

RECORD

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SOUL SURVIVORS

A New Beginning

Only God gives inward peace, and I depend on him. —PSALM 62.5 CEV

Customarily, anniversaries mark a celebration. Sept. 11 was not of that sort. And while it's been a year since the tragedy, in many respects it still feels like last night's bad dream. A huge emptiness in the center of downtown Manhattan is matched by an empty ache in the center of our national psyche.

Plans to rebuild are being considered. Every day thousands of people pilgrimage to the site, climbing a viewing platform erected for the purpose. Names of victims from 75 nations are listed there.

On Sept. 11, 2002, our nation paused long enough to notice the emptiness — one not easily satisfied by the distractions with which we fill our lives.

At Bible House we commemorated the day with a tribute to the heroes who gave their lives on behalf of others on that tragic day a year ago and for those who carry on that sacrificial spirit by bringing restoration to those who still suffer or are broken.

Nevertheless, most of us have resumed our routines. Many closer to the trauma have found new ones. Still, the unease that all is not as it should be lingers. The American Red Cross anticipates that "the spiritual and emotional needs of the hundreds of thousands impacted by 9/11 will continue to increase over the next 2-3 years."

The terrifying events of Sept. 11 and the continuing threat of new terrorism have opened a window to the soul of America.

In churches near Ground Zero, Bible Society Scriptures are still prominently displayed, available for anyone seeking hope. We've distributed 4.5 million Scripture Portions in this manner in the past year, a fifth of them in Spanish. We are redoubling our efforts to reach the soul of America in this and other ways.

At the Christian Booksellers Association Convention this July, in partnership with the association, we launched a nationwide Scripture-based literacy program. We're looking to urban churches to partner with us in helping the less literate improve their reading skills by reading Scripture. We're working with churches that want to reach our youth with the love of God through creative engagement with the Word of God. We have intensified our Scripture partnerships with prison, hospital and retirement ministries.

Sparked by the centering message of God's Word, there is opportunity for spiritual renewal in America. As St. Augustine said, "Our hearts are restless until we find our rest in you." We are seeking those who want to help Americans find their rest in him.



Eugene B. Habecker

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URBAN YOUTH PROGRAM TARGETS THE HIP-HOP WORLD

BY FRANCINE LANGE

IF YOU WALK INTO THE TAMPA, FLA., Crossover Community Church on a Thursday night, you'll witness a service unconventional by most standards.

Against a backdrop of graffiti art, you'll see break-dancers leaping and spinning (some on their heads) to a driving hip-hop beat. When they're done, others will rap — talk-shout rapid-fire rhymes in a back-and-forth call-and-response to one another and to the more than 200 other teens and young adults present. Then a young man will step up, open his Bible, read a Scripture passage and begin speaking from his heart about Jesus' words of life.

That man, 28-year-old Tommy Kyllonen, is the senior pastor at Crossover, and he is using hip-hop — its music, art and dance — as a framework to build connections with inner-city youth and point them to Christ.

His is one of the ministries the American Bible Society will partner with as part of a new urban youth program, called *The Elementz of Life*, that the Bible Society is launching this November.

The Elementz will work with churches and gospel hip-hop artists across the United States. "Our goal is to reach the hearts of young people, to disciple them into strong leaders and to give them purpose and wisdom for their lives," says Liana Roa, senior administrator for the Bible Society's Program Development.

Ms. Roa, who has been working with youth for more than 12 years and is heading up the program, says: "It's going to take the young. Those are the ones who can reach these kids." With that in mind, she has assembled a youthful 14-person task force to help develop Scripture resources to undergird the program. (Members are artists and ministers in their 20s and 30s.)

Pastor Kyllonen, also known as Christian rapper



LIANA ROA

Worship includes break-dancing at Crossover.

Urban D, and other groups will use the resources to supplement and expand their ministries. Materials will include a CD-ROM with songs from Christian hip-hop artists as well as Scripture messages, and a dual-purpose Web site for hip-hop fans, churches and youth leaders. Kids visiting the site will be able to sample music from Christian hip-hop artists, download cool screen savers and read inspirational stories from their peers about spiritual issues. One example, from Crossover member Sylvie Fanous-Samaan, describes the comfort she finds from the *Contemporary English Version* Bible: "I never knew it could be so rele-

vant, and now every day it's relevant."

Links to musician and church Web sites will also be featured. Another section will contain downloadable resources such as training materials for youth leaders and ministers who want help to improve their own youth ministries. Bible study aids, discipleship programs, and youth-relevant topic ideas will be available for free.

The program will be piloted through several youth ministries and juvenile detention centers. Cross Movement, a Christian hip-hop group that plays at large rallies around the world; the Nicky Cruz outreach to gangs, based in Colorado Springs, Colo.; and Christ Tabernacle's hip-hop ministry in Queens, N.Y., will also participate.

With the Web site, the Bible Society hopes to link a centralized online community of like-minded ministries across the nation. Groups will be able to give and receive support, advice and training to reach young people.

The program's success will be gauged by a specific response, says Ms. Roa. "When a young person will say, 'Ah...this thing speaks to me,'" she says, the connection will be made. ■



Jacquelyn Sapiie
Library Services Supervisor
at Bible House

askjacquie

Readers are encouraged to submit their questions about the Bible to Jacquelyn Sapiie, Library Services Supervisor at Bible House in New York City. Questions can be forwarded to absrecord@americanbible.org, or Jacquelyn can be reached at 212-408-1203 or via regular mail at 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023.

Q In Matthew 1.19 Joseph was called Mary's husband before he brought her home as his wife. Explain the custom of betrothal in the Bible.
(C.E.O., Illinois)

A The custom of betrothal in the Bible is quite different from modern engagements. Until the 11th century, marriages had two stages. The betrothal came first, followed by the marriage ceremony about a year later. In biblical times betrothal implied a commitment almost as binding as marriage itself. The betrothed woman was sometimes called wife and the betrothed man was called husband (Matthew 1.18-19; Genesis 29.21). Both were under the same obligation of complete faithfulness. Any violation of the betrothed state was treated as adultery and could result in death for the offender. At the time of Mary and Joseph, betrothal required a solemn spoken commitment in the presence of witnesses and an additional pledge of money or a written pledge. The betrothal was sealed when the prospective bridegroom gave a gift to the bride's father. It could be considered some compensation to the bride's father for the loss of her services to his household. The gift, in the form of money or some other consideration, sealed the agreement and bound the two families together. The dowry was a gift presented by the bride's father to his daughter or to the groom. It may have consisted of servants, valued possessions or land.

The interval between betrothal and marriage did not exceed 12 months. The marriage took place only when the groom took the bride to his home and the marriage was consummated.

Sources: *The Interpreter's Bible* and *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* ■

TRUSTEES

Making People Whole

John A. Grant believes that successful outreach includes ministering to the total person — body and spirit and mind.

"It's hard to reach an empty soul who also has an empty mind and an empty stomach," says the Florida native who was born on the same property where he now lives with his wife, Beverley.

Dr. Grant saw many of those empty souls early in his life. As a young criminal prosecutor, he dealt with people whose lives were marred by violence, desperate men and women living in extreme poverty. To most Tampa residents, they are behind closed doors and invisible. And yet, he says, "We drive by them every day."



John A. Grant

Citing the 40 percent high-school dropout rate in Florida, Dr. Grant laments that one of every five adults in the state does not have fundamental reading or writing skills. The social repercussions are profound, he says, limiting job opportunities and leaving people unable to support themselves and their families.

He sees the literacy program, recently launched by the Bible Society, as one way to meet those physical and spiritual needs. As part of the *Reaching the Soul of America* campaign, this Bible-based curriculum equips churches with the tools to teach the underprivileged.

A Bible Society trustee for more than 20 years, Dr. Grant also practiced corporate law for 21 years and served in the Florida legislature, seven of them in the state Senate. He now serves as executive vice president for Liquidmetal Technologies, a manufacturer that produces super-strong metals.

Dr. Grant draws parallels with his own life experience and those of the apostle Paul. Like Paul, he came from a privileged background. By age 24 he had earned a doctoral degree and was serving on the faculty of a major university. But, like Paul, he counts his own successes as nothing when compared to his relationship to Christ.

And he knows the power of the Word. Shortly after they married, he and his wife began attending a church where they heard the Scriptures preached week after week, eventually committing their lives to Christ.

