

LIVES CHANGED BY GOD'S WORD

# Record

FALL 2022

## Thank You from Ukraine

Your love sent Bibles  
into the war zone!

PAGE 6

## The Born Again Thief

Your witness is leading  
lost souls to Jesus.

PAGE 20



AMERICAN  
BIBLE  
SOCIETY



“Clap your hands for joy, all peoples!  
Praise God with loud songs!”

PSALM 47:1

Colombia



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ABOUT THE COVER

This elderly Ukrainian man was grateful to receive physical and spiritual nourishment when the Ukrainian Bible Society brought aid to a heavily-shelled town north of Kharkiv. In addition to food, your generous support provided him with a new Ukrainian Bible to comfort his soul in the midst of the war.

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 Bible Societies throughout the world cooperating to make Scriptures available to people everywhere in their own language.

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# Your Front Row Seat to See Lives Changed

A message from Jeff Brown, Interim CEO

Dear Friends,

When reading the article entitled “Basic Spiritual Training” at the end of this issue (page 30), I was struck by the following quote from a U.S. Service Member named Tommy, who used a Bible you gave him to lead other Troops to Christ:

*“I felt like I had a front row seat to see someone’s life changed!”*

Now that’s what I’d call the best seat in the house! After all, is there anything sweeter than watching an unbeliever profess faith in Jesus for the first time ... or a new convert get baptized ... or a prodigal return home? Well, I’m happy to share that these stories of salvation are exactly what you’ll find throughout this powerful issue of Record magazine.

I like to think of Record magazine as *your* front row seat to see lives changed. I can’t wait for you to meet the former Liberian thief, the bold Military evangelist, and the courageous Ukrainian refugee at the heart of this issue—not to mention the dozens of grateful Bible recipients whose lives will never be the same now that they can hug, read, and share their very first Bible.

I know that your love for the lost and your faithfulness to Jesus inspire you to give generously to this Bible ministry. Thank you, thank you, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for going above and beyond to share God’s Word where it’s needed most.

Now, without further ado, allow me to escort you to your seat....

Gratefully yours,

Jeff Brown

P.S. This magazine is *your* front row seat to see the lives that God is changing through his living and active Word. Every testimony was made possible thanks to your generous support. Thank you!

# Record

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COVER: Ukrainian Bible Society; SCRIPTURE SPREAD: Javier Bogota, Colombian Bible Society

PHOTO CREDITS: Ukrainian Bible Society; Argentine Bible Society



# Bibles for Ukraine

Your compassion sent desperately needed Bibles into the war zone!

“It feels like a movie about the end of the world.”

That’s how Ukrainian Bible Society leader Anatoliy (pictured above) describes wartime in his home city of Kyiv. During this horrific year, he has ministered to everyone from terrified children to brave soldiers to grieving parents.

How does he explain the resilience his people have shown in the face of death and destruction?

“Thank God we have the Bible.”

## The Bible Is Spiritual First Aid

When the call went out to flood Ukraine and surrounding countries with Bibles for suffering Ukrainians, you responded. Because of you, more than 560,000 new Scriptures have been printed in the Ukrainian and Russian languages.

They are being distributed alongside physical aid

like water, medicine, and bread—both within Ukraine and in countries receiving refugees. In fact, Anatoliy confirms that he has personally handed out thousands of Bibles himself!

“No one has said ‘No!’” Anatoliy reports, marveling at people’s openness to receive God’s Word. “When people are bleeding and people are hungry, the Bibles became like first aid.”

One man even offered to exchange a precious loaf of bread for the Bible. “Please give me a children’s Bible,” he pleaded. “I have kids at home. I would like to read with them the Bible stories.” Anatoliy assured the man that he could keep both the bread and the Bibles!

## You Are Helping the Angels of Kyiv

It’s no wonder that Anatoliy and his Bible Society volunteers are now lovingly known as the

“Angels of Kyiv” by the grateful Ukrainians who have received Scriptures, prayers, and spiritual nourishment from these brave ministers of God’s love. Following the example of their Lord Jesus, Christian leaders like Anatoliy have put their lives on the line to weep with widows, pray for the wounded, and bring smiles to the faces of little children.

In fact, these brave brothers and sisters have continued to spread the hope of God’s Word even after one of their Bible distribution vans was struck by a Russian bullet.

But even as Anatoliy and his team are considered mighty angels by the people of Ukraine, he knows that God has surrounded their ministry with a legion of generous “angels” from around the world—and he wants to thank you for sending thousands of Bibles to the people of Ukraine in their hour of need.

“I would like to say ‘thank you’ to all the donors standing behind Bible Society ministry,” Anatoliy says. “You are standing behind all those Bibles!”

## Keep Praying for Ukraine!

In addition to sending you his deepest thanks, Anatoliy does have an additional request of you: “I would like to ask Bible Society supporters to pray,” Anatoliy pleads. “Pray that God, in his wisdom, will stop the war.”

And, of course, Anatoliy says we must not forget the “biggest need” still facing our brave brothers and sisters ministering in Ukraine:

“Bibles, Bibles, Bibles. We need more Bibles!”

Send more Bibles to suffering Ukrainians crying out for help! **Give.Bible/Ukraine**

## Thank You from Ukraine!

Because of you, so many suffering Ukrainians received a precious copy of God’s Word in their darkest hour. Some had to leave their own Bibles at home when they fled for their lives. Some had never picked up a Bible before in their life. All of them want to say “thank you” for their new Bibles.



“Thank you very much for the Bible. Psalm 91 is our salvation. We read it day and night, night and day. And it surely helps!”



