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ABOUT THE COVER

A woman in traditional Guatemalan dress poses in the streets of Antigua, Guatemala, in late 2018. When you support ministry in Guatemala, you help grow the church, reach the next generation with God's Word, care for at-risk children, and translate the Bible into 100% of living languages. PHOTO CREDIT: Joshua Wann

The mission of 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. American Bible Society is a member of United Bible Societies, a fellowship of the Bible Societies throughout the world cooperating to make Scriptures available to people everywhere in their

Published since 1818, American Bible Society *Record* is the official periodical of American Bible Society and the second-oldest continuous publication in the United States. It is published three times a year and is sent to as many of our

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THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

A message from Roy Peterson, American Bible Society President and CEO

According to Jesus, you and your church community are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). That's a sobering reality to reflect on, isn't it?! Whether you attend a small chapel, a megachurch, or something in-between, your church has been called to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with a broken and hurting world.

On a recent trip to Nairobi, Kenya, I met church leaders from diverse backgrounds who are linking arms to spread God's Word in their communities through Scripture translation and Bible-based trauma healing. I was so inspired by their passion and devotion!

Of course, I didn't have to travel all the way to Kenya to witness this level of kingdom partnership. The same thing is happening right here in our own nation as well. Lives, families, and communities are being transformed, as the Scriptures describe so beautifully in Isaiah 61:1:

"The Sovereign LORD has filled me with his Spirit. He has chosen me and sent me To bring good news to the poor, *To heal the broken-hearted,* To announce release to captives And freedom to those in prison."

Through the support of your local church and American Bible Society, you are bringing the hope of Jesus to so many. On behalf of the lives you are changing, thank you for shining so brightly!

Thank you for continuing to give, continuing to pray, and continuing to believe God for great things. It is an honor to live out the Great Commission of our Lord with you.

Serving together,



P.S. The Faith and Liberty Discovery Center is opening in Philadelphia at the end of 2020! Please pray that this Bible experience encourages hundreds of thousands of Americans to appreciate Scripture's role in their country and their lives.

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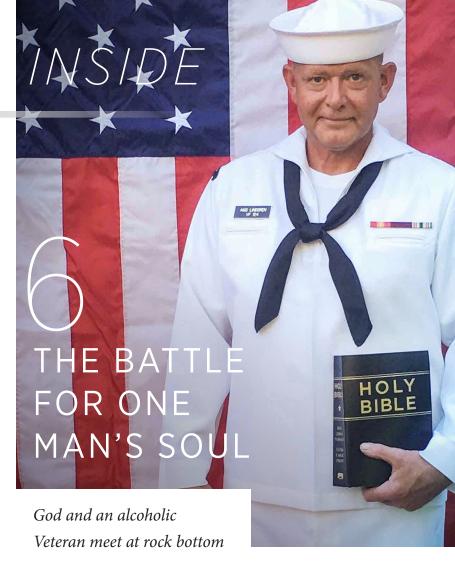
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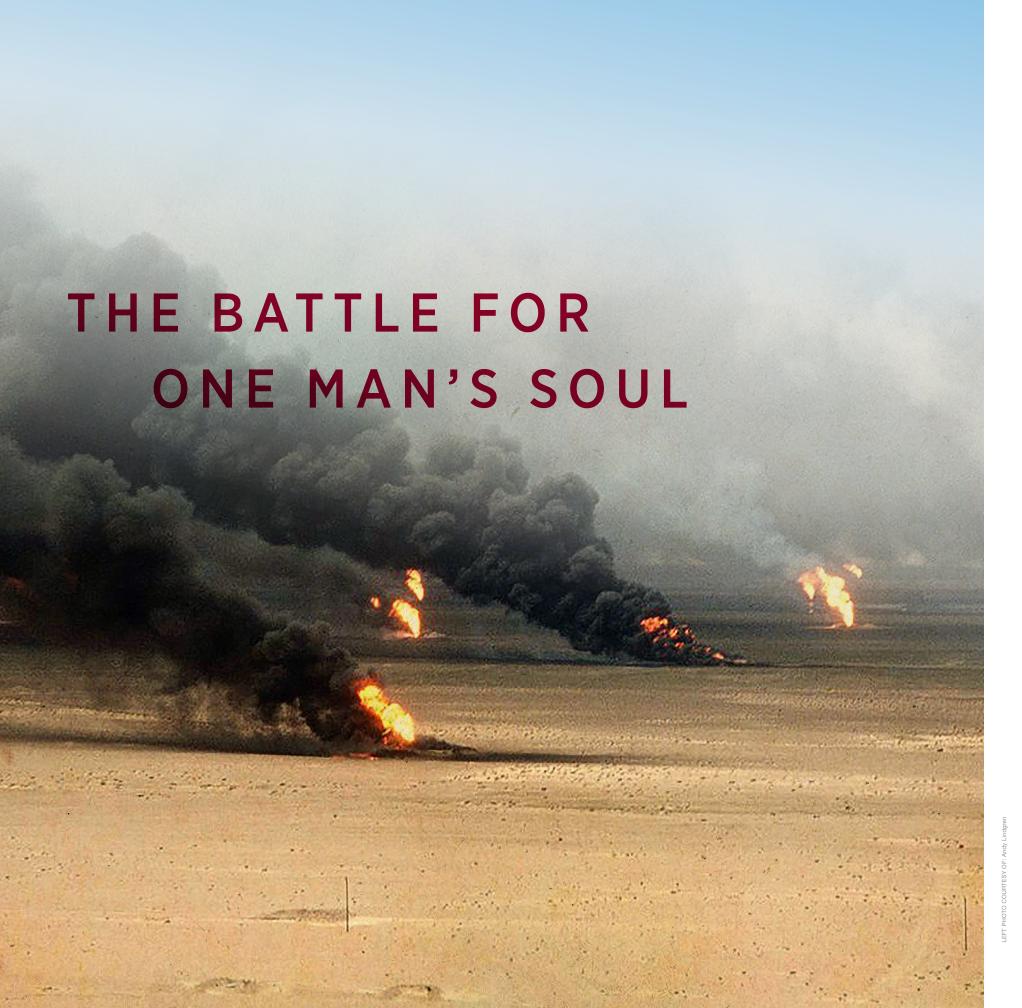




WHEN GOD

WEEPS WITH US A Guatemalan woman asks:

"Where was God when they murdered my niece?"



