

CONNECTED

2020 Special Report



Reaching Everyone, Everywhere

God is still at work! Using digital resources, people are creating connections and sharing the gospel like never before. Let's celebrate what God is doing!

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By God’s grace, your giving fueled powerful ministry movements in 2020, making connections through screens to reach hearts with the gospel during the global pandemic.

In this report, you’ll find ministry recaps, stories and testimonials of God’s people sharing the gospel and mentoring believers using Jesus Film Project® tools—all during a worldwide crisis. We pray this content blesses you greatly.



INTRODUCTION: Letter From the Executive Director

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations"

Matthew 24:14 (English Standard Version)

When Jesus spoke those words to His disciples in Matthew 24:14, He was referring to the circumstances before His return. Jesus' certainty as He assured the disciples of His victory over the evil one must have been a tremendous comfort to them!

We are living in incredibly challenging times, and Jesus' words ring truer than ever. Even though worldly circumstances are urging people to believe that evil is flourishing, we are seeing God work in powerful ways. The report you have in your hands is a celebration of God at work through your partnership. Together, we are proclaiming the gospel to the nations!

I personally am grateful that together we saw even more people encounter the gospel than we did last year. As you read about the incredible responses to TV broadcasts during the pandemic, digital outreaches and connections made amid lockdowns, I hope you feel encouraged as well.

As amazing as the harvest was in 2019—with over 29 million people

placing their faith in Christ—the last six months indicate we'll see double the response at a critical moment in history when people need hope more than ever. Our plan is to dramatically increase and refine our digital strategies to meet this incredible demand for spiritual truth.

Thank you for your part in taking the gospel to the nations. Although you may be personally experiencing several of the hardships that Jesus alluded to some 2,000 years ago, God is not absent. He is with us in our times of trouble, encouraging us to persevere. He is our only hope—just as He is for a dying world. Thank you for partnering with us to share the story of Jesus like never before!



Josh Newell
Executive Director
Jesus Film Project

LOOKING BACK: A Year of Harvest

(JANUARY 1, 2019 –
DECEMBER 31, 2019)

485,015,316

total views of
Jesus Film Project tools

29,769,281

people indicated decisions
to follow Christ

299,019

multiplying churches
or groups started

As of August 2020,
**1,850 LANGUAGE
VERSIONS OF JESUS**
are available.



When the World Hit “Pause,” JESUS Was on Their Screens

The Best Time to Watch

“Quarantined at home, more people were watching TV and presented us with a wonderful opportunity to share the story of JESUS with more people than ever before.”

Tom Terry

Jesus Film Project® radio and TV broadcast leader

In 2018 it seemed like everything was in place. A television station in Central Asia had shown interest in broadcasting the *JESUS* film. However, a lack of funding, political tensions, and a change in the TV station’s management led to the opportunity falling through for Easter 2019.

The ministry team members did not give up though. Instead they prepared for another chance to show the story of Christ to people across the region during Easter 2020. In His goodness, God soon opened new doors.

As the COVID-19 outbreak began to worsen in December 2019, ministry workers connected with six television stations interested in showing the *JESUS* film during the Easter and

Holy Week season. However, the team only had the funds to work with two of them.

God again provided—this time through your generous giving to Urgent Needs. The funds allowed our partner to say “Yes” to all six stations.

Another partner was also in place to follow up with locals who may want to know more about the gospel. When one ministry worker heard that they would be able to work with all six television stations, she joyfully said, “This is so good! The other TV stations wondered why we weren’t going to broadcast on their channel With the coronavirus, everyone is stuck at home now, scared, and watching TV. This is the best time to show them the *JESUS* film!”

Your generosity helped national ministries air the JESUS film on TV, proclaiming the gospel inside the homes of over 163 million people in one weekend. Hearts are being reached with the good news of Jesus like never before. Thank you for bolstering ministry work around the world with your support and prayers.

On Easter weekend 2020, **163,500,632** screens—in 111 countries across 83 TV stations—tuned into *JESUS* and other Jesus Film Project movies.

