

“Mama Ruth” is Home

It bothered Ruth Orr’s humble spirit that she was featured so often in *Action!* over the years. But how can we not encourage others with her story? This diligent WBS teacher could confirm 20,000 baptisms because of her evangelistic outreach. So many will miss her. See page 5.



Share Jesus in Two Ways

Follow up is a necessary part of sharing Jesus.

John Reese — CEDAR PARK, Texas

World Bible School has two halves: First, sharing Jesus through interactive Bible studies; and second, sharing Jesus through follow up.

- The first involves some 8,000 teachers.
- The second involves many more.
- The first usually involves paper or electronic lessons.
- The second usually involves personal visits and integration with the local church.
- The first send lessons mainly from the U.S. (where WBS produces materials).
- The second are located, or go, wherever WBS students respond.

Follow up is often needed where churches and mature Christians are scarce, and travel and communications are difficult, explaining why follow up has long been considered WBS’ weakest link. WBS study helpers would teach by correspondence, but wonder if their students would receive follow up (or if they did, whether anyone would report back). Lack of certainty and feedback has discouraged many and led some to abandon their WBS teaching. Please see page 8 for the antidote to discouragement.

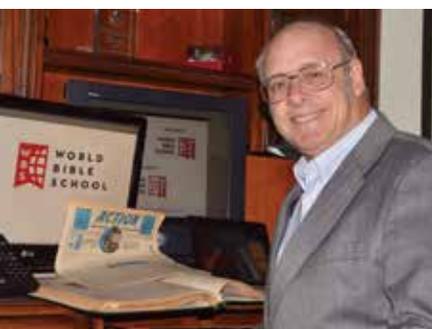
We who develop the WBS method are keenly aware of its strengths and weaknesses. We continue to improve follow up. This issue updates you on recent systemic advances. They come on top of traditional and organic improvements. For forty years, hard-won experience has built an

WBS’ hard-won experience has built an impressive array of global follow up networks.

impressive array of global networks. In many cases the best follow up workers are those brought to Christ through WBS. They gratefully

appreciate the importance of follow up, and help others as they were helped.

We salute and thank all our tireless follow up workers! Some are supported and devote full time to follow up. Most support themselves or live in poverty, yet go to extraordinary lengths to welcome students into Christ and His church. Indeed, YOU may be the next follow up helper. If you receive a call to follow up on a WBS student in your vicinity, will you help? If so, you join thousands of New Testament Christians fulfilling the second half of this unique teamwork. Whether participating in the first half or the second half, WBS is simply *You. Sharing Jesus.*



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New Follow Up Tools

Requests for follow up sent to volunteers ready to answer the call.

Edie Connel — ABILENE, Texas

World Bible School teachers often ask, "How can I get timely follow up for my responsive student?"

For 40 years, WBS has built follow up networks in many nations. Key co-workers receive requests, then arrange for the closest evangelist to follow up. Of course, some teachers do their own research and send requests directly to congregations or Christians near their students.

While traditional and organic methods continue, World Bible School is pleased to announce a significant addition that harnesses the speed and reach of the Internet.



Brother Bongani baptizes Robert Masuka.

Whether your student studies by web, email or postal, submitting a follow up request takes only a few clicks and the completion of a small form. That request will be routed to a Christian near your

student who has already volunteered to provide help. You will receive an email notification when progress has been made on your request.

Rena Herrington of Texarkana, TX, shared Jesus with Robert Masuka in South Africa. When Robert wanted to obey the Gospel, Rena submitted his request to the follow up system on worldbibleschool.org. Vicki Funk in Perth, Australia, networked with Christians in South Africa. Soon Robert met with brother Bongani from Gospel Chariot Missions and was baptized into Christ. Rena received timely updates at every step.

Today, the new system is available in about a third of the nations on earth. Active volunteer partners help from America to Zimbabwe and many places in between. Better follow up means better disciple-making.

Would you like to help us with follow up? Do you know someone who could help? We are looking for responsible disciples who are excellent communicators with ready Internet access. Send your suggestions to Edie Connel at edie@worldbibleschool.net.

