

GOD'S WORD WHERE NEEDED MOST

Record

Christmas 2017

Proclaiming Good News of Great Joy

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Christmas
Gift Catalog
Inside!

Christmas Makes Me Think of You

Dear Friends,

When I think of Christmas, I think of you.

Let me explain.

At the heart of Christmas is a beautiful gift from God—he gave a gift *far* better than any present my grandchildren will joyously rip open under the Christmas tree this year.

Jesus, the Lord of the universe, became a little baby to redeem the world from sin, sorrow, and death. Our loving God took on the frail form of humanity. In love, he poured himself out so we can have fellowship with our heavenly Father forever.

As John writes, “The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us. We saw his glory, the glory which he received as the Father’s only Son” (John 1:14, GNT).

This beautiful Christmas story reminds me of you, our faithful prayer and financial partners. You remind me of our precious King Jesus. You are so generous!

By selflessly giving the gift of God’s Word, you are helping desperate people in our nation and around the world experience the love of their heavenly Father. Thank you for your faithfulness!

In this issue of *Record*, you’ll meet some of the people blessed by your generous gifts.

In Rwanda, a group of widows have exchanged their sorrow for gladness thanks to a Bible-based trauma healing ministry in their village. In Suriname, a young girl named Cynthia gave her life to Jesus thanks to the End-to-End ministry partnership. In Charlotte, North Carolina, God’s Word is strengthening local churches as people read the New Testament with fresh eyes.

These stories were all made possible because of you. Each one represents a life that you’ve changed through the power of God’s Word. I pray that you treasure these testimonies as much as I do.

So, as I celebrate Christmas with Rita and our family, we’ll be thinking of you and praying for you. Together, let’s celebrate the God of love who took on flesh. O come let us adore him!

Serving Together,



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President & CEO



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The Scars of Love

Jesus heals the wounds of a refugee in Uganda

Elizabeth’s hands are mangled and gnarled. Six of her fingers are gone. A deep scar cuts across the back of her head. Her body is riddled with reminders of the day she was nearly murdered—for showing love.

Elizabeth suffered, just like Jesus.

One day, while gathering vegetables from her garden, Elizabeth was approached by three men. As they drew near, her heart sank with terror. She knew these men. They had raped a child and left her for dead on the side of the road. Elizabeth found the girl, cared for her, and worked closely with the police to bring these brutal men to justice. Scant justice had been paid—two months in jail—and now they stalked toward Elizabeth, bent on revenge.

Elizabeth was left for dead. By God’s grace, she survived and managed to recover in a local hospital. Although the cuts in her flesh mended with time, the wounds of her heart would not heal. She was too terrified to return home. Desperate for a new life, Elizabeth fled to a refugee camp in Uganda. “I had a lot of sorrow in my heart,” she remembers. “I did not know how to get it out.”



To watch Elizabeth share her story on video, go to [ABS.Bible/Elizabeth](https://www.ABS.Bible/Elizabeth)

Elizabeth triumphs over trauma, just like Jesus.

Elizabeth was invited to a Bible-based trauma healing group in her camp. As she pored through God’s Word, she encountered Jesus, a Savior who intimately understands her pain. She discovered a God whose body—like hers—bears the gruesome wounds of sacrifice. Jesus’s death and triumphant resurrection put her suffering into a new perspective. With God’s Word in her heart, she began the hard but joyful journey of healing. “Since I started taking part in these teachings,” she says, “joy has been filling my heart.”

To help share the hope of God’s Word with people like Elizabeth, visit [ABSRecord.com/Bibles](https://www.ABSRecord.com/Bibles)

ABOUT THE COVER: RWANDAN CHILDREN GATHER NEAR AN AUDIO SCRIPTURE LISTENING GROUP IN RWANKO CATHOLIC PARISH. CREDIT: DOUGLAS NOTTAGE

PHOTOGRAPHY: DOUGLAS NOTTAGE



Through your support, children in refugee camps in Lebanon are finding fresh joy in the promises of Jesus.

LEBANON

15,000 Child Refugees Find Refuge in God's Word

American Bible Society is partnering with Bible Society in Lebanon to help child refugees find hope and healing through Scripture. This ministry brings God's Word to life for these children through an interactive dramatic presentation of Bible stories. Last year, 15,000 children experienced God's grace through this creative Bible-based drama, and 1,000 families took home copies of the Arabic *Peace & Justice Bible*.

