

U.S.A. R CROSS A D S OF THE WORLD

...and its meaning for sharing Jesus.

John Reese - CEDAR PARK, Texas

Recent issues of *Action!* emphasize Connect US, showing the new ways seekers do their searching and, correspondingly, the new ways to connect with them. Saturate entire regions and cities of America with Gospel opportunities. See www.worldbibleschool.net/connect.

**John and Beth Reese with Paul Manyok,
Sudanese refugee and former WBS student.**



As we cast Gospel nets over America, prepare for many kinds of fish—many different peoples. The reason: American cities have become the “Crossroads of the Nations” (to borrow from the title of a significant book by Jared Looney). People from everywhere come to America for education, business, family and opportunity. Whether tourists or refugees, temporary or permanent, they are “children of God” in the sense of Acts 17:29. Whether formal or informal, legal or illegal, they are potential citizens of heaven for whom Christ died. Whether paying their way or on welfare, they desperately need the Gospel. Whether friendly or hostile to mainline culture, they are loved by God and should be loved by us—a New Testament principle with deep roots (Hebrews 13:2; Luke 10:27-37).

As a visitor to this planet and as a child, Jesus, Himself, was a refugee.

When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God (Leviticus 19:33-34).

Jesus was a visitor to this planet (John 1) and, as a child, was a refugee (Matthew 2). Remember also that God is in control, turning worldly circumstances to His Kingdom’s advantage. Our churches tend to spend more on comforts and preferences (that Jesus never mentioned) than on sharing the Gospel with every nation (which He commanded). Now God is removing our last excuses. He is bringing the nations to us! They are moving into our neighborhoods. Many more are instantly accessible worldwide through the Internet.

If you have not thought of yourself as a missionary, it’s time to come to grips with spiritual and global realities. Think like Jesus. Act like Jesus. Share the Gospel with “all nations”—including those placed right in front of you!

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Burmese Bible study

Editor's Note: *Stephen Thawng is a personal friend here in Austin, TX. My wife and I followed the lead of others in early assistance for Stephen and his group, which includes a variety of people groups from Burma, also called Myanmar. They started with many disadvantages including little or no knowledge of English. We are proud of the progress—spiritual, linguistic, educational and occupational—made by Stephen and his family and friends.*

Stephen's Story

My name is Stephen. My wife and I have three children. I was born into a Christian family in Chin State which is the poorest state in Burma. I got my civil engineering diploma in Burma but had no chance to use my knowledge. My parents moved to India in 2004. Living in India was difficult because of language barriers. Being a refugee and living in camp was much more terrible. God showed me his love when I was in India. I know God loves those who are in trouble. I went to Bible college in India for two years then I got married. My family was relocated to the U.S. in 2009. I had thought I would never meet good people in my life. [But here] there are many good people who want to help.

World Bible School lessons are effective both locally and internationally.

I learned American dreams from America friends. I have adjusted to this culture. I started going to school since 2009 through 2016 just to get an associate degree of applied science (architecture). I personally believe the America dream is still alive for those who really want

have a better life. You may go as fast as a rabbit or as slow as a turtle to achieve your dream, just so long as you keep going.



Refugees from Burma with Bible and WBS courses

Foreign Students in our Midst



David Finch — BATON ROUGE, Louisiana

Virtually every college in our country has foreign students in its classrooms. They are coming to us by the thousands. The latest data from the Institute of International Education in 2014-15 shows a record enrollment of 974,927 foreign students in our universities. 300,000 of these are from China.

God has created a golden opportunity for us here at LSU. With an active Chinese ministry for over 20 years, each fall we see an influx of 60 new students and visiting scholars. They come to our city eager to learn new things and make new friends. All we do is to reach out in love and serve them; God does the rest. Although our Chinese friends come from an atheistic background, their hearts are fertile for the Gospel seed to be planted. Over the years the Lord has led over 200 souls to be baptized into Christ. All credit goes to Him.

Did you know that 70% of foreign students living in the U.S. never get invited into an American home?

What a sad commentary of our selfish society. What can we do? In three simple words: Love! Serve! Teach! Love them unconditionally. Be a friend. Spend time with them. Serve



A Chinese life group in Baton Rouge

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Zeal for the Nations

Clay Hart — EDMOND, Oklahoma

Zeal for the nations consumed the Lord Jesus. His passion was for all people to be welcomed into God's house. Is it merely accidental that the U.S. is the number one destination for students seeking an international education? Or is Jesus' zeal, which gives us the Great Commission, behind such an open door?

