

Bible Stories Alive for All the World

Originally written and told by Kitty Anna Griffiths
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A Mustard Seed Has Become a Tree



Kitty Anna Griffiths (Mrs. G) began her Bible story broadcast, A Visit with Mrs. G, on September 3, 1973. Before that, she had told a short story (2-4 minutes) on the radio program of Calvary Church, Toronto, where I was then the Pastor. One day an executive of Trans World Radio US just happened to hear one of her short stories and invited her to become the story-teller on a new program. At the same time, the agents of our church radio program invited Kitty Anna to start a story program for Christian families. She accepted this surprising offer on one condition – that the stories would be Bible stories. She wanted to teach children God’s word, and God has blessed His word. And the mustard seed planted 50 years ago has become a tree whose branches have spread far and wide in English, and in translations (in voice and/or print) in Mandarin, Spanish, Amharic, Khmer, Swahili, Somali, Nepali, Russian, and we hope soon in Arabic and Farsi (Persian). On this 50th anniversary we gratefully say, “This is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.”

Mrs. G Reaches the Minds and Hearts of Children

This is what listeners who were brought up on the stories say: “Mrs. G made Bible stories come alive for children. Whether it was marching around the walls of Jericho with Joshua, hiding in the bulrushes with Miriam, or vying to catch a glimpse of Jesus with Zacchaeus, Mrs. G’s detailed scenes brought me back to biblical times, and kept me engaged throughout the program (quite a feat when you consider that I started listening to her stories as a toddler!). Her ability to hold an audience and accurately convey biblical teachings to such young minds is a feat in and of itself. But I believe her stories did more than that.

“Mrs. G understood children. She had an uncanny ability to gauge their capacity for understanding. She was aware of the often underappreciated intellectual abilities of children, meeting them where they were,

rather than talking down to them (as adults are wont to do). Through her unique ability, she was able to really engage children’s minds and hearts, teaching them rather than lecturing them. She would not skirt around challenging topics or dumb them down, but would work to apply them to a child’s context, making the Bible exciting and accessible for the youngest.”

—A. M. (a university student)

Another listener says the Bible stories did even more: “My childhood rang with stories from Mrs. G. I owe her a debt I can never repay. She gave me a love for the Lord and for the word of God that has held through the joys and tumults of life. I am eternally grateful.” —H. H.

Please tell children and parents that these audio stories can be downloaded for free on our website.

Mrs. G Memorial Fund

This is the month when we seek to raise \$15,000 to keep Mrs. G’s programs in Swahili on the air for another year, as a memorial to the great work God did through her and still continues to do. At the age of 16, Kitty Anna Coe volunteered to go to Kenya as a missionary teacher to teach the Bible to children in Swahili. In the event, she became a pastor’s wife. When God gave her the privilege of a radio ministry at the age of 54, she longed to have her Bible stories broadcast in Swahili. It never happened in her lifetime. Now it has happened, and it is changing the hearts of many children. On one of the four Swahili stations, 700 children in a refugee camp listen eagerly every Saturday morning, and they are now linked to a local church. If you wish to contribute to this special ministry, please mark your gift, “For Swahili”.

The Spreading Tree

For the first 10 years Mrs. G wrote and recorded a Bible story every week for her radio program.

Then she stopped recording Bible stories, and the first 10-year series were repeated on a 10-year cycle, so that last month, when we celebrated the 50th anniversary, A Visit with Mrs. G started its sixth 10-year cycle – with some 700 radio outreaches covering many countries where English is understood. And A Visit with Mrs. G will continue as long as there is a demand for the Bible stories. This is a remarkable record for a radio program, and we thank God.

Mrs. G stopped recording more Bible stories in order to give all her time to care for the spreading branches of this tree that grew so quickly as from a mustard seed.

As soon as the stories went on the air, listeners asked for cassettes (and later CDs). Thousands of cassettes were mailed out. Children listened to them at bedtime and at other times, so that Mrs. G's Bible stories became a part of the childhood of countless thousands of children, and this still continues. Only yesterday a mother told me that her 7-year-old daughter listens every night to the stories. They are now online and can be downloaded free.

Next came requests for books of the Bible stories, but very few came from listeners. The first recipients showed Mrs. G's books to their friends, and by word-of-mouth the demand became overwhelming, especially from Africa and India and countries from the emerging world. Mrs. G gave away two hundred and fifty thousand books all on a personal, one-on-one basis. She did more than mail out books with the help of a team of volunteers. She corresponded with recipients as they wrote for one book after another, and she learned what they were doing with the books. Few children had books, because they could not read English. The requests came from teens, pastors and youth workers, and from priests and nuns and Roman Catholic schools. Mrs. G sent a handwritten note of encouragement and counsel with each book. The impact of these books and of Mrs. G's personal interest in the recipients was enormous.

Now we have just received this letter from Kenya showing the impact of the storybooks and Mrs. G's encouragements. The writer did not know that Mrs. G is now in heaven.

Dear Mrs. G,

My name is Dickson. I am the younger brother of Wilfred, whom you kindly reached out to through "A Visit with Mrs. G" many years ago. Your support has left an indelible mark on our lives, and I am writing to share

the profound impact it has had and continues to have.

The books and support you [gave] to my brother not only shaped us but have also led us to a path of giving and spreading [the gospel].

In addition to uplifting our lives, these Christian books have become tools to reach out to others in need.

The influence of your gifts has expanded beyond our family. The people we have been able to touch and support are growing in number, as more individuals seek solace and hope in the messages of faith and love that these books contain. Our mission is to uplift orphaned children and under-served families in our community, extending your initial act of kindness [to us] to those who need it most.

I would be deeply honored if we could reconnect with you. Your insights, encouragement, and guidance would mean a lot to us as we continue this mission of spreading hope and faith.

Thank you for being a source of light in our lives. I eagerly await your response and the possibility of reconnecting with you. –D.T.

This is an encouraging letter to you our friends who have supported our ministry for so many years. People want the stories of the Bible in books that they can read, and today we can send them books electronically. This is our next major project.

Also, in the last year of her life, Mrs. G asked that a new set of Bible stories should be written which follow the text of Scripture in detail. This new version is what we are now broadcasting in Swahili, and it is changing the lives of children and families.

We are presently producing a new version of all the stories of Jesus, which will add to Mrs. G's original stories. What we now need is more staff to speed up the project. Our donations, like the donations of many Christian missions, have dropped. **Please pray that God will supply the help we urgently need to speed up our work.** We have seen what God has done through the printed books. The electronic versions of the future, closely following the text of Scripture, will reach many people of all ages. With God's power working in us, God can do more than we can ask or think.

Thank you for your partnership in sending the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ to the children of the world.

Yours in Christ,



Gerald Griffiths, President

Donations:

You may donate by cheque payable to "A Visit with Mrs. G Ministries" or online at www.biblestoriesalive.org/donate

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