
IMAGINE

Inspiration & Updates from the Canadian Bible Society



SCRIPTURE FOR ALL

Bible Translation for China's Ethnic Minorities

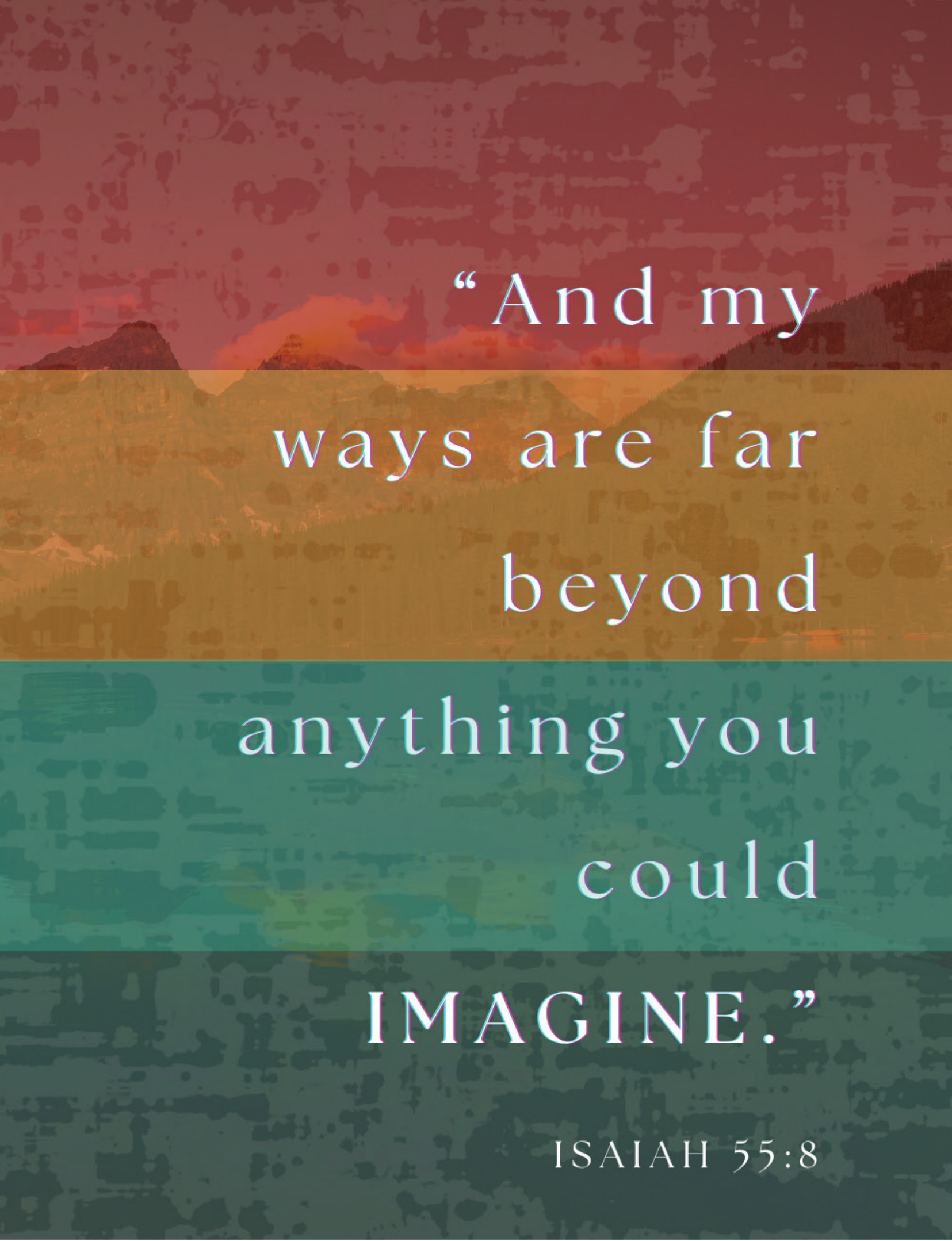
Blackfoot Bible Translation
Scripture-Based Trauma Healing
Herbie Kuhn's Faith Journey



“My thoughts
are nothing

like your
thoughts,”

says the
Lord.

A scenic landscape featuring a mountain range under a sunset sky. The foreground shows a valley with a small town and a river. A semi-transparent teal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text. The text is in a white, serif font, with the word "IMAGINE." in all caps and a larger font size.

“And my
ways are far
beyond
anything you
could
IMAGINE.”

ISAIAH 55:8

IMAGINE

ISSUE THREE | 2026

*IMAGINE a future where everyone can hear God's voice.
With dedicated partners, the Canadian Bible Society is realizing the vision of making the Bible accessible
in the languages closest to people's hearts, in a format easy for them to use, and with help to understand it for themselves.
Together, we are fulfilling God's call to unite people of every nation, tribe and language.*



ON THE COVER:
Young girls from the Lisu ethnic group in China

IMAGINE is a publication of the Canadian Bible Society.

Publisher
Canadian Bible Society

Editorial & Publishing Support
Ann Chow
Harriet Compston
Amanuel Mengistu
Mauricio Vega

Editorial Board
Mary Ann Buffam
Minu Mathew



**Canadian
Bible Society**

10 Carnforth Road, Toronto, ON M4A 2S4
Tel: 416-757-4171 | Toll Free: 1-800-465-2425
Email: info@biblesociety.ca
www.biblesociety.ca

Uppermost.

uppermost.cc



**Canadian Centre for
Christian Charities**
ACCREDITED MEMBER

CONTENTS

INSIGHT

10. *Being an Advocate for the Bible*

An inspiring challenge from Rupen Das, the president of the Canadian Bible Society

14. *Living Faith in the Public Square*

Religious freedom expert Andrew Bennett on Christian public advocacy

18. *We Need To Flood Our Community With God's Word*

Former Chief Vincent of the Siksika Nation and the Blackfoot Bible translation project

IMPACT

24. *Translating the Bible for China's Ethnic Minorities*

A report on bringing Scripture to all languages in the world's second-largest population by Harriet Compston and Pamela Choo

32. *Caring for Wounded Hearts Across Canada*

Stacey Stolte on God's love transforming the lives of those recovering from trauma

38. *A Life Well Considered*

Lorna Dueck describes Paul and Ruth Fink's journey of supporting the Bible cause

INSPIRATION

42. *Laying a Foundation of Scripture*

The Faith Journey of Herbie Kuhn: Voice of the Toronto Raptors

48. *The Psalm That Changed Everything*

A Scripture passage that transformed the life of a young Malcolm Guite

52. *His Majesty's Royal Chapel of the Mohawks*

A photo essay of the historic church by Philip Maher

CONTRIBUTORS



ANDREW BENNETT

Andrew Bennett is Director of Faith Community Engagement at Cardus, a Canadian Christian think tank, where he leads public engagement on religious freedom and the role of faith in public life. An ordained deacon in the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, he served as Canada's first Ambassador for Religious Freedom and Head of the Office of Religious Freedom from 2013 to 2016.



LORNA DUECK

Lorna Dueck is a journalist, broadcaster, and communications consultant. She is one of the hosts of the Canadian Bible Society's Scripture Untangled podcast, drawing on her long experience in faith-based media and Scripture engagement. She was previously CEO of Crossroads Christian Communications and YES TV, where she led news and documentary initiatives exploring the intersection of Christian faith and public life.



MALCOLM GUTE

Malcolm Guite is an English poet, singer-songwriter, Anglican priest, and academic known for exploring the intersection of Christian faith, imagination, and the arts. Born in Nigeria to British parents and educated at the Universities of Cambridge and Durham, he has served as chaplain and Bye-Fellow at Girton College, Cambridge, while publishing widely read collections of poetry and theological reflections. He also performs as a musician with the band Mystery Train.



HERBIE KUHN

Herbie Kuhn has been the public address announcer for the Toronto Raptors since 1995, and along with Steve Kearns, they serve as co-chaplains of the Raptors and Toronto FC. Herbie is also the lead chaplain of the Toronto Argonauts. He and his wife Stephanie have been in full-time ministry for over 26 years, and they serve with Athletes in Action Canada.



PHILIP MAHER

Philip Maher is a Canadian communications professional, photojournalist, and photographer who works extensively with Christian and humanitarian nonprofits around the world. Drawing on experience in media, public relations, and visual storytelling, he has documented relief, development, and ministry work in numerous countries, helping organizations communicate their impact with integrity and empathy.



STACEY STOLTE

Stacey Stolte serves as Program Lead for Bible-based Trauma Healing with the Canadian Bible Society, based in British Columbia. In this role, she helps develop and support trauma-healing initiatives in churches and communities across Canada, training facilitators to use Scripture-centered approaches to address the emotional and spiritual impact of trauma.



HENRY VANDERSPEK

Henry VanderSpek is a Toronto-based photographer with a passion for capturing the essence of people and community. His work has been featured in media outlets such as CBC Radio, CBC TV, and the Toronto Star. Additionally, his photographs have been showcased in the CONTACT Photo and DesignTO Festivals. Henry has also provided photography services for several nonprofit organizations, including The Institute for Canadian Citizenship, The Scott Mission and World Vision.

Dear Friend,

In these pages, you'll encounter voices from remarkably different worlds—a former Blackfoot chief translating Scripture for his nation, a poet reflecting on the Psalms, and a professional sports announcer who has built his life on God's Word. What unites these various Canadian voices? A conviction that Scripture connects people to Jesus, and encountering Jesus changes everything.

At the Canadian Bible Society, this conviction is what motivates us to expand access to Scripture and deepen engagement with God's Word—both here at home and around the world. Whether we're translating the Bible into Indigenous languages, providing Scriptures to immigrant communities in their heart language, or supporting translation projects for communities overseas, our mission remains constant: helping people hear God speak.

In Canada, we serve some of our most vulnerable neighbours—elderly residents in long-term care homes, inmates seeking hope behind bars, and youth at risk searching for meaning. We also resource churches across the country with tools for Scripture engagement and come alongside diaspora communities who are hungry for the Bible in their mother tongue.

Globally, your partnership supports translation work that is bringing Scripture to millions for the first time, along with programs that serve persecuted believers, trafficking survivors, and communities devastated by conflict and disaster.

None of this would be possible without you. Thank you for standing with us in this vital work. Together, we are ensuring that people everywhere can encounter Jesus through His Word.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rupen Das', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rev. Dr. Rupen Das
President, Canadian Bible Society



As long as the world
exists, there will be a time
for planting and a time for
harvest. There will always
be cold and heat, summer
and winter, day and night.