God is good. He is in control and sovereign over all nations, including those dominated by atheism and Islam. China, India, South Korea and Saudi Arabia lead in numbers of international students. Countries closed to foreign missionaries are sending their brightest young people to us!

The U.S. church faces an unprecedented challenge to shape the future. We can influence the nations, one person at a time. Make friends. Practice hospitality. Offer conversational English practice. Listen to their stories. Learn about their cultures. Show them the caring heart of Jesus in attitude and action. Pray for them. Share the Good News with those who are ready to hear it!

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Hospitality with the Harts and a friend



Thank you!

An open letter from the President of WBS

One of our highest privileges is to serve the King's stewards. Each Christian receives gifts from God, which makes each Christian an investor for God. What is the best way to invest? What brings the best return? What aligns most directly with His will? Such thoughtful questions deserve clear answers that reflect the Master's revealed priorities.

Whether you are a veteran supporter or a new contributor to World Bible School, I want to express to you our sincere gratitude. Most beneficiaries cannot thank you personally. They are Christians by the thousands, motivated and equipped by WBS to share Jesus. They are millions of students who need Jesus. On their behalf, thank you!

The beauty of your gift is that it aligns so directly with the Great Commission. This was Jesus' repeated emphasis in His final 40 days (Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24;

John 21; Acts 1). By then He had become the perfect sacrifice for removing every sin from every human. All that remained was to share this Good News so that all humans could respond: "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16).

On behalf of millions of students who need Jesus, thank you!

Now, His mission has become your mission, His priority your priority. Your gifts help the royal priesthood to proclaim the most needed message in the world: Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. True to Scripture, the Lord adds to His one body all who participate in His Good News event. They become His disciples and form His congregations, perpetuating the faith He delivered "once for all." Here is teaching about which you can be confident since all WBS courses are open to scrutiny. Check for yourself how Christ is honored as "Head over all things to the church."

Already, over 30,000,000 people have been taught worldwide. Now millions more are being reached as your generosity propels WBS forward. Thanks for your sacred and successful solidarity—"with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the Gospel" (Philippians 1:27).

Your partner in the greatest mission on earth,




The 2016 Challenge just got more challenging—and motivating. Initiating donors believe strongly in the vital role of WBS for sharing Jesus locally and globally. They believe you too share this conviction, and that you want to increase your gifts to WBS. So they have increased the Challenge from \$200,000 to 250,000! Help us meet the Challenge by: 1) giving for the first time; 2) increasing your giving over 2015; or 3) renewing your giving if you missed giving in 2015. The Challenge ends September 30. Please give by then!



WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL

Action!

Editor: John Reese

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- Dudley Zant**
Lar Doyle

We are saddened beyond words to learn of a tragedy involving the Crosby family whose story we told in the *May Action!* Shortly after you received that issue and after Bailee's high school graduation, she and a friend were killed in a car accident, hit by an allegedly drunk driver. Two other teenagers were also injured. Please pray for them, and the Crosby and Russell families.

Please make my gift a tribute.

Memorial Gifts and Honor Gifts

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.

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A Tribute to Dr. Glover Shipp

Howard Norton — SEARCY, Arkansas

Churches of Christ lost a genuine man of God and a visionary leader when Glover Shipp (88) passed from this life on April 20, 2016. King David lamented the death of Abner with the words, “Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel?” We ask the same question concerning the death of our dear friend and brother, Glover Shipp.

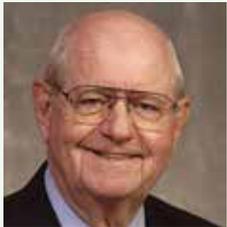
Glover was a renaissance man who had remarkable knowledge and talents in many different fields. He used all his being for the glory of God. He was a preacher, teacher, missionary, author, journalist, editor, artist, musician, linguist, Bible scholar, missiologist, elder of the church, college professor, philanthropist and committed family man. Glover and his wife, Margie, lived frugally and dedicated their lives and possessions to the service of God and His people.



Glover was a prolific writer who believed in the power of the written word and encouraged those around him to take advantage of this tool in their ministries. Although living in Brazil, he saw his Bible correspondence course and other writings go far beyond the places he visited. Glover’s motto always seemed to be, “Here am I! Send me!” We thank God for his life and work.

