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

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Despite the *pressure*  
of a busy life,  
Jesus still took time to *pray-*  
up before dawn to be  
*alone with His Father.*

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J. VERNON MCGEE



THRU the BIBLE



# WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD



## THE GOSPEL OF ACTION

Dr. J. Vernon McGee, as summarized in the Bible Companion for the Gospel of Mark

One of the first New Testament books to be written was the Gospel of Mark. Though John Mark was not an apostle, he traveled with Paul and his uncle, Barnabas, on the first missionary journey. By far, John Mark's closest relationship was with Simon Peter. This Gospel has long been considered Simon Peter's account, as told to John Mark. Some have said the facts of the Gospel are from Peter and the explanations are from Paul.

John Mark specifically wrote this Gospel for the Roman mind—the strong man who ruled the world for a millennium. The Romans brought a forced peace to the world with its strong dictatorship and—with it—justice, good roads, law and order, and protection. In the days when the Caesars ruled, the world longed for mercy and all they got was power. No man dared resist it, and fleeing the realm was impossible. It was in that day God sent a message to the Gentile world through the writer, John Mark.

Considering Peter as the source, no wonder the Gospel of Mark is a Gospel of action. Peter was that kind of man. The Lord Jesus here lays aside His robes of royalty that we saw in Matthew and girds Himself with the towel of service. Jesus is the King in Matthew and the Servant in Mark—God's servant. The style of this shorter Gospel is brief and

blunt, pertinent and pithy, simple and sweet, stripped of all excess verbiage. Mark goes right to the point, to the point of action and accomplishment. He answers the question: "Can Jesus do the job?"

Early in this Gospel we watch the intensity of Jesus' ministry unfold. There's probably more content in this first chapter of Mark than any other chapter in the Bible. It covers the ministry of John the Baptist, showing how he fulfilled the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi. It follows Jesus through a busy Sabbath, demonstrates His authority over the demonic realm, and finishes with a mighty work of healing. Yet, despite the pressure of a busy life, Jesus still took time to pray—getting up before dawn to be alone with His Father.

More than any other name, Mark calls the Lord, "Jesus"—His common name. He then tells us about when Jesus (the second person of the Godhead) is baptized and comes out of the water. The Spirit of God (the third person) comes like a dove upon Him and a voice out of heaven, God the Father, says, "This is my beloved Son." The Trinity sets heaven's seal upon Jesus as God's Son, ready for ministry.



Download the **Mark Bible Companion** for free at [TTB.org/booklets](http://TTB.org/booklets).

Immediately (one of Mark's favorite words), the Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness for initiation. Remember the question Mark wanted to prove was, "Can Jesus do the job?" Other men couldn't stand up under temptation. Adam didn't make it. Noah failed miserably after the flood. Abraham failed. Moses and David did, too. Will Jesus?

So, for 40 days Satan tempted Jesus, and He did not fail. We'll never know the depth of the pain He suffered in this wilderness, but we do see that after it was over, animals (below Him) and angels (above Him) ministered to His needs.

After the temptation, the Lord moves directly into ministry, specifically with works and words that illustrate the Servant, preaching the gospel of God, saying the kingdom of God is at hand. "Repent and believe the gospel." As Jesus begins His ministry in Galilee, He calls His disciples. Most of them fishermen, they leave their nets and follow Him into a busy life of ministry.

*By His teaching,*

JESUS PREPARED PEOPLE FOR SALVATION  
THROUGH HIS DEATH AND HIS RESURRECTION.

HIS TEACHING WILL NOT SAVE US;

*it is only through  
His death for us on the Cross  
that we can be saved.*

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE



Historical evidence shows demonism was rampant throughout the entire Roman Empire during Jesus' ministry years. Mark intentionally records the miracle of casting a demon out of a man first because it was over the spiritual realm where only God can control. Mark proved Jesus' credentials—His authority in His teaching and the demonstration of power only God has. The people couldn't understand, but the demons recognized Jesus right away.

This is the beginning of the gospel. By His healing, He got people's attention and proved His authority over the physical and demonic realm. By His teaching, Jesus prepared people for salvation through His death and His resurrection. His teaching will not save us; it is only through His death for us on the Cross that we can be saved.

## MY TURN

**WANT A FAST, FIRST-HAND, WITNESS' LOOK AT JESUS?**

Read the Gospel of Mark. It should take around 90 minutes.

As you read (or listen to it), consider the answer to the question John Mark addresses: "Can Jesus do the job?"

