

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

GOD COMFORTS AND
RESTORES A SINNING SAINT

to full fellowship.

GOD DELIGHTS IN

showing mercy.

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

Remember this truth as you
celebrate **Resurrection Sunday.**

He is risen!



THRU the BIBLE



WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

GOD LOVES TO SHOW MERCY



Dr. J. Vernon McGee
THRU the BIBLE Founder



This article is an excerpt from Lesson 1 of our **2 Corinthians Bible Companion**. Download the full digital booklet [here](#).

If you wonder if the first century church had issues, then take a look at Corinth. This young church struggled to know how to live pure, godly lives in a corrupt culture.

In the first letter to the church at Corinth, the apostle Paul called them out on a serious sin issue that was keeping them from growing up in the Lord. But when they got Paul's letter, they wised up and responded well to his correction. Just one person was still causing trouble. Paul then wrote 2 Corinthians to set the troublemaker straight, but God's larger purpose was to encourage the young church and grow them up in their Christian disciplines. They learned how to call out destructive sin—and then how to restore a repentant sinner. They also learned how to be generous in giving to God's work.



The letter begins on a high note. Paul knew for certain he was in God's will, and that gave him confidence. It makes no difference *where* you are or *how* you are or *what* your circumstances may be; if you know you are in God's will, you are in a great place.

Did you know that when Paul wrote this letter, he also addressed the church in your neighborhood, which is also God's church? *We are God's church*, the body of believers the Lord Jesus Christ purchased with His blood. The church in Corinth was like every other. When the gospel came to them, the light broke on their darkened souls. They turned from their sins to the living Christ.

To equip the Corinthian Christians for hard times, Paul then taught them about God Himself. His lessons are rich and beautiful, take them to heart. *Don't forget about God's mercies; He is the Father of mercies*, he reminds us. God is the Father; that's His position in the Trinity.

As "the Father of mercies," God provided a Savior for us. We couldn't be saved any other way. Everything we have today is a mercy from God. He is rich in grace and rich in mercy. Do you need that mercy today? If you need cash, you go to a bank to get it. If you need mercy, go to the One who is the Father of mercies. If you need help, go to Him. We don't deserve any of it, but He gives it all to us freely.

Our Father is also "the God of all comfort" (1:3)—comfort means "to come alongside of." The same word describes the Holy Spirit, the *paraclete*, the One called to our side. When the Lord Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit, He said He would send a *Helper*. *He will abide with you forever ... I promise to come to you*. The Spirit of God is called to help you, to strengthen you, to relieve the loneliness, ease the grief, and calm your fears. He is your advocate in time of fear and trouble. He will be with you in the desperate hour of life. (See Psalm 30:10.) When our soul cries out for the Comforter, He comes alongside us. When we know for sure God is with us in all life's troubles, we can live by faith and not by fear.

Life on life—that’s how Paul described the work of the ministry. We pray for each other, we help each other in trouble, we learn how to trust God from watching each other go through trouble. Our testimony in life matters. God uses it to show others how to live by faith. We don’t rely on our own wisdom, but we live our lives in “simplicity and godly sincerity” (1:12). Suffering, in part, produces this grace. God’s mercy produces qualities in our lives that we are to share.

Paul stayed away from Corinth so that their faith could grow stronger and they would grow up in the Lord. Perhaps this is also why God allows many of us to go through difficulties. He wants us to own our faith.

Since Paul got word they had made the needed course correction, now he could come to them in joy and open his heart to them. Since we’re talking about God’s mercy, it makes sense that Paul addresses the issue of sin the Corinthian church had been dealing with. A man had been living in gross immorality, yet the church shut their eyes to it, acting like they were spiritual. Paul wrote them (1 Corinthians) to get this matter straightened out. He told them to not have fellowship with this man until he turned from his sin.

WHEN A MAN REPENTS FROM HIS SIN,

RESTORE HIM IN HUMILITY.

Bring him back into fellowship.

THIS IS THE GLORIOUS

ministry of mercy.

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

And for once the story ends well. The people obeyed Paul; they stopped fellowshiping with the man, which in this case was the right thing to do. The man felt overcome by the Spirit's conviction, and he confessed his sin. Then he turned his back on his sin. Now what should they do to?

Forgive him, Paul said. He will feel overwhelmed, not only because of his sin, but because you're distant from him. So now put your arm about him and restore him to your fellowship. (See also Galatians 6:1.) You don't want to discourage him so much that Satan finds an opening for more trouble. The devil will try to push us one way or another.

Remember that we are all capable of any sin. Whatever the other man has done, we are also capable of doing. When a man repents from his sin, restore him in humility. Bring him back into fellowship. This is the glorious ministry of mercy.

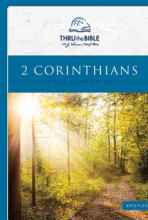
In this letter so far, we've seen God's comfort for our life's hardest events. Now we see God's comfort in restoring a sinning saint. Showing mercy gives God great delight.