Genesis 8:22



INSIGHT

ISSUE THREE

IMAGINE

2026



-
- 10. BEING AN ADVOCATE FOR THE BIBLE
 - 14. LIVING FAITH IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE
 - 18. FORMER CHIEF VINCENT OF THE SIKSIKA NATION



The launch of the revised Lao Bible in Vientiane, Laos

Being an Advocate for the Bible

BY RUPEN DAS

ADAPTED FROM A TALK DELIVERED AT
THE 2025 ILLUMINATIONS ASIA GATHERING

We have been hearing about the Great Commission and the work of Bible ministry, especially as we wait for the return of Christ. So how do we respond? In a crowded mission landscape where there are conflicting demands for resources to fund various mission and ministry initiatives, there is a need for advocates who will stay focused on the basics – that without the Bible, there can be no ministry. It is only the Bible that reveals who Jesus is.

One thing that is clear is that the Bible is not just another book. It is not merely a book of wisdom, although it contains some of the wisest insights of any book in the world. It is not simply a guide on how to live, though it would be foolish to ignore God's original blueprint for this world and human life. The Bible is not primarily a book for behavioural change, even though many people say that the Bible changes lives.

The Bible is more than all of that. It is the only book in the world that reveals who the Creator God is. Within its pages, the mysteries about the origins of life and this universe are uncovered. It reveals God's purposes for His creation. One gets a clear answer as to why there is evil in the world and what God is doing about it.

And most importantly, it reveals that God wants to be known by His creation. In it, Jesus says, "I am the Way, the Truth and Life." The only description of Jesus anywhere in history is found in the Bible, without which the world today would not know Jesus.

Some advocates enable access to the Bible, so that people may know the living God revealed in Jesus. I remember the time when we were working in the Middle East, and thousands of Syrian refugees flooded into Lebanon. We set up a humanitarian program through the local churches to meet their needs. Since this was a ministry through the churches, we did not stop them from sharing the Gospel. There was no manipulation or coercion to believe. They were helped because they were in need. We never placed Bibles into their food packages. Instead, we had a separate table with Bibles and other Christian material for them to take, if they wanted to. Every time, the table with the Bibles would be empty, and soon we ran out of funding for Bibles. While we were addressing their physical needs, we had not realized their incredible spiritual hunger.

Then we noticed something: these refugees were encountering the living God through dreams, visions, miracles, and answers to desperate prayers. After each experience, they wanted to know about the God they had encountered. The churches would then teach them from the Bible. We saw hundreds become followers of Christ as they

began to hear and read the Bible and discover who Jesus is. The refugees didn't want to hear another message, like the ones they would hear every Friday. They were tired of praying, not knowing if their prayers were being heard. Instead, they wanted to experience the reality of Jesus.

"The Bible is the only book in the world that reveals who the Creator God is."

Even though many had had mystical experiences, how could they know who Jesus is without the Bible?

That is when I became an advocate for the Bible. I had been involved in discipleship ministries and insider movements among unreached communities in Asia, especially India, and in ministries of compassion across the world. The Bible has been part of our family's legacy. Two of my Hindu ancestors became followers of Christ in the 1820s, not through evangelistic meetings, but by reading the Bible in Oriya, their heart language, and realizing how different Jesus is from the

33 million gods in the Hindu pantheon. An aunt translated the Bible into modern-day Oriya, the language of my home state in India. My father-in-law was part of the team that translated the Old Testament into Nepali at a time when Nepal was still a closed country. I always took for granted that a Bible would be available for ministry, not realizing that hundreds of unreached people groups and communities across Asia have nothing of the Word of God in their language. How could any ministry be done, and how would people know about Jesus if a Bible were not available?

Yet, we are beginning to see inroads being made into this enormous challenge. Mai, who is a 40-year-old Nung Chao woman living in a village in Lang Son province of Vietnam, speaks the Nung language. Though it is one of the tribal languages in Vietnam, it has almost a million speakers. She says, "I always long to hear the Word in the Nung language because it is easier to understand and the ideas flow easily. It is the language that speaks directly to my heart." When she was first given a Bible and started to read it, she was curious to know what the Bible said about God, His creation, His love, and about salvation. She said, "I never knew that there was a God who made everything and who cared for me personally. I never knew that there was a God who sent His Son to die for me and to forgive my sins. I never knew that there was a God who wanted to have a relationship with me and to give me eternal life." Without the Bible, she would never have known who God is. It is transformative when they realize that the Creator knows who they are and speaks their language.

Some tasks are so big that they require advocates who have access to people in power and those with money. Nehemiah realized that as a small community in

exile in Babylon, they could not afford to return to Jerusalem. So, he leveraged his trusted and influential position as the cupbearer of King Artaxerxes and made a bold request for resources to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. By leveraging his position and access to the enormous power and wealth of Artaxerxes to accomplish what he believed God was asking him to do, Nehemiah is a model of what a Gospel Patron is.

In the history of Christian mission, there have always been Gospel patrons, advocates for the Bible, who dared, like Nehemiah, to take on huge tasks. Count Nicolaus Zinzendorf, a wealthy German businessman and a devout Christian who funded the early missionary efforts of the Moravians across the world. They would establish 5,000 holistic ministry outposts, where Bible translation was often an integral part of the ministry. The Clapham Sect, a group of devout and influential Christians in England, included leaders in government and business, social activists and clergy. Prominent among them were Member of Parliament William Wilberforce, banker and economist Henry Thornton, and John Shore, who, as Lord Teignmouth, was the Governor General of India. They not only leveraged their enormous wealth to establish and initially fund the British and Foreign Bible Society for Bible translation and distribution, but Wilberforce, along with some key church leaders, and local congregations funded William Carey and his team in India as they translated the Bible and trained missionary evangelists, in the process establishing a model of how Bible translation should be done.

The most dramatic example of an advocate for the Bible is Humphrey Monmouth. Most people have never heard of him, but without him, William Tyndale would not have been able to translate the most widely distributed

Bible in England at the time to ordinary people. Monmouth, a wealthy London cloth merchant and devout Christian, provided financial support, and room and board while Tyndale worked on his translation.

**“It is
transformative
when they
realize that
the Creator...
speaks their
language.”**

When Tyndale fled to Europe to escape persecution, Monmouth used his business connections to help smuggle copies of Tyndale's Bible back into England—often hidden in cloth shipments. Unfortunately, in 1528, Monmouth was arrested and imprisoned in the Tower of London. Humphrey Monmouth died in 1537, not fully grasping his legacy. With Monmouth's help, Tyndale's revolutionary translation reached the hands of ordinary people in England,

I wonder if we can dream about more Gospel patrons and advocates of the

Bible. People like Count Zinzendorf, William Wilberforce, Henry Thornton, and Humphrey Monmouth transformed how Christian mission was done in their time through their generosity and vision.

Being an advocate for the Bible means opening it for people so they would know the Creator God, as we have seen in the stories I shared. Some are gifted as evangelists, pastors, disciple makers, and church planters. Advocating for the Bible also involves ensuring that it is available and accessible to people. This requires translators, publishers, and supply chain. A group of advocates who are often overlooked, without whom none of this would be possible, are those who provide the funds and resources and open doors. They are people in business, the marketplace, and in church leadership. And finally, there are the convenors – individuals and organizations, who bring all these groups together to ensure all the vital links in the chain of Bible ministry fit together.

There are still 1,103 languages in Asia that have little or no access to the Scriptures, 471 of them in Southeast Asia alone. A pastor in China who leads a local congregation stated, “We need God's Word! How can my people grow in their faith unless they have a Bible to read when they go home?” All of us can be called to be ambassadors for the Bible for the last remaining languages from India to Indonesia, from China to Singapore, from the Philippines, down through the maze of languages in Papua and Papua New Guinea.

The Bible is not just a book—it is the living Word of God, revealing Jesus, a guide for our lives, a source of comfort in trials, and a beacon of light in darkness. As advocates, ambassadors, and convenors, we are entrusted with the sacred task of making this light visible to others.

IMAGINE



WILD BOY
WR
BEVERLY
HOLD LT TANKS
(2.2 oz.)
L CEASARS
\$1 OFF!
BRANDED WITH CHARACTER

why you
we do instead
have a
CHAMPAGNE
only machine

WEEKEND
BRUNCH
HAPPY HOUR
\$1 OFF

LIVING FAITH IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

BY ANDREW BENNETT

What does it mean to be a public Christian? Well, at the most fundamental level it means to simply be faithful. As Christians, we're called to be in the world but not of the world. Our primary identity is our baptism. To employ a civic metaphor, our baptism is our true citizenship as citizens of the Kingdom of God, our true home. Our Lord calls us at the end of Matthew's gospel to go out and preach the gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Everything we do as Christians must be seen through the lens of the gospel and as a living out of our baptismal vocation. Our baptism is not some static reality—it calls us to be active in the world, bringing the gospel to all people.

The True Nature of Religious Freedom

This truth about our baptism anchors our entire Christian life. It is a life that is active and public and at the same time, and in a complementary way, it is contemplative and private; we cannot have one without the other. Our baptism brings with it certain duties, some public such as gathering as the Church to worship God in the Holy Trinity, some private such as those hidden acts of charity we perform, known only by God. Our public duty does not end with the last Amen or final hymn on a Sunday, but rather extends and is fulfilled in the liturgy after the liturgy: the public living out of what we profess in worship. As human beings, persons created in the image and likeness of God, we bear an inherent freedom to seek the Truth (Jesus Christ), to adhere to the Truth, and to govern our lives according to Christ's precepts. Religious freedom is not fundamentally about our inner lives of faith. Even the holy apostles in the book of Acts, when they faced imprisonment and persecution, remained free while imprisoned. That aspect of our freedom can never be taken away. But religious freedom is an inherent freedom. It's not the gift of the state. We bear religious freedom simply by being human.

Scripture Demands Public Witness

Religious freedom is bound up with the public living out of faith. It's the freedom to live fully who we are as Christians out in the public square. Our Lord had a public ministry, not a private one. His baptism, miracles, passion, and death were public. He was seen in his resurrected body publicly. The apostles, after receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost,

didn't stay in the upper room. They went out into the streets of Jerusalem. The church is a public thing. The mystical body of Christ is a public reality.

Even in the Old Testament, the giving of the law was a public act. The prophets prophesied publicly. The worship of the Israelites was in the temple—these were public sacrifices. If we as Christians think that faith is just about private personal belief, we're not living out our baptism.

