

Sower.

SPRING 2026
BIBLE SOCIETY AUSTRALIA





"So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."

— Isaiah 55:11 (NIV)

About the Cover Photo:
School children from Kenya receiving their Good News Bibles.
Please see page 4 for more about this story.

Sower – Spring Edition 2026
Published by Bible Society Australia

GPO Box 4161
Sydney NSW 2001

biblesociety.org.au
1300 BIBLES (1300 242 537)
ISSN: 1839-7425

Welcome.

One of the great privileges of Bible Society's work is helping God's Word reach the waiting hands of those who long for it. As I read the stories in this edition of Sower, I am aware that behind every Bible distributed is a person, a family and a community that God is transforming.

I am reminded again how precious God's Word is. For many of us, having a Bible within reach is something we take for granted. But for millions of people around the world, owning a Bible is a gift they have prayed for, waited for ... and deeply treasured when it finally arrives.

You'll read about Joy, a young girl in Kenya whose face lit up when she received a Bible of her own for the very first time. In communities where families are struggling to meet their basic needs, a Bible can feel like an impossible luxury. Yet when these children receive God's Word, it shows that they are known, loved and not forgotten. The Bible tells them that God sees them, remembers them and cares for them.

You'll also meet believers in China like Chen Lian, Li, and Ren who speak about how important it is to have their own Bible. And how it's given them assurance, strength and everyday guidance. Li puts it simply: "Now that I have the Bible, I feel the Lord is right beside me." Even in places where access to Scripture can be difficult, God's Word is strengthening believers and helping them grow in faith, every day.

In Ukraine, you'll read the moving story of Zander, whose life was turned upside down by war. After enduring an attack on his home city, recovering from a heart attack, and fleeing to a new place, he rediscovered the hope of God's Word through a Bible he was given. What touched me most was his desire to return home one day and share that same hope with others and see their lives transformed by God.

As you read the stories in this edition of Sower, I encourage you to join us in praying for and supporting all these amazing brothers and sisters in Christ. Pray for children in Kenya receiving their first Bible. Pray for believers in China who treasure God's Word. Pray for families in Ukraine finding hope in the Bible amid uncertainty and loss. And pray that people everywhere may encounter God through the Bible and be transformed by his Word.

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path" (Psalm 119:105, NIV).

Together, let us continue making God's Word available to those who need it most, trusting him to do what only he can do.



Chris Melville
CEO, Bible Society Australia

A Bible of Their Own: Bible Distribution for Children in Kenya

STORY

ONE



Joy and her schoolmates after receiving their Good News Bibles from the Bible Society of Kenya.

KENYA

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

"Thank you for bringing me the Bible today," 11-year-old Joy says, holding her new Good News Bible close. Soon she is turning the pages, eagerly searching for her favourite verse. "For God loved the world so much ..." she begins, reciting John 3:16. For Joy, this is more than a book. It is now her very own precious Bible. "I'm so happy to have my own Bible," she says. "I'm looking forward to reading it. I will share with my family." Joy lives with her parents, brother, sister and grandmother. Her smile is impossible to forget. True to her name, she overflows with joy, "Because you came and brought me the Bible, I'm happy. I'm so happy."

Joy is one of hundreds of students visited by Bible Society of Kenya (BSK) during a three-day Bible distribution trip to remote communities held in May 2026. Joining the team was Elise, Bible Society Australia's Chief People and Missions Officer, who saw firsthand what receiving a Bible meant to children living in some of Kenya's most disadvantaged regions.

The Journey to Reach Remote Schools

One day, the team arrived at a school after classes had ended and the students had already set off for home. Often, they walk along rough dirt roads, sometimes taking up to an hour to get home. But when they saw the vehicle approaching and heard that the team

from BSK had come to bring them Bibles, they stopped at their tracks. Curiosity turned to excitement, and the students ran behind the car back to the school, eager to receive this precious gift.

"We're sorry we're so late," Elise apologised to students. Getting there had not been easy. The journey from BSK's headquarters in Nairobi took several hours, with sections of rough road slowing travel to less than 10 kilometres an hour. Reaching children in these remote communities often requires navigating difficult terrain, conservation areas, mountain regions and unpredictable weather. These communities are often so remote, road maps aren't available, and BSK has to work with parachurch organisations and the Kenyan government to locate the schools and map out their navigation as they go. Once the team spent four hours stranded in a riverbed after a vehicle became stuck. In some locations, schools are so difficult to access that teachers travel to nearby towns to collect the Bibles for their students.

Yet these are precisely the communities BSK is committed to reaching with God's Word.

"People have been saying to the Kenyan Bible Society, 'Why are you going there? It's too far. It's too hard,'" Elise says. "That's exactly what we're trying to do ... reach the less reached and less resourced." ▶



When a Bible Feels Like a Luxury

"Most of the children that are reached through this program, they come from poor backgrounds ... where a parent is not able to put a meal on the table," explains Susan, Project Officer for BSK's Bible Distribution for Marginalised Children and Youth project. "For such a parent to think about purchasing a Bible ... it doesn't even hit their mind. It's a luxury for them. The Bible is a luxury for them."

