



My heart's desire...

at the root of America's woes. Only the Savior has that healing touch!

That is why Christians must rally to share the real, spiritual solutions! The Good News is that Jesus already has given His life for theirs. He already gives complete healing and wholeness. How desperately our people need these blessings! How passionately we want our living sacrifice to bring these blessings!

Like Paul, we agonize and pray for the people of our nation.

That is why, as a starting point, we invite you to join Connect US to bless American seekers. Notice in this *Action!* how WBS is reaching Americans along with others. Be there for them when they google "search words" that cry for help.

Make sure that every individual in your community has attractive opportunities to benefit from the Good News. Connect US and WBS are YOU SHARING JESUS.

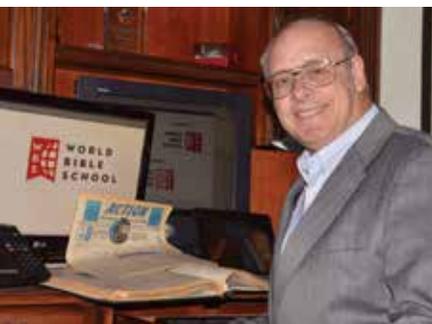
John Reese — CEDAR PARK, Texas

Our people" stir some of the deepest emotions we experience—care, anxiety, compassion, frustration and longing.

Moses grew up apart from his native people, yet he felt their sufferings and tried to protect them. Later, despite their rejections and rebellions, he asked God to take his life instead of theirs (Exodus 32:32). Paul felt the same way. Despite harassment by fellow-Jews, his heart yearned and ached for their salvation.

I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh.... My heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved (Romans 9:1-3; 10:1).

We too care deeply for the people of our nation. Like Paul, we agonize and pray. Our "heart's desire" is for them to be saved. If anything, recent news heightens our concerns. While politicians offer their solutions, we know that America's greatest problems are not social or economic. Neither politics nor legislation touches sinful hearts



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Great Start to 2016

Janet Park — LUBBOCK, TX

Dear WBS,

I just have to share good news with you. January has been an exciting time for the good that comes through WBS.

One of my students, Happy, in South Africa told me she wanted to be baptized. Ben Little responded to my follow-up request and on January 15, Ben contacted me and told me that Happy had been baptized.

A visitor at my congregation said she would like to study through WBS, but didn't want to do it on computer, so I have been studying with her weekly in my home. Susie was baptized January 31 at our Sunday morning service.

This morning, February 1, I awoke to a message from my WBS student Melissa of Squamish, WA. Both she and her husband were baptized on January 10. Her husband had said he would never go to church, but during her follow-up he began attending with her and began studying with the local congregation.

Praise God for the work of WBS and for allowing me to be a part of spreading the Gospel to others!

Three success stories: in her hometown, in the U.S. and in Africa.

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Back to Church

Sandee wrote this note, now edited, to her local church of Christ in Alabama:

Dear Church Family: *Jim and I need your prayers. I think if you read this you will understand. Jim and I have not been to church since November 30, 2014. Since then I have been to a few ladies' activities. But Satan had me convinced I did not belong at church, that it was not my family or church home, and I had convinced Jim of that also. Sounds familiar, right?*

I had been doing Bible studies on my own and with family. Then I started doing online World Bible School which has been amazing. I did a WBS study last night on living with God's family and it woke me up 100%. Hebrews 10:24-25 is imprinted in my heart and God is telling me to go back to church. So my prayer request is that Satan does not interfere with Jim and me going to church this coming Sunday and being involved in the body of Christ.

Three Baptisms, Three Weeks

Laura Metz — MEMPHIS, Tennessee



Judy was discouraged. She'd been teaching for five years, and not a single one of her students had been baptized. She began to think about quitting. It wasn't working, she thought. She must be doing something wrong. One young man, Richard, had been her email student all five years, starting while he was still in college. He still wrote occasionally, but he hadn't completed a lesson for a while. Maybe it was time for Judy to throw in the towel.

Thankfully, a good friend encouraged her to remember the parable of the sower. Judy kept on, praying for God to bring the increase.

He did.

Rudo in South Africa was Judy's first student to be baptized. A week later, Kibii was baptized in Kenya. Then, the long-dormant seed came up. Her long time student Richard was baptized in Ghana the next Sunday. Three baptisms. Three weeks.

Judy kept on, praying for God to bring the increase. He did.

Great News from Australia!

