



# ACTION!

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THE MISSION OF “50 FOWARD”

# BEGINS WITH PRAYER

**BRIAN REX DAVIS**  
CEDAR PARK, TEXAS  
WBS ACTION! EDITOR AND PRESIDENT





On the front cover, many of us will recognize a familiar posture at World Bible School, the posture of prayer. John Reese continually taught a reliance on prayer with everything that we do at WBS. Prayer is one of our great legacies of the past 50 years. But it is also our great imperative for the next 50 years.

***“Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”***

***1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NASU***

Many of you lift up our WBS efforts on a daily basis in prayer. I am reminded of a quote from the unique preacher and writer, Charles B. Hodge, Jr. in his book *Prayer, The Voice of Faith*. He begins by proclaiming, “I do not believe in prayer.” This is a shocking statement! But he continues, “... I believe in God; therefore, I pray.”

The power of prayer isn’t in our eloquence of language or our ritual repetition. The power of prayer is in the fact that we are communicating with a living and all-powerful God who loves and cares for us and the lost of this world! He has called us into MISSION with Him to teach the Gospel to all of the world.

“teaching them to observe all that I commanded you”. If this young man grows up knowing Jesus, he will not only be able to obey the Gospel one day, but he will also be able to serve Christ’s church as an elder.



*Brian Rex Davis with a WBS Student in South Africa who recently gave his life to Christ in baptism.*

Our prayer for this young man in South Africa is that his new life in Christ will be for a lifetime of faithfulness. He obeyed the Gospel at a WBS Follow-up Gospel meeting.

Wes Ritchie and Brady Shirley bowed in prayer at one of our recent WBS Board Meetings. These Godly leaders spend much time in prayer seeking God’s guidance and discernment in fulfillment of their duties.



*Brian Rex Davis and a young student attending a WBS Seminar in Thailand.*

Above you will see one of our youngest WBS seminar participants in Thailand. What is our prayer for this young man? This seminar was on helping congregations establish elderships. The second part of the Great Commission is



*Wes Ritchie (Blue Shirt) and Brady Shirley (right) in prayer at the WBS 2023 Fall Board Meeting.*

As we begin the **50 Forward** campaign, let us determine to build on the solid foundations of prayer that have gone before us. Join us in prayer each day as we seek to share Jesus with every soul on earth. Too big of a goal, you ask? We believe in God, therefore, we pray!



*Every person has more right to hear the Gosepl once than any one person has to hear it twice.*

# WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL

Jimmie Lovell | **ACTION** - September 1973

I've tackled a number of exciting projects for the Lord in my lifetime but I seem now to have arrived at the most exciting one of all, however, all of them, in one way or another, fit together. Let me review a bit: In 1936 when we moved back to Denver, there was no church in the Dakotas, Utah or Nevada and maybe one little rural church in Recluse, Wyoming - there was really not one strong church in all of the Rocky Mountain states. Vivian and I started the Colorado Christian (later the Rocky Mountain Christian) in order to make known and lend encouragement to these little, way-off-by-themselves churches. When we came back to Los Angeles in 1937 we started the West Coast Christian for pretty much the same purpose, covering all of the West from Mexico to Alaska.

*To preach the Gospel in every nation of the world became our goal.*

I personally traveled the same territory and more. In all cases, sowing the seed in new places and helping to build the many small existing churches became my mission, my mission then and it still is. All the while we

were raising vast sums of money to send and support our workers across the seas.

Having written, while in Denver, the first Bible Correspondence Course I ever saw, and finding it, although so poorly done, a tool by which any Christian could multiply his or her influence, I began to push the idea with our missionaries. It was astounding how fast it proved of value but it required money and we started supplying it. With both our West Coast Christian and California Christian papers we helped Olan

*(I found) 100 Students in a 50-mile radius who were doing their study from a single Bible... Bibles became a major added objective.*

Hicks start and build the Christian Chronicle. In 1962 we started ACTION with a stronger emphasis on world missions through Bible Correspondence. In some way or another to preach the Gospel in every nation of the world became our goal.