Although Christian Religious Education (CRE) is taught in most Kenyan schools, Bibles are scarce, particularly in public schools and rural communities where both schools and families have limited resources. In some schools, only one Bible is shared among more than two

hundred students. That is why receiving a personal Bible not only equips them spiritually, but also assists their learning in the CRE subject. "I am glad to receive this Bible," says Atieno*, a Grade 10 student who received her Bible earlier this year. "I will use it to know the Word and teach others the importance of knowing it as well. I hope to pass my Christian Religious Education now that I have a Bible."

School leaders have seen the difference access to Scripture can make. "The Bibles we have received will go a long way in helping our students," says Madam Christy*, a School Deputy Principal. "Because it is a personal copy, they can read it themselves and share the Word of God wherever they go."



"They deserve to know that they are loved. They deserve someone to reach them."

Known, Loved and Reached

As the team moved through schools handing out Bibles, they were welcomed with singing, laughter, smiles and gratitude. For many students, meeting visitors from Australia was a special moment. Receiving a Bible from people who had travelled across the world to support them made the experience even more meaningful.

The motto of BSK's Bible distribution project is, 'Every child is known, loved and reached.' "They deserve the Word of God," Susan expresses, starting to get emotional as she thinks about these children. "They deserve to know that they are loved. They deserve someone to reach them." She believes the gift of a Bible communicates something powerful

to a child living in poverty and in an isolated community; that they have not been forgotten and that someone wants to bring the Word of God to them.

Partners in Mission

This ministry is made possible through partnerships with Bible Society Australia and other supporters who share a vision: giving children and youth access to God's Word. "We are bringing our resources together for the sake of a child ... It blesses my heart," Susan says.

Since launching the project 11 years ago, BSK has distributed Scriptures to children and young people across some of Kenya's hardest-to-reach regions. In 2025 alone, >

"We've seen lives changed, relationships improved and students growing in confidence as they engage with Scripture."

23,276 children and youth received Bibles and Scripture resources. During the first quarter of 2026, another 9,342 children and young people were reached across 33 schools. The resources include Good News Bibles, New Testaments, Gospel portions and Scripture journals. By 2030, BSK hopes to reach at least 300,000 disadvantaged children and youth with God's Word.

Following Up on the Seed Sown

But Bible distribution is only the beginning. "It's like planting a seed," Susan explains. "You don't plant a seed and leave it. You go back and see how it is growing." BSK regularly returns to schools to see how students are engaging with Scripture and to support teachers and volunteers with training and Scripture teaching resources. This is so that Bible reading becomes a regular part of the students' school week, with the hope that they develop a personal relationship with God through his Word.

Over the years, the team has witnessed encouraging stories of transformation. "We've seen whole families gather to listen to the Word of God together," Susan shared. "We've seen lives changed, relationships improved and students growing in confidence as they engage with Scripture. We continue to

hear encouraging stories from schools and communities."

Thank You for Making This Possible

For supporters of the project, Susan has a simple message of thanks. "Your contribution matters," she said. "You are giving them an opportunity of hope because the Bible really gives them hope as they read the Word of God. They see there is hope for me. 'The fact that someone in Australia can think about me? God really loves me. Those people really love me.'"

As the school visit drew to a close, Elise gathered a group of children together for prayer. The chatter disappeared. Heads bowed, eyes closed and small hands folded quietly close to their faces. "We pray that they will enjoy reading their Bibles and learning about you, God."

If you would like to learn more and support this Bible distribution effort, reminding Kenyan children that God sees them, loves them and speaks to them through his Word, visit biblesociety.org.au/sow.

*Names changed to protect their privacy.



Help the Bible reach — their hands

Every \$55

can help place four large-print Bibles into the hands of elderly Christians in remote and rural China, helping them read and engage with God's Word more easily.

Every \$120

can help put eight Bibles into the hands of students in rural Kenya, equipping them to grow in faith through Scripture.

Every \$250

can help 40 people in Ukraine receive copies of the Ukrainian Bible Contemporary Translation through the ministry of the Ukrainian Bible Society.

Every \$1,000

can help print more than 250 Bibles to reach people in China who are longing for God's Word, making Scripture accessible to communities across the country.

Your gift supports the mission of Bible Society Australia, helping put Bibles into the hands of people waiting for God's Word. Most of our Bible work is not tax-deductible, so a non-tax-deductible gift is the most direct way to support Bible distribution projects. You are welcome to give a tax-deductible gift too.

If you would like to give a gift to a specific project, please call us on **1300 BIBLES (1300 242 537)** or visit biblesociety.org.au/projects.



The Bible Empowering Faith for Chinese Believers

STORY

TWO



Li and her Bible from United Bible Societies China Partnership.

CHINA

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

"Now that I have the Bible, I feel the Lord is right beside me, and he will help me," shares Li*. She lives in the southeastern part of Sichuan Province, in southwestern China, and received her first Bible last year during a free Bible distribution event organised by her local church with the support of the United Bible Societies China Partnership (UBSCP). Having her own Bible has been transformative for Li. She explains, "I have something to rely on."

