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

*Everything you
need is found
in God.*

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE



THRU the **BIBLE**



WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

A MARRIAGE ON THE ROCKS



Dr. J. Vernon McGee
THRU the BIBLE Founder

**Adapted from Dr. J. Vernon McGee's
teaching on Hosea**

Often those in spiritual authority in any generation are hesitant to enter conflict; they avoid saying the hard things that could stir criticism. Sadly, if we want to grapple with the great issues of life that often include raw realities, we must confront difficult issues.

The Old Testament prophet, Hosea, doesn't avoid dealing with hard stuff—mostly because he lived it. His backstory isn't pretty, but knowing it is necessary to understand God's message. You'd think a man of God would have a happy home, but that's not true with Hosea. From a broken marriage and a troubled home, he speaks to the nation. Hosea knew exactly how God felt about His broken relationship with Israel because he felt the same way about his home. God invited Israel to return to Him (repeated 15x in the book), and to stop worshipping idols instead of Him. They were just as unfaithful to God as Hosea's wife was to him. God's family was suffering from a broken home.



THE HOME WAS GOD'S IDEA

In every generation, the home is the rock foundation, the building block of society. From the beginning, God gave it to mankind, universal, as the most important unit of how we live. No nation is any stronger today than its homes. Like links in a chain, the families of a nation hold it together throughout our streets and the boulevards. The home is where we live and move and have our being. It's in the home where we are ourselves. We might put up quite a front, physically and psychologically, when we go out, but it's within the walls of our home that we take off our masks and we are really ourselves.

Because of the strategic position of the home, God has put around it certain safeguards to protect it. He says a great deal about marriage, the strong foundation of the home. In fact, He gave more attention to the institution of marriage than to any other institution in this world. He invented it and gave it to mankind, and marriage rests upon His direct word: "So then, they are no longer two but one flesh.

Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matthew 19:6). God performed the first marriage ceremony. He gave the first bride away. He blessed the first couple. Marriage is more than just a legal contract or an economic arrangement. It’s even more than a union of a man and a woman who love each other. Marriage is an act of God and rests on His command. If you’re going to have a successful marriage, you have to have God; otherwise, your marriage will land on the rocks.

Marriage is a sacred relationship, a holy union. Hebrews 13:4 sums up God’s thoughts when it says, “Marriage is honorable among all.” It can’t be broken by just legal action or by self-will or a fit of temper. Only two acts can break a real marriage today. The first, of course, is death. That’s why we say in wedding vows, “as long as we both shall live.” The second act that rips the relationship apart is unfaithfulness to your spouse. In the Old Testament, the one who was guilty of adultery was dealt with in the harshest punishments—death. (See Leviticus 20:10 and Deuteronomy 22:20-22.)

It’s with this backdrop that the prophecy of Hosea is the story of a broken home, contrasted with God’s ideal of marriage and of manhood and womanhood.

Marriage is an act of God
AND RESTS ON HIS COMMAND.

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE



Let's begin Hosea's story.

Hosea was God's man. Yet before he married his fiancée, Gomer, Hosea discovered she had turned to prostitution. Even as a fiancé, Hosea could have "divorced" Gomer then and there or even had her executed. But God told him to marry her.

He may have wanted to run but instead, Hosea obeyed God and gave Gomer his name, and she came into his home. But after the children were born, Gomer left him for her former life.

But God says, "Go get her!" So, Hosea went after her. He found her, paid her debts, and told her he loved her. But she wouldn't come back to him

Get on the Bible Bus this month or visit [TTB.org/Hosea](https://www.TTB.org/Hosea) to discover what happened next, and it will prove (once again) that God is faithful and merciful. The perfect husband to His Bride.



