



InDepth

Transforming lives through God's Word
Formerly International Bible Society



BRINGING THE BIBLE
TO PEOPLE SINCE 1809

Issue
2

Hope Comes to AIDS-Ravaged South Africa

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www.BiblicaMinistry.com



AIDS graves in South Africa

A LIFE TRANSFORMED

“For the last eight months we have been working with eighth- through tenth-graders who received *Reach 4 Life* New Testaments.

“One tenth-grader had a reputation as the rudest, most disruptive kid in class—and in the school. After one *Reach 4 Life* lesson, we offered to walk him home and carry his books for him. On the way we asked him where he was staying.

“He told us he lives in the back room of a shack with one little brother and two little sisters. His father died years ago, and his mother abandoned them.

“He said to us with tears in his eyes, ‘Don’t waste your time talking to me. I’ll be dead by the end of this week. I have decided to commit suicide. I can’t do this anymore.’”

“We asked him what he thought about Jesus. He said it was too late for him; he had lost all hope. We began to share from the *Reach 4 Life* New Testament about the love of Jesus and that He had come for people like him. He accepted the Lord as his personal Savior.

“We asked if we could pick him up for church on Sunday and he said yes. He came to our church and has been with us for four months now. He is a totally different person. His anger has gone. He told us he has stopped smoking and stealing. Our church is helping him with food for his little brother and sisters.”

—*Reach 4 Life* peer educators Job Kgame and Mandla Mkhize, Soweto, South Africa

HOPE COMES TO AIDS-RAVAGED SOUTH AFRICA

How do you begin to effect change?

South Africa not only has the highest incidence of reported rape in the world, it has a culture and history that promote sexual violence, polygamy, and promiscuity.

In a survey done earlier this year, 28 percent of men questioned said they’d committed at least one rape in their lifetime. Many indicated they saw nothing wrong with rape.

The figures are grim: a woman in South Africa is raped every 17 seconds; a girl, every 33 seconds.

DEADLY CONSEQUENCES

Not surprisingly, South Africa also has one of the highest HIV rates in the world. A staggering 71 percent of AIDS deaths are of South Africans ages 15 to 49. More than 30 percent of pregnant women are HIV-positive. Few have access to drugs to treat themselves or protect their infants from infection.

Cemeteries are running out of space.

It’s a horrible situation that impacts everyone in South Africa. For instance,

because one-fifth of the adult population is HIV-positive, there is a shortage of teachers. Yet education is essential to break the cycle of HIV infection.

How do you begin to effect change? With God’s life-giving Word.

In 2004, Biblica South Africa launched the *Reach 4 Life (R4L)* New Testament and program to fight HIV/AIDS among teens and young adults. The life-changing, life-affirming message of the gospel is crucial in producing a radical shift in attitudes and behaviors.

R4L New Testaments contain 40 Bible study lessons that encourage youth to embrace the gospel and adopt godly lifestyles. Study notes and peer testimonies address sexual issues in frank ways teens appreciate.

GET INVOLVED!

You can rescue teens from an early grave. Go to www.BiblicaMinistry.com/R4L

TAKING R4L TO THE AIDS EPICENTER

KwaZulu-Natal province, home of the Zulu nation, has the highest HIV rate not only in the country but in the world, in part from the lack of serious government commitment to HIV education, treatment, and prevention.

But there is hope.


Every day, many schools in the KwaZulu city of Ladysmith hold assemblies and share information from Biblica's *Reach for Life* New Testaments. Throughout the school day, trained volunteers teach Reach 4 Life (R4L) lessons to teens and preteens already exposed to cultural beliefs that promote unhealthy sexual behavior.

Many of these kids are AIDS orphans. They live with relatives or neighbors, and some are abused or neglected. They hide their pain, shame, and struggles inside.

Cindy, age 13, is a prime example. She lives with her grandmother, and because women are taught not to protest, she never reported the relative who sexually abused her for years. Because he threatened to beat her if he saw her speaking to anyone, she kept quiet in school and at home. Predictably, her school performance was poor.

One day after an R4L lesson on pain, Cindy summoned the courage to speak to the R4L volunteers. They reported the abuse to the principal, and social workers began counseling Cindy.

Cindy was removed from the home and area and goes to a different school now. She has started talking in class and participating in sports.

She even smiles now. 



At Biblica, formerly International Bible Society, we have been given the privilege and responsibility of taking the life-giving Word of God to the world. In this issue of *Biblica InDepth*, you'll see the Bible's powerful impact in the lives of children and teens, whether in Senegal or the Galapagos Islands. God's Word is creating opportunities for them to take hold of the forgiveness and eternal life God offers.

