

GOD'S WORD WHERE NEEDED MOST

Record

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AMERICAN
BIBLE
SOCIETY



God's Word: *New Life for the World*



Dear Friends,

Across the country, we are celebrating the beauty of new life sprouting up all around us. For Christians, the new life of springtime pales in comparison to the new life that we celebrate at Easter.

In 2 Corinthians 5.17, the apostle Paul shows how the death and resurrection of Christ create newness of life for needy sinners. "Anyone who is joined to Christ is a new being; the old is gone, the new has come."

One important way this new life takes root in people is through the reading of God's Word. And by partnering with American Bible Society, you are helping sow these seeds of Scripture in cities and villages, here and around the world.

Last fall, Rita and I had the joy of seeing this work in person when we visited several Christian communities in China's mountainous Yunnan Province. During our visit, we were overwhelmed by the angelic singing of Chinese believers as they received the Bible.

And we'll never forget the joy with which these Chinese Christians recited John 3.16. They excitedly pointed to themselves whenever they said, "For God so loved the world . . ." Through the message of the Bible, they vividly grasped God's deep love for them!

As you'll read in this issue of *Record*, your faithful partnership makes it possible to translate the Bible for these Chinese believers, who have never engaged with God's Word in their heart language.

In addition to these testimonies from rural China, this magazine also shares how God's Word is spreading through two ministry partnerships. The End-to-End initiative continues to reach oral communities with God's Word through film and audio Bibles. And a recent partnership with the Catholic Church helped spark Bible Engagement at the 2015 World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia.

These stories of new life would not be possible without your support. Thank you for generously sharing the life-changing message of the Bible with those who need it the most.

Join me in praying for spiritual growth as God's Word reaches the ends of the earth!

Serving Together,

Roy L. Peterson
President & CEO, American Bible Society

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Record

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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 the United Bible Societies, a partnership of the Bible Societies throughout the world cooperating to make Scriptures available to people everywhere in their own language.

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A New Chapter for the Bible in Mongolia

Growing up in Mongolia, Bayar Garam didn't know a single Christian. As a closed communist country, the Mongolian government controlled everything from religion to the press.

"We were exactly like North Korea is today," explains Garam.

That all changed in 1991. Communist reign in Mongolia ended, and Christian missionaries entered the country for the first time in 70 years. "The number of Christians grew . . . from zero to 50,000-60,000 Christians

today," says Garam. In 1992, Garam became a Christian and attended the very first Christian church in Mongolia.

Despite Christianity's enormous advances in Mongolia—a country of nearly 3 million people—Garam says there is still much work to be done.

"A country with a young Christian Church needs a lot," he says. At the top of Garam's list is a version of the Bible more accessible to the average Mongolian Christian.

That's why Garam is managing the production of a new Bible translation in Mongolia—the Mongolian Standard Version. This new translation will be the first Mongolian Bible translated directly from Hebrew and Greek, and will supplant a handful of hard-to-read translations currently on the market. As Bayar explains, "It will be a translation more clear, accurate and understandable for the readers."

Although the project's finish line is 12 years away, Garam feels well supported by American Bible Society's financial partners as he leads this monumental project.

"When American Bible Society says, 'We are behind you . . . and will be praying for you,' that takes a huge burden off of me," he says.



Bayar Garam and his team of four translators recently began translating the Old Testament for the new Mongolian Standard Version Bible.

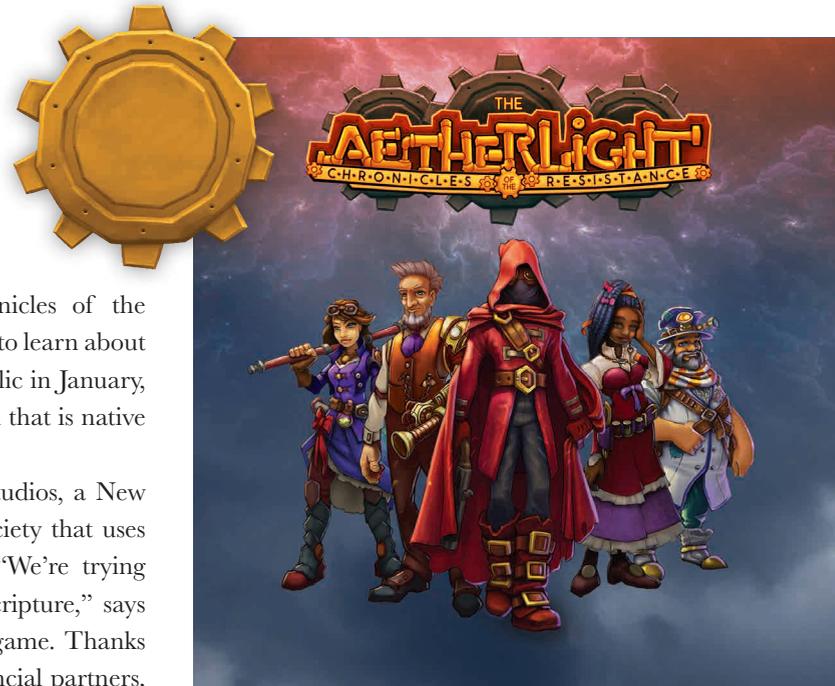
To support other Bible translation projects like this one, visit ABSRecord.com/Translation.

National Update

Video Game Helps Kids Engage with Scripture

A new videogame, “The Aetherlight: Chronicles of the Resistance,” provides a digital platform for kids to learn about the Bible. The game, which opened to the public in January, shares the biblical narrative through a medium that is native and accessible to a digital generation.

The game was created by Scarlet City Studios, a New Zealand-based partner of American Bible Society that uses digital media to tell stories of redemption. “We’re trying to connect young people with the story of Scripture,” says Tim Cleary, who wrote the story behind the game. Thanks to support from American Bible Society’s financial partners, youth are now able to immerse themselves in the biblical story in a fresh, interactive way.



To play the game, visit TheAetherlight.com.

New Partnership Reaches Youth with the Bible

The 2015 “Teens & Bible Engagement” survey revealed that teenagers are more open to the message of the Bible before they hit their twenties, even though actual Bible reading among teenagers remains low. That’s why American Bible Society recently began a partnership with YoungLife, a Christian youth organization. American Bible Society helped cast vision for increased Bible engagement among teenagers at a large regional YoungLife meeting in late 2015.

“Research shows young people are engaging with the Bible less than they ever have,” explains Arthur Satterwhite, senior manager of youth and millennial engagement for American Bible Society. “Our partnership with YoungLife will help overcome that barrier.” American Bible Society and YoungLife have started developing a mobile app to spark Bible engagement among teens. Please pray that this new partnership will impact youth with God’s Word.



