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

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WE HAVE A SAVIOR  
WHO NOT ONLY

*will save us for heaven*

BUT WHO WILL HELP  
US TODAY.

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE



**THRU**the**BIBLE**



# WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

## TROUBLE WILL COME, BUT COUNT IT ALL JOY



Dr. J. Vernon McGee  
THRU the BIBLE Founder



This excerpt is from our  
**James Bible Companion.**

Download a free copy at [TTB.org/James](https://www.TTB.org/James)  
or buy a print copy at [store.TTB.org](https://www.store.TTB.org)

The Epistle of James deals with the ethics of Christianity rather than doctrine. James bears down on some practical issues, but weaves the theme of how faith produces these good works into every chapter.

“Count it all joy when you fall into various trials,” he begins. Trouble will come, so don’t think it strange that something terrible is happening to you. Instead, rejoice that God is testing you in this way. James isn’t saying that Christians will necessarily experience joy when we go through trials. Trials are meaningless, suffering is senseless, and testing is irrational unless there’s some good purpose for them. God assures us there is. (See Romans 8:28).



When you stand under the pressures, be alert to your heart's attitude toward your trouble. Believe that God has permitted this trial for a purpose. Be confident He is working something out in your life. You may not *understand* His purpose, but it pleases Him when you walk by faith and not by sight.

What are some of God's purposes in these tests of faith?

James urges us to let patience develop us into mature and well-developed Christians. Patience is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. You won't become patient by *trying* to be patient, but neither will the Holy Spirit deliver it on a silver platter. Patience comes through suffering and testing. Testing and trials produce patience in our lives so we might develop into full-grown children of God. This is so relevant to today!

God allows trouble so that we learn patience, which will then produce real hope and love in us. We'll also gain wisdom related to our trials if we ask Him for it. Wisdom is the exercise and practical use of knowledge. Wisdom is knowing how to act under difficult circumstances, or when you face problems or questions. Life is filled with these situations, and we clearly need God's wisdom to navigate them. God is in the business of giving out wisdom "liberally"—if you lack wisdom, go to God who will hear and answer your prayer.

Turn these problems over to Him. You don't have the brains to meet the problems of life, but you do have a heavenly Father who can supply the wisdom you need. When you're tempted to doubt God's purposes, turn the problem back over to Him. Start each day by giving Him your issues and trust Him that He'll give you the wisdom you need to face the challenges.

The book of James is sometimes compared to the book of Proverbs, which is written like a college curriculum on wisdom. Here in the Epistle of James we find a different school—the "School of Hard Knocks." God wants to bring His own to full Christian maturity.

He tests His children to weed out the phonies and the fake saints and to assure His true children that He will help. Our trials are proof positive of our faith. If you are having trouble, that's a good sign you belong to Him. He also wants to produce patience in your life and confidence that God is working out His purpose in your life.

When faith is tested and surrounded by darkness, when the waves are rolling high and all seems lost, the child of God knows this is not the end. It may be gloom now, but it will be glory later on (see Psalm 30:5). James says someday the one who has suffered "will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

Testing of any kind tends to create pessimism, bitterness, and cynicism; it's easy for people to get caught in the "why?" or "why me?" loop. But God tests us to grow our faith and develop our patience, and He has something very specifically in mind for the future.

*We will each endure trials,*

BUT IF YOU EMERGE FROM THEM,  
STILL LOVING THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THEN

*there's going to be a reward  
waiting for you.*

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE



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People who have suffered a great deal often enjoy a closer, more loving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Suffering causes them to look forward to the day when the Lord welcomes them into His presence, when He will reward them with the crown of life.

Scripture mentions a half dozen different crowns given as *rewards* to believers. The crown of life is a reward for those who endure trials in their lives, yet they still love the Lord. Testing will either drive you to the Lord or it will drive you away from Him. So many Christians become bitter when life gets hard. But keep thinking about the moment you will stand in the Lord's presence. Don't let the very thing your heavenly Father was using to develop your character and to bring you into a loving relationship with Him make you bitter. We will each endure trials, but if you emerge from them, still loving the Lord Jesus Christ, then there's going to be a reward waiting for you.