It was not until on my third world trip and in Africa that I came to the realization that one cannot take a Bible Correspondence Course

without a Bible. However, I found there one case where near 100 Students in a 50-mile radius who were doing their study from a single Bible. Bibles then became a major added objective. I feel now that I waited most all of my life to find the most important one thing to mankind in all the world - the pearl of great price - God's Word. Then it was that Vivian and I started down that long road of reaching, in some fashion, the unsaved person with the Bible or Bible lessons - if he accepted one we tied in the other - no greater twins were ever born. Today, outside the United States, **we have close to a half million Students enrolled in Bible study.** Please do not pass this by without

*The dedication, determination and efficiency of our workers over there, I saw, as I have never seen elsewhere in the world - even here - the power of the Gospel*

thinking seriously what it means - 500,000 unsaved persons in our hands seeking salvation. To each of them we are helping to get a Bible and the lessons - the lessons and the Bible.

The tremendous efforts with all of the backing of great churches here in America; the dedication, determination and efficiency of our workers over there, I saw, as I have never seen elsewhere in the world - even here - the power of the Gospel - what the Bible, and almost the Bible alone - can do in the hearts of man.

By some act of God (we call it providence) we were able to get thousands of Bibles printed on Communist presses in Czechoslovakia, and delivered into the hands of our courageous workers out of Vienna, Austria. You readers of





## Fifty years later and our mission is still the same:

*To share Jesus with the world by motivating and equipping a global network of Christians to use interactive Bible studies effectively.*

Since Jimmie Lovell crafted "World Bible School" in 1973, thousands of Christians just like you have started over **40 MILLION** Bible Studies.

Today we offer Bible studies through:

- **Postal** Correspondence Programs
- **Online** Correspondence Programs
- **Ocean Bridge**, correspondence through digital scanning
- **Mathetis**, online group Bible study

We have also produced:

- **The Master Series**, our own Bible correspondence course
- **WBS Study Edition Bible**
- **WBS Online** Bible study website, [worldbibleschool.org](http://worldbibleschool.org)
- **WBS App**, **WBS Lite app** and **Mathetis App**
- **WBS Advanced Bible Curriculum**
- **Mathetis Original** video Bible courses.

This would not be possible without dedicated Christians like you who have chosen to invest their **time and money** into sharing the Gospel through WBS for the last 50 years.

As we reflect upon how God has used forward-thinking Christians within our past, we are inspired to continue God's work for the next 50 years and beyond. **Will you partner with us?** Continue reading ACTION! to learn more.

**Get started now by visiting [worldbibleschool.net](http://worldbibleschool.net) or giving us a call at (512) 345-8190.**

ACTION gave the money - I just helped get it there. Not only that initial transaction, you have supplied to them some \$60,000 or \$70,000 since that time. Here we have a situation where dedicated, scholarly men of God with their dedicated wives and children are staging a new Restoration Movement like of which the world has never known. The Word of God is going out in 11 different languages, followed by both mail and personal contacts. It is one of the ripest fields and richest works on earth with many redeemed souls now in every one of those nations.

*I come now, no doubt, to my  
life's closing chapter -  
World Bible School*

The Bible, my Brothers, with Christ, Peter, Paul and others, is the most powerful proclaimer of the Gospel - having to do with man and eternal life - in all the world. I come now, no doubt, to my life's closing chapter - **WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL** which brings to sharp focus all which I have mentioned above.

Oh how I've worked and prayed about all this, and how wonderful so many of you blessed souls have been to help make so much of what I mention in this paper possible - thousands and thousands, yes hundreds of thousands of dollars. I now bring you to one of the greatest

works of them all where money plays but a minor part - our **WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL**.

There are two major situations having to do with man and Christianity (1) the unsaved and (2) the responsibility of the saved to get Christ to him, which means that if the saved does not do it, he stands in the same position - or even worse - than the unsaved - both will be lost. As so much which I have mentioned above, after most of life has been spent, I awaken to these

*Finding and enrolling the  
unsaved is not too difficult  
and we are fast finding  
teachers who will see that  
Christ and His soul-saving  
message reaches them.*

two vital insights with some knowledgeable means of handling them. Finding and enrolling the unsaved is not too difficult and we are fast finding teachers who will see that Christ and His soul-saving message reaches them. From one end to the other it requires lots of deep thinking, planning and hard work on our part but this is joy to our souls - millions are dying without Christ - we have a job to be done.

We have had to start with those who can read and write English and we are in the process of enrolling such persons all over the world.

