
TAKING THE **WHOLE WORD** TO THE **WHOLE WORLD**

Our faithful lives

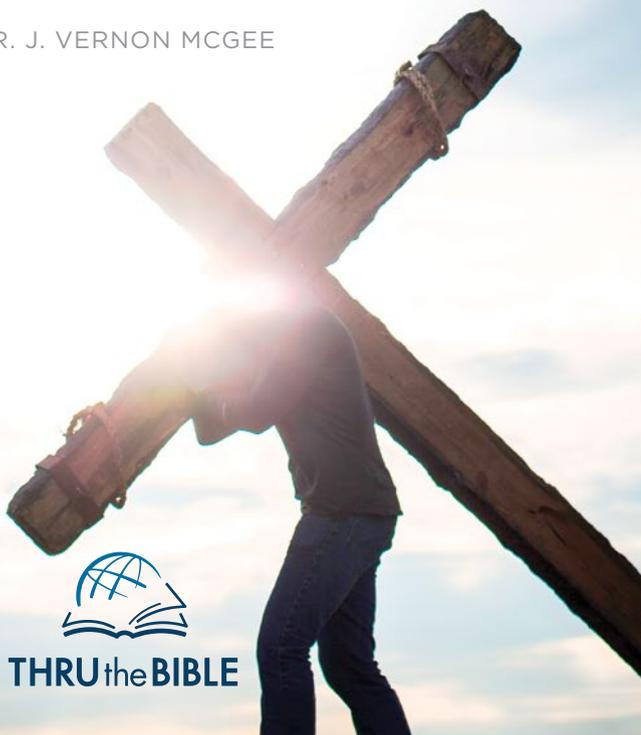
MAKE A BEAUTIFUL BACKDROP

FOR PEOPLE TO HEAR US

SHARE THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT

Jesus Christ.

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE



THRUthe**BIBLE**



WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

SAINTS OR AIN'TS?



Dr. J. Vernon McGee
THRU the BIBLE Founder



This excerpt is from our **Titus Bible Companion**. Download the full digital booklet [here](#).

No matter how high the steeple rises in the sky or how beautiful the worship inside, the message delivered from the pulpit will tell you whether a church is really a church. A church must teach sound doctrine or it's not a church.

In this second chapter of Titus, we discover more of what this "sound doctrine" is (2:2) and what type of leader God can use to lead His church. The apostle Paul also divides up the congregation into specific demographics and paints a picture of what all saints should look like.

Let's begin with the senior citizens. He said older men should be worthy of respect and self-controlled. They practice a practical faith in God and embrace their role as an example in the church body. They show concern for others and a patient endurance, with full confidence in God. These are all marks of maturity.



Older women should do all that, too, with a feminine flair. Their behavior should reflect their love for the Lord. Their words are edifying and kind, rather than malicious gossip, and the time they have on their hands should be spent doing good works as well as teaching younger women what is good.

It's a serious responsibility to be a wife and to care for children in the home. The biggest and most important business in the world is the making of a home. A wife's primary responsibility is her home, and a wise husband allows his wife to manage the household as her primary ministry. An older woman can help a young wife navigate the complexities of that job and respond to the love and leadership of her husband.

The next group Paul addresses are the young men, and for that he turns to Titus, his young protégé and pastor, and says, *"You be a pattern, an example, for the other young men."*

A young man should maintain purity as he models his complete confidence in God's Word. He knows and appreciates how his behavior impacts the effectiveness of the gospel. He also realizes his life is being watched by the world, so he should live so he can't be accused of anything ungodly. Even his conversations should reveal that he is a child of God.



The next group Paul addresses are servants. In the early church, many followers of Jesus were slaves. In fact, 90 percent of the names engraved on the walls of the catacombs are of slaves. The gospel met a tremendous need for this group of people.

Paul challenges servants with sound counsel in two areas that easily cross over to our relationship with our employers. The first counsel stresses the importance of a godly attitude—to do our jobs humbly and wholeheartedly. And secondly, to be trustworthy in our speech, in our moral integrity (don’t steal), and faithfulness.

What do these actions accomplish? When you act this way, you adorn the message of the gospel, Paul said. The original word for “adorn” is the same root for “cosmetic.” Our faithful service to our employers makes a beautiful backdrop for people to hear the good news about Jesus Christ.