Li has a new conviction of the need for honesty, for not taking advantage of others, because she is able to turn to God's Word often. "I feel the Heavenly Father is always with me, knowing that I will make mistakes, yet reminding me."

A growing church, a growing need

The Church is growing in China, but adequate access to the Bible is a challenge, as demand for God's Word continues to outpace supply. Officially, it is estimated that there are approximately 46 million Christians, but unofficial estimates are up to 100 million. Churches are growing at a steady rate and entering into a consolidation phase.

"Chinese Christians love the Bible and cherish it deeply," says Rev. Xu Xiaohong, Chairman of the National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Church in China. "They regard Scripture as heavenly

nourishment that strengthens and shapes their lives."

Bible access is especially difficult in rural areas, and around 60% of Christians live in rural or remote areas. Many believers are elderly, often needing large-print Bibles. Even where Bibles are available, cost can still be a barrier.

The most critical group are believers in the rural areas who are not able to afford and get access to Bibles.

Assurance, strength and guidance through God's Word

A new believer in the same city as Li, Ren* described the certainty that having a Bible of her own brings. "As a Christian, one may hear certain teachings, but without a personal Bible, it's hard to be certain. Having a Bible brings greater assurance, reveals more details, and strengthens my faith." Ren only started believing in the Lord last year and she says, "After coming to faith, I wanted to have my own Bible."

In Northeast China, Chen Lian*, an 80-year-old believer, once prayed for a Bible of her own. She says, "I heard others say that any problem in life can be answered in the Bible, so I especially longed for its guidance. Having a Bible of my own felt so important — without one, I could only read it when I went to church." >



Ren and her Bible from United Bible Societies China Partnership.

“Through increased reading, their understanding of the Lord has grown; they have learned to use Scripture to guide their lives, to humble themselves, and to rely on the Lord in all things ...”

Chen Lian's prayer was answered last year, and she was so grateful to have her own Bible that she could look through anytime. “Especially when I face difficulties, God speaks to me through it, giving me strength and hope.”

“their understanding of the Lord has grown; they have learned to use Scripture to guide their lives, to humble themselves, and to rely on the Lord in all things, experiencing peace and joy in their hearts.”

The reach and impact of God's Word

In 2025, through the support of the United Bible Societies China Partnership, close to 200,000 Bibles were made affordable for rural Christians living with so little.

Another leader shares, “The Word of the Lord is the light on our journey and the lamp on our path; it is our spiritual nourishment. In the days ahead, we will devote ourselves to reading the Bible diligently, allowing God's Word to shape and transform our lives.”

Another 42,000 Bibles were distributed for free across 17 provinces. More than 60% of these free Bibles were large-print editions for elderly believers. Already in the first few months of 2026, over 8,000 free Bibles have been distributed across five provinces, with more than 30,000 affordable Bibles also printed. The United Bible Societies China Partnership aims to provide more than 900,000 affordable Bibles in 2026, with 40,000 Bibles for free distribution.

“The Christians who received free Bibles are deeply grateful to the generous individuals who selflessly donated them,” the leader adds.

If you would like to help place God's Word into the hands of believers like Li, Ren and Chen Lian, visit biblesociety.org.au/sow.

