

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

YOU MUST HAVE GOD'S CHARIS  
*Grace*  
+  
*Peace*  
BEFORE YOU EXPERIENCE HIS SHALOM.

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE



THRU the BIBLE

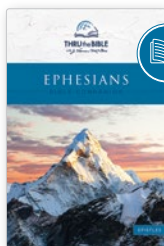


# WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

## THE BEAUTIFUL RELATIONSHIP WE HAVE IN CHRIST



Dr. J. Vernon McGee  
THRU the BIBLE Founder



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

In 62 A.D., four men left Rome, traveling east to modern Turkey. Tucked in their satchels, each carried a letter written by a Roman prisoner waiting to appear before the emperor. These four letters are in the Word of God, called the “Prison Epistles of Paul.”

- **EPAPHRODITUS**, from Philippi, carried home the *Epistle to the Philippians* (see Philippians 4:18).
- **TYCHICUS**, from Ephesus, brought his city the *Epistle to the Ephesians* (see Ephesians 6:21).
- **EPAPHRAS**, from Colosse, had the *Epistle to the Colossians* in his bag (see Colossians 4:12).
- **ONESIMUS**, a runaway slave from Colosse, hand carried the *Epistle to Philemon* addressed to his master (see Philemon 1:10).

These letters present a composite picture of Jesus Christ, the church, the Christian life, and how they interact together.



**EPHESIANS** presents the body of Christ, the invisible church.

**COLOSSIANS** presents Jesus as the Head of this body, the church.

**PHILIPPIANS** presents how to live a dynamic Christian life with Christ as your strength.

**PHILEMON** presents Christian living in action in a pagan society.

The gospel walked in shoe leather in the first century, and it was working.

But Ephesians—this glorious letter tells us how the body of Christ is God’s masterpiece. The church is a mystery not revealed in the Old Testament and more wonderful than any temple made with hands. As God’s children, we are built with *living* stones, that’s the Holy Spirit living in us. As His body, we are to walk as Jesus would walk and not give in to the devil’s strategies. And someday, God knows when, we will be presented to Christ as a bride.

Ephesus was the leading church (of seven) in Turkey. From this base, Paul founded the church and began a far-reaching ministry.

The gospel had its greatest entrance in Ephesus, second only to Rome in this part of the Roman Empire. In that day, millions lived here, at the heart of the Empire. East and west met in Ephesus. It was a cultural center, a religious center, had a great climate, and was a vacation destination spot.

Picture the Apostle Paul sailing into the magnificent harbor, right up to a beautiful, wide, white marble walkway leading to one of the seven wonders of the world. All focus led to the temple of Diana, four times larger than the Parthenon. Inside the 127 graceful carved columns stood the vulgar idol of Diana, the many-breasted goddess of fertility. All sorts of gross immorality took place in the shadow of this temple. Not to mention, the souvenir trade thrived, mostly on the silver models of the temple and Diana.

It was to such a city that Paul came. He went first to the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months. Then to the school of Tyrannus for two years from where students took the gospel to every region of Asia (Acts 19:10). It spread enthusiastically and began the greatest season the gospel has ever had.

Paul considered this season in Ephesus his greatest opportunity (1 Corinthians 16:8-9), the high watermark of his missionary work. The people of Ephesus heard more Bible teaching from Paul than anyone, which is why he could write them about the deep truths of this epistle.

Paul also faced great opposition here because his preaching put the silversmiths out of business, causing a city-wide riot. God miraculously saved his life, which encouraged him and kept him preaching (see Acts 19:23-41). Paul loved this church in Ephesus.

A huge number of believers turned to Christ because of Paul's ministry in Ephesus. The gospel was more effective here than in any place and at any time in the history of the world. Ephesus was the church at its best, at its highest spiritual level.

Ephesian believers loved the Lord Jesus, even while living in a pagan Roman society. They modeled what it means to be drawn to Him. Paul wrote to the Ephesians that Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. Return His love, Paul encouraged them and us. Respond to Him. Say to Him, “I love You because You first loved me.” This beautiful letter to the Ephesians invites you to a closer relationship with Christ.



“Grace to you  
and peace.”

PAUL'S GREETING

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To look at Ephesians logically, you see two sections. The first half is doctrinal and the last half is practical. We need both. A lovely high view of our salvation (chapters 1-3) gets down where we live (chapters 4-6). In the first half we see the church as a body, a temple, and a mystery. In the second half, the church is seen as three metaphors: a new man walking through the world, the bride of Christ, and a soldier fighting an enemy.

