



Bible
Society

word in action

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We are living in a period of unprecedented opportunity and challenge for Bible mission at home and abroad.



Despite the challenge of secularisation in Europe, the world is becoming a more religious place. The number of Christians in the world will have reached 2.9 billion by 2050, up from 2.1 billion today. Alongside this, the centre of Christianity will have shifted – from Europe to sub-Saharan Africa. In 2050, sub-Saharan Africa will be home to nearly 40% of the world's Christians¹.

It's therefore no surprise that demand for the Bible in Africa is growing at an exponential rate. The demand, of course, is accompanied by exceptional need. Over 40% of people living in sub-Saharan Africa live in absolute poverty.

Bible Society exists to offer the Bible to the world. We believe the Bible is the story of God and the world. The Bible is the word of God, and God speaks through it to us today. We are driven by the conviction that when people engage with the Bible, lives can change, for good. In the next five years we will be making a special effort to respond to the extraordinary opportunities and challenges in sub-Saharan Africa.

Of course, the context at home is different, but no less challenging. Around 55% of the population (30.9m people) do not engage with the Bible but are 'spiritually open'², and we're committed to offering the Bible to people in this situation. Our Pass It On competition (p.2), Wales to the world (p.3) and The Pitch, our short film competition (p.10-11), are just three ways in which we are seeking to do this.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of *Word in Action*. Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support. We appreciate your prayers, volunteering, gifts and time more than you know.

Paul Woolley
Interim Chief Executive



¹ Pew Research
² Bible Society and YouGov research

Pass It On competition winner announced



Photography by St. Mary's School, Ascot

Twelve-year-old Grace Haworth has won our Pass It On competition with her poem based on Genesis 1-2 (you can read it on page 14).

Grace, a pupil at St Mary's School, Ascot, was presented with a framed picture of her work, drawn by *The Beano* cartoonist and competition judge, Kev F Sutherland. Kev said, 'I'd like to congratulate all the entrants for taking part and creating such a high standard and broad range of work. It was a close-run thing when I'd got down to the final half dozen, all of which would have been an honour to draw; but in the end, and with much deliberation, it was Grace's story that won out.'

He added, 'You might have expected me to choose one of the all-laughs funny scripts – and I loved so many of them – but the visuals conjured up by this

story were its ultimate strength.' Grace and St Mary's School both received an iPad.

The competition asked children, aged 6-12, to re-tell a Bible story in their own words using whatever style they preferred: a story, comic strip or poem. Many children told their story from the perspective of the protagonist, while others chose a character from the story such as a lion (Daniel and the lions' den), a stone (David and Goliath) and a big fish (Jonah).

Rachel Rounds, Head of Communications said, 'We were thrilled to have had over 300 entries and are blown-over by how brilliantly all the children brought the Bible to life in their own imaginative way.'

You can read the winner's and runners-up stories at biblesociety.org.uk/passiton

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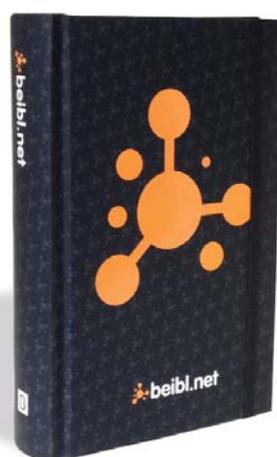


Wales to the world

In a packed church, near the banks of Wales' River Taff, 150 people came together for an evening of song, storytelling and spoken word. They journeyed through the rich history of the Bible and the Christian faith in Wales – and at the end, many spontaneously worshipped and prayed in response to all God has done through his people in this nation.

This was 'Wales to the World', a celebration of the spiritual heritage of Wales, which took place at three venues earlier this year. The events took people through the inspiration of the spiritual 'greats' in Wales, who were all changed, for good, through the Bible. These included Robert Jermain Thomas, a martyr who took the Bible to Korea, Evan Roberts, who fronted the 1904 revival and William Morgan, who translated the Bible into Welsh in 1588.

