming souls — they also talk about renewing culture.

Q: Others have set out to redeem culture; how is *Fermi Project* different?

A: The *Fermi Project* brings all of these people together in one conversation. Through our Q gatherings (annual conferences of Christian leaders interested in asking questions that stimulate connections and collaborations) and our online digital magazine, we bring together Christians who are leaders in seven channels of cultural influence: business, government, media, church, arts & entertainment, education and the social sector. 🌟

Easter Prayers

“The Angel said to the women, ‘Don’t be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus, who was nailed to a cross. He isn’t here! God has raised him to life, just as Jesus said he would. Come, see the place where his holy body was lying.’” Matthew 28.5, 6 (CEV)

The week leading up to Easter is an opportunity to reflect on the gift of Jesus in walking the path to the cross for our sake. You and your loved ones can engage in these daily readings from the Old and New Testament to help you meditate on his sacrifice and celebrate resurrection hope.

APRIL 5

PALM SUNDAY
Isaiah 45.21-25
Matthew 21.1-11

APRIL 6

MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK
Isaiah 42.1-9
John 12.1-11

APRIL 7

TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK
Isaiah 49.1-6
1 Corinthians 1.18-31

APRIL 8

WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK
Isaiah 5.4-9a
Hebrews 9.11-15, 24-28

APRIL 9

MAUNDY THURSDAY
Exodus 12.1-14a
John 13.1-15

APRIL 10

GOOD FRIDAY
Isaiah 52.13—53.12
John 19.1-37

APRIL 11

HOLY SATURDAY
Job 14.1-14
Matthew 27.57-66

APRIL 12

EASTER DAY
Daniel 12.1-3
Matthew 28.1-10

Family Activity

This activity is designed to help you celebrate Jesus’ resurrection.

“TREE OF LIFE”

Supplies needed: Bible; 8 1/2” x 11” construction paper (assorted colors); Easter symbol patterns (butterfly, cross, egg, flowers, sunrise); pens or pencils; hole puncher; string; scissors; tree branch; potting soil; bucket.

“Resurrect” a dead tree branch by decorating it with the symbols of Easter. Display the tree throughout the Easter season where you gather for family devotions as a reminder that Christ overcame sin and death and offers each of us new life in him.

Read together Revelation 22.1-7.

Afterward, invite everyone to respond together:

“AMEN! JESUS GIVES US NEW LIFE!”

Serving *Those* Who Serve

Caring for our nation's veterans

BY DAVID SINGER



The timing was perfect, Veterans Day heads into the holidays,” says Ron Craddock, chief chaplain at the Veteran’s Administration Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia. “We’d already handed out many [Bibles] – they were going fast.”

James R. Taylor, chief chaplain at the VA Medical Center in Tampa, Florida, wrote, “I would like you to know those for whom you will be providing this spiritual comfort . . . We have some of the nation’s most severely wounded from this current war.”

This was the most recent effort made by the American Bible Society to provide both the active military chaplaincy and the cadre of VA chaplains with Scripture resources suitable for the spiritual needs of our armed forces personnel.

Scars of Battle

Armed Services Ministry Manager, Rev. Thomas May, worked with Jeni Cook, associate director of the National VA Chaplain Center, to offer Bibles to her 900 chaplain colleagues serving some 5.5 million U.S. veterans.

The Bible Society received orders for more than 40,000 Scriptures in Spanish

and English. Among the 22 items ABS made available were audio New Testaments in CD and MP3 format and Bible and New Testament versions in large and extra large print.

“In the past,” said Rev. May, a director at the Bible Society, “we have focused on providing Bibles and New Testaments for active duty personnel, and that’s important. But we also have a real concern for the whole life cycle of those who serve our country and for

“Veterans were thanking us from the bottom of their hearts . . . we saw that getting copies of God’s Word inspired joy in them.”

their families. Compared to military personnel on active duty, there are more than three and a half times as many people under VA care. These are those who carry the scars of battle.”