## MY TURN

- 1 Why do you think God might find it necessary to test a person's faith?
- 2 Our attitude matters a great deal when it comes to enduring trials. **When a trial comes, is your initial reaction one of faith or something else?**
- 3 The process which ends with wisdom begins with patience, but patience has to grow. **Are there areas of your life where you are resisting growing in patience?**
- 4 Wisdom is so important that we can never just rely on our own. **Who do you know who has wisdom that you can turn to when you need it?**
- 5 Trials will come. **What can you do before they arrive to help make sure they produce patience in your life rather than anger and bitterness?**

## WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT MOVES:

### A MINISTRY UPDATE ON HOME GROUPS IN ETHIOPIA



**Gregg Harris**  
THRU the BIBLE President



One of the most foundational commitments of THRU the BIBLE is that **this is God's ministry, not ours. He owns it, He directs it, and He provides for it.** In Psalm 32:8, God says, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye." We take these biblical truths very seriously.

About a decade ago, the Lord directed us to begin the concept of Radio Home Groups in South Asia. Over the following years, we watched this movement grow to more than 20,000 groups throughout the region. These home Bible studies produced incredible fruit. So, as we watched God growing the impact of this ministry, we began to pray that in His time He would use this ministry model in other parts of the world.

A few years ago, a partner in Scandinavia encouraged a leader he knew in Ethiopia to visit India to learn about THRU the BIBLE Radio Home Groups there. That Ethiopian leader was Rev. Wakshuma Terefe, who was saved in the 1980's and listened to Dr. McGee via shortwave broadcasts from Guam. In the early 2000's he became the Oromo speaker of TTB. In short, he loves THRU the BIBLE and is a passionate advocate for how the systematic study of the whole Word can change people's lives.



Wakshuma Terefe and George Philip, the two men God is using to shepherd this amazing Home Group movement in Africa and South Asia.

Early in 2024, Wakshuma invited several THRU the BIBLE leaders to come and train about 65 pastors and church leaders in Ethiopia on how to develop a Radio Home Group ministry. At the conclusion of the training, they committed to start 2,300 groups within one year!



This blind pastor hosts 17 Home Groups with a combined 71 blind members. He said, "This is so helpful because the blind community cannot read."

Within months, **we saw God move in ways we never dreamed. While it took years to develop thousands of groups in India, the team in Ethiopia surpassed 2,000 groups in only six months!** Because we always want to understand what God is doing in our ministry, I scheduled a trip to Ethiopia to witness this movement of the Holy Spirit.

Recently I spent a week traveling all over the country and meeting hundreds of leaders. Everywhere we went, we saw an incredible hunger for the systematic study of the Word. Every day, we attended gatherings of Radio Home Group leaders. After a time of worship, I brought a message of encouragement. George Phillip, the man God used to develop the ministry model in India, then provided further training.

We met a restaurant owner who formed listening groups with his employees. Two police stations formed 100 groups in one prison that gather to listen every day. A blind pastor has 17 groups with 71 blind members. He gave a radio to a wheelchair-bound blind girl who cried and said, "I have a new friend to teach me the Bible!"

**God is always working in ways we may never see. But we know that when we fling the seed of His Word, it never returns void.**

Thank you for your faithful prayer and financial support. Without it, we could not generously lavish the Word of God to the whole world. **Our commitment is to continue to faithfully give out God's Word wherever He leads and directs.**



**There's even more to share from this momentous trip—don't miss our next newsletter issue for additional stories and updates on what God is doing in Africa.** Until then, hear directly from some of our Ethiopian brothers and sisters on the back cover.

# J E S U S I N

James

WITH DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

## BROTHERS IN CHRIST

Instead of starting letters, “Dear Friend,” like we do now, when the New Testament letters (“epistles”) were written, they started with the author’s signature—letting people know up front who was writing them.

