

GOOD NEWS for the **POOR**



Vast numbers are poor.
How can we help more?

John Reese — CEDAR PARK, Texas

Both Testaments emphasize God's care for the disadvantaged.

You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor (Deuteronomy 15:11).

Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and He will repay him (Proverbs 19:17).

God's Son instructed His followers, "Sell your possessions, and give to the needy" (Luke 12:33). Blessing the poor takes cash and also wisdom. What uplifts the poor, rather than deepening dependencies? Fleeting fixes may feel good, but what actually improves lives? My sixty years of experience, mainly in Africa, suggests this key ingredient: HOPE.

Along with physical blessings, Jesus shared the hope-filled Message.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim Good News to the poor (Luke 4:18).

Give provisions. Above all, introduce struggling people to the Provider! The Good News uplifts in every way. When humans seek His Kingdom, He meets all their needs (Matthew 6:33; 1 Timothy 4:8).

Vast numbers are poor. How can we help more?

Most of our 1.5 million students are poor.

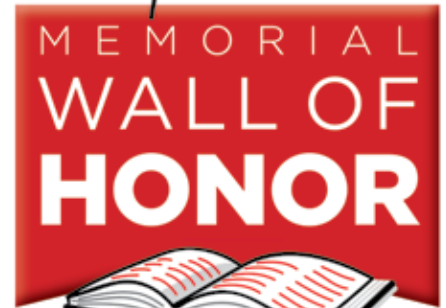
I was first attracted to World Bible School because it reaches so many with Gospel blessings. Our local work near Johannesburg did well to share Jesus with a few hundred in any given year. Yet millions in poverty surrounded us. In answer, we focused on WBS from 1985. Hundreds of WBS teachers reached tens of thousands of South Africans with the hope-

John rejoices with a baptized prisoner in Belize.



Announcing the

Ruth Orr



Give honor where honor is due. Recognize WBS study helpers, coordinators and other friends of WBS. See pages 2-3.

filled Message, and passed to us the most responsive for discipling.

Neighboring Zimbabwe, the country of my birth, has enjoyed similar Gospel opportunities through WBS. Despite crushing poverty, many who were hopeless are finding hope in Christ. Well over half a million have enrolled in WBS.

Of 1,500,000 current WBS students worldwide, the great majority are poor. Reaching them is not "convenient" (see page 6). But Jesus' commission to bless the poor was never about ease or quick rewards. It is about patient, sacrificial love that shares the Father's passion: "He has distributed freely, He has given to the poor" (2 Corinthians 9:9).

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Ruth Orr—the Dorcas of our Time

John Reese — LEWISBURG, TN

Tributes to Ruth Orr are so prolific that we have chosen samples to show the range of needy people she served.

Americans: At the meal after Ruth’s funeral we (Reeses and Pottbergs) visited with Pam Owens. One day Pam walked out of the world and into Ruth’s WBS office, and said, “I want to learn the Bible.” Ruth began immediately. They spent an hour and a half in that first Bible study. Pam became her daughter in the faith and joined Ruth in her African travels. Pam carries forward Ruth’s legacy with WBS.

Refugees: Also at the funeral were Philip Massaquoi and his wife Elizabeth. Philip had fled Liberia, and Ruth met him in Ghana in a refugee camp. She brought him to Christ, then sent him to the Bible school. Ruth even arranged his marriage to her Ghanaian translator Elizabeth. Philip said, “I’m grateful to God for Mom. She was everything to me. I had to leave my country because of the civil war. I had to escape with other children, raising them up and myself. Mom took me to school. She trained me up. I went [back] to Liberia and established a church that has 300 members because of Mom. She made me who I am today.”

Prisoners: Among Ruth’s WBS students were many prisoners, and she would go into the prisons of Africa to teach them further. During civil unrest in Onitsha, Nigeria, lawless crowds invaded the local prison and forced the prisoners to leave. Ruth’s students had learned the Bible well. So, one by one, virtually every one of Ruth’s students returned voluntarily to the prison. The authorities were so impressed that they reduced their sentences and released them early, the lawful way.

Women and Children: Timothy Iwe of Nigeria said, “A gallant soldier is gone to rest. Mama WBS, we will miss your face but will never miss the words you printed in the hearts of many. Homes have changed for good because you taught women. Many children are growing in love because you cared for them. Goodbye to the Dorcas of our time.”