Rendering Unto Caesar

This then begs a question. What is the appropriate posture for us as we live out that public faith? The gospel has much to say in response to this question that has preoccupied the church in every age as it offers a courageous and prudential public witness. In Luke chapter 20 (also in Matthew and Mark) the Pharisees challenged our Lord posing this same question. Jesus takes a coin, a denarius, and says "Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" They said, "Caesar's." He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

Very often as Christians, we're fine with the second half of our Lord's admonition but not the first. Rendering unto Caesar cannot be divorced from that which is God's. It's not either-or. It's both-and. Our responsibility as Christian citizens is to be Christians in the public square, to pray for our civic leaders, to respect lawful authority, to pay our taxes, to engage civically, to bring Christ into the public square. Of course, we do not do so blindly or without discernment. If the civil authority acts repeatedly and in a grave manner against the moral law then we are duty bound to peacefully resist such violations and to call our leaders back to what is true and good. This is also our responsibility. And so, we must not leave our Christianity at home when we enter the public square, keeping it safe and sound in a little box by our front door until we need it again. That is not what our baptism calls us to.

***THE PUBLIC LIVING OF
OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH HAS
TANGIBLE CONSEQUENCES
FOR THE BUILDING UP OF
OUR COMMUNITIES***

The Twin-Headed Amnesia

Unfortunately, on the role of religion as a public good we face a twin-headed amnesia in western secular cultures. On the one hand, our institutions—government, business, cultural sectors—have forgotten who religious people are and why we hold to an objective and universal truth. For Christians, it always points back to the truth, who is our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, we Christians have for many decades failed to live out our faith publicly. We've confined it to the comfortable pew, allowing that muscle that strengthens a courageous public witness to atrophy. This has allowed institutional amnesia to move from ignorance to opposition. This opposition finds its strength in arguments that further the myth of secular neutrality, in other words, that the state is neutral in matters of religion, that it does not pick sides. We must address this myth in that it is false. The state is not neutral but rather favours secularism, which is a belief system not dissimilar to religious faith with its creeds, its rituals, its festivals, and yes, even its heresies. This is what Charles Taylor calls closed secularism, squeezing out expressions of religion that don't conform to the governing ideology. The preferred approach is open secularism, where the state accepts a free market of religious expression and belief. People will believe different things, sometimes radically different things, and that's okay.

Making Our Case

The public living out of our Christian faith has tangible consequences for the building up of our communities. We live our faith publicly not simply for ourselves as Christians but for the life of the world, as the great Orthodox theologian Fr. Alexander Schmemmann would say. As Christians, we support local communities in diverse ways, such as support for refugee resettlement and ESL programmes, running in-from-the-cold programmes, or renting our church halls to community groups. In cities and towns throughout the country, people know at a local level that churches do good things, that Christian charities provide an outsized impact in communities across this country. However, this knowledge seems to not always transfer into those who inhabit the lofty halls of government. We must remind and inform civil authorities that what Christians do in our communities we do for all. We must remind them that we have deep roots in the socio-economic and cultural fabric of Canada. In a landmark 2020 study, *The Hidden Economy: How Faith Helps Fuel Canada's GDP*, Christian think-tank Cardus estimated that the value of religion (Christian and non-Christian) to Canadian society stands at more than \$67 billion annually, including

“the fair-market value of goods and services provided by religious organizations and charities, faith-related food businesses, and the value of substance-abuse recovery support groups hosted by congregations.” The vast majority of these faith-based institutions are Christian, including over 28,000 congregations.

We need to dispel ignorance among our elites about who Christians are and what we do. Let’s talk about how Christianity shaped this country, how all the rights and fundamental freedoms people have come from Christianity and from a particular understanding of the human person. We have to remind people about their deep desire for meaning and that Christianity for two thousand years has been making sense of the world.

The Scriptural Foundation

The Scriptural case for our public Christian witness is the Incarnation and the Resurrection.

One of the duties attached to our religious freedom as Christians is to publicly live it out—in our workplace, our schools, our universities, our social circles. God became man in the person of Jesus Christ, and through the Incarnation, He has shown us what it means to be an integrated human person. Through His glorious Resurrection, He has shown us what true joy is. That joy is what we bring into the public square. It behooves us, then, to know our faith—to be well-formed, firmly grounded in the words of Scripture. The Word of God is eternal, but it needs to be presented anew in each age. We must articulate our Christian faith in a way the world can receive it. We don’t dilute it or equivocate. We don’t deny fundamental truths, but we present them so people can hear them, whether or not they come to confess Christ is the working of the Holy Spirit. But we have to be able to make an argument.

THE SCRIPTURAL CASE FOR OUR PUBLIC CHRISTIAN WITNESS IS THE INCARNATION AND THE RESURRECTION

Very rarely can you go in Bibles blazing—that’s not how our Lord would do it. How did our Lord communicate? Through parables. It’s not up to us to determine how the Holy Spirit is working in their lives, but, we need to use language that, while not diminishing the gospel, can be understood by those with whom we are speaking.

Be Prepared to Witness in the Public Square

How then can we prepare ourselves to enter the public square of our country with a confident faith? We must immerse ourselves in the Holy Scriptures, but read them with the mind of the church, articulating the Christian faith consistent with how the church has always articulated it. If we situate ourselves within our particular tradition and ask, “How did the great theologians, pastors, and saints of my tradition do it? What can I learn from them?” They can direct us. We might be technologically more advanced compared to the fourth century, but we’re still fundamentally the same humans with the same challenges.

We must pray the Psalms daily. Ask God to grant us wisdom. We need to control our passions. Pride is the root of all sin. We need to be conscious of anger and passions that lead us to adopt an unnecessarily confrontational posture. You turn people off and jettison your platform to speak in the public square. In the Psalms, there’s everything—a handbook for how to be a human being. We must read the gospels over and over again, and the book of Acts, to understand what the church did from the very beginning, from Pentecost when Peter goes out and proclaims the Risen Lord. The gospels really must be our constant help in shaping what our demeanour must be in the world: in short, to be Christ-like.

For the Life of the World

Every Christian is called to be in their corner of the public square—workplace, school, university, or family—to live out a public life of faith and offer public witness. That is where our Lord is calling us through our baptism.

The work we do should be imbued with the joy of the Resurrection, with great humility, but without equivocating, always being clear about what we believe and why that calls us to act.

In the end, our public faith is not about me. It’s not about any individual. It’s about Christ being present in the world. And, as one continually striving to join myself to Him, I must be first and foremost His servant, not my own.

IMAGINE



A CONVERSATION WITH FORMER CHIEF
VINCENT YELLOW OLD WOMAN ABOUT FAITH,
CULTURE, AND THE PAINSTAKING WORK OF
BRINGING SCRIPTURE TO HIS PEOPLE

“WE NEED TO
FLOOD OUR
COMMUNITY
WITH GOD’S
WORD”

BY AMANUEL MENGISTU
PHOTOGRAPHY BY HENRY VANDERSPEK

From a position of humility and affirming hope, the Canadian Bible Society is honoured to work alongside Indigenous Canadians for the good of their communities. In partnership with Wycliffe Bible Translators and SIL Global, CBS has supported capacity-building translation workshops for speakers of First Nations languages since 2015. Today, active projects span Inuktitut, Iñupiaq, Anihshiniimowin, Naskapi, Kwak'wala, and Blackfoot—each one driven by community members who want their people to encounter Scripture in their heart language.

Among these efforts is the Blackfoot Bible translation, with a target of completing the full Bible in the 2030s. Parts of Scripture were first published in Blackfoot in 1890, and over the decades, a dictionary, grammar, and portions of the New Testament have followed, including CBS publications of the Gospels of Mark in 1972 and John in 1979. A complete, contemporary Blackfoot Bible has never existed, but a dedicated team is now working toward that goal.

Vincent Yellow Old Woman, former Chief of the Siksika Nation, is one of the translators. Married for fifty-two years, a grandfather and great-grandfather, he brings a lifetime of faith and leadership to the work. In a recent conversation, he reflected on what the project means to him—and why it matters for generations to come.

Chief Vincent's journey to Bible translation was not straightforward—nor was his journey to faith in Christ. He is a survivor of Canada's notorious residential school system, where as a child he once tried to run away, only to be caught and punished. In the years that followed, he struggled with alcoholism—a battle that, along with his residential school trauma, would later be depicted in *New Blood*, a touring theatre production based on his life and set to the music of Peter Gabriel.

Growing up, Vincent also wrestled with questions of identity. He attended a church that discouraged mixing Indigenous culture with Christianity—a tension that troubled him for years. It was his late mother and other elders in her church who eventually put him at ease, assuring him, “As long as you have your Lord in your heart and you glorify him—that's [what's] important.”

Vincent went on to graduate from theological college in New York in 1975 and later became a member of the Siksika Nation tribal council, eventually serving as chief from 2013 to 2016. For decades, he has travelled across North America as an elder, providing spiritual counsel. Now, in his later years, he has taken up a new calling: translating God's Word into the Blackfoot language.



Former Chief Vincent with participants at a translation workshop

When a community member with a vision for Bible translation first approached Vincent, he declined. At the time, he was fully engaged in his role serving thousands of members across southern Alberta as Chief of the Siksika Nation. He was convinced that the demands of political leadership left no margin to get involved with Bible translation.

“I told her, ‘Let me tell you what a Chief's role is. It's busy.’”

Years later, after stepping back from politics, another call came—this time from a woman working with the Anglican church on Blackfoot translation. “For some reason, I just said yes. I'll help you guys.”

That yes opened doors to partnerships with the Canadian Bible Society, Wycliffe, and others. Now he meets regularly with fellow translators, working through Scripture passage by passage.

Chief Vincent was surprised by how long translation takes—even a few verses require extensive work.

“I didn't realize what it took,” he says. “And then they told me, ‘You're just the main translator. But we have to give it to another group—the back-translators—and then another group looks at it.’”

The process is rigorous by design: multiple layers of review ensure accuracy and faithfulness to the original text. But modern technology has helped. When the team gets stuck on a word, Chief Vincent texts the elders on the reserve.

“Today, five of us are sitting around the table translating a chapter. And if we get stuck, I text some individuals... and it comes right back. [Translators] did not have this luxury thirty, forty years ago.”

He's grateful for those who laboured on earlier Blackfoot translations without such tools—and is determined to build on their foundation.

Vincent has kept the same favourite Bible verse throughout his entire spiritual journey.

“My favourite Bible verse since I got saved... It's been John 3:16. I've read a lot of different verses, but I always go back to John 3:16. And that's the one that carried me through.”