Reflection & Discussion Questions

FROM THE BIBLE COMPANION

- 1 What can church leaders and church members learn from the relationship of the Apostle Paul and the church in Corinth?
- 2 What would you attempt for God if you had the same kind of confidence the Apostle Paul expressed in 2 Corinthians?
- 3 How could being reminded about God's mercies prepare you to endure tough times?
- 4 What does it tell us about God that He is interested in us being comforted in suffering?
- 5 What can you do to focus on God's purposes in the messy middle of suffering?



Download your free copy [here](#).

G 2023



BIBLE QUIZ UNIFIES A COUNTRY:

What a creative way to take God's whole Word to the whole world!



One of our broadcast partners in India annually conducts a "Bible Quiz." In September 2022, over 50,000 people participated in the friendly competition that spanned the entire country. **Yes, that number is correct. Over 50 thousand people studied the book of Hebrews and then tested themselves on what they learned.**

This creative idea, the brainstorm of TWR-India, is intended to build relationships with local churches and encourage a thirst for in-depth Bible study within the local body.

Every year for almost a decade, TWR-India leaders pick a book of the Bible and a date in September. Then they gather THRU the BIBLE resources on that book and send it to every participant to study.





And the result? Dependra Halder, who leads TWR-India, reports that 2022's quiz was a resounding success:

“We conduct this quiz to encourage as many people as possible to invest time in studying the Word of God. It is a unique opportunity to grow in our knowledge of God and to have some friendly competition, spurring one another on as we mature in Christ. The quiz this year was on the book of Hebrews, a book that many found as challenging as it was compelling and convicting. It is my prayer that the participants gained much more spiritually than from the prizes. I also pray that what has been learned now will not be lost in the recesses of our memories but will continue to resonate in our hearts and minds.”

Bible Quiz Opens the Door for Home Groups

For the first time this year, India's Bible Quiz made its way to Bihar, a state in eastern India with the second largest population in the country. The response was overwhelming. **Several churches opened their doors to start Homes Groups for the members of their congregations. We praise God that a one-time event like the Bible Quiz is paving the way for lasting fruit in Bihar and throughout India.**



SEE THE BACK COVER OF THIS ISSUE FOR STORIES FROM PEOPLE WHO TOOK THE BIBLE QUIZ THIS YEAR.



“I ASKED FOR SOME COMPANY IN MY FAITH ...”

If we were to name the top five most dangerous countries to live as a Christian, Libya would undoubtedly make the list.

And yet, God’s powerful Word is breaking through obstacles. Rejoice in this letter (we don’t receive many from this area) from a listener who for safety reasons calls herself Yamina:

“I am a woman of prayer, and God has used you to answer many of them. I asked for some company in my faith, and He brought me you. Then I began praying for my neighbor. She was at first resistant to the name of Jesus. She believed He was an enemy of Muslims. When I explained He is the friend of Muslims, a friend of sinners, but an enemy of sin, she said she would think about it. I asked her to listen to your program with me and then she went home. A few days later she decided to accept Jesus as her Savior! What a miracle. Now we are both students of your teaching and, God willing, our husbands will be too.”

Together let’s pray for and praise God for the faith and bravery of Yamina, her neighbor and new sister in Christ, and all those who choose to follow Jesus despite the risk.

Father, thank You that even with the threat of imminent danger, Your name is proclaimed and hearts are drawing close to You. Protect our brothers and sisters in Libya today. Encourage them and strengthen them with Your Word. As THRU the BIBLE goes out, multiply their numbers and transform Libya into a country that glorifies You. In the precious name of Jesus, amen.

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

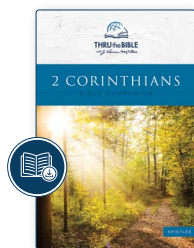
**GO TO TTB.ORG/PRAY
TO SIGN UP.**

J E S U S I N

2 Corinthians

WITH DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

Without Jesus Christ, we all are lost. We don't need behavioral modification or a psychological adjustment. Without Him, we are all doomed sinners on the way to hell. **The only solution we have is the gospel of Jesus Christ. What we need is Jesus!**



Adapted from the **2 Corinthians Bible Companion**. Download your free copy [here](#).

The good news is if we are in Christ, we are a new creation (5:17). We leave the old things behind, like our sin and this world system. Now we are identified with the glorified Christ. We have been baptized into the body of believers and we belong to Him.

How do you know you are a new creation in Christ? Because Jesus says so on the basis of the Word of God. You no longer belong to the old creation that fell in Adam. The new creation stands in Christ Jesus, and you are *in Him*. **We still stand in the place of danger and temptation, and we may fail in many, many ways, but the wonderful truth is that the Lord Jesus Christ has redeemed us, and we are a new creation in Him.**

As a new creation, we are reconciled to God. Reconciliation goes one step further than salvation. It's more than having our sins forgiven and divine justice being satisfied. Reconciliation means our relationship with God has completely changed. As a holy God, He had to do something about our sin. That's why He gave His Son as a sacrifice on our behalf. **Because Jesus died for us, we stand in a different place with God.**

Today God stretched out His arms to a lost world. *"You can come to Me."* **It doesn't make any difference who you are, you can come to Him. Because Christ died, a holy God no longer deals with us in judgment, but now He reaches down to save all those who will come to Him.** Jesus Christ bore all that judgment on Himself, to pay your debt so that you can be reconciled to God. **You don't have to do anything to win God over. He's not angry with you. God loves you.**





Do You Have the Time?