By comparison, **in all of 2019**, Jesus Film Project film broadcasts garnered just 120 million views when broadcast in 58 countries across 373 radio stations and 61 TV stations.

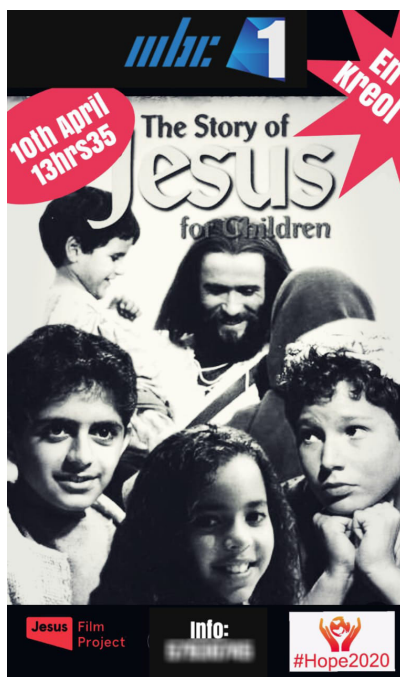
Easter 2020

163,500,632 views

All of 2019

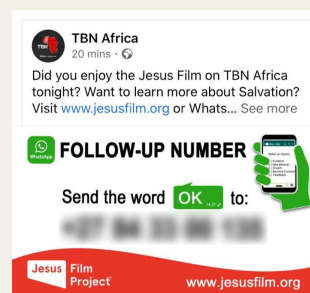
120,000,000 views

Some images and identifying details have been changed to maintain confidentiality throughout this report.



"Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples!"

Psalms 105:1
(English Standard Version)



In almost all Easter broadcasts, Cru® national teams included a WhatsApp number for viewers to contact with their follow-up questions.

One 13-year-old boy from Mesopotamia watched the *JESUS* film during Easter and contacted the television station via WhatsApp. He wondered if he could become a follower of Jesus, even though his parents follow another religion. He shared that the Jesus portrayed in the movie is the same person who had been appearing to him in dreams since he was 5 years old. A partner of Jesus Film Project prayed with the boy—who received Christ—and now shares Scripture with him to help him grow in his new faith.

