

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

GOD CREATED THIS UNIVERSE
WITH A PURPOSE,
AND HE'S WORKING
OUT HIS PLAN TODAY.

*And it's way bigger
than we can comprehend.*

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE



THRUtheBIBLE



WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

A LETTER TO THE FAMILY OF GOD



Dr. J. Vernon McGee
THRU the BIBLE Founder



This excerpt is from our
1 John Bible Companion,

Download a free copy at [TTB.org/1John](https://www.TTB.org/1John)
or buy a print copy at [store.TTB.org](https://www.store.TTB.org).

In the last decade of the first century, the apostle John moved to Ephesus to pastor the church founded by Paul. It was near the end of his life when he wrote three important parts of the New Testament—first, the gospel of John (around 90 A.D.), the book of Revelation, while he was imprisoned on the island of Patmos, and then, back in Ephesus, he wrote three final letters to the Christian community made up of house-churches in and around Ephesus. He died soon after, around 100 A.D. and was buried there.

Ephesus was a fascinating place at the time—a complex, Roman world with strong, prevailing attitudes and beliefs from Roman culture. This thinking shapes the message of John's first letter.



Many followers of Jesus in Ephesus were children of the first Christians. They had heard the stories of what it was like for their parents when Acts 19 took place in their city. But the newness of their faith in Jesus had worn off; the thrill and glory of those first days had faded. Revelation 2:4 records John's observation that the Ephesians had left their "first love." The Ephesians' devotion to Jesus Christ was at low ebb.

This second generation of Christians had also lost their high moral standards. Believers are called saints—from the Greek word *hagios*, meaning "set aside for God's sole use, belonging to God." The temple was *hagios*; the Sabbath was *hagios*. Christians were also to be *hagios*. But the children and grandchildren of the first Christians did not want to be different. They wanted to fit in with the world, rather than be set apart.

In Ephesus, persecution was not the enemy of Christianity. The danger to this group of believers was not harassment from the outside but seduction from the inside. Christianity was not in danger of being destroyed; it was in danger of being compromised. There was an attempt to "improve it," give it intellectual respectability, and let it reflect popular philosophy. It may sound as familiar as attitudes we

face today; Christians then wanted to point out the good in everyone’s heart and deny the need to deal with sin. “Make the Bible relevant and accessible.” But be on your guard when you hear false teaching like this, and fortify your thinking with the Bible’s truth.

Finally, a real threat to this second-generation church was the heresy of Gnosticism that had crept in. This false teaching boasted “super knowledge.” They said they knew things normal Christians couldn’t.

Gnostics taught that Jesus was fully God—but not fully man. Various forms of Gnosticism taught the body was evil, so God could not unite Himself with it. Jesus only *seemed* to have a body, but actually did not—that when He walked, He left no footprints. Others taught that divinity came upon Jesus at His baptism and left Him at the cross. John was one of the last people to have actually known Jesus Christ personally and was uniquely qualified to combat this false teaching.

So this first letter from John, 1 John, reads like a sermon for believers in the Ephesus community to teach them how to stand firm against heresy and encourage them to walk in the light. It’s a family epistle—a letter to the family of God. Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ brings us into the family and into the fellowship of the Father’s house. John referred to God as our Father 13 times and to the believers as “little children” 11 times. This epistle reads like a sermon from a devoted pastor who loves and is concerned for the family of God.

GOD INVITES THE BELIEVER INTO

A SACRED, DEEPLY PERSONAL

relationship with Him.

Some have called 1 John “the holy of holies” of the New Testament—how God invites the believer into a sacred, deeply personal relationship with Him. We read it to know how to cultivate that intimate fellowship with God.

The church is a body of believers God blesses “with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ” (Ephesians 1:3). God gives us that position when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ—this brings us into the family of God. In the family we have a relationship which can be broken when we sin, but then restored when “we confess our sins.” Then “He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

As our fellowship grows deeper, the better we know God experientially, the closer we abide in Him (John 14:21-24), and the more we will experience the life He intends for us. First John instructs and motivates the family of God to grow closer to God and each other (how to “walk in the light”), and how to restore our relationship with God and others when it is broken by sin. This is an intimate, practical family letter that helps us continue to believe in the name of Jesus Christ.



MY TURN

- ① Does it surprise you that the second generation of Christians had already drifted from their first love?
- ② Do you see any places in your life where, like the recipients of this letter, you don't want to be set apart to God?
- ③ In what areas do you think believers today struggle with wanting to improve the Christian faith?
- ④ Family can mean different things to different people, but what does it mean to you to be a part of God's family?
- ⑤ What are some specific ways you could follow John's command to “walk in the light?”

