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

GOD HAS MADE YOU HIS CHILD
AND BLESSED YOU WITH
ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

THAT'S THE CONFIDENCE
WE CAN LIVE IN TODAY.

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE



THRU the BIBLE

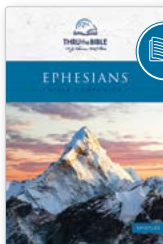


WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

CLIMBING THE MOUNTAINTOPS OF EPHESIANS



Dr. J. Vernon McGee
THRU the BIBLE Founder



This article is an excerpt from our **Ephesians Bible Companion**.
Download the full digital booklet [here](#).

Many people run for cover when they hear the word *predestination*. The natural man hates this word, and the average believer finds it difficult to accept at face value. Although the explanation might be clear, the truth it contains is hard to receive.

But let's look closely at the pivotal verses that are like a walnut—hard to crack, but with a lot of goodies on the inside.

Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. —Ephesians 1:4-5

God planned our salvation in eternity before we were even in this world. The plan initiated “when the fullness of time had come” (Galatians 4:4) for the Lord Jesus Christ to enter time, and make our salvation possible by His death on the cross. After Jesus' time on



earth, God the Holy Spirit followed. He came to dwell with believers. He brings us to a saving knowledge of God's grace revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Think about this: God has always been the One who does the saving. Our part has always been the sinning. You don't find Jesus. *He* finds you. He is the One who goes after the lost sheep and brings us home.

God chose believers in Christ before the foundation of the world, way back in eternity past. He didn't choose us because we were good or because we would do some good, but He did choose us so that we *could* do some good. The entire choice is thrown back on God's wisdom and the goodness of God alone. The responsibility is on Him. If He did the choosing, then He's responsible. That makes it quite wonderful!

Let's look closer at the verse. "Just as" connects these new thoughts to the previous verse. God gives us spiritual blessings according to His purposes. Look how these blessings build: He blesses us "*with every spiritual blessing,*" which is then wrapped "*in the heavenly places,*" and finally put in the larger package of "*in Christ.*" The whole thought is: Open your gift and see what God has done for you, and then move out confidently in faith and live today on the high plane to which God has brought you. He's made you His child and blessed you with all spiritual blessings. That's the confidence we should live in today.

This world and this universe *will* operate according to God's plan and purpose.

All this was according to His plan. God the Father planned the church, God the Son paid for the church, and God the Holy Spirit protects the church. The source of all our blessings is God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He takes us back to eternity past to help us see our salvation is completely from Him and not about us at all. God did it all.

We are climbing the mountaintops in Ephesians. We're peeking into eternity past, and God is telling us how He planned the church.

Perhaps you've heard the word "election." This means God chose us to be in Christ. People are not spiritually lost because they have not been elected. They are lost because they are sinners, and that is the way they want it and have chosen. The free will of man is never violated by the election of God. The lost person makes their own choice.

But to the lost sinner, God is prepared to extend His mercy.

These are the heights of Ephesians right now—it demands disciplined thinking. Some skirt the issue by saying they have "intellectual problems" with the Bible. But the hurdles aren't creation versus evolution or if there was a literal flood or if Jonah was swallowed by a whale. The real problem is the Bible condemns the sin in our lives. God will save you when your heart is willing to turn to Him. He's planned salvation like this so that He might bring you to heaven someday; and when you get there, you're going to find out He's the One who did it all.

Look at our verse again to see the next thing God did for us. The words "*in love*" really belong with verse five. "In love, having predestined us" Some say, *Oh no, there's that word predestination!* But don't be scared of this word—it is one of the most *wonderful* words in Scripture. These truths are like strong medicine. If you take it, it'll do you good. You need to *know* you've been chosen in Him in order to stand for Him today. It makes a world of difference in your life.

Some would never imagine that predestination and love could be together in the same verse, but here they are. God's love is behind this concept so many are afraid of. The word *predestination* means "to define, to mark out, literally to horizon." If you live where it's flat, you can see the horizon. You're "horizoned"; you're put in that area. When it refers to God, predestination describes God's purpose for your life.

HAVING BEEN BORN AGAIN,
NOT OF CORRUPTIBLE SEED BUT INCORRUPTIBLE,

*through the word of God which
lives and abides forever.*

1 PETER 1:23



Predestination never refers to unsaved people. God doesn't predestinate someone to be lost. If you are lost, it's because you have rejected God's remedy. It's like a doctor offering a dying man the cure. "If you take this, it'll heal you and you'll live." The man stares at the doctor and says, "I don't believe you." Then the man dies, and the doctor's report accurately says he died of a certain disease. But there was a remedy, and he actually died because he didn't take the remedy. God has provided a remedy for the lost to be saved. He never predestines anyone to be lost. In your free will, you determine your own choice.