They now attend the Idlewild Baptist Church in Tampa, where he teaches a Bible fellowship class and continues to "press on." ■

— LAILA JONES



Thalia Westphal



SOUL SURVIVORS

The American Bible Society has set out to reach the soul of America with God's Word. Surveys show that American youth are highly spiritual but biblically uninformed — that often our most troubled young people don't see God or God's Word as the answer to their pain. But when the connection is made, the results can be miraculous. Now, through our Reaching the Soul of America campaign — targeted Scripture-focused programs that show the relevance of Scripture to this generation — we are asserting the importance of biblical truth and values to our post-modern culture and redirecting troubled souls toward everlasting hope. And we are looking for partners who will work with us to connect our youth with Scripture.

Following are stories of young lives transformed by turning to God and the Scriptures — urban youth rescued from seemingly hopeless situations. It is to young people like these that we are reaching out with God's redeeming message of new life.

Three young people
turn to faith in Christ

by Mike Slaughter

The American poet Maya Angelou once penned, “Of all the needs (there are none imaginary) a lonely child has, the one that must be satisfied, if there is going to be hope and a hope of wholeness, is the unshaking need for an unshakable God.”

But to 16-year-old Thalia Westphal, contempt better described her perception of a loving, heavenly Father. “I hated God so much. I wanted nothing to do with him,” she says. To Thalia, “The Bible was just a best-seller book, and Jesus was a fictitious character that somehow a lot of people stupidly believed in.”

Crumbling under the pain of her parent’s divorce and a failing relationship with her mother, Thalia began to self-destruct. Her drinking, smoking, lying, running away and constant arguing led to her being kicked out of her mother’s house in Dallas, Texas.

She became depressed — it seemed to her that no one

One day, she locked herself in her room with a bottle of pills and a lifetime of hurt. An overdose could prove fatal, but Thalia didn’t care anymore. She had no hope for tomorrow. She thought, “If I die, who cares, who will miss me?”

In the midst of the turbulence, God began to open Thalia’s eyes to the possibility of a new life. But not without a few knocks along the way. Hostile and angry, Thalia “slammed doors, was very obnoxious and didn’t want to be part of the family,” says her mother, Georgie Grossman, who had remarried. “She fought us and really made life miserable.” Finally, with Thalia throwing family life into constant turmoil, her mother gave consent, and Thalia landed on her father’s doorstep in Fort Worth.

At first, she was no different living with her father. “She was brash, abrasive and out of control,” Paul Westphal says. “She would clam up, get angry. Everything about her would look negative.”

With few alternatives to bringing peace in his home, yet knowing Thalia enjoyed drama, Mr. Westphal urged his daughter to try out for the Easter pageant at his church, Travis Avenue Baptist in Fort Worth. She landed a small role, expecting to be a disinterested observer of the other performers.

During the musical, though, she experienced something unexpected. For the first time in 16 years, God’s Word came to life as she participated in the Easter story. What was only paper and ink before now took on flesh and blood, breath and life, as she watched the different roles being played out.

During rehearsals, Thalia had seen the other cast members, adults and teens, weeping over the portrayal of the crucifixion. “I viewed the story as fiction and thought, ‘Big whoopee!’

“But then I started listening to the words. And there was a song in the pageant that talked about the nails that were stuck in Christ’s hands and feet. After a while, I began crying, too. And I would say to myself, ‘I’m crying over fictitious characters. What’s wrong?’”

Her father says the biblical story and the people portraying it captivated his daughter. “She came to me and said, ‘Daddy, they’re not acting.’” He adds, “She saw that they believed what was going on.”

A week after the pageant, Thalia surrendered her life to Christ and was baptized at Travis Avenue Baptist five days later.

“I was the embodiment of Satan,” Thalia says, “but God gave me a chance to start over and live for him.

“During the past year, I’ve shed off my old sins and my old body — my terrible past has all been washed away by the blood of Jesus. I’ve gained a seat in heaven and a whole new perspective and way of looking at things.”

Nan Dean, the pastor’s wife at her church says, “Thalia kind of had a chip on her shoulder and an attitude. After she became



PHOTOGRAPH BY JESSIE HORNBUCKLE

▲ Thalia Westphal calls the Bible her manual for life.

believed she was actually considering the unthinkable.

She’d watch movies about suicide, knowing she was thinking more and more about killing herself. But when she tried to voice the possibility that *she* could do the same, she didn’t think anyone took her seriously. Thalia remembers her disappointment. That disappointment fueled a rage that led her to carry out violence against her own body.

“I thought there was no way out of it, so I would try to hurt myself,” she explains. Using a sharp utility knife, she’d slice away at her skin, “... wrists, legs, arms, anywhere. It didn’t really matter,” she says.

Anderson Summers, 19, Queens, N.Y.

He's a self-described "momma's boy" who speaks fondly about a warm family life among the aunts, uncles, cousins, a brother and his mother and father growing up in a New York City public housing project.

He is large — standing 2 inches below 6 feet tall and weighing 295 pounds. That, combined with his quiet demeanor, proved valuable when he hooked up with the Crips, an infamous street gang.

"I was like the gang's pit bull," he recalls. He earned the name "Cryptonite" because of his devotion to the group, a longtime scourge of the New York streets, sowing intimidation to the general public while providing a warped sense of solace and family to its members.

Anderson describes his teen years as full of fights — with members of rival gangs, with a friend he accused of going after his girlfriend and with a guidance counselor at school. He once crushed the eye socket of a young man who hurled racial remarks on a subway train. For that crime he was detained at Riker's Island, a tough New York City jail.

Even through the worst of times, Anderson remembers he could still feel the presence of God in his life.

His family life was solid and he had good friends at school. Yet he found he wanted more, and looked for it among a bad crowd.

"Even then I knew God was working, God was telling me I shouldn't be around them kind of people," he says. Still, he recalls, "I pushed God away. I said, 'I want to fit in. I want to be amongst the crowd. I want to have all the girlfriends, I want to go to all of the parties.'"

A Christian friend, Edwin Rosario,

helped turn him around. At first Anderson only knew Edwin from a distance. Still, he was impressed.

"He had a glow, a glow that could only come from God. I wondered what he had. ... I wanted what Edwin had so bad. He had such a peace about him, a peace that only God could give him, but I didn't know that."



PHOTOGRAPH BY REBECCA McALPIN

Edwin told Anderson about Jesus. Anderson rejected him, but Edwin kept coming back, proclaiming to his friend that God loved him enough to die on the cross for him.

Anderson kept mulling over the message before going to sleep, all the while pondering about the havoc his life of crime had wreaked upon both friends and strangers.

"One night I thought about it. I thought about if Jesus did love me. The reality struck me that there's got to be more to life than just smoking weed, drinking, smoking, getting drunk ... So, for the first time in my life, I prayed. I said, 'God if you're real, come into my heart. I want to serve you if you're

real. I want you to take me out of this life that I'm living.'"

As a result, he found his relationships transformed. He rediscovered the loving concern his parents always had for him. He joined a church and has become a student of the Bible.

"When I became a Christian, the Word of God became so powerful, so

strong. It meant everything to me. I could sit back and think about situations in my life to where I was scared. ... When you're scared, when you're lost, God is a strong tower; you can run to him and be saved."

He is going to Bible college in the fall and plans to be a teacher and preacher of the Word. While he has his own dreams, with his newfound faith, Anderson now has put his life in God's hands.

"What I want to do with my life is whatever God has for me ... I want Jesus to make my path, because his Word is the light unto my feet, to show me how to walk and where to walk," he says. — **PETER FEUERHERD**

a Christian, I saw quite a transformation. Now she has a smile on her face and seems to be handling life and has a joy about her."

To Thalia, the Bible is absolutely important. "The Bible's

like a life source," she says. Reading it almost every day, she sees God's Word as her manual for life. "It gives me my rules and my guidelines and that's a way for me to connect to

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READ ALL ABOUT IT!

American Bible Society Reaches the Soul of America with Scripture-based Literacy Program

By Thomas D. Sullivan | Photographs by Jesse Hornbuckle

If you can read, you can pick up a Bible and learn of God's creation, and Jesus, the savior.

And if you can't ...

You need someone else to tell you the Good News.

Or read it to you,

Or, better yet, someone who will teach you to read.

So you can *read all about it* for yourself.

In Houston, Pastor Jerome Gambrell of Meadowbrook Baptist Church noticed that his church's neighborhood was changing: Many Hispanic families were moving into the area. And many of the newcomers could not read English.

Through a program conceived and developed by the American Bible Society, for which the late Eleanor McCollum, an honorary Board of Trustees member, provided encouragement and initial funding, Meadowbrook Baptist Church now offers people a chance to improve their reading by reading the Bible.



▲ The Rev. Allen Franklin, standing, leads a literacy class.