**It is somewhat a costly procedure but the thought of a soul in darkness drives us on.** We already have Students in Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda and Kenya and many will be coming soon from several other nations.

We plan to have 100,000 Students next year and 500,000 by two years from now - all taught by members here in America - the saved must become involved if they stay saved. Churches in a number of places have become involved. It is nothing short of being fantastic.

I can truthfully say, you have never experienced such interest and excitement as this work will bring. You will be keeping some of the Lord's commandments you never kept before and it will bring you happiness in the church you never had before. You will be preaching Christ from your own home not from some church building, which proves it can be done from both.

*You have never experienced  
such interest and excitement as  
this work will bring.*

I ask again that every preacher, elder, member who reads this to become involved as it will help you toward that home where there are no tears, no night. I send this with a prayer and my love.









10



11



12



13



14

# 10,000,000

FOR CHRIST

## 14,873,194

HEARTS OFFERED A Gospel  
STUDY IN 2022-23

## 2.10M

Printed Lessons

## 10.09M

Online Lessons

## 105K

Study Bible

## 2.56M

Mathetis

FRUIT FROM SEEDS PLANTED

## 1.61M

Printed Lessons  
Students Enrolled

## 299K

Online Lessons  
Registrations

## 105K

Study Bible  
Distributed

## 733K

Mathetis Video  
Views

## 2,757,003

SOULS BEGAN A BIBLE  
STUDY IN 2022-23

As we close the **10,000,000 for Christ** campaign, we pause to thank God for His increase. We thank all of the Christians who began studies with these precious souls. And we thank our donors who helped fund these feats.

Speaking of donors, we finished 2023 by completing our largest ever Match and Challenge - \$1.5 MILLION. This helped us to reach our overall goal of raising \$10,000,000 between 2022 and 2023. Our final two-year total was \$10,982,161.

We press forward in our mission to share Jesus with the world through our **50 Forward** campaign. Will you join us as we continue to reach the lost?

1) Muo Emmanuel from Nigeria is baptized into Christ; 2) Kelvin Chanda from Zambia baptized and joins the church in Solwezi; 3) Four Postal Students in Kenya are baptized and join the Nyamusi church of Christ; 4) WBS Student Helga Botha and her daughter are baptized into Christ in South Africa. 5 & 6) After studying with his Follow-up Partner, Online Student, Tesgaye, obeys the Gospel; 7 & 8) Brian and Sondra are greeted by a school studying using Ocean Bridge in Nigeria; 9) 52 inmates inside a prison in Kenya put on Christ in baptism after completing the

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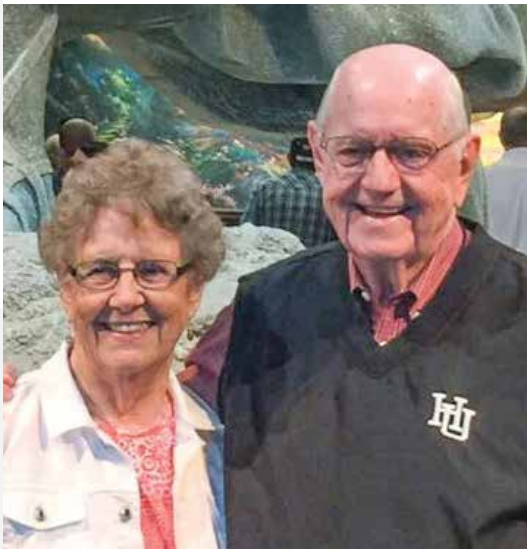
Master Series in October 2023. 10 & 11) WBS Student, Brandon from South Africa, chooses to put on Christ in baptism. Two weeks later his wife Nadine also chose to become a Christian; 12) WBS Online Student, Prudence, is baptized into Christ at the Gospel Chariot Missions Campus in Pretoria. 13 & 14) The Northwest church of Christ in Plainview, Texas continues to see God's increase with two more baptism through their prison ministry.



**JOHN REESE | SEARCY, ARKANSAS**  
PRESIDENT EMERITUS



*Howard and Jane Norton*



# NEVER STOP DREAMING

## REMEMBERING HOWARD AND JANE NORTON

In 2020, World Bible School published *Dreams Come True*, a picture book of mission stories. Howard Norton wrote one of the most inspiring stories. In “A Dream, A Plan, A Reality,” Howard told how God used him and Jane, as newlyweds, to form the large team that went to Brazil in 1961, and God’s powerful work since then. He concluded,

What thrills us are the hundreds of congregations and thousands of Christians scattered throughout Brazil and the rest of Latin America who are constantly preaching and practicing the Gospel of Christ. To God “be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.”