Editor's note: In case you did not see Paul Harp's story in the July 2014 Christian Chronicle, we summarize it here and also report the rest of Paul's story, which includes follow up by hospitality.

Skype + Hospitality = Chinese Converts

Paul Harp — SEARCY, Arkansas

For over a year I taught English (using the Bible) to Cherry, a young woman in China. We met weekly on Skype. With determined work, her English improved and her faith blossomed. She experienced great difficulty finding someone to baptize her and finally asked if we could do the baptism by Skype, using a water tank on her roof and the help of her husband.

I emailed Cherry more about baptism's biblical significance and a detailed plan for the baptism. When the time came, Cherry positioned her laptop on a shelf overlooking the tank. With Cherry standing before the camera, I took her confession of Christ.

"Cherry," I said, "you are now being immersed in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of your sins and that you may receive God's Holy Spirit!"

I then said to her husband, "Sam, now put her body completely under the water." I watched on camera.

When she was raised from the water, I said, "Congratulations, Cherry, you are now a child of God, a Christian, a member of Christ's church! Praise God for His marvelous grace!"

[Later, Paul wrote to WBS' Edie Connel,] "Cherry and her husband Sam came for a visit [to our home in Searcy]. She stayed two weeks, and he stayed five weeks. I have studied daily with him. I am having him count the cost."

[Soon thereafter,] "Sam was immersed into Christ today! He has been at our home going on five weeks, and we have been engaged in intense Bible studies the entire time. It has been a slow process. He is a good man schooled in an atheistic environment, but he has a good heart and is very honest and loving. I feel more confident about the future of this wonderful couple than I have ever had toward any conversion I have ever been a part of."

She Was So Happy!

Phil Walker — HUNTSVILLE, Alabama

Peggy Bell has been working in Mayfair's World Bible School program for about ten years. She does all of the data entry and has a significant teaching load. Wanting more WBS students, she went online and selected Josh and Kelly from Spokane, WA. They wanted the printed lessons to study God's Word together. Soon, Kelly requested lessons for her two sons. All four students progressed well. Then Josh and Kelly both sent a letter to Peggy requesting baptism.

We checked through Internet and contacted the Northside church of Christ in Spokane, about 14 miles from Josh and Kelly. Shawn Moore of Northside called me a few days later and said that Josh and Kelly as well as Kelly's sons all wanted to become Christians. After additional studies that looked at conversions in Mark and Acts, Josh, Kelly, Shawn and William were all baptized on Sunday, September 7. When I called Peggy, I thought she was going to jump through the phone. She was so happy!

New converts, Josh, Kelly, Shawn and William, with WBS teacher Peggy Bell (center)



The Importance of Follow Up

Thanks! And let's keep building momentum.



Years ago I learned the importance of follow up in business. We at World Bible School take follow up seriously. Students need assistance in obeying and living the Gospel.

Donors need assistance, friendly reminders and feedback. They need to know that their giving promotes their values and accomplishes their intended goals.

By way of follow up to 2014, we want to express our sincere gratitude for a great year. A caring family challenged us all to match their gift of \$100,000 in new and increased donations. By God's grace at work through your generosity, we met the match and exceeded it. The total in

increased or new giving was well over \$400,000. On behalf of the many thousands to whom these gifts make an eternal difference, THANK YOU!

Let's follow up now to keep the momentum going. With or without a match in 2015, keep

Keep advancing the Kingdom. Your giving does even more to fulfill the Great Commission.

advancing the Kingdom. Do even more to fulfill the Great Commission. Some hear about amazing WBS opportunities and say, "Check back with me later and I'll be glad to assist." Certainly, we'll count it a privilege to follow up with you. But

why not start the year in a great way? Take the initiative before distractions take over. Now is the time to follow up on your best intentions.

This edition of *Action!* pays tribute to a special WBS teacher, Ruth Orr, who impacted thousands around the world. One way we at WBS are following up on Ruth's legacy is to create a way to honor Ruth and all like her who work so hard in WBS. By making a donation and supplying WBS with an 8" x 10" photo of your honoree, teachers and coordinators will hold a place of honor on our newly created Ruth Orr Memorial Wall of Honor at the WBS home office in Cedar Park, TX. This form of honoring is different than a typical tribute gift as listed on page 4. Please contact me or the office (512-345-8190) about the details. Let's make 2015 the best year yet!