In case these folks think Paul is just getting into their business, the apostle answers the bigger question of why they should stand out in their culture. *It’s because of God’s grace*, he said. The most wonderful thing in the world is that God’s grace is available to us in three time zones:

For the grace of God that brings salvation [past] ... teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age [present], looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ [future]. –Titus 2:11-13

The grace of God is the way God saves us. It is God’s power at work in us. God doesn’t save us by His love; He doesn’t save us by His mercy. Ephesians 2:8 tells us: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.”

He paid a price for us

SO HE COULD REDEEM US FROM

THE DARK, REBELLIOUS LIFE

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

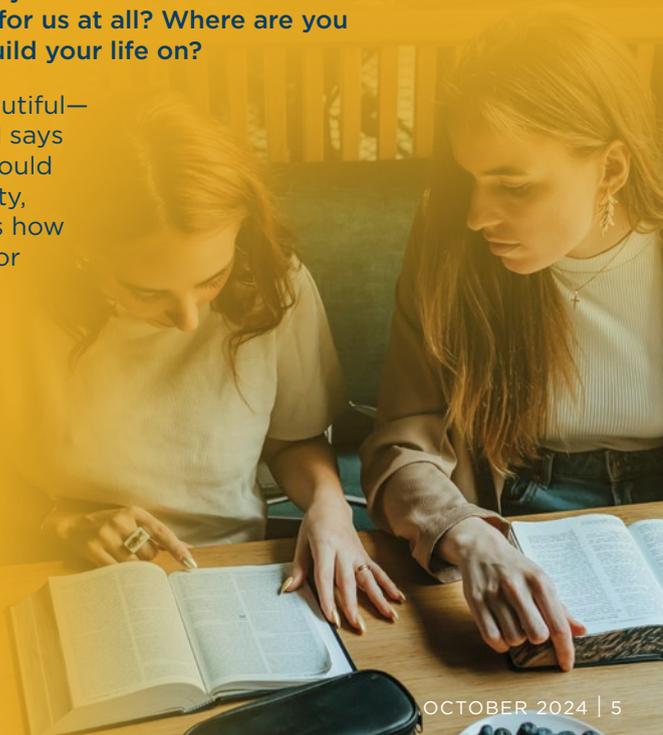
God only asks people to believe Him, to trust Him, and to accept the gift offered by Jesus Christ. God's way is the best way, and it is the *only* way.

God is not trying to make this world a better place; He is redeeming the people who believe in the name of Jesus Christ. The gospel doesn't want people to act nicer. God isn't interested in reforming you; He wants to redeem you. God wants you to live for Him and wants you to do good works, but He has to redeem you first.

How will He do that?

Through Jesus Christ "who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works" (2:14). He paid a price for us so He could redeem us from a dark, rebellious life. He wants a pure people for Himself.

MY TURN

- ① **Where did the early church find sound doctrine? Has this changed for us at all? Where are you finding truth to build your life on?**
 - ② **God's grace is beautiful—and relatable. God says sound doctrine should lead to our maturity, and then shows us how it looks different for different groups of people. How is that grace?**
 - ③ **Paul told Titus to be a pattern. What are some areas of your life where you need to find a good pattern to follow?**
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- A photograph of two young women sitting at a wooden table, reading an open book together. The woman on the left is wearing a white t-shirt and has her hand on the page. The woman on the right is wearing a brown jacket and is also looking at the book. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a window with blinds.



ETHIOPIA LEADERS WELCOME HOME GROUP TRAINING



Steve Shwetz

THRU the BIBLE Host & Board of Directors Chairman

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to visit Ethiopia and Kenya to witness the work of God in these two countries. During my time in Ethiopia, THRU the BIBLE organized a three-day training session for pastors interested in establishing Home Groups in their respective communities.

Originally, we aimed to have 25 to 30 pastors attend the training. However, the word spread quickly, and we ended up with over 60 pastors joining us for the three-day training. They came from various parts of Ethiopia and even from as far as Somalia. The training was conducted simultaneously in English, Oromo, and Amharic.