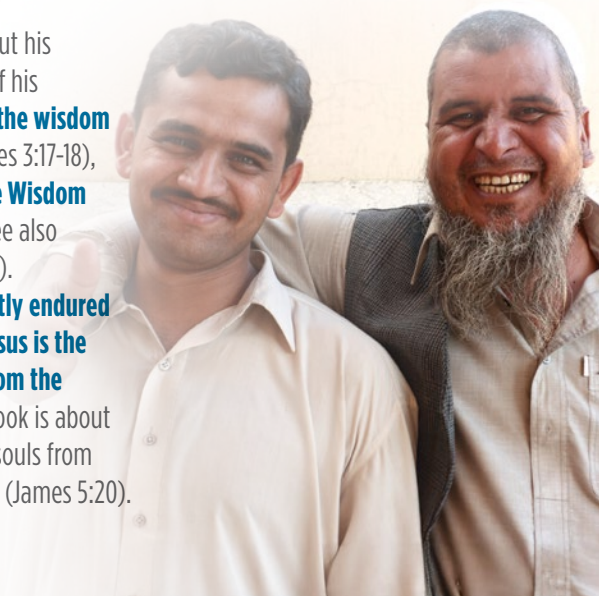
**When James started his letter, he introduced himself as “Jesus’ bondservant.” But in reality, this “slave” was really Jesus’ own half-brother. James’ father was Joseph and Jesus’ father was our heavenly Father, but they shared the same human mother, Mary.**

Perhaps James never boasted about his close relationship with Jesus because, before the Resurrection, James didn’t believe Jesus’ claims to be Messiah. Neither did Jesus’ other brothers and sisters believe or follow Him during His earthly ministry (see Matthew 12:46-50 and John 7:5). However, once he believed, James followed the Lord faithfully. In fact, James likely became head of the church at Jerusalem, and in Acts 15 he presided over the history-defining great council there.

If you were in that original audience, it must have felt like a privilege to get a letter from someone who grew up with the Savior of the world. But **James repeatedly called his audience “my brothers”—grouping all who are found in Christ by faith as brothers with this brother of Jesus.**

James writes about Jesus throughout his letter, almost like it’s a biography of his brother. **When James wrote about the wisdom that comes down from above** (James 3:17-18), **he wanted us to think of Jesus, the Wisdom that has come to us from above** (see also Matthew 11:19 and 1 Corinthians 1:30).

**Or about how Jesus Himself perfectly endured temptation** (James 1:12). **Or how Jesus is the perfect gift that has come down from the Father of lights** (James 1:17). This book is about our Jesus, who alone can save our souls from death and cover a multitude of sins (James 5:20).





# WHY STUDY JAMES?

Join in the studies on  
THRU the BIBLE FEBRUARY 12-  
MARCH 5 or anytime online, by  
podcast, or by mobile app.

The book of James was the first book in the New Testament to be written—likely about 20 years after Jesus returned to heaven and the church began. The book’s focus is: “What does faith look like?” James deals with the ethics of Christianity, not doctrine. He’s about shoe-leather. In fact, James starts the first chapter telling us to “consider it pure joy” whenever we face trials and tribulations.



FAITH IS THE CAUSE OF *salvation*;  
WORKS ARE THE RESULT OF *salvation*.

*“God looks down and sees your heart, and He knows whether you believe or not—that is justification by faith. But your neighbor next door doesn’t see your heart; he can only judge by your works, the fruit of your faith.”* –Dr. J. Vernon McGee



## KEY VERSE

*But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.* –James 1:22

## BECAUSE IT’S SO PRACTICAL, THE BOOK OF JAMES HAS BEEN COMPARED TO THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOK OF PROVERBS:

**ON WISDOM** James 1:5—“*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God....*” See Proverbs 2:6

**ON HUMILITY** James 4:6, 10—“*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.... Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.*” See Proverbs 3:34

**ON THE POWER OF OUR WORDS** James 3:5—“*Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!*” See Proverbs 26:28

**WHAT ABOUT TOMORROW?** James 4:13,14—“*Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city’ ... you do not know what will happen tomorrow.*” See Proverbs 27:1

**ANGER** James 1:19—“*Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.*” See Proverbs 15:28

**HOW TO PRAY** James 5:16—“*The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*” See Proverbs 15:29





## Hearers Vs. Doers

The Bible Bus is coming up to one of the most favorite books to study—the epistle of James. Some affectionately call it “the Proverbs of the New Testament” because it’s so packed with wisdom. But this wisdom isn’t just practical platitudes; Dr. McGee called it “wisdom from above.”

