

ALL AUTHORITY

2020!

Doesn't that have a unique ring? **2020** evokes clear, accurate vision. It suggests a theme that many groups are using this year. We too see the value of **2020** and give it a special focus: **Seeing the Great Commission through the eyes of Jesus**. This year, each issue of *Action!* examines a facet of the Great Commission.

Many today fall into the old trap of looking for political power. They think they see Jesus and His church as stuck in a holding pattern, awaiting kingly power. The risen Lord sees the reality: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me" (Matthew 28:18). The Greek word for "authority" is

exousia, combining the legal right with the strength to carry out His will. He possesses "all (*pas*) authority in heaven and on earth." Rebels who defy this truth merely store up condemnation for treason. Jesus is "the Ruler of kings on earth.... Lord of lords and King of kings" (Revelation 1:5; 17:14).

Seen through the lens of *pas exousia*, the Great Commission is not an option. It is the King's command for every disciple (Matthew 28:20). At the very pinnacle of Jesus' time on earth, it becomes our priority to be pursued with passion and with power—*His* power!

The Great Commission begins and ends with Jesus. His power launches it. His presence sustains it, promising, "I am with you always." With 2020 vision,

we see more than fine sentiments. We acknowledge God's revealed realities that assure us and empower us. Like Paul, we toil "with all *His* energy that *He* powerfully works" within us (Colossians 1:29). "The immeasurable greatness of *His* power" works for us and in us, bringing unimaginable results that bring *Him* the glory (Ephesians 1:19; 2:10; 3:20-21).

in this
issue

- p2 Milestones
- p3 Bibles
- p4-5 Tributes
- p6 Web Ads
- p7 Around the world
- p8 Tex on endowments

Milestone Toward a New Future

Tim Yaeger — BIRMINGHAM, Alabama

January 15, 2020, was the landmark date when Mathetis went public. Mathetis (an anglicized form of the Greek word for disciple) has been a vision of WBS for many years. It is a brand new social network designed to connect our world to Christ and His church. Utilizing interactive multimedia content, it is intended to be a safe environment for you and your friends to study the Bible and grow spiritually.

In October 2019, a limited launch took place in Austin, TX, at the Global Missions Conference. That initial stage began to populate Mathetis with Christians ready to interact with participants when the site opened to the general public. In celebration of the January public launch, WBS' Cedar Park staff wore Mathetis T shirts.

On January 17-19, Mathetis presentations were made at Evangelism University in Savannah, TN, which attracts about 1,500 attendees. This conference is for high school leaders of youth groups who want to share Jesus with those around them. During the event, 328 joined Mathetis, which tops the previous record for one event. Currently, 1,500 members are registered on Mathetis.

On January 15, Tim Yaeger, WBS' Vice President of Technology, announced:



The WBS staff in Cedar Park celebrates the launch of Mathetis.

The wait is over! Mathetis is here and ready for everyone! Check it out now by visiting Mathetis.org or updating your app in the App Store or on Google Play. With the public launch, Mathetis offers new features:

1. *The access code requirement has been removed—anyone can join!*
2. *New courses, with more coming soon*
3. *Easily add friends to your groups*
4. *Mentors gain access to the Mentor Request Board*
5. *Edit your profile within the app*
6. *Improved study board with filters*
7. *Added controls for group leaders*
8. *Simplified navigation*
9. *Improved performance and stability*
10. *...and a whole lot more!*

We'd love to hear your feedback. Let us know what you think by emailing us at help@mathetis.org or providing a five star rating and review in the App Store or Google Play. Today is a big milestone toward a new future for reaching the lost where Christians share Jesus through Mathetis and grow together in a new social network.



Richard and LeeAnne Patton serve at the WBS Mathetis display at the Freed Hardeman Lectureship.



**GREAT BIBLE
CURRICULUM
FOR YOUR CLASSES
OR SMALL GROUPS—USING
“MATHETIS ORIGINAL”
VIDEOS!**

Go to mathetis.org/reaching-series
or email info@mathetis.org.

“The Reaching Series” is a set of three 13-week Bible class curriculum booklets that inspires Christians to reach out to the lost. It can be used as both stand-alone curriculum or in tandem with the Mathetis courses and videos.

**AVAILABLE
NOW!**

Can You Spare an Extra Bible?



Over the past few years, many of us have seen effective use of “buy one/give one” campaigns. For example, “You buy a pair of shoes, we’ll donate a pair of shoes,” or “You buy a backpack, we’ll give away a backpack” to a needy child. How about a soul in need of the Good News?