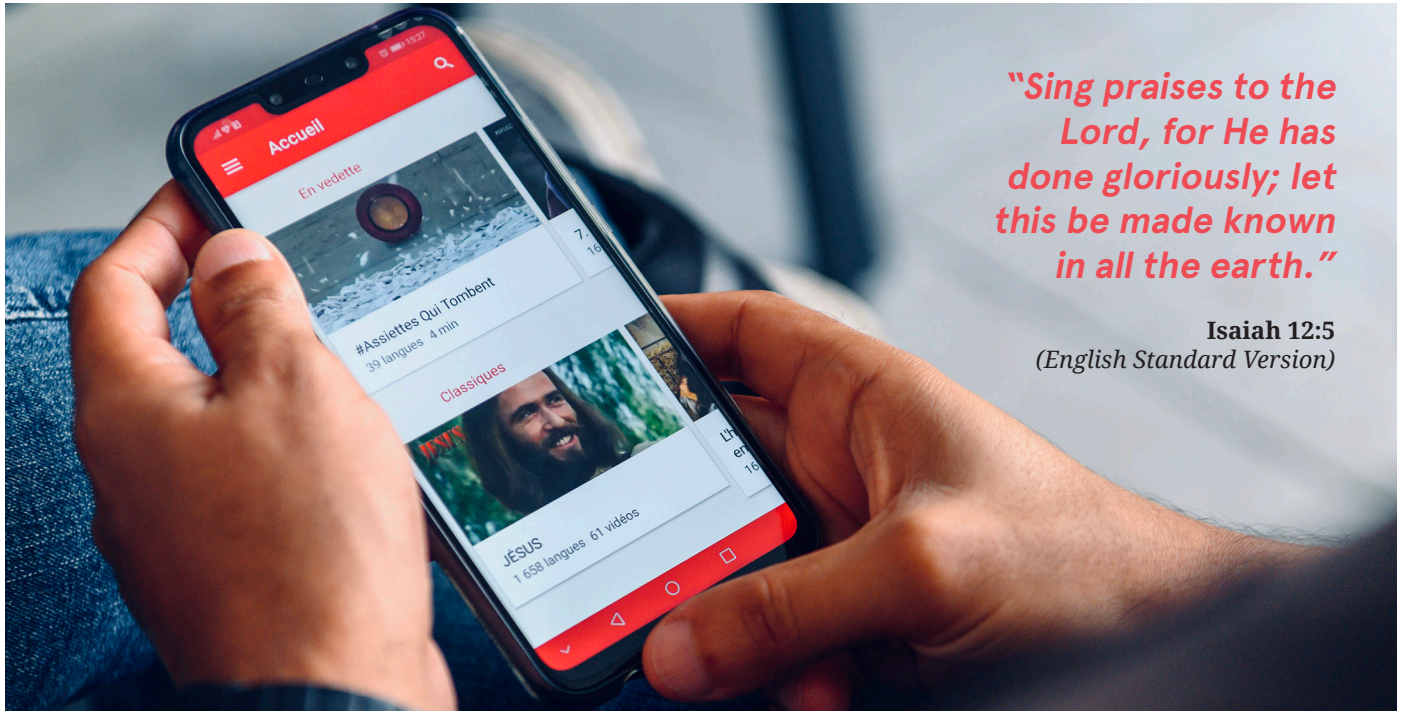


Philippines TESTIMONY

"So, having the film shown [on] TV, where everyone can watch, it became an opportunity to share the gospel, and I used that opportunity to share [with] one of my friends. After watching the film, my friend said that it became clear to him [who] Jesus is. From there I was able to share the Four Spiritual Laws, and he realized that he wanted to have a Christ-directed life. So, he prayed and accepted Jesus Christ in his life."

FACEBOOK OUTREACH IN THE MIDDLE EAST:

Connecting Across Screens



"Sing praises to the Lord, for He has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth."

Isaiah 12:5
(English Standard Version)

"I Want to Know More About Christ"

Ayman posted regularly on Facebook as part of his ministry, hoping his gospel-centered messages might resonate with someone. One of his posts caught Farid's attention.

Ayman's post read, "That is why the Lord says, 'Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me your hearts. ...' Joel 2:12 [New Living Translation]." His post went on to urge people who were interested in discipleship to contact him.

"The post is really good," Farid commented. "I wish someone would help me. I want to know more about Christ and to be a disciple." Then he told Ayman his story.

He was a follower of a major religion in a war-torn Middle Eastern country. His first wife was barren, so he divorced her and remarried. Then one day he saw the *JESUS* film. As he watched, he saw Jesus perform miracles. He wondered if Jesus could bring them a child.

He took a quiet gamble. He prayed to Jesus, asking that his new wife might get pregnant. Soon after, it happened!

Farid talked to his relatives about Jesus and his wife's pregnancy. But his relatives, who are devout followers of their religion, were angered by what he said. They attacked Farid and threatened to kill him. Openly believing in Jesus was not an option. Farid had to flee to a neighboring country with his family.

Ayman shared the gospel with Farid using the Four Spiritual Laws booklet—and Farid prayed and received Christ! Ayman then connected him with a local church. Farid has since met the pastor and plans to be baptized.

Ayman continues to follow up with Farid remotely to help him grow in his faith. One of Farid's greatest desires is for his children to be around Christians and to one day know Christ personally.

MINISTRY AROUND THE WORLD: Mobilized by a Borderless Gospel

Guatemala

SCHOOL EVANGELISM

Sonia used Zoom to present “Stories of Grace”—another evangelism tool using the Magdalena: Released From Shame film—to 37 school principals and teachers across Guatemala. Most of them are not believers. Sonia and her team hope the officials will come to know Jesus and start small groups in their schools, helping reach the younger generation. *Sonia trained 87 women from 12 countries in Latin America. Fifteen new groups formed as a result!*