Photo credits: Scarlet City Studios, YoungLife.

Leaders Gather to Strengthen U.S. Cities through Scripture

Last fall, God’s Word had a voice at Movement Day 2015 in New York City. The annual gathering of urban Christian leaders seeks to heal the spiritual wounds of U.S. cities through collaboration in ministry, business and the arts. American Bible Society provided a special Scripture-based devotional journey for conference participants, encouraging them to follow God as they lead their urban communities.

“No ministry and no church can address the challenges of a city alone,” says New York City Leadership



Center President Craig Sider. “It’s remarkable what God is doing in cities through Movement Day.” Please pray that God’s Word continues to fuel the innovative ministry partnerships formed through Movement Day.

For more information about Movement Day, visit MovementDay.com.

Annual Bible Celebration Launches for U.S. Catholics

Building on partnership with American Bible Society during the World Meeting of Families, the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops launched a National Bible Week in November 2015. The Conference invites “families, parishes, schools and other Catholic groups,” to participate in this annual celebration of God’s Word. This year’s theme was “The Bible: A Book for the Family.”

“I don’t think there has been a more exciting time in the history of the Catholic Church to be a Catholic,” says Alicia DeFrangé, manager of Catholic ministries programs for American Bible Society. DeFrangé says the example of Pope Francis is helping spur Bible engagement among Catholics in the United States. Please pray that God would use this new initiative to speak through his Word in the Catholic Church.

For more information about our partnership with the Catholic Church, visit ABS.US/CatholicMinistries.

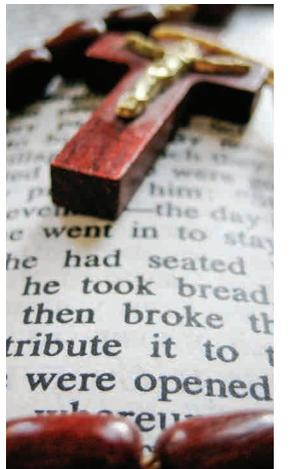
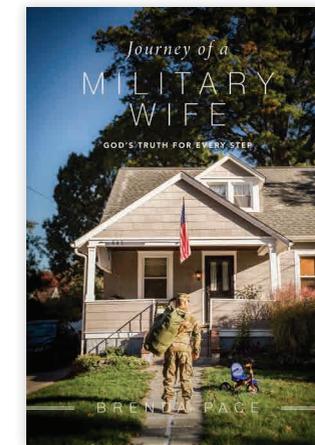


Photo credits: NYCLC, Chris Sloan CC 2.0., Book cover design by Jordan Grove.



New Devotional Book Ministers to Military Wives

American Bible Society is helping launch a new devotional book for military wives. “Journey of a Military Wife: God’s Truth for Every Step” was written by Brenda Pace, a military wife for 28 years. “Everybody has assignments they don’t like,” says Pace. “But often those are the very places where we see God’s faithfulness the most.”

The devotions cover a whole range of topics from the Bible, such as faith, hope, love and contentment. There is also a Bible study companion kit for small groups. “My hope is that this book will encourage you in your own journey,” says Pace. Thanks to the generous support of American Bible Society’s financial partners, military spouses are finding encouragement in God’s Word through the ups and downs of deployment.

To order a free copy of the book, visit ABS.US/MilitaryWives.

International Update



CHINA: 30 Years of Printing God's Word

Amity Printing Company, which is the only authorized printer of Bibles for China, celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2015. Since its founding, Amity Printing Company has grown into one of the largest Bible printing presses in the world, producing a total of 140 million Bibles—70 million for mainland China and 70 million for other countries. American Bible Society President and CEO Roy Peterson and his wife, Rita, attended the celebration event in November.

“The way for the church in China to be good and healthy

is to have better access to the Bible,” says Peterson.

The number of Christians in China has been steadily growing. Estimates indicate that there are about 100 million believers in China. Through Amity Printing Company, these new Christians will have access to God's Word in a language and format they understand.

To read more updates about how God is working around the world, visit [Facebook.com/AmericanBible](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanBible).



ETHIOPIA: New Bible Translation Reaches Waiting Christians

A new Bible translation was recently completed for Ethiopia's Tigray people group, whose heart language is Tigrigna. Although other Bible translations circulated within the Tigray community for a decade, Tigrigna speakers could not understand them. But thanks to the new Tigrigna Bible translation, 4.5 million Tigray people now have access to God's Word in a dialect they clearly understand.

“The people of Tigray [now] . . . have the Holy Bible in their mother tongue,” says Project Coordinator of the Tigrigna Bible translation Endrias Kacharo. “The Bible Society of Ethiopia expresses its deepest appreciation and gratitude to all who have contributed to the success of this work.” Kacharo specifically expressed thanks to American Bible Society's financial partners for helping Ethiopian Christians access the Bible in a language that speaks to their hearts.



ECUADOR: The Bible Brings Hope and a Future

In Ecuador, more than 20 percent of the population is functionally illiterate. For many of these men and women, it is difficult to break the cycle of poverty or exercise their rights as citizens. That's why United Bible Societies in Ecuador (UBSEC), with support from American Bible Society's financial partners, has implemented a Bible-based literacy program for key people groups within the country.

Bible Societies have mobilized churches to facilitate reading groups, providing their communities with both literacy skills and hope from the Word of God. Many of the reading group participants are vulnerable women from isolated areas. By learning how to read, people are empowered in their communities and encouraged by new knowledge of a God who loves them.

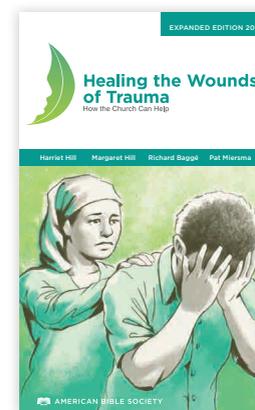
WORLD ASSEMBLY: Bible Societies Plan for a Future of Bible Ministry

Representatives from Bible Societies around the world will gather in Philadelphia this May for the United Bible Societies (UBS) World Assembly. The event, which coincides with American Bible Society's Bicentennial Celebration, will bring together Bible Society leaders to celebrate God's faithfulness in the past and plan for a future of Bible ministry. UBS, which is comprised of 147 Bible Societies, serves more than 200 countries around the globe.

“The 2016 World Assembly is taking place at a very special time,” says American Bible Society President and CEO Roy Peterson. “May 2016 marks the 200th anniversary of American Bible Society and the 70th anniversary of United Bible Societies. In 1946, Bible Society leaders from 13 countries, including the United States, agreed to work together more closely, giving birth to this very strategic Fellowship we enjoy today.”