Today, we will each be given 24 hours to spend as we want. We can invest it or waste it or enjoy it. **The time we spend in God's Word and in prayer—well, it just couldn't be spent any better. When you invest your time with God, you're making a statement about what you consider important.**

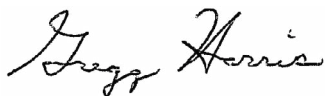
In Psalm 90:12, Moses asks God to teach us how to number our days that we may present to Him a heart of wisdom. This kind of "numbering our days" describes a concept of time the Greeks called *kairos*.

Kairos time doesn't refer to the clock or calendar time (that's a different Greek word, *chronos*), but to a unique opportunity within time for something significant. It signifies a strategic or pivotal moment, a one-time, a passing opportunity. **The Bible often exhorts us to take advantage of the time God has given us for both *chronos* and *kairos*.**

At THRU the BIBLE, we're thinking all the time of how to make the Bible and Dr. McGee's instruction all the more accessible to you, to allow you to make the most of the strategic moments of the day when God might just want to say something to you through His Word.

I commend you for making time in God's Word a priority in your *chronos* time so that you can catch those *kairos* moments as a gift from God. That's my prayer for us all.

Grateful for your partnership in the gospel,



Gregg Harris
THRU the BIBLE, President



WHY STUDY 2 CORINTHIANS?

Join in the studies on
THRU the BIBLE APRIL 21 —
MAY 18 or anytime online,
by podcast, or by mobile app.

Sometimes the church gets messy. The church at Corinth had a reputation like that. The apostle Paul wrote four letters to them (we have two) about their behavior—about what pleases the Lord and what doesn't. He wrote this letter we call 2 Corinthians to encourage them toward living godly and open-hearted lives. These truths play well no matter what century you live in.

“This letter is both a comfort and a challenge. Do everything you know you should do, and when you’ve done that, trust God to step in to do what you can’t.” —Dr. J. Vernon McGee

TAKE THIS TO HEART FROM 2 CORINTHIANS:

- God comforts us so we can comfort others | 1:4
- Walk by faith not by sight | 5:7
- You are a new creature in Christ | 5:17
- The power to live for God, comes from God | 3:5; 4:6-10
- Invisible things are happening | 4:16-18
- God loves it when you're generous and cheerful | 9:6-8
- God's grace is enough | 12:9-10

KEY VERSE

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. —2 Corinthians 5:17

WHO IS GOD? Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort. —2 Corinthians 1:3

- ✦ He's **“the Father of mercies”**—the source of all mercy and the one who acts in mercy.
- ✦ He's **“the God of all comfort”**—He's the one who stands alongside us to encourage and support.

A GOOD WORD ABOUT GENEROSITY FROM 2 CORINTHIANS 9

- Give generously | v.6
- Don't give grudgingly | v. 7
- God gives the grace to give | v. 8
- Give bountifully (more than you have to) | vv. 9-11
- Give according to the need | vv. 12-14
- You can't out-give God | v. 15

ON THE ROAD

Greetings FROM THE BIBLE BUS

**IN INDIA LAST YEAR, OVER 50,000 PEOPLE PARTICIPATED
IN THE ANNUAL THRU THE BIBLE QUIZ.**

Here's what a few said about what they learned:

From Kimear in Bihar: "I did not know anything about the book of Hebrews before I started to use the study material. I began reading and then listened to the study on YouTube. **This became a routine and, by His grace, I had a wonderful time writing the Quiz. It has helped me gain a much better understanding of the Scriptures.**"

A pastor in Maharashtra writes: "Our church has participated in these quizzes for four years. **The TTB-India Bible study resources are articulate yet simple at the same time. This material is a great tool that benefits all who want to grow in Christ.** It is not about passing or failing the Quiz. It does not matter who wins or who gets the prizes. **Our primary aim is to learn God's Word.**"

From Andhra Pradesh: "I am just a fledgling in my faith in Christ. I don't have much support in my growth in the faith. I read the Bible often, but I don't understand much of it. I have a great desire to study the Word meaningfully. I heard about the TWR Bible Quiz and I registered for it in the nearest center to my home. **It helped me study the Word of God, and I learned so much from the book of Hebrews. It really has been a great blessing to me in my spiritual life.**"

From Bihar: Ten children and five staff from a hostel for poor children participated in the Quiz. **The small group has now decided to continue studying the Word of God together.**

READ ABOUT THE LATEST BIBLE QUIZ ACROSS INDIA ON PAGES 6-7.



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