“I always look for words of support here in the Bible. God always calms and gives hope.”



“We had a Bible, but we never read it.... I will read it now!”



“Thank you for bringing aid—for not forgetting us. It is hard, but we carry on!”



“Many thanks to the kind people who sent these Bibles. We will study them and will pass them to other people so that everyone reads them.”

PHOTO CREDITS: Ukrainian Bible Society



# W O M A N *of the* W A R

## Three lessons God taught me through my new Ukrainian friend, Yana.

By Elisabeth Trefsgar

Your prayers and support have sustained suffering Ukrainian Christians amid a devastating war. You've empowered them to read and share the hope of God's Word in the face of death, destruction, and despair.

This spring, I had the honor of meeting one of these dear Ukrainian sisters. Her name is Yana.

Yana is a steadfast follower of Jesus Christ, a loving mother, a passionate teacher, and the proud wife of a Ukrainian Bible Society employee.

She is also a refugee.

I spent a week with Yana in Poland during an American Bible Society trip to evaluate the overwhelming need for Bibles among Ukrainian refugees. Yana, who served as our team's translator, gave me a new perspective on the suffering caused by the war in Ukraine.

Yana taught me three lessons about hope, faith, and joy I'll never forget—and I knew I had to share them with you!

### **1** Even when you lose everything, you can always share the hope of Christ.

Imagine having just a few hours to pack a suitcase before fleeing your home....

This was the reality for Yana and for millions of Ukrainians this year who fled their homeland to escape war.

In 48 short hours, Yana kissed her husband goodbye through a bus window, slept at a border crossing in freezing cold weather with her two children (with only their suitcases for a bed), and arrived at the doorstep of total strangers in Poland.

Yana didn't even have room in her suitcase for her Bible.

But as I got to know her, I saw that Yana's most treasured possession wasn't something that you can pack in a suitcase. It was her hope in Jesus. Even when she was forced to go weeks without a physical Bible in her heart language, the eternal promises of God's Word were hidden deep in Yana's heart.

PHOTO CREDIT: Doug Nettage, American Bible Society



**“My new friend Yana from Ukraine showed me what it means to trust the Lord no matter what. I’m so honored to share her story with you.”**

**— Elisabeth**

“I know who my Savior is, and I know his plan for me,” Yana told me. “That’s really my hope.”

After arriving in Poland, Yana didn’t waste any time sharing the hope of Jesus with others. With Yana as our translator, our team met Ukrainians who saw missiles strike near their homes and who ran for their lives across the border. Without fail, Yana would take time after our interviews to embrace weeping Ukrainian mothers, pray with them, and encourage their families with words of comfort and hope.

And while Ukrainian and Russian Bibles are still scarce in Poland—where more than 3.9 million refugees have fled since February—Yana still joyfully shares God’s Word when she can. She has already given Polish Bibles to the family who hosted her during those first days in Poland.

“I am really happy that I can share God’s Word here, even in this situation,” she said. “It’s a blessing!”

And yes, I am very happy to report that Yana and her children have all received Ukrainian Bibles to sustain them in this season of exile.

## 2 Don’t stop reading God’s Word—even in your hardest moments.

At first, Yana didn’t think that her family would be apart for so long. “All of us hoped that in a few days, maybe in a few weeks, we would return home,” Yana explained to me.

As the days passed and each morning brought more tragic news of the ongoing war, discouragement and despair threatened to sneak in. Still, Yana and her family clung to God’s Word—and made sure that the Bible remained part of their daily routine.

Each evening, Yana would say goodnight to us around 9 p.m. and return to her room, where she’d join a Zoom call with her children and her husband. Even after long and exhausting days, they would spend time talking, praying, and reading God’s Word as a family.

“The Bible is always important for us, especially now,” Yana assured me. Her family finds special comfort in the Psalms, which helps them bring their burdens to a loving heavenly Father.

Until they are together again, God’s Word remains a shelter for Yana and her family, reminding them every evening that they are not alone.

## 3 The joy of Christ can’t be put out by suffering.

On our last night with Yana, my team wanted to capture her story on video.

We filmed her interview in a small courtyard at dusk. As Yana told her story, the city grew quiet. Pigeons cooed and swooped overhead. Curious faces peeked out of upstairs windows. And all around Yana, the courtyard lights glowed warmly.

As I watch the video now, those lights remind me of the joy of Christ we witnessed glowing in Yana’s heart.

Joy isn’t the first word that might come to mind when you consider Yana’s situation. When I was with Yana in Poland, her parents were trapped in a besieged city. Her husband was risking his life to deliver humanitarian aid and Scripture back home. And, while they were safe from air raids in Poland, Yana and her children grieved the way this war has changed their lives forever.

