

LIVES CHANGED BY GOD'S WORD

Record

2024

**You're Taking
God's Word to the
Ends of the Earth!**



**Discover how a unique
ministry partnership is
reaching hearts for Christ**

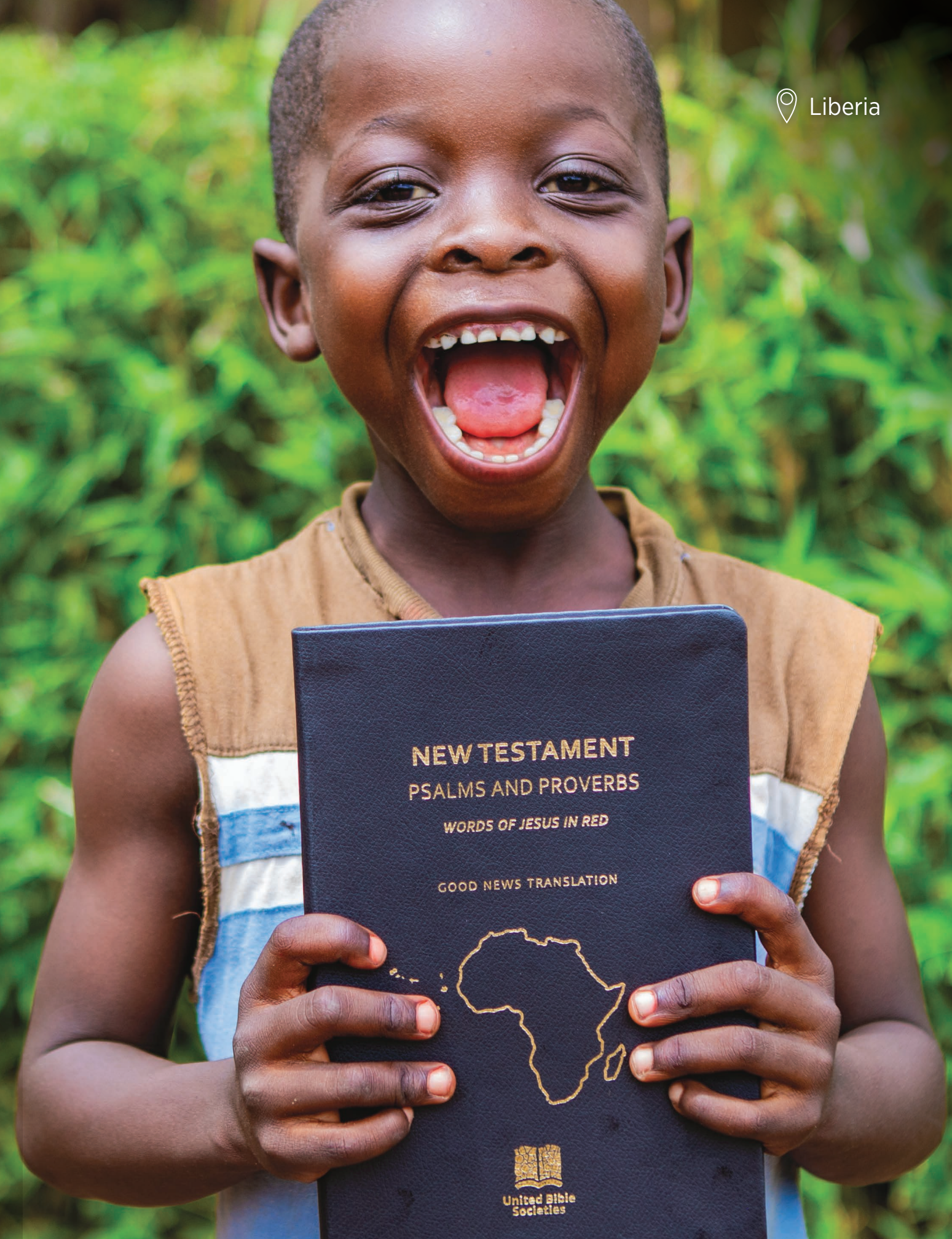
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AMERICAN
BIBLE
SOCIETY

**May you always be joyful in
your union with the Lord.
I say it again: rejoice!**

 PHILIPPIANS 4:4



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ABOUT THE COVER

Your support of End-to-End is helping people see, hear, and experience Scripture. Our partnership with trusted ministries multiplies your gift of God's Word and equips local churches to reach their communities. In the Philippines, tribes like the Northern Subanen in Mindanao are meeting Jesus through Scripture listening groups!

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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You Are God's Messenger!

A greeting from President and CEO

Dr. Jennifer Holloran

Dear Friend,

It's an honor to meet you here, in the pages of *Record* magazine, as we look back on another year of God's faithfulness. For me personally, it's difficult to think of a more eventful year.

As of February, I am privileged to serve American Bible Society as president and CEO after working for the Bible cause with our friends at Wycliffe Bible Translators USA for 22 years. My family now calls Philadelphia our home, and I have grown day by day in my gratitude for this calling of a lifetime.

