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

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**WHAT YOU  
THINK OF THE CROSS**  
TELLS US WHO YOU ARE, AND  
**IT WILL DETERMINE  
YOUR ETERNAL DESTINY.**

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE



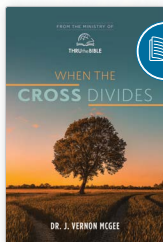
**THRU** the **BIBLE**



# WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

## WHAT DOES THE CROSS MEAN TO YOU?

Dr. J. Vernon McGee



This article is an excerpt from  
**"When the Cross Divides"**  
Download the full digital booklet [here](#).

*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. -1 Corinthians 1:18*

For just a moment, think about the cross of Jesus Christ.

Did you know that what you're thinking of right now tells a lot about you?

Dr. McGee will explain more in this excerpt from his booklet, "When the Cross Divides."

### The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing ...

Three words tell us a lot in this verse. The first is "message" – "for the message of the cross." The Greek word Paul used here is *logos*, and it simply means "word." In one of our newer translations of the New Testament, *logos* is translated quite literally: "For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness." However, it doesn't tell us much when we only translate it literally. Paul actually had something else in mind.



Paul had a great deal to say in this epistle of 1 Corinthians about the gospel. He said to the Corinthian believers, “For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2). Then, at the fifteenth chapter, he said, “I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:1, 2). Then he gave the gospel facts: Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. According to Paul, that is the gospel. It is *all* the gospel, nothing else but the gospel, and anything else is *not* the gospel. Therefore, I would like to use the word I think Paul had in mind: “The *gospel* of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing.”

Now “foolishness” is another interesting word. Although “foolishness” is a good translation, Paul was saying more than that. It’s the Greek word *moria*, from which we get our English word “moron” or “moronic.” Actually, it means something that is good for nothing, something stupid. *For the gospel of the cross is good for nothing to those who are perishing. It means nothing to them.*

For most people, the cross probably is good for nothing. It doesn't fit into their program. If I attempted to tell them about it, they'd say, "That's stupid." This is exactly what Paul said: *The gospel of the cross is stupid to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

That word "power" is the Greek *dunamis*, from which we get our English word "dynamite." *Dunamis* indicates the nth of power. Right now, according to our present scientific knowledge, the nth of power is fusion. Something else more powerful may be discovered in the future, but whatever the nth of power is, that's what the gospel is according to Paul.

There are two classes of people who come to the cross of Christ. To one class of folk, the cross of Christ is good for nothing—stupid. Another group of folk come to it and find in it the atomic power of God to salvation.



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## But to us who are being saved [the cross] is the power of God ...

If I were an artist, I would paint on a canvas a scene of a great barren field with not one sprig of green. Down through the center of that field would be coming a plow in the shape of a cross, digging deep into the earth, and throwing soil on one side and on the other.

For nearly two thousand years, the cross has come down through this world, turning mankind, as the dust of the earth, on one side and on the other. Men and women come to that cross, look at it, and say, "It's foolishness to me; it has no meaning for my life," and they've gone in one direction. Others come to this cross and find in it the power of God. It saves them and they go in a different direction into eternity.

Yes, people have their opinions and that's fine. But your view on who Jesus Christ is and what He did on the cross won't change Him or that cross one whit—but it will change your eternal destiny. What you think of the cross tells who you are; it does not tell who He is or what the cross is. There have been too many down through the centuries who have found in the cross the power of God.

When you come to the cross of Christ, what you think of the cross won't affect it one whit. It is the dynamite of God that tells who you are, and it will tell your eternal destiny.

## MY TURN

**When the Apostle Paul described his message, he said "*we preach Christ crucified*" (see 1 Corinthians 2:2). We really have nothing else to offer the world except what Jesus Christ accomplished when He died in our place.**

Spend some time reading and meditating on the following verses. Consider how to take these truths to heart and be ready to explain to anyone who asks you what you believe.