Ephesians was written “to the saints ....” Is that you? A saint is one who has trusted Christ and is set aside for God. There are only two kinds of people today: the saints and the ain’ts. Saints should act saintly, it’s true. But we’re only saints because we belong to Him to be used of Him. Some saints are not being used of God, and that’s their fault. Saints are also believers, the “faithful in Christ Jesus.” God calls us *saints* and man calls us *believers*. A saint should be saintly and a believer should be faithful.

Paul’s greeting was “grace to you.” *Grace* was the typical way to greet someone in the Gentile world in Paul’s day. When you meet someone on the street, you’d say, “*Charis!*” which is *grace* in Greek. “And peace.” In a Jewish community, “*Shalom!*” is how people say hello.

Paul combines these two greetings and lifts them to new heights. Grace is how God saves you. You have to know this grace before you can experience His peace. Paul always puts them in that order—grace before peace. You must have *charis* before you can experience *shalom* (see Romans 5:1).



## MY TURN

- ① How does the image of each believer as a living stone, part of God’s building of the church, help you think about the Christian life?
- ② What can we learn from how much fruit the gospel bore in a city as entrenched in sin as Ephesus?
- ③ Ephesians shows us that deep spiritual truths lead to real, practical action. What biblical truths do you struggle with putting into practice?
- ④ Why does God choose to use some saints and not others?
- ⑤ Think of the images Paul uses: a house, a body, a bride. What other pictures can you think of that represent the relationship of believers to one another and to God?

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH WhatsApp?

If you know someone who has emigrated to North America but is from another global region, it's a good guess they're familiar with WhatsApp, an instant messaging service for sending and sharing text, voice messages, video and audio messages with friends and family at home or anywhere else in the world.

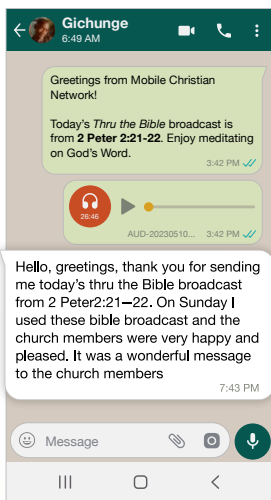
As an inexpensive alternative to other messaging apps, WhatsApp has more than two billion users, third in line globally after Facebook and YouTube.

**As you may recall, one of THRU the BIBLE's ministry partners, Mobile Christian Network (MCN), uses WhatsApp to engage people in India, Africa, and parts of Asia.** MCN posts the THRU the BIBLE program every day and thousands listen. However, what makes this creative approach even more effective is that not only do people listen, but they invite their friends and family, too—forming listening groups of up to 250 subscribers. It's like creating tiny personal radio stations. And the communication and feedback is personal and instant.

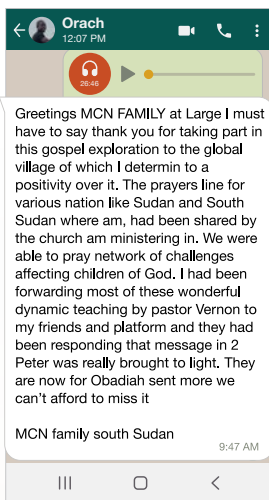


MCN asked their WhatsApp users, *“Do you use Thru the Bible to help you teach the Bible to people in your neighborhoods or villages?”* Here's how they responded, showing how they share THRU the BIBLE with their churches, parachurches, or home Bible studies across Africa and Asia.

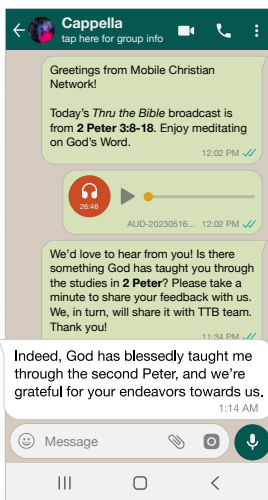
## MCN shares these stories and screengrabs, asking us to pray for this effective and easy way to take the whole Word to the whole world.



**Gichunge is a pastor from Sierra Leone. He uses THRU the BIBLE to train him to preach God's Word.**



**Orach's home country is Uganda, but he lives in Sudan.** As he says, he knows what it is to live in a "global village." Daily, he shares the TTb program with his family and friends in Uganda, Sudan, and South Sudan.



**Twenty-eight people in Burundi formed a group to study the Bible with Dr. McGee.** In this text, a group member tells what he learned from studying 2 Peter.