Howard and Jane never stopped dreaming. After returning to the United States, Howard became dean of the College of Bible at Oklahoma Christian University. He also preached for Memorial Road church of Christ and served as editor of *The Christian Chronicle* (1981-1996). Moving to Arkansas in 1997, he served as professor of Bible and director of Lectureship at Harding University, and he served College church of Christ as an elder. All along, Howard and Jane’s mission travels never ceased, nor did their dreaming. In his 70s, Howard became president of Baxter Institute in Honduras. Then he served as a member and a chairman of World Bible School’s board (2016-2022), lending his wisdom and experience to launch WBS into a new era of visionary growth.

During their 16 years in Brazil, Howard and Jane had become fluent in Portuguese. They loved all nations, especially Brazil. In a July 2017 guest editorial for *ACTION!*, Howard reported on my visit with him to present new WBS tools in Brazil. He said, “How our [1961] team would have jumped at the present opportunity to teach the Gospel to Brazilians with Internet courses prepared by World Bible School!”

Howard and Jane’s dreams for WBS to offer Portuguese courses advanced decisively when veteran missionary, Tim Brumfield, became a full-time representative for WBS. With the Nortons, he envisioned a great army of Brazilian Christians as missionaries via Internet and in-person. Along with many international travels, taking along Brazilians, Tim spearheaded breakthroughs in new ways to share the Portuguese WBS Master Series and Let the Bible Speak courses. At most recent count, some 300 Brazilian Christians have been recruited as WBS Online Study Helpers to Brazil, Angola, Mozambique and other Portuguese-speaking nations. Just as the Norton dream took shape beginning in 1961, their dream for Portuguese WBS (Escola Biblica Mundial) is becoming a magnificent reality. By the power of the God the Nortons served, the coming years will be the most exciting yet as God fulfills their dreams. Their examples are inspiring even greater visions for accomplishing the Great Commission.



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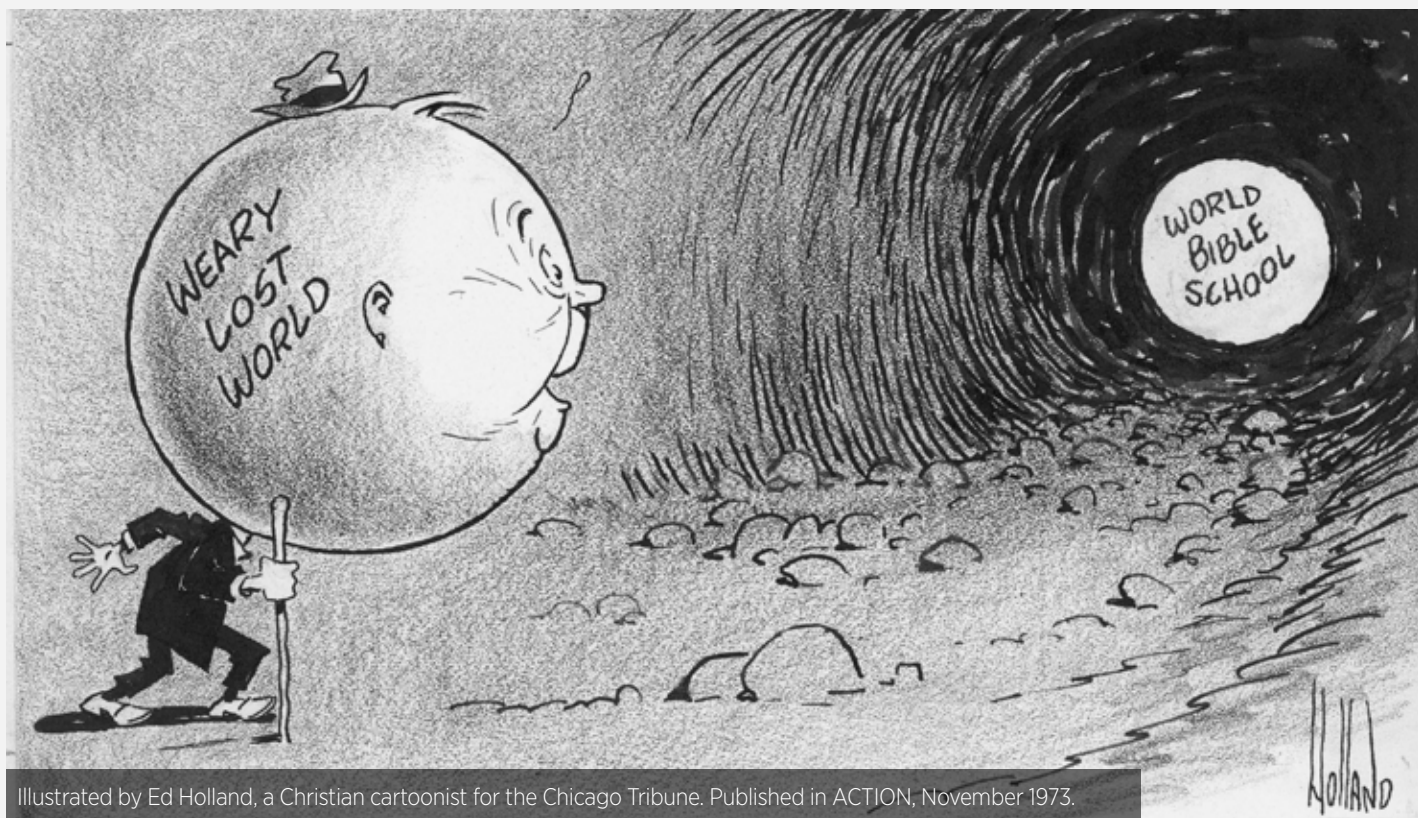
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# MEANINGFUL ANSWERS TO PRAYERS: OCEAN BRIDGE

