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BIBLE
SOCIETY

July–September 2014

PRAYER
in action



JULY – a focus on *The Big Mission* at home

A plot from Superman... or the Bible?

A quarter of UK children have never heard the nativity story. Three in five don't know the parable of the Good Samaritan. And one in five children couldn't tell you that the story of Noah's Ark comes from the Bible.

Yet nearly a third of children say it's important to know these stories – and four in five parents think Bible stories should be passed onto their children (see WIA p8-9).

That's why our mission here in England and Wales is so vital. With 27 per cent of parents confusing plots from Superman with Scripture, helping people pass on the Bible to their children is a top priority – and we're doing it with a Bedtime Bible app and projects like Open the Book, which offers the Bible as part of school life.

Your prayer support in all this is crucial. And you can play a part by sharing the stories you love with a child in your life too.

Find out more at biblesociety.org.uk/passiton

29 JUNE–5 JULY

PLEASE PRAY:

- Give thanks for the positive media coverage around the *Pass It On* campaign, and pray that people who may never normally open the Bible would be prompted to consider its stories for themselves.
- For our media and campaigns team. Pray their work would always challenge negative perceptions of the Bible, and instead will open up Scripture in surprising and generous ways.



photo: Bible Society / Layton Thompson

The Big Mission launched earlier this year at Spring Harvest to help overcome the barriers that keep the Bible shut for children

6–12 JULY

PLEASE PRAY:

- Give thanks for our strong presence at this year's Spring Harvest festival, and for all those who committed to being part of *The Big Mission* (WIA p12).
- For the other Christian festivals happening this summer. Pray for our staff and volunteers manning the stands, and pray that visitors would be inspired by *The Big Mission*.



13–19 JULY

PLEASE PRAY:

- For the launch of *hello world*, our all-round experience for 18-30 year olds. It will kick off at New Wine and Momentum this summer, with a competition to win a trip to Cambodia. Find out more at biblesociety.org.uk/helloworld-wia



- That young people will sign up to experience Bible work around the world, and grow in their faith through involvement in the programme.

20–26 JULY

PLEASE PRAY:

- Featuring 26 of Wilfred Owen's First World War poems, crossrefit.info, guides A-level and university students through the influence of the Bible on the poet and his work. Pray that these resources will be well-used.
- That more students and young people would understand and appreciate the Bible's influence on literature and culture through creative projects like crossrefit.

27 JULY–2 AUGUST

PLEASE PRAY:

- Thank God for all the people who have signed up to become Bible storytellers with our Open the Book project. They'll be retelling and re-enacting Bible stories in primary schools all over the country.
- Our aim is to have Bible storytellers in every primary school in the country. Pray for the realisation of this vision – and for funds and volunteers to make it possible.

AUGUST – a focus on *The Big Mission* around the world

Reaching 20 million children by 2020

'We believe the Bible is not just a page-turner, it's a life-changer.'

So says Dai Woolridge, Church Partnership Manager, who was at the launch of *The Big Mission* at Spring Harvest (WIA p4-5). The goal of this campaign is to reach 20 million young people with the Bible – and to do it by 2020. It's ambitious, but with God on our side, we believe it's possible.

Over the next few years, our frontline teams will be fighting the things that keep the Bible closed for children all over the world – whether that's illiteracy, poverty or the lack of a Bible in their language. Your support through prayer makes all the difference.



3–9 AUGUST

PLEASE PRAY:

- Ask that God will stand alongside us and go before us in our fight against those things that keep the Bible a closed book for children.
- Against the barriers of poverty, illiteracy, disability and indifference. Pray that we'll have wisdom, strength and courage as we embark on *The Big Mission* together.

10–16 AUGUST

PLEASE PRAY:

- Give thanks for Abby Guinness' trip to Cambodia, to see *The Big Mission* in action (WIA p6-7). Pray that she'll have opportunities to share news of our work with her Spring Harvest network and others.
- For the Bible Society team in Cambodia, who work tirelessly and faithfully to share the Scriptures in a country still emerging from the darkness of the Khmer Rouge period. Pray particularly for Thida Hul Kol (left), who runs the *15-Minutes for Life* daily radio broadcast (WIA p15).

17–23 AUGUST

PLEASE PRAY:

- For our staff working in dangerous contexts, in places like Algeria and Turkey. These dedicated teams sometimes risk their lives in their quest to share the Bible. Pray for protection and safety.
- For children living in these volatile countries, that despite the challenges, they would have an opportunity to discover the Bible and its stories.

24–30 AUGUST

PLEASE PRAY:

- Praise God for the amazing impact of literacy classes in Cambodia, which are opening up the Bible for thousands of people each year. Give thanks for the many positive outcomes: people's self-esteem is boosted, they are better able to trade and access benefits, they become more involved in church and their faith deepens.
- Thank God for Lorn Oun Moun Ta, and literacy tutors like her, who share their faith with children as well as educate them.



