

# Sri Lanka



## Sign Language Gospel

**Project: 101703**  
**Non Tax Deductible**



# 300,000+

deaf or hearing-impaired people  
in Sri Lanka

# <8%

of Sri Lankans are Christians

# 26

schools for the deaf in Sri Lanka,  
5 of them are Christian schools

### Overview

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The Ceylon Bible Society (CBS) is translating the Gospel Parables of Jesus into Sign Language for the Christian deaf community in Sri Lanka, partnering with Christian Churches and other organisations in the country.

### The Need

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There are more than 300,000 deaf and hearing-impaired people in Sri Lanka. Approximately 9% of Sri Lanka's population suffer from some form of hearing disorder (World Health Organization, 2019). Moreover, Sri Lanka's deaf community is marginalised socio-politically, and deaf people are unable to get required services efficiently from schools, hospitals, banks, courts and more, due to the lack of Sinhala to Sign Language interpretation support.

There are currently only five Christian schools for the deaf in Sri Lanka, and only five church denominations translate their church services into Sign Language. A visit to the School for the Deaf in Ratmalana convinced the Ceylon Bible Society of the importance of providing the children and young people with the Scriptures in their own language — sign language.

*Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy. - Proverbs 31: 8-9, NIV*

## Goals

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This project aims to make key biblical narratives accessible to the deaf community in Sri Lanka by creating gospel selections in Sri Lankan Sign Language in video format.

Training and regular committee meetings to plan and coordinate the project's key components are also part of the process, to ensure an accurate representation and clear communication using Sri Lankan Sign Language.

In 2024, the team successfully launched a series of videos telling stories of Jesus' ministry. In 2025, this project will launch 'Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand' (John 6:1-15), 'The Beatitudes' (Matthew 5 to 7), 'The Parable of Weeds among Wheat' (Matthew 13:24 – 30), 'The Parable of the Mustard Seed' and 'The Parable of the Yeast' (Matthew 13:31- 34).

## Impact

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This project aims to impact at least 1,000 people, with a greater potential impact, as the estimated number of Christians who are deaf is around 20,000. The project will also strengthen churches to work more closely with the deaf community. The resources will improve the quality of church teaching for the deaf, and result in more deaf people being able to be involved in Bible ministry.

The Gospel Parables in Sign Language is a resource for deaf people that can motivate them to study the Bible. Despite the challenges they face, through these resources, they can experience more of the love and faithfulness of God. It is hoped that having Gospel Parables in sign language will make them feel that they are valuable in God's eyes.

## Testimony

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*"After two years, we have successfully completed and launched a video series depicting the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ in Sri Lankan Sign Language ... Feedback from the launch has been overwhelmingly positive, with many attendees expressing profound gratitude for the opportunity to witness the Gospel story in their heart language. This project has not only enriched spiritual lives but has also fostered a greater sense of belonging and community among the deaf in Sri Lanka." — Ceylon Bible Society*

## Prayer Points

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- Please pray for the people who are signing this resource, that they would be able to learn the correct signs, and that God grant them wisdom in translating Bible texts into signs.
- Pray for the editing and recording of the 'Life story of Jesus' series. Thank God for the wonderful work that is currently in progress and pray that it would be a blessing to the deaf community in Sri Lanka.
- Pray for good collaboration among the team and continued funding for the project into the future as the economic crisis in the country has affected everyone.