FORECASTING A GOSPEL HARVEST IN CANADA



Dave Dunmore
Executive Director TTB-Canada

Traditional radio broadcasts over the vast reaches of Canada's farmland and small towns still prompt folks to write letters and share from their heart. One such listener told us, "After a long day, I find *Thru the Bible* helps encourage me with our faith walk with Jesus."

We love our radio listeners and recognize that the media landscape is changing rapidly. During fall's harvest season we had an opportunity to travel across Canada's western provinces to explore opportunities with THRU the BIBLE media partners.

We met with radio network executives who are actively looking ahead and implementing digital technologies and delivery systems to meet the audience where, when, and how they choose. We viewed online community hubs, which enable listeners to connect with their preferred radio station for local news and events, livestream a broadcast, or provide a link to TTB.org. Some stations have rolled out their own downloadable apps.

We know that providing legacy and digital connection points is necessary and effective in sharing our time-tested Bible teaching content. There are incredible opportunities for us to continue building and nurturing our technology to help in the gospel harvest.



We kicked off our schedule at CKJS Multilingual 92.7 FM in Winnipeg, Manitoba. As our first meeting wrapped up, we headed toward the station's playout studio and the familiar voice of Dr. McGee's daily Bible study could be heard

over the broadcast speakers. What an encouragement to hear at that moment! Our discussions with the station's Program Director had been very insightful and fruitful. His observations and perspectives helped to confirm the **themes we see as being necessary to reach more people with the Good News of Jesus Christ: new broadcast languages and new delivery systems** (i.e., how people access THRU the BIBLE content).

In this decade, Canada has taken in millions of newcomers from around the globe. Although people often learn English to be able to work or attend school, their birth country's heart language is always on the tips of their tongues. Thankfully, THRU the BIBLE is translated and recorded in hundreds of the world's languages. We now have new opportunities to share these faithful teachings from God's Word right here in Canada.



The Winnipeg station's focus is directed toward the city's multilingual population. As a result, there is an existing path to add THRU the BIBLE broadcasts to reach listeners whose background is from Ukraine and the Philippines.

Please pray that as the message of Jesus and His love airs in the Ukrainian and Tagalog languages that believers, or those searching for sounds of their homeland, will find these programs. Then, through the work of the Holy Spirit, they can experience a changed life.



TTB Canada is also considering additional broadcasts in languages to meet the needs of people from India and Arabic-speaking countries in other Canadian cities. **The nations are here now! Let us proclaim the truths of Scripture so they may hear.**

As we continue to faithfully serve in our mission of "taking the whole Word to the whole world," please pray that the new broadcast languages and new delivery systems will reap a harvest that is for God's glory.

J E S U S I N

1 John

WITH DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD

The introduction to the book of 1 John ushers us from this earth out into eternity.

Go back as far as you can think, beyond creation, back billions and trillions of years, and out of eternity comes the Lord Jesus Christ. Way back there He is already past tense; He is the Ancient of Days. “In the beginning was [not is] the Word.” In other words, this is a beginning that doesn’t even have a beginning because He had no beginning.

Our minds can’t begin to comprehend it until we come to John 1:14, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory.” This takes us back to Bethlehem, Galilee, Jerusalem where we meet Jesus—fully God, fully man.

John and his brother, James, met Jesus in Jerusalem when Jesus was 30 years old. Later they were with their father, mending nets, when Jesus came by and called them to follow Him. When John says, “*I want to tell you about Him,*” he witnesses to Jesus’ reality. “*We saw with our own eyes and heard with our own ears and felt with our own hands. We gazed on Him. We touched Him with our own hands. For three years we experienced, ‘witnessed,’ eternal life in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ*” (v. 1-3).

As one of the remaining people who actually walked with Jesus, John had credibility to testify Jesus was indeed fully man, contrary to what the Christians were hearing from the Gnostics who said Jesus wasn’t a man.

John isn’t talking about a theory. He’s talking about Someone he heard, he saw, and he handled. God in the flesh, Jesus Christ, was brought out into the open where people could see Him. This is the One who is the Word of Life—the One we can have fellowship with today.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. -John 1:1-2

WHY STUDY 1 JOHN?

On air **JUNE 11—JULY 15** or
anytime online, by podcast,
or by mobile app.

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.

KEY VERSE

"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

A FAMILY LETTER: Near the end of his life, the Apostle John, pastor of the church in Ephesus, wrote believers "a family letter" that taught them how to stand firm against heresy, to walk in the light, and grow closer to God. These principles still apply.

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



LIVING WAYS FROM 1 JOHN:

- It's impossible to love Jesus and not love others.
- Broken relationships can be restored when we confess our sins.
- Sin offends Someone who loves you and it needs to be treated like that.