In 16 weeks "Read All About It" had raised the average reading level of program participants by more than half a grade level in reading and more than three grade levels in language arts. Using the experience gained at Meadowbrook and pilot programs conducted at 10 other churches, the American Bible Society is recruiting urban church partners across the nation who will help to extend this "Read All About It" initiative to underprivileged citizens.

Ignorance of God's Word leaves a man, woman or child shackled by sin. Illiteracy represents economic and educational bondage, and, for adults, the additional burden of shame.

"Read All About It" helps people realize the dual dreams of gaining both spiritual and economic freedom.

The American Bible Society developed the literacy program with the help of the Bank Street College of Education in New York City, a leader in educational research. The reading materials are based on Bible stories taken from the *Contemporary English Version Bible*, a translation created for new readers and for those for whom English is not their first language.

Thanks to reading the Bible through the "Read All About It" literacy program, Dania Noyola is closer to God. "I have



▲ Instructor Barbara Clifford, right, explains a point to Dania Noyola.

BOOKSELLERS BUY INTO LITERACY LAUNCH

The American Bible Society got an enthusiastic response to its "Read All About It" literacy program unveiled at the Christian Booksellers Association (CBA) convention in Anaheim, Calif., in July. Nearly 2,300 booksellers sent representatives to this year's event.

CBA is helping the Bible Society recruit bookstore owners who will help promote the program with church customers — to have bookstores build partnerships with local churches in conducting literacy classes. Brian Sherry, director of direct response marketing for the Bible Society's publishing unit, said nearly every bookseller who met with Bible Society staff at CBA expressed interest in the literacy program.

During the convention, the Rev. Trevón Gross, senior vice president for Programs at the Bible Society, distributed "seed packets," small starter kits for the literacy classes. The packets contain one booklet for each level of learners, plus a CD-ROM and videotape that explain the growing need for lit-

eracy training and how to set up a literacy program.

The 235 bookstores that signed up during the convention to promote the program will each distribute starter kits to five churches in their local areas.

The goal is to establish Bible-based literacy training at 1,500 urban locations by partnering with a variety of organizations: churches, prisons, parochial schools, at after-school programs in public schools and at YMCAs and YWCAs — all reaching out to people limited by their inability to read.

Robert Schwalb, the director of publishing and graphic services for the Bible Society's publishing unit, was pleased by booksellers' intense interest in the literacy program at the CBA convention. "We're kind of a planting," and "things are starting to sprout already."

We pray for a great harvest of this sowing of God's Word.

him in my heart all the time," she says. She's been studying in Meadowbrook's program since January. Ms. Noyola, who was drawn in by the stories about creation in Genesis, Solomon and Noah's Ark, loves the reading material because, "It's all about God. ... It's all for me."

The literacy program helps Ms. Noyola in other ways, too. Thanks to the literacy classes, she converses in English more easily with colleagues at work.

She attends the classes with her mother, Leonia Azuara. Mother and daughter share a love for the Bible and the literacy program. A student at Meadowbrook since January, Ms. Azuara's favorite story is Noah's Ark. She sees parallels between Noah's time and ours: "People don't believe in God," and don't listen to him.

By reading the Bible, Ms. Azuara says, "I have changed a lot," because, she says, "I know about Jesus."

Rev. Gambrell is impressed by the program, which includes 90 illustrated booklets, with 30 Bible stories written at three reading levels. Specific lesson titles include *In the Beginning*, *A Story about Solomon*, *Jesus and the Devil* and *Jesus Walks*

on Water. Trained tutors, using a step-by-step guide, spend several hours a week with each student, teaching phonics and applying



▲ The Scripture-based literacy program is a great success.

proven literacy training methods.

As word about the program has spread in the Meadowbrook neighborhood, many other people have expressed an eagerness to enroll in the program. "If we had more teachers, I could have more classes," Rev. Gambrell says.

The Rev. Allen Franklin, who teaches an adult literacy class at Meadowbrook using the American Bible Society materials, speaks of the "heart-grabbing" impact of the Scriptures on his students. As students start to read the Bible stories, they "start recruiting," and the class "just grows and grows and grows."

Rev. Franklin sees a lesson of humility in the success of the Bible literacy program: "God always takes ordinary people to do an extraordinary task." ■



◀ Leonia Azuara, foreground, and Dania Noyola read the Scriptures.

For more information about this program, call Jean Bross-Judge, senior program administrator, Literacy Program at the Bible Society at 1-800-688-7108 or e-mail her at jbrossjudge@americanbible.org.

THE BIBLE IN *public schools*

Connecting kids
with Scripture

BY FRANCINE LANGE



◀ Trudy Whitehurst, center, founder of Religious Released Time Education, works with children at her headquarters in Brooklyn. From left are sixth graders Tamara Burgess and Kai Milano, and ninth graders Karen Douglas and Crystal Dabady. Above, students search for biblically relevant locations on a world map and computer program and read Scripture passages from American Bible Society Bibles.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANCINE LANGE

REACHING THE SOUL OF AMERICA HAS BEEN A MISSION of the Bible Society since 1816. But today the challenge and the need are greater than ever. Connecting people with their spiritual needs in the midst of a media-saturated, secularized culture is a daunting task. And those most vulnerable to the proliferating media distractions are our young people — the first generation of the new millennium.

We vigorously support partners with programs that not only capture the attention of today's youth with the humanizing hope of God's Word, but that touch their hearts as well. Two such programs that engage our youth are Bible clubs and religious education classes, both after-school initiatives.

Many public high schools in Baltimore host Bible clubs on campus. In Brooklyn, children happily march off to nearby churches for religious education after putting in a full day at school. Some people think such activities are against the law, that they violate the separation of church and state. But, in fact, like other clubs and after-school activities they are sanctioned by current federal legislation and school regulations.

According to Ken Sinkler, manager of Partnership Relations in the Programs Department at the Bible Society, many Christians seem unaware of these legal possibilities. He often hears Christians express frustration that these sorts of programs are not an option. Mr. Sinkler has worked to promote two in-school religious programs, providing Bibles and other Scripture-based materials. "We have an opportunity here to plant an enduring seed of Scripture knowledge within the hearts and minds of our youth that will stay with them throughout their lives," he says.

He is eager to help support and mobilize others who share his desire to help children attending public schools learn about Christ. Parents seeking access within the public school system should know that, under the law, they have specific, constitutionally protected rights. You can contact Mr. Sinkler and support Scripture distribution in public schools by calling him at 212-408-1341 or via e-mail at ksinkler@americanbible.org.

Bible Clubs in Baltimore

JEFFREY SIPPEL HAS A VISION: TO HELP HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS establish Bible clubs in high schools across America. The only essential ingredients are students who share his vision for making a difference with their peers.

Mr. Sippel, the greater Baltimore area director for Citizens for Excellence in Education, helps students set up the clubs. And Mr. Sippel knows the law. "I'm not allowed to go into a school and hand out Bibles or tracts," he says. He is, however, permitted to organize and train interested students.

An energetic man who talks about Jesus constantly, he recalls his public school experience in the 1950s. "We began every day in school by reading the Bible and by praying," he says. That changed when a legal campaign by atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair, to have prayer and Bible reading removed

from the schools, succeeded. (In an ironic twist, Mr. Sippel remembers attending the same high school as Ms. O'Hair's son Bill Murray and speaking to him about Christ. He later became a Christian and is now an ordained minister.)

But now, students who meet in school facilities to study the Bible, pray and hand out Scriptures to classmates receive protection by the Federal Equal Access Act, which was passed by Congress in 1984. (The law affirms the right of students to organize religious clubs in public secondary schools under the same conditions as other student clubs.)

Bible clubs, says Mr. Sippel, provide a way for kids who are reluctant to attend church to learn from the Scriptures. At Kenwood High School, club founder Mike Ches, who graduated this year, describes the dramatic manner in which one student joined the club. Sabrina was required to stay after school, in "detention," which happened to be in the same room the club met. She pretended she wasn't listening, says Mr. Ches, but couldn't help hearing their prayers, singing and Bible study discussion.

"The next week she came back," he says, "and she kept coming back." During one study session she began to cry. After praying with her, Mr. Ches says, "I asked her if she had a Bible."



Jeffrey Sippel

SUPPORTING A STUDENT RIGHT

A recent *Newsday* article reported that 7-year-old Joshua Leirer was handing out Scripture booklets especially prepared by the American Bible Society after the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center. His teacher stopped him and confiscated the booklets.

A federal lawsuit filed by a law firm against the New York school district, claiming it violated Joshua's constitutional rights was settled recently. The settlement stated that schools would not censor material distributed by students that is based on religious content.

In a letter to *Newsday*, Patrick English, executive vice president of the American Bible Society wrote: "The booklets espouse no doctrinal bias and simply point to God's comforting Words in times of great difficulty, a religious point of view embraced by believers of many of the world's religions. ... [T]he Scriptures speak for themselves rather than having the American Bible Society tell people what they should believe.