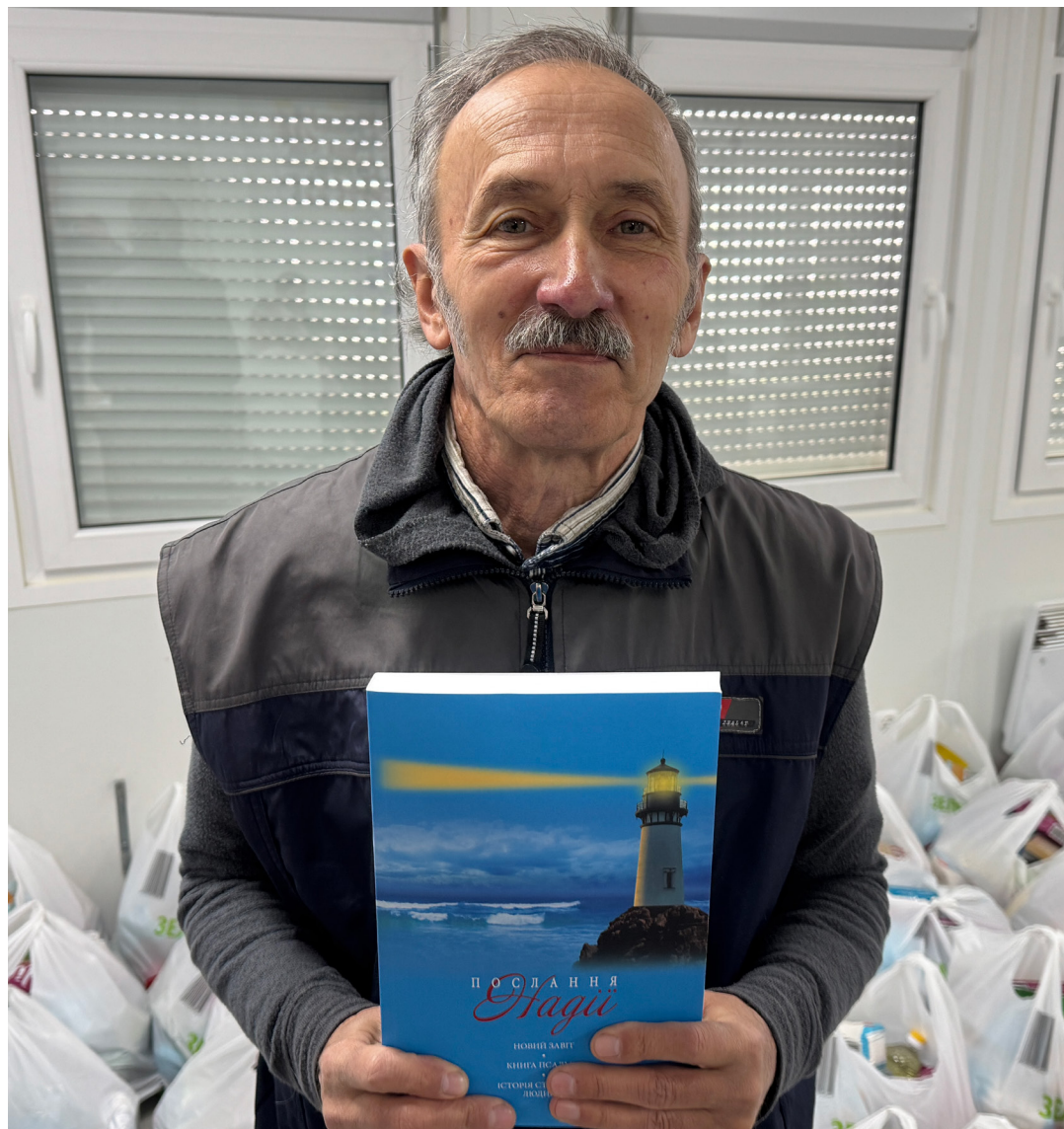
*Names changed to protect their privacy.

Through Bible distribution, God is transforming lives in China. In one church they began reading God's Word every day and developed a deeply ingrained daily Bible ready habit. “Through increased reading,” the church leader observes,

Hope to Share: One Man's Journey Back to God's Word

STORY

THREE



Zander holds his copy of 'The Message of Hope' Scriptures, gifted during a Bible Society joint outreach visit to his modular settlement in Lviv. Alongside food support for displaced families, Bibles like this are offering comfort, clarity and renewed hope to those who have lost so much.

UKRAINE

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

"I come from a family of clergy. Yet the calm, everyday rhythm of pre-war life had dulled my desire to read the Bible. Yes, we had a Bible at home, but we never read it. And when we fled, we didn't even think to bring it with us," shares Zander*, a Ukrainian man in his 80s from the city of Mykolaiv.

Zander was a college history teacher and, though he was a part of the people's militia, he was unprepared when the attack on Ukraine happened in 2022. Witnessing the attack on his city, he suffered a heart attack and was unable to move for some time.

When he and his wife removed to Lviv, they found true welcome and care in the embrace of a local Baptist seminary community, where they were offered temporary shelter. Moving from place to place, they eventually settled in a modular village for internally displaced people.

"From the moment we arrived in Lviv, we felt the kindness of the local people. I came to realise later this warmth is a reflection of their Christian upbringing. I was deeply grateful — both to the people and to God. That gratitude led me to search for a church. And by God's providence, I was led to one where I truly experienced his love and grace."

Zander and his wife began to attend church regularly and to read the Bible they were gifted. "We were incredibly grateful to the Bible Society — not only for reminding us of the importance of reading God's Word, but also for the greatest gift of all: a Bible. Though it wasn't the first Bible

in our life, we embraced it as if it were — as if we had opened it for the first time. In this new reality, it felt like we were beginning life anew."

"I constantly thank God for allowing trials into our lives — so that we might remember him," Zander admits. "The Bible has added 'salt' to what was previously a bland, flavourless life. Finally, I have found true meaning. And it is the Bible that has helped me discover it."

Zander dreams of returning home to Mykolaiv, to those left behind and grieving. "I long to go to them and speak to them about hope — the hope that God gave me here in Lviv. These people have no hope. Their lives feel empty and aimless, as they wait for death. I want to bring them hope, to share God's Word with them — just as kind people once shared it with us."

To Bible Society supporters here in Australia and around the world, Zander says, "I am truly grateful to all the kind-hearted donors through whom God reached out to me and gave me hope. And I am deeply thankful to the Bible Society that came to me — just a pensioner from Mykolaiv — with such an extraordinary and precious gift: the Bible."

If you would like to share the gift of hope found in God's Word, please visit biblesociety.org.au/sow.

*Name changed to protect their privacy.

Pray With Us

Join us in praying for our Bible distribution work around the world.



PRAYER POINTS

Kenya

Pray for the children and youth of Kenya who have and will receive their very own Bible through Bible Society of Kenya's distribution project. Pray that these students will experience a positive transformation as they read God's Word, and pray for a broader reach of this project to many more underprivileged students in Kenya.