Everyone's Story

This year I've run into so many people who have a story about THRU the BIBLE or Dr. McGee. I've loved hearing every one of them. The stories have a common theme—the person was in a spot, they heard the Word, God provided, and they've been on the Bible Bus ever since.

Do you have a story like that? I hope so. (We'd love to hear it.)

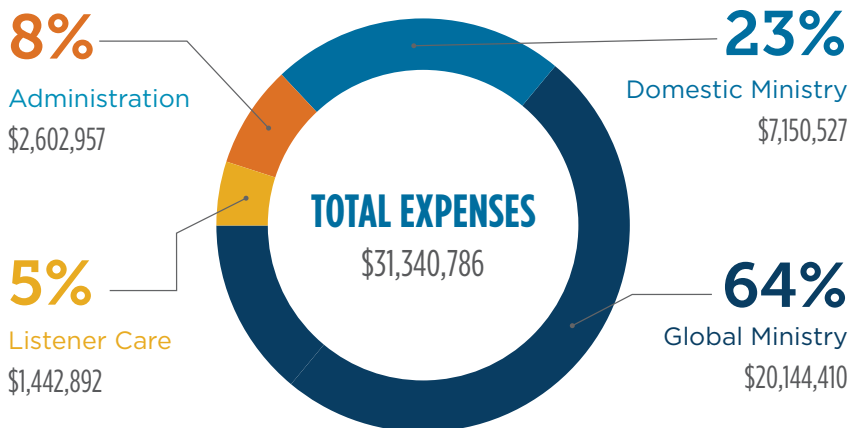
This pie chart pictures how God provided this past year through your partnership and how we invested it. Behind every number, every category, every effort are people just like you ... and more stories than we can tell this side of heaven. We're going to be celebrating for eternity.

Thank you for your partnership this year in taking God's whole Word to the whole world.

Grateful for you,

Gregg Harris
THRU the BIBLE, President

2024 ALLOCATIONS



J E S U S I N

Jonah

WITH DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

A GREATER JONAH IS HERE

Jonah was a real, historical person. The record has been validated. Jonah was an Old Testament prophet, but his little book, which contains no prophecy, is instead a personal account of a major event in his life that points to the Lord Jesus Himself and His resurrection from the dead.

Eight centuries after Jonah's story took place, Jesus Christ retells it in the company of the scribes and Pharisees. They asked Him for a sign that He was the Messiah, but they had no intention of believing. Jesus saw through their plot and said instead that He would give them the sign of Jonah.


“For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.” -Matthew 12:40-41


The Lord directed them back to Old Testament Jonah who was apparently raised from the dead when he was in the fish. God brought him out of darkness and death and into light and life (just as He would in Jesus' soon death and resurrection). After his miraculous deliverance from the big fish, the Ninevites received Jonah's message and repented from their sin. But, Jesus said, Israel as a nation was in a much worse position because she did not receive her Messiah and did not repent.

Jonah's real story is not a fish story, but a picture of the man Jesus, raised from the dead and on a throne in heaven.

STORIES FROM THE BIBLE BUS

THE DIASPORAS OF CANADA

 “Greetings from Canada. I was born in Serbia, but I went to Canada at the age of 25 because I couldn’t find a well-paid job in Serbia. I got married here, but I am very happy to listen to the internet program, Thru the Bible. In a way, it cures my nostalgia for Serbia, because I like to listen to programs in Serbian. I rarely have the opportunity to speak my mother tongue here. **But what is most important is that these programs strengthen my faith and nourish me spiritually. After a hard day, the Word of God restores my strength. It is a refreshment and a great blessing to me.** I take the Bible and listen to TTB. Sometimes my wife joins me, too. She makes us tea and we listen and study together with Dr. McGee and the Bible. These are special moments, and they bring us closer to God. We feel His presence and how He speaks to us. Our hearts change when we study His Word.” **From Filip**

 “I used to be persecuted a lot for my faith in Jesus, and I got expelled from my home. As a student, I managed to get to Canada. Ironically it was here that I started to miss church life very much. I feel so alone here, but it is nice to connect with you. **I am glad I can share my struggles, sorrows, and prayers with you.**” **From a Kabyle-speaking woman**

Listen on June 5 as Gregg Harris and Steve Shwetz share more about new opportunities in Canada. Get on the Bible Bus on your favorite Christian radio station, at TTB.org, or with our app.



God has blessed THRU the BIBLE to take the whole Word to the whole world by pairing Dr. McGee’s study programs with the Bible in hundreds of languages, featured in our apps and online platforms. This is made possible with global ministry partners like Biblica.com.



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



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