

FIRE & HAMMER

Jeremiah 23:29

Have you noticed how partial we are to comfort these days? Today's new songs make us feel good. They are sweet and attractive, often based on comforting Scriptures. The Word should inspire our songs (Colossians 3:16). But that same Word has a sharp side. Where are contemporary choruses that warn about God's wrath? Where are the "hard sayings"? They too reflect the God we adore.

Even from the Old Testament, we tend to select the "hope" passages. But the prophets delivered many stern messages, including this rhetorical question from the weeping prophet:

Is not My word like fire, declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces? (Jeremiah 23:29).

In that context, fire burns and destroys. A hammer strikes with force, driving hard, smashing and pulverizing. When God's Word goes forth as fire and hammer, it wreaks just vengeance, which is also part of God's faithfulness to His promises. When we share God's Word as fire and hammer, we fulfill the spirit of Ezekiel 3:17: *Whenever you hear a word from My mouth, you shall give them warning from Me.* We let the Word fulfill its role which includes "rebuke" and "correction" (2 Timothy 3:16). Do we speak the whole truth like Paul?

I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:26-27).

John the Baptizer's message was "Good News" (Luke 3:18) that included painful truths (Luke 3:17, 19). "Salvation" makes no sense without the problem it solves. Therefore, the healthy message exposes sin (Ephesians 5:11, 13; Luke 2:34-35; John 3:18-21 cf. Jeremiah 6:14).

Are you seeking the perfect balance of positives and negatives? Do you want the healthiest presentation of the Good News? Then use the Bible itself! It is "the whole counsel of God" within one cover.

Through *Bibles for Millions* you can share the fullness of the life-saving message.

PLEASE MOUNT PAGES 4 & 5 ON
YOUR BULLETIN BOARD!

SEE AND USE THE
GMC POSTER ON PAGES 4 AND 5.

The Global Missions Conference, organized this year by World Bible School, is fast approaching! Please use the poster for your church's foyer and class bulletin boards. Note, on page 5, the announcement of a brand-new way to share Jesus. Along with many other blessings, GMC 2019 will serve as the launch-pad for this latest development in reaching newer generations. Register at www.GMC2019.org.

Heather and

Bibles for Millions

Heather Fleming, a public school teacher for 29 years, retired recently. For years, she had wanted to share more of the Bible's message with her students, but school policies restricted her. At her retirement party, which drew hundreds of former students, parents and friends, Heather offered free WBS Study Bibles. The attractive signs included, "The Only Textbook I Endorse and Use Daily! Yours For Free! I love you!" and "Food For Your Soul."



Heather Fleming at her display of WBS Bibles

Heather is the wife of one of the shepherds, Darron Fleming, at Highland Village church of Christ in Austin, TX. She is always on the lookout for ways to serve and to bless. Recently, congregational messages included this one from Heather:



Party guests at the display table

Jason [Butler], thank you again for the lesson last night! It was so relevant! A young man came to fix our A/C today. He told his life story and all the tragedies in his world,

and I listened. Before he left, I gave him a WBS Bible. He got teary-eyed and thanked me profusely. I just want you to know that your lesson last night provoked me to think of that. So again, thanks for all you do for us and getting us on track with our neighbors!

This is how *Bibles for Millions* works, whether offered by the scores or given one at a time. Join Heather in putting WBS lessons and Bibles to work!

Summer Campaigns

The American summer is a busy time for the Kingdom. Here are a few glimpses into World Bible School travels and activities.

WBS' John and Beth Reese led 18 "God Bless Africa" (GBA) campaigners to Zimbabwe. The group's ages ranged from 75 to 16 (two teens came from Tanzania, and Harding University sent four students with two professors). Zimbabwean Christians organized three WBS follow up seminars that drew over 500, with 47 baptized into Christ. Our internationals served in six congregations and blessed the orphans of Chivero Home of Hope, also conducting a VBS that attracted 200 local children.