In recent years, Lebanon has become a place of refuge for millions of Syrians and Palestinians fleeing the violence

in their homelands. Among these refugees, thousands of children spend their formative years struggling to make sense of the trauma they endure. Entire generations are born in crowded, under-resourced refugee camps, where hope for the future is often bleak. With your support, they are able to find refuge and restoration in the promises of Scripture.

You can bring hope and healing to refugees!
Visit ABSRecord.com/Bibles



Ghanaian women falsely accused of witchcraft are finding their purpose and hope restored through Bible-based trauma healing.

Ghana: Oppressed Women Find Healing through the Bible

In Ghana, hundreds of women have been banished to "witch camps" after being falsely accused of sorcery. They are blamed for sickness, droughts, and fires, and they are often driven from their homes by violent mobs. In the camps, women have solidarity with one another—and little else.

Bible Society of Ghana is sending trained facilitators into these camps to bring Bible-based trauma healing to women forsaken by their communities.

Kenya: Modern Translation Opens Scripture for Five Million Hearts

In July 2017, 5 million people in Kenya's Kalenjin ethnic group received access to a modernized version of the Bible. The Kalenjin community is made up of 14 dialects. Speakers of each dialect can understand, to varying degrees, the related languages. However, it has been a challenge translating the Bible into a language that is fully meaningful for everyone in this diverse language family.

That's what makes July's launch of the revised Kalenjin Bible so exciting. This updated version makes God's Word clear, relatable, and powerful for Kalenjin Christians. It is a significant improvement over the 1939 version—understandable to only a few dialects—and the 1969 version, which has become archaic and confusing with time.

Through your prayers and support, God's Word is now going deeper into the hearts of the Kalenjin people.



Elseba Lelei is a member of the team ensuring that the modern Kalenjin Union Version Bible is accurate and compelling for Kalenjin Christians.

China: New Bible Unifies Minority Church

In some regions of China, 85 percent or more of Christian believers speak minority dialects and cannot understand Chinese. Through your prayers and support, United Bible Societies China Partnership helped a local team of translators bring the Word of God to life for 50,000 Wa speakers.

In October 2016, this minority language group rejoiced to receive the full Bible for the very first time. With your help, the church in China is growing in spiritual boldness as believers engage with the Bible in their heart language.

You can bring God's Word to life for people in China, visit ABSRecord.com/Bibles



Wa speakers celebrate getting copies of the full Bible in their language for the first time in 2016.

Vietnam: Sign Language Bible Empowers Deaf Community

Most of the 1.2 million deaf people living in Vietnam are unable to read, and they are often ostracized from society and denied any educational opportunities. That is why American Bible Society is partnering with Vietnam Partnership to share God's love with the deaf community in Vietnam through an innovative video translation. By sharing Bible stories through sign language, this project brings the gospel to life in a way that immediately connects with the deaf population.

"As a deaf person, it is very hard to understand written books," reports one deaf Christian named Nguyen. "When we translate into sign language with our grammar, we are helping both the Christians to grow deeper in God and helping non-believers have a chance to know about Jesus through the Bible stories." Your generous partnership brings hope to people otherwise cut off from God's Word.



The deaf population in Vietnam is being invited to see that the Lord is good through new video Scripture translations.



Inmates in Omaha, Nebraska, learn about God's love for them through a Bible-based trauma healing ministry led by Chaplain Joy Stevens.

U.S. INMATES FIND HEALING IN GOD'S WORD

Your prayers and support are bringing God's message of hope to people in the U.S. prison system. In 2017, American Bible Society partnered with Good News Jail and Prison Ministry to train prison chaplains in Bible-based trauma healing ministry, which combines Scripture's restorative message with mental health best practices. Now Christ's love is changing lives in some of the most hopeless places in our nation.

This new ministry partnership meets a vital need as 97 percent of incarcerated women and 75 percent of incarcerated men experienced trauma prior to their incarceration. Through your faithful support, God's Word is going forth to break cycles of trauma, violence, and incarceration, bringing hope and a future to hurting inmates across the United States.

Brooklyn Families Explore the Scriptures Together

Thousands of Catholic families in Brooklyn, New York spent summer 2017 reading the Bible together. In June 2017, American Bible Society's prayer and financial partners joined with Fundación Ramón Pané and Biblica to help launch the Catholic Community Bible Experience in 30 parishes across Brooklyn. The Community Bible Experience uses a reader-friendly Bible—with no chapter numbers, verse numbers, or footnotes—to help churches experience the New Testament as a living, breathing story with relevance for everyday life.

Altogether, you helped provide more than 9,000 Scripture resources in five languages to families in Brooklyn hungry for the life-changing story of the Bible.