The Blackfoot translation of the Gospel of John is now complete in draft form—a tangible milestone in a multigenerational effort. Chief Vincent knows the full Bible may not be finished in his lifetime. But each completed portion matters.

“When I see the book of John, finally, in a book form, I'll be happy. I'll be so excited.”

For Chief Vincent, the urgency is clear. Indigenous communities across Canada face profound challenges—addiction, family breakdown, loss of hope. He sees Scripture as part of the answer.

“In our community—not only my community, but across Canada—with all the addictions and all the things that are happening... We need to flood our community with God's Word. It's gonna be a powerful tool. It's a wonderful tool. And I think that's what's missing.”

He appeals to supporters: prayer and partnership matter. “We need prayer. That's very powerful.”

At the heart of Chief Vincent's commitment is a simple conviction: he cannot live without God's Word.

“I couldn't live without it. I need it,” he says. “In our prayer, I say, ‘God, I need you to speak to me.’ And through His Word and the meditation of His Word, I need that. And if I don't have that, then I'm lost.”

Even after decades of walking with the Lord, his dependence has only deepened. “Not only do I need Him, but I love Him. And I want to spend time with Him... so this way, I can help my grandkids, my great-grandkids, and my family.”

The Blackfoot Bible, he believes, will outlast them all.

“You and I, when we're gone in this world, the Bible is gonna stay. For eternity. And the Blackfoot Bible will continue to speak to our people in a good way.”



The Blackfoot Bible translation is one of six Indigenous translation projects currently supported by the Canadian Bible Society.

To learn more or support this work, visit biblesociety.ca/indigenous.

My word is like the snow and
the rain that come down from
the sky to water the earth.
They make the crops grow
and provide seed for sowing
and food to eat.

Isaiah 55:10



IMPACT

ISSUE THREE

IMAGINE

2026



-
- 24. TRANSLATING THE BIBLE FOR CHINA'S ETHNIC MINORITIES
 - 32. CARING FOR WOUNDED HEARTS ACROSS CANADA
 - 38. A LIFE WELL CONSIDERED: PAUL AND RUTH FINK

IMAGINE



TRANSLATING THE BIBLE FOR CHINA'S ETHNIC MINORITIES

**BY HARRIET COMPSTON
AND PAMELA CHOO**

The Canadian Bible Society is committed to make sure God's Word is available in the languages that speak to the hearts of people across the world. As part of this mission, CBS is delighted to support the United Bible Societies China Partnership on three projects: Affordable Bibles for the Millions, Hope through Scripture Literacy and Braille and Audio Bibles for the Visually Impaired.

Once one of the least-reached nations in the world, China is on course to be the world's most Christian nation in the next 15 years. During the Cultural Revolution, Christian Churches were closed. When they were allowed to reopen in the 1980s, many ethnic minority churches found themselves in a quandary. Christians in these communities, most often remote, had little or no access to the full Word of God in their own languages, instead relying on incomplete translations done decades ago by pastors or missionaries. Without ready access to the Bible, congregants struggled to grow spiritually, and cults found they could capitalize on their lack of spiritual understanding to lead them astray.

In 1998, at the invitation of the China Christian Council and the National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China CCC&TSPM, UBS responded to the call to support various minority-language Bible translation projects, training native speakers on basic translation principles and computer skills. UBS also provided resources to establish a Bible translation centre in Yunnan province and a workspace for translation teams in Wuding County.

Over the following decades, UBS has supported CCC&TSPM with translating, publishing and distributing Scripture translations for minority ethnic groups in China. Here we highlight the work done to translate the full Bible into three of these languages: East Lisu, Wa and Ganyi.

East Lisu Bible

Of the more than 100,000 East Lisu people living in Yunnan and Sichuan, around half are Christians. This remarkable fact is linked to the region's long Christian heritage. Rev. George Edgar Metcalf, who arrived with his entire family to share the gospel in 1906, first introduced the East Lisu to Christianity. Metcalf also developed an East Lisu script and began to translate portions of the four Gospels in 1912.

By 1947, Metcalf had completed his translation of the New Testament, but he could not print it in China at that time. It was not until 1951 that Metcalf brought his manuscripts to Hong Kong, where the Hong Kong Bible Society first printed the East Lisu New Testament. However, due to restrictions then in place, the East Lisu people in Yunnan never saw the published copies.

After churches re-opened in China in the 1980s, the pressing need for Bibles in their heart language led six elderly East Lisu believers to create a New Testament translation based on Metcalf's manuscripts. One of these believers was Yang Hanquan, whose father had worked with Rev. Metcalf on the original translations. When the updated East Lisu New Testament was completed in 2009, Hanquan struggled to hold back his tears. After nearly 25 years of work and prayer, he could finally hold God's word in the palms of his hands.

In 2016, CCC&TSPM published the full East Lisu Bible. Reflecting on the significance of this event, Hanquan's grandson, Yang Hai'en, who has carried on the family tradition of Bible translation, said, "Having the Bible in the East Lisu language, together with the East Lisu Scripture literacy classes, helps the believers learn God's Word effectively."

Wa Bible

The Wa people are an ethnic minority living in southwestern China, mostly along the mountainous region bordering Myanmar. In the early 1900s, William and Vincent Young, a father-and-son missionary duo, introduced the Wa people to the gospel. Through the Youngs' ministry, many of the Wa people abandoned animistic rituals, including headhunting, to become Christians. The Youngs also created a script for the Wa language using the Latin alphabet, which laid the foundation for the gruelling work of Bible translation. In 1938, their labour of love came to fruition with the printing of the first Wa New Testament.

When churches reopened in the 1980s, the Wa Christians recognized the need to update the 1938 New Testament and translate the Old Testament. This led to the formation of a group of volunteer Wa Bible translators. However, it was not until the early 2000s that the Wa Bible translation project took off, culminating in the release of the Wa Bible in 2016.

Today, there are about 80,000 Wa Christians in China, many of whom have access to the Wa Bible. The Bible's impact on this community has been significant. Wa Bible reading groups have strengthened believers' faith, nonbelievers have turned to Christ, and many lives have been transformed through encounters with the Wa Bible.



Ganyi Bible

The Ganyi people, spread across Yunnan, Sichuan, Guizhou, and other provinces, are a subset of the Yi people, one of China's largest ethnic minorities. According to 2009 estimates, there are at least 30,000 Ganyi Christians in China.

Like many minority groups in the region, the Ganyi people practiced animism before missionaries led many of them to Christ in the early 1900s. Early Ganyi believers attempted to translate the Bible into their own language. They developed a writing system based on the Pollard script, devised by British missionary Samuel Pollard in the 1930s to transcribe a Hmongic language spoken in Yunnan and Guizhou. Over the next few decades, the early Ganyi believers could not make many inroads into Bible translation work due to a lack of training and support. The advent of the Cultural Revolution eventually halted any church activities during that time.

During the 1980s, the Ganyi churches went through a spiritual revival. Many believers returned to the faith, ready to serve their churches and broader communities with greater zeal. During this time, the Ganyi churches decided to revive the goal of translating the Bible into their own language. However, finding a suitable team of local translators proved



daunting. Most Ganyi Christians are subsistence farmers in rural, mountainous regions. Most receive scant formal education, least of all theological training. Also, most Ganyi churches lack the means to sustain full-time Bible translators.

In the early 2000s, UBS provided the technical and financial resources required to train a team of Ganyi Bible translators.

Li Jiaxing was one of the Ganyi Christians involved in the Bible translation project. "I believe God's Word has the power to shape and influence the entire Yi people for generations and generations to come," he says.

Li believes that having the Bible available in the Yi language is important to his people for two main reasons: First, access to the Bible in their heart language will foster greater spiritual growth for elderly believers. Second, the Bible will help Ganyi Christians share their faith with others in their own community because many Ganyi are not proficient in Chinese.

After years of prayer and hard work, the Ganyi Bible was finally completed in 2019. Four years later, on Bible Day in December 2023, CCC&TSPM released the Ganyi-Chinese diglot Bible, which features the two languages side by side. This Bible promotes Chinese-language literacy among the Ganyi people, preserves the Ganyi language and increases understanding of the Scriptures.





*Amity Printing
Company Celebrates
40 Years of Providing
Bibles for the World*





The minority-language Bibles featured in this article—East Lisu, Wa, and Ganyi—all share a common birthplace: Amity Printing Company in Nanjing, China. As Amity marks its 40th anniversary, it's fitting to honour the partnership that made these translations possible.

In 1985, Bishop K.H. Ting and other Chinese Christian leaders founded the Amity Foundation as an expression of the church's call to serve. The following year, Amity Foundation and the United Bible Societies jointly established Amity Printing Company—a historic partnership that would transform Bible access across China and beyond. On 14 October 1987, the first Bible rolled off the press.

“The UBS is committed to continue the supply of resources unavailable in China at present, such as Bible paper, and to the development and maintenance of the press,” declared Rev. Dr. John Erickson, then chairman of the UBS Executive Committee. That commitment has endured for four decades.

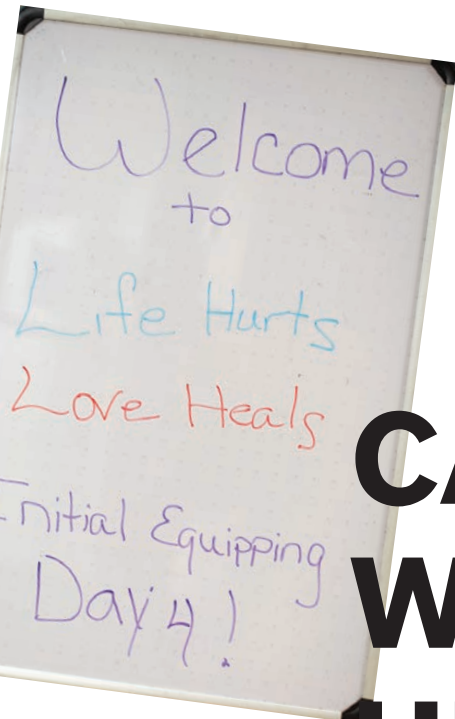
The numbers tell a remarkable story. By May 2025, more than 279 million Bibles had come off Amity's production lines—approximately 100 million for the church in China and nearly 180 million exported to 158 countries in almost 300 languages. Among these are Bibles printed in 10 different ethnic minority

languages, including the East Lisu, Wa, and Ganyi Scriptures that CCC&TSPM has published in partnership with UBS.