Pat Brown is always available to talk to friends of WBS—individuals and churches. Contact him at pat@worldbibleschool.net.

Let us know your plans...



A number of friends of WBS have committed to remembering this ministry as a part of their estate. That means that after they're gone, they want to leave a gift that will continue to have a spiritual impact on the world.

Sometimes we know of one's plan to do this. But, frankly, we typically **don't** know. We'll just receive a significant check on behalf of one's estate and maybe a brief explanation: "Yes, my parents were truly sold on the evangelistic success that WBS teachers can have. They wanted to see that continue."

How about you? It's not hard to remember WBS in your will, or as a beneficiary to an IRA,

insurance policy, etc. And you don't have to have a lot of wealth, either. (Julie and I have committed a modest, but meaningful amount to benefit WBS.)

Let us know on the bottom right portion of the form below. Even if you're not sending a gift at this time, send us the form with your planned gift intentions.

In the name of the "follow up" theme of this *Action!*, I'd love to follow up with you and encourage you of just how impactful your planned gift will be.

Kevin Rhodes (MBA, CSPG) can help you with impactful planned giving. Contact him at kevin@worldbibleschool.net.



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\$1,000/yr

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(You can give securely online: worldbibleschool.net/give)

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My gift is a **Tribute**. See the back of this form.

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are ideal ways to pay tribute to a loved one's legacy or special occasions. At the same time, your gift will be used to "share Jesus" with WBS.

I have completed my personal information on the back of this form.

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“Exciting and Fulfilling”

The Roses: lives given in service to Brazil.



**Kay and David Rose
with Glenn Owen in 1967**

The original Sao Paulo Mission Team moved to Brazil in 1961. Their methods included radio preaching and correspondence courses. Overwhelming response led Glenn Owen to visit the U.S. and recruit a Follow Up Team that traversed Brazil during 1967-1973. Then Glenn turned the effort over to David Rose.

“Our goal,” David says, “was to contact truth seekers who had finished the Bible correspondence course or others who had heard the various radio programs. During these

years, some 23 small congregations were established by our modern day ‘circuit riders.’ Alton Howard’s donated Cessna helped on distant requests. Our group was made up of 14 college-aged workers. It was the most exciting and fulfilling time in our lives!”

At the memorial for Kay, Howard Norton paid this tribute: “The Team is grieving the loss of Kay Rose. Kay and David were diligent workers on behalf of Christ’s cause in Brazil. They worked tirelessly and effectively. They were especially responsible for working with the Follow Up Team—a group of talented young people who dedicated two years of their lives to following up leads that surfaced as a result of preaching on 28 radio stations in Central Brazil. Kay received these new missionaries as they arrived, helping them to get settled, providing warm hospitality as they adjusted and encouraging them when they came home from grueling trips to the Brazilian interior. Many, many people are Christians today because of this work in which David and Kay played such an important role.”



Mosbys Honored

At the WBS Dinner in Searcy, we honored Ed and Vivian Mosby. Their missions in Ghana from the 1970s inspired over 30 subsequent African travels and the establishment of “Bible Literature for Africa” that continued for 30 years and distributed to over 30 African nations. Many teachers used Mosby materials to encourage and further instruct their WBS students.

Involvement in WBS teaching from the early 1970s led Ed, beginning in 1981, to conduct U.S. workshops to train others. For 20 years, Ed served as a shepherd, first at Berclair church in Memphis, then at Cloverdale church in Searcy where he and Vivian were catalysts for the robust WBS program now ably directed by Harry Lisle. We

are deeply grateful for such leaders who have helped to make WBS so effective.



from page 1 - **Mama Ruth is Home**

Ruth Davis Orr was born March 5, 1939. She went home November 4, 2014. Before her preaching husband Tom Orr was called home in 1998, Ruth’s life had already been filled with service as a loving wife, a caring mother and grandmother, a Bible class and World Bible School teacher, and more. After Tom’s passing, Ruth continued to pour herself into family and church roles, and especially into WBS. She added travels to follow up on her students—making over 50 overseas journeys. She recruited many to go with her, churches to add support, and large networks of co-workers.