"We are having families not just read the New Testament but pray together over specific Scriptures and virtues that strengthen the family life," says Mike Carotta, an organizer of a family Bible reading movement in Brooklyn, New York.

Hurricane Victims Find Comfort in God's Word

In the wake of Hurricane Harvey, the devastating Category 4 hurricane that struck eastern Texas in August 2017, American Bible Society's prayer and financial partners ministered to suffering communities with the gift of God's Word. Ten ministries and relief agencies in Texas partnered to distribute more than 30,000 Scriptures to hurting people in the Greater Houston area. Because of you, people in Texas are rebuilding their lives through the hope and strength found in God's Word.

"No words [can] describe what these Bibles mean to us and the people receiving them," says Tammie Jurek, event coordinator at Grace School of Theology near Houston. "Thank you for your gifts of love to the people in Texas." That thank you is for you!



Volunteers from Houston's First Baptist Church distribute Bibles to hurricane evacuees in Houston, Texas.



Through your support, American Bible Society provided Bible study guides in English and Spanish to Hispanic churches in Phoenix, Arizona, for a month-long Bible reading experience.

Month of the Bible Launches in Arizona

In September 2017, believers in Phoenix, Arizona, joined forces for a first-annual Scripture engagement event called Unity and Revival: A Month Together in the Book of Acts. Following a popular tradition of annual Bible celebrations in Latin American countries, more than 150 Spanish-speaking churches in Phoenix spent September reading and preaching through the book of Acts, finding unity in their common love for God's Word. Your generous support provided Phoenix churches with print and digital study guides in both English and Spanish.

"The response has been great!" says American Bible Society's Phoenix Area Mobilizer Gary Kinnaman. "So many pastors have said, 'This is what we need for our churches and our city!'" Please pray that God continues to bless this annual Scripture celebration in Phoenix.

Support Bible Ministry through Your Online Purchases



Are you doing any Christmas shopping this year on Amazon? Want another way to support U.S. troops, struggling children, and rural language groups through the power of God's Word? When you select American Bible Society as your Amazon-Smile charity, a portion of your purchases on Amazon will automatically go toward advancing the Bible cause—at no additional cost to you!

Visit Smile.Amazon.com today and follow the simple prompts to start giving to American Bible Society when you shop on Amazon. Thank you for helping someone else encounter God's amazing gift of life and hope this holiday season.

Visit Smile.Amazon.com and follow the easy prompts to donate a portion of your purchases to American Bible Society.



Grief to Joy

"I didn't even smile with my children," says Bernadette Mukamana. Then she joined a Bible-based trauma healing group for widows in Rwanda. Now the joy of Christ is written all over her face. "I'm smiling now," she says.

Portraits of Healing

by Laura Chan

"If my troubles and griefs were weighed on scales, they would weigh more than the sands of the sea." **JOB 6:1-2 (GNT)**

Bernadette Mukamana was silent for more than two years. When she lost her husband, she shut down. Overwhelmed with grief, she separated herself from everyone—including her own children. She didn't believe anyone else could understand, let alone help her move through her sorrow.

One day, however, a fellow widow named Apollonia Mukandamage visited Bernadette, prayed with her, and read to her from the book of Job in the Bible.

Like Job, Bernadette has known extreme loss. Like Job, Bernadette has cried out to God, asking him to meet her in her pain. In Job's expressions of grief, Bernadette saw her own sorrow.

And then Bernadette heard the loving promise that God gave to Job: "Is there any place where God's light does not shine?" (Job 25:3). That was a glimmer of hope.

For the first time since losing her husband, Bernadette felt less alone. *Maybe the God of the Bible is with me too.*

Apollonia invited Bernadette to join a Bible-based trauma healing group—a group of widows who meet in Muhanga, Rwanda, to share their grief and loneliness with one another and to apply the stories and truths of Scripture to their sorrow.

In Bible-based trauma healing groups, widows come face to face with Jesus. And he, our ultimate healer, meets them in their grief.

Because of your support, Bible-based healing groups all across Rwanda and Africa and the globe are helping individuals from war-torn and desperate regions rediscover the hope of Christ.

Because of your support, people are learning their story doesn't have to end with trauma.

Because of your support, widows in Muhanga are learning that God is near to them in their suffering.

On these pages are portraits of three of these courageous women who share how, through Bible-based trauma healing, God cuts through the fog of hurt in their hearts and gives them clear, full lives.

Bitterness to Hospitality

Apollonia Mukandamage was a bitter person, hardened by deep suffering. “If someone came to my home, I got angry,” she admits.