Danny Truitt — DECATUR, Alabama

Andrew, a student of Tim Thomas, was baptized by Charlie DiPalma, a preacher with the Church Street church of Christ in Bayswater near Melbourne, Australia. Andrew investigated several religious groups, including Hare Krishna, before he began online studies with Tim. Charlie, his wife Mary and another member Han worked hard to teach Andrew after Tim contacted him.

In early communications, Charlie told Tim that Andrew's wife, Angela, would not study with them. Perhaps she was thinking that Andrew was dealing with yet another cult. Charlie has since reported that Angela is attending the services with Andrew. Please pray for Angela and also the children. It's always exciting to think about how many lives may be touched by just one responsive seeker.



Andrew's baptism



Here at Beltline Road church in Decatur, AL, 2015 ended with 54 WBS-related baptisms. Already the WBS team has made a great start for the new year with five baptisms at the Morgan County Jail.

Andrew and other members of Australia's Church Street church.

New Worker in the Vineyard



God continues to bless WBS in so many ways. One of the ways He does is by sending great workers to join the WBS family. Such a person is **Steve Gober** from Alabama. Steve joined the Advancement team in mid-2015 as a part-time gift officer and we are so excited to have him.

Steve has been married to Betty for 42 years. They have three married children and four grandchildren. A lifetime resident of Alabama, Steve has been the preacher for the Hodges church of Christ for the past 28 years, serving 10 of those years as both preacher and elder. Steve has also done short term mission work in Ukraine and Guyana, South America.

In Steve's words, *"I truly love being able to represent a work which, I am fully convinced, is the best means we have available today of reaching the masses with the Gospel of Christ. There is no greater feeling than being able to bring someone to Christ. Being on the team allows me to see how WBS*



reaches out to every nation of the world with the opportunity to study God's Word. Informing Christians and congregations about WBS' tools and resources is not just a job to me, it is a passionate mission! I joined the WBS team because I feel it gives me an even greater role in fulfilling the Great Commission."

"Telling others about WBS is my passionate mission!"

To our brethren in Alabama and Mississippi, please welcome Steve when he comes your way on behalf of World Bible School. Better yet, send him an invitation today. He may be reached at steve@worldbibleschool.net.

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

...and Another



Steve (see above) is not the only recent blessing to WBS. **King White** recently began working with us on a part-time basis. King's contribution is special a number of reasons.

Number one, he's *volunteering* his time to WBS.

Number two, King *loves* to interact with people—to help them, thank them, share good news with them—and he loves to do it on the phone.

Number three, King is a long-time WBS study helper using both printed and online lessons—he knows first-hand the effectiveness of WBS.

Number four, King wants to do what he can to "best impact the work of the Lord". He believes he can do that representing WBS.

King is retired from many years of work in business and finance. He lives in Spring (greater Houston), Texas, and is a long-serving deacon at the Bammel church of Christ.

If King gives you a buzz, let him tell you how God is blessing the work of World Bible School and King's life, too.

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



WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL

Action!

Editor: John Reese

Action! (ISSN 8750-1333) USPS 004380 is published bi-monthly by the non-profit ministry of World Bible School. WBS is everyday Christians sharing Jesus with printed and Web-based Bible lessons.

16110 Anderson Mill Road · Cedar Park, Texas 78613
512.345.8190 · 800.311.2006 · fax 512.401.8265

Lessons: 877.393.0211 · info@worldbibleschool.net

Ministry site: www.worldbibleschool.net

Student site: www.worldbibleschool.org

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to World Bible School, P.O. Box 2169, Cedar Park, TX 78630
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Dr. Joe D. Gray

Brian Davis — CEDAR PARK, Texas

In 1985, as one of many new students in the missionary training program "Project Good News", Dr. Joe Gray led us students through his Introduction to Christian Missions book entitled, *Speak a Good Word for Jesus*. After having served as a missionary in New Zealand and studying the cultures of the South Pacific, Joe worked tirelessly to inspire a generation of young people to dedicate their lives to being missionaries. Over a period of 20 years, 125 college students accepted that challenge and served in over 80 countries. Each year, World Bible School was one of the tools that Joe

equipped us with as missionaries being sent out to the world.

Dr. Joe D. Gray, 84, passed away Sunday, December 27, 2015. He was born in Old Hickory, Tennessee, on July 26, 1931. He was the minister at the Altamont church of Christ. He was a professor at David Lipscomb University for 20 years. While serving in the foreign field, Joe received his doctorate from Otago University in Dunedin, New Zealand. He was also the voice of the Treasure of Truth radio broadcast and evangelism campaigns that literally reached out to every nation on earth. Our prayers and love are with Harriette, his wife and life-long friend.