### Exciting, yes? Pray for these dear people, your partners on the Bible Bus through WhatsApp.

**NENE FROM NIGERIA** uses the audio lessons in our Bible study to teach her women's class and build a curriculum for her Sunday School kids.

**PAPA FROM UGANDA** downloads the Notes & Outlines for every Bible book and shares them with his listening group. "Excellent and encouraging counsel from a fellow listener. Glory be to God!"

**FALILA FROM GHANA** posted the image of the upcoming series on the book of Obadiah on his status feed.



## HOPE DOESN'T DISAPPOINT

*Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. –Romans 5:5*

*“I was disappointed in church, I was disappointed with people, I was disappointed with God.”*

That's what we heard from a listener named Ester in Italy. Gratefully, her story doesn't end there, here's more:

*“I was in love with Jesus, but the leader of our church disappointed me and everything went wrong. I saw that many religious people want just to have power. I questioned God and all I was taught. That's when I found your program and realized that God will listen to our disappointments. That we can express them to Him. I began to really study His Word instead of counting on people to explain it to me. Through it, I have found I can count on God and know that He will not disappoint me, even when people do.”*

What an important lesson. Today as we pray for THRU the BIBLE as it's heard in Italian, let's also pray for all those on the Bible Bus who are struggling with disappointment.

*Lord, thank you that You are our true source of hope. No matter our circumstances or disappointments, help us to trust in You. We thank You that You are working through every struggle and hardship we face. We are grateful we will not be disappointed because of the salvation and inheritance You generously give us through Your Son, Jesus Christ. We ask that many will come to know Him as Your Word goes out today. It's in His name we pray, amen.*

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.**



# J E S U S I N

## *Ephesians*

WITH DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

### BOUGHT WITH A PRICE

In eternity past, God chose us, predestined us, and made us accepted in the Beloved. Now we step into time, where God the Father puts His plans for the church into the hands of His Son, Jesus Christ.

After walking with us for 33 years, Jesus Christ died on a cross, was buried, rose again bodily, and ascended into heaven. His death made our salvation possible through His blood shed on the cross.

*Ew—the blood part is so messy!*

**This important detail about Jesus’s blood is the key to our salvation.**

In the Old Testament, the messy sacrificial system was the only way to deal with our sin.

Problem was, all the sacrifices never added up to a complete solution. But Christ made a single sacrifice for sins—all that was needed. **When we had no other**

**hope, Jesus Christ made the perfect sacrifice to save us**

(see Hebrews 10:6-13). He paid the price for our redemption.

This word “redemption” means Jesus paid the ransom to set

us free. We can’t do anything to cut ourselves loose from sin, but He stepped in and paid for our freedom “through His blood” (Ephesians 1:7). **God never asks you to do**

**anything for Him. He paid the full price.**

God is so holy that He must have justice for our sin. It must be paid for. Without Jesus’ blood we can’t be forgiven. Human forgiveness is based on a penalty that is deserved, but not imposed. But God’s forgiveness is based on the execution of the penalty, and the price has been paid. God paid the penalty for our sin and *then* He forgave.



## What's Your Favorite Quote from Dr. McGee?

I love it when people want to share with me their favorite quote from Dr. McGee.

Once when I was meeting a famous pastor, he enthusiastically shook my hand and said, *"I love it when Dr. McGee said, 'You don't approve of how God is running the universe? Well, it's His universe. If you don't like it, go get your own.'"*

One of our staff loves what Dr. McGee said near the end of his life, *"If I had just believed God more, I would have had more fun."*

In a letter I read this week, Melanie from Missouri shared, *"My favorite saying (right now) of Dr. McGee's is, 'There are saints and there are ain'ts. Which are you?'"* (Melanie has been studying Ephesians!) She continued, *"We love riding the Bible Bus to develop our understanding of the Bible. We love giving a monthly donation so the ain'ts have an abundance of God's Word in hopes they will hear and believe and become saints!"*

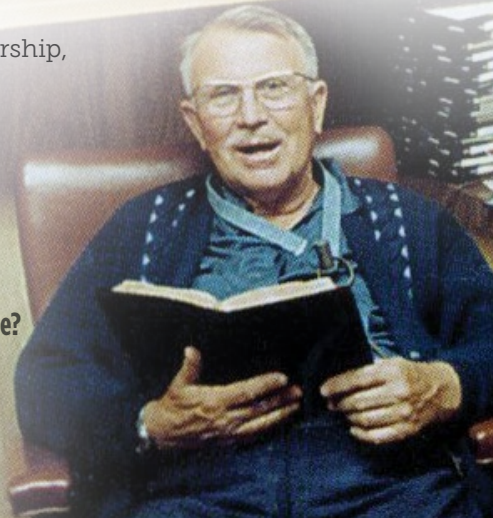
**That's right, Melanie! We're on a mission. Thanks for your partnership in taking the whole Word to the whole world. I encourage you all—keep sharing, keep giving, keep praying. We're gonna do this till Jesus comes.**