GBA campaigners at the David Livingstone statue beside Victoria Falls

WBS' Brian and Sondra Davis organized two campaigns for Hillcrest church of Christ in Abilene, TX. They first brought six Americans to work with the staff and students of Zimbabwe's Mutare School of Preaching and Operation Starfish orphans feeding program. The five-year church plant at Chuware celebrated the opening of its building. With 320 people attending the Gospel meeting, 15 obeyed the Gospel. The second in Mumena, Zambia, brought 30 Americans (15 Hillcrest adults and 13 high school graduates, with two from

Westside church of Christ in Round Rock, TX, where Brian is an elder). Using WBS materials, *God Has Spoken* and *Guide to New Testament Christianity*, campaigners taught 320 students, ages 13 to 32, from 14 village congregations. Forty-four new Christians were baptized into Christ. Both Zimbabwe campaigns partnered with the Gospel Chariot.



Campaigner Bryson Davis sharing his faith

WBS' Phil and Elaine Palmer spent a month in Kenya and Tanzania, conducting three WBS recruiting campaigns with 75 nationals. They enrolled 800 new WBS students. Two WBS Leaders Workshops prepared trainers for Recruiters Workshops aimed at equipping 400 church workers. WBS Service Centers were upgraded in Kenya and Uganda with new scanning and communications equipment. A WBS follow up seminar was held at Nairobi's Institute for Practical Christian Ministry. As Phil says, "Praise to God for the encouragement, growth and proclamation of the Gospel!"



Enrolling students for WBS in East Africa

Time for Action



As John Reese mentioned on page 1, we need to remember that the Bible is not a “feel good / self-help” book. It is God’s testament to know Him and His plan for salvation. Part of His plan is not only having faith, but demonstrating deeds that accompany your faith.

I recently heard a great sermon from the preacher at my home congregation, reminding us that God is always at work.



Jesus clearly says in John 5:17, “My father is working until now, and I am working.” Those words don’t mean we are to sit idly by watching the work of the

Gospel being done by God alone. It means we are part of His plan of salvation. The Great Commission is clear on that point.

In today’s Internet age, with so much information at our fingertips, we are tempted to think that our responsibilities end with knowing something. The truth is, being aware is only the beginning, not the ending. Remember this: Awareness without action leads to apathy!

Awareness without action leads to apathy!

It’s time to get in the game with your energy, your prayers, your generous gifts, and your talents. WBS is growing by God’s grace because of our financial partners. Almost every weekend somewhere in America, a presentation is taking place to let folks know what God is doing through WBS. So, the awareness is happening. What about the action? That is where you come in. Did you know you can begin making an impact today with your gift? How about becoming one of our monthly donors? Go

to worldbibleschool.net/give and read about our Sowing the Seed partnership. You are literally a click away from allowing more to know about Jesus—that’s action!

Is it time for the Great Commission to become a bigger part of your life? Go right now to gmc2019.org and find out more about the Global Missions Conference next month.

It’s time for getting involved. You can share Jesus with millions. What are you waiting for? Don’t just be aware. Care and act!

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



WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL

Action!

Editor: John Reese

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Join other Christians who share your zeal to spread the Good News of Jesus with a lost world. Be inspired by speakers, breakout sessions, worship and fellowship.

HELP US GET THE WORD OUT!

Please post this two-page poster in your building. Make announcements. Bring a group. Child care and classes for children will be provided.

GMC TRACKS: PURSUE YOUR PASSION

GMC 2019, organized by WBS, offers an unprecedented 130 presentations in 19 tracks, each track having 3 classes. The offerings are “deep” (in experience, research and quality) and “wide” (in the variety of timely topics). Peruse the program at gmc2019.org and pursue your passion. Below are samples. If you are passionate about...

digital methods & new generations share with Brandon Edwards, Tim Yeager, John Farber and William Bush.

helping refugees & migrants share with Dino Roussos, Jared Looney, Jerry Canfield and Phil Palmer.

reaching Muslims share with Wissam Al-Aethawi and Augustine Mahmoud.

impacting America share with Chris Swinford, John Orr, Greg Swindle, Paul Partlow and John Reese.

development & business as mission share with Stuart Jones, Scott Emery, Oneal Tankersley and others.