Editor’s Note: Along with a firm friendship that spanned many years, Glover and Howard shared much in common including missions (especially Brazil), Christian education and production of Christian Chronicle. We attended Glover’s funeral at the Brentwood church building in Austin, TX, and Howard was one of the main speakers. Many readers know Howard well, but for others we offer an introduction to Howard who serves as chairman of the World Bible School Board of Directors.

Meet Howard Norton



At the 2016 WBS spring Board meeting, Russ Albright relayed the chairperson’s baton to Howard Norton. Russ—businessman, lawyer, missionary and now missions supporter at McArthur Park, San Antonio—had served as chair for four years.

Howard Norton grew up in Fort Worth and began preaching in his teens. He and Jane (Pearce) have three children, seven grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. Howard graduated from Abilene Christian University (BA), the University of Houston (MA), and the University of Sao Paulo (Doctor of Human Sciences).

The Nortons helped to form the original (1961) mission team of 13 families to Sao Paulo, Brazil. Though they returned to America in 1977, their Brazilian ties continue. (Recently Howard spoke at 50 sessions in five weeks there). In addition to serving on WBS’ Board, Howard serves on other boards: Great Cities Missions, Southern Christian Children’s Home and the Pan American Lectureship.

Howard was pulpit preacher at Memorial Road church of Christ in Oklahoma City and served with Oklahoma Christian University as a Bible and Missions professor, dean of the Bible College, and editor of *The Christian Chronicle* (1981-1996). In 1997 Howard began 12 years as a Bible and Missions professor at Harding University, director of the Institute of Church and Family and director of Harding’s Lectureship. In 2009, he took a leave of absence to serve as president of Baxter Institute

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Men of the 1961 team to Sao Paulo, Brazil



International Prayers

Angela Graves — AUSTIN, Texas

My grandmother, Evelyn Hoggatt of Mesa, AZ, had 20,000 plus WBS postal and email students. She kept in touch, even after they finished all WBS courses. Many of the men continued learning and became ministers, deacons, elders and church planters. At first, most were in Nigeria, then she gained students all over Africa and even in Arab states. Africans erected a building in her honor. Twice she attempted to go to Africa but was prevented, first when war broke out and later due to illness. She had traditional clothes sewn for the children and ladies. When she could not take these clothes herself, she mailed them. Her office wall was covered by pictures sent by her students. On my grandparents’ 50th anniversary, their congregation gave her a desk for her WBS work.



In June 2002, I was in a car accident and slipped into a coma, without a good prognosis. My grandmother, now in the digital age of WBS, wrote to many of her thousands of students. She told them my story and asked them to pray. They said they would, along with their families and churches. People in many places were praying for me. Within one week the Lord was showing His awesome power, and continues to do so in my healing. I was comatose for five weeks. Every cell in my brain was traumatized—supposedly meaning I would be a vegetable the rest of my life. As you can see, by writing this article, I am not. Instead I earned a Bachelor’s degree from Austin Graduate School.

I praise God every morning that I wake up and thank him for my loving grandmother and her dedication to her students. After about 25 years of teaching through WBS, her health became too bad to continue. It took six people to replace her.

Mhlangas: Global Family

Washington and Alice Mhlanga are key partners with World Bible School, instrumental in reaching thousands for Christ. They and their children illustrate a growing trend—the global family. They recently visited the United States for the graduation of their youngest son from the University of Central Oklahoma. Here is part of their international story.

Washington and Alice grew up in rural Zimbabwe. Advantages were few, but Washington's father was one of the earliest leaders in churches of Christ. Missionary Roy Palmer introduced Washington to Michigan Christian College and Abilene Christian College where Washington earned his BA. He then earned the MA and PhD from Wayne State University. Back in Zimbabwe, he eventually became Executive Manager for the Mineral Marketing Corporation. His many travels, negotiating metal sales on behalf of Zimbabwe, took him from Japan, Hong Kong and the Philippines to the USA, UK and Europe.

Retirement in 2002 enabled Washington to devote full time to work begun in 1993 on the "Nhowe Mission Brian Lemmons Memorial Hospital" (officially opened 2002). This 75 bed, full-service hospital, sponsored by East Point church of Christ in Wichita,

KS, is one of Zimbabwe's best. Washington's role as Project Coordinator expanded in 2008 to the "Orphan Care Project" that assists 400 orphans with their school fees



and health care. He has been an elder at the Avondale congregation in Harare since 1999. As an elder, one of his many assignments is coordinating the Gospel Chariot schedule for Zimbabwe.