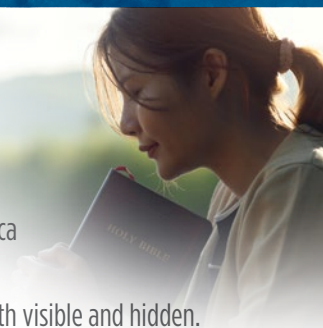
MY TURN

- ① Personal question: **Have you ever had to "return to the Lord"?**
How did it go?
- ② Agree or disagree: **"If you're going to have a successful marriage, you have to have God."**
Explain why.
- ③ If you know the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, then you love to tell your personal story of how He redeemed you, how He bought you back. **Ask the Lord for an opportunity to tell someone in your own way this week—and get your mind and heart ready.**

FAITH UNDER PRESSURE



James Rosa
THRU the BIBLE Ministry Director, Asia/Latin America



In China, Christians face a unique set of challenges that can be both visible and hidden. The pressure to conform to state ideals and societal expectations can be overwhelming, yet many believers are finding ways to remain steadfast in their faith.

STATE-LEVEL CHALLENGES

One of the most significant hurdles comes from the Chinese government, which maintains strict control over religious practices. State-approved churches must adhere to government regulations, often limiting their teachings and activities. For many Christians, worshiping in house churches—gatherings outside state oversight—can be risky. The constant fear of being watched or arrested for simply coming together to worship is a harsh reality for many believers.

Adding to this, the government has launched a campaign to “Sinicize” Christianity, aiming to reshape the faith to align with Chinese values and Communist Party ideals. In this challenging environment, remaining faithful requires immense courage.

Yet, amidst these trials, Chinese Christians find strength in the words of Peter: “But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed. ‘And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled” (1 Peter 3:14). **The threat of persecution is real, but so is God’s promise of blessing for those who endure.**

PERSONAL-LEVEL OPPOSITION

Beyond governmental control, many believers encounter opposition from those closest to them—family, friends, and neighbors. Christianity is often seen as a foreign religion,

perceived as disconnected from traditional Chinese values. When someone chooses to follow Christ, their family may feel betrayed or perceive it as a rejection of ancestral beliefs.

Cultural values, such as honoring ancestors, are deeply rooted in Chinese society. In this context, **Christianity's call to worship God alone can clash with familial expectations, leading to painful conflicts. For many, this personal persecution can be even more distressing than state oppression.**

For those who genuinely follow Jesus, persecution is a certainty. Yet Paul reassures us that our earthly trials are temporary: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4:17). This promise helps believers in China—and everywhere else—stay focused on the greater reward.

FAITHFULNESS AMID PERSECUTION

Despite these challenges, the church in China is not only surviving; it's thriving. Many Christians find creative ways to worship, often meeting in secret. **Their faith is unshakeable, and their perseverance serves as a powerful testimony of what it truly means to follow Christ, no matter the cost.**

Chinese believers cling to the assurance that God is with them during even the darkest times. **Persecution, whether from the state or from loved ones, cannot diminish the joy of knowing Christ and the hope of eternal life.** Jesus' words in Matthew 5:10-12 resonate deeply: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

DID YOU KNOW?

- Mandarin was one of **our first international languages**—started in 1977.
- **Cantonese followed** in 1988.
- THRU the BIBLE reaches the world in Cantonese and Mandarin by: **Radio, Internet, Social media, Apps** (find them at *TTB.Bible*)



Knowing this, it's a particular honor and privilege that God is using THRU the BIBLE every day to accomplish His saving work in China. Remember these unique challenges as you pray for our listeners and partners.

Hear directly from some of our brothers and sisters on the Bible Bus in Mandarin and Cantonese—check out their letters on the back cover.

J E S U S I N

Hosea

WITH DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

RELENTLESS LOVE

In the hill country of Ephraim in northern Israel, there lived two young people who were madly in love. **Hosea loved a girl named Gomer and she loved him back**—just like other wonderful love stories repeated across the generations.

But after they were engaged, Gomer went bad. She resorted not only to adultery, but to the oldest profession, prostitution. Hosea was brokenhearted and shame filled his soul. **He had legal recourse under the Mosaic Law as a fiancée to have Gomer stoned to death. Instead, God tells him to marry her.**

So, despite the gossip and the shame, Hosea obeys God. He marries Gomer and gives her his name. But that's not the end of our sad story. After having three children together, Gomer leaves Hosea for her former life. She runs away. What does God tell Hosea to do now? You might hope He said, "Well, Hosea, you've done all you can. You tried to help her, but that didn't do any good. Just take the kids and leave her."