unity in Christ share with Cecil May, Calvin Warpula, Bob Young and Nathan Keene.

senior opportunities share with Abundant Living, Senior AIM, Gospel Sharing, Sojourners and Harry Riggs.

innovative leadership share with Howard Norton, Bill McDonough, Keith Kasarjian, Tim Burow, Joe Evans and others.

learning from history share with Dan Rodriguez, Shawn Daggett, Sam Shewmaker and George Akpabli.

sustainable partnering share with Brian Davis, Washington Mhlanga, Machona Monyamane and Nhamo Marunga and others.

The list goes on: **orphan care** with the Bakers, **church planting and discipleship** with the Howells, prison ministry with Buck Griffith and Chris Magadu, **WBS “Connect”** with Bill Colwell, **WBS follow up** with Edie Connel, **holistic development** with Art Wood and Jana Owen, **medical missions** with Ellie Hamby, Kevin Linderman and the Smelsers, **missionary care** with the Shorts, Hennigers, Allison, Langstons and Hartmans, **stamina** with Sonny Guild, the Baileys and Jordan Yarborough, **Gospel Chariot Missions** with George Funk (live from Australia!) and much more.

OCTOBER 10-12

REGISTER TODAY AT GMC2019.ORG!



DEEP WIDE GLOBAL MISSIONS EXPLORE MISSIONS DIMENSIONS

FEATURED KEYNOTES

The Wide Commission: Into all the World
Wissam Al-Aethawi - Converted from Islam, Arabic evangelism

Adapt or Die? When Does Adaptation Cease to be Biblical?

Bill Richardson - Guatemala, Argentina, Chile, Spanish Churches in U.S.A., Harding University

Steve Eckman - President of York College

Disciple Making or Church Planting? Are These Opposed to Each Other?

Evertt Huffard - Israel, Harding School of Theology, Urban Ministry, Global Church Leadership Development, Missions Resource Network

EP & DE NS CONFERENCE DRING IONS SIONS

KEYNOTES:

(cont'd) **Kirk Brothers** - U.S.A., Latin America, Youth Leadership Development, President of Heritage Christian University

Para-church or Church? How Do They Relate in the Mission?

Brian Davis - Inner City church plants, church planting in French West Africa, South Africa, Zambia, and Congo D.R.C., World Bible School

Bruce McLarty - Kenya, President of Harding University

Teaching Them to Obey All

Truitt Adair - U.S.A., Nigeria, President of Sunset International Bible Institute

AN EXCITING
ANNOUNCEMENT AT GMC!



Mathetis Launches in October!

Witness a dream coming to life at
GMC 2019—a **social media discipling tool!**

Years ago, visionary leaders at World Bible School saw the need to engage newer generations spiritually via social media. The last 2 years have seen intensive investment and preparations. This brand-new social media discipling tool is called **Mathetis** (adapted from the Greek for “disciple”). Think of Mathetis as a social network that fosters spiritual growth among friends, small-groups, and individuals. It invites our world into a conversation filled with love and truth.

Mathetis offers a variety of online experiences that incorporate engaging videos, thought-provoking questions, interactive exercises, descriptive articles and meaningful discussions. Participants can access Mathetis on any device. They can enter at any topic—usually framed as a search-friendly question—that they find interesting. These topics lead to encounters with the Good News of Jesus and life in His body.

Since this method is innovative, WBS has also developed a curriculum geared for your congregation’s Bible classes and home study groups. This printed curriculum parallels the Mathetis online experiences. Each 13-lesson booklet is valuable as a stimulating Bible study. It also develops better understanding of youth cultures and trains those who want to enhance their outreach through Mathetis and social media.

The first unveiling of Mathetis is reserved for October 11th at GMC 2019. After mentors are recruited, Mathetis will begin to “go public” early in 2020. To receive exclusive access and

additional information
on this cutting-edge
social network, visit
mathetis.org.