But God’s Word showed her a better way to live. Today, Apollonia is sharing her hope with others. She’s a leader in the trauma healing group, reminding the other widows that Jesus is with them in their sorrows. “We rejoice together,” she says.



Isolation to Community

Vestine Iyakaremye felt abandoned by God. “I thought God had left me,” she says.

But through her church’s Bible-based trauma healing group, she found a community of women who prayed with her and who, like Jesus, help her in her sorrows.



Sorrow to Love

Apolonia Unimanimpaye used to be trapped in a cycle of sadness and guilt. “Every day I wanted to cry,” she remembers.

But in the widows’ group, she applied the truths of Scripture to her daily struggles and encountered Jesus. Now she can say, “I discovered that I am loved.”



You can share the hope of God’s Word with hurting people in Rwanda and around the world.

Visit ABSRecord.com/Bibles

QUIET TIME

PRAY AROUND THE WORLD

JANUARY

Growing with God's Word in Unity

- 1 Ephesians 1:1-23
- 2 Ephesians 2:1-22
- 3 Ephesians 3:1-21
- 4 Ephesians 4:1-16
- 5 Ephesians 4:17-32

EPIPHANY

- 6 Psalm 72
- 7 Ephesians 5:1-20
- 8 Ephesians 6:10-24
- 9 Mark 1:21-45
- 10 Mark 2:1-17
- 11 Mark 3:1-19
- 12 Mark 3:20-35
- 13 Mark 4:35-5:20

ASH WEDNESDAY (WESTERN CHURCHES)

- 14 Mark 5:21-43
- 15 Mark 6:1-29
- 16 Mark 6:30-56
- 17 Mark 7:24-37

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY BEGINS

- 18 Mark 8:27-9:1
- 19 Mark 9:2-29
- 20 Mark 9:30-50

ECUMENICAL SUNDAY

- 21 Mark 10:13-31
- 22 Mark 10:32-52
- 23 John 12:20-36a
- 24 John 12:36b-50
- 25 Acts 9:1-25
- 26 Acts 9:26-43
- 27 Acts 12:1-25
- 28 Acts 13:1-12
- 29 Acts 13:13-25
- 30 Acts 13:26-41
- 31 Acts 13:42-52

FEBRUARY

Growing with God's Word in Faith

- 1 Genesis 37:1-36
- 2 Genesis 39:1-23
- 3 Genesis 40:1-23

- 4 Genesis 41:1-36
- 5 Genesis 41:37-57
- 6 Genesis 42:1-38
- 7 Genesis 43:1-34
- 8 Genesis 44:1-34
- 9 Genesis 45:1-28
- 10 Genesis 46:1-34

- 11 Genesis 47:1-31
- 12 Genesis 48:1-22
- 13 Genesis 49:29-50:26

ASH WEDNESDAY (WESTERN CHURCHES)

- 14 Psalm 51
- 15 Psalm 52
- 16 Psalm 73
- 17 Psalm 108

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

- 18 Hebrews 11:1-22

GREAT LENT (ORTHODOX)

- 19 Hebrews 11:23-40
- 20 Joshua 1:1-18
- 21 Joshua 2:1-24
- 22 Joshua 3:1-17
- 23 Joshua 4:1-5:1
- 24 Joshua 6:1-27

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

- 25 Ruth 1:1-22
- 26 Ruth 2:1-23
- 27 Ruth 3:1-18
- 28 Ruth 4:1-22

MARCH

Growing with God's Word in Prayer

- 1 Psalm 79

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

- 2 Psalm 82
- 3 Ezra 7:1-28

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

- 4 Ezra 8:1-23
- 5 Ezra 8:24-36
- 6 Ezra 9:1-15
- 7 Nehemiah 8:1-18
- 8 Nehemiah 9:1-25
- 9 Nehemiah 9:26-38
- 10 Nehemiah 10:28-39

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

- 11 Esther 2:1-23
- 12 Esther 3:1-15
- 13 Esther 4:1-17
- 14 Esther 5:1-14
- 15 Esther 6:1-13
- 16 Esther 6:14-7:10
- 17 Esther 9:1-19

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

- 18 Esther 9:20-32
- 19 Psalm 3
- 20 Psalm 4
- 21 Psalm 5
- 22 Habakkuk 1:1-17
- 23 Habakkuk 2:1-20
- 24 Habakkuk 3:1-19

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY (WESTERN CHURCHES)

- 25 Mark 11:1-26
- 26 Mark 12:1-27
- 27 Mark 12:28-44
- 28 Mark 14:1-31

MAUNDY THURSDAY (WESTERN CHURCHES)

