

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

**THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
IS NOT A SERIES OF
LITTLE DO'S AND DON'TS.**

It is knowing Jesus Christ.

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE



THRU the **BIBLE**



WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

GROW IN GRACE



Dr. J. Vernon McGee
THRU the BIBLE Founder



This excerpt is from our
2 Peter Bible Companion.

Download a free copy at [TTB.org/2Peter](https://www.thru.org/2Peter)
or buy a print copy at [store.TTB.org](https://www.thru.org/store).

In a final letter, written shortly before he is crucified, Peter the apostle warns the young church about a storm on the horizon. He wants to give their faith an anchor in Scripture, their only defense against the coming apostasy. *“You will not be able to live for God in these days of apostasy unless you have a knowledge of the Word of God,”* he says in essence. *“You need to know not just about God but also about His Word. Then you’ll have a place to stand and a steady foundation to your Christian character.”*

The Christian life is more than just being born again—it’s also about growing up in Christ. The last verse of the entire letter sums it up well: *“But grow in the grace ...”* We do not only need to *stand fast* in grace (his closing challenge from the first letter), but we also need to *keep growing* in it.

Peter, who identified himself as a bondservant and just one of the apostles (that’s his authority) wrote this second letter in 66 A.D., shortly after his first letter. The Lord Jesus had ascended back to heaven



three decades before. In these 30 years, a sneaky heresy had slipped in the church called Gnosticism that said some had a secret about Jesus no one else had. Maybe it was a secret password or handshake, but you had to get on the inside in order to find out. Peter rebuffed all that and said real knowledge is to know Jesus Christ.

Peter writes to those who “have obtained like precious faith with us.” When he uses the word “faith,” he means the gospel, the body of truth. He is saying, “*You have received it, now it’s up to you what you do with it.*”

If you are not a believer today, don’t say it’s because you have mental reservations. The truth is, you have some *sinful* reservations. When your heart turns to the Lord, then He will lift the veil. Anytime you are ready, God is ready, and He will save you. God doesn’t want anyone to perish. Today it is “*whoever* desires, let him take the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17) and “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whoever* believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). All He asks you to do is believe. He doesn’t even ask you to clean up before you come to Him. He’ll clean you up later if you really mean business with Him.

When Jesus Christ saves you, He not only subtracts your sin, He also adds His own righteousness to your account.

Peter blesses his readers with “grace and peace be multiplied.” Notice this is always the order: First, we know the grace of God—that God has saved us, not through our merit, our character, or anything in us, but He has saved us because of our faith in Christ. Because He loved us enough to die for us on the cross to pay the penalty of our sins, it is possible for Him to reach down and save us. Once we experience God’s grace, then we can experience God’s peace (see Romans 5:1). And notice one is not added to the other—it is multiplied!

How does this spiritual mathematics take place? Through “the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.” Christianity is a Person. We are not only to believe in Jesus Christ but we also want to *know* Him (see also Philippians 3:10). He is the living Savior who right at this moment is at God’s right hand. This knowledge of Jesus Christ comes through a knowledge of the Word of God, the *sure* Word of God. The Holy Spirit takes the things of Christ and makes them real

ONCE WE EXPERIENCE GOD’S GRACE,

*then we can experience
God’s peace.*

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

to us. You can know Jesus Christ better than you can know your closest loved one. You can tell Him things you would not dare tell anyone. The important thing is that to *know* Him is eternal life (see John 17:3).

To know Him in this way, we first have to be born again (see 1 Peter 1:23). Then His divine power gives us everything we need to live life to the full. He makes every arrangement for you to live a godly life for Him. It's only through the knowledge of Christ that you can really learn to live here and now and grow to be a more godly person. Only by knowing Jesus Christ in every way possible can we be "called ... by glory," meaning we are growing to be like Him in every way, with all excellence. The way you'll have the courage to excel in life is through knowing more and more about Jesus Christ.