Bible translator Arfon Jones also told of his 17-year labour to translate the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into colloquial Welsh, in a version called beibl.net. It's only the third ever translation of the full Bible into Welsh, and in October 2015 we published beibl.net in print for the first time. Church Relationship Manager – Wales and West Midlands,



Dai Woolridge performing at 'Wales to the World'

All photography by Bible Society

Dai Woolridge, said, 'Hebrews 12 reminds us that there's a great cloud of witnesses who went before us and they're spurring us on. We wanted to look back and be inspired by a Welsh cloud of witnesses (I'm sure there's a joke about Wales and clouds in there somewhere!). Just as many before us vowed to take this book seriously, we now want to look forward to how we can do the same, to bring the Bible to life for more people in Wales.'

We're promoting the beibl.net translation through a new Bible engagement campaign, called Beibl Byw (which means 'the Bible alive, the Bible lives'). As part of the campaign we are partnering with others in Wales to produce resources and run activities to bring the Bible to life for Welsh-speakers.



A school visit to Mary Jones World

Meanwhile Mary Jones World, our visitor centre in Bala, continues to share the story of our founding with tourists, schools and church groups. We're helping people learn about the past and make connections to the ongoing importance of the Bible in Wales and around the world. In March the original Mary Jones Bible was on display at Mary Jones World attracting attention from all over the country.

Bringing the Bible to life in Wales

- Find out about **Beibl Byw** at facebook.com/beiblbwyw (in Welsh)
- **'Wales to the World'** will continue with further dates (to be announced) in October 2016. For more information, go to biblesociety.org.uk/walestotheworld
- **Come and visit us!** Mary Jones World is now open daily, 10am – 5pm until 31 October bydmaryjones.org.uk Twitter [@bydmaryjones](https://twitter.com/bydmaryjones)
- **Watch the video** of the Mary Jones Bible on display at biblesociety.org.uk/wia-bibleinbala

To read this article in Welsh go to biblesociety.org.uk/wordinaction

On a global mission

We've stepped up our efforts to **bring the Bible to life** for every man, woman and child. So, what's changing, and what part can you play in our global mission?

The Bible: the word of God, a global bestseller, the story of God in the world. Yet millions of people around the world don't engage with it.

Why? Across the world, people often want the Bible but it's not available to them; it's not translated in their language, or it's too expensive, or they simply can't get hold of a copy. Here at

home, the Bible is readily available, but few people want it. Nine out of 10 people in England and Wales don't read the Bible. Everything we do at Bible Society is driven by one conviction: that when people engage with the Bible, lives can change, for good. We realised that to really bring the Bible to life for more people, we needed to sharpen our focus and adapt to a changing world. So, we've developed a new approach...



Here at home we'll work even harder to help people recognise the value of the Bible and engage with it better

we'll help you bring the Bible to life day to day

Bible illiteracy is widespread and many adults and children simply don't believe the Bible is relevant today. Meanwhile, Christians like you tell us you want help to engage with the Bible better. We need to offer the Bible in creative and relevant ways, and help people like you bring it to life day to day.

By 2021 we aim to:

- Grow our Open the Book programme so we can bring the Bible to life for more children each year
- Inspire and resource adults to deepen their connection with God's word
- Equip the local Church to advocate for the Bible within their church and community
- Form a network of local churches to work alongside us in our mission
- Demonstrate that the Bible can be a force for good, for individuals, families and communities



Photography by Layton Thompson

here's how we can bring the Bible to life together

Bringing the Bible to Life



Around the world we'll focus on three areas where Christianity is growing fast and the need is greatest

this is how we're connecting people with the word of God internationally

Africa

Christianity is growing fastest in sub-Saharan Africa, but more than 40% of people still live in absolute poverty. The need for Scripture in the toughest, hardest parts of the region is huge.