For minority-language projects that require smaller print runs, Amity has invested in a specialized thin-paper digital printing centre. This technology enables print-on-demand from as few as one copy while maintaining cost efficiency—ensuring that even the smallest language communities can receive professionally printed Scriptures.

Looking ahead, Amity plans to expand from 280 to over 500 languages, with the ultimate goal of covering every Bible translation worldwide. Reflecting on the journey, one Amity leader said, “The original intention behind establishing Amity Printing was to produce Chinese Bibles for Chinese Christians on our own soil. Through forty years of trials and tribulations, God has guided us toward broader horizons. Today, we have provided countless souls across the world with spiritual nourishment.”

The Canadian Bible Society honours the exceptional work of Amity Printing Company in making God's Word available to people worldwide over the past four decades. CBS was an early funder in the 1990s and has remained a long-standing strategic partner.



**CARING FOR
WOUNDED
HEARTS ACROSS
CANADA:
*GOD'S LOVE
TRANSFORMING
LIVES***

**BY STACEY STOLTE
PHOTOS BY HENRY VANDERSPEK**



Debra Karman, CWH Consultant and Master Facilitator in Classic and Story-based Trauma Healing, has been leading healing groups and equipings with CBS for five years.

It is -20°C, and snow is swirling across the highway that stretches before me from Sheshatsiu (Shesh-a shee) Innu First Nation to Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Newfoundland. The deep darkness outside could feel oppressive, but my spirit feels light, because of the twelve people who actively participated in the two Caring for the Wounded Heart (CWH) Bible-based trauma healing groups we offered at the Mary May Healing Centre in Sheshatsiu over the last week, and just this afternoon, at the conclusion of a facilitator equipping session, five dedicated Innu people who have longed for their loved ones and their community to be healed from trauma and freed from addiction received their Apprentice Facilitator certification. I can't help but feel immense gratitude to have been part of their journeys, a deep sense of wonder at the transforming power of God at work in the lives of his people, and at the generosity of Canadians who faithfully support it.

Among these participants are three sisters who have served as interpreter-translators in various roles and after experiencing the group in English, relayed their vision for how a CWH healing group in Innu-Aimun, their native language, could impact their community. They are concerned for the Elders who are the children of residential school survivors, survivors themselves, or were affected by the sixties scoop, and the generations following who continue to suffer from the lingering effects of these events. These women have witnessed and endured the profound darkness that seems to have settled over this place and yearn for the light of Christ to break through.

Reflecting on the past week, I'm struck by how this program, initially created to help survivors of war and genocide in Central Africa in the 1990s has become a vital tool against that pervasive darkness, even in the far reaches of Northern Canada, a beacon of hope guiding people toward true healing through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The original authors, missionaries, pastors, Bible translators, and mental health experts, gathered in Kenya to discern how the Church could respond in a meaningful way to the debilitating effects of war, violence, and displacement on those around them. They developed a resource, *Healing the Wounds of Trauma: How the Church Can Help*, (published in Canada as *Caring for the Wounded Heart: Bible-based Trauma Healing*) and initiated healing groups, training sessions and translation projects. Word spread quickly and soon, Bible Societies and other organizations around the world began launching healing ministries. By 2005, the Trauma Healing Institute (THI) was established, and along with SIL agreed to provide the necessary infrastructure and support, eventually creating local, regional, and global networks of facilitators.



Stacey Stolte, Trauma Healing Program Lead at CBS

Thank God for leading me to participate in this healing group. I was treated unfairly by my grandmother when I was a child, which made me feel helpless and dislike my family when I grew up. I shared my childhood trauma and found that it had been healed by the love of Jesus and that I had been set free. All glory to the Heavenly Father.

Rainbow (Hong Kong).

Since then, thousands of people impacted by conflict, natural disasters, illnesses, domestic violence, abuse, suicide, addiction, and human trafficking have found hope and healing through the simple six-lesson framework. This approach provides essential healing tools, offering a safe space for participants to share their stories and ask hard questions; helping them understand their grief, express sorrow through lament, art and music; release their burdens and pain at the Cross; and learn how forgiveness can free them from anger and bitterness, restoring hope and helping them move forward. Further lessons help individuals rebuild their disrupted lives and develop strategies for facing future challenges with resilience. Meaningful Scripture passages such as The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. (Ps. 34:18) shine light on God's character and love for us in the midst of suffering. Participants also learn to listen well and walk alongside others who are hurting, "bear[ing] each other's burdens, and in this way, [fulfilling] the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).

In 2020, the Canadian Bible Society began engaging churches and organizations across Canada training over 400 people to facilitate groups using Caring for the Wounded Heart. Currently, 186 are active facilitators who teamed up to conduct 88 healing groups in 2024, reaching a diverse range of Canadian communities, from churches ministering to struggling members to organizations supporting refugees and newcomers to Canada. These efforts are bolstered by regional mentors in six major centres across Canada. We have forged partnerships with THI and SIL Global to equip facilitators in both the literacy-based Classic and oral Story-based versions of the curriculum. With the newly revised Canadian French translation in hand, we will launch the first French-language facilitator training this spring, involving participants from urban centers and remote Indigenous communities in northern Quebec. CBS-trained facilitators are also training prison and military chaplains to lead healing groups in those unique settings. Through our global network of facilitators and translators diaspora churches are able to run groups in Farsi, Dari, Tigrinya, Spanish, Mandarin, and Cantonese, and to support translation efforts. Planning is underway to begin translating the Story-based version into Inuktitut, and hopefully soon, Innu-Aimun.

I have experienced many changes in the past year, which sometimes makes me feel at a loss as to what to do. I experienced healing in the group, and listening to the sharing of some cases made me feel that I was not alone. Meditating on God's words gives me great comfort and strength every time. The support and affirmation given allows me to be built up again in God's love.

Rainbow (Hong Kong).



I didn't understand what trauma can do, and how it does destroy your life eventually if nothing is done. I want to share more and more to help others to heal and find hope, not staying in our pain. We can use our pain to help others so they too can find hope!

-J

Participants at a trauma healing workshop for facilitators.

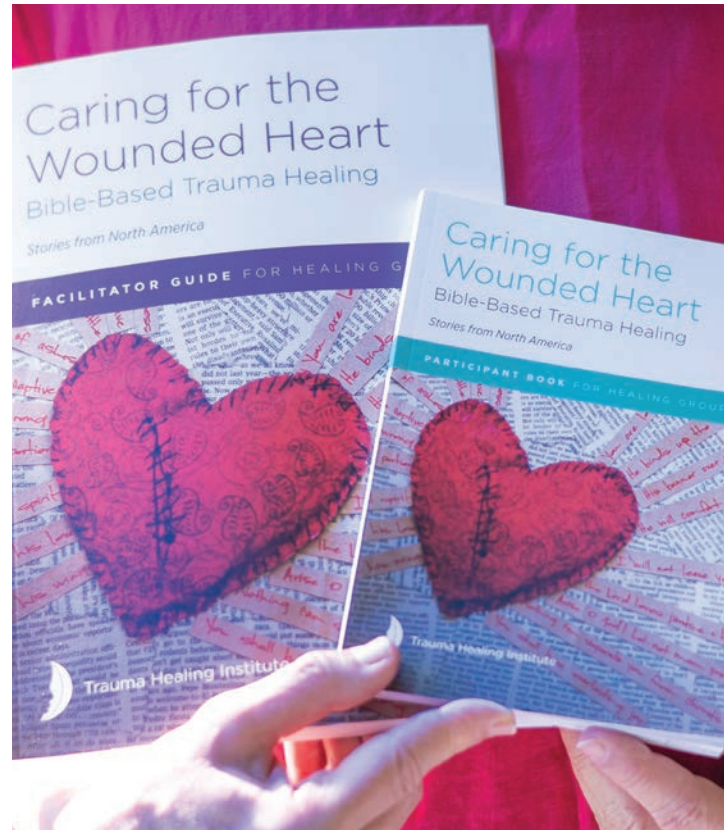


Trauma healing in Indigenous communities is a key focus for CBS. The launch of Caring for the Wounded Heart was largely inspired by an appeal from recently retired Anglican Indigenous Suffragan Bishop Isaiah Beardy of the Tataskweyak Cree Nation in Split Lake, Manitoba to address the high rates of suicide, abuse, and addiction in his community, employing a Bible-based, culturally relevant approach. Sadly, Covid restrictions and internet quality were barriers to true engagement until 2023, when CBS collaborated with Wycliffe Canada to send facilitators to Split Lake, conducting three healing groups using a contextualized story set for Indigenous Canadians, and training seven facilitators. A return trip is planned to train facilitators in the Story-based method and organize a healing group as part of a land-based camp aimed at engaging younger participants.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, facilitators have been able to travel to other remote places in the North, such as Tuktoyaktuk, Yellowknife, Iqaluit, Aklavik, and most recently, Sheshatsiu to hold healing groups and train local facilitators. There is strong support from the Catholic and Anglican Dioceses in NWT, Nunavut, and northern Manitoba as well as the PAOC churches in NWT, Quebec, and Labrador, working together across denominational lines to empower local facilitators to minister to people in their own communities, and reach out to their neighbours. This highlights one of my favourite aspects of working with CBS leading this ministry; being a witness to people from a range of cultural, linguistic and denominational backgrounds putting aside their differences to focus on God's great love that brings unity in Christ through the Holy Spirit's healing power. May He continue to do more than we can ask or imagine!

From one of my most memorable conversations with Bishop Beardy:

"We're on a journey through a wilderness [like the people of Israel in the OT], but we must learn to walk with the creator, God, and Scripture helps us with that...[When] Jesus comes along and heals a person, they become a whole person again, healed mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. But we cannot do it alone. A person cannot do it. You need the power of God through His Son, Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit. If we work together, we will become whole again. We'll be able to do our work and have our own testimonies, our own 'New Testaments of Hope!'"



I like the explanations and the stories that go with it -and especially the Bible verses, I love them. The stories are familiar, and I love everything about it, even the prayers we said at the beginning. I would like more hands on activities and more skits, we understand more when they happen.

-D



Photo courtesy: Tom Fink, son of Paul Fink

A Life Well Considered:

Paul and Ruth Fink's Journey with the Canadian Bible Society

BY LORNA DUECK

Managing money to make it grow has been a long process of patience and persistence for Paul Fink. A retired friend of the Canadian Bible Society, Paul has been a member of the charity's Finance Advisory Committee and helped navigate financial security for the Bible Society over the past thirty years. We are delighted to thank him for the sharp mind and many volunteer hours he has devoted to helping the work of Bibles being distributed to the world.