Peter loved the word "precious." He's talked about our precious faith, now he talks about the precious promises God has given to us (promises like John 6:37, Matthew 11:28, John 14:6, 1 John 5:12, and 1 Peter 1:23). Wonderful promises come wrapped in knowing and believing Jesus Christ and by faith in Him.



MY TURN

- ① Knowing Jesus is the foundation of the Christian life. **What steps can you take to know Jesus more and better?**
- ② One of the keys to following Christ is to allow the Holy Spirit to change our hearts and our desires. **What things will you think of as more precious as your heart changes?**
- ③ Virtue and courage don't just appear in our lives, but they must be cultivated. **Who do you know who lives a life of virtue, and what can you learn from them?**

OUT OF THE DARKNESS, INTO THE LIGHT



Ray Alary
THRU the BIBLE, Special Assistant
to the President



After many hours of travel, we step off the plane in Liberia, West Africa. Dave Dunmore and I have come from Canada; our coworker and THRU the BIBLE host and Chairman, Steve Shwetz, has travelled from his home in California. We breeze through immigration and get to baggage claim. Moments later, the baggage hall is plunged into darkness. At least 100 of us crowd around, trying to get our luggage. It's *hot*. The light comes back on about 10 minutes later, and by then we have our bags that are loaded with precious cargo: **Over 200 media players have successfully made their way through customs, destined for eager listeners here in Liberia.**

As I reflect now on our time in Liberia, those minutes of darkness have greater meaning to me. **Liberia has had a difficult history. For many years it was a dark place spiritually and politically. So dark that a radio station, ELWA, that had been broadcasting THRU the BIBLE and other Christian programming to the country was destroyed by warring parties.** A country that had the light of Christ suddenly went dark. **Praise God, on January 1, 2025, THRU the BIBLE started sending light back into Liberia on that rebuilt station!**

But for years, TTB had no radio outlet in the country. So, you can bet I was excited a couple of years ago when we got a call from a donor who had heard Gregg and Steve talking on the program about our Home Groups in India. This brother was wondering if we could possibly do Home Groups in Liberia? **That one phone call started a THRU the BIBLE ministry in Liberia that has now distributed over 1,000 players throughout the country. Wow!** The impact of this small project necessitated a visit—seeing is believing, as they say.

And we saw the impact. On Sunday, Dave, Steve, and I drove two hours to a little village. We didn't know what to expect. We were literally in the middle of nowhere, there was no electricity, the only water supply was just a stream. We entered the simple structure serving as a church—a bamboo pole draped with palm fronds to keep the sun off of us. **In attendance were over 200 people from seven churches that have been started through local people listening to THRU the BIBLE in African English Home Groups.**

We sang, I shared a message from John 3:16, and Steve Shwetz even did a baby dedication. What a joy to see light penetrating the darkness!



Steve Shwetz performed an impromptu baby dedication!



Some of the 200 media players our team brought for listening groups in Liberia.

But for me the most exciting thing that happened wasn't in the service. **As we were leaving, a woman discreetly came up to me and said, "I am a Muslim. I have been listening to the programs, not as part of a group. I heard what you said from John 3:16, and I need to hear more."** She asked for a player and guaranteed me she will listen regularly. When this sort of thing happens, it does something to me—I know God is speaking to this woman's heart. My prayer is that she will come out of the darkness and into the light.

God is shining His Light brightly in Liberia through media players, through Home Groups, through people hearing the message from a neighbor, and now through radio broadcasts. **God is at work, and you are all making it possible. Please keep putting gas in the "Bible Bus" until all the world has heard!**



LISTEN ON MAY 19 AND 26 AS GREGG HARRIS AND STEVE SHWETZ SHARE MORE ABOUT OUR MINISTRY IN LIBERIA. Get on the Bible Bus on your favorite Christian radio station, at TTB.org, or in our app.