"The publicity about this case might prove an opportunity to remind a wider community that public schools actually have a wide berth under the law to provide non-proselytizing education about the Bible, one of our great cultural treasures."

She didn't, so Mr. Ches gave her a *Contemporary English Version* (CEV) Bible. Sabrina has since graduated from high school. "She said she would read it when she got frustrated," he says.

Mr. Sippel started his work in 1989, when his daughter, Jennifer, sought his help to set up a club in her school, Western High. Now, says Mr. Sippel, more than 75 schools in central Maryland have Bible clubs. By his count, the club members have distributed more than 2,000 Bibles, the American Bible Society's easy-to-read CEV translation, provided through a joint grant from the Maryland Bible Society and American Bible Society.

To learn more about starting a Bible club, click on Mr. Sippel's Web site www.bibleclubs.homestead.com. You can download a free pamphlet listing students' rights and a manual describing how to set up a club. (Please note that the American Bible Society is not responsible for the content on this site.)

After-School Religious Education in Brooklyn

TRUDY WHITEHURST KNOWS THE VALUE OF A GOOD EDUCATION — one buttressed by a solid foundation in ethical values. A petite woman, she taught for 23 years as a public school teacher in Brooklyn and later served as a private school principal. She never expected to return to the classroom after retirement in 1991, but a fateful encounter changed that.

One afternoon, Ms. Whitehurst boarded a subway and watched as children, just out of school, charged noisily into the train, using profane language. Their rowdiness stood in stark contrast to the students she taught; she had ruled her classes with a firm but loving hand and had taught respect along with other subjects.

"I started walking," she says, praying as she walked, "and tears came to my eyes." Passing several churches, an idea began to form. "We need to release the children to a church after school so they can study the Bible and learn a code of ethics," she said aloud.

She met with Dr. Irene Impellizzeri, former vice president of the New York City Board of Education, and Burton Sacks, chief executive for external affairs at the board, to share her idea.

"I was all excited, I thought this was a brand new baby that I had birthed," she recalls. They told her that provision for the program she was describing had existed for decades — the School District of the City of New York Chancellor's regulation (No. A-630) — but Protestant Christian groups rarely took advantage of it.

Ms. Whitehurst decided to change that. She founded Religious Released Time Education Headquarters, Inc. She recruited parents and churches and encouraged parent and teacher involvement in her new vision through local PTAs. She began selecting materials for her Bible literacy training from Mr. Sinkler at the American Bible Society — Bibles, bookmarks, audiotapes and biblical comic books.

In 1994, Ms. Whitehurst signed up the first school, P.S.

STUDENT "SURVIVAL KITS" DELIVER LIFE

Most kids are curious about giveaways. So when they see schoolmates passing out colorful boxes of goodies outside their schools, many eagerly go for them. In these "Survival Kits" they find Bibles, booklets about Jesus, music CDs by Christian artists and videos featuring students' testimonies, items that introduce them to Christ in their own milieu and on their own turf.



Student Venture, a Campus Crusade for Christ ministry, has been using that strategy to reach junior and senior high schools across the nation since 1999. Staff and volunteers set up distribution points outside school property, but strategically located in full view of students streaming out of school.

This ministry, a partnership with the American Bible Society, other Christian ministries and local churches, reached more than 150 schools last year. Workers distributed some 202,000 Survival Kits.

Scott Stroven, mass distribution coordinator for Student Venture says, "The kids really treasure them. We feel that the Word of God is the most important item in the kits."

Following Sept. 11, volunteers gave kits to 160,000 students in New York City. Cards tucked into each Bible referenced passages relating to comfort. "We really felt that that would draw them into the Scriptures," Mr. Stroven says.

This spring, Student Venture once again visited the city, distributing another 20,000 kits, reaching about 70 percent of the public high schools there.

To learn more about students' rights, readers may contact the legal advice Web site Liberty Counsel at www.lc.org.

399, enrolling 24 fifth graders and using classrooms at her own school, Isaiah Whitehurst Private School. "The children were delighted to get a Bible of their very own from the American Bible Society," she says.

Now, 56 children from eight more Brooklyn schools (including P.S. 181 and P.S. 308) attend after-school classes at several churches including Mount Lebanon Baptist, Cornerstone Baptist and St. Philip's Episcopal.

For more information about Religious Released Time, write Mrs. Whitehurst at 2531 Beverly Rd., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11226 or call 718-462-9407.

MALAWI PRISON MINISTRY DELIVERS

mercy

By Francine Lange

William Mposa knew it wasn't a heavenly choir he heard as he passed a Malawi prison one fateful morning about three years ago. But the beautiful sounds coming through the barred windows inspired him to respond to a heavenly directive he sensed through the music.

A few days later, he contacted prison officials at the Zomba Central Prison (where he had heard the male prisoners singing) and asked about donating supplies to the inmates. "And the answer was 'Yes,'" he recalls.

Most of the central African country's crowded prisons were built before its independence in 1964, and none have been expanded or improved to accommodate the increased prison population. Disease and infection spread quickly in the squalid cells, increasing the misery inmates endure. Therefore, Mr. Mposa explains, any legitimate offer of help from the outside is welcomed.

At first he carried in some bars of soap and gave them out only to inmates who shared his affiliation in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. But needs were so great there he decided to collect and distribute supplies and Bibles to prisoners, regardless of their religious backgrounds.

"It did not take long before the inmates asked me to preach to them and that is how the prison ministry began," he says. The 42-year-old Malawi native, who also owns and runs a financial consulting business, now shares the Scriptures on weekends with nearly 2,000 of the more than 9,000 male and female inmates at Zomba.

"I have received letters from some of the inmates to the



When I was in jail, you visited me.

— MATTHEW 25:36 CEV

effect that the Word of God preached to them has made them realize their wrongs and has created a desire to read about and know about Jesus," Mr. Mposa says. One example, from an inmate named Demister, expressed gratitude: "Spiritually, I feel myself growing as each day unveils," he wrote.

During the week Mr. Mposa takes in Bibles in Chichewa and English, Scripture Portions, gospel tracts and even copies of the *American Bible Society Record* magazine donated by the Bible Society of Malawi (BSM).

Byson Nakutho, executive director at BSM has a personal interest in prison ministry and has been involved in several church outreaches to prisons. He knows the life changing

power of the Word.

"Those prisoners who have been exposed to Scriptures and are shown compassion and the means to better themselves spiritually can become positive participants in national development," he says.

In fact, says Mr. Mposa, last year's August/September *Record*, which describes a Bible-based U.S. prison program designed to break recurring cycles of crime and re-incarceration by introducing inmates to Christ, caused a hopeful stir with prisoners and officials alike.

Volunteers now join Mr. Mposa at the Zomba and Chichiri prisons. His strong relationship with BSM enables him to direct Bible materials to areas where they are needed most.

"There is joy and satisfaction when I see a prisoner give his life to Christ, restoring hope where there was only despair and frustration," says Mr. Mposa. ■

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID SINGER

Helping People at Home

Ruben Sierra understands well that “to be controlled by human nature results in death; to be controlled by the Spirit results in life and peace” (Romans 8.6, *GNT*).

The apostle Paul went on to say that “the Spirit comes to help us, weak as we are.” Thanks to his encounter with Scripture, Mr. Sierra was pulled out of a deep hole. “I used to be one of the people trying to stay alive on skid row.” Now, back on his feet, he visits people in one of the worst parts of Los Angeles, offering God’s Word. “When I see them, I see the way I used to be,” he says.

“Now my mind is clear. I can talk to people, look them in the eye.”

Every Sunday, Mr. Sierra helps to lead a worship service on the streets. He distributes Bibles and Scripture Portions to congregations of homeless people. His flock is growing.

Mr. Sierra took on this mission as a way to thank God for his recovery.

The American Bible Society is helping to provide Scriptures for people like Mr. Sierra and those he serves. The Bible Society also reaches out to members of Native American groups.

The tragic history of the people who were the first to live in our land has raised a barrier of mistrust between Native Americans and other races in North America. To overcome this barrier, the Bible Society has initiated a special Native American program to build strong, committed relationships between the organization and people of the First Nation.



