

MISSION: MATTERS

WHERE THE WORD
MEETS THE WORLD

May-June 2026

Spotlight on Bible-based Literacy
in the Philippines and India

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For more than a billion people around the world, reading is out of reach. But through God's Word, that's changing.

A life restored through the Word 3-5

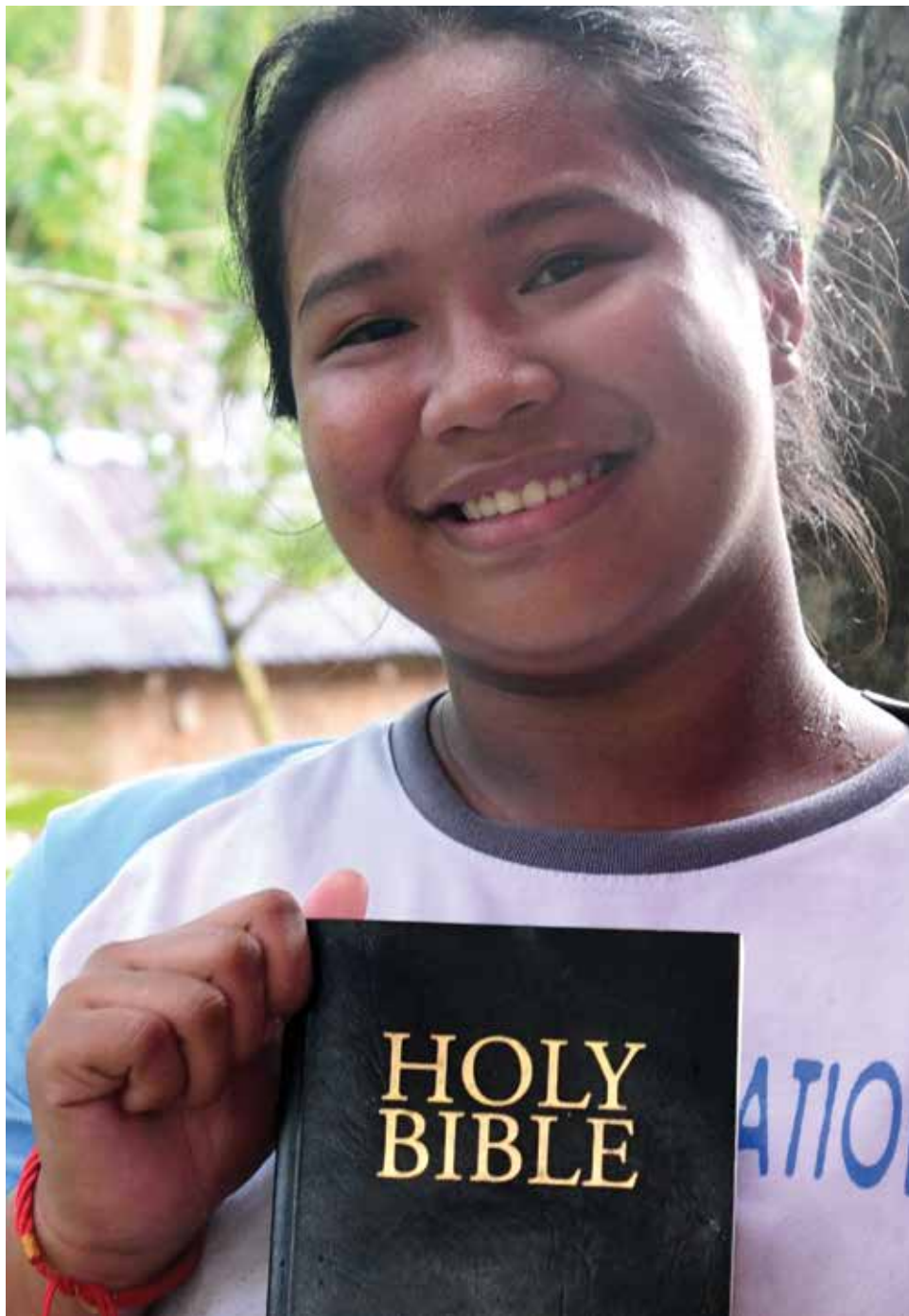
Ashley didn't think life was worth living—until Jesus showed her something worth living for.

A place of belonging 6-8

Once neglected and forgotten by their society, students in remote villages in India are finding a place where they belong—in the arms of Jesus.

Finding her purpose 9-11

When Ana Maria (*pictured*) followed some neighborhood kids to a literacy class, she never imagined it would lead her to a new path.