- 29 Mark 14:32-72

GOOD FRIDAY (WESTERN CHURCHES)

- 30 Mark 15:1-41
- 31 Mark 15:42-47

APRIL

Growing with God's Word in Hope

EASTER SUNDAY (WESTERN CHURCHES)

- 1 Mark 16:1-20
- 2 John 20:19-31
- 3 John 21:1-14
- 4 John 21:15-25
- 5 1 Corinthians 15:1-11
- 6 1 Corinthians 15:12-34
- 7 1 Corinthians 15:35-58

PASCHA (ORTHODOX EASTER)

- 8 1 Peter 1:1-25
- 9 1 Peter 2:1-25
- 10 1 Peter 3:1-22
- 11 1 Peter 4:1-19
- 12 1 Peter 5:1-14
- 13 2 Peter 1:1-21
- 14 2 Peter 2:1-22

- 15 2 Peter 3:1-18
- 16 Jude 1-25
- 17 Isaiah 19:16-25
- 18 Isaiah 26:1-19
- 19 Isaiah 26:20-27:13
- 20 Isaiah 40:1-31
- 21 Isaiah 41:1-20

- 22 Isaiah 43:1-21
- 23 Jeremiah 23:1-32
- 24 Jeremiah 29:1-14
- 25 Jeremiah 30:1-24
- 26 Jeremiah 31:1-22
- 27 Jeremiah 31:23-40
- 28 Jeremiah 32:1-15

- 29 Jeremiah 32:16-44
- 30 Jeremiah 33:1-26

Bible Societies around the world are sharing God's message of hope and love with those who need it most. Here are prayer requests from a select group of Bible Societies.



Paraguay

Please lift up Paraguayan Bible Society's boat ministry, El Amanecer (The Dawn). The boat ministry delivers food, medicine, clothing, and Scriptures to hurting communities along the Paraguay River. Please pray that recipients experience God's love through this ministry.



India

Please ask God to bless Bible Society of India as it trains local church leaders to translate the Scriptures for minority language groups in India still waiting for access to God's Word in their heart language. Please pray specifically for the 22 Bible translation projects planned for 2018. Pray that the Scriptures will come alive for the 1 billion people living in India.



Costa Rica

Pray for Bible Society of Costa Rica as it coordinates efforts to translate God's Word for the Ngöbe language group—the only vibrant language group in Costa Rica without access to the New Testament. Pray that the Spirit of God would inspire and encourage Ngöbe speakers who will soon be engaging with God's Word in their heart language for the very first time.



France

Praise God that, as of 2018, French Bible Society has been faithfully sharing God's Word for 200 years. Pray that the bicentennial celebration would open new opportunities to reach the nation of France with the hope of the Scriptures.



Ghana

Bible Society of Ghana asks for prayers as it trains local Christian leaders to lead Bible-based trauma healing groups. These leaders are bringing the love of Christ into Ghana's "witch camps," which are full of imprisoned women who have been falsely accused of sorcery and unjustly exiled from their communities. Please pray that Christ's love would minister to these suffering and oppressed women through the message of God's Word.



Madagascar

Please pray for the Malagasy Bible Society as it undergoes a change in leadership. Pray that the new leadership team would forge strong partnerships with local churches so that the Bible Society can continue to effectively spread the Word of God in Madagascar. And please pray for the people who will encounter God's love for the first time through the ministry of this Bible Society.

You can join our online prayer community at [ABS.Bible/RecordPrayer](https://www.absbible.org/RecordPrayer)

See, Hear, Experience

Through the End-to-End ministry partnership, you are bringing the good news of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

by Brandon Van Deirse

Can you imagine life without Jesus? Around the world, millions of people are still waiting to hear that Jesus loves them. They have never read a word of the Bible. God's Word may not exist in their language. Their hearts were handcrafted to experience the love of their creator, but they are cut off from the joy and hope he offers. Without access to God's Word, how will they know his love?

This is where you come in.

Through your prayers and support, a ministry called End-to-End helps people in hard-to-reach places experience the life-changing message of the Bible in a language and

format that speaks to their hearts. This ministry partnership between American Bible Society, the JESUS film, Faith Comes By Hearing, and national Bible Societies brings God's Word to life through an innovative, three-phase process where people:

1. **See** the JESUS film
2. **Hear** God's Word through Audio Scripture listening groups
3. **Experience** the life-changing impact of Word of God through discipleship in local churches.

See. Hear. Experience. This simple formula is transforming people's lives from Zambia to India to Suriname.