Your September gift will help bring the Bible to fellow Americans. Your October offering will help support Scripture distribution in Cuba and Puerto Rico. To find out more about joining the Bible-a-Month Club, fill out the reply form below, or write:

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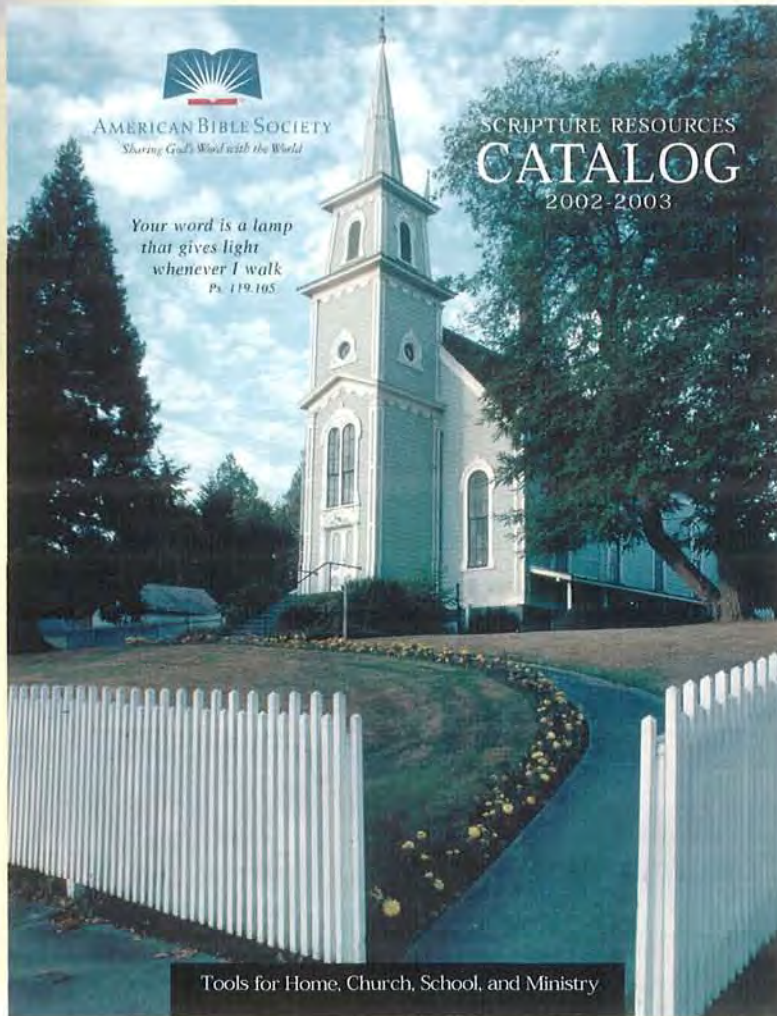
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AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

Sharing God's Word with the World

Charles Thomson, the First American Translator of the Bible

First published in 1611, the King James or Authorized Version of the Bible provided English-speaking people with a scriptural text of incomparable beauty and accuracy. Its enduring influence kept all serious attempts to create a rival translation at bay. Of the four new English Bibles produced during the next 200 years, only the version translated by Charles Thomson (1729-1824) is still remembered today.

Thomson was a classicist, not a theologian, and taught Latin and Greek, before being appointed secretary of the Continental Congress in 1774. During his 15-year tenure, he encouraged his good friend Robert Aitken to print the first American edition of the King James Bible.

In July 1789, shortly after George Washington's inauguration, Thomson retired from public life and started translating the Bible in Greek. He brought to the task the same integrity that had earned him an Indian name meaning "man who tells the truth." Thomson based his translation of the Old Testament on the edition of the Septuagint published by John Field in 1665, but chose to omit the Apocrypha.

A fragment of his original manuscripts, including Psalms to Malachi, is preserved in the Library of the American Bible Society.

The Thomson Bible has the double distinction of being the first English translation of the Septuagint and the first biblical translation prepared by an American. Many of the 1,000 copies that had been printed remained unsold and were later destroyed. In the 20th century, however, the quality of Thomson's translation came to be appreciated. His Old Testament was reprinted in facsimile in 1904 and 1907. A revised edition, prepared by A.C. Muses, was issued in 1954. ■



Charles Thomson's translation of Psalm 23

— LIANA LUPAS

FOR THE RECORD

100 YEARS AGO

Gratitude for Scripture Gifts

Correspondent E.W. Warwick wrote an item in the September 1902 *Record* thanking the Rev. J.P. Wragg for arranging for three New Testaments and six Bibles to be sent to a group of impoverished African American farm workers.

When one of the workers received the Scriptures, "Tears came to his eyes, and my own heart was warmed," wrote Mr. Warwick. Addressing Mr. Wragg, who was then responsible for managing Scripture distribution to African Americans in the United States, Mr. Warwick stated, "It would have done your heart good to have seen the gladness in his countenance." Mr. Warwick wrote that he and the man had "a word of prayer together at my own humble home."

The October 1902 *Record* quoted President Theodore Roosevelt's words of encouragement to Sunday school teachers.

"Every effort looking to improvement in methods of Bible study and instruction should ... be most earnestly supported. The Sunday school workers are entitled to the hearty support of all well-wishers to the nation."



Theodore Roosevelt

50 YEARS AGO

A Cabbie Driven by the Word

A Mr. Hatazawa served for a long time as a Scripture distributor for the Japan Bible Society. He became a taxi driver in Tokyo, but continued passing out God's Word.

In the first month and a half of his time behind the wheel, he distributed 1,000 Bible Portions. As passengers left his cab, Mr. Hatazawa offered them gospel booklets and asked, "Would you please read this book?"

One day, as he offered a Scripture Portion to a passenger, the man asked, "You are a Christian, are you not? I have a cousin who is Rev. Zurta Watanabe," a prominent theologian. This encouraged Mr. Hatazawa, who pressed on with his motorized ministry. ■

LARGEST-EVER DONORS LIVED SIMPLY

WHEN ERNEST E. REEVES died last May, at age 92, his

BY FRANCINE LANGE

private man, who kept his financial matters to himself. Few

neighbors had no idea that the retired farmer and his wife had given millions to the American Bible Society in gift annuities. They were, in fact, the largest donors in Bible Society history. But Mr. Reeves and his wife, Jessie “Dolly,” who passed away this year at age 89, had not taken residence in a mansion in an upscale neighborhood. They had lived quietly in a modest trailer home in Texas.

Born and raised in Iowa, Mr. and Mrs. Reeves grew soybeans and corn and raised cattle and sheep on a 300-acre farm. They also made shrewd stock purchases, yet lost a quarter of a million dollars in one day during the market crash of 1929. That loss, Mr. Reeves said, changed their perspective on stewardship and caused

them to begin giving away the wealth they earned, most of it to the American Bible Society.

This tall, unassuming farmer and his wife worked hard over the years, farming, buying and selling stocks and real estate. They raised no children. Leisure, for them, involved travel throughout North America and Europe and frequent drives over to Sioux City, Iowa, for dancing.

In 1975, the Reeves retired and moved to Pharr, Texas, to live in a “manufactured” trailer home. According to most who knew him, Mr. Reeves was a

people knew, for example, that after he had set up the annuity with a sizable contribution, he also began contributing to the Bible Society the quarterly income checks he received from the annuity.

To members at his church, the St. Mark United Methodist in McAllen, Mr. Reeves was the usher who, for 25 years, greeted visitors every Sunday with a welcoming smile and a red rose in his lapel.

And to us at the Bible Society, he and Mrs. Reeves were humble, generous supporters of the Bible cause. Through their commitment, we have been able to share the good news in Bibles and Scripture materials with people all over the world.



Ernest and Jessie Reeves

For their legacy — giving the largest personal donations in our history — we are certainly grateful. But their real legacy comes from the Lord who says to each faithful believer: “... Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.” (Matthew 25.23, *King James Version*) ■

More information about planned giving programs sponsored by the American Bible Society can be obtained by calling the Planned Gift Programs Department at 1-800-820-6227.

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70	7.2%	\$720	\$3,880.80	70	6.6%	\$660	\$3,060.50
75	7.9%	\$790	\$4,284.50	75	7.0%	\$700	\$3,563.30
80	8.9%	\$890	\$4,718.70	80	7.7%	\$770	\$4,024.40
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AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY
Sharing God's Word with the World

Charles Criniere, 23, Chicago, Ill.

To learn about Charles, take a walk into his room, a refuge for his studies while he was attending Northeastern Illinois University. "It's kind of messy, but it's mine," he warns a visitor.

In one corner is a picture of him with some old friends he would run around with, known for pursuing their graffiti "art" on the mean Windy City streets. That's a reminder of where he was.

A sign of where he is includes Charles' wide assortment of Bibles, his favorite possession. His favorite verse is John 14.6, where Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." Inspired by that biblical verse — and the help of a supportive family — Charles turned his life away from shoplifting and running with a wild bunch into the devoted Christian he is today.

What made the difference?