Special Needs

Many VA chaplains speak of the special needs of veteran soldiers. As the chaplain responsible for a rehab unit for the blind, Chaplain Craddock was particularly grateful for the audio New Testaments ABS offers in CD and MP3 format. He wrote, “My patients range from blind to going blind. It’s so much easier for them to listen to the audio Scriptures. We’ve purchased two CD players our patients can check out – they think the audio Bible is wonderful.”

As part of the Veteran’s Day celebration at the Norwood VA Center, different organizations set up booths to display the various services they offer. The chaplains set out their booth of ABS Scriptures.

“We gave out quite a few,” said Chaplain Craddock. “Veterans were thanking us from the bottom of their hearts; just to see their smiles and hear their thankfulness at getting these

Bibles — we saw that getting copies of God’s Word inspired joy in them.”

Freeing Up Funds

Chaplain Jim Durham, who ministers at the Muskogee VA Medical Center in Oklahoma, reports, “Normally, the only money we have available to purchase Scriptures comes from the honorariums we sometimes get for speaking or doing weddings.”

Alongside these Scripture Resources, the Bible Society works with the VA chaplains to make available a series of “God Understands” Scripture Portions — booklets on topics such as guilt, anger and fear of death. Rev. May



explained that this series of eight Scripture Portions has been tailored for areas of counseling

germane to the needs of Veterans suffering from issues related to “Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.”

Many chaplains comment on the popularity among vets of the large-print Bibles, especially veterans injured in earlier conflicts like Vietnam or Korea. “We give out 30 to 50 Bibles a month,” said Chief Chaplain Clifton Montgomery who, along with his cadre of seven other chaplains, works with hospitalized vets at the Jesse Brown Medical Center in Chicago. “But we’re not in the business of distributing Bibles. We give them out only as requested while we do our rounds on the wards. Patients most often ask for the large print *KJV* or *GNT* versions. We could not effectively meet the needs of vets and their families without ABS.” 



The American Bible Society is ramping up its Armed Services ministry. Significant efforts to develop relevant Scripture materials are underway in two program areas.

STRENGTH TO SERVE

Serves those on active duty, their families and community support structures.

EQUIPPED FOR LIFE

Serves veterans, their families, their caregivers and community support structures.

Materials are being developed, in partnership with military leaders, that bring a strong biblical perspective to the everyday struggles that the military face. Guidance and encouragement for life issues such as death and eternity, suffering and grief, forgiveness, finances, sexual temptation, marriage and childrearing, are crucial.

What can you do?

PRAY

- for these men and women and their communities that support them;
- for chaplains.

PRACTICE

- hospitality; welcome returning soldiers.

EXTEND

- what ABS is doing with someone else;
- the support network financially;
- the resources.

To support this network financially, visit:

www.ABSRecord.com/armedservices

Please Pray

We invite you to focus your prayers on countries around the world where there is unrest, physical hardship and persecution.

I look to the mountains; where will my help come from?

My help will come from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 121.1, 2 (GNT)

China

Thank God for the successful expansion of the Amity Printing Press facility in Nanjing in 2008. Pray that its increased capacity to print Bibles can match the demand for Scriptures in the expanding church in China and other communities around the world. Pray too, for more funding to purchase the paper required to print the millions of new Bibles. Pray for the recruitment and training of pastors, priests and other church leaders so urgently needed, especially in rural and remote areas, to teach a growing church the good news of God's Word.

Democratic Republic of Congo



A group of widows from the war.

Pray for peace and reconciliation in the east of the country, where fighting has forced nearly a million people from their homes. Pray refugees can be reached by the Bible Society despite difficulties posed by the conflict. Pray

God will bring healing through a new joint relief effort begun by the American Bible Society, the Evangelical Church in Central Africa, the county's largest denomination, and the Bible Society of Congo (BSC) to assist refugees who have fled to a church compound in Dungen. Relief will include Bibles, a month's supply of food, blankets and hygiene packs. Give thanks to God for the BSC's long track record of providing Scripture to its suffering people.