China

Pray that each person who receives a copy of the Bible may read and understand the Word of God and be nurtured and transformed. Pray too for continued approval of permits to print Bibles in China. Pray for God's favour and blessings, as well as his provision, in continuing the supply of Bibles to the vast number of Christians in China. Finally, pray for hearts to be open to the Word of God.

Ukraine

Please pray for the physical safety of the Bible Society staff in Ukraine as they bravely continue their Bible mission, serving the church in Ukraine and individuals with Scripture resources. Pray for wisdom for the Bible Society leaders in carrying out Bible work in very complicated circumstances, in the best possible way. Pray that every Bible distributed brings transformation, leading to people knowing God and his truth.

Jordan

Pray for the Bible Society of Jordan and the wonderful work they do for refugee children and families, partnering with local churches to distribute Bibles, Scripture resources and aid. Pray for every refugee family, that amid displacement, fear, and loss, each one would encounter the Rock of their salvation and find true hope and strength in Christ.

Nicaragua

Praise God for the opportunity of the Bible Society of Nicaragua to hand out Bibles and Scripture resources to children battling cancer at La Mascota Hospital. Pray for these children, for God's strength to help them through this journey and that through God's Word they will experience peace. Pray for the Lord's protection over them from anything that prevents their recovery.

Australia

Praise God for the faithful work of Bible translators and ministries dedicated to producing and distributing God's Word in Australian Indigenous languages. Pray for wisdom, health, perseverance and protection for those serving in remote communities, that their work would bear lasting spiritual fruit. Pray too that Indigenous communities may be transformed as people encounter God's Word in their heart languages.

DOWNLOAD OUR MONTHLY PRAYER GUIDE:
biblesociety.org.au/pray

Help the Bible reach _____ their hands

Sara* is 14. Her school in northern Kenya shares one Bible between 256 students. She could see God's Word. She could never hold it.

In March, Sara received a Bible of her own. She carried it home and placed it in her father's hands. He turned the pages, trembling. "Mungu ametukumbuka. [God has remembered us.]"

Your gift can do that again. Today you can help send Bibles to students in Kenya, Scriptures to families displaced by war in Ukraine and affordable Bibles to believers in China.

*Name changed for privacy reasons.

Give online at biblesociety.org.au/sow
or call **1300 BIBLES (1300 242 537)**.

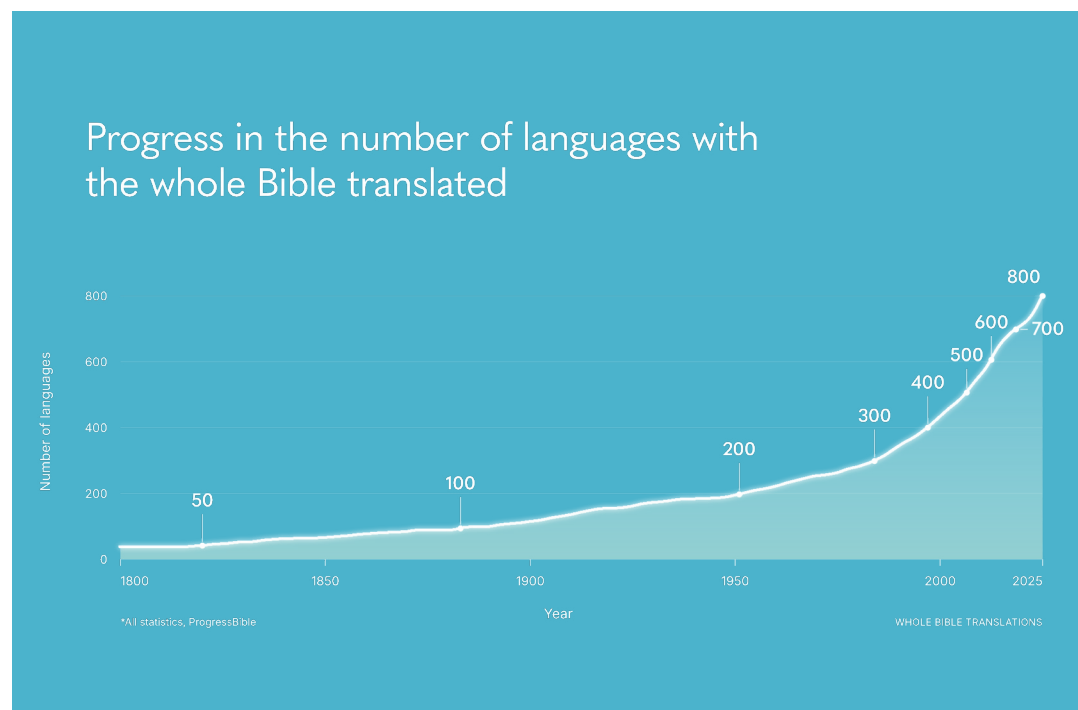
Thank you for helping the Bible reach their hands.



The Bible Reaches a Historic Milestone: 800 Languages and Counting

The global Bible translation movement has reached a remarkable milestone: the complete Bible is now available in its 800th translated language*.