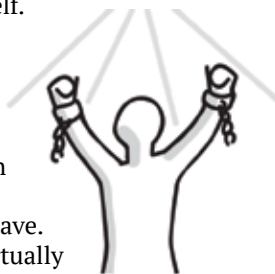
The Poor: Simon Ashalley (whose daughter is little Miss Ruth) wrote, “She is the type who will give all she has to others. Someone who will go the extra

mile to make sure the poor got something to eat. Not only that, but [she worked] to get you out of that state into a better one.”

Preachers: Simon continued, “She has raised a lot of Christian children and made many preachers for the Lord’s kingdom. When I go to the radio each week and hear people calling in to thank me for the powerful message presented, I am very happy for that. [But] the fact is she made me that person and not me alone, but many others as well.” Sylvester Imogoh of Nigeria wrote, “I have gone [many] places with Ruth Orr teaching the saving Gospel. We endured hunger, pains, insect bites, harsh weather and many uncomfortable nights in rural places. We even survived a serious [auto] accident. Even in all of this, Ruth never complained. On the streets many World Bible School students ask me about her. They call her ‘The White



Ruth and Elizabeth Massaquoi, of Liberia



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Amazed and Overwhelmed

Sharon Allen Walker — FAYETTEVILLE, TN

Prior to being married, I had been blessed to see places of great need—U.S.A., Haiti, Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Philippines, etc. First-hand knowledge of the world’s spiritual famine weighed heavily on me.



Sharon

My husband and I were always busy in the Lord’s Kingdom, but our opportunities to “go” were limited. At times I suffered from depression because of my strong desire to reach out more effectively with the saving story of Jesus.

The years flew by, filled with raising a family, congregational work and employment. Multiple health struggles were time-consuming.

After my mother’s death, I picked up a World Bible School newsletter and realized “now is the time.”

This seems to be the “method” for sharing the Gospel in a new and different way, without concern about borders, a way to realize the promptings of my heart since childhood. Here is my first opportunity in a long time to do meaningful outreach.

WBS seemed to be the way to realize the promptings of my heart.

I researched WBS. While keeping grandchildren, I phoned Rita—wonderful Rita!—at Mayfair congregation in Huntsville, AL (where my mother had worshipped). I learned that our long-time family friend Phil Walker is a WBS leader at Mayfair. Phil invited Don and me to witness WBS firsthand on Wednesday evening. We went. It seemed we were in a “bee-hive” of busy folks grading papers, online workers, brethren training brethren, etc. I was amazed and overwhelmed to say the least.

Again the skeptic in me would not accept teaching materials at face-value. I became a postal student to Libby Jones at Mayfair. Within two-three months, I completed the entire WBS series, and was “in.” I think it’s the best teaching approach to bring one to Christ that I’ve ever seen brought together in short-form.

continued on page 5

Announcing the Ruth Orr Memorial Wall of Honor



Kevin Rhodes

With 2015 graduations approaching, we enjoy seeing loved ones recognized for their achievements. Recognition is a way we say, "Congratulations!" and "Job well done!" It allows us to partner in the graduates' success and to share in their journey.

I'm reminded of the thousands who have faithfully shared Jesus through WBS lessons, of the unique part each has played in spreading the Word to a lost world. I also think of the hundreds of thousands of converts to Christ and pray over those yet to hear of Him from a WBS teacher.

In 2014, WBS' loss was heaven's gain as

Ruth Orr, a humble yet extraordinary friend of WBS, passed on to receive her crown. Ruth was responsible for bringing thousands to Christ through WBS as a teacher, mentor and coordinator. To honor her legacy, WBS is instituting the *Ruth Orr Memorial Wall of Honor* at the WBS office in Texas. This special wall will commemorate Ruth's life, and allow church leaders and friends to recognize WBS coordinators and study helpers who have made a difference in the lives of others. It will display photos and a description of the honorees and hold a special place of honor in WBS' history.

By sponsoring a special friend of WBS with a tribute gift of \$500 or more, you are saying,

"Congratulations!" and "Job well done!" while partnering in their WBS journey. This is also a great way for your congregation to say a heartfelt, "Thank you!" and to give recognition where recognition is due to those unsung WBS heroes both past and present. The generosity of your honorarium to WBS propels forward the WBS outreach so cherished by your honoree.