GOD AND AN ALCOHOLIC VETERAN

MEET AT ROCK BOTTOM

By Windsor Groves

Bomb blasts. Burning oil fields. Rounds and rounds of ammunition spent. Rounds and rounds of lives lost.

As a U.S. Navy flight deck mechanic, Andy Lindgren trained aircrews and readied planes to take on the horrors of the Gulf War. Every time he gave the green light for one of the attack jets to scream off the air strip in San Diego, he pictured the troops it would protect and the battles it would help win.

Though on different sides of the ocean, he was united with his brothers and sisters overseas. They were fighting this fight together, protecting each other, securing freedom.

Land of the free, home of the brave.



Veterans Bible you provided through your generous support.

Andy was U.S. Navy proud—and he was proud of himself. He was tough and ready for anything, just like the jets he okayed for combat.

But in reality, he was far from ready for the war zone ahead.

★ ANDY WAS LIVING THE AMERICAN DREAM

After being honorably discharged, Andy graduated from college, built a thriving career at a university, and started a family.

"Everything in my life was going good," he says. "I was the king of people-pleasing and making sure that everybody thought, 'Andy's a great guy!' It boosted my ego."

When one of Andy's friends introduced him to the Bible, it piqued his interest.

"I got pretty schooled in it," he says of the King James Bible he read, studied, memorized, and shared. "I thought it would be impressive. But it was just knowledge at the time, honestly. I had no Holy Spirit. Nothing moving in me."

Despite it all—and he seemed to have it all—an insatiable thirst still lurked within.

★ ALCOHOLISM TORE ANDY'S LIFE APART

What was moving within was a dark and deadly disease: alcoholism.

"It's genetic and it's hereditary. Grandfathers, uncles, cousins—several of them are either in treatment, actively using, or dead. Alcoholism has existed for a long, long time."

Then, tragedy struck. Andy's younger brother

"THIS GUY SHOULD'VE BEEN DEAD NINE DRINKS AGO."

Nicky, his best friend, died suddenly of a heart attack. And something broke inside of Andy.

"That's when the beer turned to vodka," Andy admits. "The disease of alcoholism waxed real heavy, and it started to control my life—and horribly."

For the next six years, Andy watched almost everything disappear through the bottom of a bottle.

"All of the sudden—a college graduate, honorably discharged from the military, a good dad, baseball coach, with a nice house and cars—and I'm sleeping behind the library because I can't stay sober."

In a nightmarish teleportation routine, Andy would pass out in one location—a jail cell, a cheap motel bathroom floor, a back alleyway—and wake up hours, even days later, in a completely different place. There was one constant, though: "I always ended up in the hospital on a gurney with a police escort."

On one particular night, Andy drank—and didn't stop. At the VA hospital, the crisis response team surrounded him in shock. "This guy should've been dead nine drinks ago," they said, baffled by Andy's survival.

Clearly, God had other plans for Andy.

★ ANDY LOST EVERYTHING HE CARED ABOUT

Andy sat in his hospital bed, weaning from years of stupor, slowly awakening to the reality of his current state.

"I'm in my room there, no access to phone, computer, outside world, nothing. I received two registered letters. One was from my wife's attorney asking for a divorce. An hour later, the mail came again, and it was another registered letter—the termination of my job of 24 years."

The truth sank in. Brother: gone. Marriage: over. Children: taken. Career: finished. And Andy, the man who once had it all, hit rock bottom—joining others just like him.

"We're big, tough, macho, egotistical guys that have everything and got life all figured out. And all of the sudden, we come crashing down, and we burn, and we blow up."



★ YOU GAVE ANDY THE BIBLE THAT CHANGED HIS LIFE

It was clear that Andy's damage was beyond repair. But God was about to deliver a miracle.

"I walked out of my room one morning and looked over to a little table next to the nurse's station. There was large-print King James Version Bible with a black leather cover on it.



Andy's Bible is covered in highlighter marks and notes. Every day, he eagerly studies God's Word and cries out to God in prayer, finding strength for his spiritual battles.

Inscribed were these words: 'Veteran's Edition.'"

Andy was drawn to it, wondering what the Bible might say to a Veteran at rock bottom. He grabbed it, went back to his room, and pored through its pages, cover to cover.

"All the things that I had studied years earlier—Abraham, Noah, the Exodus, the New Testament, everything—it all started clicking. It was like God opened my mind and allowed me to look at it all at a completely different level."

His remaining months in rehab became a private retreat with Jesus. God's Word was living water quenching a thirst he'd had for as far back as he could remember.

"This Bible changed my whole life. I was on my hands and knees. I was sobbing. That's when God came into my life. Period."

★ THANKS TO YOU, ANDY FOUND VICTORY IN CHRIST!

Today, Andy celebrates two years of sobriety. "That mental obsession for alcohol has been lifted from me. It's an absolute miracle," he says, in awe of God's healing. He's found contentment in a steady job and continues to rebuild a relationship with his children.