Ron Pottberg of WBS, one of Ruth’s main coworkers, spoke with four others at Ruth’s funeral, along with five grandsons. Bill Tankersley, an elder at Church St. church of Christ in Lewisburg, TN, said that Ruth’s family “was a tight-knit

family with Mama at the center. However, it didn’t stop there. She became Mama to many children that she kept in her home and many in [Church St.] church. She realized that tens of thousands needed a Mama, too. So, when she deplaned in Africa, cries of ‘Mama Ruth! Mom!’ could be heard. Yes, a Mama in faith is what they needed.”

About the same time a three hour memorial in Lagos, Nigeria, shared a similar theme. WBS coordinator Godwin Issac said, “You were like a mother to me. You touched so many lives in Nigeria both physically and spiritually. It was indeed a life well spent! WBS will miss you. Nigerian preachers and students will miss you. Your adopted sons and daughters and those you were helping will miss you, Mum.”

In fact, through WBS, Ruth became a mother in the faith to 20,000 souls, born again in places as scattered as Tennessee, the Philippines, Poland and many parts of Africa. They imitated her faith so that now her spiritual grandchildren number in the hundreds of thousands.

Continuity was another theme flashed across the world. Chinedum Nwanko in Nigeria consoled Americans: “As we share in your pain and grief in this difficult time, we encourage you to pick up the

baton and continue on the legacies our mother left behind—one of which is the WBS program.” In passing the baton, we plan to tell more about Ruth in the next issue of *Action!*. WBS is also initiating a “Wall of Honor” to honor Ruth and other WBS teachers.



**Mama Ruth with Nigerian Baby Ruth,
one of many babies named in her honor**

Honor Loved Ones

Join the many who honor worthy loved ones with gifts to WBS. Your gift will help reach many with Jesus—just as Ruth and others have. Use the form at left.

Notes from John...

Keeping Your Students Active



This editor recently visited two impactful World Bible School programs in Hobbs, NM. I enjoyed the privilege of speaking on Sunday at Jefferson Street and joining their WBS team at Monday Night For The Master. I also visited with Bob (pictured) and Jeff Hamilton who coordinate Taylor Street's WBS

program. They get remarkable numbers of referrals due in part to their practice of sending a New Testament to each student.

While not all programs can afford such a generous practice, are there incentives that most any program can use to keep WBS students studying longer? After much thought, prayer and feedback, Bill Colwell and Robin Cannon have put together simple and workable ideas. Look to the March issue of *Action!* for these new tools.



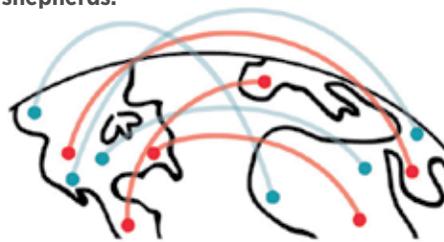
One work station among several at Monday Night For The Master in Hobbs. From left: Sharon Perry, Ray Savage (elder) and Lona Griffin

Monday Night for the Master?

Does your church have something like this during the week? A way for members to get involved in service, encouragement and evangelism? Make sure you involve your members with World Bible School teaching!

Follow Up Fallacy

World Bible School takes me to many developing nations. I'm not there to inspect. I just make the mistake of arriving. Normally, local congregations are welcoming, but this reception seems reserved, cautious, even fearful. Slowly the situation emerges: Local elders are engaged in a power struggle with The WBS Man—so designated once by a passing American. With U.S. backing, The WBS Man seems like a king. Unaware of my coming, his court (likely beneficiaries) has just ruled that he is non-accountable to his shepherds.



Eventually, I convince the elders and deacons that WBS is not the enemy. They learn with genuine amazement how WBS really works. They discover that any member of the Lord's church can (and should) enroll students and do follow up. At the church where The WBS Man offices, a deacon's grown son has never heard that he is eligible to take free courses from America. As best he and others can guess, Americans gave WBS to one Man as his private and exclusive domain—a perception that works against WBS' grass-roots effectiveness and reputation. That one Man's American financial supporters remain too distant to know any of this. Seeing only his glowing reports, they feel good about their cost-effective missions.