Washington met Alice when she was a student at the University of Michigan earning the MSc degree in environmental chemistry. Her qualifications and efficiency are valuable business assets. Yet from 2001 Alice applied her skills full-time to coordinating the WBS Service Center in Harare—hub for much of the follow up for Zimbabwe's massive WBS student body, now approaching 1,000,000. In addition to WBS data and communications management and field work, she hosts many U.S. visitors (as you read this, the Mhlangas are hosting the Reese campaign group).

Zimbabwe's unemployment rate, possibly the worst in the world, has forced families to seek education and employment elsewhere. The Mhlanga's grown children are no exception. Melissa is in WA, Simba is in OK, Jonathan is in AR, and Keith is applying for graduate school. At David Lipscomb University, Washington's brother Fortune is Dean of the Department of Computer Science, and Fortune's wife Flora is Associate Dean of Biological Sciences. Like many others, the Mhlangas are a global family. The qualifications, reach and partnerships they exemplify hold major implications for fulfilling the commission to share Jesus globally.

For WBS follow-up in Zimbabwe write to alicewbs@africaonline.co.zw. For general follow up contact sherri@worldbibleschool.net For details on the Orphan Care Project, please email office@epcofc.org or phone 316-684-3723.

Foreign Students in our Midst from page 2

them by providing practical help with shopping and teaching them English. Teach them the Word of God. Sit down with them and just read one of the Gospels. You will be surprised how many students are eager to study with you.

In Baton Rouge we host a Friday night dinner and Bible study. We consistently have 10-15 students attend each week. They come for home-cooked meals, to practice English, to experience friendship with Americans. They also come to enjoy the community of God and learn about Christianity. God is preparing their hearts. One visiting scholar recently told me, "I have walked many crooked roads in life. I am happy to come to know Jesus." Another young PhD student said to me, "I know there is a power out there somewhere, I am just not sure who he is." One physics student who we baptized this year said, "I am so thankful to God that he has led me to America to learn about Him."

You too can experience the power of God changing the lives of the foreign students he leads to your doorstep. Just step out by faith to leave your comfort zone. Reach out to the foreign students in your community. God will bless you with a rich harvest.

Zeal for the Nations from page 2

Making disciples of international students is so strategic now that it should rise to the top of our mission priorities. Hundreds of thousands will return to their home countries to launch new careers. How many will re-enter as devoted followers of Jesus, who themselves are called to obey the Great Commission? The answer depends on us. Are we willing to rise to the challenge?

Memorial Road church next door to Oklahoma Christian is committed to meeting this challenge through its international ministry. MRCC members as well as OC students show friendship and hospitality by serving internationals as conversation partners once a week. American Christians host internationals in their homes for meals and school holidays. Mature Christians from many nations lead in building bridges to welcome new students into activities and Bible study. God continues to give the increase as growing numbers of internationals return to their home countries to share Jesus.

Make plans to attend a
WBS Benefit Dinner
in your area and invite others to join you.

August 12 - Austin, TX
August 18 - Fort Worth, TX
September 6 - Dallas, TX
September 22 - Chattanooga, TN
October 4 - Nashville, TN
November 1 - Searcy/Little Rock, AR

For details and to RSVP, please go to
worldbibleschool.net/events.

Editor's Note: In the last issue about saturating communities with Gospel opportunities, we highlighted House to House and World Christian Broadcasting. In this issue about internationals among us, we do the same for WEI (an offshoot of WBS) and LST. In each case, the author is a founder who, after many years of building, has passed on the directorship. WEI's new director is Tom Langley, and LST's new director is Scott Lambert.

Mission Field in Your Town USA

Dick Ady — GRESHAM, Oregon

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 American Community Survey (ACS), there were 42.4 million immigrants in the U.S., and that number was increasing by about one million per year. These immigrants were coming to us from Mexico, India, China, the Philippines and many other countries. More than 25 million of them reported on their survey questionnaire that they spoke English "not well" or "not at all."



Dick and Maudine Ady honored at Harding University by WBS Board member David Burks

This presents an enormous opportunity for English-based lessons like World English Institute (WEI) which share the Good News about Christ with immigrants while helping them learn the English language. For immigrants who need to take the TOEFL in order to enroll in an American college or university, WEI's Advanced English Course is designed to help them prepare for the TOEFL. There are 25 million people in our nation with limited English proficiency who can be drawn to Christ by studying

English and the Bible side-by-side. WEI has only "touched the hem of the garment."