At American Bible Society, I'm following in the footsteps of great American leaders who loved God's Word and left a legacy designed to transform our nation. And I'm standing on the shoulders of American Bible Society supporters like you who make our ministry possible. In many ways, you remind me of the prophet Isaiah:

"I heard the Lord say, 'Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?' I answered, 'I will go! Send me!'" (Isaiah 6:8)

While you might not be a prophet, you are God's messenger of good news. You answered his call by choosing to invest your gifts and prayers into this ministry. And while you may never meet the people you blessed in this life, I hope you can see the way you changed their lives—and their eternities—in the following pages.

As we seek to live out the Bible's message, I am trusting God to show us the next mission field, the next waiting language group, the next person without a Bible, until no one is left who does not know the name of Jesus—until the earth is filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Habakkuk 2:14).

Thank you for choosing to leave your legacy of faith by partnering with American Bible Society. I can't wait to see where God leads us next.

Gratefully yours,

COVER: David Naidu, the Philippine Bible Society / PRIOR SPREAD: Taylor Fedena, American Bible Society

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Taking God's Word to the Ends of the Earth



PHOTO CREDITS: Bible Society in Angola / United Bible Societies China Partnership

6

Feeding Hungry Souls in China



Bread That Satisfies

You are feeding hungry souls in China and setting the table for an eternal feast

By Dr. Jennifer Holloran

Li

had been hungry all her life.

Born in the upheaval of the Great Famine and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, little Li woke up hungry. She went to bed hungry. She watched her family struggle to survive. And she watched others starve.

Fifty years later, the hunger still crept into Li's mind.

When Li heard about a local church that gave away free food, she couldn't believe it. But she went anyway—and received a generous meal after the service. She went home with a full stomach, but she knew from experience that she would be hungry again soon. So she went back to church the next Sunday. And the next.

PHOTO CREDITS: United Bible Societies, China Partnership

“ I found this book was bread from God. With it, I fed my soul.”

One Sunday, the pastor stopped Li after the service. He said he was impressed by her faithful attendance. He asked her how long she had been a follower of Jesus.

It was the moment Li had been dreading.

“I am not a Christian,” she told the pastor. “But I like the free food.”

She expected the pastor to get angry or even throw her out. Instead, he packed her an extra portion of food to take home. He also told her



Li holds her very own Bible, a gift you gave to her through your partnership with American Bible Society! Thanks to you, Li can feed her soul each day with God’s Word, which is “sweeter even than honey!” (Psalm 119:103).

that the Jesus she had been hearing about each Sunday once called himself the Bread of Life.

Touched by the pastor’s kindness and intrigued by this Bread of Life, Li started listening more closely to the sermon each Sunday. The more she heard, the more she believed that Jesus really could satisfy her hunger—the deeper hunger she had all along.

This is exactly what I’ve been searching for, Li thought. A Savior who feeds hungry souls like mine.

Li put her trust in Jesus and was baptized. Then, thanks to you, she received what she considers her greatest treasure: her very first Bible!

“I found this book was bread from God,” Li said. “With it, I fed my soul.”

You’re Continuing Decades of Life-Changing Ministry in China.

Li’s story is just one of hundreds I’ve heard since beginning my role as president at American Bible Society. And it’s one of many millions that God has written through your generosity in partnership with us!

This spring, I joined our United Bible Societies partners for an unforgettable visit to China. I traveled to five cities in 11 days and saw a glimpse of the ministry you make possible.

For more than 160 years, friends like you have answered the need for God’s Word in China. In



I traveled through China with my United Bible Societies colleagues (pictured); together, we had the joy of witnessing what God is doing through your generosity!

our earliest years of ministry, our supporters sent a staggering 1 million Bibles to China. In times of war and political turmoil, they prayed fervently for Scripture to transform hearts and lives. Your commitment to this nation and to people like Li is truly inspiring to me.

Today, the work continues.

There are many in China who have never heard the name of Jesus. There are brothers and sisters in Christ who have never owned a Bible. And

there are entire languages that do not yet have the Word of God.

When I consider the feast of Scripture translations, Bible resources, and media that we have available to us here in the United States, I find myself asking God to turn my heart toward those who are still hungry for the Bread of Life.

And I praise God for supporters like you as we work together to spread God’s Word throughout the world.

“ Since believing in Jesus, I have not only never been hungry, but I am no longer fearful or anxious about my needs.”

Because of You, People Like Li Are Receiving the Bread of Life.

One hundred years ago, most Bibles were shipped to China and carried from door to door.

During the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), Christianity was outlawed, churches were shuttered, and Christians were persecuted for following Christ.

But today, thanks to you, most of the Bibles in China are printed inside a country where owning Scripture was once illegal!

In 1987, American Bible Society supporters helped launch the Amity Printing Company, which is now the world’s largest Bible printing press and the only printer authorized to print Bibles for use by the churches in China.

During our visit this spring, I learned how Amity has become a force in global Bible distribution. To date, they have printed more than 260 million Bibles in 229 different languages—serving not only our Chinese brothers and sisters, but many millions of people outside China, too. And with an established presence in China, Amity is a key partner in answering the need for God’s Word in this nation of 1.4 billion people.

Even 40 years ago, this would have seemed impossible. But God has used this unlikely partnership in an unlikely place to further his kingdom and provide food for hungry souls. And you’re part of that. Thank you!

While in China, I also saw how you’re making a difference for language groups that have not yet received Scripture. With more than 300 languages spoken in China, this nation is still at the forefront of Bible translation efforts. And thanks to you, no community is forgotten—no matter how small.