This achievement reflects God's faithfulness and the dedication of Bible translation teams, churches and communities around the world who are working to ensure people can encounter God's Word in the language of their heart.



EDUCATION PIECE

The significance of this milestone

- It took more than **1,900 years** to translate the Bible into the first 400 languages.
- It has taken just **28 years** for that number to double from 400 to 800 languages.
- Only **six years ago**, the global Church celebrated the translation of the Bible into its 700th language.
- Today, around **6.2 billion people** in 800 language communities have access to the complete Bible in their own language.
- Since 2020, an additional **500 million people** have gained access to the full Bible in the language they understand best.

Bible Society Australia's contribution

At Bible Society Australia (BSA), we celebrate this global achievement while continuing to play our part in making God's Word accessible to Australia's First Nations peoples.

Some of the translation work we are involved with includes:

- Publishing the **first complete Bible in an Australian Indigenous language, Kriol, published in 2007.**
- Supporting the translation of the **full Bible in Pitjantjatjara**, which is currently in progress.
- Recording the **Kriol Audio Bible**, helping people engage with Scripture through oral formats.

At BSA, it is our mission to bring the Word of God to every Indigenous Australian in a language and format that speaks to their heart.

The work is not yet finished.

While we celebrate the progress represented by the 800th Bible, the task is far from complete. Although around four-fifths of the world's population can now access the Bible in their own language, one in five people still cannot. That represents approximately 1.5 billion people and nearly 6,600 language communities who are still waiting for the Bible in their heart language.

This milestone is both a celebration and a call to continue. Every translation completed means more people can encounter the living Word of God in their heart language. Together with Bible Societies around the world, partners and supporters in Australia, we remain committed to seeing God's Word made accessible for all people.

*All statistics are from ProgressBible.

To learn more, visit biblesociety.org.au/our-work.

A Significant Step Towards a Full Pitjantjatjara Bible

IMPACT

UPDATE

Australia



In May 2026, at a small Lutheran church in Alice Springs, four Pitjantjatjara Bible translators gathered with a small team from Bible Society Australia (BSA) with a shared goal: to help bring the Pitjantjatjara Old Testament translation closer to completion. Over the course of a week, they worked through a crucial stage known as consultant checking, a final review process that ensures the translation is both faithful to the original Hebrew and clear for Pitjantjatjara readers and listeners.

Among the team were BSA Translation Consultant, Reverend Dr Sam Freney — who conducted a thorough exegetical review of the drafted translation — and Dave Barnett, who has spent more than a decade coordinating the Pitjantjatjara Bible Translation project. After the exegetical review, a community testing of the text was carried out with first-time hearers or

readers of Scripture to ensure the meaning of the translated text comes across clearly.

For Dave, the week exceeded all expectations. "It was a really great time," he said. **The team had hoped to complete 15 Psalms, but also finished Obadiah, Nahum and Malachi, bringing the books ready for publication.** "This is a project that's gone for 86 years. So to get three books completed in a week ... that's about as exciting as a week is in the translation world."

Once complete, this Old Testament translation will join the Pitjantjatjara Shorter Bible, Tjukurpa Palya (completed in 2002 containing a full New Testament and approximately 15% of the Old Testament) creating the first full Bible in Pitjantjatjara, a testimony to decades of faithful work and God's ongoing provision.

To read more, visit biblesociety.org.au/blog.

Riding for Literacy and Hope

SUPPORTER

STORY



Meet Chris Girvan, one of Bible Society Australia's dedicated supporters. A long-time volunteer with Bike for Bibles, Chris has helped advance this largely volunteer-run fundraising initiative from its early years.

Since launching in 1984, Bike for Bibles participants have raised more than \$13 million for Bible Society projects around the world, helping thousands of people learn to read through God's Word.

"I spent most of my high school and university years in Kiama, where my father was the Anglican minister. Church attendance, Bible study, and regular Bible reading have been a joyful and foundational part of my adult life. My wife and I have lived in Shellharbour for nearly forty years, and I am an active member of Shellharbour City Anglican Church.

I knew little about the Bible Society until my father left parish ministry in the late 1970s to become State Secretary of Bible Society Victoria.

I began cycling about thirty years ago and, in 2013, was inspired to join Bike for Bibles. I still remember that first day riding from Lidsdale to Mudgee, followed by ten days touring country New South Wales.

In 2017, to celebrate Bible Society Australia's bicentenary, I organised a special ride. Paul Beckmann and I cycled to Melbourne via Canberra, Cooma, Bombala, Lakes Entrance and Gippsland, finishing at Federation Square. Since then, Paul and I have had the privilege of coordinating five more rides based in Goulburn, Bathurst, Brisbane and, most recently, Canberra.

Bike for Bibles raises funds to support Bible Society literacy programs in disadvantaged communities overseas. There is great satisfaction in pedalling to help provide education, opportunity, and hope. As people learn to read, many are also introduced to the life-changing message of Jesus.