Letter from the President

Your word is like a lamp that guides my steps, a light that shows the path I should take.
Psalm 119:105 ERV

A new life in more ways than one

Thanks to you, people around the world are reading the Bible for the first time

Imagine not being able to read to your children or grandchildren. Imagine not being able to read your Bible.

This is a reality for more than 1 billion people globally who can't read or write. Women account for about two-thirds of those lacking these essential skills. Whether due to poverty, remoteness, or cultural barriers, literacy remains out of reach for far too many.

Bible League's Bible-based Literacy program has been addressing this barrier to Bible-access for some 15 years now.

Bible-based Literacy teaches reading and writing using the Bible as the textbook. As adults and children learn to read, they're also learning about God's love for them. Bible-based Literacy also opens doors to the Gospel in closed countries or among those who oppose God's Word.

Knowing how to read and write can lead to better economic opportunities. Most of our classes teach English—vital for business and escaping poverty in many countries. Other classes include Hindi, Bengali, Haitian Creole, and Arabic. This ministry is transforming lives in 15 countries across Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Lives are transformed through learning and trusting the Gospel, and new opportunities for evangelism arise naturally from the excitement of learning to read God's Word.

Since we began Bible-based Literacy, countless hearts have been transformed by God's message of love. Each day in 2025, 65 people heard the Gospel through this program—and discovered a new life in more ways than one.

You'll meet three of them in the following pages: Ashley, Gyaneshwari, and Ana Maria—young women forever changed by literacy and God's Word. Today, they can write their names. They can help others learn to read. And they can finally read the Bible for the first time.

Thank you for empowering them with skills that will change their lives. More importantly, thank you for helping them to know how deeply God cares for them.

In Christ,



Jos Snoep, President



Stepping out of the darkness

How Ashley discovered a life worth living

Her smile is so bright it might hurt your eyes. Four years ago, that smile had disappeared.

Hopelessness had taken hold of Ashley. At 11, believing her life was meaningless, she cut her wrists.

Ashley lives in Batangas, Philippines. Despite the vibrant community around her, she felt surrounded by darkness. Her father's drinking caused strain at home.

After her suicide attempt, Ashley tried to find purpose. To combat her anxiety and depression, she tried serving in her family's church at 13. But it didn't help. Suicidal thoughts still filled her mind.

She felt like her life had no meaning—like a puzzle with a missing piece.

The missing piece

Then Ashley's little sister, a new Christian, helped her find it at a different church. One day, her sister excitedly said, "Hey, big sister, come with me to church. It's cheerful there!" Seeking joy, Ashley decided to give it a try.

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(cont.) There, she met Pastor Bitek, a Bible League-trained Christian. His teaching on John 10:10 brought Jesus alive for Ashley.

Finally, Ashley found the piece to make her whole. It had been Jesus all along. She continued studying God's Word through the Bible League Bible study. Eventually, she accepted Christ as her Lord, but her transformation didn't happen overnight.

Now, at 15, her smile is back. She compares the gray darkness that once consumed her to the vibrant, colorful life she lives today. It's a lot like Dorothy Gale stepping from black-and-white Kansas to the brilliantly colored Land of Oz.

From student to teacher

Not too long ago, Pastor Bitek invited Ashley to a Bible League Bible-based Literacy class. She realized English



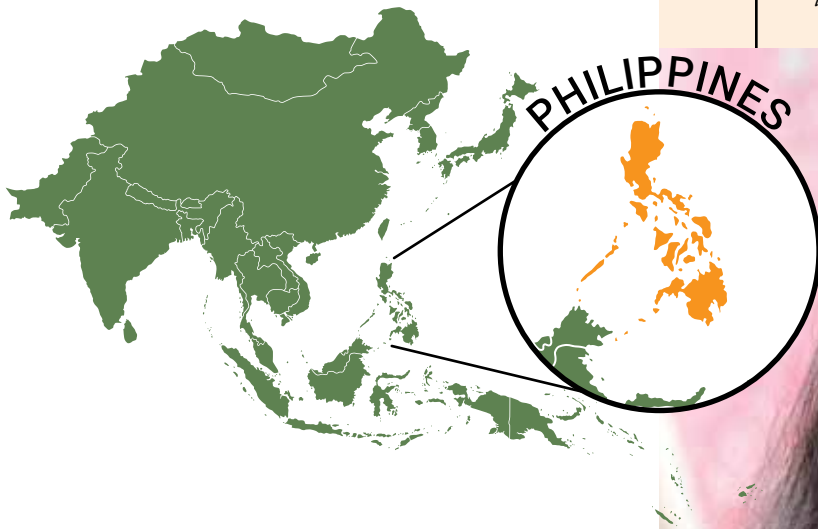
was essential for her future career, so she gladly accepted.

