Language, Healing and Hope

Australia - WDP

Overview

Bible Society Australia (BSA), with the support of World Day of Prayer Australia, works alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christians to make God's Word accessible in the languages people speak, understand and connect with most deeply. Through Bible translation, audio Scriptures, visual storytelling and culturally appropriate Bible resources, Indigenous communities are encountering God's Word in ways that honour both faith and language. Translators such as Tjulyata from Amata help bring Scripture to life not only through translation, but through artwork that communicates Bible stories for new generations.

The Need

For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, English is not the language that speaks most deeply to the heart. Yet access to Scripture in Indigenous languages remains limited. In remote communities, oral communication is often more effective than written resources, creating a strong need for audio Scriptures, storytelling resources and locally-led translation work.

- Only **one Indigenous language (Kriol)** has a full Bible translation
- Many people speak English as a second or third language
- Low literacy levels increase the need for **audio and storytelling formats**
- Language loss threatens cultural identity

Expanding Bible translation and accessible Scripture resources help strengthen faith, preserve language and culture, and enable people to encounter God's Word in ways that speak to the heart.

Goals

BSA's goal is to make God's Word more accessible in First Nations languages and formats, helping communities engage with Scripture in ways that strengthen faith, identity and cultural connection. Working with partners, BSA seeks to strengthen cultural identity and deepen faith by supporting local translators to make God's Word accessible in heart languages, particularly through formats suited to oral and family-based learning, such as audio and storytelling.

Key goals are:

- **Translation:** advance Indigenous Bible translation, including Pitjantjatjara and Noongar.
- **Training:** equip Indigenous translators through workshops, mentoring and formal training.
- **Engagement:** produce audio Scriptures and culturally appropriate resources.
- **Distribution:** make Scripture resources available to communities, churches, chaplains and families.

Impact

This project works to grow access to Scripture in First Nation languages, affirming the value of Indigenous identity, culture, and faith. It equips women to pass on language and faith to future generations and brings peace and healing through Scripture resources and audio Scriptures that comfort people in hospitals, prisons and remote communities.

One example of this work is *Godaku Tjukurpa* ("God's Story"), a children's Bible storybook featuring 54 artworks created by Indigenous artists. The book was developed to help Pitjantjatjara children and families engage with the Bible through the visual storytelling traditions of their people. Every painting is paired with Bible references and titles in both Pitjantjatjara and English, helping children explore and understand God's story. Tjulyata, a Pitjantjatjara Bible translator, contributed her painting *Woman at the Well*, illustrating the story of Jesus and the Samaritan Woman from John Chapter 4. Her painting, and the others in the book, reflects how art is another way of sharing and understanding Scripture.

Impact in Numbers

20

Indigenous Australian languages supported through Bible translation activities, and 22 Indigenous translators from 11 language groups equipped through specialist translation training (during 2025/26)

13,910

Indigenous language Bibles and Scripture resources distributed, and 441 audio Scripture players supplied to help people hear God's Word in their heart language (during 2025/26)

Testimony

"Yes, it's true that there is an English Bible. But of course, sometimes they only understand when it's in their own language ... We're doing this work for future generations, so that they would learn and understand God's Word."

— Tjulyata, Pitjantjatjara Bible translator

How Your Support Helps

$30

helps provide an audio Bible through chaplaincy in prisons and hospitals.

$300

helps supply 10 language Bibles for a remote community.

$1,000

supports an Indigenous translator during a translation workshop.

"It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it. **— Isaiah 55:11**

"palu puṟunypa ngayulu wangkanytja ngaṟanyi, panya ngayulu tjukurpa wangkanyangka kutjupa kutjupa tjuṯa utiringkupai alatjiṯu ngayulu panya wangkanytjitja tjuṯa kutju. Panya ngayulu kutjupa kutjupa palyantjikitja mukuringkula ngayulu wangkapai, ka mulapaṯu wangkanyangka utiringkupai." — **Aitjayaku 55:11 (Isaiah 55:11 from Pitjantjatjara Shorter Bible, Tjukurpa Palya)**