At World Bible School, we fully acknowledge the desperate need in our world for God’s Word. Every day we see the ruin caused by sin, and the hunger for spiritual solutions, which we know Jesus provides.

Wouldn’t it be great to buy a Bible for a student, knowing that would result in another

precious student benefiting from receiving his own Bible? That opportunity is now.

A generous donor sent us this message: **“Please reach out to your partners to donate to purchase 10,000 WBS Bibles, and I’ll supply another 10,000 Bibles for Zimbabwe students!”** That is truly a blessing and an opportunity to get an extra Bible to truly needy people. Many lives will be changed forever by having their own copy of the WBS Study Bible.

Many donors are looking for a targeted project. If you are one of



those, here is a great way to start. Take a minute to meet this special match. Contact our office or send your donation to WBS marked, “Zimbabwe Bible Match.”

This sort of incentive is powerful. Last year at our dinner in Nashville, we had a \$50,000 match, which by God’s grace, we met and exceeded, raising well over \$100,000 in one night! That is truly God in action.

In Matthew 25, Jesus reminds us to be wise about blessings. Will you join the wise servant and make the most of your gifts received from God? Please join in giving an extra Bible to students—and be looking for future opportunities we’ll share with you throughout 2020.

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

“Taking the Plunge”

Beginning his long tenure with World Bible School, **Tex Williams** shared his reasons for “Taking the Plunge into WBS.” In that *Action* article, September, 1985, Tex wrote:

Jesus showed the common purpose that He had with the Father. “For the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). Jesus passed “His work” on to the disciples. In John 17 He prayed, “As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.” The commission of Jesus to the church is well known (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16).

Therefore, the purpose of the church and every Christian in this century or any other century is to “seek and save that which is lost.” We must find the most effective ways

of reaching all the people of the world with the Gospel of Christ. I believe that WBS offers one of the most unique opportunities in our time.



Now, for the rest of the story, please turn to page 8...



WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL *Action!*

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Rex & Patsy Zant

"I Am Continuing"

Barbara Kee — SEARCY, Arkansas

Editor's Note: Readers of Action! recall that in 2017 Doyle and Barbara Kee moved to America after 47 years of world missions based in Geneva, Switzerland. Later, we sadly reported that Doyle passed away unexpectedly, January 2019, in Searcy AR. Below, with her permission, is an excerpt from Barbara's recent letter.

So, in my life, everything has changed, even my identity—widow. I have joined a widow's support group, to help me adjust to all of these changes. Doyle had prepared everything to provide for me, so I would be cared for without his presence. I am living with our daughter, Bonnie, in a beautiful house in Searcy, AR, and all is going well.

I am continuing to work on the correspondence courses. That is one thing that has not changed. Only, now I am correcting and sending the courses that Doyle wrote for training preachers. These are advanced courses with exams and a dissertation to write.

I am trembling as I do this, hoping it is what Doyle would have wanted, so that those already enrolled would be able to finish. But this is good for me. It keeps me busy, and I am learning at the same time. Let it be said of me, "She has done what she could" (Mark 14:8). In doing this work, the Word of God is being spread in the French-speaking countries. And it is producing much fruit.



Earlier times:
Doyle and Barbara at the French World Missions Conference in Searcy

Remembering Doug Trowbridge

Doug and Patsie Trowbridge (married 63 years) have been integral to World Bible School, working alongside its founder Jimmie Lovell and his wife Vivian since its inception—long before the name "World Bible School" was applied to the method in 1973. They incorporated West Coast Christian (precursor to WBS) on November 18, 1965, and Doug and Patsie came onto that Board in 1966. Since that time, they served continuously on the Board of WCC and then the Board of WBS. Though Doug retired for health reasons in recent years, Patsie continues to serve on the WBS Board. Successive Boards often called on Doug's qualifications and skills as a lawyer and financial advisor.



The Trowbridges overlooking Harare, Zimbabwe

In 2010, WBS honored Doug and Patsie with a plaque that stated, "For their enduring commitment to WBS, which continues to express the vision and passion of Patsie's parents, Jimmie and Vivian Lovell."

A leading statistician says, "We are making more converts worldwide through WBS than all other methods put together." The Lovell and Trowbridge families represent the steadfast hearts used by the Lord in making such remarkable progress.