I’ll never forget the moment we arrived in one rural village. As we drove down the road, people lined our path, singing a song of thanksgiving for your gift of Bible translation.

During the church service we attended later that day, people showed me their handwritten portions of Scripture. Compared to my complete Bible, these worn pages seemed like mere crumbs, yet I’ve never seen people hold something with more care.

I heard my brothers and sisters recite long passages from memory and could almost see on their faces how sweet the words tasted. As I sat listening, I considered how rarely I’d hidden God’s Word in my own heart.



Your generosity blesses rural Chinese Christians, minority language groups, faithful pastors, and eager seminary students with the Scripture they need to grow in their faith.

Everywhere I looked, I saw a deep love and hunger for God’s Word—all from a community that doesn’t have the full Bible! What a powerful example for us.

Thanks to you, this community—and others across China—are closer than ever to receiving God’s Word in the language that speaks to their hearts and nourishes their souls. I can only imagine the joy they will experience when they hold your gift in their hands.

There are many more moments I could share: pastors who have been equipped with theological training and study resources; church members who no longer need to share one Bible, but

joyfully attend church each Sunday with their own copy of God’s Word; and new believers like Li who are growing in their faith and sharing Scripture with others. But there are no words that can describe the ministry you make possible better than Scripture itself:

“My word is like the snow and the rain that come down from the sky to water the earth. They make the crops grow and provide seed for planting and food to eat. So also will be the word that I speak—it will not fail to do what I plan for it; it will do everything I send it to do.”

ISAIAH 55:10–11



Praise God for Scripture literacy classes that can be held in minority churches in rural China, thanks to your support!

God’s Word—the gift you give—is like rain that produces a plentiful harvest in hearts hungry for the only Bread that can satisfy. Despite ever-changing restrictions, massive need, and challenging boundaries to ministry, we can trust that wherever God’s Word goes, it will change lives.

Just look at people like Li!

“Since believing in Jesus, I have not only never been hungry, but I am no longer fearful or anxious about my needs,” Li says. She cites Matthew 6:25–27 as her favorite verses, adding, “I no longer worry about what to eat or wear.”

And now that she has her Bible, Li is eager to introduce others to the Bread of Life. “I can now share these verses with others to bring comfort to them,” she says. “I am so thankful for my Bible!”

You’re Setting the Table for an Eternal Feast.

My visit to China expanded my view of American Bible Society’s ministry and made me even more grateful for your partnership. Whether in China or in the next frontier of Bible ministry, I look forward to laboring alongside you to

share the good news of Christ with all people. We truly cannot accomplish this great mission without you.

But my time in China also reminded me of the eternal difference you make when you give God’s Word.

At the end of the Bible, we get a glimpse of a great feast at the end of time: “Then the angel said to me, ‘Write this: Happy are those who have

been invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb” (Revelation 19:9).

By sharing God’s Word, you are not only ensuring that people feed their souls today. You’re sending God’s invitation to this great feast. As God takes your gift of the Bible and multiplies it beyond our wildest imagination, I trust that you will find many brothers and sisters seated beside you as we celebrate the Bread of Life, who satisfies our souls. 📖



We’re thankful for the generations of American Bible Society supporters who have blessed people like Li with the Bible. Through you, God has fed the souls of millions with his eternal, life-giving Word!

Bless patient Chinese Christians still waiting for a Bible: **Give.Bible/China**

4 WAYS YOU SHARED THE BIBLE THIS YEAR



1

You're Equipping American Heroes with the Full Armor of God

Last year, we told you about a new digital resource for military members: the Military Bible Challenge app. Offering an engaging journey through Scripture with video content, themed prayers, and daily challenges, the app has already blessed military members with your gift of God's Word! One user sent us a message sharing how the Military Bible Challenge app impacted his personal walk with Jesus: "It's changing my life and strengthening my faith. I thank God and bless those making this possible. The Military Bible Challenge arrived in the perfect moment of my life. Thank you!" You can share this free resource with a Veteran or military member today:

[ABS.Bible/Challenge](https://abs.bible/challenge)

2

You're Blessing New Language Groups with the Truths of Scripture

Over the past year, you helped fund 77 translation projects in 50 countries! Cecilia, who lives in Liberia, was overjoyed to study the book of Esther in her heart language of Dan. "After reading the book of Esther translated into the Dan language, I was inspired by God's Word and realized his sovereignty," she said. "We came to understand that God has a purpose for our lives, and everything happens for a reason. We became courageous, believing that we are where we are for a purpose, and that God's hidden hands can deliver us from any situation." Because of your support, people like Cecilia are able to fully experience God's power to save. Thank you!



3

You're Reaching Millions with the Bible—Right on Their Phones

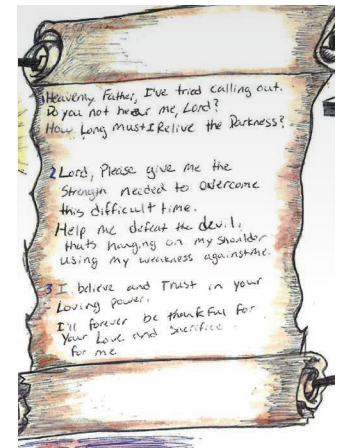


If you use a Bible app, you're probably benefiting from the Digital Bible Library—the world's largest collection of digital Scripture! We steward this collection with United Bible Societies and partner with organizations like YouVersion to expand Bible access. Their popular Bible App pulls 99% of its translations from the Digital Bible Library and has been downloaded on 700 million devices worldwide, reaching more hearts with your gift of the Bible!