Moldova

ONLINE OUTREACHES

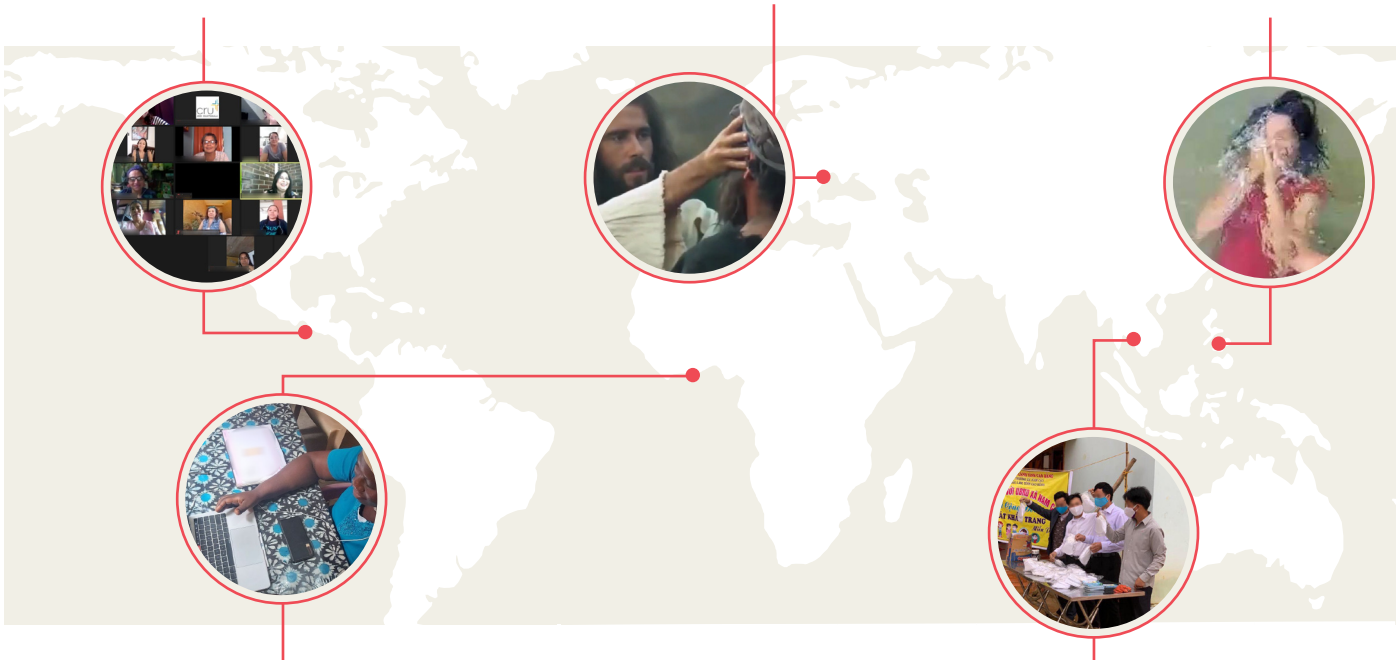
In January 2020, the Moldova GCM team did an online outreach called “The Amazing Question”—a strategy based on the biblical account where Jesus asks a blind man, “What do you want me to do for you?” They used Facebook to show the JESUS film clip of the story. When people watched the video, they were prompted to consider their own answers to this question. When COVID-19 spread, Moldova ministry workers knew the Lord had prepared them for it. *They held online evangelistic outreaches during Easter with remarkable results. Hundreds heard the gospel, and many received Christ!*

Philippines

ZOOM BAPTISMS

A ministry worker sharing about celebrating baptisms virtually:

“Praise God for the technology! This pandemic will not stop the Holy Spirit from working in the hearts of men. God is borderless! And we go borderless with God.”



Ghana

ONLINE STORYTELLING TRAINING

Clara led her first Magdalena oral-Bible-storytelling training session via Zoom at the end of May. On her first call from Ghana, *45 people from across West Africa were present.* They learned to tell Bible stories in simple and relevant ways that could help them connect with others. Clara also taught participants how to share Christ’s story over the phone and via smartphone apps.