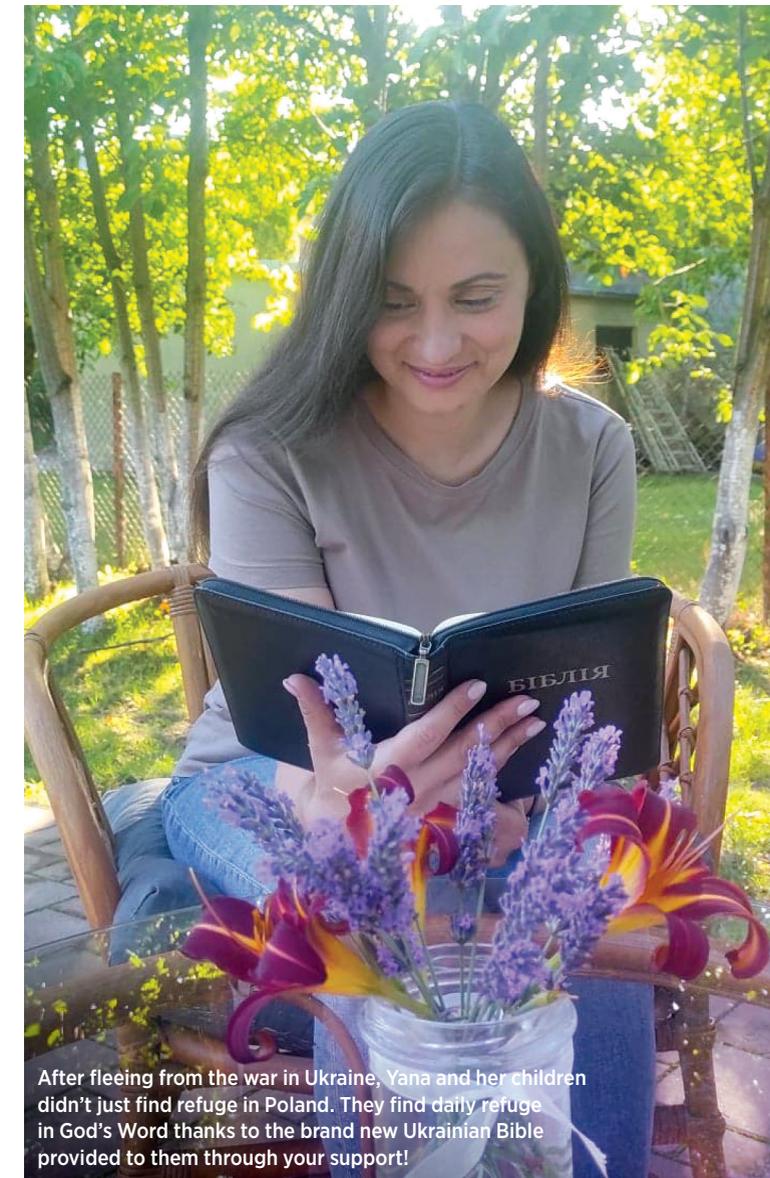
“From time to time, we feel this sadness,” Yana told me. “We miss Ukraine very much. We miss our city, our school, our work, our parks.” But despite the trials she has faced, Yana’s joy is undimmed. And it’s real.

The more I got to know her, the more I saw that Yana’s joy isn’t a distraction from her pain. It isn’t a mask to hide her suffering, or a crutch to keep her from falling apart.

Yana’s joy—deep and wide and written all over her face—is rooted in Jesus Christ. I saw it overflow to touch everyone around her. And I saw how it affected the way she viewed the broken world around us.

“There will be a time when we won’t have any crying, any suffering, any death, any wars,” Yana reminded us toward the end of our trip. Until that time? “All of us can be the tools which God can use to help other people,” she said.

I thank God for giving me a living, breathing (and smiling) example of that truth in my friend Yana! ■■

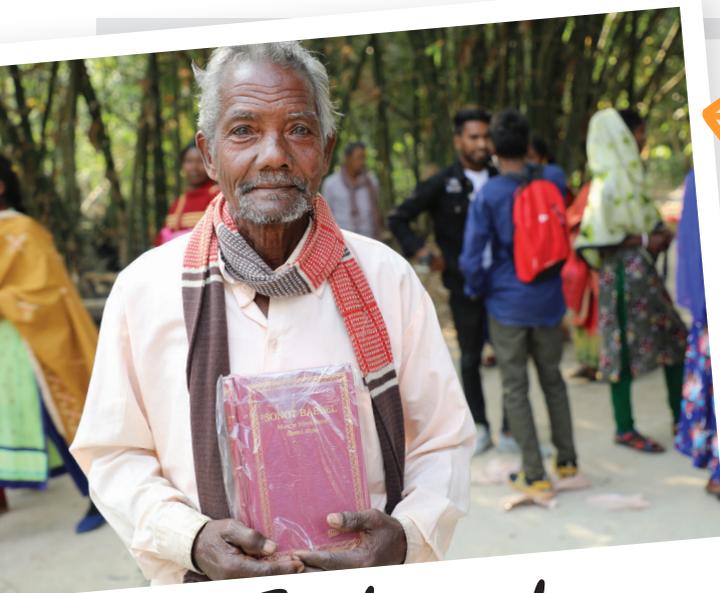


After fleeing from the war in Ukraine, Yana and her children didn’t just find refuge in Poland. They find daily refuge in God’s Word thanks to the brand new Ukrainian Bible provided to them through your support!

Watch Yana describe her harrowing escape from the war in Ukraine: [ABS.Bible/Yana](https://www.abs.bible/Yana)

# Thank You Notes from around the world

**There are so many happy people who want to thank YOU for providing them with the precious gift of God's Word!**



*Thank you!*

*from the Santal Tribe in Bangladesh*

Thanks to you, precious children in Nepal received colorful children's Bibles and other Scripture materials that teach them about the love of Jesus. Now they love reading God's Word every day and are discovering how important they are in God's eyes.



*Thank you!*

*from Little Children in Nepal*

Because of you, the Santal tribal people, who live in the northwestern plains of Bangladesh, now hold the complete Bible in their hands and hearts. Through a Bible translation project you supported, 350,000 Santal people can now access the entirety of Scripture in their native language of Santali. Praise the Lord!