The many services rendered by the Trowbridges have benefited seekers worldwide. But, like most WBS teachers, their work has been by faith, without opportunities to see the results directly. So, to catch at least a glimpse, they traveled with the Reeses to Southern Africa in 2012. Doug and Patsie gave their unique account of the beginnings of WBS, especially emphasizing its principle of selfless volunteerism—greatly encouraging follow up workers. They also met many who had been reached through WBS.

Afterwards, Patsie reported, "The personal witnessing of people who had been converted and whose lives in many instances had been dramatically changed sometimes brought tears to my eyes. The dedication to share the message of salvation with others when they have few resources was humbling."

That was a special trip, but just one among many precious memories. On December 12, 2019, Doug completed his journey and is now Home.

Thanks, Charlotte!

Many dear friends work behind the scenes to make WBS effective. Most readers won't recognize the name Charlotte Wright, yet they have enjoyed her work for many years. Charlotte has done much of the layout for *Action!* periodical since at least 2006, the year Tex Williams retired. During this extended tenure, Charlotte's teamwork with Kevin Rhodes has made *Action!* attractive and inviting. The number of issues they have produced approaches 100. *Action!*'s quality and look have come a long way since the early days. We at WBS will miss Charlotte's dedicated service as she must now focus more fully on family needs. Thank you, Charlotte!



While expressing gratitude, remember that every mailing of *Action!* is handled by a faithful band of volunteers and staff from the Austin and Central Texas area. Coordinators are Don and Sharon Gardner. (Below, Sharon is second from left; Don is in the back, right, in black.) The group gathers at the Cedar Park office for a work party each time *Action!* is printed. To the crew for "Action! Friday," thank you all!



Balancing Faith and Works

As we grow in our relationship with God, faith is always front and center. “We walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). “Without faith it is impossible to please Him” (Hebrews 11:6). That seems clear enough, but where do “works” fit into the picture? Christendom’s answers differ so sharply



that many people—including many World Bible School students—fall victim to confusion or disinformation. One side uses Paul against James, and the other James against Paul. Closer to home, denominational influences are making inroads, which can provoke strong reactions. Where is the healthy balance?

This new WBS Supplemental Course helps Christians and their students find the Bible’s answers. It briefly touches

on historical conflicts, then focuses on the Scriptures. Written as 13 lessons, the course is designed for classes and small groups as well as for individuals in need of solutions or maturing. The biblical content and beautiful layout make this significant course ideal for your Bible class’s quarterly study. Also, many WBS students will benefit from this biblical clarity.

Following are lesson titles, with a brief explanation of the content of each.

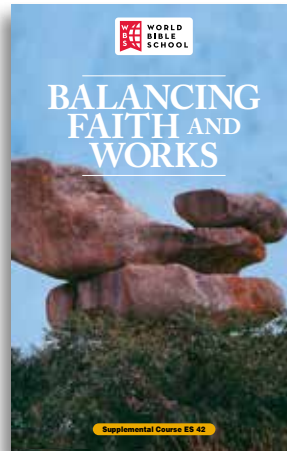
Lesson 1 Taking a Fresh Look – turning from historical confusion to biblical clarity

Lesson 2 The Battle for Balance – identifying the problem and the solution’s framework

Lesson 3 Perspective on Paul’s Past – Paul’s background in “works” religion

Lesson 4 Perspective on Paul’s Problem – response to the circumcision challenge

Lesson 5 How Paul Uses Faith and Works – letting Paul define his own terms



Lesson 6 Perspective on James – the theme of James and his own definitions

Lesson 7 Do Paul and James Agree? Yes, and they clearly show agreement.

Lesson 8 Early Insights from Failures – negative examples from the O.T.

Lesson 9 Early Insights from Successes – positive examples from the Old Testament

Lesson 10 Divine Initiative and Human Response – God defines the response He requires

Lesson 11 Is the Thief on the Cross Our Example? He exemplified grace but much remained to be revealed

Lesson 12 The Giver, the Gift and the Giving – God alone sets conditions for receiving His free gift

Lesson 13 Choosing Your Own Response – far from theoretical, this calls for decisive action

As always—because WBS is non-profit and wants as many as possible to benefit—the cost for this attractive product is just 60 cents per booklet, far less than typical class material. To order, email orders@worldbibleschool.net or call toll-free 877-393-0211.

“My First Real Meal”

Kella Jones — BURLESON, Texas

Debra lives in California. Her World Bible School teacher, Tonya Patterson, lives in North Carolina. After completing the main series of WBS online, Debra was very eager to be baptized. Thankfully, after her studies with WBS, Debra knew she could not hold off any longer and that she must have her sins washed away.