Every day, Andy finds the nourishment he needs by reading the Bible and praying. He keeps a sharp focus on what matters most: the Lord.

"Before these feet hit the floor, I thank God for every single thing I have. And I don't mean cars and boats and a house. I thank God for warm socks, wood for the stove, and ramen noodles for lunch. And I mean it." "THAT
OBSESSION
FOR
ALCOHOL
HAS BEEN
LIFTED
FROM ME."

Andy has found lasting satisfaction in Jesus because of a Bible he found on a little table at a VA hospital. For this, he extends his deepest thanks.

"You might not necessarily realize what you did for me—but that Bible showed up—and I'd like to think that God hand-delivered it for me." ■



American Bible Society provides Bibles and Scripture resources to U.S. Military members and their families. We are grateful

for our partnerships with VA hospital chaplains across the nation who serve the Lord by sharing His Word. You can help more Veterans like Andy find hope in Christ at give.bible/military



Andy recently gave his Bible to a fellow Veteran in need. Your support allowed us to send him a replacement! "It's the same exact Bible that I found that night!" Andy says. "I'm so excited. You just made my whole day, week, and month!"





AUDIO BIBLES

Willy Twalyahikayo has not had an easy life. He had to drop out of school early to work in the notoriously unsafe copper mines in Kilembe, Uganda. Although the mines made him sick, he pressed on.

When his health finally failed him, his retirement package after years of hard work was just a thank you. With little to his name and with his family unable to care for him, he went to live in a nursing home.

There, his days passed slowly. With his life winding down, one question nagged at him: "How will I be remembered?"

Then, thanks to your support, an Audio Scripture ministry called "Faith Comes By Hearing" came to Willy's community. A volunteer from Bible Society of Uganda explained to Willy how he could use "talking Bibles"—provided by you—to share God's Word with others in his nursing home.

"Joy filled my heart!" Willy says.

85 million people have benefited from Faith Comes By Hearing—Audio Scriptures that help oral-preference people groups learn God's Word. It's active in countries like:



PHILIPPINES

24,500 people will hear God's Word by 2020!



PERU

15,000 indigenous people will hear God's Word by 2020!



UZBEKISTAN

An oral Bible translation is now available for 25 million Northern Uzbek speakers! "The talking Bible spoke directly to me in my language," says Willy, "and I didn't have to read my print Bible that I used to struggle to read." (Willy had a Bible in English, but his reading and English skills were both rusty.) The talking Bible had a profound impact on Willy's relationship with God: "My faith returned, now that I could hear God speak to me directly in my own language."

That's when everything clicked for Willy. Right there in his nursing home, Willy found his calling: to share the Word of God with those around him. He created 4 groups in which people could gather to listen to the Bible and fellowship with one another. Because he knows it's important to internalize Scripture, he says, "I make sure my group members receive and listen to the talking Bible and find out what they heard and learned."

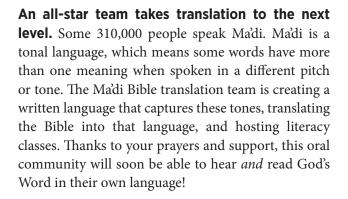
Although Willy trusts the good work of sharing Scripture will continue once he's passed away, he knows God has a purpose for him now. He says, "As long as I live, I will continue to share the Word of God with my fellow elderly people in my community."

Willy offers special thanks for those who made his dream a reality. He says, "Thank you, Bible Society of Uganda, and everyone who works toward sending us the talking Bibles."



You can share audio Bibles and Bible-based trauma healing with even more people today! Go to **give.bible**







RADIOS BRING HEALING TO REFUGEES

What happens when Bible-based trauma healing goes on air? More than 3 million people living in Central and Northern Uganda hear something interesting when they turn on their radios: Bible-based dramas that teach about trauma and its effects. These episodes are particularly powerful for refugees—many of whom fled attacks from the Lord's Resistance Army and were never able to return home. This Scripture-informed trauma care coaches listeners on how to find help and leads them into a deeper relationship with God.

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SIGN LANGUAGE BIBLES

Did you know that no complete Bible exists in any sign language? Thanks to your prayers and generous support, that's about to change! We're working with Deaf communities worldwide to video record Bible stories that make God's Word understandable—not just with words but with gestures and facial expressions for context.

Alongside partners, we're working toward a 2033 goal of translating God's Word in every sign language! A full American Sign Language Bible could be available as early as 2020, and many other sign language Bible translation projects are underway around the world.



COSTA RICA

Costa Rica is home to over 70,600 deaf people. Many in this Deaf community cannot read. Some don't even know what their written names look like, as they use signs as names. An inability to understand printed text has led to a great deal of biblical ignorance in the community. Now, however, Bible stories are being recorded in sign language so all may see and believe in God's Word!



KENYA

There are more than 350,000 people in Kenya's Deaf community. Although Kenya is a majority Christian country, Scriptures have not been made available for the Deaf community. This sign language Bible will help the Kenyan church better reach the Deaf community. The first books to be video recorded are the Gospels; then the team will complete the rest of the Bible.



VIETNAM

There are approximately 1.2 million deaf people in Vietnam. Most of them are ostracized from mainstream society and live like outcasts even among their families. A Vietnamese Sign Language Bible will help deaf people discover their Godgiven identity. This new Bible will also raise awareness of the needs of the Deaf in the Vietnamese church.