Paul was raised in a home shaped by Bible reading, and from the first days of his investment career, he was convinced that a Bible-based ethic was his guiding star. After earning an economics degree from Waterloo Lutheran University, a young Paul began work at the Bank of Canada in Ottawa. By Paul's late twenties, his work at the Bank had grown tiresome to him, and an investment of his own that required a unique skill to manage called Paul away from his banking career in the city. Paul took a favourite hatchet and decided it was time to clear 100 acres of forested land that his father had bequeathed to him near Magnetawan, Ontario. Paul moved north and began harvesting his forested land to create a development of cottages for rent. "I had to do it myself over a period of five years. It was a substantial job in terms of cutting forest, piling it up, burning it to create bare

ground, and laying foundations," he recalls. "At the time, I didn't think I was a land developer, but I soon was, and the property is still there, and it is a very good development."

By the age of 38, Paul felt he had completed the project to a stage where it could compound its value as rental cottages, and set his eye on his next stage of life: marriage and his career back in the city. He returned to Toronto, dusted off his economics degree, and joined Confederation Life's investment banking in Toronto, where analysis of forest product companies became part of his portfolio. He married Dr. Ruth Nelles, a Brampton physician whose father had been an Anglican priest, and together their new union blossomed with three children. Toronto's investment industries were a competitive field, and Paul's next career move saw him become vice president at a startup firm called Fairfax Financial. Paul's role at Fairfax included investigating new frontiers for investing overseas.

"I was what was called a 'bird dog'. I was on a team to investigate Bangkok, Singapore, Hong Kong and global markets," said Paul. "I always had a defensive position as we tried to source international markets. You don't have to be brave just because you can be. I travelled five years and

never invested a cent.” Eventually, the company invested in several Hong Kong companies and then began to invest in India. The history of Paul’s role at Fairfax highlights his contribution to an astounding Canadian success story. Fairfax is now a \$45 billion investment firm, and Paul remains bullish on Canada’s investment future.

During his employment, Paul volunteered as an advisor to the Canadian Bible Society’s investments, served on the Board of Directors, and held a firm view of building a slow-and-steady endowment fund to secure the Bible Society’s mission. “My advice was always don’t be greedy,” Paul recalls. “Back in the 80’s, we could get 18 percent [returns], but I warned it will drop to three percent, you have to be careful... and you need common sense principles.”

By age 65, Paul was ready to retire, and he underwent a needed triple bypass heart surgery. He is well humoured that his days of travel and investment adventures are behind him.

Today, the investments Paul muses on are his childhood, his wife Ruth and his three children. Paul and Ruth’s favourite place to enjoy is still the original cottage development Paul created in the Magnetawan forest, and they return to it as often as they can. Over the years, Paul planted 150,000 trees to replace the ones he had harvested when he was young. He continued planting trees right into his 80th year, work that the Finks’ son now continues, as the family has added another 500 acres to the original development plan. (The picture accompanying this article is a view of the area developed, with a Fink cabin and boat shelter in sight.)

Back at their home in Huntsville, Paul has his mother’s and his father’s Bibles on his study desk. His mother’s Bible is so well marked, so worn that many pages can hardly be read. His father’s Bible has very little marking in it, as he died of a heart attack when Paul was only eleven years old. “I don’t think I realized how dead, dead was at the time,” said Paul, who is now openly contemplating his own mortality as he struggles with lung disease.

Ruth spent her career as a family doctor but now puts her medical skills to work managing Paul’s fragile health, with their nearby daughter keeping a close eye. Paul and Ruth had three children, and as he chats, he shares memories of his daughter Claire, who died in the hospital during heart surgery for complications of Down syndrome when she was only five years old. “It was hard, very hard. She was a wonderful girl, and even today I miss her, and I look forward to meeting her in heaven.”

Paul brims with boyhood memories, like how his father sold him wooden gas tanks for two dollars that he could strap together into a catamaran and float down the Grand River in Cambridge, Ontario, where the family lived. “Two dollars

was a lot of money in those days,” recalls Paul. The wooden gas tanks were cast-offs from the famed de Havilland Mosquito, an all-wooden plane built for stealth on night fighter missions and blitz attacks during World War II. “Father managed a factory making the plane’s wings, tails, and tanks. He travelled a lot, and on one of these trips got off the train at Union Station and asked to be taken to the hospital. He was gone in an hour,” Paul recalls.

Paul’s mother and grandfather leaned into shaping young Paul and his three siblings. His grandfather was a Toronto doctor who had gone into medicine after resigning his role as a minister, weary of parishioners bickering over theologies. Paul’s mother was also a doctor; she helped fund the building of a local church he attended as a child.

“She was very influential in my youth,” he says. “I knew she was no fool, and knowing how seriously she took the Bible, I took it seriously. It was just something that was always there for me.”

His mother also inspired his interest in investing. “I had a paper route, and over three years, I earned \$300, which even in those days was not a lot of money. But my mother invested the money in White Rose, a Canadian oil and gas company. It was bought out, and I received \$900. I thought, ‘Well, this sure beats carrying all those papers around.’ I was hooked,” laughs Paul.

From those early lessons in faith and finance, Paul built a career marked by prudence, generosity, and a steady commitment to the work of Scripture. His legacy with the Canadian Bible Society stands as a testament to a well-considered life.

Announcing the Paul & Ruth Fink Fund

*The Canadian Bible Society is honoured to announce a generous commitment of \$1 million to establish the **Paul & Ruth Fink Fund**. Created to advance Scripture translation and engagement, this substantial gift will directly support four distinct Bible translation projects. We are deeply grateful for this donation, which will empower more people to encounter God’s Word in their own language and cultural context.*

He gives a command to the earth,
and what he says is quickly done.
He spreads snow like a blanket
and scatters frost like dust.
He sends hail like gravel;
no one can endure the cold he
sends! Then he gives a command,
and the ice melts; he sends the
wind, and the water flows.

Psalm 147:15-18



INSPIRATION

ISSUE THREE

IMAGINE

2026



-
- 42. LAYING A FOUNDATION OF SCRIPTURE
 - 48. THE PSALM THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING
 - 52. HIS MAJESTY'S ROYAL CHAPEL OF THE MOHAWKS

IMAGINE



LAYING A FOUNDATION OF SCRIPTURE

BY HERBIE KUHN

I am a first-generation Canadian. I am the only child of two people who immigrated to Canada in the 1960s. My mother, Patricia, is from Guyana—she was raised in Georgetown, Guyana, in South America. And my father is from what used to be West Germany. The three members of our family were born on three different continents.

They both immigrated to Canada in 1963, independent of one another. They did not know one another. They met at a social gathering, and they fell in love. Put that into perspective for a second. Mid-1960s, you have a mixed-race couple at the same time that there is a whole lot of civil rights upheaval and segregation happening in the U.S. And while segregation wasn't a legal thing per se here in Canada, there was certainly still a lot of racism.

However, by God's grace, both my parents came from families that were very open. I am so grateful for a couple who decided that love took precedence over everything. Mixed-race marriage and catcalls to the side, love preceded everything. And they stuck it out.

IMAGINE

My mom came from a solid Christian background with many believers, many people professing Jesus as Saviour. My dad was raised Roman Catholic, although by the time he got to Canada, it wasn't necessarily a priority for him. It wasn't that my dad didn't believe in God—it was more that he had been turned off by the institution of the church, and so that caused him to sometimes run in the other direction.

I was essentially raised in church. Raised in a church in the east end of Toronto. Traditional trajectory: Sunday school. Youth groups. Confirmation ceremony. I was raised listening to sermons, going to church, going to Sunday school, going to youth group, going to outings, retreats, that type of thing.

As I got older, going to church started to feel like something I was supposed to do, rather than something I actually wanted to do. In my teen years, I began rolling with the wrong crowd and started making some poor choices. While I would still attend church regularly, it certainly wasn't a priority for me at that point. If I did go, it was because my mom wanted me to go, and I was trying my best to be obedient.

Unfortunately, there were many times when I would be out very late on a Saturday night and show up at church with my mom very tired on Sunday morning, feeling pretty worse for wear.

However, God used that as part of the foundation of my faith.

Another element that's a huge part of my upbringing from a Scriptural perspective would be a Gideon New Testament. Back in the day in Ontario, they still distributed Gideon Testaments in the public schools. I remember receiving one sometime around grade four or grade five. And I remember reading it. I remember reading it regularly.

Even during my teen years, sometimes I'd have it beside my bed, and there'd be a daily reading—the little Scripture passage that would go along with each day of the calendar to read the whole New Testament plus Psalms and Proverbs in a year. I remember reading those and closing my Bible, shutting the light off, and going to sleep.

I can't give you a clear one-plus-one-equals-two explanation for this. But I truly believe that the Lord used those experiences, even if I wasn't necessarily ingesting it and implementing it. I believe He used those readings as bricks in my faith foundation.

I really believe that He used those—whoever the faithful Gideon distributor was back in the day—to give me that Testament. And He used those as little bricks that would eventually become part of the foundation for who Herbie Kuhn is today as a ministry leader and as a chaplain.

Because I have no doubt—no doubt—that God's Word transforms lives. You can argue with me till Jesus comes back, and I'm not going to change my mind.

In 1995, I'm not walking with the Lord. Myself and a high school buddy started this one-off newspaper covering the CFL's Hamilton Tiger-Cats. God used it, because when I went to Hamilton to cover the Tiger-Cats, I met their chaplain. His name is Steve Kearns. Steve and I forged a connection. I latched onto him in part because he was a nice guy, but in part so that I could say to my mom, "Hey, I'm hanging out with a chaplain in Hamilton."



Inspiration

I will never forget this pivotal conversation. Standing in the Tiger-Cat facilities, Steve said to me, “So, Herbie, when did you become a Christian?”

And it was like the Lord used Steve’s voice as a spiritual two-by-four to the head.

And I went, “Well, you know, I was raised in church. And yeah, I was baptized as a baby...” I gave him all the “correct” answers. But I knew—I knew in my heart—that I did not have a definitive answer to that question.

Steve was gracious. He didn’t hammer it home right at that point, but he had made his point. The Holy Spirit made the mark.

Then he began a one-on-one discipleship with me where he would actually drive from Flamborough to our home

in the Beach. One on one. That’s a significant drive—it’s like an hour drive. I’ll never forget, my mom would answer the door, and she knew what Steve was all about. And she’d say, “Steve, I’m praying for you as you meet my son.”

In early 1996, we had a unique circumstance where my mom and I left the church where I had been raised. And for the first time in my life, I was without a home church.