4

You're Helping People in Prisons Find Hope in God's Word

Our partnership with organizations like Reach the Forgotten carries your gift of God's Word into prisons and reaches hurting people with the love of Jesus. Through Bible-based trauma healing groups, participants process their trauma in various ways—including art, as you can see in this photo of a prayerful drawing created by a participant. Another participant, Chris, shared what the program meant to him: "It helped me find new beginnings, accepting the hurts of my past with grace and forgiveness. I can run to God my Father and ask him to take my sorrow, suffering, and pain, knowing he is faithful and able to dry my tears, bring me his joy and peace, and help me carry on!"



Send God's Word where needed most: [Give.Bible/GodsWord](https://give.bible/godsword)

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Visit three different countries and learn how your gift of the Bible is welcoming people into the kingdom of God!

By Elisabeth Trefsgar



What if you could take your gift of the Bible—and multiply it?

That was the inspiration for End-to-End, a ministry partnership rooted in the local church.

Thanks to American Bible Society donors like you and a robust partnership of Great Commission-minded organizations, this program introduces people to Jesus by providing Bibles and a variety of other resources, including print, audio, visual, and digital Scripture. Where churches exist, this program equips them to reach and disciple their neighbors with the gospel. And where there is no church, these resources help convene new believers and nurture church plants with the living Word of God.

Today, End-to-End is introducing people to Christ in 60 countries!

Sam Harrell, who serves as Chief Partnerships Officer at American Bible Society, likens the story of End-to-End's beginnings with Zechariah 4:10: "Do not despise the day of small beginnings."

In 1998, End-to-End was just an idea shared by two friends—Erle Deira and Morgan Jackson—around a kitchen table in Suriname, where Erle led Suriname Bible Society. For a while, it seemed like their partnership model for Bible ministry would remain a dream.

Then, a decade later, Erle was invited to join American Bible Society, where a new focus and passionate support from believers like you brought End-to-End to life.

"As supporters of American Bible Society, you care deeply about sharing God's Word by giving the gift of the Bible," Sam Harrell says. "But through a partnership like End-to-End, your

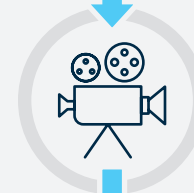
gift is magnified a hundredfold. And that's what End-to-End is: bringing people into the kingdom of God, through the Word of God. Thanks to you, we're able to do that all over the world!"

On the following pages, take a tour of three different countries and hear from our Bible Society partners how you are building God's kingdom through End-to-End!

HOW DOES IT WORK?



GIVE: End-to-End starts when believers like you give the gift of the Bible through American Bible Society and our trusted ministry partners like Jesus Film Project, LUMO, and Faith Comes By Hearing.



SEE: Screenings of The Jesus Film and other gospel films draw communities together and introduce people of all ages to the story of Jesus.



HEAR: Audio Bible listening groups help people study and discuss Scripture and deepen their knowledge of God.



EXPERIENCE: Many who have never owned a Bible receive one for the first time.



GROW: Believers use the Bibles and Scripture resources you provide to grow in faith and share the gospel, strengthening church planting efforts and reaching more hearts with the good news of Jesus!

PHOTO CREDITS: PRIOR, SPREAD: Bible Society in Angola



Through End-to-End, our Bible Society partners in Angola are reaching rural communities with the good news of Jesus!

ANGOLA:

“WE NEED THE BIBLE TO START THE CHURCH.”

In Angola, you might visit a church where only the pastor has a Bible—and the Bible has no cover.

Especially in rural areas, poverty, illiteracy, and lack of resources stand as major barriers to people in this southern African nation who long to have God’s Word. Pastors and evangelists are eager to do the work of spreading the gospel, but even they lack the tools they need.

Without Scripture, evangelism, personal growth in faith, and church planting efforts are next to impossible.

PHOTO CREDITS: Bible Society in Angola



As we know, if there is no Bible, there is no church. We need the Bible to start the church.”

— CLAUDIA

Claudia, who works with the Bible Society in Angola, sees this great need daily.

“As we know, if there is no Bible, there is no church,” she says. “We need the Bible to start the church.”

That’s where you come in!

Since 2018, you have been partnering with believers in Angola through End-to-End. Thanks to you, people receive not only the Bibles they have prayed for, but also visual and audio tools through our End-to-End ministry partners.

“End-to-End is one of the best projects that we are carrying out,” says Beatriz Hupa, the General Secretary of the Bible Society in Angola. “It’s the perfect way to serve both the people and the churches. The people are happy because they can finally understand who Jesus is and what he has done for them. And the churches are happy because they can help so many more people. No other organization has this type of program.”

When people see and hear the gospel in a format they can understand, everything changes. Once, they needed to wait until Sunday to hear the Word of God. Now, they can’t get enough. That’s why, Claudia and Beatriz say, the most powerful moment of End-to-End happens when people receive your gift of the print Bible—something they can keep with them always.

