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

WHATEVER COMES TO YOU—
GOOD THINGS, BAD THINGS,
DARK THINGS, BRIGHT THINGS,
LOVELY THINGS, MEAN THINGS—

**GOD WILL SEE TO IT THAT IT
WORKS FOR GOOD IN YOUR LIFE.**

J. VERNON MCGEE



THRUthe**BIBLE**



WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD



WHERE ARE YOU GOING, JONAH?

Dr. J. Vernon McGee

“I haven’t forgotten you. I’ll save you if you will turn to Me.” That’s the message the book of Jonah speaks to the most wicked, brutal people who have ever lived on this earth. Yet God saved them. And if God will save them, He will save anyone who turns to Him.

PROBLEMS WITH JONAH

Many so-called theologians have problems with the book of Jonah. But it’s not because God saves wicked people who don’t deserve it. Their problem is with the fish. It’s nonsense to make that an issue today. We do well to keep separate the essentials and the incidentals. The essentials are Jonah and Jehovah; the fish is only a prop. The fish is neither the hero of the story nor the villain of the story. This book is not even about a fish, although the fish plays an important role.

My trouble is with Jonah, and it begins here:

But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. –Jonah 1:3

This upsets our theology. Here is Jonah, a prophet of God, called by God to go northeast to Nineveh, and instead he runs in the opposite direction. He buys a ticket to Tarshish, which was in present-day Spain and the jumping-off place of the world in that day. People believed Tarshish was the end of the earth. You couldn’t go any farther west, and if you did, you’d sail off the earth and perish. So Jonah bought a ticket for a place as far away as he could go.



Download your free copy of “God of the Second Chance: The Real Story of Jonah.”

Why does this prophet of God go in the opposite direction of where he was called by God to go? Why didn’t he do what God told him to do?

There are several explanations. The first is that Jonah hated Ninevites with a passion. He did not want them to be saved, and he had good reason for this. In his lifetime, the northern kingdom of Israel was under constant threat of attack by Assyria. Their armies would raid the north and capture and kill an entire town. I suspect that when God spoke to Jonah, he was living in his hometown of Gath Hopher—in the north where the Assyrians often invaded. He may have seen his own mother and father slain in front of him or maybe his brothers and sisters taken away captive. Jonah *hated* Ninevites. He was not interested in seeing them saved, so he went in the opposite direction, away from Nineveh.

Second, God never asked any Old Testament prophet to go as a witness to the world. One of the great distinctions between Israel in the Old Testament and the church in the New Testament is the direction they are called to go. God never said to the prophets of Israel, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”

(Mark 16:15). Rather, their invitation was, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD" (Isaiah 2:3). Israel witnessed to the world by having the world come to them. So Jonah would have been justified in asking, "Why do You ask me to do something you've never asked any other prophet to do?"

The third reason is disturbing. Look in your own heart. We have a commission today to take the glorious news of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. Why are we going in the opposite direction? Let's not talk about Jonah disobeying God when, as a whole, we have miserably failed in taking the gospel out to the lost world. Examine your own heart right now, and you'll understand Jonah's human side. We are not busy carrying out our commission, either.

God says to His people today, "Take My Word to those who are lost." And some say, "But I don't love them." God says, "I never asked you to love them; I asked you to go." I cannot find anywhere that God ever asked Jonah to go because he loved the Ninevites. He said, "Jonah, I want you to go because I love Ninevites, I want to save them, and I want you to take the message to them."

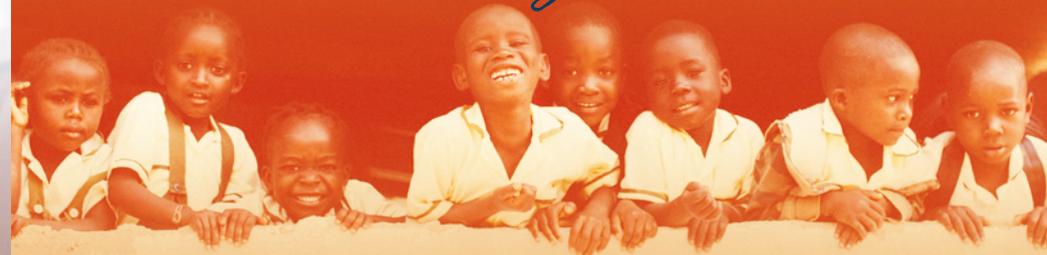
» MY TURN

I remember talking to a missionary, home from Africa, and he showed me a picture of little boys in the orphans' home there. I asked him, "When you first went to Africa, did you love the Africans?" He said, "No, I wanted to go to my people in Greece, but the door was closed." As he held that picture, I asked, "But do you love those little fellows now?" Tears came to his eyes. "Yes," he said, "I love them now."

God says to you and me, "I love the lost. You take the Word to them, and when they are saved and you get to know them, you will see them through My eyes and will love them too."

Get involved in getting the Word of God out to people. Don't wait to be motivated by emotional prompts. Take the Word of God to them because God loves them, and if you'll do that, I guarantee you will learn to love them too.