Southeast Asia

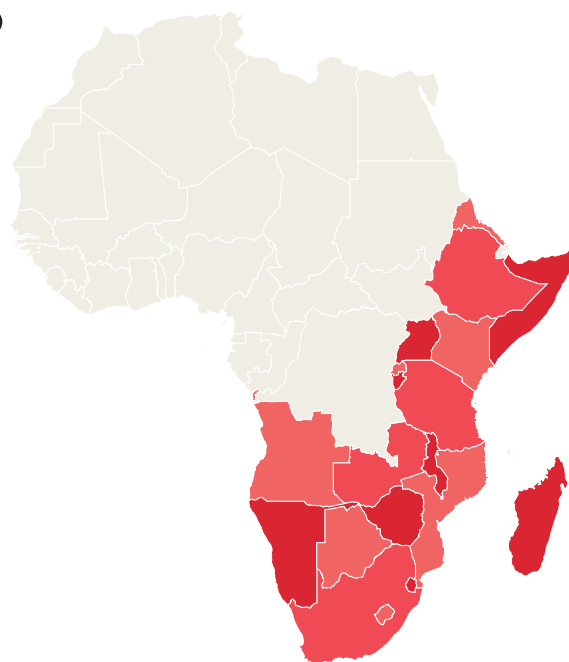
HUMANITARIAN AID

Cru® national teams, GCM leaders and Jesus Film Project® staff members provided humanitarian relief to populations most disadvantaged by COVID-19 quarantines and lockdowns. Team members distributed face masks, rubbing alcohol and food. They also provided medical equipment and helped disinfect some areas. *As they distributed essentials, staff members and volunteers prayed with people and shared the gospel.*

A Gospel Response to COVID-19

When COVID-19 cases began ramping up worldwide, Cru® national ministries in Southern and Eastern Africa—like many ministries around the world—questioned what to do. When the virus spread, governments locked their countries down. Some banned public gatherings. Nevertheless, ministry workers determined this wasn't a time to retreat, knowing God was still at work. Global Church Movements national team leaders and a host of local Cru staff members and volunteers banded together to steward Hope2020, Africa's gospel response to COVID-19.

Using digital tools like the Jesus Film Project® app, the GodTools app, Everystudent.com, and social media apps like WhatsApp, YouTube, and Facebook, trainees across 24 countries shared the gospel and mentored new believers. The results were incredible!



Celebrate God's Work

(APRIL 2020 - JUNE 2020)