I came across a phrase in James the other day that made me think of you. It’s James 1:22, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only.” James was saying in effect, *Don’t just listen to God’s Word, put it into practice.*

**I’m very glad we’ve got a big company of people riding the Bible Bus, but it gives me the greatest joy to hear how you not only listen to THRU the BIBLE, but you live it out.** Each time you face a trial with deeper faith in God, you’re living out the Word. Each time you pray on the World Prayer Team, each time you invest financially, each time you share a Bible Bus Pass, each time you invite a friend to listen with you—each one of those times, you are not just “hearing” but you’re “doing.”

Thank you for your model of faith—for when you *hear* the Word and when you *do* the Word. **You really inspire me, and you inspire each other. So keep it up, brothers and sisters. We’re walking this road to glory together.**

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



Gregg Harris  
THRU the BIBLE, President

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# IMPACT THE NATIONS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

*Declare His glory among the nations,  
His wonders among all peoples.* – Psalm 96:3

The nations are closer than you think. People from every tribe and tongue around the world are settling into our neighborhoods, offering a unique opportunity to share the hope of Jesus right where we live.

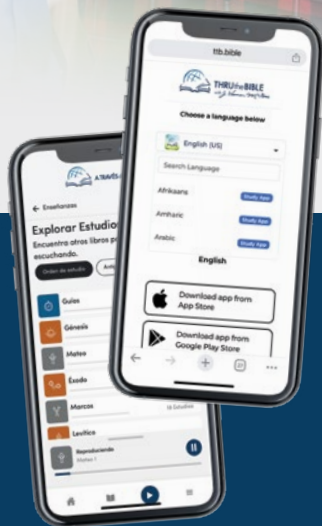
## REACH THE WORLD ON YOUR STREET WITH THE THRU THE BIBLE APP

With the free THRU the BIBLE App and over 60 language-specific study apps—including Spanish, Mandarin, Amharic, and more—sharing God's Word in a heart language has never been easier. Simply find the language your neighbors speak, introduce them to the app, and see how the gospel resonates in a whole new way.

### THREE SIMPLE STEPS TO BRING HOPE TO YOUR NEIGHBORS:

- 1 **DOWNLOAD** the THRU the BIBLE App at [TTB.Bible](http://TTB.Bible).
- 2 **PRAY** for someone who speaks one of those languages.
- 3 **INTRODUCE THEM** to the language-specific app.

You'll be amazed to see how hearing God's Word in their heart language is like a fresh glass of water.



### READY TO BEGIN?

Explore all our study apps at [TTB.Bible](http://TTB.Bible).



Available in the Apple  
and Google Play Stores

**Together let's reach the nations in our neighborhoods—  
taking the whole Word to the whole world.**

# STORIES FROM THE BIBLE BUS



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## ETHIOPIA

*“I thank God for your good work and may the grace of God be with you all. I grasped many things from this study of Genesis to Revelation. I can see the Old Testament is the shadow of the New Testament. **In the Old Testament books, I saw Jesus. What a surprise. Each message helps and guides Christians to look for Christ in their lives.** Many people are blessed by this program, including me. May the peace, love, and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. We will pray for you, please also pray for us.”*

**From an Oromo listener**

*“I have listened to you for many years. **Your program is very educational and a guide; it has been a blessing in my life, as well as for my family.** We are happy for the announcement of a second round of this program. We will inform our friends to follow you. **Personally, the program brought me back to Christianity from the wrong paths I had taken for many years.** I will keep listening and learning about the Bible. I would like to praise our God for this chance to live in His house, and serve Him with our actions, thoughts, and minds.”*

**From a Tigrinya listener**



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



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