## IS OPENING DOORS FOR FRUITFUL BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE



**TIM YAEGER**  
BIRMINGHAM ALABAMA  
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

Did you know the concept of Ocean Bridge began nearly ten years ago? The idea didn't have that name until recently, but the challenge of international postal correspondence has been

growing over many years. Prayers have been lifted throughout these years from WBS staff seeking a solution. When we take our challenges to God in prayer, he faithfully provides more incredible solutions than we can imagine. God works in His time, but He is faithful to yield fruit.

Prayers were lifted and God opened the doors for dramatic Ocean Bridge expansion. We began 2023 with Ghana, Zimbabwe and Uganda. World Bible School added Nigeria, our highest recruitment country, Kenya, and Zambia. Technically, we didn't have those three planned in the budget. But, through generous donors' blessing, God allowed us to print in-country and establish Ocean

Bridge operations. This led to WBS recruiting **61,000 Students** in the Ocean Bridge model in only half a year. We pray God will yield even more Students in 2024.

Prayers were lifted and God reenergized many WBS programs within congregations. 2023 started with three congregations on Ocean Bridge and ended with **43!** Where congregations were continually losing courses in the mail, now they are actively teaching Students deep into the courses and receiving many baptism requests. Where WBS Study Helpers were giving up, more are getting involved, and **WBS Coordinators are involving multiple generations of the church**, even youth groups, to get involved with WBS teaching. God





is yielding fruitful correspondence through His church!

**Prayers were lifted and God** assembled a WBS team worldwide to execute Ocean Bridge. To mention a few, many of you may know Sherri Hays. She coordinates the transfer of all digital files and Students. Debbie Patek provides quality control for scans before they go to a congregation. Ron Pottberg, Phil Palmer and Machona Monyamane coordinate dozens of WBS workers in Ocean Bridge countries. Andrew Maach, our software engineer, dedicates his time to creating new technology that allows Ocean Bridge to

scale. Savannah Howell, our React Native developer, created the icon you see for Ocean Bridge. Marcus McKee is our road and Zoom warrior helping congregations get started on Ocean Bridge. God is yielding fruitful correspondence through His team!

**Prayers were lifted and God** is building bridges of unity. Through Ocean Bridge, God is unifying teams, leading to more recruitment and more Students. Ultimately, God will yield a fruitful harvest for the Kingdom of Christ through this unity.

**Are you ready to start your journey on Ocean Bridge** and participate in fruitful international Bible correspondence?

Let's kick off the next 50 years together in a powerful way knowing God will faithfully do more than we can imagine.