*Thank you!*  
*from Emakhuwa Speakers in Mozambique*

Your support helped complete and distribute a new translation of the Bible in Ge'ez, an ancient Ethiopian language used in historic Christian texts and modern church services. You can imagine just how important this newly published Bible will be for church leaders as they share God's Word with their people.

Through your prayers and support, the Makhuwa people are dancing for joy after receiving a new Bible translation in their heart language of Emakhuwa. Now more than 5 million Makhuwa people can easily understand the whole Bible for the first time in their history. What a treasure!



*Thank you!*  
*from Church Leaders in Ethiopia*



*Thank you!*  
*from the Deaf Community in Peru*

A hard-working team is translating the Bible into a sign language for the Deaf in Peru—an invisible community of almost 100,000. They lack access to education. Many take manual labor jobs to provide for their families. But now this group of marginalized people have stories about Jesus from the Gospel of Luke in their heart language with much more of the Scriptures still to come. Thanks to you, they are learning about Jesus's love for them.



With your prayers and support sustaining them, church leaders in Colombia are using our Bible-based trauma healing ministry to care for Venezuelan refugees. According to the UN, there are more than 6 million displaced Venezuelans worldwide. As frightened children flee from violence in their homeland, they will now be greeted by the healing message of God's love for them. Thank you!

*Thank you!*  
from suffering Children in Latin America

Through your witness, new believers are getting baptized in Muslim-majority countries after hearing the gospel proclaimed in audio Bible listening groups. Scripture listening groups are one of the main tools local Bible Societies use to help curious people explore the message of the Bible. Please pray that God will bless and protect these brave souls.



*Thank you!*  
from New Christians in Hostile Countries



*Thank you!*  
from Blind Believers in East Africa



Your prayers and support made the publication of the full Braille Bible in Swahili a reality. The publication of this Bible was a landmark moment for the blind community and the church in East Africa. The Bible launch took place in the Dodoma region of Tanzania, which is home to many people with visual disabilities due to high rates of trachoma. Thank you for bringing the Bible to life for this community.

Without you, we could not carry on this life-changing Bible ministry. Thank you! You can also send First Bibles to more waiting people by making a gift today: [Give.Bible/GodsWord](https://www.givebible.org)



# Our First Bible: 20 Years Later

# H

ave you ever wanted to ride in a time machine? Today you can!

Back in the year 2002, the Wichí people of northern Argentina received the Bible in their heart language for the very first time. Twenty years later, their community has been totally transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

So, allow these grateful souls in the Wichí community to answer a powerful question for you:

**What happens decades after you give someone their very first Bible?**



## Felix

“Life was very difficult before,” says Felix, remembering the constant conflict and violence that used to exist in his community. “Now, even those who aren’t believers benefit from the fact that the gospel is among us, because we have peace in the community.”

PHOTO CREDITS: Jo Hill, Argentine Bible Society



# Julia & Ceferino

Julia, pictured here with her husband and granddaughter, keeps her Wichí Bible in a colorful, woven cloth bag called a *yica*. Because their community deals with frequent flooding, the Wichí people store their most precious possessions in these portable bags, keeping them on their person at all times.

Julia flips through the well-worn pages of her Bible and starts reading in a soft voice:

*“Jesús yachajo tä tahuyej wichi wet yok.”*

The text is from John 8:12, in which Jesus says: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have the light of life, and will never walk in darkness.”

“That passage is very important because that is exactly what happened with us. He showed us the way to go,” Julia explains. “The Word of God enlightened people so they can live together.”

Julia’s husband, Ceferino, agrees: “The Word [in our language] has been the most important thing. There is nothing else we follow that has helped us like this.”

# Calixto

“When people didn’t have the Word of God, there was no peace,” Calixto remembers. “Now we have places where we all live together in safety, but it wasn’t like that before. Each family lived separately on the mountain.”



# Fanny

“I learned many things that help me in difficult times, and how to live as a believer—things I didn’t know before,” Fanny celebrates. “I can read the Bible in Spanish, but I understand very little compared to when I read it in my own language.”



# Rodrigo

Rodrigo oversees Bible translation projects for the local Bible Society in Argentina. He’ll never forget learning about a Wichí pastor who gladly handed over his precious *yica* bag—representing all of his earthly possessions—as a way to say “thank you” for the gift of God’s Word in his heart language of Wichí.

“The Bible is the only thing I need,” the pastor declared. “Thank you for giving us this!”

Rodrigo has a special message for you—the faithful partners of American Bible Society who make miracles like this possible.

“It is not our money that persuades people to treasure the Word of God,” Rodrigo admits.



“But your financial giving makes an incredible spiritual impact. Whatever money you can give helps show others that treasuring Scripture changes your life. So, thank you! You are great, you are important, and this Bible ministry would be very hard to do without you.”



A well-worn Wichí Bible, turned here to Matthew 16. This grateful community in Argentina has been totally transformed ever since receiving God’s Word in their heart language 20 years ago!

Give to Bible Translation and help transform more communities like this one!

[Give.Bible/Translation](https://Give.Bible/Translation)



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THE  
*Born Again*  
THIEF

**You won't believe what  
a Liberian man named  
Abraham was planning to do  
before you stepped into his  
life with the Bible.**

By Jack Newman

A

brahim's anxious eyes scanned the wide dirt lanes of his village.

If only he could find a place to hide.

A hiding place wouldn't be so hard to find in the city, where endless rows of paved streets and tall, colorful buildings could shield him from suspicious eyes. Here, most people knew who he was. What if the villagers recognized him? What if they caught on to the fact that Abraham had not returned to visit his father?