"It has to be Christ in my life," he



PHOTOGRAPH BY STRATMARK

says. "Back then it was in my heart that all I had to do was whatever made me feel happy. But the Charles of now is about doing what God pleases and to be pleasing in his sight." That includes his new teaching job at an area high

school. (He recently graduated with a bachelor's in Math and Education.) "I center my life not around myself but around God and what he says through the Bible."

— PETER FEUERHERD

God, a way for me to know what he intends for my life," Thalia explains.

Now, Thalia's life has been completely changed. "Instead of going out and getting drunk, I go out with my friends or

I'll spend time with my father. Instead of hurting myself, I listen to good music to praise God. I wake up in the morning going 'Yeah, it's another morning!' instead of 'Oh gosh, it's another morning.'"

SUICIDE AND VIOLENCE

"The American Society for Adolescent Psychiatry reports that suicide among teenagers has increased dramatically in recent years, making it the third-leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year olds." (*Miami Herald*, "Breaking the Silence" by Ivette Yee, Jan. 30, 2001 www.herald.com)

- One in every eight murder victims in the United States is younger than 18. Almost 40 children and adolescents are killed by violence each week.

- Murder and suicide are the second and third leading

causes of death among teenagers between the ages of 15 to 19. Among 10 to 14 year olds, they are third and fourth.

- In an average month, there are more than 525,000 violent acts in public schools. Nearly 8 percent of urban junior and senior high school students are too afraid to go to school at least once a month.

— Commission for the Prevention of Youth Violence

Join with us in Reaching the Soul of America!

You can help us help young people engage with God's Word. By becoming an American Bible Society Word Sponsor, you will throw out the lifeline of God's Word to young people in crisis.

Use the envelope provided in the magazine centerfold to become a Word Sponsor today.

- On average, six or seven youths are murdered in this country each day. Most of these are inner-city minority youths.

— Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

BIBLE IN THE NEWS

Lincoln's Bible-based speech

■ In his second inaugural speech, Abraham Lincoln said of both the North and the South, "Both read the same Bible." In a new book, *Lincoln's Greatest Speech: The Second Inaugural*, Dr. Ronald C. White Jr. explores the

historical backdrop to the famous address.

The Bible was critically important to people on both sides of the Civil War, Dr. White writes, and Lincoln keenly sought to reconcile all Americans, using rhetoric that his biblically literate audience would readily understand.

Dr. White describes how the American Bible Society printed tens of thousands of small pocket Bibles for Civil War soldiers, who read them eagerly.

During the Civil War, John D. Pugh of Company B, 7th Regiment, Ohio, carried this American Bible Society New Testament.

In his research in the American Bible Society Library & Archives, he discovered a New Testament with the inscription, "Seek an inheritance in that home where there is no parting," owned by John D. Pugh of Company B, 7th Regiment, Ohio.

What a novelist reads

■ Yale Law School professor Stephen L. Carter is known for his books about American law and mores, including *Integrity* and *The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion*. Dr. Carter has published his first novel, *The Emperor of Ocean Park*.

Speaking of his reading habits, Dr. Carter told *The Washington Post* that his favorite book is the Bible. The *Post* reported that he "takes his Christianity very seriously."

His own writing contains very little bad language and explicit sex. Dr. Carter said there's too much sex in modern fiction. "I've got explicit religion instead," he told the *Post*.

A direct instruction

■ On his deathbed, Frank Pakenham, Britain's Lord Longford, asked his wife, "You know what the most important quotation from the Bible is?" He continued with Christ's words from St. Matthew: "I was in prison and you came to me."

In *The Times* of London's profile of Lady Longford, the paper quoted Lord Longford's widow, who spoke of her husband's lifelong dedication to visiting and helping convicts.

"He gave time to prisoners — especially unattractive ones — because he felt it was a direct instruction to him from Jesus," she said.

Psalms in the midst of battle

■ At the end of a fierce battle in Afghanistan, U.S. Army Rangers called to mind Psalm 121: "I look to the mountains; where will my help come from?"

In a lengthy account of a daylong battle on a 10,000-foot-tall mountain, *The Washington Post* described how U.S. soldiers thought of a Psalm they had studied the night before as they waited for helicopters to fly them out.

As they prepared for the helicopters, the Rangers recalled Psalm 121, which they had read during Bible study at the Bagram air base.

The American Bible Society has distributed more than 19,000 *Good News Translation* Bibles to military personnel during *Operation Enduring Freedom*.



Living Biblically in the Virtual World

"But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control."

— GALATIANS 5:22-23 GNT

If you're a regular reader of this column, you know that the American Bible Society commits significant resources to share God's Word with the world digitally, offering Scripture engagement to the Net generation. At the heart of this investment lies ForMinistry, dedicated to "equipping the church online for ministry" with free Web-building tools, biblically oriented resources for ministry leaders and strategic consultation on touching lives in cyberspace with the reconciling message of Scripture.

Our aim is to help churches change lives through the power of God's Word. And so we continually put ourselves to the test: Are we focusing on *the message* we are called to proclaim and not just the latest innovations in *how* we communicate? *Why* are we employing these methods and are they consistent with our charge to be "salt and light," dispelling the darkness and decay around us? Are we frantically chasing after ever-more efficient technical *means*, possibly at the expense of the *ministry ends* that were our original impetus?

I've just finished reading a new book that addresses cyberculture with great insight, delightful humility and humor and solid theological grounding in the biblical message. *Habits of the High-Tech Heart: Living Virtuously in the Information Age*, by Dr. Quentin J. Schultze, professor of communication at Calvin College, raises provocative questions in a constructive critique of the pervasive tendency we all have, even those of us in ministry, to fall into what he calls "informationism," which Dr. Schultze defines as "a quasi-religious faith in the power of information to improve our lives ... to [offer us] social progress and personal happiness."

Dr. Schultze pinpoints how easy it is even for churches to run blithely after new technologies without considering the "dark" side of digital telecommunications as well as the potential good that can come from it. He challenges us to moderate our appetite for "gee-whiz" tech-toys; to laugh at our pretension that

we can control our fate through technology; to demonstrate authenticity in the vortex of hype and spin that passes for conventional wisdom; and to always judge any online "community" we create by the extent to which it strengthens incarnational communion.

In so doing, Dr. Schultze draws us back to the wisdom of Scripture, wisdom that speaks to our age-old questions: Where did we come from, where are we going and what constitutes a *good life* along the way? How do we develop *godly character* in ourselves and help shape it in our children? For biblical people, the question is, ultimately:

Are our attitudes and actions — online and off — aligned with God's shalom, God's justice and mercy, peace and hope, compassion and righteousness?

What I take away from *Habits of the High-Tech Heart* is a renewed sense that churches will employ both face-to-face dialogue and appropriate electronic communications to extend their ministries over time and across distance.

The stories at ForMinistry attest to the impact our efforts are having, especially on seekers who first find a church's ForMinistry-powered Web site and soon make this congregation their new home.

Recently, a newly-formed Carpatho-Russian Orthodox mission parish baptized a couple who had visited the church's Web site and decided to return to their roots in the Orthodox tradition. This couple has had their marriage blessed in their new parish family. Their first child was born in August and was also baptized in the church.

This story may have started in cyberspace, but it is being played out every week in the home where they meet for worship. And that is precisely what we are aiming for when we seek to equip churches online for ministry. ■

— CHRIS THYBERG

CThyberg@ForMinistry.com

Director, Ministry Development — ForMinistry

An Internet ministry of the American Bible Society

"Equipping the Church Online For Ministry"®

Search



This fictional story is intended to illustrate the power of ForMinistry technology.

Katherine and Michael had just moved to a new town where they were planning to get married. But before they could say "I do" to each other, they had to make a lifelong commitment to the right church. Through ForMinistry's website, they found Father John and All Saints Episcopal and soon realized that they had not only found their soulmate but their soul-church, too! Check out www.ForMinistry.com and find out how they can help you strengthen your connection with your congregation.

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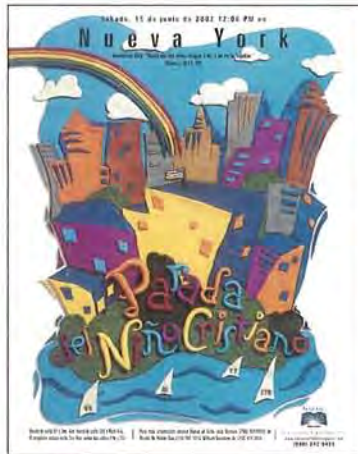
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BUILD FIND CONNECT SHARE

update

NATIONAL



▲ Flyer announcing the Children's Day parade in New York City.