New convert,
Debra

I talked with Tom, the minister of the church of Christ in Ontario, CA. He talked with Debra over the phone. It took a few days to set up an actual meeting, but Sunday afternoon they were able to get together. After having a great Bible study, Debra was baptized. From my understanding, they went to the baptistry at the church but something

there was unsuitable. So, they went back to Debra’s house, and she was immersed in her jacuzzi.

After Debra was baptized Sunday evening, she took the Lord’s Supper for the very first time. Debra sent me a text saying: “I am eating the bread and drinking the juice. This feels like my first real meal!”

Debra is now planning on talking to some of her friends and encouraging them to study and go to church with her, and hopefully obey the Gospel as well.

More news! Tonya’s student Corey was baptized by Harold Redd, minister at the Midtown church of Christ in Memphis, TN. Kella reports, “Brother Redd has been a big help to Corey and guided him a long way. Corey says he already feels the Holy Spirit in his life and is already assisting with



New convert,
Corey

the church’s transportation which picks up people for church. You can see how happy he is.”



More news! Tonya’s student, Dee, started online but requested postal courses, so I became her Study Helper and kept Tonya updated. Judy, the minister’s wife at the church of Christ in Oak Hill, WV, and another lady followed up with Dee. After in-depth study, she decided to be baptized. The water was “cold!” but she was so happy for not holding back. Dee and her family have been through hard times. Her new church family has taken great care of her and she has learned a lot!

Exciting Church Reports!

Gary Hoyt of the Broadway church in Paducah, KY, was ordering 100 more World Bible School Study Bibles when he shared this story:

[Our prison ministry workers] are now able to send the brown WBS Study Bibles into the local prisons. Even more exciting, this congregation had 100 baptisms in 2019, which was up from the 71 of the previous year. They had not added more teachers or anything. The only thing different was to begin adding the WBS Study Bible to their teaching. Gary attributed the increase to the “new” Bible and thanked us for introducing it into the teaching process. They are overjoyed and are now expanding their teaching to their community as well as the prison ministry.

The only thing different [for more baptisms] was to begin adding the WBS Study Bible to the teaching.

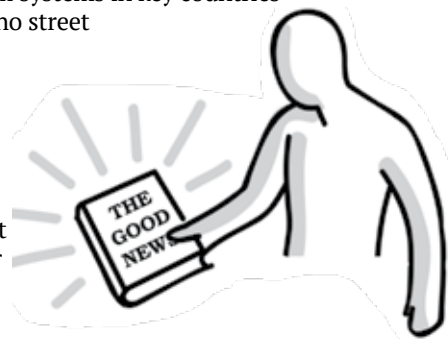
Bob Bennett of the church in Summerville, SC, wrote to Joel Coppinger:

As our fiscal year ends for 2019, we have shipped 1,042 pounds of international freight consisting of 13,405 lessons. We have had a banner year with WBS and are very thankful for your part! Thank you for all that you are doing to help make Summerville church of Christ one of World Bible School leaders of international evangelism. God bless our work together! Let's have another great year for 2020.

1,202,339 Postal Enrollments in 2019

The Great Commission is God's mission, into which He graciously invites us. Because God drives the mission, He continually gives encouraging progress. As an example, we at WBS have received figures for 2019. New postal enrollments through our home office in Cedar Park, TX, totaled 1,202,339. That is for English and does not count Spanish, French, Portuguese, Swahili or other languages. It does not include the count from Internet or Connect. Nor does it count postal students who enrolled through local programs.

This recent count is down slightly from 2018 but is all the more remarkable considering the difficulties experienced by postal teaching. Official mail systems in key countries are worsening, not improving. Many students, having no street name or number, rely on the P.O. Boxes of schools and businesses. Many such boxes are closing as struggling governments raise P.O. Boxes rental fees. Strikes, inefficiency, theft and corruption also take their toll. Despite such disadvantages, huge numbers still apply for WBS paper courses. That indicates how hungry large populations are for Bible knowledge. They persist in seeking an opportunity. WBS Study Helpers do their best to fulfill these requests—successfully delivering many hundreds of thousands of lessons.



WBS constantly gauges progress and problems, building on the former and seeking to solve the latter. One thing coming soon is new WBS App for smartphones that uses WhatsApp, the main messaging method for 1.5 billion active users worldwide. It offers huge potential for teaching millions of seekers. Please be praying for current success in delivering lessons and Bibles, and for improved delivery methods in the future. The hunger is overwhelming, and the Lord is fulfilling His promise, *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied (Matthew 5:6).*

His next beatitude is for you who care about these hungry souls and seek to meet their needs. *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy (Matthew 5:7).*

Congratulations, Alpha Omega School!