Photography by Clare Kendall

By 2021 we aim to:

- Make the Bible available in seven countries, for two million people
- Offer the Bible to 250,000 people suffering from trauma or living with HIV
- Provide literacy and audio Bible programmes for over 500,000 people
- Challenge African leaders to lead with integrity and change society for good, inspired by the Bible
- Help our African colleagues to connect more people with God's word

Middle East

This region is in crisis. We aim to shine a light of hope, shore up Christians in difficult contexts and offer an alternative to extremism.



Photography by Bible Society

By 2021 we aim to:

- Work alongside Christian communities in the Middle East, helping and supporting them to maintain their faith
- Help young people engage digitally with the Bible
- Publically present the Bible as an alternative to religious extremism
- Develop a Bible resource specifically for Muslims in one of the key local languages
- Support Bible-based trauma healing in at least five countries
- Help our colleagues to enhance the mission of the struggling local Church

China

Christianity continues to grow within this global powerhouse. We need to support Bible engagement as the Church expands.



Photography by Bible Society

By 2021 we aim to:

- Make printed or digital Bibles available for at least half of the people in mainland China who want the Bible – that's 685 million people
- Provide 20,000 church leaders with a printed or digital study Bible, for free
- Provide 3,000 church leaders with Bible training and education
- Influence the Government to recognise the value of the Bible in Chinese society
- Begin the process to digitalise all existing translations

So in summary, our international work focuses on bringing the Bible to life for those who need it most - a few words but a giant commitment! Our plans are ambitious, doubling our level of activity in these areas. That's why we are so grateful to have people like you alongside us in this global mission.

There are many ways to be involved; you can volunteer, pray, fundraise and give. Find out more at biblesociety.org.uk. Together, we can do something amazing: connect people to the word of God, at home and across the world.

Bringing the Bible to life in Africa

We're bringing the Bible to life in the most challenging, troubled places in Africa – not only because it's where God's word is most needed, it's also where demand is greatest.



The Chosen Ones drama group



Chikondi Costnas

Photography by Clare Kendall

Malawi

In the shade of a jacaranda tree, 21-year-old Chikondi Costnas is performing a drama loosely based on the Psalms, crying out to God in despair over losing his job and his parents' death. For the small audience, it's utterly convincing. Later, Chikondi tells us, 'The Bible is the most important thing in my life. It's the only gift I have.'

He's part of a ten-strong Bible-inspired drama group of young people in their teens and early 20s. They write plays, songs and poems to perform locally. Last year they came third in a national talent competition run by Bible Society, and Chikondi received his Bible as a prize.

The competition is one element of a wider programme to encourage and develop young people. Memory Phiri, the 16-year-old girl on the front cover, is part of this wider programme of drama groups established and encouraged by the Bible Society of Malawi.

In Malawi, unemployment is devastating the hopes of the younger generation. Currently, two out of five young people are unemployed. Three-quarters of those who do work are in unstable, irregular employment¹. Malawi is among the 10 poorest countries in the world².

Clapperton Mayuni, who leads our work in Malawi, said, 'We want to encourage young people to be the best they can be, to know who they are in Christ. We celebrate their talents with the hope that they will find a sense of value in God through this.'

¹ International Labour Organisation, Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015
² World Bank

Prayer points from Clapperton:

- Please pray for good governance in Malawi
- Pray our young people will have hope in their nation
- Pray that the Bible will change young people's lives. 'The word of God is powerful. We don't know what it will do. We don't know what they will become,' he said.

South Sudan

- The civil war which began in 2013 has displaced 2.2 million people
- Tens of thousands have died
- Up to 40% of the population faces food shortages
- Please pray for a new peace agreement, pray for the healing of thousands of men, women and children from the trauma they've experienced
- Pray for the safety of our staff as they work tirelessly to meet the demand for Scripture

Our team here are providing 50 times more Bibles than they were before the outbreak of the 2013 conflict between the Dinka and Nuer tribes. They've suspended all other translation and literacy work in order to keep up with demand.