WBS was one of the tools that Dr. Gray equipped us with as missionaries.

How many people around the globe heard the Good Word of Jesus spoken to them because of the vision and faith of Dr. Joe Gray? I don't know, but I look forward to meeting them with Joe one day... and that is Good News indeed!

Honoring Jane Hogan

Robin Cannon — CEDAR PARK, Texas



Gordon and Jane Hogan

Jane (McAuley) Hogan has graduated to heaven after a 90 year sojourn among us. She is survived by her husband of 68 years, Gordon, and three children: Beth (with Mike) James, Dave (with Debbie) Hogan of Singapore, and Julie (with Ron) Garner. To daughter-in-law Debbie (who is my sister), Jane was both family and friend. She was blessed with eight grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. She has multitudes of friends and family worldwide—many blessed by the warm hospitality of their

home, often called the Hogan Hotel. Her infectious laugh, beautiful Georgia drawl and inspiring cooking simply cannot be forgotten.

World Bible School Board member and long-time friend Howard Norton spoke at her funeral. He told how Gordon was on an impressive career path, then gave it up for missionary hardships. Where many wives might have balked, Jane cheerfully and whole-heartedly took on the challenges of pioneering missions in Asia. She maintained that "let's go get 'em spirit" through 33 years in Pakistan and Singapore, and to the end. Their influence spread to the Pacific, Australia, New Zealand and the world. They inspired countless students through four Christian colleges, especially Four Seas in Singapore and Harding in Searcy. As Howard said, Jane was "a true mother of Israel," a mother to many, and to us at WBS also.

Jane wholeheartedly took on the challenges of pioneering missions in Asia.

Note to Web Study Helpers

Jonathan Towell — LUBBOCK, Texas

We love hearing from WBS Study Helpers. Every day we get many emails from Christians all over the world who are using WBS to share Jesus. It is exciting.



As feedback shows definite trends, we keep improving the teaching process. Here are updates designed to make the Study Helper's job even simpler.

Course Unlock

We have added a new button called "Unlock Course." When you are ready to assign a course, just click that button.

Assignment Status

Before, if a lesson's box was checked, that lesson was assigned. But had the student started the lesson yet? How many questions did the student have remaining to finish the lesson? Such questions could not be answered by the old assignments page.

Now, each assignment has a much clearer set of icons to indicate the status of the assignment. And, you can hover over the icon to see more information about the status. You can even tell how many questions the student has answered.

Assignment Assistance

Not only can you see how many questions the student has answered, you can also see the student's specific answers to those questions before the student has submitted the assignment for grading. Sometimes students need help in the middle of a lesson. Teachers can now jump into the assignment to see exactly where the student can be helped.

We hope you like the new Assignments page. Please give it a try and keep that feedback coming.

WBS Goes to the Fair

Steve Gober — HODGES, Alabama

Bob and Marilyn Ledford worship with the Hamilton church where Bob serves as a deacon, a song leader and WBS coordinator. I have known them personally for many years. They are a wonderful couple who sincerely serve the Lord in every way possible. This is Bob's story:



Marilynn and Bob Ledford

About three years ago, a sister congregation called our preacher and offered materials left over from a previous mission work. Our preacher asked my wife and I if we could use it in our World Bible School work. Being the pack rats we are, we soon took the church van and loaded up with the free material. It was hard to imagine such a treasure trove. There were WBS courses, home Bible

studies, books authored by some of the best brotherhood minds and all kinds of teaching aids. We distributed among members, but even then the materials filled several shelves in our church's WBS

workroom. Then an old axiom came to mind, "You don't go fishing in a fish bowl."

Most towns in our part of Alabama have some kind of festival each year. We had observed all kinds of vendors in rented booths, including some denominations that gave out bottled water and other materials. The thought came to me, "We have water—the living water!" So, we began calling city halls and chambers of commerce, inquiring about obtaining a vendor's permit and renting spaces at these city festivals. We were going to give away WBS materials, free Bibles, DVDs from WVBS and more. Almost every town waived the vendor fees because we were not selling.

We have just finished our second year, making the festival rounds with our WBS booth. It has been both rewarding and fruitful. The public interest has been amazing! People are very receptive in accepting our material, and they can't believe it is free! Many ask, "Who are you people?" We tell them, "We are from World Bible School, funded by members and congregations of the churches of Christ."