BIBLES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

PALESTINE

- Palestinian Bible Society is helping women reach their families. Around 100 women meet weekly in the West Bank's largest city to discuss the Bible and ministering to their loved ones.
- Trauma healing launched this year in Palestine. Read more about this ministry on page 18.
- Over the last few years, youth were given over 50,000 Bibles and tracts, and more than 40,000 children attended Bible-based summer camps!

ISRAEL

- Each year, 80,000 Scriptures are given to Israelis!
- The Bible is being translated into modern Hebrew, so it will be understandable to the average Israeli.
- In Galilee, the Bible House is cohosting a Christian event for people of other faiths (including Muslims, Jews, and Druzes) to learn about Jesus.



FIRST BIBLES



計

KIMBUNDU IN ANGOLA

The Angolan church says, "How can we evangelize our neighbors without a Bible in our language?"

Thanks to you, the first ever Bible in Kimbundu is nearing completion! In 2020, this people group will receive God's truth.



NGBANDI IN DRC

After 36 years of translation efforts, a Ngbandi Bible was completed in June 2019!

Since 1981, translators in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have labored over a Bible translation for Ngbandi speakers. Treacherous, often unusable roads and spotty electricity and internet made these efforts a serious challenge, but God has blessed the team to prevail!

Now, the local church is sponsoring a Bible translation celebration, and many plan to attend the long-awaited launch.



The indigenous Rapa Nui people of Easter Island just welcomed a New Testament in their language.

"This is the most beautiful day of my life," said Maria Ipacaparati, full of emotion, "because we, the Rapa Nui people, have met the Word of God in our language."



CIWUTE IN MOZAMBIQUE

259,750 speakers of Ciwute have reason to celebrate: you're bringing a Bible to them in their language.

2019 was the first of a 10-year translation project for a Ciwute Bible, but already the community has seen excerpts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians.

Pray that the translators would have endurance and that God's Word would bring hope to spiritually and economically impoverished communities.



INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE BIBLES

You are sharing God's Word with people who do not speak their country's majority language.

370M

indigenous people live across the globe, according to UNESCO.

7,351

languages are currently spoken in the world.

178,246,457 people are waiting for access to God's Word in their language.

2,784

translation projects are being funded by partners like you.

100%

is the goal we're working toward—to give every indigenous language group access to the Scriptures by 2026.



U.S. STATE OF THE BIBLE 2019

We conduct an annual survey* about how Americans view and use the Bible. Here are some of the latest numbers:

24% of Americans use the Bible frequently. It shapes their relationship with God and others.

3 in 5 people want to know more about what the Bible says.

48% of Americans engage the Bible infrequently, if at all.

60% of Americans say the Bible's message has transformed their lives.

*Research conducted by Barna Group. Read the full report at: abs.bible/stateofthebible 6

THE BIBLE IN AMERICA



Where do you go to find a Bible in another language?

It's often difficult for non-English speakers in the U.S. to find a Bible in the language they best understand, so we provide print-on-demand Scripture materials in 21 languages and counting. Check it out at bibles.com/pod



Healing spreads across Kansas City!

More than 70 churches in Kansas City have joined together to identify and respond to trauma in their communities through American Bible Society's Bible-based trauma healing ministry. You're supporting local churches as they reach the 500,000+ people in Kansas City with the Good News of Jesus's power to heal the wounds of sin, despair, and grief.



Published: Bible Boot Camp for Military Women!

Being an American hero is a heavy burden. And since men comprise 83 percent of the military, being a female member of the Armed Services can be an additional challenge. To encourage the women who risk their lives for our country, we created a 45-day devotional

just for them called "Bible Boot Camp for Military Women." Designed to provide a 'boot camp' understanding of the Bible, this daily devotional uses key Bible passages alongside personal stories from Servicewomen, military wives, and female Veterans. Through this devotional, you're encouraging military women to march in victorious cadence with God.



IN MEMORIAM



in memory of my mother

Ellen J. Ackerman

given by James W. Dusenberry

in memory of my husband **Hugo Anderson** given by Marilyn Anderson

in memory of **Neva Barnhardt**given by Becky B. Brown

in memory of

Marian Barthel
given by Robert J. Barthel

in memory of
Alice Beethe
given by St. Peter's Lutheran Church

in memory of **Dr. Gordon L. Black**given by Barry H. Wahrmund

in memory of **John T. Campbell** given by Ellen Campbell

in memory of **Eva Carraway** given by Jane C. Green

in memory of

Our Mother/Mother-in-Law
given by Lee and Carolyn Dawson

in memory of **Nancy Etheridge** given by Chris Martin

in memory of my mother

Jane Hamel

given by Scott Hamel

in memory of my wife

June Handwerker

given by Bob Handwerker

in memory of **Rev. H.P. Hilgendorf** given by Lynne and Jose Paba

in memory of my wife **Ilona F. "Noni" Jones** given by Ivan R. Jones

in memory of our pastor

Rev. Dr. R. Clayton Kendall
given by St. Paul
Community Church

in memory of **George Lyles** given by Pamela M. Lyles

in memory of **Col. Nimrod "Mac" McNair**given by Delysia Ashwood McNair

in memory of my husband **David E. Morey**given by Anna Morey

in memory of my parents
John Peter Pabst &
Katherine Doris Pabst
given by Katherine Bowen

in memory of **Rebecca Rome** given by Sandra H. Thomas

in memory of
Lisa Lewis Russell
given by Stephen M. Bailey &

Lucia H. Bailey Family Foundation

in memory of

Junior Seitz & Erma Seitz

given by Karen Ard

in memory of

My Father

given by Lowell Slyter

in memory of my wife **Glennyce Van Til** given by Alan E. Van Til

in memory of
Norman White &
Helen White
given by Carolyn Piper

in memory of

Joseph Yonan

given by Rev. William and

Elizabeth Burger

in memory of **Karl Ziegenfuss** given by Sandra Hawn

Honor the memory of a loved one by providing Bibles to people who don't yet have them.