Through the lessons, she learned to read and write English, using the Bible as her textbook. This boosted her confidence, and she decided to teach others Bible-based Literacy as well. Ashley and her classmates, including Ana Maria (*story, page 9*), completed Bible League’s literacy teachers’ training and now joyfully teach children in remote areas.

Renewed strength

But it’s not all rainbows. Flecks of gray still appear as she endures anxiety attacks. In those moments, she turns to Jesus and the Bible you provided. “Talking to Him truly empowers me to turn my sorrows into joy. After my time spent in prayer and devotion, I feel strong and ready to take on life’s challenges once again.”

Today, Ashley isn’t just surviving—she’s helping others to discover the same hope that saved her life.



A thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy. But I came to give life—life that is full and good.

John 10:10 ERV

Ashley’s story isn’t unique

Research shows that a girl’s self-confidence peaks around age nine, then drops. Scary, right? By 11, Ashley had already attempted suicide—a trend that’s tragically becoming more common.

Globally, one in seven 10–19-year-olds experiences mental health conditions, and the Philippines faces even higher rates: **35%** of young adults struggle with depression and **16%** with anxiety.*

But there is light in the darkness. Bible-based Literacy[†] offers more than just language skills. It boosts self-esteem. It provides community, purpose, and hope through God’s Word—when young people like Ashley need it most.

*WHO, “Adolescent Mental Health” (2025);
Philippine Daily Inquirer/AXA Study (2024/2023)

†Through Bible-based Literacy, people study a literacy curriculum—either in English or their own language—while using the Bible as their “reader.”



Belonging at last

How you're bringing love and community to India's most vulnerable

"If you ask about their home situations, you'll have tears in your eyes. Every student has a painful story."

Rajkumari (*pictured below*) has been a teacher at a Christian school near India's eastern coast for 11 years. It's a beacon of light in a place that can feel hopeless.

Rajkumari explains, "They are mostly from illiterate families. Most of their parents have never been to school themselves. Many students come to us with zero educational background. They don't even know how to hold a pencil when they arrive."



Opening new worlds

Thanks to your help, they can now hold a pencil and speak English fluently. Each afternoon, the students attend Bible-based Literacy class, gaining knowledge that opens the world in new ways.

Today, not only have they learned to read and write English, but they've also come to know Jesus.

Rajkumari marvels, "None of these children knew how to read when they arrived. Through Bible-based Literacy, they're reading the Bible for the first time in our school. That's incredible."

One girl's story

This is true for Gyaneshwari (*pictured on page 7*), who comes from a Hindu family.

She's been at this school for six years. In the 14-year-old's home district, about half the women can't read or write.

At home, she had no friends. In remote farming communities, children often deliberately exclude girls like Gyaneshwari because of their *caste* (*see sidebar, right*).

From outcast to beloved

Attending this school and studying God's Word has changed everything for this teen. She has found the love and community she desperately longed for. She credits Bible-based Literacy for helping

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Understanding the caste system

India's ancient caste system divides society into rigid hierarchical groups determined at birth—from priests and scholars at the top to laborers at the bottom, with Dalits (formerly “untouchables”) facing the most severe discrimination.

Though caste-based discrimination was banned in 1950, the system still shapes daily life in rural areas, determining marriages, friendships, and opportunities. Girls from lower-caste farming families like Gyaneshwari are deliberately excluded from friendships. This is similar to how people treated lepers as “untouchable” in biblical times.

A beacon of light

The school Gyaneshwari attends was founded more than 10 years ago. The founders hoped to empower indigenous children or those considered lower caste with quality education—something they wouldn't receive otherwise.

The school is completely free—books, uniforms, food, and dormitories are all provided. About 20% of the students come from Hindu families, but all are welcomed with open arms.

Each day, the students attend Bible League's Bible-based Literacy as an add-on to their classes.





(cont.) her improve her writing and know Jesus. It's no surprise that one of her favorite stories from the Bible is Jesus healing the 10 lepers. Wise beyond her years, she sees the parallels between this and her own life.

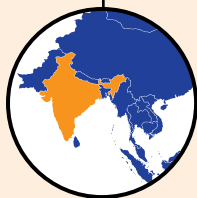
Gyaneshwari says thoughtfully, "Everyone hated lepers—they were like the untouchables of India. But Jesus overcame that boundary and healed them. They became normal and accepted. Jesus does not discriminate."