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Wilma Coppinger celebrated her 100th birthday on September 6, 2019. She and Jake were born in Oklahoma. They were in 1st grade together in Apache, but neither remembered until a class photo was found after they married in 1936. They moved to Tulare, California, in 1945. Their children are Joel, Jimmie and Pat. About 1978, Jimmie Lovell encouraged Jake to focus on WBS follow up. Soon Jake took the first of many WBS mission trips. Wilma was the home-keeper. Still adept with her fingers, she has made beautiful quilts for most of her grand (7), great (15) and great, great grandchildren (6). You can send a card to Wilma via WBS of Tulare County, P.O. Box 3700, Visalia, CA 93278-3700.

Love Notes

Teenage WBS teachers,
Jackson, TN:

“I’ve been able to see that people across the world are passionate to learn about God and His Word, and it has made me think about my own relationship with Him.”

“World Bible School has meant a lot to me. I get frustrated with getting caught up in the routine of school, but WBS gives purpose to each day.”

“WBS has taught me that you can help so many people learn the Word of God. It has been such a blessing.”

“It has been an awesome experience showing others the love of Christ through WBS.”

“It is so cool getting to interact with [international students], hearing about what they struggle with and the differences in our two cultures.”

“WBS has taught me how to serve and spread the love of God to people, even at a young age.”

Carladean Thompson, Kenya: **“These little Bibles are such a blessing to the work at Komarock church of Christ. When John gave us each a copy of this Bible at the Intermission retreat, I already knew what a treasure it was. The last couple of months I have used the section called “Going Deeper” to teach a lady who has taught CRE (Christian Religious Education) in the public schools here in Nairobi, Kenya. When we got to section E of *This Is Good News*, she was astonished. She had thought repentance was salvation. She told me, ‘I am not saved.’ She is studying more. I believe she will be able to see the whole truth and come to grips with changing.”**

Chris Magadu, Zimbabwe: **I have just received this message from the chaplain of Chikurubi Maximum Security Prison: “We have so far covered all 2,500 inmates with Introduction Lessons.” So, all 2,500 prisoners are WBS students—praise God!**

A Surprise for Danny and Deborah

Steve Gober — WBS Gift Officer
DECATUR, Alabama

Since September 2013, Danny and Deborah Truitt have led the WBS teaching team at the Beltline church of Christ in Decatur, AL. Over 8,000 lessons have been sent. The Lord has given their team over 300 baptisms within the U.S. and over 300 in Cuba.

We at WBS and the Beltline church wanted to honor (and surprise) the Truitts. I asked WBS president John Reese to prepare a video, speaking to the Truitts. At Beltline’s Sunday service, we presented the video and a plaque, a duplicate of the one on the Wall of Honor at Cedar Park. There were about 800 people present who gave the Truitts a standing ovation. Danny later wrote,

We have never been more surprised in our lives as when our WBS elder, Tim Thomas, took the stand and called us to the front. I’m kind of a sappy person, so I was in tears the whole time. It was without a doubt one of the greatest—if not the greatest—moment in our lives. I have never felt so honored. Thank you, from Deborah and I both, from the bottom of our hearts.

Thank you, Danny and Deborah, for all you do to teach others about Christ!



Steve, Deborah and Danny

Big Events



Since 2006, InterMission has served missionaries on and off their respective fields. Veteran missionaries—Kent and Nancy Hartman, Clay and Cherry Hart, John and Beth Reese, and Edward and Sharon Short—form the core team of volunteers that promote mission productivity and longevity, with “safe landing” transitions. This year, they and six other facilitators conducted the East Africa Intermission near Nairobi for over 80 cross-cultural workers with churches of Christ. Other InterMission activities include Global Reunion, a camp for missionary families, held at OCU in Edmond (160 registered), Re-Entry Workshops, consulting and congregational training.



The 49th Annual Caribbean Lectureship was hosted for the first time by churches of Christ in Bermuda. Attending were 500 from Bermuda and 21 Caribbean islands, along with other nations. John and Beth Reese represented WBS. The photo shows the group singing on the steps of Hamilton City Hall and Arts Centre. The 50th ACL will return to its starting place in Kingston, Jamaica. Make plans to attend this memorable event on July 12-15, 2020. Register at www.caribbeanlectureship.com.