Please be thinking of WBS teachers and coordinators you want to sponsor in the inaugural group of the *Ruth Orr Memorial Wall of Honor*. Space is limited, so please get the wheels moving at your congregation to honor those who have served so well. For information or to submit honorees' names, please contact Pat Brown at WBS, pat@worldbibleschool.net or 405-627-5952. Or you may contact Sheryl Williams, sheryl@worldbibleschool.net or 512-345-8190.

Go to worldbibleschool.net/give to see exciting new dimensions that let your normal spending dollars also support WBS.



John Reese

Sell your possessions...ugh.

John reminds us of Jesus' words on page one. "Sell your possessions, and give to the needy." If you're like me, you don't feel very comfortable with that. But that's what Jesus told "his disciples"—not just some "special case" (as we might fancy the rich young ruler).

What does that mean—"sell your possessions"? Surely not everything, right? Now? Later? No doubt, each of us will spend a lifetime growing to understand how God calls us to be: 1) un beholden to our wealth and 2) generous with others.

Meanwhile, many of Jesus' disciples today are grasping the principle as financial supporters of WBS. **We are so thankful for you.** Without a doubt, your generous gifts are benefitting the most needy of all—souls in need of a Savior.

Many are growing, too, in their perspective on what they might possess late in life and, indeed, after they're gone. They're considering how a gift to WBS from their estate—whether large or small—can reach many more with Jesus than they could have during lifetime gifts.

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



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from page 2 - **Ruth Orr**

Lady who is fearless' and 'Mother'."

Even the **Postmaster** at Mzuzu, Malawi, wrote: "Ruth was crowned a Mother of All. She was a pillar, a soul searcher, a hero, a helper without limitations. Age and color were out of her sight. What a friend I had in Jesus' name!"

Ruth epitomizes many qualities that make WBS effective. Therefore, WBS in Cedar Park has designated the *Ruth Orr Memorial Wall of Honor* as a way to recognize WBS teachers and coordinators of your choosing. As another WBS teacher Sidney Scott of Virginia says, "I remember thinking I had never met anyone quite like Ruth Orr. And I still haven't and probably never will. This woman, who was so petite in size, had a giant heart for God's work." Help us to carry forward the WBS work Ruth cherished by sponsoring honorees for this *Wall of Honor* (see page 3).

from page 2 - **Amazed and Overwhelmed**

Now we are working on duplicating Mayfair's "beehive" in our congregation, Washington Street, Fayetteville, TN. If only everyone with the heart to reach out with the Gospel knew how simple WBS is and yet how awesome!



Ray & Libby Jones, Rita Mitchell and Phil Walker at the Mayfair church of Christ

We mourn the passing of **Dr. A.D. Smith** in Texarkana, TX. He and his wife Sharon have long been activists and supporters of missions and WBS.

Sharon carries forward their labors of love that bless so many both physically and spiritually.

Elaine Brittell: Mother to Many

Carl Mitchell — MESQUITE, Texas

In 1946 Elaine Brittell (23) and her family, traveled from Graton, CA, to Zambia. Although her family returned home after a few years, during the 37 years that Elaine lived in Zambia, she never made a trip back to the United States. Elaine dedicated herself to rearing scores of orphans and caring for the poor. For example, at her death she was providing for about 13 families out of her salary which never exceeded \$300 a month. She was so careful to not spend money carelessly that she refused to eat at a restaurant. Elaine aided in the translation of the Bible into Tonga and helped establish churches. She established a men's and a women's church

in the local prisons.

On October 17, 1983, a group of young men stopped by to pick up Elaine on their way to conduct a worship service in the men's prison on that day. Her dead body was discovered. She had been raped and murdered. A few of her personal belongings had been taken. The person (or persons) who killed her was never discovered although it was believed one of the orphans she had raised murdered her. At her funeral, thousands were present to testify to the effectiveness of her service for the poor in the name of Jesus.

Improve Student Retention

Robin Cannon and Bill Colwell
— CEDAR PARK, Texas

Many people begin WBS studies well. Then life happens—workloads, school exams, illness—and interest wanes. Some students slowly fade away, while others suddenly go silent. We often don't know why, but we need to do what we can to improve student retention.