Memorials of \$500 or more for one individual or family unit will be published in *Record*.

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ONE GUATEMALAN WOMAN

DISCOVERS WHERE GOD IS WHEN

BAD THINGS HAPPEN

By Hannah DeMarco

Lesbia grew up in the good and beautiful places of Guatemala.

She lived in a good neighborhood. She had parents who loved her and teachers who ignited her passion for learning. Where she lived, the bad things couldn't get to her. The bad things lived where kids her age disappeared without a trace, where trash decomposed in the street for weeks, where drugs seemed like the best way to survive.

At church, Lesbia only heard about God's blessings for His children. "I hadn't listened to sermons or known any Bible verses that addressed suffering, nor had I known a God that cared about suffering," Lesbia shares. "It was all about God trying to make us all happy, a God who answered prayers with a 'yes.'"

In adulthood, Lesbia found a life filled with "yes": a husband who loves her, a family she adores, a beautiful home in Guatemala City, and a thriving career as an esteemed psychologist.

Lesbia had everything she needed for a full and happy life. But everything changed with a single phone call.

LESBIA'S DREAM LIFE BECAME A NIGHTMARE

She heard it ringing in the night. Before she even put the phone to her ear, she could hear her sister screaming on the other end. Through her sister's frantic words, she heard one thing: "Carol got shot!"

Lesbia froze.

Carol, her niece, was like a daughter to her. She had her own bedroom in Lesbia's home. They laughed and danced and cooked together. But now Carol was in a hospital bed, filled with tubes, fighting for her life.

Lesbia grabbed onto details through her sister's sobs: Carol was on the way to her college campus for an exam. That's all she was doing. Somehow she ended up in the emergency room.

The hospital needed proof of Carol's identity, so Lesbia had to do something awful: go into the car where Carol had been shot and find Carol's ID. When Lesbia opened the car door, all she could do was scream. The sounds-unlike anything she'd made before—seemed like they were coming from someone else.

"I saw the whole car covered in blood. Carol's laptop, phone, make-up, money—all of it was untouched." Lesbia's mind raced.

"Why did they shoot her?" There was no answer.

"I COULDN'T EVEN FIND SOMEONE TO HUG ME."

The only thing that kept Lesbia going was that she knew Carol would make it through. "Church members told us that God would make a miracle," Lesbia reflects. So she sat by Carol's hospital bed, sleeping in hospital chairs, praying for the miracle she was promised.

Seven days after Carol was shot, her body stopped working. She died without a miracle.

SHE FELT LIKE GOD ABANDONED HER

Lesbia's first thought was, "We must have done something wrong." She turned to her church family for help, guidance, anything-but they didn't know what to say. Lesbia was surrounded by silence. "All of the praying, and the support, and the care we had was suddenly gone," she says. "I couldn't even find someone to hug me, or someone to say, 'I understand you."

At church, her pastor told her to have more faith. When she mourned, she was told she wasn't trusting God enough. In her own church—what should have been a safe place for her-Lesbia felt judged, alone, ashamed. She got angry.

"My church couldn't find me an answer," she explains. She had so many questions for God, and she felt guilty for having them.

In the weeks following Carol's death, Lesbia withdrew from God, her church, her family. At home, no more laughter echoed off the walls of her living room. Each of her family members



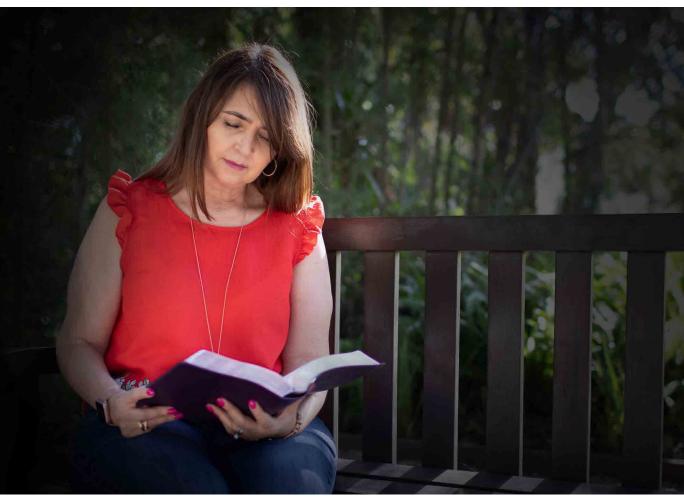


Your passionate prayers and generous support are bringing the healing power of God's Word to Guatemala. Thank you for sharing the healing balm of Scripture where it is so desperately needed! Continue supporting the work of trauma healing at give.bible/traumahealing

cried in separate corners of the house, alone. Lesbia stopped talking to people for the most part. When she had to have a conversation, she was distant and cold. "I didn't allow myself to feel because there wasn't room for more feelings in me," she shares.

Soon, the police gave up on finding Carol's killer. In Guatemala, no one is safe from this kind of injustice. About 20 Guatemalans are murdered every day, and 97 percent of crimes in Guatemala go unsolved.

Lesbia knew this, but she was told tragedy would never touch her. "I never thought they would kill someone who went to church, who believed in God and served at church—like that couldn't happen to us," she explains.



In the Bible, Lesbia discovered God's loving presence—even in the midst of deep sorrow. Thank you for providing the loving support she needed!