J E S U S I N

2 Peter

WITH DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

HOW TO KNOW HIM

Christianity is a person, and it's about not only believing in Jesus Christ, but in knowing Him, friends! That's the important thing about the Christian life—knowing Him.

Peter, an eyewitness to Jesus' humanity and majesty, says at the start of his second letter, "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord" (1:2).

Peter tells us the only place we can get that knowledge of Christ is in the Word of God.

You can't know Him out in nature, though you can discover something of His power and wisdom. You might know something about Him through an experience or in some meeting. But you can't know Him personally apart from His Word.

Peter tells us that **Christ has given us all of the things that we need to have a life that's really worth living.** "His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness"—and here we go again—"through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue" (1:3). Again, it's only through the knowledge of Christ that we can really learn to live well here and to grow into a godly person. The only way you can become that kind of person, with a well-developed personality, is through knowing Jesus Christ, "the knowledge of Him who called us by glory" And that means to be like Him.

Having "virtue" means that you have the courage to excel in life. You can stand on your own feet for God. We need that virtue today! **He's called us "by glory and virtue," and the only way we can do it is in knowing Christ.**

Jesus Christ has given us some glorious, wonderful promises in the New Testament. "Precious promises," Peter calls them. Why has God given us promises? So that we can be like Him. That is, so we might be sons and daughters of God. **When your knowledge of God leads you to faith in Jesus Christ and you're born again, then you're given God's nature.**

The Christian life is not a series of little do's and don'ts. It is knowing Jesus Christ.

WHY STUDY OBADIAH?

On air **MAY 20-26**
or anytime online, by podcast,
or by mobile app.

God hates it when we try to live like He doesn't exist. The prophet Obadiah focused on one such prideful nation: Edom. Back in Genesis 25, Isaac had twin sons—Jacob and Esau. Israel descended from Jacob and the Edomites descended from Esau. In Obadiah's prophecy, we see pride showing up in Edom just like Esau, their father, who said, "I would rather have a bowl of soup than have a relationship with God."

Pride says, "I can live without God."

Every time we read about Edom in the Bible, it's how they opposed Israel. They had a long history of hate with the Jews. King Herod the Great (who tried to kill Jesus as a baby) **was an Edomite.** And speaking of heritage, a large part of the Muslim world today has the blood of Esau flowing through their veins.

OBADIAH'S MESSAGE TO THE NATION OF EDMO: "PRIDE HAS DECEIVED YOU."

Edom lived in a false security, thinking they could take care of themselves.

"Obadiah is a little book, but it is an example of an atomic bomb in the Bible. It might be a small thing, but it has a powerful message." —Dr. J. Vernon McGee

ABOUT THE BOOK OF OBADIAH

- Written in 590 B.C., the book of Obadiah overlaps the ministries and writings of Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, and Joel.
- Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament, just 22 verses long.
- Obadiah is a series of poems.
- When Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70, the Edomites disappeared from history.

The nearly impregnable fortress of Petra was the capitol of the Edomites.

KEY VERSE

The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; you who say in your heart, "Who will bring me down to the ground?" —Obadiah 1:3





Powered by Prayer

If you've been around THRU the BIBLE a while, you know how committed we are to deliver God's Word and Dr. McGee's teaching through whatever medium we can think of. Radio. Apps. YouTube. Flash drives. WhatsApp. Whatever!

One delivery method we know never fails. James 5:16 says "the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective" (NIV). **May I ask that you partner with us in prayer this month that God's Word and THRU the BIBLE will go places we never dreamed possible?**

Go ahead—pray right now. God is listening, and He's proven over and over again that He hears the prayers of His people and He answers.