But God says, "Go get her!" So, Hosea searches and finds her. He pays her debts. He tells her he loves her. But still she won't come back.

What a picture of a Savior today!

He created us and we belong to Him, and then we're guilty of going off and giving our love, our affection, and our time to the sin of the world. And in the midst of that, when we were yet sinners, **He came down and bought us back with a price in our ugly condition that He might make us His legitimate children.**
What love!

The story doesn't end here—the conclusion will make you weep with joy.

WHY STUDY HOSEA?

Join in the studies on
THRU the BIBLE **JANUARY 22-
FEBRUARY 11** or anytime online,
by podcast, or by mobile app.

There is no pain like family pain. Nothing hurts worse than the heartache we feel as it relates to those we love and those who love us. Hosea tells us that God knows how we feel—in fact, He feels the same way when we turn from Him.

"The book of Hosea pictures God's love for a broken family. Typically, if what happened in Hosea happened in our family, we'd just as soon bury it or push it aside or cover it up. But God brings our need out into the open. He'd rather we face it and give the Lord a chance to heal it. And that's when He does for us what we can't do for ourselves." —Dr. J. Vernon McGee

KEY VERSE

... Let us press on to know the LORD; his going out is sure as the dawn; he will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth. —Hosea 6:3 ESV

Hosea (as well as "Joshua") means "salvation," which is the same word as "Jesus."

Jesus is the Groom, and we are called the Bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2). The Lord Jesus Christ Himself said to the church in Ephesus, "I have this against you, that you have left your first love" (Revelation 2:4).

HOSEA + GOMER = GOD + ISRAELITES

Hosea writes, **"The LORD said to me, 'Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods ...'"** (3:1).

GOD SHOWS US IN HOSEA THAT

He's after your heart (6:1).

HE RELENTLESSLY PURSUES YOU,
EVEN WHEN YOU RUN.





Happy New Year

Well, it's the new year. **Did you know that God loves "new" things?** Throughout the Bible, He talks about all the new things He gives to us.

God gives us a new heart and spirit (Ezekiel 36:26 and 18:31).

God puts a new song in our hearts (Psalm 40:3).

He will give us a new name (Revelation 2:17).

He has made us a new person in Christ (Ephesians 4:24; 2 Corinthians 5:17).

His Word renews our minds (Romans 12:2).

In Revelation 21, the last chapter of the Bible, we see a new heaven and a new earth coming down, and God sums up His Word with the blessing, "Behold, I make all things new."

Of all the new things that are happening with God, nothing gives me greater joy than your letters and emails describing how the study of God's Word is giving you a "newness of life," which we see in Romans 6:4 is not new in time, but new in character and quality. In your personal stories, you describe how God is making you a different person.

That's what you have to look forward to in this new year. So, stay the course in 2025. Remain in His Word. Keep trusting Him. We've got great things ahead of us on the Bible Bus.

Grateful for your partnership in taking God's whole Word to the whole world,

Gregg Harris
THRU the BIBLE, President

THRU THE BIBLE APP



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STORIES FROM THE BIBLE BUS



認識聖經

CANTONESE & MANDARIN

“Peace in the Lord. I keep listening to this program, it’s so good. Especially for a newly baptized believer like me, it is thorough but easily understood, and I’ve learned a lot. Now, I have a question to ask: it has been said, God’s love is unconditional and without principle. Really? Unconditional and without principle? Please pardon me, a new Christian, for my ignorance and foolishness. Kindly give me an answer. Hallelujah!”

Mandarin | Email

*“In this past year, I needed to work overtime and attend classes or other business, so I could not get home in time to listen to TTB. Basically, I always hurried home on my motorbike right after work to make the program. Sometimes I would listen online to make up those I missed. **Since I began listening to TTB, I’ve been blessed and am thrilled about it!**”*

Cantonese | Email

*“I became a believer in December 2017 and was baptized in 2018, receiving God’s special grace. My sisters recommended that I listen to your program. **In listening to you, my spiritual life grew quickly. Since the book of Genesis, I’ve been listening to TTB consistently. By His grace, I now am serving as a group leader. Thank you and thank the Lord!**”*

Mandarin | Text Message



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



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