Are you sending support funds abroad? Remember that distance can create mirages. How can reality be distinguished from illusion? Sharpen your focus by getting closer. Make that visit you have long needed to make. Arrange for closer supervision. Build harmony with local leaders and members. Use WBS in ways that engage all believers as royal priests and, above all, that promote Christ alone as king.

India: An Example of Continuing Study

Group studies courses to learn more about the Gospel

Eddie Cloer — SEARCY, Arkansas

In 2011, a World Bible School teacher in Arkansas brought a businessman to Christ in one of India's largest cities. WBS studies opened up a new world and he hungered to learn more. With other men from the church he began to participate in a reading-based school of in-depth, regular Bible studies offered by Truth for Today World Mission School (TFTWMS) in Searcy, AR. The group has a dean who administers the six tests per course.



The group has studied TFTWMS courses continually for three years. They have completed 20 courses on books of the Bible including the Life of Christ, Matthew, Acts, Romans, Prison Letters, 1, 2 Thessalonians, Hebrews, 1, 2 Peter/Jude, Revelation and several Old Testament books. The new Christian usually makes 100's on the tests and is often the "spark plug" that encourages the others. He now knows more of the Bible than many long-time Christians.

We praise God that this Indian, surrounded by Hinduism, learned the Gospel through WBS and is now becoming a spiritual leader. He is an example of how we ought to be thirsting for knowledge of God's Word!

Editor's Note: Eddie and Susan Cloer tell me that TFTWMS courses are also being prepared for online use. We look forward to that additional tool for helping students further their Bible knowledge. The Cloers can be contacted at ecloer@biblecourses.com or 501-268-7588.

From the Word: And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. (2 Timothy 2:2)

Disciples Making Disciples...

...making disciples, who make more...

Laura Metz — MEMPHIS, Tennessee

As Christians, we never know what will happen when we sow the Seed. It's easy to get discouraged when birds eat it, the sun scorches young plants and thorns choke the growth. But—praise God!—there is good soil that accepts the seed and brings a harvest 30, 60 or 100 times what was sown.



Tatiana's baptism in Germany

That's what Felicia Palmer from the Bellevue church of Christ in Nashville, TN, found in studying with Tatiana, an 18 year old student in Yaroslavl, Russia. In August 2013, Tatiana googled "study the Bible." Soon she was studying with Felicia. One year later she travelled to Germany to be baptized. Tatiana didn't stop there. A month later she became a WBS teacher herself, passing the Good News on to more students.

And Felicia, who first shared the Good News with Tatiana? Felicia was also a WBS student before she became a teacher. She studied WBS lessons several years earlier as a "Let's Start Talking" student in her native Romania. Now she shares Jesus around the globe from her Nashville home. She continues to mentor Tatiana, who reminds us, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9).

Editor's note: Laura is a parttime resource for WBS. You've seen her work in two columns on this page, in past Action! issues, on The Hub online and elsewhere. She also supports Web teachers and WBS Technology development efforts. Thank you, Laura, for your work!

New System at Work: Kenya

Laura Metz — MEMPHIS, Tennessee

Like the Ethiopian of Acts, Anthony asked Gerald Nichols, "Is there anything that hinders me from being immersed?" Gerald lives in League City, TX, and Anthony in Bungoma, Kenya. As you can imagine, Gerald lost no time submitting Anthony's information to the new WBS follow up system. Two weeks later, Wenceslaus Juma met and studied further with Anthony. They called together members of the Namwacha church to witness Anthony's baptism—and they all rejoiced.

In Texas, friends rejoiced with Gerald over his student's new birth. And in Utah, another WBS teacher praised God for this. How did this joy spread so far and so quickly? Wenceslaus was once a World Bible School student himself, studying with Penny Shields of Tooele, UT. He became a Christian in early 2013.

You too can be part of the celebration. Adopt a student today. Share God's love and let God do the rest.