Here are a few specific requests:

- ① Praise God that His Word clearly is having impact in areas where the name of Jesus is being heard for the first time. **Pray the Bible Bus travels to new places without hindrance.**
- ② **Pray for the safety of groups meeting in countries where the Bible is prohibited.** Because the gatherings are in homes and not in public places, the risk is lower—but still present.
- ③ **Intercede for new TTB Home Groups** beginning in Bosnia, Turkey, and Macedonia as they face the unique challenges of ministry in eastern Europe.
- ④ **Finally, pray also that God's Word works in our hearts, too.** Hebrews 4:12 is true: "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Together with you in prayer,



Gregg Harris
THRU the BIBLE, President

WHY STUDY JONAH?

On air **MAY 27-JUNE 10**
or anytime online, by podcast,
or by mobile app.

Does the Old Testament book of Jonah belong in the Bible? Did that whole thing with the whale really happen? Did Jonah actually die? These questions and more revolve around the tiny book some scholars call “the perfect little narrative.”

JONAH IS A PROPHET DURING THE REIGN OF KING JEROBOAM II — that’s after the prophet Elijah, but before Amos and Hosea. God calls Jonah to preach to the wicked people of Nineveh who have been cruel to Israel. Jonah doesn’t want to, so he runs in the opposite direction to Tarshish (near Spain). But God had another idea ... because God is in the business of saving sinners.

“God didn’t ask you to love the lost before you go to them. He said, ‘I love the lost, and I want you to go to them.’ That is what He is saying to Jonah: ‘Jonah, I love the Ninevites.’” —Dr. J. Vernon McGee

JESUS COMPARES HIMSELF TO JONAH — saying just as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, He also would be a sign to His generation in His resurrection from the dead. (See Matthew 12:38-41.)

LESSONS FROM JONAH:

- You can’t run away from God.
- Disobedience will create turmoil in your life.
- God’s mercy is a mystery.
- With repentance comes obedience to God’s Word.
- God’s plan to show grace won’t be frustrated.

WHAT IS THIS LITTLE STORY ABOUT?

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|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Is it about Jonah’s rebellion? | → | Love for all people |
| Is it about Nineveh’s revival? | → | Compassion for the lost, especially Gentiles |
| Is it about the fish? | → | Kindness that leads to repentance |
| Is it about the gourd? | → | Missionary heart for the world |
| Is it about us? | → | Promise of Jesus’ resurrection |

IT’S REALLY ABOUT GOD AND HIS:

STORIES FROM THE BIBLE BUS



THRU the BIBLE

LIBERIA

*“Hello, I reside in the United States and have been a listener of TTB since 1978. War broke out in my nation of Liberia where I first listened to TTB. In 2007 I was brought over to the United States. **TTB has made a great impact in my life. It empowers me so I can even explain and tell others about the Bible. I’ve been listening to it for all these decades and, by the grace of God, today I was ordained as a pastor.** I’m so excited and I believe by the grace of God I’m going to continue listening to TTB all the days of my life. I pray that God continues to inspire you and bless you as you build your faith on the foundation, which is Jesus.”* **Voicemail from Joseph**

*“This morning I listened to Dr. J. Vernon McGee’s sermon ‘An X-Ray of the Cross.’ It was a moving sermon, and I committed my life to Jesus. This was neither my introduction to Dr. McGee nor my first commitment to Jesus. I ‘met’ Dr. McGee about 45 years ago in college. Then, the attraction was not his sermon, but the theme song I often heard on my neighbor’s Christian radio station. I wouldn’t hear Dr. McGee again until around 2003 or thereabouts. By then, I resided in the U.S. and was faculty at a local university in Atlanta, Georgia. I read Dr. McGee’s books daily, prayed, and attended church. But then I stopped all of these; I returned home after 2012 and abandoned Dr. McGee’s books and neglected church. **However, in the last couple of years I somehow resumed listening to TTB on your podcast. Dr. McGee’s teachings are still inspiring and illuminating. Thanks for your devotion and encouragement. My three-scores-and-ten is looming, and I believe that a forgiving God is showing me the Way, again.**”* **From William in Careysburg, Liberia**



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



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