He had come home to rob his father.

Abraham wanted to rob his father.

Abraham's father owned one of Liberia's enormous rubber farms, where sticky, white latex is harvested from the veins of rubber trees—destined to become car tires in the world's massive automotive industry. It is a smelly business, thick with the stench of burning rubber. But it is a lucrative business.

Abraham used to work as a rubber salesman for his father. Then, Abraham's greedy friends started whispering in his ear: What good was a rubber fortune in a rural Liberian village? The city was the place for him! In the city, money meant power. In the city, money meant pleasure. In the city, his friends promised him, "We will all live largely!"

PHOTO CREDIT: Getty Images



A prodigal thief named Abraham had his life turned upside down by Jesus when he heard the gospel proclaimed in a Scripture listening group like this one. Thanks to your support, Bible listening groups are a powerful evangelistic tool used by Bible Societies around the world.

So, Abraham asked his father for enough money to move to the city. His father agreed—that is, until Abraham’s lavish lifestyle kept him coming back for more and more and more. Eventually, his father put his foot down.

“My father decided to deny me,” Abraham remembers. “He couldn’t understand what I was doing with the money.”

That’s when Abraham’s friends planted a new idea in Abraham’s head. If Abraham’s father refused to give him more money, then Abraham would simply have to take the money for himself.

That’s why Abraham had returned to his village. That’s why his heart was pounding. That’s why his eyes darted about, looking for a place to blend in until the time was right.

And that’s when he spotted the perfect hiding place.

It was a group of young people just like him sitting in a circle. In the center of the circle was a small audio device, like a radio. But they weren’t listening to music or to a news broadcast.

They were listening to the Bible.

God steered Abraham into a Scripture listening group.

You see, Abraham had stumbled upon a Scripture listening group organized by the Bible Society in Liberia.

PHOTO CREDIT: Doug Nottage, American Bible Society

Along with the JESUS film, audio Bibles are one of the primary tools that Bible Societies use for evangelistic outreach. Small groups of 10 to 20 people listen through the New Testament together in manageable chunks. They conclude each meeting by discussing what God taught them about Jesus in that passage of Scripture.

Listening group members even receive their very own print Bible or New Testament from the Bible Society as a graduation gift. With the encouragement of local churches, new converts continue the lifelong practice of spending time with Jesus in the pages of the Bible.

Abraham didn’t care about any of this, of course, as he slipped into the circle of listeners. He just wanted to escape the notice of his father until his mission was complete.

But God had other plans for Abraham.

The gospel message pierced Abraham’s heart.

As he huddled among the members of the Scripture listening group, trying to blend in, Abraham could not help but overhear the dramatic reading booming forth from the black audio player.

*There was once a man who had two sons.*

At first, he didn’t think much of it.

*The younger one said to him, ‘Father, give me my share of the property now.’*

The others were here to listen to the Bible, not him.

PHOTO CREDITS: Bible Society in Liberia

*So the man divided his property between his two sons.*

But then again, hadn’t he heard this story before?

*After a few days the younger son sold his part of the property and left home with the money.*

Yes, there was something eerily familiar about this story.

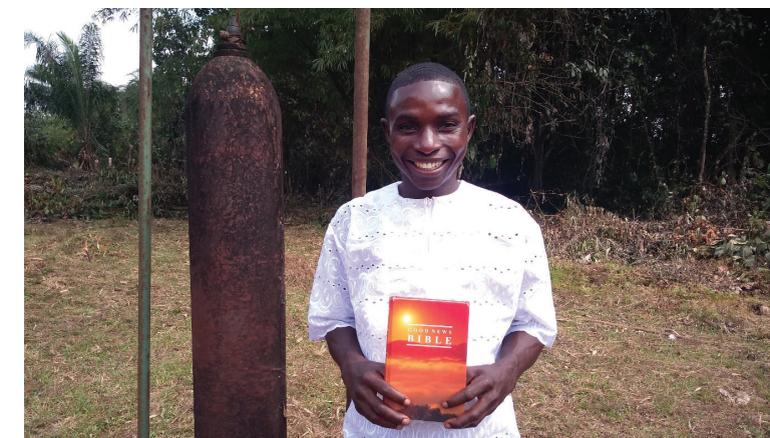
*He went to a country far away, where he wasted his money in reckless living.*

Hot tears welled up in Abraham’s eyes.

Thanks to you, Abraham gave his heart to Jesus!

As he listened to the parable of the Prodigal Son from Luke 15:11–32, Abraham became undone.

**“I have accepted Christ as my Savior!”**





## IN MEMORIAM

*“For what is mortal must be changed into what is immortal;  
what will die must be changed into what cannot die.”*

1 CORINTHIANS 15:53

in memory of  
**George K. Battles and  
Eleanor V. Dahlquist Battles**  
given by the Eleanor V. Dahlquist  
Revocable Trust

in memory of  
**Quanah Benny**  
given by Constance Damon and  
Ramos and Caitlin Benny

in memory of  
**Robert “Bob” Branning**  
given by Roneale K. Branning and friends

in memory of my husband  
**Robert C. Dunbar**  
given by Sue Dunbar

in memory of my husband  
**Patrick L. Gleash**  
given by Annalee M. Gleash

in memory of my wife and daughter  
**June and Kim Handwerker**  
given by Bob Handwerker

in memory of my friend  
**Geraldine E. Haupt**  
given by Mary A. Peddicord

in memory of  
**Eileen Marguet**  
given by Theresa Young

in memory of  
**Audry Pearson**  
given by Word of Life Lutheran Church

in memory of my husband  
**James L. Skifstad**  
given by Joy C. Skifstad

in memory of  
**Joseph Sobaje**  
given by Mary J. and David Rogne

in memory of  
**Mr. H. Moffette Yuengling, Jr.**  
given by Lisa Yuengling

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PHOTO CREDITS: Bible Society of Togo; Bible Society in Niger; Colombian Bible Society

Regret burned within his heart because of all he had done—and had been planning to do—to his father. Ironically, all eyes were now staring at the sobbing young man who had been so desperate for a place to hide.