To read more stories about how the Bible is changing lives around the world, visit [ABS.US/News](https://www.abs.us/news).



MISSION TRAUMA HEALING: Pointing Hurting People to the Bible

In January, American Bible Society published a new edition of “Healing the Wounds of Trauma”—the flagship text behind its Scripture Engagement trauma healing ministry. First published in 2013, it now includes four new chapters on domestic abuse, suicide, addictions and disaster relief. The new content was added to address the specific needs of partners who use the book to minister to wounded commu-

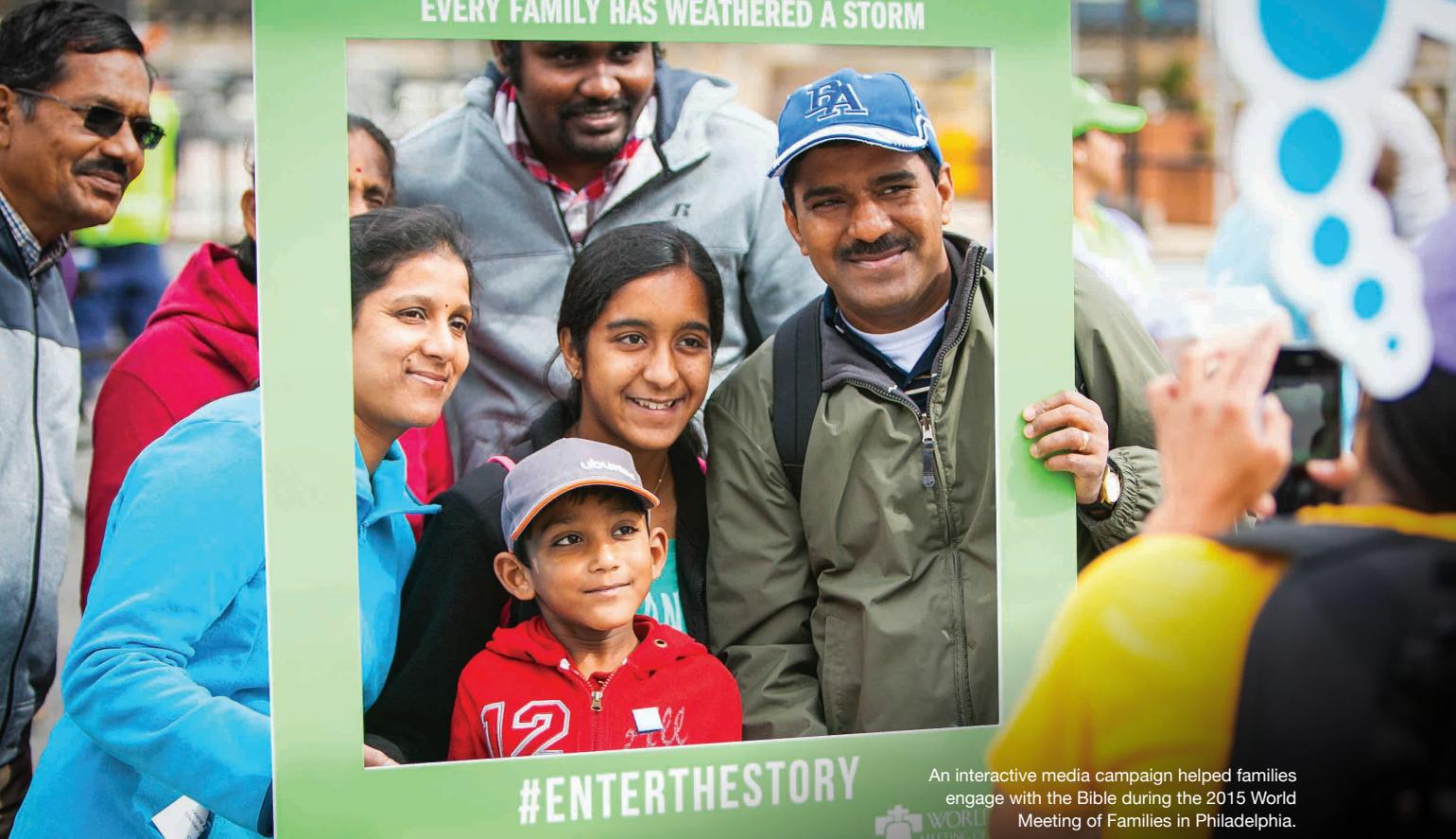
nities around the world.

The 2016 edition of “Healing the Wounds of Trauma” also adds more than 50 new Scripture references, strengthening the biblical foundation of American Bible Society's trauma healing curriculum.

Please pray that people will find healing for their spiritual wounds as they engage with God's Word through this initiative.

Photo credits: United Bible Societies courtesy of China Partnership, Bible Society of Ethiopia.

Photo credits: United Bible Societies in Ecuador, Norwegian Bible Society / Bert Olsen, Book cover design by Peter Edman.



THE FAMILY'S FIRM FOUNDATION

God's Word united global families during the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia.

On Sept. 27, 2015, Philadelphia's Benjamin Franklin Parkway looked a little bit like heaven. The long stretch of road, normally jammed with honking cars and bustling pedestrians, burst at the seams with something resembling the throng of believers from Revelation 7.9—"a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language."

Tens of thousands of pilgrims had gathered for the World Meeting of Families—a week of Christian teaching about the family and society. Coinciding

with Pope Francis' first visit to the United States, the 2015 World Meeting of Families drew the eyes of the world to Philadelphia during one unforgettable week in September.

God's Word was in the middle of it all, thanks to a collaboration between American Bible Society and the Roman Catholic Church. With support from financial partners, American Bible Society developed two key outreaches for the World Meeting of Families: a multimedia Scripture Engagement campaign in Philadelphia and a custom Scripture Portion of Luke's Gospel for half a million Catholics around the world.

Photo credits: Andrew Hood.

"This was a chance for us to share God's Word in a collaborative and winsome way," says Jason Malec, managing director of national ministries for American Bible Society. "We wanted to positively impact people's perception of the Bible and also engage people very actively in the Bible," explains Malec, referring to the Scripture Engagement campaign in Philadelphia.

The multimedia campaign hinged on a single phrase: "Enter the Story." More than 600 custom billboards, train advertisements and bus wraps called passersby in Philadelphia to connect their family's unique story with God's story in Scripture. The ads pointed to a custom website where visitors could engage with Scripture passages and devotionals, all organized around family-related themes.

"When I first saw the image on the back of the bus, I thought it was advertising an HBO special. The quality was the same," says Philadelphia resident Nate Bowman-Johnston. "But when I saw the American Bible Society logo, I realized this was a Bible campaign. It made me think again about what the Bible has to say about my family situation."