Through the End-to-End partnership, people from 36 countries—everywhere from Panama to India—are seeing, hearing, and experiencing God's love for them.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ABHISHEK SCARIYA & SURINAME BIBLE SOCIETY

Meet Cynthia

Cynthia is an 18-year-old woman from a small village in Suriname. She speaks Saramaccan, a language spoken by 58,000 people—mostly the descendants of runaway slaves. Her isolated village was completely cut off from the gospel until the End-to-End ministry partnership shared God’s Word in their heart language, helping people like Cynthia see, hear, and experience the love of Christ for themselves. Just imagine the joy!

1. See

“Through the JESUS film, I became aware of his unconditional love for us all. He died for us and paid for our sins with his blood because he loves us. I was heartbroken to see how Jesus paid for our sins.”

Cynthia first encountered the gospel message in her heart language through the JESUS film—a dramatic reenactment of the Gospel of Luke. It has been translated into more than 1,500 languages and shown to 3 billion people around the world. Transcending boundaries of literacy, culture, and religious tradition, the JESUS film shares the story of God’s love and grace with people who don’t yet know how to read the Bible.

2. Hear

“The first time I read the Bible, I could not understand every word that was written. But the first time I heard the

gospel in my own language, it was easy for me to understand. Nothing is clearer than hearing the gospel in your own language.”

After discovering God’s love for her through the JESUS film, Cynthia

“I believe that God is able to change everyone’s heart and life, but we must be willing to commit our life to Christ.”

dug deeper into Scripture through an Audio Scripture listening group. Cynthia and her companions gathered regularly around a Proclaimer—a solar-powered audio Bible that broadcasts the Word of God in one of 1,000 languages. Together, they heard and discussed the life-changing message of the Bible.

Listening groups are usually rooted in local churches, but you will also find Proclaimers booming God’s message of love in orphanages, refugee camps, and isolated villages across the globe. *(Continued on page 18)*

Cynthia, a Surinamese woman who was introduced to Jesus through the End-to-End program, says, “I am thankful that I am born again through Jesus Christ.”



3. Experience

“Jesus changed my life, and because of him my life has more meaning. I believe that God is able to change everyone’s heart and life, but we must be willing to commit our life to Christ.”

When people like Cynthia commit their lives to Jesus, they need to experience God’s love in his Word each day. That’s why the End-to-End ministry partnership helps local Bible Societies translate the Scriptures, distribute the Scriptures, and teach people how to read the Scriptures for themselves.

Every year, your support helps the End-to-End ministry partnership provide more than 300,000 Bibles, New Testaments, and Scripture Portions to new Christian disciples.

Cynthia’s entire world was radically changed when she met Jesus. Her heart was transformed. As Cynthia’s story demonstrates, this deep engagement with the Word of God is bringing hope to entire communities.

Today Cynthia leads a weekly Scripture listening and prayer group. She is actively involved with both churches in her small village. Through her witness—and through your prayers and support—she says all her friends have become followers of Jesus. As people like Cynthia see, hear, and experience Jesus for themselves, his message of hope multiplies in their communities and beyond, bringing God’s Word to the ends of the earth. **B**

You can share God’s Word through the End-to-End ministry! Visit ABSRecord.com/Bibles

IN MEMORIAM



My God is my protection,
and with him I am safe.

PSALM 18:2B (GNT)

Our aunt, **Shirley Almos**

Given by Steve and Stuart Almos

My sister, **Eva Carraway**

Given by Jane Carraway Green

My father, **Jere Lawrence Crook, Jr.**

Given by Senter Crook

**J.P. and Charlene Fitzgerald,
Della Miller Fitzgerald, Gladys Fitzgerald**

Given by Jimmy and Jackie Fitzgerald

My father, **Douglas Tomlinson**

Given by Alessa L. Beringer

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 *American Bible Society Record*.

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Lara Davis, owner of One Faith Boutique in Yukon, Oklahoma.

FAITH AS SMALL AS AN EARRING

How one shop owner is using fashion to get Bibles into people’s hands around the world.

Lara Davis is a missionary—although not in the traditional sense. She doesn’t travel the world to build houses or consult with Bible translators in the field. Instead, Lara runs a women’s clothing and accessories store called One Faith Boutique in downtown Yukon, Oklahoma. And she’s spreading the good news of God’s love for the world by contributing a portion of each sale from her store to American Bible Society.

“I want everyone to have a Bible in their hands and to know more than anything that a relationship with Jesus changes your life now and for eternity,” Lara says.