### WHAT DOES THE CROSS MEAN TO YOU?

- Romans 1:16-17
- Galatians 2:20
- 1 Corinthians 2,  
especially vv. 1-5 and 14-16

# G 2023



## AN AFRICAN PHOTO ALBUM

*“There’s so much ministry going on. What a wonderful trip!”*



**Steve Shwetz**  
THRU the BIBLE Chairman and Host

I wish you could have been with Gregg and me as we visited the beautiful people of Uganda recently. **Let me share a few of my photos with you and tell you what it was like so you can pray with me for this growing ministry ...**



Straight from the airport (and a couple days of travel), Gregg and I each preached at two different churches. Here was where I got my first taste of Africa.

**We heard testimonies from listeners who live in “the Mecca of Mbale” and listen to THRU the BIBLE on a community radio on a loudspeaker that blasts our Bible teaching over the entire neighborhood.** It is so well received that even the Muslims enjoy listening and are willing to talk about Jesus.



**A retired career soldier shared that when he was injured, he listened to THRU the BIBLE and got saved while studying Genesis.** He used to shoot bullets for the government; now he shoots Scripture for the Lord.



**A Sunday school teacher writes lessons down and teaches her class.**

She has read the Bible for many years but has discovered so many new things since listening to THRU the BIBLE, especially to humble yourself and obey.



**Agnes shares that Muslim clerics want to know the truth.**

They have Bibles in their homes and want help understanding.

We went to a remote village where we visited a listening group of about 30 people made up of pastors and church members. Their excitement for and love of THRU the BIBLE was amazing. Many of the listeners gave examples of what they have learned from specific passages in the Bible.



**Abone, a pastor, shared that he has a better understanding of the Gospels and his preaching now is Christ-centric.**



**This pastor shares THRU the BIBLE with his congregation and they listen and study together (and check him on his sermons!).**



**Pastor Zariah leads the THRU the BIBLE listener club.**

We attended a pastor's conference with about 60-75 pastors in Embali. So many pastors wanted to share how THRU the BIBLE was helping them in their ministry that they only let those who traveled a long distance to speak. Even so, half had to sit down since we were out of time. There was so much to say!



**Gregg and me doing a Lugandan live call-in radio show talking about THRU the BIBLE and taking listeners' calls testifying about how much they love the Lord and THRU the BIBLE.**



On another night, we traveled nine hours to a second radio call-in for the Runyakitara program where many listeners stormed the station with their responses. They love THRU the BIBLE. They said they never understood the Bible before, but now they do.

**Pray for these three men with me here.**



David (next to me) is “Dr. McGee’s” voice on the Luganda program. Abraham (in the suit) is the Juba Arabic teacher. Pastor Frank is the teacher on the Runyakitara program in western Uganda.

**Also pray for these pastors and producers:**

- 1 A common request we heard from pastors:** “Our people know God but are highly driven by emotion and high emphasis on miracles, gifts, and healings. THRU the BIBLE is our main instrument to teach them the Word of God and help them grow in their knowledge of God. *Pray we grow in Christ.*”
- 2 South Sudan is a difficult place to do anything because of chaos and corruption.** *Pray for the producer, Abraham, as he creates the Juba Arabic program.* Just after we left, we got word that Abraham’s son in South Sudan had been murdered. Pray for this precious family as they grieve.
- 3 Pastor Frank, the voice of the Runyakitara program, is also the leader of several churches.** Response has been tremendous. *Pray for him as he faces the demands of new THRU the BIBLE ministries.*

This is by far the best field visit I have had with THRU the BIBLE.

**We are excited about what the Lord is doing in Uganda!**

Thanks for praying!

Your friend and fellow traveler on the Bible Bus,

 | Steve





## GOD SPEAKS, ARE WE LISTENING?

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. –2 Timothy 3:16*

If there's one thing we've learned as we've traveled together on the Bible Bus, it's that God speaks to us through His Word. Sometimes we're encouraged, sometimes we're instructed, and sometimes we're corrected.

That last one is especially hard, but it often leads to great things in our lives. That's the story we hear today from Dara in Cambodia. He writes:

*“God spoke to me through your program and called me back to church at a time when I was disappointed by our leader. It had been six months since I attended, but one day I was driving and listening to the radio on my way from Pursat to Phnom Penh. Your program alerted me to think more about my problems, and I was motivated to return. God changed my mind and my heart. I went back and*

*have been so happy. I thank God for using His Word to help me understand my flawed thinking.”*

How is God speaking to You through His Word? As You thank Him for that today ask Him to bring more people in Cambodia aboard the Bible Bus so they too can experience the peace and joy that comes from knowing God is with us and directing us as He speaks through His Word.