Supplementing the media campaign, American Bible Society's second key ministry initiative during the World Meeting of Families offered a more direct

"We wanted to positively impact people's perception of the Bible." —JASON MALEC

outlet for Scripture Engagement. Half a million Scripture Portions—Luke's Gospel translated into six languages—were distributed during the conference in Philadelphia and through shipments to Congo, Cuba, Vietnam, Australia and France, five territories with a strong Catholic presence.

Among the recipients of these Scripture Portions was a Damascus family who witnessed the atrocities of the war in Syria.

"This important gesture . . . expresses the meaning of the World Meeting of Families," says Archbishop Paglia, referring to these particular recipients. "The good news of God's mercy is announced to families; families are charged to bring this gospel [into] their own cities."

Another prominent Catholic leader, Archbishop of Philadelphia Charles J. Chaput, expressed thanks for American Bible Society's willingness to serve the worldwide body of Christ.

"The interconfessional pillar of American Bible Society permitted us to enter into a great partnership to serve our church," says Chaput.

With support from American Bible Society's financial partners, this partnership helped proclaim God's Word during the 2015 World Meeting of Families. Equipped with the hope of Scripture, Christian



American Bible Society distributed half a million custom Scripture Portions to Catholic communities around the world.

families who attended the festivities in Philadelphia will continue to share the good news of the gospel in their home communities.

"Scripture is the center of our lives as practicing Catholics," says one Canadian man who journeyed to World Meeting of Families with his wife and four children. "We really want to take God's Word and share it . . . spread it as best we can."

Jack Newman is a writer at American Bible Society and managing editor of *Record* magazine.

To bring the healing power of God's Word to those who need it most, visit ABSRecord.com/GiveABible.

PRAY AROUND THE WORLD



Bible Societies around the world are helping to spread God’s message of hope and love with those who need it most. Here are prayer requests from a select group of Bible Societies that ask you to lift them up in prayer.

Uganda

Building on its Bible-based trauma healing program for oral cultures, American Bible Society’s partners in Uganda are launching audio trauma healing programs for broadcast via radio and mobile phones. Through this program, Ugandans will soon be able to connect with God’s Word in a brand new way. Please pray that the people of Uganda will encounter the healing power of the Bible through this audio program.

Egypt

Bible Society of Egypt continues to open Christian bookstores in the Ain Shams area—a very poor part of Greater Cairo where thousands of Christians live. Please pray that these bookstores will be a beacon of light in the darkness, providing access to God’s Word for a region desperately in need of hope.

Germany

In 2017, churches around the world will commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. German Bible Society is preparing for this historic milestone by producing a Martin Luther-themed Bible in one of Germany’s most popular Scripture translations. The Bible will launch on Reformation Day in October 2016. Please pray that this project would help spark a renewed interest in Bible study among the German people.

South Africa

Please ask God to bless a Bible-based literacy program for disadvantaged children hosted by Bible Society of South Africa. There are currently 15–20 million adults in South Africa who are not functionally literate; this program educates the next generation of South Africans while sharing God’s Word.

Bolivia

Domestic violence—physical, psychological and sexual—against teenagers and children is increasingly common in Bolivia, where more than half of the population is under the age of 24. Pray that victims of sexual violence and abuse would find spiritual healing and that all parents would love and nurture their children. Lift up Bolivian Bible Society as they share the hope of God’s Word with hurting families in Bolivia.

Nepal

Almost one year has passed since a devastating earthquake struck Nepal in April 2015. Although damages from more recent earthquakes have been minor by comparison, Nepal Bible Society is still working to share the hope of the Bible with suffering people in Nepal. Please pray that Nepal’s residents will find strength in God’s Word as they continue to wait for their lives to return to normal.

You can join our online prayer community at [Facebook.com/CircleOfPrayer](https://www.facebook.com/CircleOfPrayer).



Jane Jelgerhuis visited Iraq at the end of 2015 to research future trauma healing programs in the Middle East.

When American Bible Society launched its Bible-based trauma healing program in the Middle East, the first issue to capture my heart was the exploitation and abuse of women at the hands of cruel and deviant men, especially within the Islamic State. Perhaps it’s because I’ve seen so many hurting women, especially in Africa, find reconciliation and forgiveness by claiming the promises of Scripture for themselves.

But when I visited Iraq at the end of 2015, God showed me something new. I had never stopped to wonder what it was like for the husbands and fathers of these women to endure the knowledge that they were rendered helpless—completely unable to protect their daughters from evil. In Iraq, I came face to face with many brokenhearted men who had no control over the fate of the beloved women in their lives. One of the men I remember most vividly is Rahim.*

Rahim lives in a tiny fiberglass crate. He invited me into his makeshift home for tea; he wanted to tell me his story. Seated on thin cushions on the floor, he told me that his wife and three daughters had been captured by ISIS and sold into slavery. His youngest daughter is only six. As he shared, Rahim’s agony and desperation stirred me to the core. He was alone and helpless, visibly traumatized. “Even if I had the \$5,000 each needed to ransom them,” he wailed, “where would I find them?”

*Names have been changed to protect the identity of our brothers and sisters in the Middle East.

I couldn’t comprehend what horrors Rahim must be feeling. Listening to him, I thought of my father and my husband. How would they respond if my daughters and I were kidnapped and sold as slaves? The thought is unimaginable.

Although we live a world apart, Rahim is my brother. His wife and daughters are my sisters. This suffering family vividly reminded me of the urgent need for Bible-based trauma healing in the Middle East. Sharing the restoration narrative of the gospel with people whose lives are so wounded is a daunting, desperately needed task.

Because we serve a God who understands suffering and works all things together for good, we persevere, refusing to let cynicism and anger win the day. We will bring his Word to the traumatized and let the glorious words of Scripture soothe and restore. Obeying the great commission of Jesus, we continue to go into the world with God’s Word in hand—hard places included.

Jane Jelgerhuis is managing director of American Bible Society’s trauma healing program.

To bring the healing power of God’s Word to those who need it most, visit [ABSRecord.com/TraumaHealing](https://www.ABSRecord.com/TraumaHealing).



QUIET TIME

“Yes, grass withers and flowers fade, but the word of our God endures forever.”

Isaiah 40.8 (GNT)

Give Voice to Your Values

It’s all too easy to look at estate planning as a mere transfer of your material possessions. Many estate planners think this way, itemizing your assets and fixating on technical tax provisions without ever scratching the surface of your heart by asking questions such as:

- **What about your family values?**
- **What about your spiritual beliefs?**
- **What about your passion to share God’s Word with the world?**

American Bible Society has served thousands of financial partners in comprehensive gift planning. When done well, this process helps people of faith create estate plans that give voice to the principles they hold most dear.