166,260,222

people heard the gospel

4,387,916

people indicated
decisions to
follow Christ

952,556

follow-up
engagements via
messaging apps

720

small groups and
churches started

39,903

people trained in
digital strategies

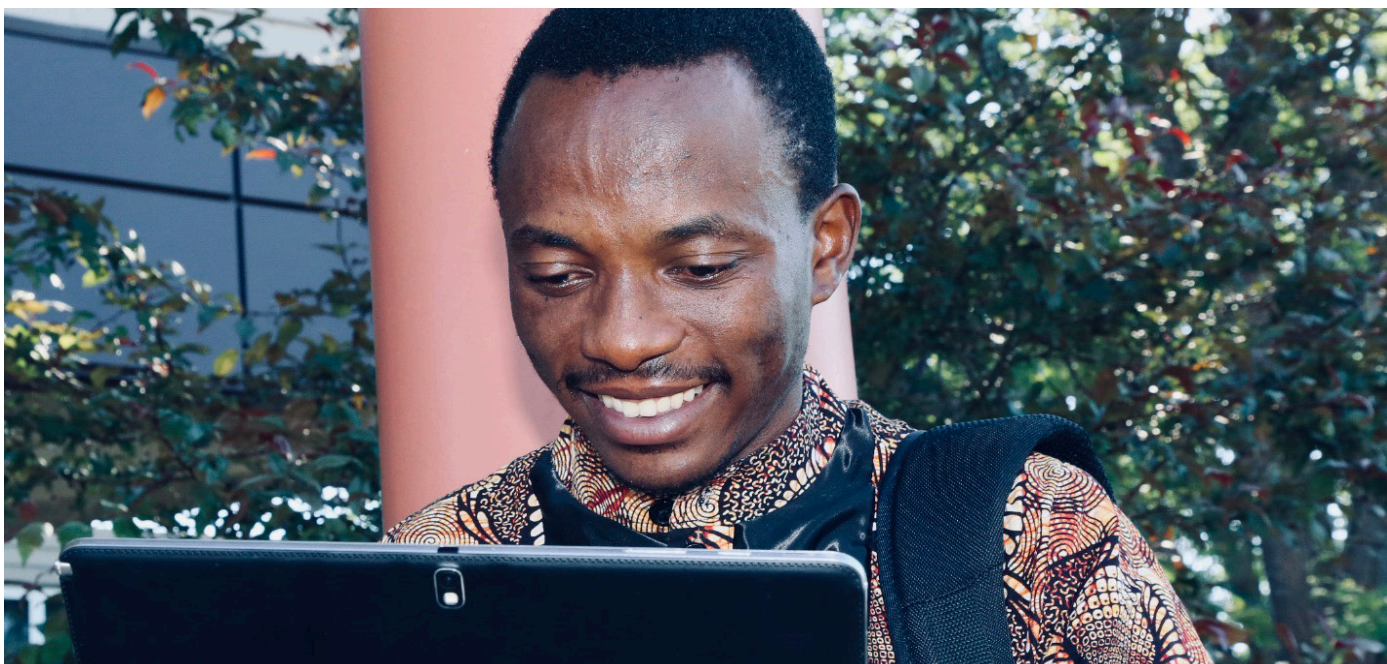
Connecting People to the Gospel in New Ways

The Hope2020 digital strategy encourages believers to go a step beyond evangelism—by leading small groups and encouraging their members to share the gospel and form their own groups. For instance, Tonderai mentors 20 people in Zimbabwe, using WhatsApp as a Bible study platform. Among his mentees is Chipso, a third-year medical student at the University of Zimbabwe. She has five mentees of her own. One of these mentees is Nsobi, who shares her Bible studies with a group of 300 people, and so on.

Rwandan ministry workers used the WhatsApp platform to run a nightly Bible study. Soon after, the group challenged everyone to share via WhatsApp the names of 10 friends who aren't believers. They assigned the names to each other and committed to initiate gospel conversations with everyone listed. **The group initiated gospel conversations with 56 people, and 18 of them indicated decisions to receive Christ!**

"We are stepping up our win, build and send effort—and experiencing the mighty acts of God and witnessing [an] unprecedented souls harvest. Thank you for honoring and glorifying God in your world. Let's continue joining hands and maximizing this lockdown to bring Christ to every home."

Tariku, member of the Hope2020 Leadership Committee



He Found Truth Online

Ndembo, a college student in Malawi, was browsing several websites looking for truth. He came across Everystudent.com, a website designed by Cru where students can explore questions about life and God—plus email their spiritual questions. After studying the website, Ndembo indicated his desire to follow Christ. Useni, a staff member with Malawi Campus Crusade for Christ® (as Cru is known there), connected with Ndembo and mentored him one-on-one online. In April he invited Ndembo to join a WhatsApp Bible study. Ndembo started his own group the following month with five friends. **His friends were so excited that they in turn invited 21 other classmates!** Ndembo has been mentoring a group of 15 students since then. He's also training them to share the story of Christ with others and form their own groups.

Reaching Out While Staying In

Alimayu lost count of how many times he had shared the gospel with his friend and fellow Ethiopian, Salim. But Salim did not want to accept Christ. When the pandemic hit their country, the government issued a stay-at-home order. During the lockdown, Alimayu quickly began implementing training he received from Great Commission Ministry Ethiopia (as Cru is known there). He started hosting a Bible study via text messages. He prayed for Salim and sent him text messages regularly, sharing Bible verses and inviting him to trust in Christ. One day Salim called Alimayu, and they spoke for a long time. Salim indicated his desire to place his faith in Jesus! Alimayu called Salim's neighbor, Abel, to help lead Salim in prayer. **Salim committed his life to Christ!** Today Alimayu regularly keeps in touch with Salim to help him grow in his faith.