SEPTEMBER— a focus on Bible literacy around the world

Photo: United Bible Societies



Tackling one of the biggest barriers to the Bible

Over recent years, Bible Societies have ramped up efforts in the area of literacy – to address one of the most significant barriers to accessing the Bible around the world.

There are 800 million illiterate adults globally, and two-thirds of them are women. Africa and Asia have the most significant needs. In 2014 we're aiming to teach up to 100,000 people to read, using the Bible as the main text.

Teaching this vital life skill has far-reaching benefits, but for us the main reward is seeing people engage with Scripture for the first time in their own way, on their own terms. Do pray for this fantastic work, and for those who will learn to read this year.

31 AUGUST–6 SEPTEMBER

PLEASE PRAY:

- Two decades of armed conflict in South Sudan means a generation of young people here have grown up never knowing what it means to go to school in the morning. Pray for plans to train 240 literacy tutors.
- Teaching people to read the Bible is one of the first projects to be launched by the recently formed Bible Society in South Sudan. Ask God to bless and grow this work.





7–13 SEPTEMBER

PLEASE PRAY:

- Bangladesh has one of the worst literacy rates in the world, which is why we're aiming to get 1,000 new people started on our Bible-based literacy programme. Pray for more tutors and churches to host the classes.
- The Bangladesh literacy classes run over two years. In year one, students learn parables and stories from the New Testament. In year two, they get an overview of the Bible. Pray this understanding will deepen and grow their faith.

14–20 SEPTEMBER

PLEASE PRAY:

- Our literacy classes in Cambodia are phenomenally successful. Within three months, 90 per cent of children and adults can read basic Khmer text. Thank God for this programme.
- For our Cambodian staff, who travel to the most remote communities to set up classes. This commitment to helping marginalised people speaks volumes – and cannot be underestimated.

21–27 SEPTEMBER

PLEASE PRAY:

- In China we're hoping to teach 55,000 people to read in 2014, and give them each a Bible. This is vital in a country where the shortage of trained pastors means he or she might only visit your church once every three months. Pray for the success of the project.
- For more funds to support the expansion of literacy classes across China. Some 55 million people are illiterate here, and three-quarters are women.

28 SEPTEMBER–4 OCTOBER

PLEASE PRAY:

- Our literacy work has been recognised by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation). Thank God for the professionalism and hard work which has led to this partnership.
- For all those who will discover the Bible as they learn to read. Pray they will encounter the richness and wonder of the redeeming story of Scripture, and pray they will make it part of their lives.

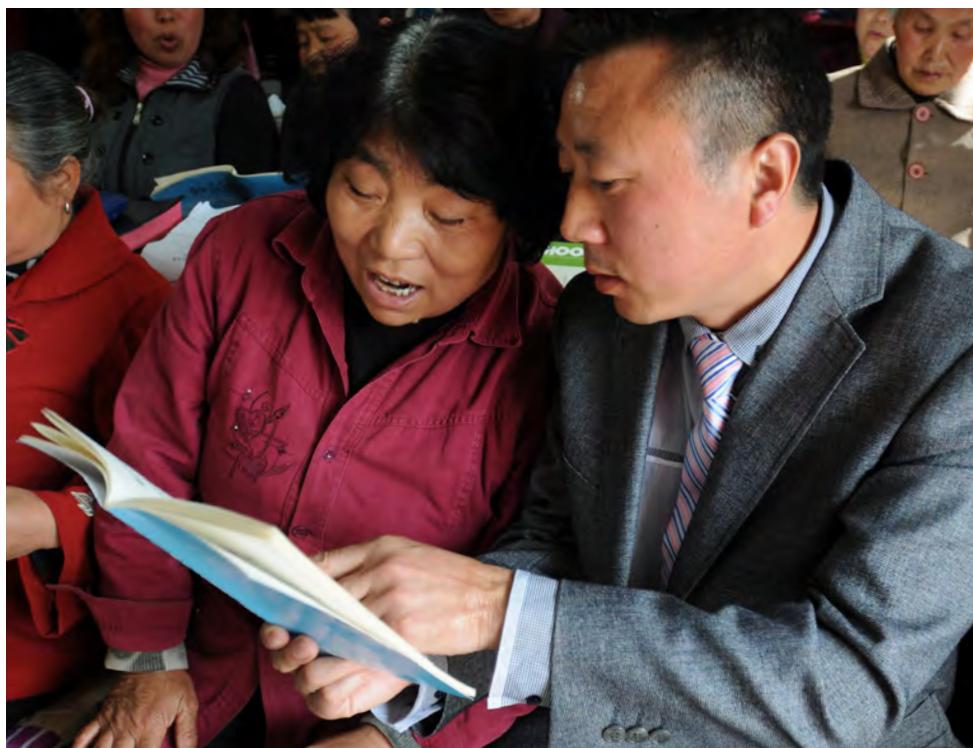


Photo: Bible Society/Claire Kendall