The pastors were thrilled to receive THRU the BIBLE resources and audio players to take back to their communities. These resources would be used to train local coordinators who, in turn, would oversee up to 15 individuals leading small groups in their communities.



Over 60 church leaders attend Home Group training in Ethiopia.

After completing the training, they were challenged to estimate the number of small groups they would form. The number they came up with amazed me. This group of about 60 pastors committed to start over 2,500 small groups. These groups would meet in homes to read the Bible together and listen to the teaching of THRU the BIBLE. I must admit, I had my doubts about their ability to achieve such a large number of Home Groups. However, as of the beginning of summer, they were closing in on over 2,000 groups!

We can sometimes get overwhelmed by numbers like this. Dr. McGee calls it “the sin of statistics,” and although we rejoice in the numbers it is ultimately the fruit the Lord produces as a result of these groups meeting together around God’s Word that gets us most excited. Over 67% of the population in Ethiopia identifies as Christian, but like much of Africa, it is “a mile wide and two inches deep.” The prosperity gospel is flourishing in Ethiopia and solid Bible teaching is desperately needed for those who claim to be Christians but have no concept of what salvation through faith in Christ alone even means.

I’m asking you to pray for these leaders and for those who will be attending the small groups throughout Ethiopia and Somalia. Pray especially for Wakshuma. He leads the entire Ethiopian team and is also the voice of Dr. McGee in Oromo. He recently lost his wife to cancer and is now raising his young son as a single dad. Pray that he would lead the team well and that God would provide for him and his son as he faces the unique challenges associated with raising a child alone.



Pastor Wakshuma Terefe, the voice of Dr. McGee on the Oromo Bible Bus.





WHEN WE KNOW HIM BETTER, WE DO BETTER

But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct. -1 Peter 1:15

When we know Him better, we do better. That's the message we hear from Fabrice in Burundi. He writes:

"I am grateful for this program. It is truly captivating. I have been an avid follower for some time now, and I must say that it has had a profound impact on my life. There was a time when I was deeply immersed in sinful behavior. However, during my participation of studying the Bible with you, I experienced a transformation and turned away from my past. As I got to know God better, I wanted to live my life for Him. I became a better person and wanted others to see Him in my actions. I am keeping you in my prayers for continued success in spreading the Word of the Lord, and I extend my heartfelt thanks for all you do."

Fabrice is right, as followers of Christ we are called to a different standard of behavior than that of the world. We are called to be holy, which means "set apart."

Pray for THRU the BIBLE as it goes out in Burundi (and in our communities as well). Ask God to set us apart and to impress His Word on our hearts. May we, too, live in the hope that our friends and family see our good deeds and glorify God (see 1 Peter 2:12).

This is an example of the email our World Prayer Team receives every weekday. Together, we travel the world on our knees, interceding for one country at a time. Join us in covering the entire earth with prayer every year.

GO TO **TTB.ORG/PRAY**
TO SIGN UP.

WHY STUDY TITUS?

Join in the studies on
THRU the BIBLE **OCTOBER 3-9**
or anytime online, by podcast,
or by mobile app.

"This is how to lead a church." Life in the first century dealt with the same issues we do today. Learn how the apostle Paul, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, directed Titus in how to organize the church, how to choose leaders, and how we can lead healthy and holy lives.

KEY VERSE

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. –Titus 3:5

KEY WORDS IN TITUS:

- Good works – 7x
- Savior – 7x
- Salvation – 7x
- Sound doctrine – 7x

ACCORDING TO THE BOOK OF TITUS, EFFECTIVE LEADERS ARE:

- ✓ Blameless
- ✓ Faithful
- ✓ Not overbearing
- ✓ Not quick-tempered
- ✓ Self-controlled
- ✓ Holy
- ✓ Disciplined
- ✓ (Even being a good parent is on the list)

"It is a dangerous thing to put down a series of rules that are nothing but a ritual whereby you attempt to live the Christian life. My friend, unless you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, all else comes absolutely to nought." –Dr. J. Vernon McGee

DISCOVER TEN WAYS TO BE A CLASSY, TITUS 2 WOMAN. Check out Titus 2:1-5.