Edward Kajivora, who leads our work in South Sudan, said, 'During a war there's nothing you can rely on to help apart from God. When you really need God, you need to read or hear what God says in the Bible.'

He said many people are becoming Christians in refugee camps in and around Juba. 'Phrases like "God is

great," or "God has power" have become a form of greeting among people in the streets. I went to a refugee camp and shed tears to see people praising God. Many narrowly escaped death, and I can see the suffering they are in, but they are trusting in God.'

Providing Bibles to soldiers



Photography by United Bible Societies

- This tiny country is one of the smallest in the world
- Its population numbers just a few more than the city of Birmingham, and is overwhelmingly young
- More than half of the Swazi people are below the age of 25; more than a third are under 14³

Swaziland

One of the reasons for Swaziland's youthful population is, tragically, AIDS. The country has the highest HIV infection rate in the world⁴.

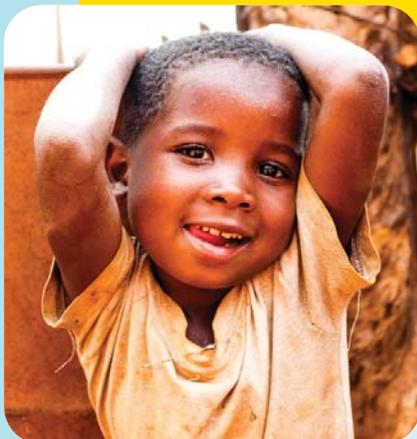
Between 2000 and 2009, life expectancy fell from 61 to just 32 as a result of the illness⁵ – and the social impact has been dramatic.

Ngcebo Mbuli, who leads our work in Swaziland, said, 'We're working with a school where 98% of the children are orphans; both parents have died of AIDS. On the surface, these kids seem happy.

But when you sit down with them, you see the depths of their sadness. They need healing.'

He's hoping to launch our Open the Book programme in schools like this, bringing Bible storytelling to the classroom and distributing Scripture for children to read at home.

'The Bible is a book that brings comfort, joy and hope to these children,' added Ngcebo, 'But they can't afford it. Their priorities are food and clothing.'



Photography by Adam Garff

³ From our team in Swaziland, backed up through Wikipedia

⁴ UN AIDS data

⁵ Report quoted on Wikipedia, Swaziland: a culture that encourages HIV/AIDS, 2009

Light in the darkness



Your support is shining a light of hope in one of the most troubled countries on earth, by meeting the tremendous demand for the Bible among Syrians. We spoke to the man behind this vital mission.

When Gaith* shares the one thing in the Bible that really speaks to him, the power of it hits you right in the stomach. Gaith lives in Aleppo, Syria, and works as the national director for our team there. He has a wife and teenage son, who sometimes travel with him around the country to distribute Bibles. Often, he's at the bookshop; it's just

150m from the closest fighting, but is always full of people. He risks abduction, bombing and sniper fire on a regular basis.

'My favourite verse?' Gaith smiles. "'Don't be afraid. I am with you.'" Isaiah 41.10a (CEV)

For the past 30 years, Gaith has been offering the Bible to his people. Since the war broke out in 2011 and half of the country's population fled or were killed, demand for the Bible has never been higher.

'Every family has a sad story,' said Gaith. 'We have no hope from the outside. All our hope comes from inside, from Jesus. People are turning to God's word for comfort and encouragement.' In 2010, before the war began, we

distributed around 35,000 Bibles, New Testaments and children's Bibles. Last year, it was close to 55,000 books – and 110,000 Scripture calendars were handed out too. This is thanks to the support of people like you, who responded with overwhelming generosity to our Middle East appeals.

Around one in 10 Syrians is a Christian, but Gaith said these days, people of all faiths are interested in reading the Bible. 'Jesus is not only for the Christians,' he said, 'Jesus came for all people, so we offer the Bible to all 22 million Syrians. This is our vision: to reach every Syrian with the Bible.'