▼ Children riding the American Bible Society float wave American flags to bystanders along the parade route during the 44th annual Children's Day parade.

■ NEW YORK

Thousands of children participated in a Children's Day parade in New York City this summer, an annual event organized by the Evangelical Children's Association and sponsored by the Office of Latino Affairs (OLA) at the American Bible Society.

The daylong festivities included concerts, distribution of Scripture Portions in Spanish from the *Project Constant Hope* campaign and a parade that wound its way through a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood in upper Manhattan. Now in its 44th year, the event is one way the association brings together Latino churches from different denominations. Kids from children's ministries throughout the city are encouraged to march in the parade as a public witness to their faith in Christ.

The Bible Society's sponsorship is tied to the area's demographic makeup, says Emilio A. Reyes, vice president and executive director of OLA.

"New York City is home to a large Latino population, many of whom have immigrated there from all over the world," he says. "OLA wants to provide the comfort of the Scriptures

to these Spanish speakers."

The OLA float displayed a rainbow arching over tall, multicolored buildings and was printed with the slogan, "God is our Shelter and Strength" in Spanish. Children perched on the float waved American flags to people lining the parade route. The Bible Society also sponsored the colorful posters advertising the event in the city.

■ VIRGINIA

Last year, FBI Chaplain Art Stevanato, temporarily reassigned after Sept. 11 to minister to agents and other law-enforcement officers working at Ground Zero and the Fresh Kills landfill on Staten Island (where workers searched through rubble and human remains), came to value the Bible Society's pocket Bibles and Scripture Portion *God Is Our Shelter and Strength*. He especially appreciated a version of the Portion, which pictured a police officer on the cover. In August, when asked to attend the 2002 graduation ceremony for new agents at the FBI Training Center in Quantico, Va., he ordered 900 copies of the Scripture Portion to give to the new graduates and their friends.



■ NEW YORK

This year, the nationwide Bible reading campaign — Bible Sunday — will be celebrated on Nov. 24. Dating back to 1900, this observance celebrates Bible work around the world and provides a way for churches to unite around the Bible's life-changing message of hope.

To help participating churches prepare for this special day, the Bible Society offers a complete package of activity guides for both chil-



JOHN COTE/JC CREATIVE SERVICES

Bible Sunday

"THE WORD OF OUR GOD ENDURES FOREVER" | *Isaiah 40:8*

dren and adults, bulletin inserts and testimonies of how God's Word has changed lives worldwide.

To order materials or for more information, please call 1-800-4SUNDAY (1-800-478-6329) or e-mail us at biblesundayinfo@americanbible.org.

■ TEXAS

The American Bible Society mourns the death of Eleanor Searle McCollum, a benefactor and honorary board member of the American Bible Society, who died on Aug. 12.

Mrs. McCollum, 93, a resident of Houston, Texas, was elected to the Bible Society board in 1963 and served until 1979, when she was elected an honorary member.

Invitation to Joy, her autobiography, describes her mission as a Christian woman dedicated to spreading the Gospel.

She met Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney, her

first husband, in New York City. That union ended in divorce, and she later married Leonard Franklin McCollum, a Houston businessman (now deceased).

Mrs. McCollum became a Christian after she attended a 1957 rally led by Dr. Billy Graham in New York's Madison Square Garden. Her public conversion transformed her life. She traveled the world in tourist class, being sure to get a middle seat so she could converse to fellow passengers about the joys of knowing Jesus.

She assisted the American Bible Society with generous contributions that underwrote a popular New Testament with a distinctive butterfly design on its cover and, in her latter years, assisted Bible-based literacy programs.

In an interview published in the *Record*, she said that she had one goal in her life: "I want to have all the people I speak to have the opportunity to know God personally."

Mrs. McCollum is survived by a son, Cornelius Searle Whitney, a grandson, Harry C. Whitney and two stepchildren, Frank McCollum Jr. and Olive McCollum Jenny. ❀



PETER FLUERNBERG

▲ **Eleanor McCollum holds a Butterfly New Testament in the Good News Translation that she underwrote for the American Bible Society.**

IN MEMORIAM

MEMORIALIZE A LOVED ONE BY HELPING TO PROVIDE BIBLES TO PEOPLE WHO DON'T YET HAVE ONE

Rev. Elwood Bertlett
Given by: David N. Persons

My Mother,
Mrs. Kathryn K. Carruth
Given by: Carolyn Prud'Homme

My Parents, Mr. and Mrs. William
and Dell Black
Given by: Alice Worley

My Parents,
William and Joyce Cobel
*Given by: Barbara Cobel Harvey and
Raymond Cobel*

Donald G. Coleman
Given by: Sally S. Tena

My Father,
Jere Lawrence Crook, Jr.
Given by: Senter Crook

Dr. Carrol C.
and Mrs. Marian Nelson
*Given by: The Estate of Dr. Carrol C.
Nelson*

Memorials of \$500 or more for one individual or family unit will be published in the American Bible Society Record.

For further details about the memorial program, please write to:

Donor Relations, American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York NY 10023-7505.

update

I N T E R N A T I O N A L



UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

▲ **Shohagi Uraw works by day and learns to read at night.**

▼ **These young Haitian men are learning the lessons of life by reading *Le Livre de Vie*.**



LARRY JERDEN/UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

■ BANGLADESH

By day, Shohagi Uraw, 25, works hard, building and repairing roads. By night, she heads over to her village church to learn to read and write. As part of the Bangladesh Bible Society's *Literacy Through Listening Groups* program, the church is running free literacy classes for women in the area.

Ms. Uraw studies with 11 other women who have had limited experience in reading. She has none; her family was poor and she had to start working at an early age, so missed out on her education. But her lifelong dream to attend school keeps her coming back night after night.

The group's facilitator, Rahela Bormon, uses a 34-cassette and 16-book program to help Ms. Uraw and others earn the Bengali alphabet and grammar, and has seen good progress.

As Ms. Uraw learns to read, she said that her own progress includes her Christian growth. "After listening to the Bible stories and reading them and singing about them in class, my spiritual life has really developed," she said with joy. "I am now truly leading my life according to what the Bible says."

■ HAITI

Thanks to an initiative funded by *Opportunity 21*, the partnership of Book of Hope International, Assemblies of God and the Haitian Bible Society,

thousands of children and young people in Haiti are receiving *Le Livre de Vie* (Book of Life) in French and Creole. The Book of Life contains the four Gospels plus study questions that apply the teachings of Jesus to the contemporary issues that concern youth.

At Collège Catherine Flon, a private school located at Carrefour, students received copies of both *Le Livre de Vie* and the New Testament. Student Julien Vladimir thought they made a good combination. "About some subjects, like sex, love and the family, *Le Livre de Vie* clarifies the New Testament," he said.

Another student, Simeon Dony, said he had never been prompted to consider Scripture seriously before. "I thought the New Testament was just a book like any other. ... I was very surprised to discover it had such an interesting message. I think that reading this book can help young people change their lives."

■ PALESTINE

Despite the obstacles of fear and even persecution, the lands of the Bible offer fertile ground for the Word of God. Spiritual hunger runs deep. And Palestinians like Jack, when touched by God's Word, in turn, touch others with Christ's message.

Jack, repeatedly arrested for his political activism, sat in a prison cell wondering if he was fighting the right fight because, despite his sacrifices, nothing seemed to change.

Slowly, his thoughts turned to one of his Christian neighbors. This neighbor reflected an inner peace that Jack desired but could not understand. So he contacted the neighbor, and over the next few weeks his neighbor explained to him the faith of the Christian Scriptures.

But it was when he began to read the Bible for himself that he found the peace for which he longed. After his release from prison, Jack joined a church in the Old City of Jerusalem

and continued to study the Bible.

Today, as an assistant pastor and part-time teacher at Bethlehem Bible College, Jack has given up the political struggle for a new one — preaching Jesus' message of peace.

"This city has a lot of spiritual heaviness, and Satan has a very strong hold over it," he said. "You could say that this is a spiritual battle for the hearts of the people. I want to help bring them to the Lord because only salvation can bring them real peace."

■ YEMEN

In a recent breakthrough for Bible work in Yemen, the government gave permission to the United Bible Societies (UBS) to bring Scriptures into the country for distribution. (According to published reports, more than 99 percent of its 18 million people are Muslim compared with 0.05 percent Christians, mostly expatriates.)

In response to a request from the Bible Society in the Gulf (BSGul), the UBS European Distribution Centre in Denmark delivered Bibles in various languages last summer to Christ Church in Aden. One of only two active

church buildings in the country, it was known as Aden's parish church while the country was under British rule. In 1967, after Yemen became independent, the church fell into disrepair. Now restored, its clergy and staff hold services and

run a medical clinic for the local community.