“It’s common to see people laugh, cry, and dance,” says Beatriz. “They kneel down and say, ‘Oh Lord, thank you! For the first time I have your Word with me!’”

There is much more work to do, and many challenges to overcome. But the Bible Society is determined to reach all 18 provinces in Angola and ensure that all people—whether in cities or in remote villages—can hear about Jesus.

“We have a saying: ‘Even if you work for months or years, if you get one soul for Christ, it is a big gain,’” says Beatriz. “So, we thank you for helping us win souls!”

THE PHILIPPINES:

“THE BIBLE CHANGES YOUR LIFE—TODAY AND FOR ETERNITY.”

Raymond has seen firsthand the way that God’s Word changes lives.

Through his work as a regional coordinator with the Philippine Bible Society, he’s watched infamous slum neighborhoods turn around through Bible outreach and met Muslim neighbors who encountered Christ through dreams and visions.

Now your gift of End-to-End is helping the Bible Society engage hearts in Scripture like never before!

“End-to-End helps us partner with churches, focus on discipleship, and see lives transformed,” Raymond says.

Even better, this program has connected churches across denominational lines, furthering the Bible Society’s goal of reaching communities across the archipelago nation’s 7,641 islands—about 2,000 of which are inhabited.

By offering visual, audio, and digital Scripture resources in addition to printed Bibles, churches can reach multiple language groups and invite those who have never read the Bible to experience



In the Philippines, people are finally hearing and reading God’s Word in the language they speak with their families. End-to-End helps further the work of Bible translation by ensuring that your gift of Scripture reaches people still waiting to meet Jesus.

PHOTO CREDITS: David Naidu, the Philippine Bible Society



End-to-End helps us partner with churches, focus on discipleship, and see lives transformed.”

— *RAYMOND*

Scripture in new ways. Raymond says that Bible listening groups have been particularly impactful in rural communities.

“People are amazed,” Raymond says. “They hear God speaking to them in their own language, and they get excited about the Bible, because they can finally understand it.”

The Bible Society is eager to bring End-to-End to every part of the Philippines. They see it as an effective delivery method for God’s Word, which sparks spiritual revival everywhere it goes and leads to real-life changes in communities, including increases in evangelism, church planting, and education.

According to Raymond, that’s the real message of End-to-End: “The Bible changes your life—today and for eternity!”

GUATEMALA:

“THE BIBLE ITSELF IS ENOUGH TO CHANGE HEARTS AND LIVES.”

In Guatemala, the population is almost evenly split between Catholic (45%) and non-Catholic (42%) Christians. But even in a nation where most people consider themselves followers of Jesus, there is an overwhelming need for your gift of Scripture through End-to-End.

“There are many church plants and young churches that need to grow,” says Annelisse, who works with the Bible Society of Guatemala. “They need tools to help them with evangelism.”

With 25 distinct languages in Guatemala—including oral and sign languages—it has been difficult to equip churches with Scripture resources that can serve everyone.

“

Through End-to-End, people are actually getting to know Jesus. And they are changed because of it. The Bible itself is enough to change hearts and lives!”

— ANNELISSE

“You and I, we have the Bible in our heart language,” Annelisse says. “And we can take that for granted. But for some communities, having Scripture in their mother tongue is huge! Spanish is often a second language for them, and they identify with their heart language. But there are often almost zero Scripture resources for these smaller language groups.”

Through End-to-End, you’re changing that!

As people experience the visual, audio, and written parts of this program, they no longer see a foreign God or a foreign text. They see Jesus speaking their mother tongue, and their eyes are opened to what the Bible is all about.

Annelisse compares it to finally getting a glasses prescription that fits your needs.

“If you don’t have the accurate prescription, you might be able to see—kind of,” she says. “But

with the right glasses, you can see fully. Now that people have Scripture resources in their language, they understand clearly. Maybe they have been Christians for years, or maybe they are new believers. Either way, they can see!”

Beyond this, Annelisse says that End-to-End is helping people understand that the Bible holds principles for daily life. By watching gospel films, listening to audio Scripture, and reading the Bible, people are learning how to put God’s Word into practice—moving from disciples in name only to disciples in action.

Annelisse remembers hearing the story of one man who was fighting with his family over an outstanding debt for land he had sold to them. He was invited to End-to-End, where he watched a film showing that Christ paid the price for his sins. This experience was so powerful that the man went to his family and told them he wanted to forgive their debt, just like Jesus did for him.



In Guatemala, people are becoming hearers and doers of the Word as they experience Scripture in the language and format that best speaks to their hearts.

Now, the man is at peace with his family—something Annelisse says is only possible through the transformative power of Scripture!

“Through End-to-End, people are actually getting to know Jesus,” she says. “And they are changed because of it. The Bible itself is enough to change hearts and lives!”

Like most countries, Guatemala’s population is divided between cities and rural areas, and the Bible Society has plenty of work to do before they reach every part of the country. But through your support, Annelisse is encouraged in this life-changing work.

PHOTO CREDITS: The Bible Society of Guatemala

END-TO-END IN 2023...

60

countries served

1m

Bibles, New Testaments, and Scripture portions distributed

40k

new churches planted

635k

people told us of their decision to follow Christ

WILL YOU PRAY WITH US?