LOCAL CHURCH INSTRUCTIONS FROM TITUS:

- Be orderly (chapter 1)
- Teach and preach the Word of God accurately (chapter 2)
- Be known for your good works (chapter 3)

P.S. FROM DR. MCGEE: "The church is saved by grace, is to live by grace, and is to demonstrate her faith to the world with good works.... It's difficult to find a church balanced in these three areas. Usually one is emphasized and another is neglected. You'll never find a perfect church, but look for balance."





To Everyone Who Serves the Body of Christ

THRU the BIBLE loves pastors, and we come by it honestly. Dr. McGee was a pastor his whole life, first to a congregation at church and then to a congregation on the air. **That's why we especially love to read pastors' letters on the air and give away so many resources on TTB.org. Acting like a pastor, giving out God's Word, is part of our DNA.**

As you study on the Bible Bus this month, listen for the affection and conviction in Dr. McGee's voice. He loved the ministry, and he never got over the honor it was to be called to serve God's people. I know that feeling, too. Nothing gives me greater joy than to read your notes about how THRU the BIBLE is helping you grow closer to God. I thank God for you and pray for you often.

And as you may remember, Steve and I have just returned from Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia where we met predominantly with pastors and ministry leaders. They were humble and eager and grateful for help in the ministry. **It's become a hallmark of our global ministry, for sure, to serve and equip those who serve God's people.**

And that's just another reason why we appreciate your love and commitment to God's Word and to God's people. **Thank you for your faithfulness in serving both in whatever role God has given you to play.** Let's continue our course in taking God's whole Word to the whole world.

Grateful for your partnership,



Gregg Harris
THRU the BIBLE, President



WHY STUDY PHILEMON?

Join in the studies on
THRU the BIBLE **OCTOBER 10**
or anytime online, by podcast,
or by mobile app.

Why study Philemon? Because we all mess up sometimes. This short letter from the apostle Paul is to his friend Philemon. Behind the letter is a dramatic story set against the backdrop of slavery. It's an illustration of "what forgiveness looks like" and was hand-carried by the one who needed it. Grace is messy sometimes.

THIS LETTER SERVES THE CHURCH IN TWO WAYS:

1 It's a **spiritual illustration** of Jesus' love for us when He pleads our case before God. Paul writes, "receive him as you would me. But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account" (vs. 17-18).

"Jesus took our place in death, but He gives us His place in life."

—Dr. J. Vernon McGee

2 It teaches us **how brotherly love should work**. Two men (Philemon and Onesimus) from different classes in the Roman Empire, who hated and hurt each other, are now brothers in Christ, and they are to act like it.

"The human heart always wants to be free. Now these two men were free to follow Christ, and it meant something unique to both of them." —Dr. J. Vernon McGee

KEY VERSE

That the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. —Philemon 1:6

"We should be generous people—even when wronged. Because that's when the light shines brightest in this dark world." —Dr. J. Vernon McGee





P R A Y E R

C H A L L E N G E S T O R I E S

PRAYER CHALLENGE #2: Intercede for those who are isolated—perhaps geographically, culturally, emotionally, or spiritually—from the body of Christ. Pray they find a connection. Perhaps be a connection for them.

Did you miss **Prayer Challenge #1** in our September issue? Download it at TTB.org.



PRAYER CHALLENGE STORY

*“I make it a practice to listen to THRU the BIBLE via the app on the train on my way home from work, and then podcast the Sunday Sermon. I have learned so much in a short time. **I always have longed to have a closer relationship with God through His Word. And His Word never disappoints;** sometimes I feel like the two on the road to Emmaus, my heart burns within.*

*“I don’t have any Christian friends. Unfortunately, because my husband doesn’t believe in God or the Bible and believes that religion is the cause of most of the problems in the world, it has made it very difficult for me to become involved in a church community. **So, programs like yours give people like me wonderful hope and, in a way, Christian fellowship. I love praying with fellow believers on the World Prayer Team. I thank God for you all and His Word.**”* **From Elwyne | Australia**

KNOW ANYONE WHO IS ISOLATED?

Pray for an opportunity to love them in a practical way. Perhaps invite them to join you on the Bible Bus and/or the  **WorldPrayerToday** Team.



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All Scripture is from the New King James Version
unless otherwise noted.



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