



Bibles: In 2014, the United Bible Societies distributed a record number of 34 million Bibles worldwide, as well as 428 million Scriptures that included Old Testaments, New Testaments, the Gospels, and some Bible portions. In war-torn Syria, more than 5 times as many Old and New Testaments were distributed as in 2010 before the civil war started. Due to the soccer World Cup, more than one fifth of Bibles (7.6 million), and more than two third of Scriptures were distributed in Brazil.

<Christianity Today, christianitytoday.com, December 2015>

Bolivia: Over ten years ago, an agency sponsored five children in a community full of gangs, dirty streets, and dreamless people. They were given scholarships to develop pastry-making skill and learn basic accounting. Together they started their own pastry business. Now, one girl at 23 years old is still chasing her dream to work in a hospital as a specialist, open a clinic to help poor people. And the entire community has changed, quiet with paved streets, and basic services. Most importantly, people are transformed by the gospel, now having dreams, eager to get educated, and serve the Lord.

<Food For the Hungry, www.fh.org, 12/14/15>

Gaza Strip: As any other of the 1.5 million Palestinians living here, one man was full of anger and hate toward Israel. He has suffered lost of land and family members killed. But he is transformed by the love of Jesus. He now loves Israel, loves the Jews, and wants to learn Hebrew in order to share the gospel with them. He said God puts him here for the purpose to reach out to the Jews who needs Jesus.

<Reuters News, reuters.com, 12/14/15>

Japan: An agency has launched the 2020 Vision for Japan: To deploy 100 church multiplication teams to start 1000 producing churches that will enfold 1,000,000 new followers of Jesus and send out 1000 missionaries to the major cities of Asia. This seems impossible. But the triple disaster, earthquake-tsunami-nuclear plant meltdown, has drastically changed the outlook of the nation. Christians of various denominations, along with missionaries all united together in the relief effort. Thus, kindle the ordinary Japanese' interest in Jesus. Some Japanese pastors even envision a goal of 10% Christian in the nation by 2024.

<Asian Access, www.asuanaccess.org, 12/10/15>

Lebanon: In a month when suicide bombers killed 43 people on the streets of Beirut, a Power to Change media conference united volunteers from 57 cooperating churches. City-wide ads on billboards and national TV and radio promoted free DVD and a book telling the stories of 12 well-known Lebanese whose lives and difficult situations had been

changed by encounters with Christ. Some 2,500 phoned in for copies of the DVD, with 1,200 of them from a region of 400,000 Syrian refugees.

<Sat-7, www.sat7usa.org, 12/8/15>

Iraq: A year ago, a 10-year old refugee girl, driven by ISIL terrorists from her home and lost everything, was interviewed on TV, where she asked God to forgive the terrorists. The video went viral. Recently the interviewer found her again, and learnt that two of her prayers last time were answered. She found her best friend and is in school again. In the new interview, the girls shared what they are most aware now: the Lord's Prayer, especially the phrases, 'on earth as it is in heaven,' and 'gives us our daily bread.' She sang one of her own songs, "My beloved Jesus captured my heart by His love. Glory be to God. With my love, Glory be to God."

<Sat-7, www.sat7usa.org, 12/3/15>

Indonesia: After praying how to reach their Muslim neighbors, a congregation decided to invite them to their prayer service to pray for them. 75 Muslims showed up, outnumbering the Christians 3 to 1. They kept coming for they are seeing prayers answered, and want to know more about Jesus.

<Forgotten Missionaries International, forgottenmissionaries.org, 11/30/15>

Laos: Though the constitution professes freedom of religion, it also is written loosely that 'The State respect and protect lawful activities of ...religious followers ... which are beneficial to the country and people.' So Christian worship services, prayer meetings, funeral and wedding services, etc. could all be violations. But Christmas celebration is still a time of joy, excitement and family gathering. It is estimated that some 10,000 people typically attend these celebrations. Within 2 years, 20% of these who hear the gospel accept Christ. The event bear fruit far into the future, as follow-up group visits and plant churches.

<Christian Aid Mission, www.christianaid.org 11/25/15>

Islamophobia: After recent attack by ISIL terrorists in Paris and California, the rise of anti-Muslim speeches in the Western nations has alarmed veteran missionaries in many mission fields. These uttering have intensified the persecution among Christians especially in Islam-dominated regions. To many Muslims the West is associated with Christianity, so anything Western is labeled 'Christian.' They react to anti-Muslim gestures by taking out their feelings on Christians among them.

<Open Doors USA, www.opendoorsusa.org, 12/15/15>