**Start Ocean Bridge today** by visiting [worldbibleschol.net/oceanbridge](http://worldbibleschol.net/oceanbridge) or giving us a call at (512) 345-8190.



A MEANINGFUL WAY TO REACH THOSE WHO HAVE

# FALLEN AWAY

WILLIAM BUSH | SPRINGFIELD, TN | CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER



MATHETIS

*"My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins." -James 5:19-20*





Available now on the Mathetis App or at [mathetis.org](http://mathetis.org)

*Not my youth group, I thought. Not my friends. We are different.*

Growing up as the son of a youth minister, I heard this statistic all the time: approximately 50% of young people would leave the church after graduating high school. It was a staggering number back then. But even worse, new research suggests two out of every three souls who grow up in the church will leave soon after graduating high school.

*Not my youth group, I thought. Not my friends.*

Many of us who grew up together in the youth group also attended church services both on Sundays and Wednesdays. We regularly participated in devotionals and other youth activities, attended church camp, assisted in church-wide service projects, taught Bible classes, lead in worship. Some even chose to attend a Christian university and among those some even majored in Bible or ministry. Many chose to continue as great servants and leaders for our Lord after graduation. Yet, when I go back home to visit or as Facebook memories pop up with pictures from the past, I am also reminded of those friends who chose to leave their relationship with Christ.

Whether these precious souls are your grandchildren, children, cousins, best friends or just simply a former brother or sister in Christ - **it hurts when Christians choose to leave Christ and His church.** *What if I had just said this? What if I had just done that more often? What if they had chosen a different school or a different major? Was it my fault? What could I have done to change things?*

We all know the parable of the sower and that some hearts are rocky and some are full of weeds. We also know one of Jesus' own disciples chose to deny Him. But these realities don't stop the pain when someone we love chooses to set aside their relationship with Christ to pursue the things of this world. Like God, we do not want *any to perish, but all to reach repentance* (2 Peter 3:9).

We at World Bible School hurt with you. We too have grandchildren, children, brothers, sisters, friends and other family members who have chosen to leave Christ. We have heard your cries, share in your heartache **AND it has compelled us to do something about it.**

Right now, we are developing **a new Mathetis Original video course and "Reaching Series" Bible class curriculum booklet to equip Christians with tools to reach those who have fallen away.** The Mathetis Original course will be a tool designed for you to invite your loved ones into a Bible study, while the Bible class curriculum will be designed to help us as Christians learn how to lovingly guide those who have fallen away back into a healthy relationship with Christ.

Will you help us produce the next Mathetis Original course?

**We are seeking to raise \$250,000, which will enable us to:**

- Write the videos, questions, Digging Deeper articles and Bible class curriculum
- Produce the high-quality Mathetis videos and publish them on Mathetis
- Print the new "Reaching Series" Bible class curriculum booklets



To give scan the QR code, visit [worldbibleschool.net/give](http://worldbibleschool.net/give), call 512-345-8190 or mail a check to P.O. Box 2169 Cedar Park, TX 78630



# SAME MISSION NEW GOALS



**GEORGE BARLOW**  
AUSTIN, TEXAS  
CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER

There's a song we often sing entitled, "Higher Ground." The words of the song begin like this...