Now, our WBS shelves are almost empty, but we intend to re-supply. Our elders have been very generous in helping with that. We would highly recommend this vendors approach to anyone who doesn't mind a long day in both good weather and bad. At the end of day, the reward is heavenly.

Making the festival rounds with our WBS booth has been both rewarding and fruitful.

The Love behind Action!

As you can tell, a lot of love goes into Action! It is a gift of encouragement to your home from caring hearts.

Kevin Rhodes and Charlotte Wright use their artistic skills to create a quality layout every time. Don and Sharon Gardner are the volunteer leaders of bulk mailing to your congregations. Their helpers gather regularly to do the work of counting and packaging. This tradition goes back many decades to the Torrance church in California (with the Lovells and Coxes) and then Westover Hills in Austin (with the Benskins and Gardners). Our sincere thanks to all who have helped to distribute Action! through the years!



Charlotte Wright

Now the bulk mailing work takes place at World Bible School's Cedar Park facility. If you live in this vicinity—including Georgetown, Round Rock, Leander and Austin—please join our volunteer mailing force on the second Friday of every other month (January, March, etc.). Call Tiffany at 512-345-8190 for details.

Editor's Note: Please be praying for Howard and Margaret Cox in their health struggles.

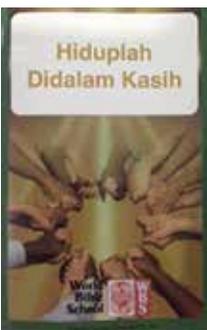
Don Gardner's father, Norman Gardner, passed away recently. For many years, he and his wife Billie addressed the Action! papers that are mailed to individuals. Funeral services were held for Norman at the Brentwood Oaks church of Christ in Austin, TX, and I was pleased to share in paying tribute to such a beloved example of selfless service.

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Norman and Billie Gardner



Indonesian Master Series Completed



Message from Steve Cate: John, We are pleased to let you know that we have printed the World Bible School book *Live a Life of Love* in the Indonesian language (*Hiduplah Didalam Kasih*).

The printed version looks very similar to the English version and all the Master Series courses that preceded it. The English version is an excellent book and deserves to be circulated in the widest possible of circles. We are happy that Indonesians will be reading this book in their own language long after you and I are gone.

Reply from John Reese: Well done! What a spectacular milestone for Indonesian evangelism, especially for maturing those brought to Christ! We are deeply grateful for the dedication and hard work that have gone into such a monumental task. Your great hearts for Indonesians are very evident in this the labor of love. We praise God for you, and pray His richest blessings on bringing forth fruit from your sacrificial service.



Taking a Chance in Ireland



Lori Brady — CEDAR PARK, Texas

Lori Brady, a WBS Web teacher, also works at WBS in Cedar Park, TX.

For about a year we have been praying for an online student of mine in Ireland. She initially responded to advertising there as a Connect outreach of the Brentwood Oaks church in Austin. During the time we were studying together, she was 17 and her parents wouldn't allow her to be baptized. She completed all the Master Series courses through *Family of God*, but

I hadn't heard from her in quite some time. Then, recently, I received this message:

I was finally baptized. The preacher baptized me and another girl in a beautiful place. I didn't tell my parents because I already knew they would be against it. Once before they told me that when I turned 18, I could decide what I wanted. But in the morning the preacher talked to me. My heart was touched so I took a chance and was baptized. Afterwards my parents nearly throw me out of the house, but then things got calm and slowly they didn't bother about it anymore.



Many times I was fighting with myself. But I found the solution within God. I always did. No matter how far away I was, I end up with God. I realized in the time I was away how much I need God in my life. Nothing else will ever fulfill me. Nothing except God.

God didn't let me down. He never did. He just showed me how much I need Him and He gave me a chance to be baptized. I took it.

I know that God is so much more than we can imagine. He is so much more than we know. And I do have so many questions. And I know He will answer every one of them; but everything at the right time. At God's time.

I thank you so much for being my friend in Christ these past two years. We talk only now and then, but still you are very precious to me. May God bless you and hope I to hear from you soon how is your life going.

Lea.