Bike for Bibles is a wonderfully positive venture. For six days we ride, serve and share life together, reconnect with old friends, welcome new riders, and enjoy fellowship with churches along the way. Above all, we rejoice in God's blessing as we work towards our fundraising goals. A strong and enthusiastic team has already formed for next year, with more than thirty-five riders and support crew committed to participating. We thank God for the opportunity to serve in this way."

If you want to support, join a ride, or learn more about the Bike for Bibles fundraising event, visit biblesociety.org.au/bike.

On Jesus' wings and his prayer



CENTRE FOR PUBLIC CHRISTIANITY



Barney Swartz

Writing for *The Age*, CPX Senior Fellow Barney Swartz reminds readers that one gift stands pre-eminent among the many that Jesus left us: his prayer, the Lord's Prayer.

The eminent Australian philosopher Rai Gaita, generally sympathetic to Christianity, wrote that he cannot himself be a believer because he cannot bring himself to pray.

This is a profound insight, for Gaita understands that Christianity is not merely a set of illogical intellectual propositions, as many atheists suppose, but rather a practical way of life and community.

I am the opposite of Rai – I am an adult convert to Christianity precisely because I find prayer and gratitude a natural orientation in my life.

But there are times and circumstances when I simply don't know what to pray, how I should petition God. The real world, and especially international affairs, can be too complicated to see through. Then, more than ever, I turn to the Lord's Prayer – what Catholics call the "Our Father" – the short prayer Jesus taught his disciples.

The traditional English translation is a mere 70 words that cover everything, with beauty and depth but also directness and simplicity. As one theologian wrote, "no part of Scripture is so full, and so simple at the same time, as

this". It features the three central aspects of prayer: praise, confession and petition.

It is easy for familiarity to blind us to just how remarkable Jesus' teaching is. Take the first two words, "Our father". How extraordinary is it that believers, so flawed and finite, are invited to call the creator and sustainer of the universe by the family name "father"?

Not only does this describe a relationship with God, it also unites believers as a family – adopted as his children by God, as the Apostle Paul points out.

The prayer then seeks proper recognition of God's glory ("hallowed be your name, your kingdom come"). In calling for his "name" to be holy, Jesus means the fullness of God's character – his power, wisdom, holiness, justice, mercy and truth.

Next comes the line I find so helpful when stresses and complications of the human predicament leave me uncertain how to petition God: "Your will be done, on earth as in heaven." For God alone can draw all the strands into a perfect understanding.

The next line, "give us our daily bread", shows that it is proper to pray for our physical and spiritual needs – as opposed to our desires for wealth, luxuries or glory – and demonstrates our dependence on God. After all, Jesus also teaches that not a sparrow falls without God being aware; he knows and cares about our needs.

I cannot go through line by line, but other powerful concepts are forgiveness, protection and deliverance, ending with worship. I marvel that we have this model prayer from the very lips of Jesus.

Find out more about CPX at:
publicchristianity.org

"The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." (Psalm 34:18 NIV)



'I was desperate, crying out to God. Then the phone rang...'

Valerie's story | The Lord is especially close in grief

Compiled by Naomi Reed.

"When I was 46, my husband died very suddenly, from a stroke. We had no warning whatsoever. He'd been to a conference in Melbourne, and he got home and said he was feeling weird. The ambulance came and took him to hospital. By then, he'd lost the power of speech. He couldn't talk or say goodbye. He died a few hours later.

Michael and I were very close. We had such a happy marriage, and we were planning the rest of our lives together. The funeral was five days later. I was so bereft. I was walking around like a skeleton, not eating. I'd never felt so low in my whole life. I was full of questions, feeling desperate. I had a heavy cold. One day, I just screamed out to God. I said, "I've got to know that Michael is not just in a box in the ground!"

Five minutes later, the phone rang. It was a friend of a friend, who we hardly knew. We'd only met him twice. But he said, 'I've been thinking of you all day. Five minutes ago, I had an overwhelming feeling that God wanted me to get in touch with you. You need to know that Michael is okay. He's not in a box in the ground. He's in heaven, with God.'

I burst into tears. The friend talked with me on the phone for an hour. It was the most wonderful thing. It gave me the courage to go on. At the end of the conversation, he suggested I could try writing a letter to Michael each day, telling him how I was feeling. At first, I thought it was a weird idea – fancy writing to a dead person.

But I sat down, and I wrote 17 pages to Michael that night. I started off, 'Dear Michael, I know I'll never get a reply from you, but...' and then I told him everything I'd been thinking. It was brilliant! I wrote to Michael every night for the next two years.

Three weeks after I wrote the first letter, I was sorting through our filing cabinet. Michael was very organised, and everything was in order, but I needed to check it, and throw things out. As I was sorting, I came across an envelope with my name on it, in Michael's handwriting. I stared at it, then opened it up. It was dated three months before Michael died. He began, 'My darling Valerie, I have a feeling that I won't make old bones. I may die from a stroke, and I may not be able to speak, and say all the things I want to say to you – about how much I love you and the children...'

Then I read all the things he wanted to say to me. It was such a beautiful thing to receive! It meant so much to me and the children. It was a final blessing and reassurance. It was a reply to my letters!