The Important Things

The editorial (page 1) raises the question of balance in handling the Scriptures. God comes as a gentle dove *and* a consuming fire. His Word is life-giving rain *and* a heavy hammer. Each biblical tension is true and plays its vital role. The sacred responsibility to represent God's Word compels us to write World Bible School courses with utmost care—twelve years to develop the Master Series.

Some onlookers, seeing 1,400,000 new enrollments in 2018, might think that WBS is about large numbers. The far greater priority is faithfulness and fairness in presenting the Good News. An adapted message—such as a “health and wealth gospel”—would attract millions more. But what would be the point? Why promote a perversion that is powerless? Why dishonor the Giver of the Gospel, as if we are wiser for our age and better at engaging our culture? His way is right, perfectly suited to fulfill all His purposes. Our task is to share His way in love, well knowing that some will be attracted and some repelled (1 Corinthians 1:18-23). All disciples share the same task, as reflected by a recent shepherd's farewell at Jefferson City, Missouri.

How can one measure growth in a congregation using attendance, when the growth of the individual members is measured by the stature of Christ? I would challenge any expert on church growth to give us the budget or attendance at any of the seven churches in Revelation. No need to wonder why. Jesus was talking to the churches and individuals about the important things.

We strive to be the church of the first century, spiritually speaking, because we strive to follow God's Word as they strove to follow it—seeking to please the Lord by staying faithful to the Word of God, listening closely to the apostle's instruction and applying it to our hearts, encouraging each other in this, too, and constantly on guard against the influence of the world. If our hearts are fixed on a common goal, we shall reach it together. Let us put our confidence in His promises and to rejoice at His coming when we shall greet our eternal family both old and new in His presence.

This striving includes emphasizing the Lord's “weightier matters... without neglecting the others” (Matthew 23:23). We make no claim to human perfection, just the heart-felt confession that “Jesus is Lord” and His way is the only way.



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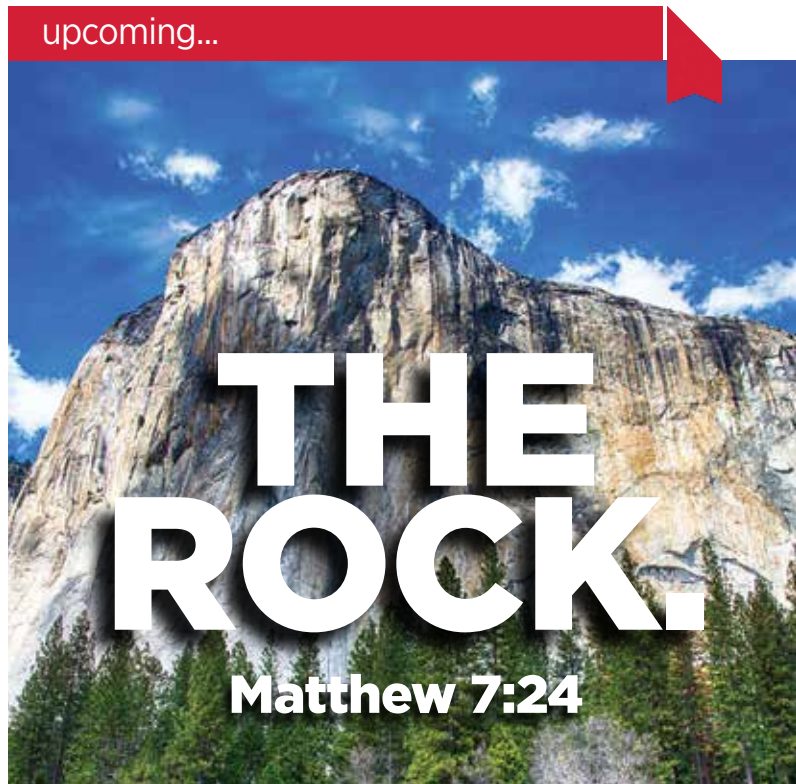
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