Graduates Honored

Gabriel Chea — LIBERIA

Ron Pottberg joined our team in Liberia to continue with the work of evangelism. Our team travelled to Ganta to participate in the first annual lectureship in the Nimba Region. Fourteen souls were added to the Ganta church of Christ. Then we went to Kakata for their first annual lectureship. In addition to the indoor program, intensive door to door outreach resulted in eight souls added to the church. Then we traveled to Flehla in Bong County for its second lectureship and its first graduation of WBS students as well as International Bible Students of Roger Dickson. Nineteen graduates were honored. Back in Monrovia, 70 students graduated at our 11th annual graduation. Jacob Sesay from Sierra Leone served as our guest speaker.



Due to deplorable road conditions, our teams could not honor the first annual graduation in Foyah. However, Alfred Borlon represented our team and honored the 18 graduates. We appreciated Ron's work with us, and pray that Almighty God continues to bless our efforts in WBS worldwide.



Jimmie Lovell's Dream for America

Jimmie Lovell was the leader who, in 1973, gave to an ongoing evangelistic effort the name "World Bible School." Then and now, what makes WBS different is "you sharing Jesus"—the *you* being the everyday Christian. Plenty of groups use correspondence, but in typical denominational fashion they are limited by a confining headquarters and staff. The New Testament inspires a different dynamic. Every Christian is a priest who proclaims God's goodness. Every congregation answers to the Great Commissioner in His heavenly headquarters. This approach spreads the work and expense over many more workers, meaning that limitless numbers can be taught.

Jimmie, a salesman for DuPont Chemicals, caught the vision of New Testament Christianity's potential for blessing unlimited numbers. He wanted to see the Gospel impact people everywhere, *including his home nation*. Here is what he wrote in *Action!* early in 1973:

I made up the first Bible correspondence course I ever saw—47 years ago in Denver, Colo. The idea has been heavy on my heart ever since. It has proved to be the most efficient, economical and fruitful tool of the foreign worker in reaching souls.... A large majority of the churches in other lands have been started by Bible correspondence. We estimate that... far more non-Christians have been converted by a handful of missionaries than is done by our some 10,000 preachers at home.



This statement reflects Jimmie's early emphasis on supplying funds for Bibles and printed courses to missionaries to use on their respective fields, which repeatedly proved valuable as a spearhead. While always encouraging missionaries, Jimmie's emphasis gradually moved to everyday American members as a vital missionary force. He envisioned their impact on the world, but especially on America itself. Notice the emphasis on America in the *Action!* of May-June 1973.

For more than 40 years I have pretty much concentrated on this method [Bible correspondence] of reaching the unsaved in all nations with the Gospel. The effectiveness of it has proved itself so outstandingly in foreign fields, and it is now my opinion that we can make use of it just as fruitfully here in America.... I have [long] held to more or less one objective—preaching the Gospel in every nation.... I have now affixed another goal for living—to see

"It is my opinion that we can make use of WBS fruitfully here in America."

the day when every church of Christ in the United States is making use of Bible correspondence courses in its community.

In other words, "Let's bring these blessings home!" As it turned out, WBS energies naturally flowed toward the overwhelming receptivity of Africa and similar developing regions. Even Jimmie, with all his vision, could not foresee the tool that started to swing emphasis toward America — the *Internet*. As WBS advertised online worldwide, the nation that responded the most was the U.S. Now the number of Americans



You. Sharing Jesus.

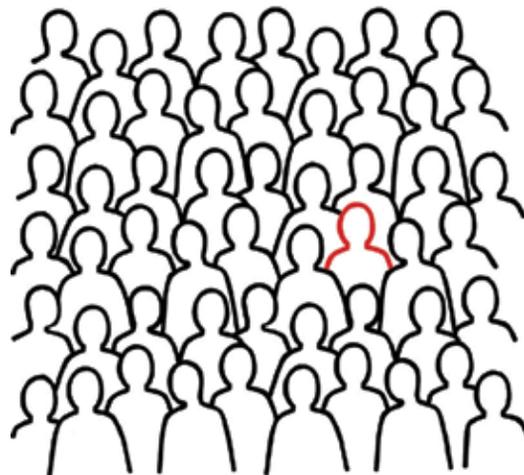
POSTMASTER:

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

Electronic Service Requested

enrolled online is approaching 100,000. While they find WBS online, about a third ask for their Bible courses as paper. Results from Internet advertising spurred further refinements aimed at America, with more in the present pipeline. Now WBS has launched Connect US, a special focus on reaching America through everyday Christians—a venture of faith that Jimmie would have approved. We too share his vision: "To see the day when every church of Christ in the United States is making use of Bible correspondence courses in its community."

upcoming...



Every creature?