Drs. Danny and Nancy Smelser of Florence, AL, established a mission clinic in Monduli, Tanzania, in 2009. They planned in due course to turn it over to Tanzanian Christians, but found that education levels, especially in the sciences, made preparations for that transition difficult. To meet the need, they started Alpha Omega, “a science focused Christian secondary school.” 2016 saw the first intake of students, with another grade added each year. In October 2019 they celebrated the school’s first graduating class. Lewis Short, a board member and administrator, described the graduates as “32 students who are already becoming spiritual and community leaders.”

Many of the students at Alpha Omega are also World Bible School students. One of the students, Baraka Samwel, was a WBS campaigner in 2019’s God Bless Africa Campaign with the Reeses. He has been mentored by Lewis and Tammy (Reese) Short and their family. The Shorts served for many years in Italy then in Tanzania. They recently finalized the residential phase of their work at Monduli. The photo shows signatures of students and staff blessed by their service. Lewis continues to represent Alpha Omega. His email is letb.short@gmail.com.



Smelers, Lewis and Alpha Omega teachers with the first graduating class



The Short family with signed gift

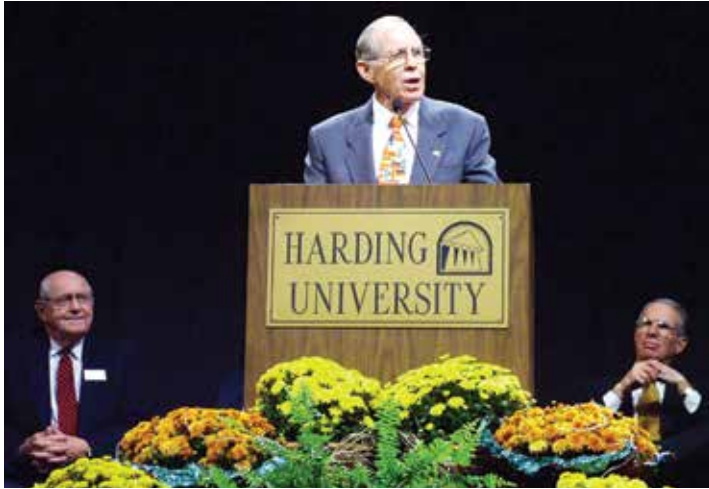
Tex: “We Can Build an Endowment”



You. Sharing Jesus.

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to
Action! World Bible School
P.O. Box 2169
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Tex speaks at Harding. He is flanked by Howard Norton and David Burks, both of whom later became WBS Board members.

Tex took the plunge into World Bible School in 1987 (see page 3). He traveled frequently, year in and year out, for two decades. Between WBS and earlier travels, the mission took Tex to nearly half of the world's nations. Literally millions learned the Gospel while he guided WBS as one of “the most effective ways” to evangelize.

Today, more than ever (also in Tex's words), “WBS offers one of the most unique opportunities in our time.” New opportunities outpace anything Tex experienced. WBS recently launched the Gospel-sharing social network called Mathetis, a timely avenue for reaching Americans and Westerners. Next will come the new WBS App for smartphones that uses WhatsApp, the main messaging method for 1.5 billion active users worldwide. Then will

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come improvements to delivery systems, essential because well over a million new students enroll every year for WBS' paper courses.

Tex went on to eternal glory in 2019, but today's unique opportunities would have thrilled him. If you share Tex's life-dream and want to see more of it come true, this is your opportunity. Mary Jane has asked that Tex's legacy be honored by gifts sent to World Bible School. These gifts give due recognition to Tex as a giant of the mission. They project Tex's inspiring example into the future. They actively advance the cause to which Tex, Reuel, Jimmie and others like Doug (Page 5) devoted their lives. Millions have received the Good News, and your gifts will share Jesus with millions more.

In the September *Action* of 1991, Tex wrote, “I am hoping that we can build an endowment fund that will not only keep WBS operating and expanding, but also supply support for

the director, whoever he may be, in years to come. Funds of this nature come from wills and grants from individuals who see the importance of keeping WBS moving.” That endowment now stands at about half a million dollars and should be grown substantially. Let Brian Davis (512-345-8190) know of your intention to build “The WBS Presidential Endowment” to bring Tex's dream to reality.

upcoming...



The vision:
every creature!