- **PRAY** for End-to-End partners as they carry your gift of Bibles and Scripture resources around the world.
- **PRAY** for End-to-End to reach more communities through Bible translation and new audio Bible recordings.
- **PRAY** for End-to-End to equip local churches, church leaders, and evangelists with the Scripture tools they need to serve their entire communities.
- **PRAY** for Bible Societies in Angola, the Philippines, Guatemala, and all other nations carrying out End-to-End. Pray for this program to reach even more nations with the good news of Jesus. Pray for all ministry partners involved to depend on God to provide everything they need to reach all people with his transforming Word!

“We are always grateful for our partnership with you,” she says. “We pray for you and bless you! Thank you for helping to give the Word of God in the mother tongues of our people.”

THANK YOU FOR MAKING DISCIPLES BY ENGAGING HEARTS IN SCRIPTURE!

We hope this glimpse into End-to-End has inspired you as you consider all that God is doing through your generosity!

What started as a simple conversation between friends is now among our furthest-reaching ministry efforts—and the need continues. In the 60 countries that you have helped us reach, many communities are still waiting. And even in nations where the Bible is readily available, your ongoing advocacy for God’s Word can help people meet Jesus.

“We’ve tested End-to-End in Kansas City, Philadelphia, New York—even in my own hometown,” says Sam Harrell. “All these things can happen where you live, too. You can help make disciples in your own neighborhood.”

Through your support of American Bible Society, you’re ensuring that people not only receive the Bible, but fully engage with its life-changing message. Thank you! 🙏

Bless communities with the gift of Scripture through End-to-End:
Give.Bible/EndToEnd

IN MEMORIAM

“I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me will live, even though they die; and those who live and believe in me will never die.”

JOHN 11:25–26a

in memory of my aunt
Sharon Bertoglio
given by Randy Cartens

in memory of
Mary Canty
given by St. James AME Church

in memory of
Jere Lawrence Crook Jr.
given by Crook Trust – Bruce Taylor

in memory of
Robert F. Gray
given by Pam Jenkins

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

in memory of my husband
Vernon C. Hanson
given by Ruth V. Hanson

in memory of
Rhonda Higginbottom
given by Elselore Pretzler

in memory of my mother
Miriam B. Huth
given by Karen Evans and Family

in memory of my son
Phillip Matthew King
given by Melba King

in memory of
Phil Hayward Lindner
given by Laura Greenwell

in memory of my parents and grandparents
**Donald & Evelyn Ringler,
Otis & Violet Van Wagner,
and Francis & Laura Ringler**
given by Sheryl L. Ringler

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Life in Focus

How pursuing praise and focusing on Christ enriches our lives

By Taylor Fedena

Raindrops pelted the roof of the car that drove me and my coworker friend from the airport to our hotel in Monrovia.

It was an early Sunday morning in June, and we were in Liberia to meet people who received God's Word through your generosity and to learn about the ministry you're making possible in this West African nation.

As the old car radio crackled to life, I noticed our driver was listening to a church service. Despite my exhaustion from 24 straight hours of travel and the lull of the pouring rain, I felt God urging me to pay attention and keep my tired brain awake just a little longer. After several heartfelt worship hymns came 15 church announcements. With each announcement, I noticed that even the negative or challenging reports were reframed into praises with an emphatic declaration: "Praise God!" or "Good news!"

The gratitude I heard in this worship service made me realize how often I lose focus and forget to praise God. How easy it is to pray for what I want while disregarding the blessings God has showered on me!

Like the rain on the car blurring my view of the Liberian landscape, there are many pleasures that can distract us from Christ. We pursue earthly treasures like career, possessions, power, and influence because we're promised they'll make us happy. And they do—temporarily. But the happiness doesn't last, and we continue seeking our fulfillment in the wrong places.

Hearing a church service on the other side of the world reminded me that true wealth comes not from worldly sources, but from Christ. When we focus on him, we experience fulfilling joy that goes beyond circumstantial happiness. In fact, the Bible tells us that those who value Jesus above all are rich—rich in love, kindness, and the other fruits of the Spirit. Making Jesus our life's focus changes our:

1. Attitudes

When we reframe our lives to focus on all that God has done for us, we can thank him in every circumstance as the Holy Spirit works in us to produce fruit and make us more like Christ. We can say, "Praise God!" during the most difficult, uncomfortable, or heartbreaking times, knowing that God is still good. And as our attitudes change, we're ready to look for evidence of God's blessings all around us (Romans 6:23; James 1:17).

2. Abilities

The power of God in us is stronger than we often realize. God hands us situations beyond our control because he wants us to learn to trust him. When we are overwhelmed and cannot handle circumstances on our own, we can trust that God's power equips us to handle every situation with kindness, grace, and excellence (Philippians 4:13; 2 Corinthians 3:5).

3. Actions

The apostle Paul reminds us to do everything to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). From daily chores to life-changing decisions, God knows that we experience a richer, fuller life when we trust him. When we focus on Jesus and allow him to change our perspectives, we can better follow God's will and advance his kingdom.

As you seek to focus your heart on Christ, I invite you to meditate on Psalm 34 today and challenge yourself to see how many blessings you can count! ▀

***"I will always thank the LORD;
I will never stop praising him."***

—PSALM 34:1

Translating Scripture, Transforming Lives



Remembering a couple who loved God's Word and left a legacy of Bible translation

By Elisabeth Trefsgar

If you had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Jean Butler Newman, one of the first things you may have noticed were her hands.