Long ago, God decided to adopt us into His family through Jesus Christ and give us the position of full-grown heirs. He took tremendous pleasure in planning how to lavish us with salvation by the Spirit of God, giving us access to Him in a new way, through a new relationship (see 1 Peter 1:23).



MY TURN

- ① **What does it tell us about God that He isn't passive, that He pursues us for salvation?**
- ② God chose believers before they were ever born, and not because they would do anything to deserve it. **How does it make you feel about yourself to know God doesn't make mistakes in His choices?**
- ③ **What would you attempt for God today if you had more confidence?**
- ④ **How does knowing we've been chosen by God enable us to live for Him?**
- ⑤ Adoption into God's family means our position has changed. **In your own words, how would you describe the old position of the believer compared to the new position?**
- ⑥ God did not elect us merely for us to occupy space; His purpose in electing us revolved around changing us, making us holy and blameless. But those things require our effort and cooperation. **In what ways are you cooperating, or failing to cooperate, with the Spirit in those areas?**
- ⑦ Imagine you had been a companion of Paul's when he wrote Ephesians. **Would you have advised him to not use words like "predestination" or "election," or would you tell him to leave them in?**



TRAVEL NOTES FROM AN (ACCIDENTAL) GLOBAL CHRISTIAN



James Rosa

Global Projects Analyst, THRU the BIBLE

I was recently blessed to travel to Southeast Asia to work on several global project initiatives for THRU the BIBLE. I departed with intentions of having a significant spiritual impact on the people and ministries I would be serving. I returned realizing that I was in fact the one who was significantly impacted. As I pondered all the people and places I had encountered, I struggled to truly capture the essence of all the intangibles that had so thoroughly influenced my Christian worldview. I just knew I was different. However, a statement made by a colleague brought much needed clarity to my internal struggle. He said to me, “James, welcome to global Christianity.”

I immediately understood what he meant. Some truths are difficult to comprehensively understand unless you experience them. Not to say that experience is authoritative. We hold to many biblical truths that we might never personally experience ourselves. **However, experience can inform and give context to our understanding of the truth, and one of the benefits of working in Christian ministry on a global scale is its ability to challenge one’s experience.**



TTB had the opportunity to share a meal with the “S”-people’s ministry team while learning more about the amazing work they are accomplishing among their people group.



Ajahn “P” teaching one of the two, hour-long **Facebook Live sessions he does for the “H”-people group every day.**



Ajahn “P” **travels around with a suitcase full of his broadcasting equipment** so that he never misses a teaching to the “H”-people.

Here are a few thoughts to illustrate what I mean. I pray they inspire and motivate you to live on mission.

- ① **The centrality of the person and work of Christ as the preeminent object of our faith.** In Southeast Asia, like in the U.S., Christians love Jesus Christ. He is precious Lord and Savior to them, just as He is to us. That might seem obvious, but this reality is profound. We have much more in common than not.
- ② **The centrality of the person and work of Christ as the preeminent need of the unbelieving world.** After about 12 hours of being in country, I quickly realized that a city is a city, a mountain is a mountain, and people are people. They look different, they speak differently, they have a different culture and value system, and yet, they need Christ just like you and I do. That truth gave me a renewed passion and zeal for missions, not only overseas, but here in my hometown.
- ③ **Amazing people live everywhere—and I met a few.** What do you call someone who started preaching at 14 years old, is one of the primary pastors to his *entire* people group, oversees 14 churches, conducts two hour-long teachings every day, has four biological children, ten adopted children, 40 students attending the Bible institute he started, and gets this and so much more done with less than four hours of sleep every night? *A gut check.* What do you call meeting half a dozen Christians just as fruitful as this man? *Cognitive dissonance.* Do you think I came home feeling like I was living on mission? *No.* But thank God for repentance! I might not be that fruitful today, but I can begin sowing so that I might be that fruitful tomorrow.

When you see the amazing work Christians can and are accomplishing around the world, it truly excites, inspires, and challenges you to want to follow them. **That is my charge to you. As they follow Christ, as Paul followed Christ, let us all follow Christ—our precious Lord and Savior—and, one by one, get the whole Word to the whole world.**



DISCOVERING THE GREATNESS OF GOD

Great is our Lord, and mighty in power –Psalm 147:5

“Jesus is way bigger and more powerful than I expected!”

That’s what we hear from Shnoudeh as together we pray our way through Egypt. Here’s the rest of his story:

“I was truly blinded by what I was taught by my parents. I found you by accident, and when I started to study the Bible with you and read the Word of God, I felt the peace I’ve always heard about and wanted. I believe now that I am a true follower of Christ. I am a real Christian as of now, this minute. May God bless you. Keep praying for me and my wife, too.”