Consider, for instance, Wembezi village in KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa. KwaZulu-Natal has the highest HIV infection rate in the world. A few months ago, the Wembezi community called a meeting of community leaders to discuss the high level of drug use and rape in schools.

The principal of a school that uses our Reach 4 Life Bible-based sexual abstinence program stood and said, "[Reach 4 Life] has really changed the lives of our students. ... I appeal that we embrace this program as part of the solution to our community. It's hard for us adults to talk to these kids with issues like rape, but in my school Reach 4 Life find these cases every week. Kids trust them. I am seeing change in my kids' behavior every day."

Biblica's Scripture-based programs invite children and teens to trust Jesus with their fears and needs and give their lives to Him. Hope is born, behavior is changed, and lives are transformed for eternity through the good news of the gospel.

"Transforming lives through God's Word." That is our mission. That is what Biblica is all about.

Serving Him together,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Keith Danby'.

Keith Danby
Biblica Global President/CEO



Reach for Life

Across the Continents



Reach for Life (R4L) began in South Africa in 2004 to spread the gospel and among youth and help them avoid HIV/AIDS infection. In the five years since, Biblica has presented R4L to more than one million youth worldwide.

The R4L program reinforces the message that sexual abstinence before marriage and faithfulness within marriage are the only truly “safe sex.” The program clearly introduces Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Key components include the *Reach 4 Life* New Testament, leadership training, and small-group interaction that fosters accountability and growth.

From South Africa to Romania and Thailand, through the compassionate support of donors like you, Reach 4 Life is changing lives through God’s Word.

THAILAND

With as much as 14 percent of Thailand's Gross Domestic Product coming from the illegal sex industry, there isn't much economic incentive to eradicate it. Sex trafficking, child prostitution, pornography, and drug abuse are rampant, affecting not only sex workers and drug addicts, but the general population. More than one in 100 adults are HIV-infected. Thai youth are one of the main risk groups for HIV.

Biblica Thailand staff began implementing R4L curriculum in Thai schools two years ago. Volunteers lead classes primarily with non-Christian students steeped in a culture that encourages casual sex. In a Buddhist country where just 1 percent of the population is Christian, students are receiving Jesus as Lord and Savior every semester and committing to a godly lifestyle.



Just think about this. If we lived God's way, saving sex for marriage, would there be an AIDS pandemic with its early, painful deaths, grieving loved ones and millions of orphans?

Reach 4 Life New Testament Insert

KENYA


In Kenya, twice as many young women ages 15-24 as men are infected with HIV/AIDS. Recently, Biblica Kenya staff provided crisis pregnancy ministries with 34,000 R4L New Testaments to use with secondary school students in Nyanza, Western, and Rift Valley provinces of Kenya.

A parent whose daughter went through the R4L program phoned the Biblica Kenya office to commend the change he's seen in her life and request more copies of the New Testament for youth in his community. Organizations constantly request the R4L New Testaments. Pray for funding to meet the demand for this crucial tool in the war against HIV/AIDS.

ROMANIA

Romania's freedom from communist oppression, combined with poverty and a people raised without Christian values, has fostered a perfect breeding ground for sexual immorality, crime, and sexually transmitted diseases. Biblica Romania is infusing hope and a radically different worldview through its Reach 4 Life groups. Recently 17 new R4L groups were launched and 1,800 R4L New Testaments distributed.

Damaris, a Romanian teen, had just finished attending a Reach 4 Life group Bible study series when she was in a car accident that left the 22-year-old driver of the other vehicle with serious injuries. She began visiting the young man and learned he was HIV-positive.

"I am so thankful to God that I had the chance to participate in Reach 4 Life," Damaris said. "I visit him almost every day at the hospital and we read together from the R4L New Testament. I don't know how long will be his life, but I just want to lead him to Christ the Savior." 

You can help reach at-risk youth with this life-giving message. Look for more information on Reach 4 Life at BiblicaMinistry.com/R4L.

WHAT IS REACH 4 LIFE?

Reach 4 Life is a New Testament.

It includes the contemporary-English NIV text, plus

- A section titled "Suicidal Sex," a frank discussion of sexual promiscuity and HIV/AIDS
- "Reality Bites"—short, engaging discussions on sexual issues commonly faced by young people
- Discussions of common questions asked by new Christians, such as "What if I have doubts?" and "How do I get closer to God in my personal life?"
- A clear presentation of the gospel and an invitation to accept Christ as Savior and Lord
- A Bible study curriculum of 40 lessons that build on each other and cover topics relevant to developing an abundant life in Christ
- Instructions on how to start a Reach 4 Life study group

Reach 4 Life is a program.