One of Lara’s motivations for sharing God’s Word is her daughter, Faith. “Faith has asked me many times, ‘What about those

“I want everyone to have a Bible in their hands.”

people who don’t have Bibles?”

That question was reverberating in Lara’s mind when God told her to launch a business to give women a place to buy affordable, fashionable clothes—all while contributing to something bigger than themselves.

“When God laid it on my heart that we were supposed to start this business, I felt him telling me that it wasn’t about clothes or style,” Lara explains. “It was to be a platform for spreading his Word.”

Taking this call seriously, Lara spent a lot of time researching to find an organization that shared her heart.

“Everything led me back to American Bible Society,” Lara says. “They have the same drive and passion that I do, and that’s where I want my money and my customers’ money to go.”

While donating a portion of every sale to American Bible Society was a no-brainer for Lara, some of her advisors encouraged her to keep 100 percent of her profits until the business was more firmly established.

But Lara has always been adamant that every dollar that comes in is God’s.

“Giving is the purpose of this business,” Lara says. “I trust that God will provide.”

And God has certainly provided.

Between 2014 and 2017, One Faith Boutique grew from a one-woman operation in a spare bedroom of Lara’s home to a 40-plus-employee business with thousands of items bursting from a warehouse in historic Yukon.

“To do what God’s done with this business is beyond me,” says Lara. “There’s no way I could ever take any credit for this business whatsoever, because it’s so obvious that it’s all him.”

Through her partnership with American Bible Society, Lara is making an eternal difference by getting Bibles into people’s hands across the world.

As Lara says, “You can tell someone about God or quote them a verse from the Bible, but when you put a Bible in their hands and they read not just a verse but a whole chapter for themselves? That’s life-changing.” **B**

You can use your time and treasure to share God’s Word, just like Lara! Visit ABSRecord.com/Bibles

PHOTOGRAPHY: BRANDI WHITE

Turning pages, Changing lives

by Jack Newman

Because of your faithful support, thousands in Charlotte, NC, are rediscovering their love for God's Word through the Community Bible Experience.

In early 2017, a group of readers in Charlotte, North Carolina, decided to read a best-selling book from cover to cover.

But this was no ordinary book club.

For one thing, the group was enormous. More than 5,600 people participated. Most of them attended one of many churches across the Charlotte area. And the page-turning book at the heart of their club was written more than 2,000 years ago.

During the 40 days of Lent, a group of 15 churches in Charlotte completed a Scripture-reading journey called the Community Bible Experience. Using a reader-friendly New Testament created by Biblica, thousands of people studied the Scriptures with fresh eyes. Through support from American Bible Society's prayer and financial partners, this one-of-a-kind book club is inspiring a deep love for God's Word in Charlotte.

What sets the Community Bible

Experience apart from other Bible studies is *The Books of the Bible*—a New Testament Scripture Portion containing no verse numbers, chapter numbers, or footnotes. This fresh format makes it less intimidating for people to flip open the New Testament—and to keep turning pages.

"The Bible can be kind of daunting because it's so big," explains Rev. John Burton Jr. of First Baptist Church West in Charlotte. "But if it's a small book, and it's in conversational language with no verse numbers ... they can understand."

Charlotte residents who completed the Community Bible Experience agree with Rev. Burton; the unique format of *The Books of the Bible* helped them dive deeper into God's Word than ever before.

"It's more like it's a story that goes on. It inspires you to continue," says Mamie Young, a member of Mount Carmel Baptist Church in Charlotte. "It's like I'm reading a novel."

Mamie started attending a Bible study at her church two years ago and found the Community Bible Experience in 2017 to be particularly formative in her faith journey.

"The Community Bible Experience is important in my life because it is endearing the Bible to me," Mamie says. "It is making me want to learn the Word of the Lord so that I can be able to live by his Word."

While Mamie appreciated the special



Members of churches in Charlotte, NC gather for prayer during a 40-day journey through the New Testament called the Community Bible Experience.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DOUGLAS NOTTAGE

quality of this unique Bible-reading experience, other participants were more amazed by the *quantity* of God’s Word that they read in such a short amount of time.

“I was startled reading it,” says Emmanuel Moore, who also attends Mount Carmel Baptist Church. “We’re supposed to read a certain section in so many days, and sometimes I would read ahead!”

And Emmanuel is not alone. According to Biblica, eight out of 10 people who participate in the Community Bible Experience finish reading the entire New Testament in 40 days or less—just like Emmanuel.