Despite the risks, Gaith will not leave Syria. He has 'felt the touch of God,' he says, to stay and serve his people. 'God wants us here.'



'My favourite verse?'
Gaith smiles.
"Don't be afraid.
I am with you."

Isaiah 41.10a (CEV)



Photography by United Bible Societies

People think we can leave because we're part of an international organisation, but we remain because we are Syrians. People feel hopeful that we have not fled,' added Gaith. 'Recently, a man wanted to give us a donation to help fund Bible distribution. He was very poor, and we said he should keep this money to leave Syria. But he said no. When I see people like this, I think I should be here with them.'

Gaith and his eight staff, based in Damascus as well as Aleppo, are now launching a programme of Christian counselling (sometimes called trauma healing). It's early days, and training for those who'll run the workshops has only just started – but the need is great.

'Many, many people are hurt from this crisis,' said Gaith. 'Some of them are losing hope. I have met young men, sportsmen, without arms or feet. Families and children are in conflict. All society has changed.'

He said, 'This is the message of the Bible, to reconcile and heal. Jesus healed, preached and taught people how to work and live with each other. Now, we are his hands and we are equipment for God, so we will do it.'

To date, 4.5 million Syrians have fled the country and 6.5 million have left their homes but remain in Syria. A quarter of a million people have been killed since the conflict began; a third were civilians and 13,000 have been children¹.

Gaith talks about life 'when the crisis finishes,' – and part of his focus now is on rebuilding a better future for his country, where everyone has access to the Bible and can recognise its value. But in the meantime, he asked supporters like you to pray.

'I'm not a strong man,' said Gaith. 'But God in my life makes me able to do this work. Pray for us to be salt and light. Pray for all the people who read the Bible in Syria; all these people, they belong to Bible Society.'

*name changed to protect his identity



Claire Smith

Freelance writer
for Bible Society

¹ BBC, Feb 2016

Bringing the **Bible to life**, on screen





Meet Vanessa Perdriau, 2015 winner of our short film competition *The Pitch* – and discover the story behind her dramatic film, *The Widow's Last*.



Vanessa Perdriau always wanted to be on TV. Growing up in New Zealand, she was 'one away' from being chosen as the girl who got eaten by a dinosaur in one of the *Jurassic Park* films. But when she was auditioning to play a character who kills her mother, Vanessa had a change of heart. The scripts were too dark, the themes too foreboding. She realised she didn't want to inhabit the characters she was being asked to play. So, Vanessa decided to make her own films, telling a different story.

Turning ideas into reality

Vanessa moved to London to study film-making. After graduating in 2009, she worked as a freelance filmmaker, producing and editing news for CNN and directing films for clients like Cancer Research and Colgate.

But all the time, Vanessa, now 28 and living in London, was searching for a way to turn her own short film ideas into reality. 'I was on the internet looking for funding opportunities, and stumbled across *The Pitch*,' said Vanessa. 'I almost fell off my chair! It spoke right to the heart of what I wanted to do.'

The competition invites budding filmmakers to put their ideas for a short film before a panel of judges, in order to win £25,000 and support to shoot their film. The winner is then flown to LA to show their work to industry professionals. All this appealed to Vanessa. But what really caught her eye was that, to enter

The Pitch, filmmakers must take inspiration from the Bible; any story, character or theme.

Gripping narrative

'I immediately started looking at different stories,' said Vanessa. She became drawn to the story of Elijah and the widow, found in 1 Kings 17. 'The narrative just gripped me,' she said. 'Elijah had prophesied the famine which was killing the woman and her boy. He was on the run from the king. The widow knew what she stood to lose by helping Elijah, so why did she do it? It's a story of compassion – and the beautiful paradox that so many people can relate to: in giving, you gain.'