“I couldn't hold back anymore,” Abraham remembers.

The pastor in charge of the Scripture listening group came over to check on Abraham, and the whole messy story came gushing out. His father was summoned, and Abraham confessed everything. The prodigal son had returned home.

Now, Abraham's life is completely different. He's making an honest living alongside his father once more. “My life has changed for the good,” Abraham rejoices. “I am helping my father more than before.”

But the biggest change in Abraham's life—the one you made possible through your provision of God's Word—is the change that happened in this would-be thief's soul:

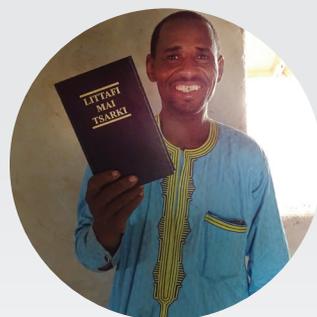
“I have accepted Christ as my Savior!”

## You reached 19,000 new believers with God's love.

On the day Abraham gave his life to Jesus, angels rejoiced in heaven over the one sinner who had found his way home (Luke 15:10).

**Thanks to your generous support of the evangelistic Bible ministry that changed Abraham's life, more than 19,000 people around the world publicly professed faith in Christ last year!**

Can you imagine the chorus of praise in heaven?



Share the message of salvation with even more unreached people! **Give.Bible/GodsWord**



# BIBLES FOR ★ THE BRAVE

A very special interview with T.J. Cherry—one of our youngest and most creative partners. This fifth grader raised \$1,300 to send Bibles to U.S. Troops!

**Q: Tell us a little about yourself, T.J.!**

**A:** I live in Kentucky and have attended the same Christian school since I was in preschool. One of my favorite hobbies is to collect animal bones and rocks. I play soccer, wrestling, and football. I have one little brother. My favorite subjects in school are spelling and social studies. When I grow up, I want to be either an Army man or a policeman.

**Q: What is “Bibles for the Brave?”**

**A:** At my school, we have to do service projects every year. For example, last year I helped a local farm with their goats and horses and donated \$100 to them, because they weren't

getting money from school field trips due to COVID. This year, I decided to sell homemade bracelets and crosses at my school and donate the proceeds to American Bible Society to send Bibles to the U.S. Military. We called the project “Bibles for the Brave.”

**Q: Why did you choose this focus for your service project?**

**A:** One day, I was downstairs in my house looking for some books to read. I found this tiny, camouflage Bible. I asked my mom about it. She said it was her Bible from when she got it in the Army and how it changed her life. That's what inspired me to do it.

**Q: How did you organize your project?**

**A:** My mom and I talked about how we had to plan the project. We went to Hobby Lobby and bought Rainbow Loom® rubber bands and paracord rope. I learned how to make the bracelets and crosses. I made a slide show that I showed my classes, and my mom made a bunch of flyers. The principal of my school let me sell my items before school in the morning at a big table in the front lobby. I organized my friends to help volunteer at the table.

**Q: What was your goal?**

**A:** I thought I was only going to get \$200. I didn't know if I would raise enough to send enough Bibles for the troops. But my mom told me that even one Bible would make a difference in someone's life. I set a goal for \$1,000. In three weeks, I raised \$1,300! I later learned that this would provide Bibles for 260 Military Service members.

**Q: How did you feel when you reached your goal?**

**A:** I felt super excited that I was giving a lot of Bibles to the Military!

**Q: Why did you choose to partner with American Bible Society?**

**A:** My mom researched it. We learned that American Bible Society has been giving Bibles to the military for more than two centuries.

**Q: Why is it important to share the Bible with others?**

**A:** Because then they get the Word of God. I really wanted to do something that helped others follow Christ. Also, I know that the Bible made my mom feel very comforted when she was serving in the Army.

**Q: Tell us about your own relationship with God.**

**A:** I serve in my church a lot. And I read the Bible very often. My favorite Bible story is Noah and the Ark. I just like having the Bible in my hand. Whenever I get sad, I can read it. It makes me feel better.

**Q: What was the hardest part of this project?**

**A:** Making the bracelets was the hardest part because I got some big blisters on my hand!

**Q: What was your favorite part?**

**A:** Watching how people walked away happily with the bracelets. And knowing that there are going to be people with Bibles in the Military.

**Q: What did you learn?**

**A:** I learned how to make a calendar and organize volunteers. I learned how to make several items with paracord. I made flyers, posters, and a slide show to help promote Bibles for the Brave. This project took a lot of time, and I worked really hard, but it was worth it if I can change someone's life with a Bible!

Join young T.J. in providing more Bibles for the Brave! You might even consider matching his \$1,300 gift. [Give.Bible/Military](https://www.givebible.com/military)

PHOTO CREDITS: The Cherry Family; Doug Nottage; St. Cecilia Catholic School

**“Two are better off than one,  
because together they can work  
more effectively.”**

**📖 ECCLESIASTES 4:9**

**📍 Fort Knox, KY**



# BASIC SPIRITUAL TRAINING

ONE LITTLE BIBLE IN THE HANDS OF A CHRISTIAN SOLDIER  
CAN WIN MAJOR VICTORIES FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD.  
AND IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT  
OF OUR BRAVE TROOPS.