Babu Ganta, the Oman-based information officer of the BSGul, explained that the need for Bibles grew beyond the needs of the few Christian expatriate residents. "There is also a constant flow of seafarers visiting Aden," he said. "They are often away from home for long periods, feeling lonely and depressed. It is a great feeling if someone takes an interest in them and provides them with a copy of the Scriptures in their own language. It means a lot to them."

■ PALESTINE

The Living Stones student center, a Bible resource center and café for students and young people, is playing a valuable role in exposing young Palestinians to the Bible. The gathering place, now in its second year of operation, is a joint venture between the Palestinian Bible Society and the Bir Zeit Roman Catholic Church, and is funded through the *Opportunity 21* Scripture distribution program.

Living Stones serves as a second home for hundreds of students at Ramallah's Bir Zeit University. Staffed by a volunteer team of Palestinian Christian university students, the center serves nearly 100 students every evening. Visitors can browse through the Scripture materials and speak with Palestinian Christians about the Bible and other topics.

Volunteers at the Living Stones Center are also reaching out to a nearby village, where they recently began a program for local children. ■



BIBLE SOCIETY IN THE GULF

▲ Local Yemenites visit the medical center located at Christ Church in Aden. Following the Yemeni government's recent approval, the church also began accepting delivery of Bibles for distribution.



SWEDISH BIBLE SOCIETY

▲ To raise awareness of the Bible's relevance in contemporary society, the Swedish Bible Society places information posters in public places, including this bus stop in Uppsala. The poster highlights the text of 1 Timothy 5:18: "A worker should be given his pay."

quiet time

We hope you will use this guide in your daily study of the Bible, and that you will write to tell us what you think of this feature and how you use it.

OCTOBER

God's Word:

Source of Peace and Justice

- 1 Psalm 72
- 2 Psalm 85
- 3 Psalm 94
- 4 Psalm 97
- 5 Psalm 111

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

- 6 1 Corinthians 11.17-34
- 7 Exodus 23.1-13
- 8 Leviticus 19.1-18
- 9 Leviticus 19.19-37
- 10 Leviticus 25.1-17
- 11 Leviticus 25.18-34
- 12 Leviticus 25.35-55

SUNDAY

- 13 Numbers 27.1-11
- 14 Deuteronomy 5.1-21
- 15 Deuteronomy 15.1-18
- 16 Joshua 22.1-20
- 17 Joshua 22.21-34
- 18 Ruth 2.1-23
- 19 Isaiah 58.1-14

SUNDAY

- 20 Amos 5.1-27
- 21 Micah 2.1-13
- 22 Micah 3.1-12
- 23 Micah 4.1-13
- 24 Nahum 5.1-15
- 25 Zechariah 7.1-14
- 26 Zechariah 8.1-17

SUNDAY

- 27 Matthew 23.1-15
- 28 Matthew 23.16-36
- 29 Matthew 25.31-46
- 30 Luke 3.1-20
- 31 John 8.31-59

NOVEMBER

God's Word:

Source of Praise

- 1 1 Chronicles 16.1-13
- 2 1 Chronicles 16.14-36

SUNDAY

- 3 Deuteronomy 26.1-15
- 4 Daniel 4.28-37

- 5 Psalm 95

- 6 Psalm 96

- 7 Psalm 98

- 8 Psalm 99

- 9 Psalm 100

SUNDAY

- 10 Psalm 104

- 11 Psalm 112

- 12 Psalm 113

- 13 Psalm 116

- 14 Psalm 118

- 15 Psalm 126

- 16 Psalm 138

SUNDAY

- 17 Psalm 147

- 18 Psalm 148

- 19 Psalm 149

- 20 Psalm 150

- 21 Revelation 4.1-11

- 22 Revelation 5.1-14

- 23 Revelation 19.1-10

BIBLE SUNDAY

- *24 1 Timothy 4.1-16

- 25 2 Corinthians 8.1-15

- 26 2 Corinthians 8.16-24

- 27 2 Corinthians 9.1-15

THANKSGIVING DAY

- 28 Psalm 65

- 29 Psalm 66

- 30 Psalm 67

**National Bible Week is November*

24–December 1, 2002.

PLEASE PRAY

AZERBAIJAN – Pray for this former Soviet republic, which is experiencing economic hardship and high unemployment, and for refugees there, estimated at 10 percent of the country's population. Pray for the Hosanna children's program, an increase in Scripture distribution and for closer links between the Bible Society and local churches.

WEST BANK – Pray for peace in Palestine. The rise in violence in the West Bank has prompted the United Bible Societies to sponsor an emergency distribution of print and audio Scriptures for Palestinians.

CAMEROON – Give thanks that the New Testament is now available in four more Cameroon languages: Dii, Chambrá, Pidgin and Ghomálá'. Thank God that the complete Bible in the Tupuri, Masana, Gbaya and Bulu languages, and the New Testament in the Limbum language will be available soon. Pray that the new *Parole de Vie* Bible in French will have a significant impact in this country.

KAZAKHSTAN – Pray for an end to the war occurring west of the Kyrgyz republic. Give thanks for the translation of the New Testament into modern Kyrgyz and for the start of translation work on the Old Testament.

UZBEKISTAN – Thank God for the launching of the book of Proverbs in Uzbek. Please pray for the translation of the rest of the Old Testament into Uzbek and the New Testament in Karakalpak.

GOOD NEWS ON WHEELS

EVERY SUNDAY, THE REV. Guillermo Escobar Laura leaves home in a Bolivian town at 4:30 a.m. to take a taxi to a remote mountain path, a two-hour drive away. From there, he walks another hour, arriving at dawn in the village of Ancoraimes Lojrocachi, where he recently became pastor of a small church.

In ministering to the people there and other isolated places, Rev. Escobar finds that the most effective tools in his ministry are the *Faith Comes By Hearing* (FCBH) Scriptures on audio cassettes.

Stories of the cassettes' success abound. In Utavi, for example, a village on the shore of Lake Titicaca, an elderly man plagued by addictions to drugs and alcohol would regularly come to church with his wife. His drug problems continued — until he began listening to the tapes. The story of how Jesus cured the daughter of Jairus in Mark's Gospel moved the man to make major life changes. Even though he was in his late 60s, "his life was turned around completely — he stopped drinking," and continued to attend church services and the FCBH listening sessions, Rev. Escobar said.

According to Rev. Escobar, the audio Scriptures have revitalized the faith of the Christians in Utavi, so much so that they are visiting churches in neighboring villages to share their newly gained Bible knowledge.

Mr. Escobar uses the tapes to make an impact outside of church, too. When he travels by van to get to Utavi, he said, "I ask the drivers to play the Scripture tapes instead of the worldly music they usually play. They become interested in what they hear, and I then talk to them about the Lord."

It seemed that Rev. Escobar always ended up riding a van driven by Francisco Cahuaya. The driver and his wife, who collected fares from van passengers, would agree to



▲ Driver Francisco Cahuaya, right, was converted after the Rev. Guillermo Escobar Laura played the *Faith Comes by Hearing* Scripture tapes in his taxi van.

play the Scripture cassettes during the journey. They became increasingly interested as, each week, they and Rev. Escobar would listen to the tapes during their journey.

"I would always play the tape that we were scheduled to study in church the coming week," he said. "God touched their lives, and eventually their entire family came to church."

The tapes had such a strong impact on Mr. Cahuaya that he is now studying in a theological extension course.

The FCBH program in Bolivia, made possible through *Opportunity 21*, is a project sponsored jointly by the American Bible Society, the United Bible Societies and the Maclellan Foundation to translate and distribute Scriptures around the world.

Mr. Cahuaya's experience testifies to the value of *Faith Comes By Hearing*. "I used to play music in my taxi," he said, "but the first time I played the New Testament, I felt very good."

Before he became a Christian, Mr. Cahuaya felt alone in the world, "but now I feel I have a father who has power." ■

In the *Middle East* you can give the gift of *peace*.

"Peace I leave with you,
My peace I give to you ..."

John 14:27a, NKJV

The Lord longs for all people to know the peace that only He can give them. But in the Lands of the Bible, violence and destruction threaten peace ...

Israel suffers from terror, fear and unrest. In Iraq, tensions mount as global relations turn hostile.

Nowhere is God's message of love, hope and forgiveness needed more today than in this troubled region.

We need to bring the message of peace found in God's Word to the Middle East — to help change nations ... one life at a time!

Please join us in this important mission with your prayers and generous support.

Yes, Dr. Habecker, I want to help bring God's Word back to the land where the gospel was written.

Enclosed is my gift of: \$ _____

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