Rewriting her story

In her village, Gyaneshwari may have never learned to read and write. She would never have dreamed of being an engineer. She may have remained isolated and alone. Because of supporters like you, that isn't her story today.

Now, her story is one of potential. She loves reading the Bible and prays her parents will accept the Gospel, too. One day, she hopes to become a civil engineer. And best of all, Gyaneshwari has found a friend like no other.

Literacy in India: Did you know?



One in four women

in India can't read or write. In indigenous areas, this is likely even higher.



Women and girls

in these areas frequently don't get the opportunity to attend school. Instead, their parents send the boys while the girls stay home to care for younger siblings and the home.



English is the subsidiary official language of India, but it is also the most important one for national, political, and commercial communication.



Thousands of people in India are being reached with the Gospel through Bible League's Bible-based Literacy classes each year.

The student becomes the teacher

How Ana Maria discovered God's purpose for her life

Seventeen-year-old Ana Maria (*pictured below*) bends down to eye level with a group of little ones. Holding a bright yellow literacy booklet, she points to the page: “Find the letters. W, R, and S.”

Two years ago, this moment seemed impossible to Ana Maria. She recalls, “I struggled with spelling, vocabulary, and pronunciation.” But that all changed when she saw some kids walking through her neighborhood in San Benito, Philippines.

Learning English

Intrigued, Ana Maria followed them to a church where she met Pastor Bitek, who was teaching a Bible League Bible-based Literacy class—a program made possible by supporters like you.

Ana Maria never missed a class after that day. Pastor Bitek taught them about God's Word during class and invited them to attend his weekly Bible League Bible study.

She explains, “This literacy class has significantly improved my skills. I was amazed by how much progress I made since I first started.”

A new opportunity

The teen gained so much more than another language—it sparked her interest in reading the Bible. Pastor Bitek shared the Gospel with Ana Maria, and she accepted Christ as her Savior.

She beams, “In the past, when I read the Bible, I didn't understand its meaning. However, now that my English

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(cont.) comprehension has improved and I have the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I can truly feel the impact of God’s Word in my life, resonating deeply in my heart.”

As Ana Maria learned to read and write in English, her confidence grew. She wanted other kids in her community to have the same opportunity she did.

Finding her purpose

She asked Pastor Bitek about becoming a Bible-based Literacy teacher. He helped her and others, including Ashley (*story, page 3*), become literacy teachers. Now, Ana Maria is teaching children in remote areas.

Her eyes light up. “I love teaching literacy because I see that the children will someday become like me, learning the English language while also gaining knowledge about God’s Word.”

Her dreams are bigger than ever. She is studying to become a civil engineer—a goal that once seemed impossible.

“Truly, God has a purpose in everything; it is not an accident that I followed the children and participated in the class. It was God who called me here, and I am inviting my neighbors and family members to attend our Bible study. I hope to bring them all to the Lord.”



Why English matters in the Philippines



English is an official language in the Philippines and taught in schools, but not everyone has access to education.

This creates a barrier to opportunity. There, English proficiency is widely seen as essential for well-paying jobs that help families escape poverty.

Bible League's English Bible-based Literacy program opens doors to a better future in more ways than one. When someone learns to read with the Bible, they gain both the knowledge of God's Word and the communication skills needed for brighter futures.

Each year, thousands of people in the Philippines learn English through Bible League's Bible-based Literacy program. Incredibly, hundreds of people like Ana Maria and Ashley go on to become teachers themselves.



Listen to ***The Word in Action***—a podcast about how God's Word is transforming lives around the globe.

You'll hear from people who are spreading the hope of Jesus each day. Explore new stories monthly of how God is moving in the lives of kids, persecuted believers, church planters, and so many others.

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“They’re reading the Bible for the first time in our school. That’s incredible.”

Rajkumari (*story, page 6*) is right. The power of God’s Word in her students’ lives (*pictured*) is incredible. Stories like hers are happening around the globe because of supporters like you.

Right now, countless people don’t have access to a Bible. They’ve never heard the Gospel. Like Rajkumari’s students, they’ve never read the Bible.

But you can change that.

Your gift puts God’s Word into the hands of those who need it most. Your support will help train believers to walk alongside people as they study it.

Together, we can spread Christ’s love to those still waiting. For more information and to donate, please visit bibleleague.org/mm or scan the QR code to the right.



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