The Reach 4 Life program invites honest, caring interaction among group members. Teens feel comfortable sharing heart issues and concerns they wouldn't mention to most adults. The program includes

- Peer-to-peer counseling
- Training for R4L volunteers and coordinators
- Use of the *Reach 4 Life* New Testament as study text
- 40 group lessons to encourage spiritual change and growth



CHILDREN AT RISK FIND A HOME IN CHRIST

He's like a lot of 10-year-old boys. Patricio can be noisy. He gets in trouble.

His father, who drinks—a lot—says Patricio's good for nothing, the worst kid ever. Those words stab the young boy's heart and leave deep wounds.

His mother left the family for another man. That hurts even more.

Patricio loves his parents, but he doesn't feel loved in return. He believes not a soul on earth cares whether he lives or dies. And that belief makes the world a very scary and lonely place for a 10-year-old.

Patricio lives on one of many islands in Ecuador's Galápagos archipelago. The islands aren't easy to visit, because they can only be reached by plane or boat. It costs considerable time and money to travel there.

But the Great Commission doesn't concern itself with inconvenient logistics. And so Biblica Ecuador staff, in partnership with four local churches, traveled to the Galapagos Islands recently to present the message of God's love to more than 1,500 children.

WOUNDED HEARTS AND THIRSTY SOULS


Many children, like Patricio, are hungry for love and acceptance. More than half of Ecuador's population lives in grinding poverty. It takes a horrendous toll on family life. Children are often abandoned by parents who migrate to look for work and leave their children with relatives or neighbors. Other children suffer neglect and abuse from parents who seek escape from life's problems through alcohol and drugs.

Most of these children have never attended church, and many cannot afford to go to school.

Through the generosity of donors like you, Biblica's Children at Risk program brings the church and the message of the gospel right to children—wherever they are. Staff and local churches partner to engage children through a colorful and fun Bible-based program. Using puppets, drama, and music, they share the good news with children of Christ's love and forgiveness.

“Now I know that Jesus cares about me and He loves me. Nothing is impossible for God.”

On the Galapagos Islands, young, wounded hearts and thirsty souls recently embraced the program's message of their value to a loving Father in heaven who will *never* see them as “good for nothing.” Afterward, Patricio approached Biblica staff, weeping, to thank them for the “beautiful program.”

“Now I know that Jesus cares about me and He loves me,” he said. “Nothing is impossible for God—He can even change my father's heart. I will pray for my father that he may stop drinking and also get to know Jesus. Now I have new friends, and I will attend church. Thank you ... thank you!” 



MENDING LIVES IN ROMANIA

Romania has been oppressed and occupied by various foreign powers over the centuries. The Ottoman Turks, Nazis, and communists all have put their stamp of repressive rule on the country. However, in recent decades the worst ravages were masterminded by home-grown dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

As a result of decades of repressive government practices that robbed farmers of their crops and livelihood, rural Romania is steeped in poverty. Twenty years after the fall of Ceausescu's regime, many villagers still eke out a meager living from subsistence farming.

Poverty is most severe and systemic among the Roma, or gypsy, people. The Roma have the highest illiteracy and birth rates in the country. Centuries of oppression have left them marginalized and subject to economic and social discrimination.

Many of the children in orphanages are from Roma families. Often, children in orphanages are not true orphans—they have been placed there because their parents cannot afford to house and feed them.

COLORFUL CURRICULUM

Although living conditions in rural Romania are gradually improving, schools, churches, and orphanages have few resources and little money to spare for children's curriculum. So the *My Monthly Bible Readers* provided through generous Biblica donors and partnerships with other ministries are very welcome.

Biblica's *My Monthly Bible Readers* provide four years of monthly curriculum designed for children ages 8-12. The colorful readers appeal to children with their lively, interactive presentation of Bible stories and modern-day applications.


Biblica Romania partners with local ministries and churches to distribute the readers. In the past few months, almost 2,000 children were reached with the gospel and are now engaged in Bible study groups, many of them for the first time.

One church uses *My Monthly Bible Readers* to lead children's Bible studies at an orphanage. Another church shares the colorful readers with Roma children from nearby villages. Local ministries use the Bible readers in child evangelism programs. And in many villages, public schools have selected *My Monthly Bible Readers* for their religion classes in primary grades.

"We work with children from the nearby orphanage, and we always invited them to participate at our Sun-

day school, but unfortunately not many of them responded," said Marian Z., an elder at Golgota Church in Deva, Romania. "Now that we introduced this magazine as curriculum for Bible class, they are much more interested and are coming every Sunday to our church."