After tearing through their assigned New Testament reading for the week, Community Bible Experience participants, such as Mamie and Emmanuel, gathered in small groups to ask honest questions about the passage that they read—questions like: *What did you notice for the first time? What challenged you? How does this passage show you God’s love?*

Answering these simple questions about God’s Word made a big difference in people’s lives.

“People come in excited to share what God has been speaking to them,” says Rev. Jacotron Potts, a pastor at The Park Church in Charlotte. “The people who would normally sit back and be quiet are now becoming empowered and confident in their understanding of the Word of God.”

One of those people is Mamie, who says that her study of the New Testament helped reduce the anxiety that she feels for her family—especially for her growing grandchildren.

“I used to worry about things,” Mamie says. “But now I know that I have a Father who is taking care of me and who is going to be there for me and for my family.”

Thanks to this one-of-a-kind book club, the Body of Christ in Charlotte is more firmly rooted in God’s Word. What started as a 40-day journey through the New Testament has become a lifestyle of meaningful Scripture engagement for thousands.

“People are really engaged,” says Robin Brown, a member of The Park Church in Charlotte. “We’re going to see some long-term effects of this.”

You can help people encounter the life-changing message of God’s Word! Visit ABSRecord.com/Bible

“People who would normally sit back and be quiet are now becoming empowered and confident in their understanding of the Word of God.”

— JACOTRON POTTS, THE PARK CHURCH



Mamie Young says that studying the New Testament through the Community Bible Experience helped her trust in God more and worry about the future less.

BOARD MEMBER NAMES AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY IN HER WILL

“God is calling us to share his treasures with all of his people,” says Cheryl Holland, a long-time member of American Bible Society’s board of directors.

Like many of you, Cheryl named American Bible Society as a beneficiary in her Will. Cheryl and her husband, Doug, are excited to be part of generations of ministry to come.

“I must say that both of us feel such peace of mind that after we pass away, American Bible Society will continue to share God’s Word with people groups around the world,” says Cheryl.

Living in the promise of a future with Christ, the Hollands are happy to leave their earthly treasure to share the great hope of the Bible with others.

“TO THE READERS OF RECORD WHO HAVE BEEN GIVING THEIR WHOLE LIVES, I WANT TO SAY THANK YOU.” —CHERYL HOLLAND

“We have utter confidence that the money will be well-spent,” says Cheryl. “I want to trust my money to American Bible Society, even after I have no control. That’s a vote of confidence.”

For Cheryl, it is a joy to be able to share the resources God has given her family.

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

Cheryl knows the ministry of American Bible Society only happens when generous individuals humbly pray, give, and trust God to do what only God can do—restore lives.






Cheryl Holland and her daughter, Hannah, distribute Bibles in rural China.

HAVE YOU REMEMBERED AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY IN YOUR WILL?

When you let us know you named American Bible Society in your Will, we can better plan for maximizing your legacy—getting more Scripture into the open hands and hearts of people around the world.

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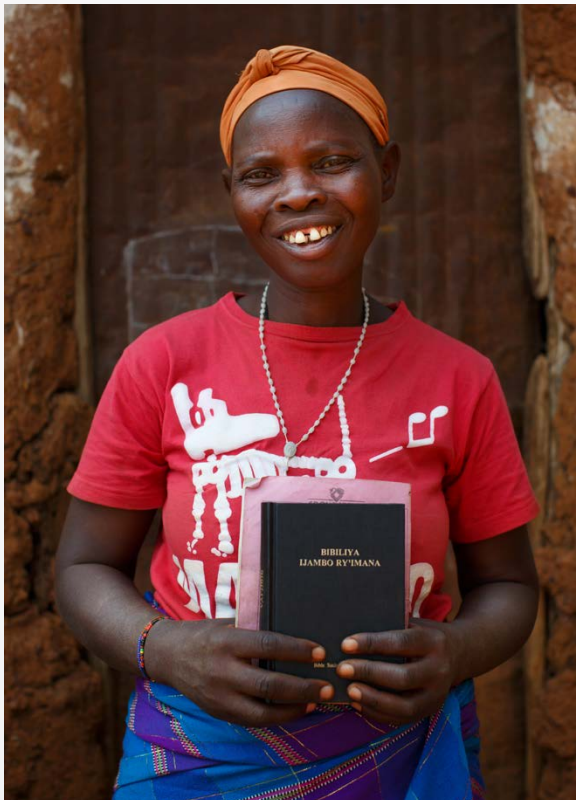
To say thank you, we will send you a free, autographed copy of American Bible Society President and CEO Roy Peterson’s autobiography, *Set Free*.

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