J. Vernon McGee



IN YOUR OWN HEART, RATE YOUR WILLINGNESS TO SHARE GOD'S WORD WITH PEOPLE.

- 1 I'm willing and sharing God's Word every chance I get.
- 2 I'm willing but don't know how.
- 3 I'm hesitant, fighting resistance.
- 4 Just call me Jonah.

One easy way to begin is to join *Thru the Bible's* World Prayer Team. Start by praying for people to hear and respond in faith to God's Word. Ask God to move your heart with the spiritual needs of people He loves in every country of the world.



CHECK OUT WHAT THE  WorldPrayerToday TEAM SAYS ABOUT THEIR MISSION ON THE BACK COVER.



Hope IN DARK TIMES

Communicating the hope found in Jesus Christ to areas hardest hit by COVID-19

As of this writing, the world is still “sheltering in place,” protecting each other and healing from the pandemic. This unprecedented season calls for ministry efforts to be creative and relevant to the need.

At *Thru the Bible*, we’re grateful for our ministry partnership with YouVersion, whom God is using to very effectively take His Word to new demographics of people using the Bible app.



YouVersion
Do you have it on your phone or tablet?

To date, YouVersion has been downloaded on over 420 million phones globally in over 60 languages. Rarely, however, do they offer full-length audio like *Thru the Bible’s* program. But because of our like-mission of taking God’s Word to the world, we’ve worked together on several test projects—offering *Thru the Bible* in languages within their Bible app’s reach, but for which they do not have Bible content. We’re both excited by the results.

In March and April as the pandemic ravaged Europe, our team at *Thru the Bible* connected with YouVersion, brainstorming on how we can together minister to those hardest hit by COVID-19. Gregg Harris, president of *Thru the Bible*, wrote TTB staff this update:

“TTB is working with YouVersion to ‘fast track’ audio plans for six books of the Bible in Italian: Psalms, John, Ephesians, Philippians, Romans, 1 Peter. We hope their content will be an encouragement to many suffering in Italy. The Global Director of YouVersion told me their usage is up 30% in Italy ... no surprise that people are looking for comfort from God’s Word, and we want to be there to help.

“Not many days later, we also added the same books of *Thru the Bible* teaching in Castilian (European) Spanish to YouVersion plans, considering the great spiritual need in Spain.

“We thank God for YouVersion and the important role they are filling and for the extra work of ‘fast-tracking’ these plans to get God’s Word to where it is needed most, as soon as possible.”

At the conclusion of the YouVersion plans, we point our new Italian and Spanish listeners in Italy and Spain to our regional TWR radio partners who are ready and eager to serve these new listeners’ questions and prayer requests. Only in heaven will we know the impact of our collaborating together. Please pray God will use our efforts to offer more of His Word to a hurting world.

European Spanish



EXTRA ENCOURAGEMENT

FROM CHINA | Talk about divine timing. On March 30, we launched our completely revamped ministry to China. The head of FEBC’s Chinese ministries tells us they’ve seen a huge upsurge in activity on their social media (which was already very large) since the COVID-19 crisis began.

EMAILS FROM SOUTH KOREA

“I pray God’s plan and glory will reach out to those who are suffering from COVID-19, as He helped David and his tired soldiers win victory in wars.”

“I get comfort from listening to ‘McGee’s Bible Study’ as we haven’t been able to gather to worship for Friday night service or choir practice due to the current COVID-19 circumstances. Thank you for allowing us to have this precious time.”

“FEBC is a true gospel-spreading, life-saving station providing God’s message. I pray COVID-19 will end soon. Many people are struggling. Praying is the only thing we can do. Take care.”

FROM INDIA | Meanwhile, our well-established Home Group ministry in India is proving critical in these days of isolation. Look for an update from our good friend and Director of TWR-India, George Philip, in next month’s issue.

AS WE FIGHT OUR OWN PERSONAL BATTLES WITH THIS SITUATION, LET’S REMEMBER ...

People all over the world are under similar lockdowns, isolation, and stress. **Pray for them.**

God is allowing us to bring the comforting balm of His Word to millions in a time of crisis. **What a privilege.**



“I COULD NOT LIVE WITHOUT JESUS CHRIST”

For years our prayer team has traveled through Norway, praying in confidence for God’s Word to bear fruit in the hearts and lives of those who listen to *Thru the Bible*. And, although we receive very little feedback, we know He is quietly and consistently at work.

That’s why today we’re so excited to share this letter from Marianne who writes:

“I am a woman from Norway and have been listening to Thru the Bible since 2016. First on Norwegian radio, now on your app and the internet. Dr. McGee is a great blessing to me and has helped me to grow as a Christian. Through your teaching, I have been lifted up in troubled times. I am the only Christian in my family. May God in Christ Jesus richly bless you all and your ministry. And thank you for the work you do. I could not live without Jesus Christ as my Savior.”

Praise God for His faithfulness in Marianne’s life and in all of ours. Today let’s pray that Marianne’s family and many others in Norway hear God’s Word on *Thru the Bible* and accept Him as Lord.