Grateful for your enthusiastic partnership,



Gregg Harris  
THRU the BIBLE, President

**P.S. What's your favorite quote from Dr. McGee?**  
I'd love to hear it! [BibleBus@TTB.org](mailto:BibleBus@TTB.org)



# WHY STUDY EPHESIANS?

Join in the studies on  
THRU the BIBLE OCTOBER 17–  
NOVEMBER 23 or anytime online,  
by podcast, or by mobile app.

Think about how you've grown in your Christian life since you came to faith in Jesus Christ. The why and how are here in Ephesians. Find out in our study this month what it means to be a Christian and a church, both in faith and in practice.

*“When we said that the Bible Bus would travel the mountain peaks of the Bible (as well as through the valleys), our study in Ephesians is the High Sierras of Scripture. It’s the very apex of Bible revelation.”* –Dr. J. Vernon McGee

## 10 TAKE-AWAYS: DR. MCGEE ON EPHESIANS

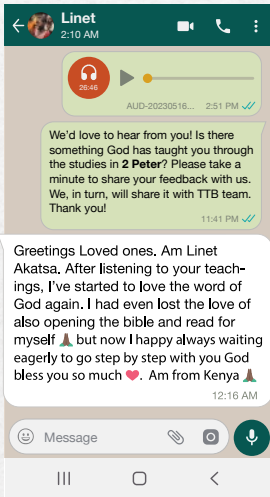
- 1 A saint is one who has trusted Christ and is set aside for the sole use of God.**  
There are only two kinds of people today: The saints and the ain'ts.
- 2 God's love is far from fragile, friends. It is deep and wide and strong.**  
**God is rich in mercy and great in love.**
- 3 Grace and peace—in that order.** You must have grace before you can experience peace.
- 4 God is happy today because He has a way of saving you and blessing you.**  
There's nothing more wonderful than this.
- 5 You grow in Christ Jesus best in the company of other believers,**  
iron sharpening iron (Proverbs 27:17).
- 6 Obeying God doesn't ignite your salvation; it's the heat coming off of the fire that God lit when He saved you.**
- 7 We do not serve God so He will accept us.**  
**We serve God because He has already accepted us in Christ.**
- 8 We're going to need an eternity to experience all the dimensions of Christ's love for us.**
- 9 Being found in Christ is the happily ever after to the Bible's greatest love story—**  
God's love for you in Christ Jesus.
- 10 Your life in Christ Jesus is linked to your nearness to God.**  
There is nothing more satisfying and more enduring than that.



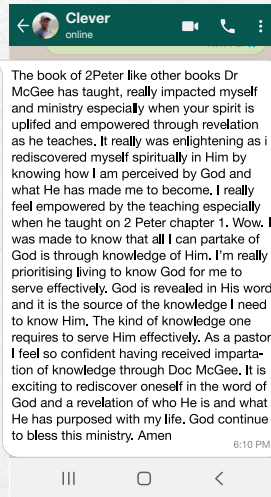
# I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY

## WhatsApp CARRIES THE BIBLE BUS TO AFRICA

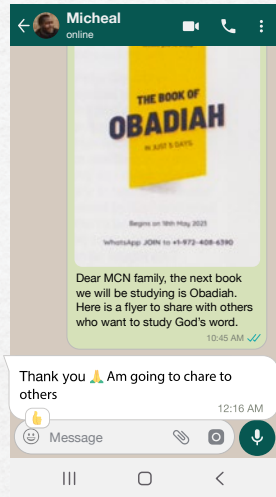
FOR MORE ON THRU THE BIBLE ON WHATSAPP, SEE PAGES 6-7.



**Linet from Kenya says THRU the BIBLE helped her love God's Word again** after she lost interest in opening the Bible.



**Clever, a pastor in Zimbabwe, shares what he has learned from studying 2 Peter with THRU the BIBLE.**



**Michael from the Democratic Republic of the Congo enthusiastically invites others to subscribe to the study of Obadiah on the Bible Bus.**



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