Biblica Romania staff are encouraged to see how parents who formerly rejected evangelical workers have made a complete turnaround because of their children's interest in the monthly readers. Most children bring their brothers and sisters to church or study groups so they can also receive the magazine.

Romania is just one of many countries worldwide where Biblica is bringing Scripture resources and ministry to share the gospel message of God's love and salvation to children in need. To learn how you can share in this important mission, visit our website, www.BiblicaMinistry.com, or call (719) 488-9200. 

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AFRICA

Because of donors' support, Biblica distributed nearly 15,000 *Reach 4 Life (R4L)* New Testaments in four countries and launched R4L program in 58 schools. Your gifts also enabled us to distribute more than 6,000 children's Scripture materials in Kenya, Tanzania, and Senegal and train Sunday school teachers. We distributed 936 New International Reader's Version (NIRV) paperback Bibles and translated Scripture material into Kiswahili, and also reached 20,000 children in Tanzania through a Bible radio program.

In South Africa, we began a new partnership with a ministry run by ex-convicts to take R4L to juvenile offenders. The ministry has reached 460 youth in four juvenile prisons. In Ethiopia, we trained 63 pastors through an Equipping the Church seminar and gave each pastor an *Amharic Study Bible*.

ASIA

In the Philippines, your support enabled us to reach more than 77,000 children with the gospel and Scripture materials. We conducted children's programs in 82 schools and two VBS programs among the Manobo tribe in Mindanao. We also conducted a jail ministry in Davao, Mindanao, distributing 1,125 Scripture materials. About 1,700 inmates gave their lives to Jesus!

In Indonesia 960 children were reached with the gospel. Most of the children came from very poor families who make their home and living at garbage dumps.

In Thailand, we distributed 30,000 parallel Thai/English Gospels of John to students, trained 55 new R4L leaders, began R4L classes for 150 students in three schools, and printed 500 New Testaments.

LATIN AMERICA

Your gifts blessed 1,500 poor and at-risk children in Ecuador with the gospel through our Children for Christ program. In Colombia, we conducted two Equipping the Church seminars and gave 1,040 Scripture resources to participants.

EUROPE

Your gifts helped provide Scripture materials to reach 7,700 kids in Romania through partnership with local churches and ministries. We also distributed 1,800 *R4L* New Testaments, and launched 17 new R4L groups and distributed 2,135 Bibles for outreach.

In Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, we distributed 30,000 *My Monthly Bible Readers*. In Germany, we distributed 2,500 youth New Testaments and in the U.K. we provided more than 3,000 Christian books and Bibles to schools.

Because of your commitment to give God's Word to people who need the transforming power of the gospel, in three months' time more than 200,000 lives were reached for Christ.



Life Legacies

LEAVING A GODLY INHERITANCE

Inheritance is a dynamic issue and process. If your children are young, their needs and priorities are very different than if they are grown.

In the estate planning process, wise parents will prayerfully consider each child, the stage of life they are in, and their relationship with the Lord. The fundamental question must be: How will this inheritance enhance my child's relationship with the Lord?

The ultimate goal is not to pass inheritance on casually or by default. Instead, parents need to be wise stewards of the resources the Lord has entrusted to them. Through proper planning, they can pass on an inheritance that is both a blessing to their children and an occasion for giving glory to the Lord.

As you consider your children's future needs, you may also wonder how you can best leave a spiritual inheritance to further the kingdom of God. Biblica works with Christ-centered estate planning firm PhilanthroCorp to serve you with your estate planning and inheritance needs, helping you to plan so your estate can bless your family while also ensuring the greatest possible impact for the glory of God.

For more information on Biblica's Charitable Estate Planning and Planned Giving Program and how we can assist you in this important area, visit our website, www.biblicagiftplanning.com. There is a lot of valuable information on this site! Or, you can call PhilanthroCorp at 800-876-7958 to speak with one of their estate specialists.

Who is Biblica?

- Biblica, formerly International Bible Society, is one of the largest Bible and Christian literature ministries in the world.
- As God leads us into a third century of ministry, we've changed our name to Biblica to reflect the passion of 200 years and a fresh vision for the future.
- We're the translation sponsor of the New International Version® (NIV) of the Bible, the most widely read contemporary English translation.
- We are translating the Bible into 27 languages that have a total of nearly 2 billion speakers.
- We engage people with the Bible and biblical resources who might never learn about God any other way.



Please Give

Please give today to place Scripture in the hands of children around the world. For more information or to give online, go to www.BiblicaMinistry.com. Your gift will make an eternal difference in the lives of people who desperately need the hope of Scripture.

Be sure to share this magazine with your friends to help us get the message out about the great need for God's Word to transform lives!