Keep praying, team. Our amazing God is at work even when the results may not be seen or heard.

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

GO TO TTB.ORG/PRAY TO SIGN UP.

What’s Happening at **THRU** the BIBLE

PASTORS BENEFIT FROM TTB RESOURCES



Several summers ago, we opened up our *Thru the Bible* warehouse and distributed everything stored there among local ministries. We praise God for how He directed these resources into pastors’ hands. This is what happened to the resources:

- 1 Thousands of Dr. McGee’s Edited Messages (over 600 complete sets) went to a local Baptist church, which sent them to a pastor’s conference in Manila, Philippines (one set per box in above picture).

“I am a pastor of a small church on one of the furthest southwestern islands of the Philippines. Last year at the Asian Baptist Conference, I received the gift from you of respected pastor Dr. McGee’s sermons. I was one of the last to get a set, and it is a treasure to me—my only resource books. I grew up listening with my family to TTB-Tagalog, and they are amazed you gave us these. Thanks be to God! You help me teach God’s Word better. Thank you.” –Ronnie

- 2 Dr. McGee’s topical books went to our wonderful ministry partners at KWAVE, who then gave away more than 20K books to Calvary Chapel pastors’ evangelism events and marriage conferences.





“It doesn’t make any difference whatever comes to you—good things, bad things, dark things, bright things, lovely things, mean things—because whatever comes, God will see to it that it works for good in your life. You can be sure of that. It is something the child of God needs to hold onto.” *J. Vernon McGee*

You know how Dr. McGee could say that with confidence? Because he believed God’s promise of Romans 8:28: “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”

Here’s another promise from God that our *Thru the Bible* family believes:

God said, “So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.” –Isaiah 55:11

Thank you for believing God stands behind His Word. It will accomplish whatever assignment He sends it to do. No government or culture or distance or foe will hinder it. The Bible is the incorruptible, indestructible, ever-living seed of the Word of God. It is this Word we are committed to send—in its entirety—to every ear willing to receive it.

Believe these things today: God works all things together for good according to His purposes, and His Word will complete God’s work in every willing heart worldwide.

Grateful for your partnership,

Gregg Harris
President, *Thru the Bible*



WHY STUDY 1, 2 & 3 JOHN?

Join in the studies on *Thru the Bible* or anytime online, by podcast, or by mobile app.
1 John airs **JUNE 10—JULY 14**,
2 John **AUGUST 7-13**,
and 3 John **AUGUST 14-19**.

If you belong to the family of God, then the letters from John were written for you. Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ brings us into God’s family and into the fellowship of the Father’s house. As you study these letters, picture a loving pastor telling you, “*This is how to love like Jesus loves*” and “*This is how to be authentic with God*.” Sometimes it’s learning how to walk in the light and sometimes it’s learning how to fix what has been broken by sin.

- John wrote these letters around A.D. 100 from his prison exile on the island of Patmos—they were the final books written in the Bible. In that time, the danger facing the church was not persecution from the outside but seduction from the inside.

KEYVERSE

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.
–1 John 5:11-13



Some have called 1 John “the holy of holies” of the New Testament—showing us how God invites us into a sacred, deeply personal relationship with Him.

“I have written over 1 John in my Bible this other Scriptural statement: ‘Dwelling in the secret place of the Most High.’ When we get into this epistle you’ll find it talks a great deal about the family of God, and that is something quite wonderful and intimate.” –Dr. J. Vernon McGee

TRUTH & LOVE | 2 JOHN AND 3 JOHN DEAL WITH TWO SIDES OF THE SAME ISSUE:
The relationship between the truth and Christian love.

- 2 John stresses the importance of the **truth**. Deals with **ideas**.
- 3 John stresses the importance of **love**. Deals with **specific relationships**.

I Love to Tell *the Story*

“We will get the Good News to them ...”

FROM THE  **WorldPrayerToday** TEAM

ANN L. | “God moves in history and works in people’s lives and tells me how I can expect Him to work in mine. I’m glad to together pray over areas of the world on the World Prayer Team. I’m really glad you include a map with each day’s prayer prompt. You’re giving me a geography lesson along the way on top of a heart transplant from heaven. We’re doing together worldwide more than I would have believed possible. The letters from all points of the world prove that and are so encouraging and inspirational—thrilling, even.”

AARON | “From Africa to the Middle East to Mexico, Canada, Mongolia, China, Japan, India, and the many small people groups who also need God’s Word. I love that just because a few thousand people speak a language, we don’t ignore them. We will get the good news of God to them.”

CAROL | “The TTB prayer team has changed the way I pray. The stories from around the world give specific needs and, best of all, specific people to pray for. It is no longer a vague request to our great God but a real need that I can take before Him. But what gives my heart wings is to hear from sweet brothers and sisters all over the world! I hear their hearts and recognize them as family! My prayers are more important and precious to me.”

VIRGINIA | “I have learned that praying for others takes the focus off of my own issues. It’s an honor to ride the Bible Bus with my brothers and sisters, and to be a part of the prayer team.”



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