Straight away, Vanessa decided to set the story during the Irish Potato Famine of the mid-1800s. 'I was so moved by the stories I read of people living in complete poverty,' said Vanessa, 'and yet it was totally preventable. It was English callousness and greed that caused so many people to die. So I set Elijah as the Englishman, the widow's enemy she chooses to help.' Vanessa set off for Dingle, County Kerry, on the stunning south-west coast of Ireland, and shot her pitch. The result is a thought-provoking, dramatic and moving two-minute film called *The Widow's Last*.

The Pitch

The entry made it through the shortlisting process, then a public vote – and finally Vanessa's idea was scrutinised by five industry judges

including a consultant screenwriter and the editor of *Empire*, the world's biggest film magazine.

'I couldn't believe it when they said I'd won,' said Vanessa. 'The experience of *The Pitch* was a prize in itself. Being a filmmaker is a very lonely road. You have all these ideas, and you don't know what other people will think of them. But I have had so much incredible training through *The Pitch*.'

Since the finals weekend, at Pinewood Studios in January, Vanessa has been busy: writing the script, planning the film locations, casting the actors and appointing a team of specialists. The aim is to start filming this month.

'There's a message of compassion and humanity in this film,' said Vanessa. 'I want people to see need and allow themselves to be moved. That's the whole journey of the widow. She's the key to her own salvation.'

Watch Vanessa's pitch online at enterthepitch.com/entry/the-widows-last

Do you know any filmmakers or film students?

The *Pitch* is a fantastic opportunity for them to boost their careers, even if they have never read the Bible before. Please encourage anyone you think might be interested to visit the website for the competition: enterthepitch.com

What's your story?

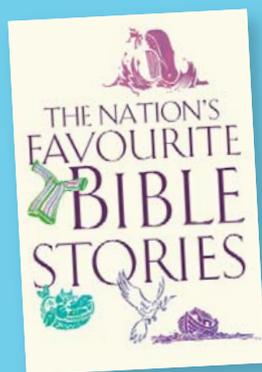
What would you say if somebody asked you to share one story, one passage, one verse or one idea from the Scriptures which have profoundly affected your own life? Perhaps it might be a story of comfort that spoke to you in a difficult period, or an enduring theme or character that keeps repeating in different ways through the years.

Last year, we asked thousands of people across the country to name their favourite Bible story and the top 70 results have just been published in our new book: *The Nation's Favourite Bible Stories*.

Matthew van Duyvenbode, Director

of National Programme and Research said, 'This book makes for fascinating reading, no matter your background. If you want to reacquaint yourself with some of the most memorable passages of the Bible, this collection is really enriching. But equally, if you're interested in understanding what stories are most familiar to the people on your street, this is a brilliant resource to open up conversation.'

And to help you get best use from the book, you can visit *The Nation's Favourite Bible Stories* section on our website for conversation starters, Bible studies, further details of the research and other great resources.



To buy *The Nation's Favourite Bible Stories* for £7.99 (plus P&P) visit biblesociety.org.uk/wia-nfbs



Photography by United Bible Societies

Bible Society in India pioneer wins Mary Jones Prize

In May, at the World Assembly of Bible Societies, our Chair, James Featherby, presented the 2016 Mary Jones Prize to Dr Leela Bose (pictured).

The Mary Jones Prize was established in 2014, following the opening of Mary Jones World, our visitor and education centre in Bala, North Wales, the spiritual birthplace of the Bible Society movement.

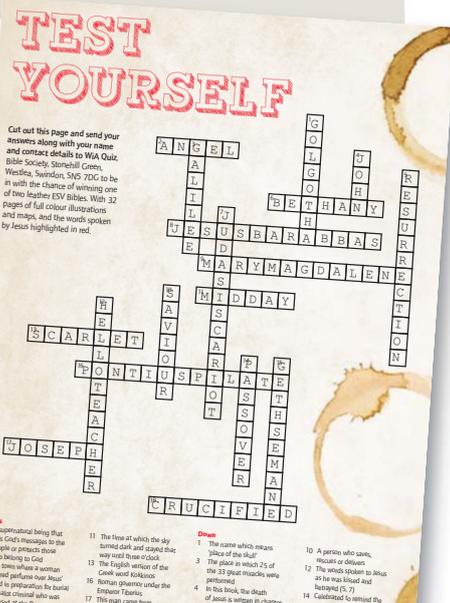
The Fellowship of Mary Jones comprises 17 Bible Societies who, inspired by the vision, financially supported the construction of Mary Jones World. In 2014 the Fellowship resolved to establish an annual prize to be awarded to the person they

considered had done most to keep the story of Mary Jones alive.