Lesbia didn't know what to do with her questions. "Where were You when Carol was shot?" she asked God. She didn't get an answer, and she was overwhelmed with rage. She yelled at God, "You abandoned her. You weren't there!" As the weeks went by, she tried to bury her heartache, growing more and more removed from God.

BUT GOD WAS WITH LESBIA ALL ALONG

Lesbia thought she was alone. But God wanted to tell her a different story.

As the months went by, Lesbia met other women

in her community who had suffered similar losses to hers-they grieved sons, daughters, spouses, nieces, and nephews who had been murdered in senseless violence.

They began to meet regularly to talk about their grief—and they didn't feel so alone.

One day, they crowded onto the couches in a group member's living room, munching on champurradas. The room buzzed with excitement. They were there to learn about a ministry that could help them and other Guatemalans process their heartache: Biblebased trauma healing.

Trauma healing is a Bible-based group counseling ministry shared around the world. This ministry equips the church to help all those who are suffering in their communities. It's like a Bible study where community members talk about the hard things they've faced, write a personal lament to God, and learn how to trust that Jesus will bring them joy again. (To learn more about the steps of the program, turn to page 30.)

"That first session was a gift from God to me," shares Lesbia.

As Lesbia and her friends went through the trauma healing journey, they discovered a new way of understanding suffering.

Lesbia met God in Psalm 56:8: "He keeps track of all our sorrows, and he has recorded each one in his book." Lesbia says, "My tears are important to Him. I met a God who did care about pain, a God who doesn't get angry if I cry, who doesn't expect me to be strong—because He is strong for me."

Lesbia also met God in Romans 8:35: "Who, then, can separate us from the love of God?"

Lesbia had read the verse many times. But this time, as she studied the trauma healing lessons with her dear friends, she received an answer to the question that pained her the most: Where was God when Carol died?

"It was as if God was telling me, 'This is your answer, Lesbia. Nothing separated Me from Carol during those last seconds of her life. I was there."

Lesbia discovered that God is with her everywhere—in the good and the bad places. At weddings and at funerals. In celebrations and in grief.

"I MET A GOD WHO DID CARE ABOUT PAIN, A GOD WHO DOESN'T GET ANGRY IF I CRY. WHO DOESN'T EXPECT ME TO BE STRONG-BECAUSE HE IS STRONG FOR ME."

"My relationship with God changed," she says. "With the trauma healing lessons, I felt like God understood me. I felt free to live my pain."

NOW LESBIA HELPS OTHERS WHO MOURN

Lesbia and this strong group of women in her community agreed that they needed to bring this ministry of healing and restoration to all the Guatemalans who hurt the way they did. They emailed American Bible Society, asking to be trained to lead trauma healing groups.

Your faithful prayers and financial support laid the foundation for Lesbia and her friends to bring trauma healing to their hurting country!

Once they received training, they immediately got to work helping others. Now, Lesbia and many others lead healing groups around the country. There's a vibrant coalition of facilitators who bring trauma healing to hundreds of people every year—from mothers mourning children who were murdered to families who lost everything in earthquakes.



Article author Hannah DeMarco reflects on visiting Lesbia and others in Guatemala

When I traveled to Guatemala last year, I was struck by the sound of laughter—of my own, of the people around me. I thought about how my laughter has changed through the years.

When I was a toddler waddling around with my toy mermaid, I giggled without fear or self-doubt. As I got older, my laughter started to change. After I told a joke, I would watch my friends' faces, waiting for permission to laugh. At other times, when growing up got hard, I couldn't laugh at all.

Trauma healing makes you laugh differently.

Guatemalans who shared their stories with me laughed with a joy that can only come from God. They taught me that you can laugh even while grieving. You can laugh without letting go of the knowledge that corruption and poverty and crime still abound. It's a laughter that looks at heartache with clear eyes. It lets people know they are never alone. This is the laughter of wise joy—the laughter of a child of God who knows He will never leave them. I hope I can learn to laugh more like that, too.

BIBLE-BASED TRAUMA
HEALING EQUIPS THE
CHURCH TO SERVE
PEOPLE WHO ARE
IN SORROW.

A NEW GUATEMALA IS COMING TO LIFE

The result of their labors will be a future in which the church is a safe haven for survivors of tragedy.