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](https://ttb.org/pray)  
TO SIGN UP.**



## You Smell Like ... Life!

**At its core, the Bible’s message is about the cross of Jesus Christ.**

Dr. McGee explains this in his piece (pages 2-5), and it’s the message we hope to preach every day on THRU the BIBLE.

And given that message, people will hear about the cross and be divided into two camps. They will say: 1) “That’s foolishness” or 2) “That’s life.” To some we smell like the fragrance of life and to others we smell like death—see 2 Corinthians 2:14-17.

I love what verse 16 essentially asks, *So, are you up to this task?* And we can say, *Certainly not.* **Good thing it’s God who takes His Word to the world, and we just do our best to do what He asks. We get what we say straight from Him and say it as honestly as we can.**

As 2 Corinthians 2 goes on, we don’t peddle the Word of God; but sincerely, “as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ” (v. 17). We stand before God in how we do this.

**This is the mission you’ve signed up for when you partner with us in taking the whole Word to the whole world. Let’s stand together.**

Grateful for your partnership,

Gregg Harris  
THRU the BIBLE, President



# WHY STUDY EZRA & NEHEMIAH?

Join in the studies on  
THRU the BIBLE MARCH 27 –  
APRIL 20 or anytime online,  
by podcast, or by mobile app.

Even in biblical history, some people don't get the recognition they deserve. Ezra (a priest) and Nehemiah (a businessman) were two men God greatly used at a pivotal time in Israel's history. They were heroes of the faith. Their books, Ezra and Nehemiah, should be read together (like 1 & 2 Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles) because they worked together to rebuild Jerusalem's walls, city, and temple after the Babylonian captivity.

*"If we want to be in God's will today, somewhere along the line we will have to become involved in a movement that is getting out the Word of God to hungry hearts. None of us can do it alone. It must be a team effort."* –Dr. J. Vernon McGee

## SAME MISSION DONE IN DIFFERENT WAYS



**Ezra's** emphasis, as a great revivalist and reformer, a priest and scribe, called people back to the Word of God



**Ezra's focus** was rebuilding the temple



**Religious** return



**Nehemiah** modeled the noble and practical impact of a businessman with a heart for God



**Nehemiah's focus** was rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem



**Political** return

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Ezra was a scribe and likely wrote 1 and 2 Chronicles, Psalm 119, and began to organize the books that we know of as the "Old Testament."
- The important prophecy of "The 70 weeks of Daniel" begins in the book of Nehemiah (Daniel 9:25).

KEY  
VERSE

*"Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."* –Nehemiah 8:10

## LESSONS FROM EZRA & NEHEMIAH

- God does not lead all of us alike.
- Persevere through conflict and criticism.
- Personal revival begins with God's Word. Every time.
- Follow through with what you promise God.
- God sees what you do for Him, and He doesn't forget.



# ON THE ROAD

## Greetings FROM THE BIBLE BUS

"I have prayed, Lord what can I do to share You with my world? At that time the only answer I could come up with is to give money, small as it is. **Then I got the Bible Bus passes and it came to me. I can put them in books in the Little Free Library ... and leave a few on the tables in the emergency room waiting area. It is my prayer that these cards will bring fruit for our Lord.** I have health problems, I tire easily, but I can do this small thing and pray God will use it for His glory. I thank you all for the good you are doing getting God's Word out and making a way for us to help." – From **Mary**

"I am living the book of Acts each day with you! Recently I met this woman, Nada, in the gym. She was very helpful, and I sensed the Holy Spirit in her. So after I had walked away from her, **I came back and said to her, 'You know Jesus?' She said yes. She's from Cambodia.... I offered her a Bible Bus pass, which she readily accepted and was thrilled to hear the program covers the entire Old Testament. I am praying for God to lead me to other people as I have over 10 Bible Bus passes to hand out.** As I ride the Bible Bus with you, we are writing new chapters to the book of Acts. I am sincerely grateful to be a part of this." – From **Charlie** | Long Beach, California



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