WBS always encourages teachers to remain prayerful and to make their communication with students as personal as possible. If your students are dropping out early, why not try additional incentives to encourage them to stay with you? We have developed some suggestions,

Please share your ideas and experiences with us.

which include a personalized welcome letter and new items for three of your mailings. (See the illustration on the right. Also

see downloadable, editable files at www.worldbibleschool.net/resources/.) We know of students who were first drawn by badges and certificates, and then discovered Jesus! It is worth trying the right kind of incentives to help them continue through the courses.

We deeply appreciate you! As a WBS Study Helper, you aid people in their journey to know God. We encourage you to build meaningful relationships as you reach out through WBS tools. Please share your ideas and experience with us so that we can serve all WBS Study Helpers better.

Encourage Students to Keep Studying...

Are you doing everything you can to help keep your students studying?

- Are you praying for them regularly?
- Are you sending your mailings promptly?
- Are you sending to students in multiple countries?

WBS wants to help you keep your students. Try these suggestions.

When you send:

1	2	3	4	5
The Way to Life Include a note of encouragement in a welcome letter which mentions the incentives. See other side for a sample.	God Has Spoken & This is Good News Include a note and bookmark with the student's name. WBS can provide some to get you started. Or, use our template to print on cardstock.	Knowing Jesus & Born of Water and Spirit Include a note of encouragement and the WBS embroidered patch available from WBS.	The Family of God & Live a Life of Love Include a note of encouragement and a New Testament. WBS stocks the English Standard version.	Graduation Certificate Include a note of congratulations. If you haven't already, ask your student about face-to-face follow up.
	 (2" x 6")	 (2" x 2 5/8") We hope to update this emblem soon	 (5" x 8")	
* Go to www.worldbibleschool.net/retention to get these files.				



Cedar Park's James Brock is a crucial cog in the worldwide WBS ministry by ensuring everything is shipped promptly. Here James prepares to ship WBS courses to the Ghana Bible Reading Project. Simultaneously, Ron Pottberg is in Ghana helping Augustine Taiwa with organizing the GBRP effort.

Note: If you have students or friends in Indonesia, you may refer them to the updated web site yayasansidangjemaatkristus.com. This site has links to World Bible School materials in the Indonesian language.

Good News in India



Paul Rengenathan — CHENAI, India

Travel throughout four states in India and 86 gospel meetings in 19 days resulted in 601 baptisms, thousands hearing the gospel and church members edified. Many poor, sick and hurting were prayed for and given humanitarian help. Mobility became a little easier to those who received tricycles, bicycles and wheelchairs (10 bicycles, three

86 Gospel Meetings in 19 Days

= 601 Baptisms

tricycles and a wheelchair distributed). Through the goats and sewing machines distributed, sustainable income is coming to 21 families (12 goats and nine sewing machines distributed).

Over 1,000 poor patients received free check-ups and medicines. They now believe we are interested in their long life and eternal life. The two villages where we drilled two water wells now have access to clean water and to the message of the Water of Life. The kids at the orphanage in Nagari are so happy for the refrigerator donated to them.



The gift of a sewing machine can make a life-changing difference.

Decrease in Ebola; Increase in Evangelism

Isaac Daye — MONROVIA, Liberia



Isaac Daye with the new Christian

For us, the decrease in Ebola death and infection rates means an increase in evangelism. The results are great. Our prayer is that God will eradicate this killer virus from our land so that Liberia and West Africa can be declared *Ebola free*.

We conducted Gospel campaigns in two of Monrovia's slums, Doe and West Point, resulting into a total 27 baptisms. We also enrolled 88 new students in World Bible School.

As Ebola threatens and takes lives, we need to be saving lives. That is why we cannot neglect the work of evangelism even though we are exposed to danger every day.

Our World Radio broadcast enjoyed one of its finest moments in November as I spoke on the subject "By What Authority?" for four weeks. This topic emphasized the importance

of the Bible as our only source of religious authority as Christians. It generated multiple phone calls from our listeners.