Working Together for God's Glory

Hope2020 achieved great results due in large part to the region's commitment in 2019 to do 75% of their ministry work through and with partner churches and organizations. Throughout the initiative, Cru leaders in the region trained over **760** pastors and church leaders to do digital ministry. In Kenya alone, **166** Kenyans attended virtual Jesus Film Project app training sessions.

Hope2020 brought a sense of unity among the national ministries. Where uncertainty could've taken over, innovation and creativity flourished. Though scheduled to run only through June 30, Hope2020 leaders extended the program to the end of December after experiencing such great success with it!



DIGITAL STRATEGIES:

Remarkable Results

(MARCH 1, 2020 – SEPTEMBER 15, 2020)



116,341,396

total plays of
Jesus Film Project®
content across
228 countries



At least **215 countries** accessed
Jesus Film Project videos
on YouTube. **India ranked
highest in YouTube plays.**

Total Plays Across Top Platforms

YouVersion	938,111
JesusFilm.org	414,798
Jesus Film Project App (iOS & Android)	253,131
YouTube (Official channel)	38,530,652
YouTube (Other channels)	76,144,087



49,600

downloads of the
Jesus Film Project app



9,808

new Voke
app users



1,728

languages and dialects accessed
through Jesus Film Project platforms

Short Films Address Critical Questions

In Central Asia, Cru® staff members interacting with partners noticed a trend. When sharing the gospel with nonbelievers who follow local religions, Christians heard similar questions: Is the Bible accurate? Has it been changed?

Working in partnership with Jesus Film Project, they started to develop a set of eight videos tackling the questions. Two are now available—*God's Rescue Plan* and *Can the Bible Be Trusted?* Both resources share the gospel in ways that connect with people from the local religion—addressing core issues of their religious culture. Ministry workers are testing the videos in North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia—and they're seeing an amazing response!

One campaign, for example, ran for four days—and 3,500 people viewed it! Out of those thousands, 11 indicated decisions to follow Christ. In this region of the world, having 11 people place their faith in Christ within four days is significant! Another campaign showed *God's Rescue Plan* on Facebook, where 240,000 people viewed the film in a four-day period. The post got 300 comments and was shared 282 times. Local teams are currently following up with those who commented. God is at work!

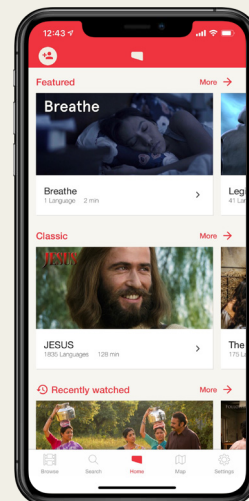
Connecting With Seekers Online

Digital strategies are helping accelerate evangelism efforts—even in the midst of 2020's challenges. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, they close an important gap between believers and people seeking out truth.

Under normal circumstances, believers in spiritually challenging areas spend a lot of time just finding people who are open to hearing the gospel. Yet in campaigns with 10 partner teams and 10 Cru teams using digital platforms to share Jesus Film Project resources across 20 countries, believers remarked that online conversations were effective in making nonbelievers aware of the gospel.

Strategies like evangelistic Facebook posts, the Love-Europe app for refugees in Europe, online church services and WhatsApp Bible studies meet nonbelievers on their journeys toward Christ.

One ministry worker serving in the Middle East put it this way: "Using media more creatively to engage with people who are already seeking truth could be the missing piece that puts us over the edge for the sake of the kingdom. ... Thank you for the investment you've made in [our country]."



What Is Digital Strategy?

Digital strategy is a way to reach people through technology wherever they are. It makes strategic use of our ever-growing digital tools to share the gospel on a personal, heartfelt level. Jesus Film Project tools run the gamut, as global as JesusFilm.org but as hands-on as tablets, smartphones and SD cards.