To illustrate, let me tell you about a Chinese family that immigrated to America 20 years ago but who still depend on their American-born sons to translate for them. In the picture below, Bi, Mei-Ying, Nat and Amy Chen have just been baptized into Christ at the Park Plaza church of Christ in Tulsa, OK. They had been taught by their Chinese cousin, and Pete Shaw had baptized them. Now, Pete plans to follow up by using WEI and World Bible School Chinese-English Bible lessons to help them know God better and to help them grow spiritually.

The Chen family in Tulsa, OK



Reaching Neighbors with FriendSpeak



Mark Woodward — HURST, Texas

All across the U.S., hundreds of churches and campus ministries are using the FriendSpeak program of the Let's Start Talking Ministry (LST) to engage their neighbors in effective conversations about Jesus.

Over 1,000,000 million foreign students—some of the world's brightest—are studying in American universities. At least 400,000 refugees have been granted legal entrance into the United States since 2009. Some come from difficult-to-enter countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, Burma and Somalia, and live in our neighborhoods. And then there are the millions of immigrants. These all represent open doors for outreach. For example, a Texas congregation focuses FriendSpeak on nearby Bhutanese refugees. A Michigan congregation has received initial training to start a FriendSpeak program with nearby Sudanese refugees.

Look around your neighborhood. Who are the people running the donut shop, nursing in the hospitals, operating the nail salons, or managing the motels? God is bringing the world to you. Paul tells us why in Acts 17:26-27, "God decided exactly when and where they must live. God wanted them to look for Him and perhaps search all around for Him and find Him. . . ." (NCV).



Since 1990, LST has helped Christians to use the FriendSpeak program and materials to reach non-English speaking neighbors. Churches receive pre-training consultation to help establish and organize their program. LST then provides initial and advanced training for church members who want to volunteer one or more hours per week to help someone practice their English, using FriendSpeak conversation guides to create an environment where conversations about Jesus are natural and friendly, no matter from where the participant is starting religiously. Online training is also available. For more information go to www.friendspeak.org or call toll free 866-630-9482.

Meet Howard Norton from page 5

in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, for three and a half years. Now 'retired,' he continues to serve as an elder of the College church of Christ in Searcy, AR, editor of *La Voz Eterna* (a Spanish Ezine), columnist for *Abundant Living* magazine and more.

World Bible School's Board is blessed by an extraordinary breadth and depth of experience, and Howard is no exception. His new role is especially meaningful as WBS launches into even greater growth and impact for local and world evangelism.

Global Trends Re-Define “Missions”

John Reese — CEDAR PARK, Texas

The face of missions is changing, and strategies need to keep up. World Bible School is one of many examples. Typically, many think of WBS as “foreign missions.” However, the leading nation for responses to WBS Internet is the United States. Whether postal or digital, much of WBS’ current focus is on initiatives to saturate America with Gospel opportunities. So where does WBS fit into the old paradigm that dichotomized missions into “foreign” and “domestic”? In many congregations “domestic missions” is a category separate from “local evangelism.” Many leaderships insist on training, and on specific plans and reports for “mission fields.” But they have little training, vague plans and no accountability for local evangelism. Their language often betrays an assumption that mission fields are all elsewhere.



Mere “presence” is no substitute for purposeful outreach to the surrounding community. Many souls around us have never heard our message, though they are just as precious as foreigners to whom we send prepared missionaries. Further, the souls around us are becoming more diversified. New generations of Americans have new worldviews.

Then there are new people with new cultures. Between mid-2013 and mid-2014, the population of America grew by 2.36 million. About half of those were Hispanics, now totaling over 55,000,000. Latinos have become the largest ethnic group in California. Remittances to Mexico constitute that nation’s third largest source of income. In terms of receiving remittances, the leading nations are India then China then the Philippines. 65 million Chinese (of whom less than 3% claim Christianity) live outside China. As Jared Looney says in *Crossroads of the Nations*, “We are currently experiencing the greatest global migration in the history of our planet. One in every 35 people in the world today is a migrant.”

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Looney’s point is that international mobility, especially to the cities, presents opportunities never before available to the church. Many foreigners are coming to us, including representatives of “unreached” or “difficult-to-reach” people groups. They are staying in touch with their relatives and friends back home as never before through Internet, phones and transport. For many in flux the changes are traumatic, creating a willingness to explore new ideas—including New Testament Christianity! Indeed, migrants converted in America become the conduit to their networks back in their home nations. World Bible School already has a 40 year track-record of effective international communications and its courses are proven vehicles for sharing Jesus over distances both short and long. How exciting to become a part of God’s work to ensure that every creature hears His saving message!



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