On one occasion in Doe community, a prospective WBS student enrolled and received the Introduction Lesson *The Way to Life*. He sat at our table and completed the lessons and immediately requested baptism as he was touched by the lessons and convicted by the Spirit. He joined four others who came for Bible study the day after our night preaching and they all were baptism. It was a joy to witness the Spirit working through His Word to save a soul.

from page 8 - **God Bless Uganda, Too**

The majority of Christians and church leaders in Uganda live well below what we would call the poverty line. This does not stop them, however, from meeting faithfully and reaching out with the Gospel... by foot and by bicycle, and by paying for public transportation themselves. Their willing spirit is inspiring.

We Americans may view "unsuitable" transport as a hardship to be eradicated by our dollars. Is that idea more Western than African? Does it reflect human culture, or Kingdom culture?

Like wealth, pervasive poverty has its own set of vulnerabilities. Even with innocent beginnings, religion may turn into the pursuit of "financial gain" (1 Timothy 6:5). Unscrupulous people may say all the right things, yet bring shame on the name of Christ by using the church and WBS for self-enrichment. Known, proven church leaders on the ground in Africa know who is reputable. They are truly rich (James 2:5), and are best qualified to handle local financial matters. Let us respect the work God is doing in them when they serve through dependence on Him instead of on earthly wealth. We are deeply grateful for the priceless contribution of our African partners!



Phil with church leaders in Fort Portal, Uganda

Remember the Poor

That's how we're exhorted in Galatians 2:10. But we easily forget...

Technology is exciting—especially for communicating the Good News! Internet offers virtually instant interaction. Progress and innovation keep surprising us. The possibilities are mesmerizing. Gadgets and computer programs surround us like a neon cocoon. We easily forget the living conditions in other parts of the world. Many can barely access water, much less dependable electricity. Many experience difficulty receiving mail. Yet even from ancient times letters have passed back and forth. Most Christians in Corinth were low class, yet they received letters of spiritual instruction (1 and 2 Corinthians). Macedonians suffered “extreme poverty,” yet they benefited from correspondence (Philippians).

The same is true for many today. World Bible School takes advantage of correspondence to teach millions worldwide. Over 600,000 enrolled to study WBS in 2014, and many of them were poor. As in Bible times, literate recipients share the written message with the non-literate. To be sure, postal WBS has expenses, time delays and inconveniences that seem onerous by comparison with Internet. But to ignore letters is to ignore vast populations of the poor who cannot access Internet reliably.

In this issue we remember Ruth Orr, a prolific teacher whose team brought some 2,000 to Christ each year. Ruth especially remembered the poor through practical, sacrificial service. If postal WBS reached the poor, that's what she used. If the task called for arduous travel under difficult conditions, that's what she did. Walking with Jesus often involves “the second mile.” WBS teachers walk many second miles for this simple reason: We share Jesus' passion to “preach Good News to the poor.”

A Statistical Glimpse

About 40% of the world population has an Internet connection, with rapid growth (watch internetlivestats.com/internet-users/), implying great opportunities for sharing the Good News and also reminding us that 60% of the world must be reached by other means.

As recently as 1820 the majority in all parts of the world suffered “extreme poverty,” as had been typical for millennia. Industrialization continues its impact. For example, East Asia and the Pacific have reduced severe poverty from 77% to 12%. According to the World Bank, the following populations live on less than \$1 per day:

Sub-Saharan Africa	169,000,000 (44% of region's pop.)
South Asia	515,000,000 (41% of region's pop.)
East & Southeast Asia	320,000,000 (19% of region's pop.)
Latin America & Caribbean	49,000,000 (12% of region's pop.)

Worldwide, over 780,000,000 lack access to clean drinking water, causing 6,000 deaths daily (of whom 90% are children).



You. Sharing Jesus.

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to
Action! World Bible School
P.O. Box 2169
Cedar Park, Texas 78630

Electronic Service Requested

God Blesses Uganda, Too

Phil Palmer — ABILENE, Texas

In January 2015, I travelled across Uganda for the launch of *God Bless East Africa* there. I conducted seven workshops and two meetings with church leaders from Jinja to Kasese. Those present were oriented and equipped for leading their congregations in recruiting new WBS students. A combined total of 275 Christians and church leaders from over 50 congregations attended the events.

continued on page 6

upcoming...

MANY will come from east and west.