New System at Work: Philippines

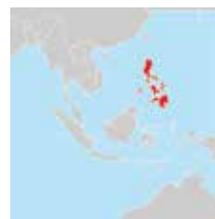
Baldomero (Bhal) Laguna — BAGUIO CITY, The Philippines

Giezette De Leon registered Sept. 1, 2014, to study the Bible after clicking a WBS-funded Google ad targeting the Philippines. A few weeks later, her teacher Frank Calloway in Rock Hill, SC, submitted her through the website follow up system (see page 2). Bhal adopted the follow up request and soon wrote this report:

Praise the Lord! After a week of following up with Giezette, a WBS student of Frank Calloway, she was immersed by Ben Havanian, our follow up worker in Iloilo. [Despite family resistance] she is now attending our church in Cabatuan, Iloilo. Due to the distance from Giezette's home, they might start a house church in her place, according to brother Ben. Thank you so much, brother Frank, for your untiring efforts, in reaching out to our countrymen.



Ben baptizes Giezette in the Philippines.



WBS follow up in Muslim areas December 14, 2014
I spoke with our follow up worker, Andrews, in northern Ghana this morning. He shared "some good news and some bad news". He affirmed that many teenage WBS students in heavily-Muslim villages are studying more, and some have grown in faith and want to be baptized. This has led to WBS activity being "monitored"—peacefully, but closely—by public school teachers and parents who generally want to prevent conversions to Christianity. [Nevertheless, as our Ron Pottberg commented, "Great! That means it's working. Always remember that this is seed planting and even if they are not converted now, many will come to faith as the churches in that area continue to reach out in the years to come."]

This is to be expected at this time in this culture. The Christians now are using seminars to meet with the students in a group so that they can talk more freely. Our prayer is that, as the young students reach independence, the Holy Spirit will lead them to follow their heart and mind and become followers of Christ. Please pray that our Father will continue to open hearts and minds in Ghana and elsewhere. (Excerpted from an email from Kent Chambers, Westover Hills church of Christ, Austin, TX)



Faith for Follow Up

Choose faith and prayer.

John Reese — CEDAR PARK, Texas

For every follow up “success,” there are many more cases where the results are not known. How does a diligent World Bible School teacher handle this uncertainty?

Any answer we offer should not sidestep responsibility. As one who devoted seven years to field follow up, and 23 more years developing all aspects of WBS, I take improvement seriously.



John equipping follow up workers

Teachers can do much to help. First, use our online follow up system (see page 2) and help us grow it. Also, please don't send unqualified student names for follow up. Instead, provide individuals who truly seem ready, with qualitative information

(e.g. student grades, background, responsiveness) and the best contact information (e.g. email, phone, physical address). These details help follow up workers to prioritize for greater effectiveness. Best of all, ask your responsive student to also take the initiative to make contact with the closest follow up worker or congregation.

Even as we pursue best practices, our main strategies are *faith and prayer*. Think about Acts 8. Did Philip initiate the plan to reach the Ethiopian? No, the Spirit arranged their meeting. Could Philip guarantee continuing care for the Ethiopian in faraway Africa? No, but the Spirit knew how to nurture this newly baptized believer. So the Spirit snatched Philip away and the Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing.

“Neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.”

Philip cooperated because Jesus' reign is real. Trusting that He has “all authority” (full control), I too can share the Gospel even when I can't see the outcome.

Conscientious Paul might easily have thought, “Enemies drive me away from every city. I cannot stay to raise my new spiritual children, so why try?” Instead, Paul chose *faith and prayer*. He had to leave a new-born congregation in Philippi. Later he wrote back assuring them of his constant, joyful *prayers*. He also said, “I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion.” (Philippians 1:6) When Paul left young Christians in Corinth, he could not know who would continue their care. But God knew. Later Paul could write back to Corinth,

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. (1 Corinthians 3:6-7)

This mission belongs to God, not me. He is in control, not me. I play my humble part by faith, whether planting, watering



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or reaping. God takes care of the rest, arranging the workers and giving the growth.

If God offers me the role of Seed-sower, I'll sow abundantly. I'll also do all possible for effective follow up. Yet, even when I can't see how puzzle pieces will fit together, I know He has the whole picture. I'll press forward, trusting that He who begins a good work through me also has the power to complete it.

upcoming...

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