In awarding the prize to Dr Bose, the Fellowship noted the extraordinary way in which she has envisioned hundreds of women all over the State of Andhra Pradesh in India and inspired the formation of more than 80 Mary Jones Clubs in the State. The clubs work collaboratively with Bible Society branches not only to raise funds for Bible mission but also to distribute the Scriptures. In addition, Mary Jones Clubs practically work to support orphans and widows, and visit prisoners and those who are sick.

Winners of Word in Action's spring crossword

Congratulations to Rosemary, from Kent, and Leon, from Hampshire, winners of the Test Yourself crossword! They each won a beautiful leather ESV Bible. Thank you to everyone who entered, many of you said how much you enjoyed the challenge of delving into your Bibles. There were a few tricky questions so for those of you who want to double check your answers, go here: biblesociety.org.uk/wia-comp



Thank you!

With your help we're bringing the Bible to life for people here at home and around the world. Why? Because when people engage with the Bible, their lives can change, for good.



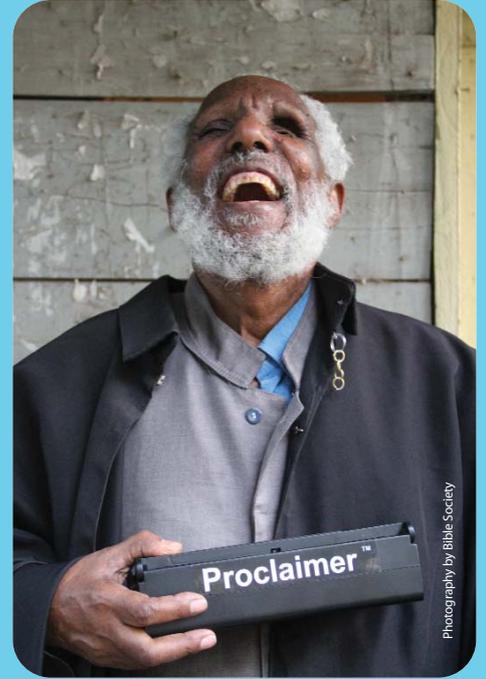
Photography by Claire Kendall



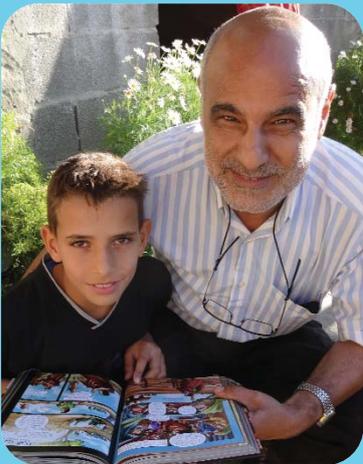
Photography by Bible Society



Photography by Layton Thompson



Photography by Bible Society



Photography by United Bible Societies



Photography by Claire Kendall



Photography by Claire Kendall



Photography by Claire Kendall



Photography by Bible Society



Photography by Claire Kendall



Photography by Bible Society of Lebanon

YOUR LETTERS & COMMENTS



Illustrations by Kev F Sutherland

Here is the winning entry from the Pass It On competition:

Genesis chapter 1-2

A blank slate,
the chalkboard pristine,
nothing drawn:
before the start of time.

The teacher lifts the chalk,
draws the first smooth line,
light against darkness,
makes the start of time.