By working with an American Bible Society Regional Advisor on your estate plan, you can help leave a legacy of Christian stewardship for generations to come.

To learn more about how American Bible Society can help you during the estate planning process:



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800-549-3328



Email:

GiftPlanner@AmericanBible.org



Visit:

www.ABSGift.org

MAY

God’s Word of Spiritual Renewal

Pascha (Orthodox Easter)

- 1 Isaiah 6.1-13
- 2 Isaiah 61.1-11
- 3 Jeremiah 1.1-19
- 4 Psalm 47

Ascension Day (Western Churches) & National Day of Prayer

- 5 Acts 1.1-26
- 6 1 Corinthians 12.1-11
- 7 1 Corinthians 14.1-25

- 8 Ezekiel 1.1–2.1
- 9 Ezekiel 2.2-10
- 10 Ezekiel 37.1-28
- 11 Joel 1.1-20
- 12 Joel 2.1-17
- 13 Joel 2.18-32
- 14 Joel 3.1-21

Pentecost (Western Churches)

- 15 Acts 2.1-21
- 16 Acts 2.22-47
- 17 Acts 3.1-26
- 18 Acts 4.1-22
- 19 Acts 4.23-37
- 20 Acts 6.1-15
- 21 Acts 7.1-22

- 22 Acts 7.23-43
- 23 Acts 7.44–8.3
- 24 Acts 8.4-25
- 25 Acts 8.26-40
- 26 Acts 26.1-32
- 27 Acts 27.1-38
- 28 Acts 27.39–28.15

- 29 Acts 28.16-31
- 30 John 15.18–16.15
- 31 John 16.16-33

JUNE

God’s Word of Hope

- 1 Romans 15.1-13
- 2 1 Corinthians 15.1-11
- 3 1 Corinthians 15.12-34
- 4 1 Corinthians 15.35-58

- 5 1 Peter 1.1-25
- 6 1 Peter 2.1-25
- 7 1 Peter 3.1-22
- 8 1 Peter 4.1-19

Ascension Day (Eastern Churches)

- 9 1 Peter 5.1-14
- 10 2 Peter 1.1-21
- 11 2 Peter 2.1-22

- 12 2 Peter 3.1-18
- 13 Isaiah 25.1-9
- 14 Isaiah 26.1-19
- 15 Isaiah 35.1-10
- 16 Isaiah 40.1-31
- 17 Isaiah 42.1-25
- 18 Isaiah 49.1-26

Pentecost (Eastern Churches)

- 19 Isaiah 51.1-23
- 20 Isaiah 52.1-12
- 21 Isaiah 54.1-17
- 22 Isaiah 55.1-13
- 23 Isaiah 56.1-12
- 24 Jeremiah 29.1-23
- 25 Jeremiah 30.1-24

- 26 Jeremiah 31.1-22
- 27 Jeremiah 31.23-40
- 28 Jeremiah 33.1-26
- 29 Psalm 31
- 30 Hebrews 6.13–7.14

JULY

God’s Word of Faith

- 1 Hebrews 7.15-28
- 2 Hebrews 8.1-13
- 3 Hebrews 9.1-22
- 4 Hebrews 9.23–10.18
- 5 Hebrews 10.19-39
- 6 Hebrews 11.1-21
- 7 Hebrews 11.22-40
- 8 Hebrews 12.1-11
- 9 Hebrews 12.12-29

- 10 Ephesians 1.1-23
- 11 Ephesians 2.1-22
- 12 Ephesians 3.1-21
- 13 Ephesians 4.1-16
- 14 Ephesians 4.17-32
- 15 Ephesians 5.1-20
- 16 Ephesians 5.21–6.4

- 17 Ephesians 6.10-24
- 18 Philippians 1.1-30
- 19 Philippians 2.1-30
- 20 Philippians 3.1-21
- 21 Philippians 4.1-23
- 22 1 Thessalonians 1.1-10
- 23 1 Thessalonians 2.1-16

- 24 1 Thessalonians 2.17–3.13
- 25 1 Thessalonians 4.1-18
- 26 1 Thessalonians 5.1-28
- 27 2 Thessalonians 1.1-12
- 28 2 Thessalonians 2.1-17
- 29 2 Thessalonians 3.1-18
- 30 Matthew 15.21-39
- 31 Matthew 16.1-12

AUGUST

God’s Word of Promise

- 1 Genesis 28.1-22
- 2 Genesis 35.1-15
- 3 Exodus 40.1-38
- 4 Deuteronomy 1.1-33
- 5 Deuteronomy 4.1-14
- 6 Deuteronomy 4.15-40

- 7 Deuteronomy 5.1-22
- 8 Deuteronomy 5.23-33
- 9 Deuteronomy 7.1-26
- 10 Deuteronomy 8.1-20
- 11 Deuteronomy 9.1-29
- 12 Deuteronomy 10.1-22
- 13 Deuteronomy 11.1-32

- 14 Deuteronomy 12.1-32
- 15 Deuteronomy 26.1-19
- 16 Deuteronomy 27.1-26
- 17 Deuteronomy 28.1-14
- 18 Deuteronomy 29.1-29
- 19 Deuteronomy 30.1-20
- 20 Joshua 6.1-27

- 21 Joshua 21.43–22.9
- 22 Joshua 22.10-34
- 23 Joshua 23.1-16
- 24 Joshua 24.1-18
- 25 Joshua 24.19-33
- 26 Judges 13.1-25
- 27 Judges 15.9-20

- 28 Numbers 6.1-27
- 29 Isaiah 29.15-24
- 30 Isaiah 43.1-28
- 31 Zephaniah 3.1-20

Photo credit: ThinkStockPhotos.com.

Tell us how reading the Bible has impacted your life. [ABS.US/MaterialsFeedback](https://www.ABS.US/MaterialsFeedback).

“Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path.” –PSALM 119:105 (GNT)



CHINA'S MOUNTAIN CHURCH

In southwest China, half a million Christians are waiting for God's Word in their heart language.

Wang Xiufang has experienced a lot of change during her 91 years on earth. Over the course of her lifetime, she witnessed the rise and fall of Mao's

Cultural Revolution in China. She and her husband founded one of the first Christian churches for the Miao people in rural Yunnan Province, gathering 50 believers in their tiny mud home. And for 14 years, Wang raised six children while her husband was jailed for his Christian faith.

Although she has endured much upheaval in her lifetime, Wang begins every day in the same way: She takes a seat on her front porch, cracks open a large, weather-beaten Bible and begins to read.