Egypt

Thank God for the successes of the Bible Society's creative and diverse programs for Bible distribution and education. Their accomplishments have increased the need for a new central warehouse. It will replace the two main warehouses in Cairo that are not sufficient to handle the huge influx of Scriptures, many of which must be imported, to support the Bible Society's 12 bookstores and many educational and home delivery programs. Pray for the funds to begin construction of this desperately needed facility.

USA

Give thanks for progress in translating the Bible into five more native-American languages. Pray new doors will open for ministry, so that the Bible Society will have more

opportunity to share God's Word, in print and through audio Scriptures, with people in crisis (at-risk youth, our military and prisoners). Pray for a turnaround in the U.S. economy and that of other nations, as more and more people must look for work. Pray for God's blessing on our new President – that he would have the discernment and wisdom to lead us in accord with God's will.

West Bank and Gaza

Pray for the thousands suffering from war who are cut off from life essentials



such as food and water. Pray that donors will be moved to support a joint effort of the Palestinian Bible Society, the Bible Society

in Israel and the Arab-Israeli Bible Society to provide life-saving resources such as emergency medical supplies for hospitals and food coupons for displaced families in Gaza. Pray for the safety of Bible Society workers who are under constant threat of kidnapping and death as they bring on-the-ground care and the Scriptures' message of hope and peace to many in desperate need.

Embodying Hope

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General Secretary of
Bible Society of Kenya



STEVE JOHNSON
Director - Saddleback
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Initiatives



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\$495 Single or double occupancy. Space is limited.

For more information, visit GBS.AmericanBible.org or call Rebecca Detrick at 866-960-7966.



AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY



In Memoriam

The American Bible Society mourns the death of Senator Claiborne Pell, of Rhode Island. In January 1966, he presented the 750 millionth copy of the Bible printed and distributed by ABS to President Lyndon B. Johnson, at the White House, in honor of that milestone.

Mrs. Oswanna Dickerson

GIVEN BY MRS. NADIA T. CAVNER

Joe DiMarco

GIVEN BY FRED H. SIMON

Fern Drechsel

GIVEN BY IRMA M. LUCHT

Helen M. Hahn

GIVEN BY

BERKS COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

MY HUSBAND,

Max Hartzler

GIVEN BY MRS. PHYLLIS HARTZLER

Melba Key

GIVEN BY WILLIAM P. KEY II

MY DAUGHTER,

Rev. Janet Landwehr

GIVEN BY MRS. JANE E. MANGOLD

MY MOTHER,

Viola L. Mollman

GIVEN BY MS. LEA MOLLMAN

**Harry W. Osborne
and Viva Osborne**

GIVEN BY MRS. JANET VEGHTE

Roy Porter

GIVEN BY FIRST FEDERATED CHURCH, DES MOINES

MY HUSBAND,

Henry Ravenhorst

GIVEN BY LANORA RAVENHORST

MY WIFE,

Annie Embry Rhinehart

GIVEN BY CHARLES B. RHINEHART

Anna M. Willingham

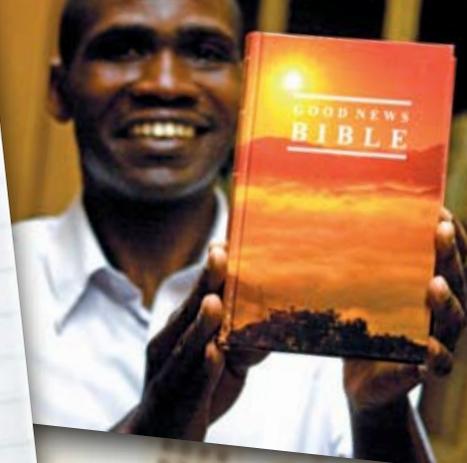
GIVEN BY DAVID WILLINGHAM

Honor the memory of a loved one by helping to provide Bibles to people who don't yet have them. 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 process, please write to:
Donor Relations, American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023

□ Financial security in shaky economic times.

□ God's Word to those who need it most.

Why not both?