Steve recommended a different church, also in the east end. An AME church—African Methodist Episcopal—was less than a 10-minute drive from my home. So Steve said, “Herbie, I know a place that I think you should check out, and I think you’ll really, really like it.”

It was April of 1996. For the first time, I walked into the doors of Grant African Methodist Episcopal Church. This is a story I’ve told hundreds of times.

I walked there, and I was welcomed enthusiastically. And the service started. And I felt like I had touched down in a whole new world. It was nothing like I’d ever experienced.

Instead of people being there in the church because they felt they were supposed to be there, these were people who were there because they wanted to be there. They were choosing to make this part of their worship experience. There was a 50-voice Black gospel choir. Preaching where the congregation was engaged and responsive.

When you’ve got a whole congregation of people who are largely descendants of African slaves, and when they quote Martin Luther King, Jr. saying, “Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, I’m free at last,” and when they’re singing songs about chains being broken—it hits you at a whole different level. The truth of the Gospel hit me in a way that I had never experienced before.

I remember thinking, “What is this? This is profound. This isn’t just some words on a page. This is deeper. This is transformative. This is regenerative. This is redeeming.”

Grant AME Church became my home. And for seven months, I wrestled. For seven months, I heard them not only talk about Jesus as a religious leader—they talked about Jesus as someone who you could walk with and who you could talk with. And someone who could make everything all right.

They talked about Jesus in the context of a relationship with him. Something which, to the best of my



recollection, I do not recall hearing about in the church that I was raised in.

After seven months of wrestling, saying, “No way Lord. There’s no way You could forgive someone like me. If only You knew the stuff I did. If only You knew the stuff I still wrestle with.”

After seven months of altar calls—they do an altar call every service at Grant—everybody would stand to their feet, and they would sing a hymn: “Come unto Jesus while you have time, come unto Jesus, make up your mind, He will make your life brand new, oh, He will take good care of you.”

I will never forget wrestling with those lyrics with my hands on the pews, knuckles white.

I don’t know what happened on November 3, 1996. I don’t know what hymns were sung. I don’t know what the preacher preached. And when I went to get a tape of the message, the tape machine was broken that day.

Even though the sermon may not have been recorded, the Holy Spirit was fully at work.

And when the altar call came, I took a few steps forward. The lady—the same lady who had welcomed me into the church seven months earlier—came and took my hand. She said, “Come on, Herbie, let’s go.”

And I walked up to the altar and gave my life to Christ that morning.

That was the transformative moment for me. That was when I became a born-again Christian. That’s when it went from head knowledge to heart knowledge.

November 3, 1995, was the Raptors’ first-ever regular-season game.

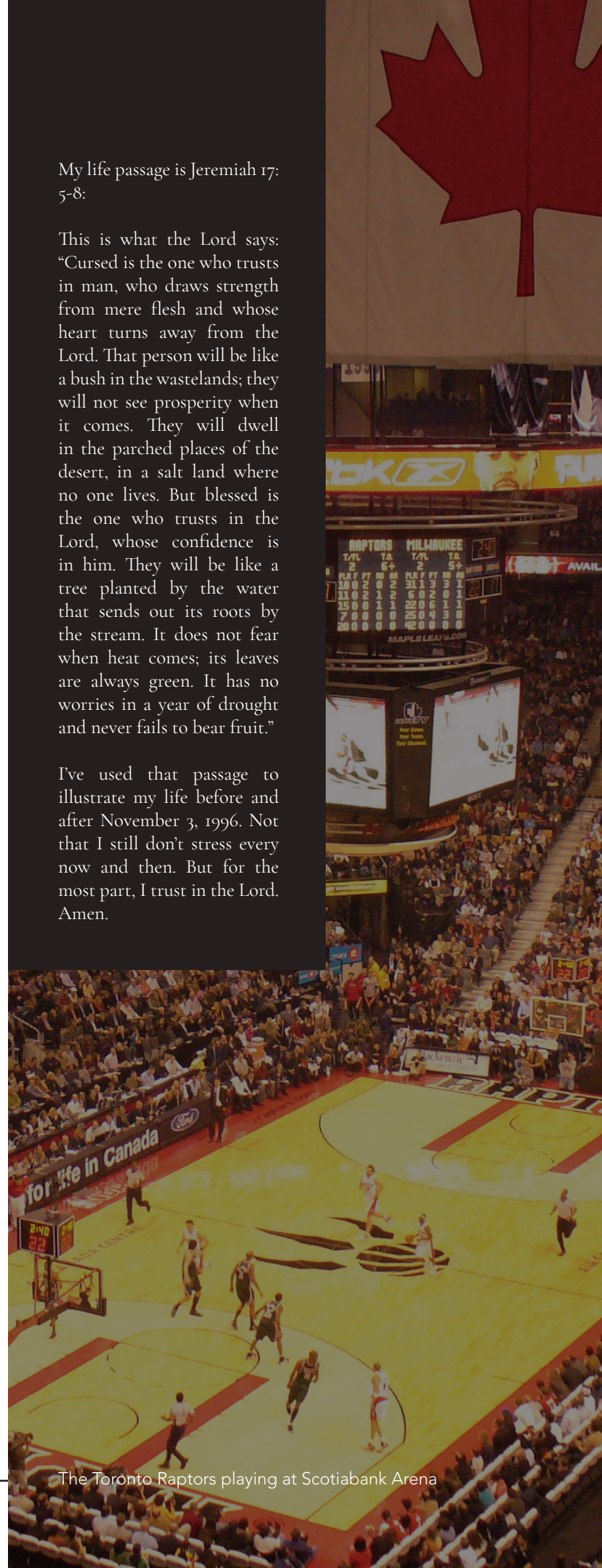
One year later to the day—November 3, 1996—is the day I came to Christ.

At the end of the day, it’s really quite a simple equation: I love Jesus, and I love sports. Psalm 37:4 says, “Delight yourself in the ways of the Lord; He’ll give you the desires of your heart.” So it was once I decided that instead of delighting in sports, I delighted in His ways—He said, “Okay, thank you. Now that I’ve got your heart, I’m going to take that human desire and I’m going to turn that into a kingdom-building ministry.”

My life passage is Jeremiah 17: 5-8:

This is what the Lord says: “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the Lord. That person will be like a bush in the wastelands; they will not see prosperity when it comes. They will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

I’ve used that passage to illustrate my life before and after November 3, 1996. Not that I still don’t stress every now and then. But for the most part, I trust in the Lord. Amen.



The Toronto Raptors playing at Scotiabank Arena

Inspiration

How cool is that? How cool does it get that a sports fan who's a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ gets to do full-time kingdom-building ministry in the atmosphere of professional sports? It's surreal, but that's what I do.

In the NBA, if you're in pro sports long enough, you go through seasons. And I'm not talking about calendar seasons. I'm talking about life seasons. Championship team. Rebuild. Everything in between. Injuries, uncertainty, questions, direction. Management changes, personnel changes. Everything changes. The only constant is change.

There have been times in my role as an announcer when the fans are packed out, and it's enthusiastic. There have been times when there aren't as many fans.

And Jesus has been my anchor through the whole thing.

I know that when I'm announcing for Him—my audience of one—my performance is not going to change depending on the circumstances. I'm announcing for Christ. Yes, I'm announcing for the fans and for the players, to be sure. But when I'm announcing for the Lord, that's the anchor which says, "Herbie, it doesn't matter what the circumstance—you do it as if this is your last game, as if you'll never have another opportunity to do this again."

In chaplaincy, I have used Colossians 3:17 as the theme for many teams and many chapels and many seasons: "Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

Because it encompasses everything, right? Whatever you do as a player, as a man, as an individual, as a husband—whatever it is, whatever you do. Whatever you say—in other words, watch your words. Do it as a representative. If you're a Canadian or you're an American, you want to honour your country. Well, you have your name on the back of your jersey—you want to represent your family well. Well, if you're an ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ, you want to represent Him well in how you carry yourself and what you say.

One of my favourite things about chaplaincy is getting athletes excited about the Word of God. I love it. Because it doesn't matter if it's a Bible study or a chapel, the Scripture is always included. It's always about whether it's a single verse referencing a particular theme, or whether it's a passage of Scripture, and then you use that to

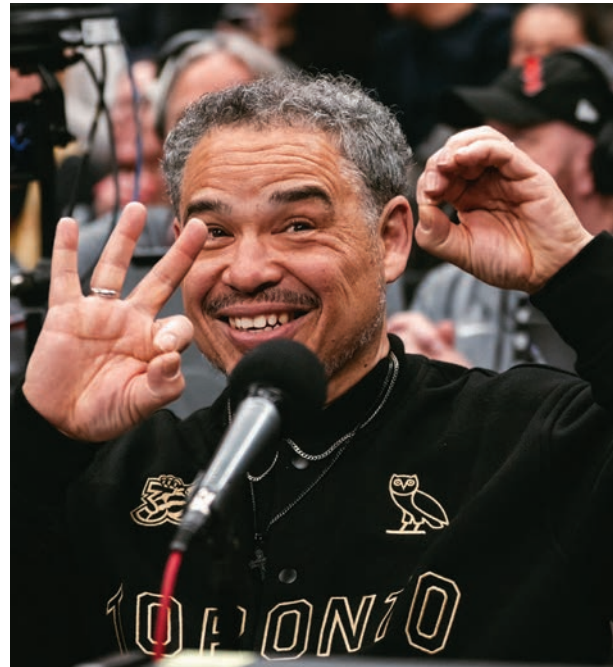
develop a theme. There's always Biblical content in every chapel and every Bible study.

There are few things that are more exciting for a chaplain than seeing a player get excited about God's Word.

There have been times where we've had four or five guys attending chapel regularly. There have been times where no one's come to chapel, where Steve and I have a message prepared and nobody shows up. There's been discouragement, there's been frustration. And there have been times of plenty, like right now, for example, where we have a large number of guys coming every single game. And God's been the anchor. The Lord has been the anchor. Jesus has been our anchor through the whole thing so that we don't get discouraged.

At a recent game, we had a large contingent for the pregame chapel. And then, after the game, about 10 players from both teams had a prayer circle in the middle of the court. It's one of those moments where you see the fruit of what God is doing.

My story has come full circle—from receiving a Gideon Testament in elementary school to putting Scripture in athletes' hands. Those bricks in my foundation? Now I get to lay them for others.