It's a predictable ritual; amid the geese and goats that scuttle through their village, Wang's neighbors know where to find her. But in Yunnan—a mountainous, agrarian province in southwest China—Wang's daily Bible reading is not just predictable, it's a miracle. For the farmers of Yunnan, finding a Bible to read is not an easy task.

Photos courtesy of UBS China Partnership.

Waiting for God's Word

This difficulty stems from one of Yunnan's great assets—its diversity. Yunnan is home to more minority ethnic groups than any other province in China. Of the 800,000 Christians in Yunnan, 85 percent speak one of the various minority languages used in southwest China. These Christians get little use from China's widely accessible Mandarin Bible translation and are still waiting to access God's Word in their heart languages.

At the end of 2015, President and CEO of American Bible Society Roy Peterson visited several minority people groups in Yunnan Province with his wife, Rita.

"These minority language groups are alive and well, though living their lives marginalized from the national language and education," says Peterson. "To experience the hope of the gospel, these people groups need God's Word in their heart language."

That's why American Bible Society has been working with United Bible Societies China Partnership since 2000 to translate the Bible into seven of Yunnan's minority languages and to distribute Bibles throughout Yunnan's

mountain communities. By rejecting a one-language-fits-all approach to Bible translation and distribution in China, American Bible Society and its partners are seeing God's Word become available and alive for faithful believers in Yunnan.

"When minority people groups hear the Bible in Mandarin, it's as though a teacher is speaking to them," says Program Coordinator for China Partnership Ng Hwee Hong. "But when they hear the Bible in their own tongue, it's as though their mother and father are speaking to them."

For believers in Yunnan to hear the voice of their heavenly Father in this way, they typically need three things: an accessible Bible translation, an ability to read the Scriptures for themselves and ongoing access to qualified Bible teachers.

Telling it on the Mountain

Meeting Yunnan's unique spiritual needs starts with Bible translation work. But most ethnic minorities in the province are subsistence farmers. They rely on resources from American Bible Society's financial partners to provide the



Dressed in celebratory garb, women smile as they receive copies of the New Testament in their heart language of White Yi. There are approximately 60,000 White Yi Christians in Yunnan Province today.

"To experience the hope of the gospel, these people groups need God's Word in their heart language." -ROY PETERSON

support and technology for efficient Bible translation work that simply would not be available otherwise.

And even as translators in Yunnan attend to God's Word, they do not leave the cares of their daily toil behind them. "It is challenging as I need to tend the farm three to four times a year during the sowing and reaping season," says leader of the White Yi translation team Li Wanxing.

Li is one of 60,000 Christians in China who speak White Yi. Until now, his people have never had a Bible in their heart language.

"But by God's grace, we did it," he says of the translation project. In early 2015, more than 300 White Yi Christians donned their traditional, rainbow-colored costumes to celebrate the launch of the White Yi New Testament.

Li could not be happier to see his fellow White Yi people encounter God on the pages of Scripture.

"It means a lot for us to have God's Word translated and expressed in our own language," he says. "It is not enough for us to only listen to God's Word, we need to read it too."

But for poor agricultural workers, the ability to read—even one's own heart language—is not a given. Minority languages like White Yi are not taught in local schools. That's why a second component to Bible ministry in Yunnan is Scripture-based literacy classes, so that minority people groups can learn to read the Bible with relative ease.

Perhaps the greatest beneficiaries of these literacy classes are the children of Yunnan, who are now receiving an education in their cultural heritage and in the story of the Bible.



In November 2015, President & CEO of American Bible Society Roy Peterson and his wife, Rita, visited several Christian communities in rural Yunnan Province, including the home of Wang Xiufang, a Miao-speaking Christian.

A PERFECT MATCH

BY PARTNERING FINANCIALLY WITH AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY, ONE COUPLE COMBINES THEIR LOVE FOR THE BIBLE WITH THEIR LOVE FOR THE WORLD.



To help pastors navigate the mountainous terrain in southwest China, American Bible Society and its partners have provided motorcycles to 14 traveling country preachers.

“I thought I knew what the Bible said in Chinese. But when I read it in Miao, I realized that I didn’t actually know what it said.” –MIAO TRANSLATOR

“The church can use [the New Testament] to teach our young people the language,” says church elder Li Wangsan. “Our children are coming to church after they finish school in the afternoon to learn the White Yi language.”

And when it comes to ongoing Bible education in Yunnan, the adults don’t get left out. As a third step to making the Bible come alive in Yunnan, Bible Societies are mobilizing Christian preachers to bring God’s Word to the rural villages scattered throughout the mountains of southwest China.

Specifically, 14 preachers have been outfitted with motorcycles, which help them more easily navigate the rough terrain of Yunnan. Trips between multiple churches that used to take 5–6 hours on foot now only take 1–2 hours via motorbike, says Ng of United Bible Societies China Partnership.

The Bible Comes Alive

While there is still much work to be done in Yunnan, God’s Word is already bearing much fruit as ethnic minorities read the Bible in their

heart languages for the very first time.

“I thought I knew what the Bible said in Chinese,” says a Miao translator. “But when I read it in Miao, I realized that I didn’t actually know what it said.” And testimonies like this are not uncommon.

“Minority people always tell us how blessed they are to have the Bible in their own mother tongue,” says Ng. “It greatly benefits the people of God.”

Thanks to the faithful financial partners of American Bible Society, Bible-readers like Wang Xiufang are increasingly common in Yunnan. As God’s Word continues to spread throughout China, more Christians will join her every morning, opening newly translated Bibles in their own homes to encounter God in the pages of Scripture.

Jack Newman is a writer at American Bible Society and managing editor of *Record* magazine.

To help bring God’s Word to waiting Christians in China, visit, ABSRecord.com/China.

Elmer and Winifred Wall’s courtship was like something out of a classic romance movie. After their paths crossed at Goshen College in Indiana, Elmer stayed in Indiana to pastor a church and Winifred moved to Missouri to minister to youth. One day, she received a letter in the mail from Elmer. He wanted to go on a date. With 600 miles between them, a long-distance relationship commenced. “We had a letter-writing romance,” recalls Winifred of those early years.

They continued to serve the Lord in their separate ministries, but it didn’t take long for Elmer and Winifred to tire of the distance between them. “In two years, we were married, and I became a minister’s wife,” says Winifred.

Thanks to that initial encounter in New York, Elmer and Winifred have seen their faithful donations fund Bible distribution in places like Southeast Asia, China and Central America.

“In the period of several years, we’ve been able to be a small part of mission work around the world,” says



“We’ve been able to be a small part of mission work around the world. It’s something that ordinary people can be a part of.” –WINIFRED WALL

According to Elmer, Winifred was an excellent fit for the job. “Winifred was always very much involved in the work of the church: directing choirs, playing violin, visiting the sick and raising a family,” says Elmer.