At the American Bible Society, we have been sharing the hope of God's Word with people around the world since 1816.

We also pioneered the country's very first gift annuity. For over 165 years, we have provided thousands of people a lifetime of secure payments through their choice of gift annuity plans.

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Gift Annuity

An American Bible Society Gift Annuity is a financial agreement between one or two individuals and our ministry, exchanging a gift of cash, stock, or bonds for fixed payments that last a lifetime.

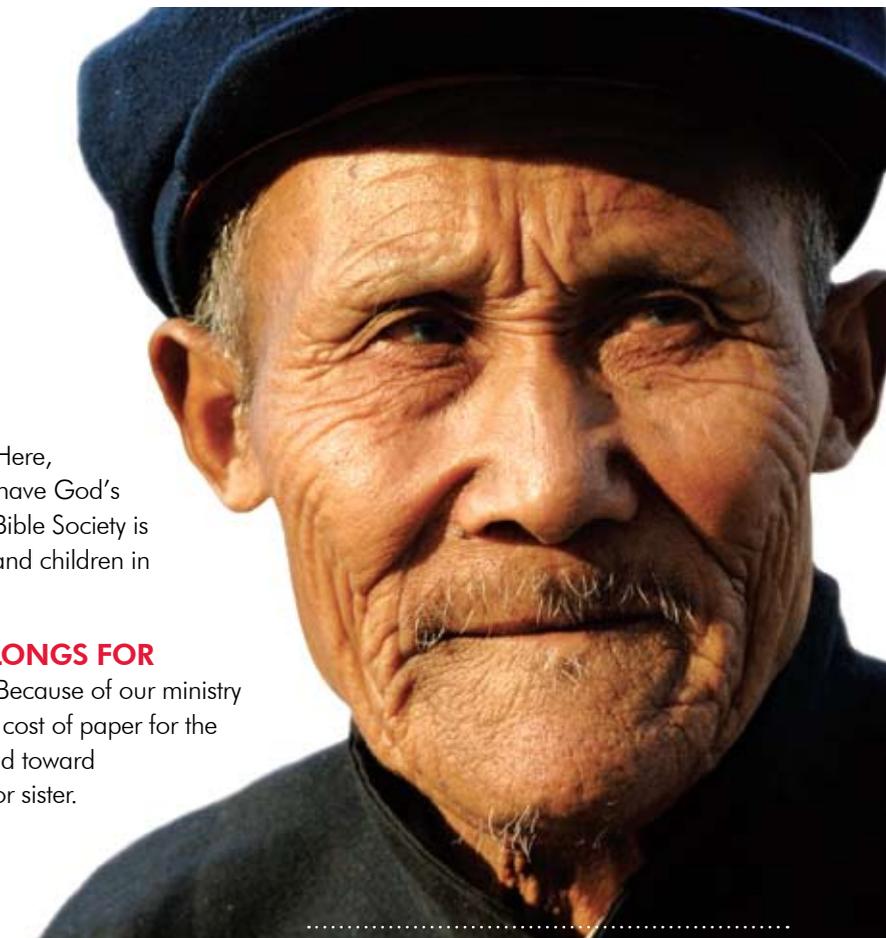
SHARING GOD'S WORD WITH THE WORLD

HE'S WAITED LONG ENOUGH.

In China, he waits and prays for a Bible of his own. Here, multitudes are coming to faith. Yet, sadly, they don't have God's Word to encourage them. That's why the American Bible Society is helping to provide 250,000 Bibles to men, women and children in China – a land still suffering a Scripture famine.

YOU CAN HELP PROVIDE THE BIBLE HE LONGS FOR

through your support of the American Bible Society. Because of our ministry partnerships in China, all we have to do is cover the cost of paper for the Bibles. Incredibly, every \$1 you and other friends send toward this goal will help give a Bible to a Chinese brother or sister. When you share your blessings, you will help satisfy searching souls who have been waiting for the hope and comfort of God's Word – perhaps for an entire lifetime. Thank you!



DETACH

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