In the 38 years since that day, I have come to see that God really cares about us when we're in trouble. We cry out to him and he's there, unmistakably. He is present all of the time, but he's especially close in grief. And he uses modern-day angels – people who are ready to do his work – to accomplish his purposes when we need it. I never heard from that friend on the phone again. But he was so kind in that moment. He could have ignored the prompt, but he didn't. And I still think about it all the time. I was a Christian before that day, but I'm different now. It's changed everything. I am so grateful to God each day. And I know it's not about me, it's about God, about who he is, and what he's like and how much he cares for us, in our hardest times. He hears us when we cry out to him!"

Valerie's story is part of the Faith Stories series, compiled by Naomi Reed.

To read more Faith Stories, visit biblesociety.org.au/faith-stories.

Daily Bible

Day 1

We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. (Psalm 78:4, NIV)

A Legacy in Faithfulness

The things God had done for the Israelites in the past, the Psalmist says, must be told to the coming generation so that they may be careful not to forget or rebel against God, but rather believe and set their hope in God.

This principle of faithfully modelling the covenant with God cuts across generations. From Moses, commanding the Israelites to ensure God's Word was written in the hearts of children, to Lois and Eunice instructing and instilling the young Timothy with the truths of God. Looking at Timothy, he was so instrumental in proclaiming the Gospel and seeing it take root among the people in Ephesus.

We have a mandate for our generations to be solid in the Kingdom principles and God is entrusting us with this stewardship of his legacy on earth. Can he count on us?

Dear Lord, help me be faithful in passing on your teachings to this generation. Give me an intent and inspiration to carry your candle around my sphere of influence.

Day 2

Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. (Psalm 1:1–3, NIV)

A Legacy of Fruitfulness

The Psalmist reminds us that we can only thrive and bear fruit when we remain anchored in God's Word. The fruit represents the outpouring of what is in us. When we are constantly drawing from God, the life in us thrives and we can produce fruit through helping others ... and not just fruit, as John's Gospel reminds us of, but fruit that will last. Fruit that goes beyond us. A legacy, you may say, of fruitfulness! That benefit of pouring into others can only reach them when we are strongly connected to the Word of God.

Dear God, I desire to continually delight in your Word, that I may always be refreshed and refresh others around me.

The Legacy We Carry

We will be reading the Bible with Susan from the Bible Society of Kenya, on leaving a lasting legacy of faith, and obedience to God. Susan is the Bible Society of Kenya's Project Coordinator of the Bible Distribution project to marginalised children. She is passionate about children and impact storytelling and serves in the missions department in her church.

Day 3

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. (2 Timothy 2:2, NIV)

A Legacy of Multiplication

Are you a teachable and faithful person who God can entrust with a mission? God's mission is right where you are! The Master (Jesus') plan of evangelising to the world has "each one reach one". That there is a multiplication strategy!

Paul told Timothy that one of the attributes he needs to stay strong in sharing the gospel is to have a kingdom expansion mindset. This entailed walking with faithful men who would in turn teach others and preserve the gospel, even to future generations.

In missions across Kenya, Bible Society partners with schools, churches and individuals who are God-centered to share the gospel. Imagine a case where in a school each child gets to know Jesus personally and reach out to another, and the whole school is evangelised too! So many things can change! If this is ingrained in our hearts, then just like disciples, we can turn this world upside down, starting with the close spaces where God has placed us.

Dear Master, instill in me the spirit of multiplication. I want to partner with you in kingdom multiplication around my spheres of influence.

Day 4

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always ... (Matthew 28:19a–20, NIV)

A Legacy of Obedience

Do you ever feel like you are not called to be a missionary? Guess what? You are one! You are called! The going is in the neighborhood! Right where you are. Submission to the command of sharing good news is the call of every believer to step out and share Christ directly.

It is simply taking the initiative of obeying this great commission by sharing Christ in the power of Holy Spirit ... and remember, the results are not yours, but God's. Ask yourself which neighbour, child, student, patient — in any sphere — you can go to and make disciples of the Lord. The legacy of obeying this great commission cannot be omitted for anyone who truly professes Jesus as Lord.

Can Jesus count on you to spread his legacy?

Dear Lord, I want to be a champion and ambassador of salvation to them who do not believe or have never heard of your saving grace. Give me the sensitivity of your Spirit as I interact with your people so that anytime I can be ready to share the good news.

READ MORE DAILY BIBLE AT [BIBLE.COM.AU](https://www.bible.com.au)

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Every will tells a story, a personal story and an act of stewardship. It's a time to reflect on your faith, your family, and how you care for the people you love most.

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Announcing the 2026 CPX Richard Johnson Lecture with speaker Louise Perry

Louise Perry is a British journalist, broadcaster, and author of the bestselling book *The Case Against the Sexual Revolution*. She also hosts the podcast *Maiden Mother Matriarch*, which explores questions of politics and culture. Perry has spoken recently about how her sociological research set her on an unexpected path towards taking the claims of Christianity seriously.

CPX invites you to join us in hearing Perry's contribution to important public conversations at our 13th Richard Johnson Lecture.



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