But as devoted as they were to their local faith community, Elmer and Winifred always had a heart for God’s work around the world. As Winifred explains, “We’re interested in overseas missions. It’s so delightful, what’s happening across the ocean.”

That’s why Elmer and Winifred partnered with American Bible Society—to share God’s Word with people around the world who need it most.

“Both of us have always thought the Bible is very important and overseas missions is very important,” says Elmer. “American Bible Society combines both. We like that.”

Elmer first heard about American Bible Society in 1952, when he was ministering to a camp of migrant farmers in New York state. “A representative of American Bible Society came and said they could provide Bibles for us to distribute in the camp,” says Elmer. “That impressed me very much.”

Winifred. “It’s something that . . . ordinary people can be a part of.”

Although decades have passed since they courted through the mail, the romance between Elmer and Winifred is stronger than ever thanks to their steady reliance on God’s Word. “We have a tradition of reading together at the breakfast table and then again at night,” says Winifred.

And as Elmer looks back on their life of ministry together, including 45 years in pastoral ministry, he is thankful that their partnership with American Bible Society has enabled them to share God’s Word with the world—from a camp in New York to villages in China. “We could distribute the Scriptures in a wonderful way,” he says. “I’ve never forgotten that.”

Jack Newman is a writer at American Bible Society and managing editor of *Record* magazine.

You can also share the Bible with people around the world. Visit ABSRecord.com/GiveABible.



Through the End-to-End program, communities gather for listening sessions around portable audio Bibles called "Proclaimers."

HEARING, READING & BELIEVING

A dynamic Bible partnership is transforming lives with God's Word, one village at a time.

Nanaka lives in a community bound to the traditions of his ancestors. In his village, nestled among towering mountains in northern Tanzania, men marry multiple wives. Children work instead of attending school.

But in the past year, this way of life has begun to change.

It all started when Nanaka and his neighbors attended a showing of "The JESUS® Film," a portrayal of the Gospel of Luke that has been translated into more than 1,300 languages. As Nanaka and his friends watched Jesus hang upon the cross—and listened to him speak in their heart language of Maasai—they

were captivated. It was the first time they had encountered the gospel message.

By watching the film, Nanaka and his neighbors were participating in stage one of a three-phase evangelism model called End-to-End. First established by American Bible Society and its partners in 2007, End-to-End shares the gospel through three methods of Bible engagement: "The JESUS® Film" screenings, Faith Comes By Hearing® Scripture listening groups and Bible reading groups. All three phases are led by local Bible Society partners around the world.

Now active in 11 countries, End-to-End serves oral communities like Nanaka's, in which

culture is passed on through storytelling and spoken word. The film and listening components of End-to-End fit within the learning environment of these oral cultures.

Once participants have faithfully listened to at least 60 percent of the New Testament, they receive their own copy of the Bible, thanks to American Bible Society's generous financial partners. This approach equips all people—regardless of their literacy level and cultural background—to encounter Christ in the pages of Scripture.

"The idea is to meet people where they are, geographically and in their life's journey," says Erle Deira, American Bible Society's director of accelerated translation.

End-to-End: A Proven Process

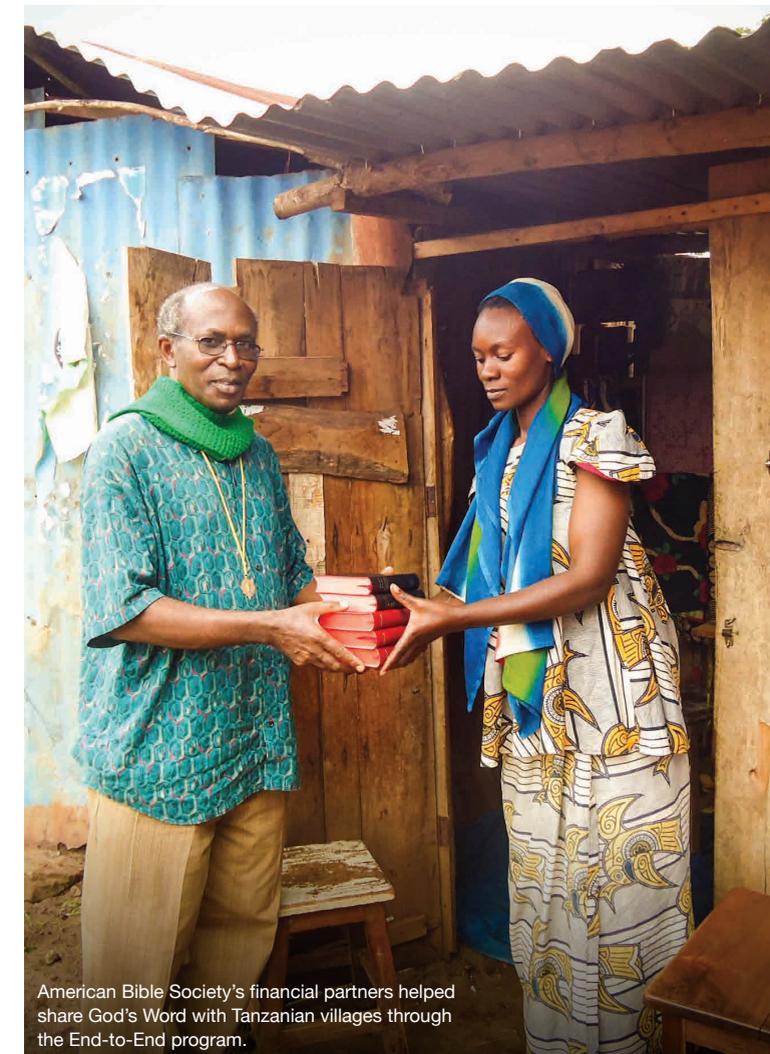
- 1 **Watch** "The JESUS® Film"
- 2 **Listen** to the Bible in Faith Comes by Hearing® listening groups
- 3 **Read** God's Word with other believers in Bible reading groups

"By implementing this three-phase model, and presenting families with a Bible, these people can engage with God's Word as a life-long journey," says Deira.

This discipline of regularly studying God's Word has already reached hundreds of thousands of people from Ghana to India, thanks to the growing popularity of the End-to-End initiative.

In the first half of 2015 alone, more than 300,000 people encountered God through "The JESUS® Film." As a result, 3,267 people committed their lives to Christ, and 25 new churches opened their doors in communities worldwide.

Building on the effectiveness of this



American Bible Society's financial partners helped share God's Word with Tanzanian villages through the End-to-End program.

model, End-to-End facilitators plan to expand the scope of their ministry. Soon, people in eight more countries, including Peru and Kenya, will be able to encounter the gospel by watching, reading and listening to the Word of God.