Diminutive and delicate, Jean's hands belonged to an award-winning wood-carver and a loving seamstress who made hundreds of quilts and teddy bears for babies in her local NICU. But you might be surprised to learn that those tiny hands also typed hundreds of thousands of pages of Scripture over her lifetime!

Together with her husband, Barclay Newman, Jean traveled the world supporting translation projects with American Bible Society. This extraordinary couple dedicated a combined 74 years to the Bible cause and helped complete American Bible Society's two landmark English translations: the Good News Translation and the Contemporary English Version. Thanks to generous supporters like you, these translations

have helped introduce millions of people to Jesus over the past 60 years.

In 2023, we had the opportunity to visit this dear sister in Christ. Less than a year later, Jean followed Barclay to glory. We're honored to share their story with you as we praise God for a legacy that is still changing lives today!

A Clear Calling

As we sit in Jean's living room, we gain a glimpse into her remarkable life.

Before calling places like the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia home, Jean grew up in Tennessee. She married Barclay Newman in 1953, beginning a marriage that would last 67 years until Barclay passed away in December 2020.

Barclay and Jean studied at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

After graduating, Barclay became a professor of New Testament and Greek at Missouri's William Jewell College while Jean focused on raising their two daughters, Tina and Dana.

Barclay, who had a unique gift for languages, was commissioned by American Bible Society to write a Greek-to-English dictionary. Soon after, he was asked to join American Bible Society as an international translations consultant.

Jean remembers being excited, even though this new adventure came with a cost.

"The hardest part was leaving our friends, our church, and our home," Jean tells us. "We loved our home."

But Jean saw the opportunity to serve with American Bible Society as a clear calling.

"It's our responsibility to share God's Word," Jean says. "We're supposed to go throughout the

“ I support American Bible Society because of the good that they’ve done. Bible translation transforms lives. It saves people for the Lord. And that’s what American Bible Society does.”

world and tell about Jesus and what he’s done for us. Because if we don’t do it, who’s going to?”

Over the following years, Barclay consulted on translation projects in Asia, Africa, South America, and Europe. Besides coordinating their many international moves and caring for Tina and Dana, Jean kept busy helping Barclay.

“I was his typist, trip planner, bookkeeper—whatever he needed, I was there to do,” Jean says.

During those years of travel, Jean remembers her family enjoying the different cultures they experienced. She speaks fondly of the friends they made and the adventures they had, and she laughs about their various mishaps adjusting to each country.

But their time also came with hardships. Barclay’s father died while Barclay was in the field, and the family struggled with various illnesses from frequent travel.

“While we were in Indonesia, Dana got very sick,” Jean remembers. “One doctor said, ‘You have two choices. Either you take her back to the States or you can plan to bury her in Jakarta.’”

In 1976, the family moved to Springfield, Missouri. Barclay continued traveling to consult on various projects, sometimes accompanied by Jean. But soon, their focus shifted from supporting foreign language translations to completing an English translation designed to reach a new generation of Bible readers.

A Clear Translation

During their time with American Bible Society, Barclay and Jean Newman worked on the Good News Translation, a groundbreaking English translation designed for modern speakers. Jean recalls how meticulous Barclay and the other translators were in their work.

“I typed the book of John three times, over 900 pages,” Jean says. “They kept making changes! It kept me busy.”

But despite the large workload and the repeated revisions, Jean saw this translation process as another way to reach hearts with the gospel.

“The Scriptures need to be made clear so that people can understand what Jesus has done for all of us,” she says.

The Good News Translation was an enormous success in the United States and was distributed to global English-speaking populations thanks to the generosity of American Bible Society supporters like you. The New Testament, which was released in 1966, was a particularly powerful tool for evangelism. More than 5.5 million Testaments were distributed in its first year, and many evangelists found that the modern translation resonated with their audiences. Billy Graham used the New Testament in his personal devotions and distributed copies at his crusades. And the simple line drawings created by Swiss artist Annie Vallotton that are featured in the Good News Translation Bible, which was released in 1976, became instantly recognizable.

Overall, the Good News Translation’s straightforward language made it unique among English translations. But Barclay felt that an even clearer translation could help reach even more people with the gospel.

“He wanted children to be able to read the Bible and understand it as well as adults, and for adults to appreciate it as well as children,” Jean says. “That’s why he decided to do the Contemporary English Version.”

Several years later, Barclay and his new team focused on creating an accurate and faithful translation of the original biblical manuscripts that followed modern English speech patterns for optimal readability.

Once again, Jean functioned as Barclay’s right-hand woman. She remembers typing pages upon pages of Scripture—and how reading those familiar passages still touched her heart.

“I would always cry when I came to the part where Jesus was crucified and died,” she says. “I would cry, but then I would come to myself and keep typing. I typed just about everything!”

Barclay, Jean, and the rest of the team finished the New Testament, which was released in 1991—the 175th anniversary of American Bible Society. It was followed by the entire Bible in 1995. Jean remembers that exciting day with pride and joy.

“It was good,” she says. “It was so readable.”