BY JACK NEWMAN



*Basic Combat Training is not easy.*

*In fact, the 10 weeks may be the toughest thing  
the Soldiers will accomplish during their lives.*

*Trainees going through BCT will undergo  
physical and mental transformations ...*

*They will face their fears as they learn  
to work as a team.*

*They will become emotionally, mentally,  
and morally resilient ...*

*They will become American Soldiers.*



**T**hus reads a portion of the disclaimer posted on the website of U.S. Army Fort Jackson in South Carolina, where a young Christian soldier named Tommy Doles completed his Basic Combat Training.

According to Tommy, that disclaimer is 100 percent correct.

“One night field exercise called ‘The Hammer’ was the longest, coldest night of my life—easily,” Tommy says. “It was freezing rain the entire time.” (Now might be a good time to mention that Tommy is also a volunteer firefighter and a former NFL player. Doing ridiculously hard things is not exactly an unusual experience for him.)

But despite the outrageous mental and physical toll of Basic Combat Training, Tommy confesses that one part was surprisingly easy: sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

# “The Word of God is living and active! It’s powerful and it changes hearts.”

## THE U.S. MILITARY IS A MISSION FIELD

“Basic Combat Training is a very spiritually open environment,” Tommy says. “Walking around the bay, stopping by people’s bunks, it was almost too easy to start a spiritual conversation. If I just mentioned that I was a Christian, guys would say, ‘Tell me about that!’”

Tommy believes there are several reasons why the tough environment of Basic Combat Training is fertile ground for evangelism. At the top of the list? God’s Word has a powerful presence in the U.S. Military thanks to your generous provision of Military Bibles through American Bible Society’s Armed Services Ministry. And Tommy has witnessed firsthand how those critical Bibles are changing lives.

“Chaplains have all of these free spiritual resources available on their tables,” Tommy explains. “Guys will grab Bibles just because it’s something that’s free. They’ll take it and start flipping through it. I’d ask them, ‘What are you reading? What are you finding? Let me tell you what I believe!’”

Although Tommy had lots of practice doing evangelism as a college and professional athlete, he claims that it was the presence of a physical Bible, not his own persuasive skills, that created

productive conversations during Basic Combat Training.

“Without a Bible that we could look at together, guys would just think, ‘Who is this guy trying to tell me what to believe? Why should I trust him?’” Tommy says. “The Bible gives us a firm foundation beyond the opinions of a fallible human. It gives us the true Word of God.”

## YOUR GIFT OF BIBLES IS REACHING LOST SOULS

Although chaplains provide Bibles to Military trainees free of charge, it might seem incredible in this day and age that a group of young people would voluntarily read the Bible in their spare time. But Tommy explains that Basic Combat Training is hardly an ordinary cultural environment.

“There’s a total lack of distraction. You don’t even have your phone!” he explains. “During Basic Training, you can either have study materials or religious texts. People looking for something to read and do would take those Bibles that the chaplains hand out and actually read them. Those resources are not wasted!”

In addition to the absence of addictive screens, Basic Combat Training is often the first time that a group of strong, healthy, young people are confronted with their own mortality and the looming reality of an afterlife.

“You’re in a setting where you’re thinking about mortality all the time,” Tommy says. “You’re thinking, ‘I could die. Death is a very real possibility.’”

Surrounded by people contemplating their eternal destinies, Tommy felt a conviction stirring deep in his soul—a conviction shared by faithful evangelists like you:

“If I really care about these people, then I need to share the greatest news that there is to share!”

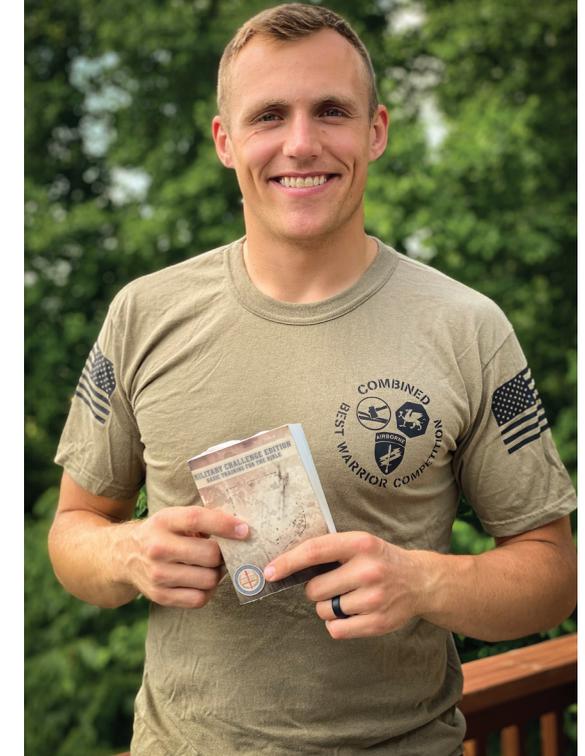
## CURIOUS SOLDIERS ARE COMING TO JESUS

Armed with this conviction and with the Bible that you gave him, Tommy led several people to Christ during his Basic Combat Training. One of the young men had been reading a Buddhist text when Tommy asked him a simple question: “Do you want to hear what the central message of Christianity is?”

The young man agreed.