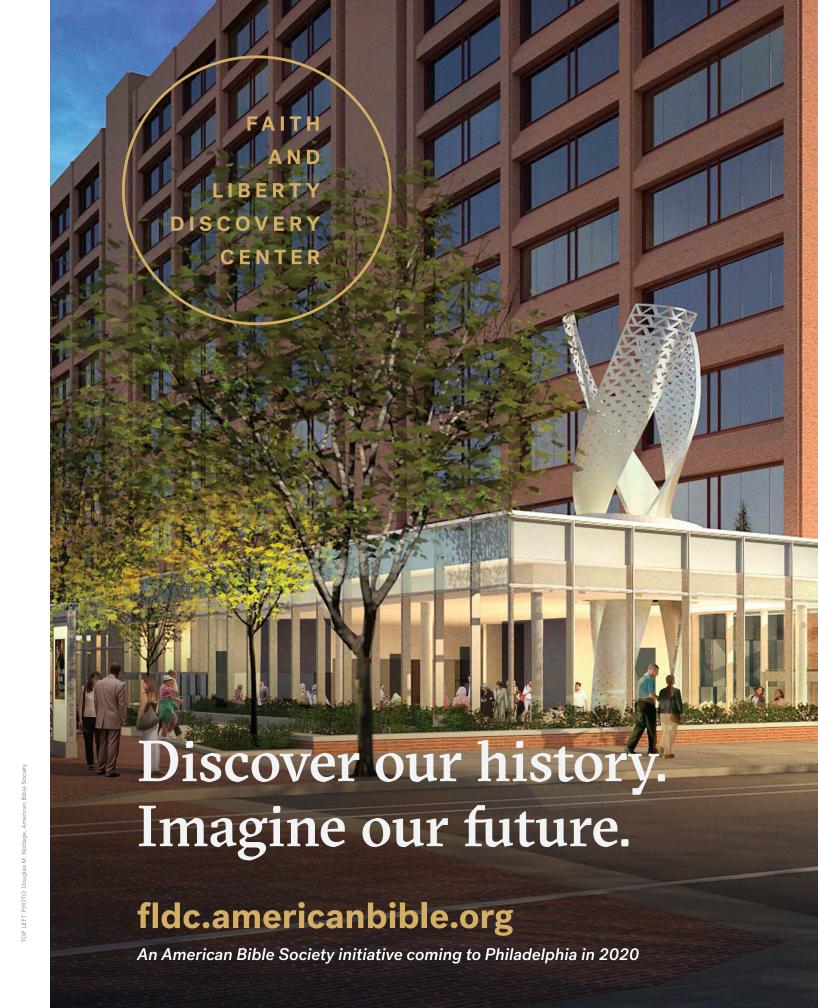
"The trauma healing ministry works alongside the church," shares Lesbia. "It arms the church to serve the people who are in sorrow. If we work together, we'll have a better chance to hug the people of Guatemala, to understand them in their pain, and to tell them that we are here, that God cares, and that we care."

You and I have the privilege to partner with Guatemalans like Lesbia. Through trauma healing, Guatemalans are discovering that God lives everywhere—in the good and the bad places.

Their tears of shame turn to tears of joy as they feel God hold them through their anguish.

This knowledge lives deep in their souls, and it empowers them to love their neighbors the way God loves them.

Together, they are building a new Guatemala: a country filled with heartache, but also a country filled with God's hope. ■





Will God Provide?

Encouragement for trusting God when you're feeling low on faith and funds

y grandfather was an intensely generous man. His wife, my grandmother, was proud of him for it, but sometimes his generosity challenged her ideas of stability. Once on a visit to my mother, my grandfather slipped my mom a \$5 bill and told her to get something nice for herself. Grandma told me she was shaking as they left my mom's apartment—that \$5 bill was their only gas money for the ride home, the car was already on empty, and it was a 3-hour drive. "What are we going to do now, God?" my grandma asked.

God, however, honored my grandfather's generosity. Somehow the gas never ran out. Somehow they safely drove the entire way home on an empty tank.

God Knows Your Needs

We often discount modern-day miracles, but it's important to remember that God knows all of our needs and can provide for them.



by Laura Chan

When I feel like I'm running on empty, I remind myself of the story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath. The account in 1 Kings 17:7–16 tells us how God sent the prophet Elijah to a widow in Zarephath to find food.

Elijah is met with dismissal. The widow reports she only has a bit of flour and oil left—barely enough for a last meal for her and her son. Fortunately, Elijah has a word from God that the oil and flour won't run dry. Every day the widow uses them, and every day they are replenished. Elijah, the widow, and the son rely on God for their daily bread, and He provides time and time again.

Just a Little, Just Enough

Do you ever feel like you're surviving on just a little flour and just a little oil? I want to encourage you to lean into your provider God—trusting Him to provide what you need when you need it. Say this prayer with me: God, I come to You with my mindset of "not enough." Forgive me for always seeing a lack. Help me trust in Your abundance. Please give me what I need for each day—and let me recognize Your daily provision as a gift.

God, Our Provider

Reflect on these verses each day for a week to remind yourself how God has promised to provide.

SUNDAY "And with all his abundant wealth through Christ Jesus, my God will supply all your needs."

PHILIPPIANS 4:19

MONDAY "The Lord is our protector and glorious king, blessing us with kindness and honor. He does not refuse any good thing to those who do what is right."

PSALM 84:11

TUESDAY "Not one sparrow is forgotten by God ... So do not be afraid; you are worth much more than many sparrows!"

LUKE 12:6-7

- **WEDNESDAY** "As bad as you are, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more, then, will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!"

 MATTHEW 7:11
- THURSDAY "Don't be all upset, always concerned about what you will eat and drink....
 Your Father knows that you need these things. Instead, be concerned with his Kingdom, and he will provide you with these things."

LUKE 12:29-31

FRIDAY "All living things look hopefully to you, and you give them food when they need it. You give them enough and satisfy the needs of all."

PSALM 145:15-16

SATURDAY "When you pray and ask for something, believe that you have received it, and you will be given whatever you ask for."

MARK 11:24



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God led this husband and wife on an unforgettable journey of healing—and it all started when they read a simple magazine article like this one.

NAMES: Victoria and Steve Sanford LOCATION: Southern California

CHILDREN: 2 adult sons, 1 daughter-in-law

VOCATION: Retired after lengthy careers at Chevron HER HOBBIES: Reading, gardening, and running HIS HOBBIES: Rock climbing, skiing, and reading

Readers Turned Healers

by Jack Newman

hat if the magazine in your hands could change your life?

What if God spoke to you through the stories in these pages, calling you to do something new and bold for His Kingdom?

For our partners Steve and Victoria Sanford in Southern California, God didn't just use a magazine from American Bible Society to change their life. He did it *twice*.

It started back in 2004 when Steve and Victoria first received a newsletter from American Bible Society. They were new believers at the time and were shocked to learn that millions of people are still waiting for access to the Scriptures.

"The Bible has meant everything to me. It is our life!" Victoria says. "So when I read a story about people *not* having Bibles—and we have a lot of Bibles in our home—it just broke my heart!"