For the rest of her life, Jean studied the pages of her CEV Bible each day, keeping it by her bedside and reading a chapter each night.

A Clear Mission

Jean retired from American Bible Society in 2002. Barclay continued serving until 2005, when he began a new venture for United Bible Societies.

Even after retirement, Jean volunteered for American Bible Society and gave CEV Bibles to anyone who needed one. She and Barclay remained faithful supporters of American Bible Society for the rest of their lives, long after their own work in Bible translation was complete.

“I support American Bible Society because of the good that they’ve done,” she tells us. “Bible translation transforms lives. It saves people for the Lord. And that’s what American Bible Society does.”

After decades of typing, Jean decided that she wasn’t quite finished. In 2018, she published *Born to Translate*, a 260-page account of Barclay’s life and work. After Barclay’s death, her book became the best way to get to know the breadth of his work—along with Jean’s own contributions to their legacy of Bible translation.

“The legacy I’d like to leave is that I was Barclay’s wife and that I helped him do what I could with translations and the work of American Bible Society,” she says.

As employees, volunteers, financial partners, and prayer warriors, Barclay and Jean Newman left a unique mark on the story and ministry of American Bible Society. We are grateful to God that their stories intertwined with ours, and we rejoice that believers like you are continuing to carry the gospel around the world. ■

Help every language receive the good news of Jesus: **Give.Bible/Translation**



Leaving *Your* Testament of Faith

Learn how American Bible Society partners like you are leaving their testaments of faith by sharing God’s Word with the world

*J*im and Char Sheldrew are no strangers to American Bible Society.

For more than a decade, Jim helped faithful donors like you prepare their legacy through our Gift Planning program, which ensures that you can keep providing the Bible even after your lifetime. Jim and Char remember driving thousands of miles through the Midwest, with Char navigating the winding roads and Jim reading the maps that led them to the homes of American Bible Society donors—a group the Sheldrews are proud to be part of!

“It’s the best organization,” Char says. “We love the mission!”

When Jim retired in 2013, the Sheldrews were in a unique position: after helping hundreds of donors create estate plans, it was their turn! Like many of our partners, the Sheldrews wanted a plan that would take care of their six children and nine grandchildren while also supporting the causes they believe in.

“Everyone thinks you have to choose one or the other, and that’s not true at all,” Jim says. “You can choose to

do both. There are different vehicles for everybody to fit different people’s needs. But the end result is that you’re taking care of both your family and your favorite charitable goals at the same time.”

The Sheldrews found the perfect plan for their family in our Charitable Gift Annuity, which ensures an income stream for their loved ones while also continuing their support for the Bible cause.

“Just imagine: every month our children will get a check from the American Bible Society, and on the note section it will say, ‘from mom and dad,’” Jim says. “It’s a love letter from us to them.”

This is especially important to Jim and Char, who see this plan as part of the testimony they’ll leave for their family.

“Some of our children are not following the Lord,” Char says. “So we hope that our estate plan will be a good reminder for them to be the kinds of people that God wants them to be.”

While they’re deeply committed to praying for their children and grandchildren, Jim and Char understand that God’s timing is perfect—and that the way they prepare to leave this world could be the greatest witness to their family.

“We didn’t want to just leave a financial plan, but a last spiritual message—a testament of faith,” Jim says. “It’s written out in addition to our estate plan,

and it explains, ‘This is how I lived, and this is how I died—following Christ.’ Our children might not find the right path until we’re gone, but when they read our testimony and get that love letter from us—that check from American Bible Society—they’re getting a reminder about what it means to follow Christ. We’re praying it will help our children decide who they will follow. It could be our greatest gift to them.”

A Faith-Focused Friendship

As passionate supporters of American Bible Society, Jim and Char have helped introduce many of their friends to our ministry—including Mark and Nancy Hanson, who have a special heart for our End-to-End ministry!

We had the great privilege to visit the Hansons with the Sheldrews this year and hear more about their inspiration for giving God’s Word.

You can watch the full interview here:

[ABS.Bible/WhyWeGive](https://www.abs.bible/WhyWeGive)



We thank God for your faithful partnership in ministry this year! If you’re ready to learn more about leaving your own testament of faith, we invite you to contact us for a free consultation about IRA gifts, estate planning, and other ways to share God’s Word. Call our Gift Planning team at 1-800-549-3328—we look forward to serving you!




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

PHOTO CREDITS: Rudolph Video / BACK COVER: Bible Society in Angola

Write Your Own Testament of Faith!

Use our free tools and expertise to help you wisely invest your gifts for God's glory!

We're so thankful for the way God used your generosity to make possible the stories in this magazine. You can make plans today to continue your legacy of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with those who are waiting—even after you're home in glory!

Our experienced team is ready to answer your questions about:

- Ensuring your Will reflects your heart for giving God's Word through your favorite ministries.
- Opening a Charitable Gift Annuity and providing for you and/or your loved ones while supporting the work of American Bible Society.
- Giving gifts through Donor Advised Funds, stocks, IRAs, and cryptocurrency directly online with FreeWill, a new no-cost estate planning tool we're proud to offer on our website.

Call us at **1-800-549-3328**, visit us at **ABSGift.org**, or complete and return the form below to discover increased ministry impact and avoid taxes by giving non-cash assets to deliver the soul-saving message of Jesus Christ now!



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