As Nanaka and his neighbors can testify, when God's Word goes out, it does not return void. Men in his village have started practicing monogamy. And children have begun to choose school over work. Nanaka sums it up when he testifies, "God's Word is changing our people."

Nick Hemming is a writer at American Bible Society.

To share God's Word with those who need it most, visit ABSRecord.com/GiveABible.

Photo credit: United Bible Societies courtesy of Bible Society of Ethiopia, British and Foreign Bible Society / Grace Smith.

Photo credit: United Bible Societies courtesy of Bible Society of Tanzania.

IN MEMORIAM

“The Lord is my protector; he is my strong fortress. My God is my protection, and with him I am safe. He protects me like a shield; he defends me and keeps me safe.” *Psalm 18.2 (GNT)*

My brother,
Gary S. Bailey
Given by Stephen M. Bailey

My parents,
Myrle and Lois Bly
Given by Ronald P. Bly

Our parents,
**Charles and Mary Boblasky
Earl and Mildred Chew**
Given by Mr. and Mrs.
Thomas Boblasky

Mary Bonbright
Given by Carlotta McKee

My wife,
Iris Jean Brustad
Given by Milton J. Brustad

My sister,
Eva Carraway
Given by Jane C. Green

My father,
Jere Lawrence Crook Jr.
Given by Senter C. Crook

My father,
Tim Dwyer
Given by John Dwyer

My father,
Curtis H. Eldred
Given by Fordyce Eldred

Francis Gay
Given by Keith P. Robinson

My uncle,
Robert P. Harrell
Given by Max H. Brown

Irene E. Hinkemann
Given by Carolyn J. Frisell

My wife,
Pamela K. Hoffarth
Given by Richard L. Hoffarth

Our son,
John S. Huggins
Given by Dr. and Mrs.
H.S. Huggins III

Steve King
Given by Mr. and Mrs.
Robert L. Briggs

My father,
Paul O. Kunz
Given by David P. Kunz

My parents,
Ervin and Johanna Mathes
Given by Janice B. Graham

Lois Nagel
Given by Dale S. Wright

My uncle,
Peter Overbeek
Given by Ruth Ter Haar

Melvin K. Pahulehua
Given by Keith P. Robinson

Alice G. Robinson
Given by Keith P. Robinson

Aubrey Robinson
Given by Keith P. Robinson

Our father,
Willard C. Sackett
Given by Mr. and Mrs.
Charles E. Sackett

Charles H. Smith Jr.
Given by Sandra P. Smith

My husband,
William Turner
Given by Gail M. Turner

Nora Vidinha
Given by Keith P. Robinson

Joann and Larry Wallace
Given by Ronald D. Medcalf

Marcella Wheeler
Given by Lee M. Wheeler

Sowing Seeds for God's Kingdom

Lyle Gansko is no stranger to hard work. When he was 16, he started helping a local farmer with his daily chores. It wasn't long before Lyle worked multiple jobs—raising hogs and cows as well as farming corn and beans. He eventually saved enough money to buy the farm that he started working on as a teenager.

Over the years, Lyle's hard work has continued to pay off; today he owns eight farms in northern Iowa. But diligent work and financial success have never been the primary focus of Lyle's life.

“I believe the main reason we're here is to help spread the gospel to people who haven't heard it . . . who don't have a Bible,” says Lyle.

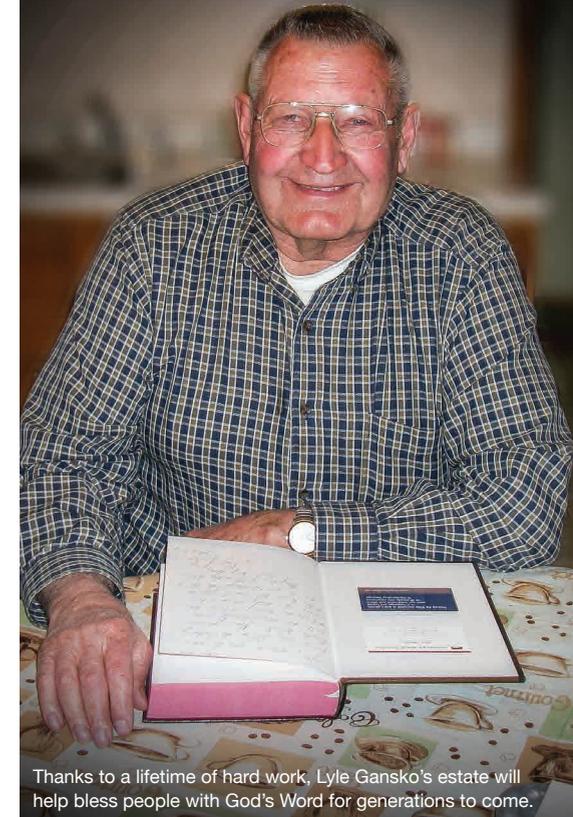
Living out that conviction, Lyle has faithfully supported American Bible Society for many years. But he has also thought a great deal about how his estate will further God's Kingdom on earth when he is no longer here to steward it.

“*The main reason we're here is to help spread the gospel.*”

That's why Lyle worked with an American Bible Society Regional Advisor when drafting a charitable estate plan with his attorney. He even helped American Bible Society pioneer the Kingdom Endowment Fund—a fund in which American Bible Society shares proceeds from an estate with other charities for up to 40 years.

For decades, Lyle has written checks to about 60 charities and carefully listed each check on a yellow legal pad. Through the Kingdom Endowment Fund, American Bible Society will continue to write Lyle's monthly checks for decades to come.

And although there are countless people, charities and causes that Lyle could bless through his estate, his priorities remain eternal. As Lyle puts it, “I would rather see it further the Kingdom of God.”



Thanks to a lifetime of hard work, Lyle Gansko's estate will help bless people with God's Word for generations to come.

For more information about how you can increase your giving and save money for the ones you love:

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 Email:

GiftPlanner@AmericanBible.org

 Visit:

www.ABSGift.org

Honor the memory of a loved one by helping to provide Bibles to people who don't yet have them. Memorials of \$500 or more for one individual or family unit will be published in *American Bible Society Record*.

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

Partner Care, American Bible Society, 101 North Independence Mall East FL8, Philadelphia, PA 19106-2155

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That's why American Bible Society is helping to provide the paper to print 125,000 copies of God's Word in China—a land still suffering a Scripture famine—for just \$1 per Bible.

Will you help us continue this life-changing work? **Every dollar you send will cover the cost of paper to help provide one Bible to a Chinese brother or sister.** Please help place a Bible into the hands of someone in China whose heart is hungry for the truth. **Thank you!**

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