Steve and Victoria knew that they couldn't stand idly by while so many people were waiting to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ.

"We were able to help out in a small way by giving to American Bible Society—and it blessed us!" Victoria recalls. "I remember praying for the person who would receive the Bible from us. We prayed that they would get God's Word into their heart."

Just like that, two young Christians became active participants in the Great Commission, using their prayers and gifts to share the knowledge of God's love with people all around the world.

But God wasn't done with Steve and Victoria. More than a decade later, another magazine from American Bible Society summoned the Sanfords into a new mission field—the mission field of the human heart.

"I remember reading an article in 2017 about this thing called Bible-based trauma healing," Victoria says. The article introduced her to a ministry that helps people heal from traumatic life events by studying and applying Scripture. "I just said to God, 'I want to do this! Lord, how can I do this?"

God answered Victoria's prayer when American Bible Society's partner support team helped the Sanfords identify a trauma healing training to attend near their home.

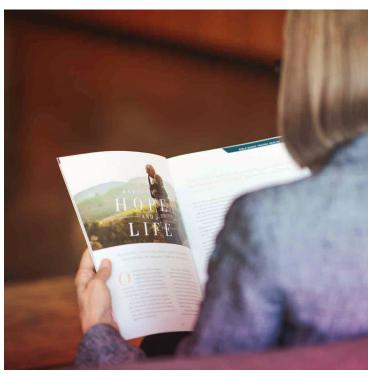
"It changed our life," Victoria says. For three days, she and Steve learned the principles of Bible-based trauma healing.

"What the Bible says about suffering, lamenting, and grieving is very consistent with what modern mental health practices say," Steve explains. "All truth is God's truth!"

The Sanfords brought the ministry of trauma healing back to their home church. They started leading small healing groups where participants learn what the Bible says about suffering, share their stories with one another, and bring their sorrow to Jesus for healing.

The impact has blown them away.

"We've seen instant results." Victoria says. "The Holy Spirit is moving in hearts like we've never seen before!" She remembers one woman who shared a traumatic experience that she had never told another living soul.



A publication from American Bible Society inspired Victoria and Steve Sanford to bring the powerful ministry of Bible-based trauma healing to their church community in California.

"The whole class was able to cry with her and embrace her," Victoria says.

Although the Sanfords faithfully followed God's call into this mission field of human trauma, they'll be the first to tell you that God alone is the real hero of their story.

"We're not that smart or wise," Steve laughs. "We just point people to what the Bible says about who God is and the healing that's available in Jesus." (Story continued on next page.)

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Whether they're sending Bibles to remote people groups across the world or weeping with brokenhearted people in their own church, Steve and Victoria Sanford are using their lives to proclaim the Good News of God's love to all people.

As Victoria puts it: "Jesus is real. He is alive. And He wants to heal our hearts."

What about you? Has God ever called you out of your comfort zone to help others meet Jesus? As Steve and Victoria Sanford can attest, a divine invitation into the mission field can appear in the unlikeliest of places—even in the pages of this magazine!



Support Bible-based trauma healing alongside the Sanfords! Learn more at give.bible/traumahealing

What Happens in Bible-Based Trauma Healing?

Steve Sanford walks you through the process



1. LISTEN

"There's a lot of power in being heard. You might look at somebody and think, 'They look like they're doing good!' But you don't know somebody's story until they tell it to you."



2. LAMENT

"People often think that they just need to get over their trauma or forget it. But the Bible encourages us to cry out to God, as the Psalmists did. You need to grieve the loss."



3. RELEASE

"The central event of the healing group is taking your pain to the cross, where Jesus purchased emotional healing for us. People write down their pain and hurt onto pieces of paper. We lay them before a physical cross. Then we take those papers outside and burn them."

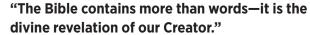


4. REBUILD

"In our last session, we talk about forgiving, which is not the same thing as forgetting. So many participants have told us, 'I never knew what it truly meant to forgive.' This session equips you for the future and builds resilience into your life. It's powerful and highly biblical."

Jesus Christ is the answer!

These brothers named American Bible Society in their Wills to tell future generations about Jesus.



At just five years old, brothers Bob and Joe Ellis were captivated by their grandfather's zeal for God's Word. Now retired, the two brothers never forgot their grandfather's example—and never stopped loving the words of their heavenly Father.

"The Bible is something to be shared."

Bob and Joe have been encouraged by American Bible Society's 203-year legacy of Bible ministry. They want this ministry to continue for generations to come.



"He provided all that we have in order to accomplish our heavenly Father's **Great Commission.**"

Bob and Joe found a way to keep sharing God's Word long after they leave this earth to join their heavenly Father—by naming American Bible Society as a beneficiary in their estate plan.

"We pray that this pledge will bring His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Thanks to Bob's and Joe's planning, generations to come will meet Jesus in God's Word, long after the Ellis brothers have joined their Lord in heaven. What a legacy!

By naming American Bible Society in your Will, you too can leave a lasting legacy of Bible ministry and make a statement about the importance of the Bible in your life.

Let us know of your intent and receive a free, signed copy of American Bible Society President Roy Peterson's autobiography, Set Free. Simply:



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Have You Named American Bible Society in Your Will?

Many faithful partners like you have already remembered American Bible Society in their Wills—ensuring that the work of sharing God's Word continues for generations to come.

If you have already taken that important step, we want to thank you by sending you a free, signed copy of American Bible Society President and CEO Roy Peterson's autobiography, **Set Free.** His story is powerful, so act now!





OUR GIFT TO YOU

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