They read John 3:16 together, and after a few conversations, Tommy asked, “Do you think you might want to make a decision to follow Jesus as your Savior?” After taking a few days to think about it, the young man came back to Tommy.

“Yeah, man,” he exclaimed. “I want to do it!” They prayed together, and he accepted Jesus into his life.



The Bible is a powerful weapon, especially in the hands of a Christian soldier like Tommy. Your prayers and support have helped Tommy lead many to Christ in the U.S. Army Reserves.

“I felt like I had a front row seat to see someone’s life changed!” Tommy says. “It was totally the Holy Spirit changing this guy’s heart. Eventually, I heard him talking about his faith with other people.”

Soon, Tommy was leading whispered Bible studies and hymn-sings after lights out. (“Not too loud, or the drill sergeant would come in and scream at us!” he laughs.) What started out with two or three believers grew to nearly a dozen guys worshipping Jesus by the warm red glow of their headlamps.

# “The number of people I saw converted in such a short amount of time reminded me of the early church in the book of Acts.”

PHOTO CREDIT: Courtesy of Tommy Doles



The tough environment of Basic Combat Training is fertile ground for evangelism. Service Members wrestle with their own mortality and the looming reality of an afterlife. In this mission field, God's Word has a powerful presence thanks to your generous provision of Bibles through our Armed Services Ministry. And as curious Troops read the Bible for the first time, many give their lives to Jesus!

"The number of people I saw converted in such a short amount of time reminded me of the early church in the book of Acts," Tommy says. "It was a good reminder that the Word of God is living and active! It's powerful and it changes hearts."

## KEEP FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT!

Tommy wants you to know just how thankful he is to you for sharing God's life-changing Word in the fertile mission field of the U.S. Military.

"Thank you for your generosity and faithfulness.

Your gifts make a real impact," Tommy says. "This really is a high-yield place to give. I've seen firsthand what happens after you give—and it's amazing."

Along with his deep gratitude, Tommy sends you a humble request: Please keep giving and please keep praying.

"Please pray that the Bibles you give would lead to doors open for the gospel to be shared," he asks. "Think of it as a business plan: Let's get the Word of God out into these places. Let's cover it in prayer. And let's trust that God is going to make things happen!"

Get life-changing Bibles into the hands of more brave troops like Tommy! [Give.Bible/Military](https://www.givebible.com/military)

PHOTO CREDIT: Doug Nottage, American Bible Society



# You Are God's Trustee

By Martha Sparks (1927–2021)

In 1999, Mrs. Martha Sparks wrote an article for *Record* magazine that encouraged her fellow "trustees" to name American Bible Society as a beneficiary in their Wills. When she went home to heaven in 2021, Martha left American Bible Society one of the largest bequest gifts in our 206-year history. We are pleased to re-publish here a portion of Martha's 1999 article. May we all heed her passionate call to godly stewardship!

The Psalmist reminds us that the earth and everything in it belongs to the Lord. We do not own anything but hold it in trust from its creator who gives us the use of it.

It is easy to see God, the Creator of the universe, as the Settlor who set up the trust and to recognize his entire created world as the funding of the trust. He turns over to each of us a part of it to manage as God's trustee.

If we are trustees, what are we supposed to do that is different from what we would do if we ourselves had created all that we have? The first duty of a trustee is loyalty to the creator of the trust.

Do we put loyalty to God first in our management of the possessions? When we make a business decision, do we ask ourselves whether the decision is in God's best interest?

Careful management is an important duty of a trustee. When God gives us the ability to earn money, acquire various kinds of property, or cultivate other kinds of

wealth, he is saying to us as his trustees, "I'm giving this to you, and I expect you to handle it carefully as if it were your own."

Did you ever think of reading a financial magazine as an assignment from God?

We must do something with trust assets. Jesus told a parable about three men who were given different amounts to invest. The master was pleased that two of them were able to increase their money. The third buried his in the backyard, earning nothing except the master's anger (Matthew 25:14–30; Luke 19:11–27). Honoring our office as God's trustees involves learning at least general principles of money management and investing, because the trustee has a duty to make the trust property productive.

Jesus's parable teaches not only about increasing our holdings with wise investment, but also of our obligation to furnish information. The master returned home and wanted an accounting. The law of modern trusts agrees.

It is within our power as God's trustees to decide who will take our place when we are gone. One way to do that is making a Will. We can decide which persons and institutions—perhaps an organization like the American Bible Society—should take up where we leave off.

As someone said, "Life is a gift from God. What you do with it is your gift to him."

**You can join Martha in changing lives for eternity by making a planned gift to American Bible Society today. We are excited to work with a faithful trustee like you!**

-  Call 1-800-549-3328
-  Email [GiftPlanner@AmericanBible.org](mailto:GiftPlanner@AmericanBible.org)
-  Visit [ABSGift.org](https://www.absgift.org)

PHOTO CREDIT: WeRemember.com

# God's Word Heals *Wounded Hearts*



**Pain and suffering cause many people to doubt God's love for them. But when you study God's Word with a loving Christian community, you discover the truth:**

- God is near to the brokenhearted.
- He bore our suffering on the cross.
- He will wipe away every tear from our eyes.

Our Bible-based trauma healing ministry provides this comfort to thousands of people every year. And we want you to experience how God's Word helps people heal from the deep pain in their hearts.



**DOWNLOAD** your free resource today,  
"A Biblical Perspective on Trauma":

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

**SHARE** the healing love of Jesus with  
someone in crisis:

[Give.Bible/TraumaHealing](http://Give.Bible/TraumaHealing)