Today let’s celebrate. Although more than 87% of Egyptians claim Islam as their faith, quietly and consistently, God is calling more people like Shnoudeh to Himself. Pray more Egyptians find THRU the BIBLE and join us as we study His Word. As they do, may they, too, realize the power and greatness of our Lord.

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.**



AS YOU

celebrate with friends

AND FAMILY THIS SEASON,
GIVE THEM A GIFT THAT WILL
feed their souls.



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ALL ACCESS

LISTEN



BIBLE BUS
PASS

ALL ACCESS

SHARE



BIBLE BUS
PASS

ALL ACCESS

READ

As conversations happen over turkey and desserts, turn the topic to what you're learning about God and His Word. If someone is interested, invite them to join you on the Bible Bus. **The Bible Bus pass will show them how.**

**GET YOUR FREE PACKS OF BIBLE BUS PASSES
TO SHARE WITH THOSE YOU LOVE.**

CALL 1-800-65-BIBLE OR EMAIL BIBLEBUS@TTB.ORG.



Do What You Can

We talk a lot about how we can each be part of the mission of taking the whole Word to the whole world. I've been impressed and challenged by so many of your creative ideas and encouraged by your initiative.

Recently on a call with our Mongolian partner, I got an update on how God's Word was spreading to the Mongolian countryside. In a country of 3.3 million people and 70 million livestock, people depend upon their livestock for survival.

Our team in Mongolia partners with a creative, compassionate ministry of Christian veterinarians. As you can imagine, veterinarians are highly valued and respected among the nomadic herdsmen. As Christian vets make regular visits to care for the animals, they also bring the gospel. Since they are outside the reach of radio signals, they also bring THRU the BIBLE on small players and SD cards for the herdsmen to hear in their own language.

How cool is that!? THRU the BIBLE is going places we might never imagine in ways we never dreamed of. Keep that in mind as you listen today and think about creative ways you can get the word out!

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



Gregg Harris

Gregg Harris
THRU the BIBLE, President



WHY STUDY PROVERBS?

Join in the studies
on THRU the BIBLE
NOV. 24, 2023—JAN. 9, 2024
or anytime online, by podcast,
or by mobile app.

A proverb is a short sense based on long experience.

“The purpose of God’s Word is to point us to Jesus. We don’t read the Bible as some self-help book, we read it to get a better picture of God’s character. Proverbs is the most intensely practical book in the Bible, filled with wisdom for everyday issues but it begins with ‘the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.’ This isn’t just good advice—wisdom is a way to see Jesus.” –Dr. J. Vernon McGee

THE FEAR OF

the Lord

WILL INCREASE YOUR

quality of life.

LOOK AT WHAT PROVERBS SAYS ABOUT LIVING RIGHT:

- **How to handle money**—3:9; 13:11; 15:27; 21:6; 22:7
- **What’s the big deal about a good “work ethic”?**—3:9-10; 11:24-25; 28:22
- **Why be generous?**—10:4; 12:11; 20:4
- **How to choose a friend**—13:20; 17:17; 18:24; 22:24-25; 27:17
- **Want to really bless your children?**—13:24; 22:6; 29:15, 17
- **Why control yourself?**—14:29; 15:1; 21:17; 23:20-21; 29:11
- **How to make good decisions**—3:5-6; 15:22; 16:9
- **How to deal with difficult people**—12:16; 14:16; 20:22
- **What happens when you mess up?**—28:13
- **What’s in a word?**—12:25; 15:23
- **How to be really happy**—3:13, 17-18; 14:21; 15:15



I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY

THESE FRIENDS ON THE BIBLE BUS IN AFRICA LISTEN TO THRU THE BIBLE ON WhatsApp

Orach's home country is Uganda but he lives in Sudan. As he says, he knows what it is to live in a "global village." Daily, he shares the broadcast with his family and friends in Uganda, Sudan, and South Sudan. He says, *"Thank you for taking part in this gospel exploration to the global village. I have been forwarding most of these wonderful dynamic teachings by pastor Vernon to my friends and platform, and they have been responding to the light. We are now ready for the next Bible book. Please send more. We can't afford to miss the teaching."*

Clever, a pastor in Zimbabwe, writes, *"The book of 2 Peter really impacted me and my ministry. My spirit is uplifted and empowered through God's revelation. I rediscovered myself spiritually in Him by knowing how I am perceived by God and what He has made me to become. It is exciting to rediscover oneself in the Word of God and learn who He is and what He has purposed with my life. God continues to bless this ministry. Amen."*

Linnet from Kenya says Pastor McGee helped her love God's Word again after she lost interest in opening the Bible. She shares, *"I listen now every day on WhatsApp. I am happy, always waiting eagerly to go step by step with you. God bless you so much."*

WHAT'S YOUR STORY? HOW IS OUR TIME IN GOD'S WORD CHANGING YOU?

Is there a specific Sunday Sermon or section of God's Word that stands out in your mind?



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