

EBRARD'S STORY: SIGN LANGUAGE SCRIPTURE IN MEXICO

At first glance, Ebrard looks like any other Mexican kid. But unlike most kids around him, he cannot hear. As a young boy, Ebrard attended a special school for the Deaf, where a teacher named Guillermo visited his school weekly to offer workshops on sign language storytelling. Today, Guillermo is a Bible translator with the Mexican Sign Language team—and Ebrard, now a teenager, is sharing the story of Jesus with others. They are both eager to bring the good news to the Mexican Deaf community.

Deaf people speaking with their hands

For many Deaf people, life can be difficult. Most Deaf children are born to hearing parents who don't know sign language, making communication challenging from an early age. As a result, many grow up feeling alone. → Do you know what that's like?

Educational opportunities for the Deaf can also be limited. While Ebrard was able to attend a Deaf school, many Deaf children do not have that same opportunity. Lacking the right kind of language support, some do not learn to read well. And those who do often feel more comfortable using sign language anyway.

Yet, of the more than 350 sign languages worldwide, only one has a complete Bible. Without Scripture in the language that they understand best, many Deaf find it hard to learn and understand spiritual truths about God. Less than 2 percent of Deaf people worldwide identify as Christians.

→ American Sign Language

→ A sad fact!

Thankfully, Bible translation is helping to change this. In sign language translation, Deaf people are recorded on video signing Scripture. Now, Deaf children can finally watch and understand God's Word in the language that speaks to them most clearly!

Ebrard wants his people to know Jesus, so he recently reconnected with Guillermo. Guillermo sent him a website link to the sign language videos of Acts 1-15. Ebrard watched them in one sitting and called the translation "marvelous"! He then went on to watch the rest of Acts and several other Bible books.

→ About the early church

Guillermo has been encouraged to see Ebrard's passion for the Word. "Here in Mexico, we're hungry," Guillermo says. "We really want to know what the Bible says in clear sign language. We want to see more and more." Because of Guillermo and other translators, one day soon, Ebrard and his people will be able to watch the whole Bible in Mexican Sign Language. → hopefully!

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!

- What do you think it would be like to grow up Deaf? What about Ebrard's life seems like yours? What seems different?
- Ebrard watched Acts sign language videos online. Have you ever watched videos that have helped you understand the Bible more?
- Guillermo was the first person to share sign language Scripture with Ebrard. Who was the first person to share the Bible with you?
- Ebrard loves God's Word and is sharing it in his community. What can you do to grow in your own love for the Bible, and how can you share that love with others?

DIG DEEPER

Just like the Church in Acts that Ebrard learned about, the Church today is made up of lots of different kinds of people, including the Deaf in Mexico. Write a story or draw a picture of some of the people you know from church. How are they the same as you? How are they different?