The Psalm That Changed Everything

BY MALCOLM GUTE

When I took up my place at Cambridge in nineteen seventy-seven, I'd become interested in medieval literature. Since all medieval and Renaissance literature is Christian by default, Cambridge was serious about our background reading. The first two books on the English faculty reading list were the King James Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. We weren't expected to pay attention to the deeper meanings; we were just supposed to be familiar with these texts, since so much of great English literature draws from them.

Images courtesy of Lancia
E. Smith and used with
permission

I took the reading list seriously and began to do the reading. But as anybody who's spent time with the Bible will know, you may decide at the outset that this is background reading, but it doesn't stay in the background. The Word of God is active and living. It won't allow itself to be pigeonholed. The book begins to interact with you in different ways. I have always taken it that this is a book that reads us even as we read it.

While studying English poetry in the 16th and 17th century—George Herbert, Shakespeare's sonnets, and the beautiful versions of the Psalms that Philip Sidney and his sister made—something dramatic happened.

I was in the habit of reading poetry out loud to express my own feelings, and I was going through a very bad patch, feeling quite sad and angry at the same time. One day, I was reading aloud in a house completely on my own. I was house-sitting for someone in London. I was reading from Coverdale's translation of the Psalms in the Book of Common Prayer. I was reading Psalm 145. It contains extraordinary verses that say the Lord is nigh to all that fall, and the Lord is nigh to all them that call upon him.

I was reading this as partly background research and partly because I'd been reading the earlier psalms of lamentation that expressed my feelings. Especially Psalm 88: "my friends and my lovers, my acquaintance thou hast put far from me." I've been in Psalm 88 at various points in my life.

But as I read this extraordinary psalm, Psalm 145, that initiates the five great psalms of praise, something happened. One minute, I was doing this thing under my control. I was in the room. I was the centre, as one always is in one's own perspective—you see the world radiate from you. I was in an empty room, in an empty house, and then the next minute, even as I'm reading this psalm, suddenly I was no longer in an empty room. And I was no longer at the centre.

I had this overwhelming sense of an undeniable and holy presence. Instead of feeling like God was a verbal construct—which I might have said in my horrible, intellectually snobby way—I realized I only existed because of the word of this one. If anybody was a verbal construct, it was me. Far from being at the centre, I was way off on the edge, dangling by a thread. I could neither look at this holy presence nor could I look away for fear that the thread would break, and I would just disappear into the void of which I'd been so proud of speaking about.

It was very dramatic and quite terrifying. Later, in my gradual reading of the Scriptures, I read in Isaiah 6: "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." But Isaiah doesn't say, "Wow, I've had a religious experience." No, he says, "woe is me, for I am undone. I'm a man of unclean lips." That's exactly how I felt—woe is me, but there was this undeniable presence.

The presence didn't go. I was waiting for it to go away, but it didn't. As soon as people got back to the house, I fled back up to college before term started, hoping that I would leave this thing behind me. But of course I didn't.

Finally, I went and saw the college chaplain. You have to be desperate to do that. But he was a very wise man.

“The Word of God is active and living. It won't allow itself to be pigeonholed.”



He said, “Of course, this has happened. And of course, you are in trouble because you’ve taken the name of the Lord in vain. You’ve spoken the holy name, and you’ve used words which are addressed to God, and which call on him and say he is nigh without believing a word of them. You have summoned what you’ve disbelieved in. You have summoned Him, and you have to deal with the consequences.”

But he pointed out that clearly the psalms were the key. He asked if it had ever occurred to me that the best thing was to go back to the psalms at the beginning and say them to this presence. It hadn’t occurred to me. He said, “I say morning prayer and evening prayer according to the Book of Common Prayer with the full readings. Why don’t you come and join me?”

And so I did. I found that while I was saying the psalms, it was tolerable to be there. In fact, in the end, it was a joyful thing to be there. These were words that this holy presence had given me to say back to Him. It was like completing a circuit.

That, of course, gave me a chance to read the Scripture again. And this time, I really let it read me. I see the Scriptures as a wellspring that flows out into you and through you rather than as a sort of contained system that you go into occasionally. Eventually, I discovered that what God had put me on earth to do was to use my love of language and facility with it to kindle my own and other people’s imagination for Christ.



ST. PAUL'S
BISHOP JAMES J. HENRY, C.M. & THE BISHOP
1884-1914

A PHOTO ESSAY BY PHILIP MAHER

HIS MAJESTY'S ROYAL CHAPEL OF THE MOHAWKS



His Majesty's Royal Chapel of the Mohawks is significant to Canada as a symbol of the historic alliance between the British Crown and the Mohawk people, commemorating Mohawk loyalty and military support to the British during the American Revolution and the early settlement of Upper Canada. It is the oldest surviving Protestant church in Ontario, built in 1785 by the Crown as a gift, and it stands as a physical link to this foundational relationship, showcasing Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) history, culture, and connection to the Crown through its design, artifacts, and stained-glass windows.

IMAGINE



IMAGINE



Inspiration



The Mohawk Chapel holds a significant place in Bible Society history, as its stained-glass windows depict moments from early Mohawk Christian heritage. These include the 1804 Mohawk Gospel of John, translated by Captain John Norton (Teyoninhokarawen). Norton's translation became the first Scripture ever published by the newly formed British and Foreign Bible Society, marking the beginning of the global Bible Society movement and laying the foundations for later Bible Society work in Canada. For the Canadian Bible Society, this connection is more than symbolic. The publication of the complete Bible in Mohawk in 2023 reflected the enduring relationship between Indigenous communities and the Bible Society.







Church
celebration in
Papua New
Guinea



But God's mercy is so abundant, and his love
for us is so great,

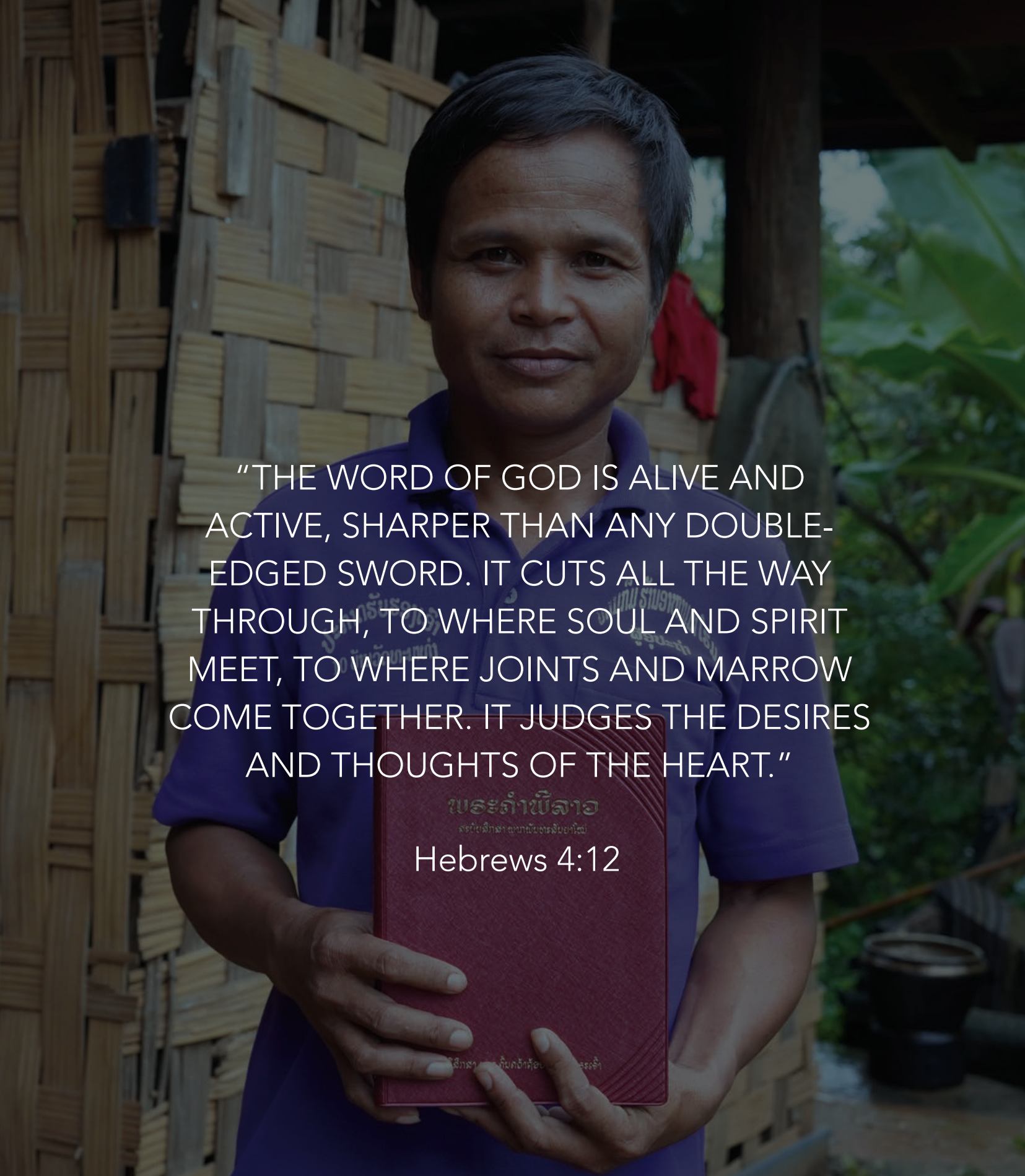
that while we were spiritually dead in our
disobedience he brought us to life with Christ.
It is by God's grace that you have been saved.

In our union with Christ Jesus he raised us
up with him to rule with him in the heavenly
world.

He did this to demonstrate for all time to come
the extraordinary greatness of his grace in the
love he showed us in Christ Jesus.

For it is by God's grace that you have been
saved through faith. It is not the result of your
own efforts, but God's gift, so that no one
can boast about it. God has made us what we
are, and in our union with Christ Jesus he has
created us for a life of good deeds, which he has
already prepared for us to do.

Ephesians 2:4-10

A man with short dark hair, wearing a purple polo shirt, stands in front of a wooden structure made of woven bamboo or wood. He is holding a red Bible with both hands. The Bible cover has text in Lao and English. The background shows some greenery and a red cloth hanging on the wall.

“THE WORD OF GOD IS ALIVE AND ACTIVE, SHARPER THAN ANY DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD. IT CUTS ALL THE WAY THROUGH, TO WHERE SOUL AND SPIRIT MEET, TO WHERE JOINTS AND MARROW COME TOGETHER. IT JUDGES THE DESIRES AND THOUGHTS OF THE HEART.”

Hebrews 4:12



Canadian
Bible Society