



The Bible Cause: A History of the American Bible Society

John Fea

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Endorsed in its time by Francis Scott Key, John Jay, and Theodore Roosevelt, the American Bible Society (ABS) is a seminal institution for American Protestants. The group was founded in 1816 with the goal of distributing free copies of the Bible in local languages throughout the world. Today, the ABS is a Christian ministry based in Philadelphia with a \$300 million endowment and a mission to engage 100 million Americans with the Bible by 2025. In *The Bible Cause*, noted historian of American religion John Fea demonstrates how the ABS's primary mission - to place the Bible in the hands of as many people as possible - has caused the history of the organization to intersect at nearly every point with the history of the United States.

For the last two hundred years, the ABS has steadily increased its influence both at home and abroad, working with all Christian denominations in the US and internationally, aligning itself whenever possible with the gatekeepers of American religious culture. Over the years ABS Bibles could be found in hotel rooms, bookstores, and airports; on steam boats, college and university campuses; the Internet; and even behind the Iron Curtain. Its agents, Bibles in hand, could be found on the front lines of every American military conflict from the Mexican-American War to the Iraq War. However and wherever the United States developed, the ABS was there.

Throughout the last two centuries ABS has never wavered in its mission, and its commitment to be the guardian of a Christian civilization has been proven many times over.

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