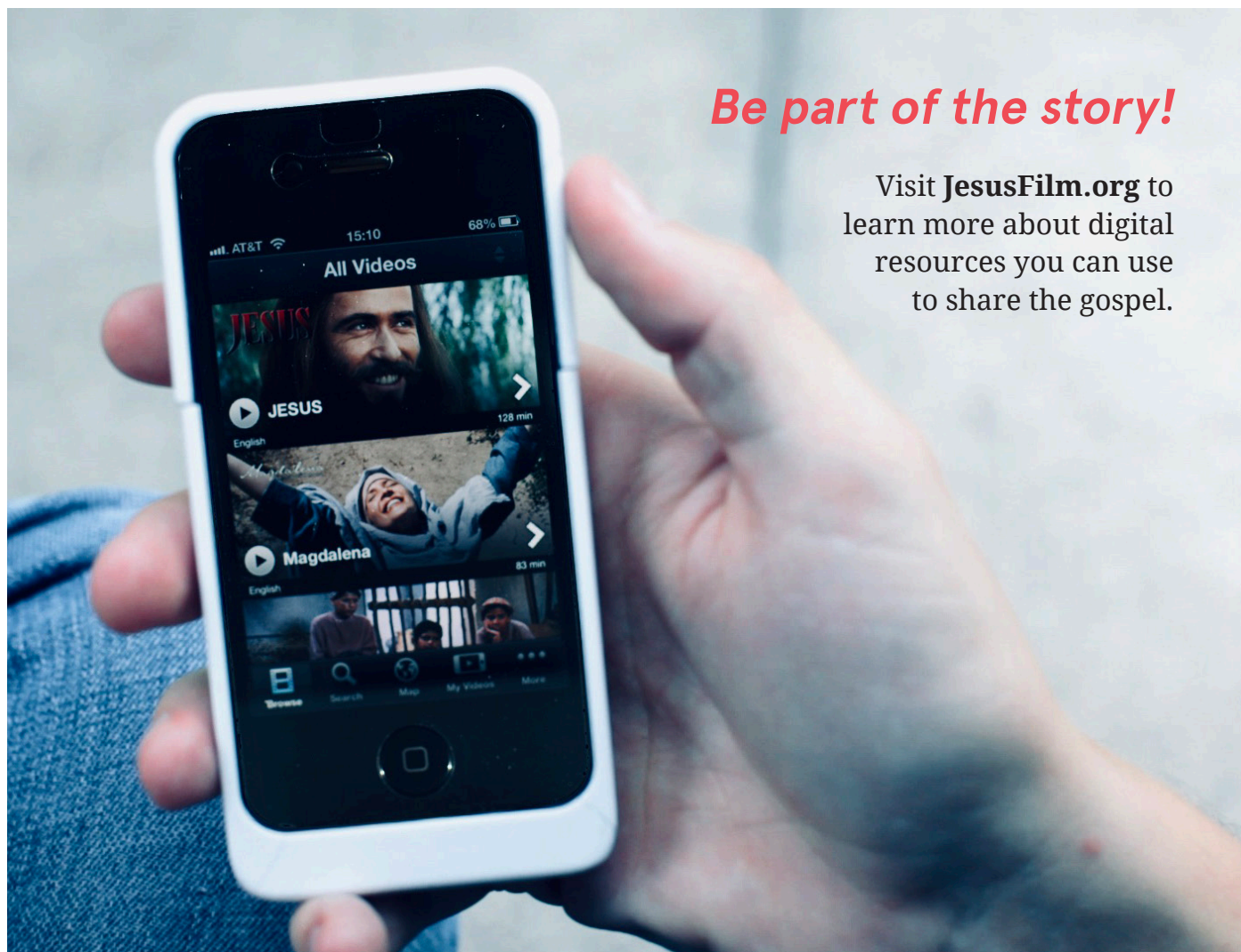


Through God's grace and your partnership, ministries around the world are utilizing these powerful digital evangelistic tools to connect with their communities.

Thank you for helping equip believers across the globe to share the life-changing story of Jesus with everyone, everywhere!



100 Lake Hart Drive
Orlando, Florida 32832
(800) 432-1997
info@JesusFilm.org



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