The line extends,
blossoming across the board,
a small contrast,
breathes life into the world.

Patterns appear,
ribbons of crystal water,
Pishon, Tigris, Gihon and Euphrates,
the boundaries are set.

He fills the board,
towering trees and delicate flowers,
swaying grass and rolling hills under
his chalk the garden takes form.

A person is made,
formed by his hand,
clearer than the rest:
the master of creation.

Out of him another is made,
the teacher summons her from inside
the other, she is by his side:
man's eternal companion.

No clothes,
no snake,
Adam and Eve -
the garden was made.

GRACE HAWORTH
YEAR EIGHT, ST MARY'S ASCOT

Thank you for my free copy of *The Servant Queen and the King She Serves* – what a brilliant way to celebrate her 90th birthday. I was particularly moved by the article 'The forgotten Christians of Calais' (in *Word in Action*) – so near and yet so far from the help they need and deserve.

MARGARET, CROYDON

To think that this organisation Bible Society and its impact right across the world all started with the determination of a young Welsh girl wanting to own a Bible is absolutely amazing.

DENNIS, BOOTLE

I feel genuinely privileged to receive *Word in Action* and *Prayer in Action*, but I very rarely thank Bible Society for being sent them, so a heartfelt thank you to you all for the work you do to produce and mail me these editions.

NORMAN, MANCHESTER

WE LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

Email us your thoughts and comments at wia@biblesociety.org.uk or use the comments form attached. We reserve the right to edit letters for style and length. The views expressed do not necessarily represent those of Bible Society.



Photography by Matheena Jirivó

'Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.' Philippians 4.6 (ESV)

'We often share this verse with children in schools where 98% of pupils are orphans because both parents have died of AIDS. We tell them we have a God who cares about us. These children may have sick parents to care for, they must go to school, there's no food and they can't afford a uniform.

But the Bible says, do not be anxious. God hears no matter the size of the request. His ear is opened.

'I have been working with Bible Society since 2009, but only took over the leadership early in 2016. My message to supporters is this; thank you very much for helping us bring the Bible to life in Swaziland. You are helping us to nurture children in the Bible. If we want to see Swaziland transforming, offering the Bible to children is the best thing we can do.'

Ngcebo Mbuli, General Secretary of Bible Society in Swaziland

Biblepeople:

Heather Clements worked at Bible Society for just over 11 years and retired in April as the Church Relationship Manager for London and the South East. We are incredibly grateful for her tireless passion and enthusiasm in bringing the Bible to life!

What's your favourite Bible passage and why?

That's a difficult one – but I think I will have to go for those amazing verses in Romans 8.37-39. These were the verses I read when I was baptised on my 15th birthday back in 1970. They were already meaningful for me at that age and have been increasingly so in the years that followed. What an

incredible promise to know that, whatever happens, nothing can separate us from God's love! They became very special once again a couple of years ago as I read these verses to my father in his final days and hours – to know the certainty that even death cannot separate us from the love of God – and naturally we read the very same passage at my father's Thanksgiving Service.

What is it like to give the gift of a Bible to a Christian who has waited many years for one?

On my three visits to China in recent years, I have had this privilege many times. It's one of the most moving and humbling experiences of my life. On my first visit, I gave Yu Yan Hua,



Heather giving Yu Yan Hua her first Bible

a 78-year-old lady, her first ever Bible. She has been a Christian all her life and this was her very first Bible, the look of pure joy as she hugged that precious book is something I will never forget.

Life of Christ at Wintershall

It's not too late to book tickets for the Life of Christ at Wintershall from **21 – 26 June 2016**. The performance runs 10am – 3.30pm each day. This atmospheric open air play takes you back in time to when Jesus lived on earth, performed on the beautiful Wintershall estate with its lakes and ancient woodland, re-enacting the remarkable events of Jesus' life. Wintershall will also be performing the Nativity on **14 – 18 December 2016**. To book please call 01793 418299 or go to www.wintershall-estate.com.



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