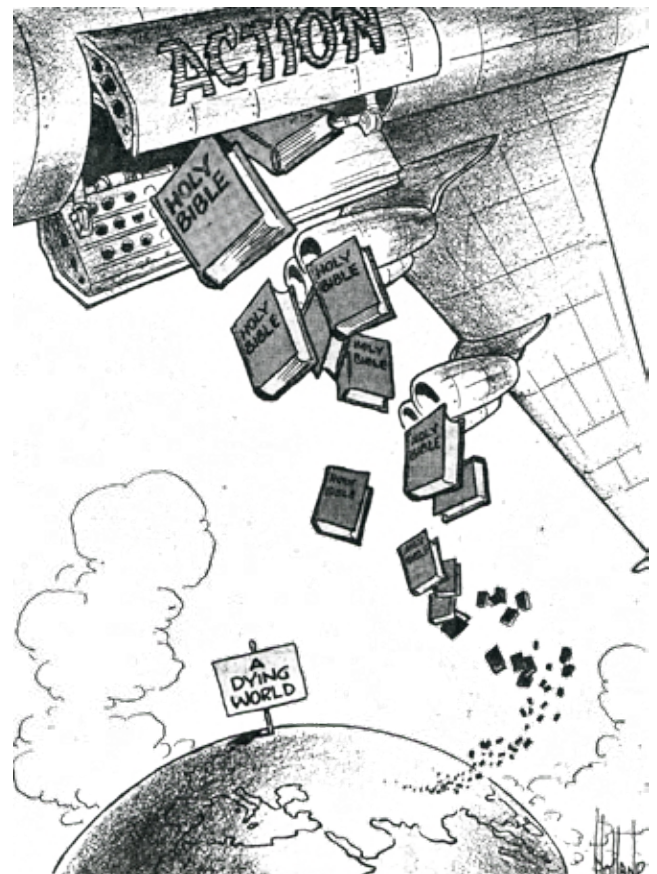
*I'm pressing on the upward way,  
New heights I'm gaining every day;  
Still praying as I onward bound,  
"Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."*

We are well into 2024 with many fascinating opportunities presenting themselves and numerous plans underway. The second week of January, the Advancement team met for two full days at World Bible School's offices in Cedar Park, Texas. We started each day with prayer, had engaging conversations, brainstorming sessions, and planning activities.

We accomplished two major goals during our time together. First, we were able to solidify a campaign for the next three years with goals that align with our overall mission and vision. With our theme of 50 Forward, **we are striving to increase our monthly individual and church donors with a combination of 500 churches and 5,000 individuals**, respectively, that give either **\$5, \$50, or \$500 per month** for a minimum of three years. Second, we were able to land on a "Call to Action" to our current and future supporters. We pray that God will raise up men, women, young adults and churches who choose to invest in spreading the Gospel - Jesus saves.

With God's continued goodness, we believe He will expand our efforts throughout the United States and across the globe.

I pray to God that He will lift me up, guide me and plant my feet on higher ground as we work together for the cause of Christ. We look toward the future, while never forgetting the past, as we advance forward to the next 50 years.





*"You have never experienced  
such interest and excitement as  
this work will bring."*

*Jimmie Lovell*

WE ARE SEEKING

**500 CHURCHES &  
5,000 INDIVIDUALS TO GIVE  
\$5, \$50 OR \$500 A MONTH**

**YOUR GIFT WILL BE USED IMMEDIATELY TO SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH THE WORLD!**

Please accept my **GIFT** of:

☐ \$5 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$5,000 ☐ Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mr./Mrs./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make my **GIFT** a:

☐ One time gift ☐ Monthly recurring ☐ Yearly recurring

By selecting "Recurring" you become a member of our **Sowing the Seed Gift Program**. Learn how your recurring gift can impact WBS at [worldbibleschool.net/sowingtheseed](http://worldbibleschool.net/sowingtheseed).

My **GIFT** is provided via:

☐ Check, payable to "World Bible School" ☐ Credit Card

If selected "Credit Card," please fill out the following:

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ CVV: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



SCAN QR CODE OR VISIT [WORLDBIBLESCHOOL.NET/GIVE](http://WORLDBIBLESCHOOL.NET/GIVE) TO GIVE ONLINE

Please make my **GIFT** a tribute:

☐ Memorial Gift ☐ Honor Gift

This tribute is for: \_\_\_\_\_

Send acknowledgement to: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

COMING UP NEXT



**WORLD  
BIBLE  
SCHOOL**

You. Sharing Jesus.

**POSTMASTER:**

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

PERIODICAL MAIL  
NONPROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
CEDAR PARK, TX  
PE 4380



*"Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" James 1:22*



*Every person has more right to hear  
the Gosepl once than any one person  
has to hear it twice.*

**1937**

**WEST COAST CHRISTIAN**

Jimmie Lovell's initial West Coast Christian periodical envisions global impact of Bible correspondence courses.

**1962**

**FIRST ISSUE OF ACTION**

Jimmie publishes *ACTION* to promote world evangelism.

**1973**

**WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL**

Jimmie applies the name "World Bible School" to church-wide involvement in Bible correspondence course evangelism.

See the full timeline and our goals for the next 50 years at [worldbibleschool.net/50forward](http://worldbibleschool.net/50forward).