- 1 Take the "Mark Challenge" this week in your time in God's Word. Start by reading the first chapter of Mark right now. Notice, as Dr. McGee points out, how packed full of action that first chapter is.
- 2 Begin and keep a running list of observations specifically about Jesus—what He teaches, how He treats people, what sets Him apart as a Servant ...
- 3 Ask God's Spirit to teach you something new in every chapter.

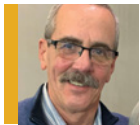
**CHECK OUT  
THRU THE BIBLE'S  
PLANS ON THE  
YouVersion APP FOR  
THE GOSPEL OF MARK\*.**

You can listen to Steve Shwetz read the plan to you. Invite someone to join you in reading it. **Go to [TTB.org/YouVersion](https://www.thru.org/YouVersion) for more information.**

\*The content is an abbreviated version of the Bible Companion.



## THE EARLY YEARS OF RADIO IN AFRICA



Ray Alary, THRU the BIBLE-Canada Executive Director

Ray Alary remembers the days when he served THRU the BIBLE in his role at Trans World Radio.

“It is the third Sunday night of the month. I’m living in South Africa, packing my two suitcases with just two items: rice and cooking oil. My routine is the same every month. I’ll spend a week with my TWR team in Zimbabwe. Life is difficult there, to say the least, so I do my best to make sure our small team has something to eat.

“*Thru the Bible* has been the cornerstone of radio ministry to Zimbabwe for almost 30 years. In the darkest days it was many people’s church, also the Bible school for lay pastors who had no formal training. When the country didn’t have electricity (often), it was the light in total darkness. When most operations shut down, our offices stayed open. Listeners wrote to say that in spite of hardship, they could endure because *Thru the Bible* was faithful in delivering the Word of God.

“If you’ve been on the Bible Bus for a long time, thank you for your prayer and financial support that allowed *Thru the Bible* to be a light when all was dark. **Your faithfulness has impacted generations. Please remain faithful so the people of Zimbabwe can hear the message of hope.**”



### LISTENER TESTIMONY

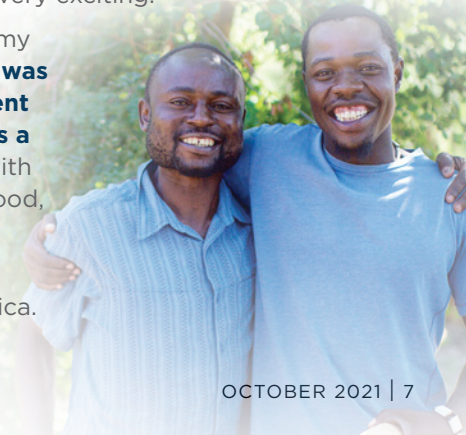
#### GODFREY, A LOCAL CHRISTIAN MAN IN ZIMBABWE SHARES:

“I still remember those days in 1982 when I carried our portable radio to the fields or attached to my hip while herding cattle and goats. I didn’t want to miss all the programs on TWR. I dialed in 49 MB on shortwave in the morning and 90 MB in the evening.

“When we were herding goats and it was raining, we’d take shelter in the caves. I would still be listening to my favorite program, *Thru the Bible*. **Some of the boys my age didn’t find Bible teaching exciting and would rather listen to music on the radio. But not me.** Somehow, I knew my journey of a thousand miles had begun. Radio was personal and very exciting.

“My radio routine not only changed my life, it shaped my life. ***Thru the Bible* was my greatest source of encouragement when God called me into ministry as a pastor.** I hope to one day sit down with someone at TWR and relive those good, golden days.

“Here is a habit I am married to until death do us part. Long live TWR-Africa. Long live the love of my heart.”



## STANDING FOR GOD IN INDIA

In a country with few Bible resources and even fewer Bible teachers, digital audio players loaded with THRU the BIBLE provide a systematic study of the Word in all of India's major languages and several dialects. As one local home group leader named Karunesh tells us, the players have given him a purpose he never thought possible:

*"Never did I imagine that one day I would engage a group of people in my locality to study the Bible. In fact, like Moses, I didn't want to lead at first; but now I thank God for giving me this great privilege.*

*"I have always struggled to understand the Word of God, but your study is simple and yet so deep as it gives me the context of each narrative. The applications are so helpful, and I can already see a lot of changes in me. It is also evident that the Word is working in the lives of the members of my group as I see them grow spiritually. It is*

*amazing that we can meet each week in a house and listen to the Word in our own language without any hindrances."*

Thank God today for these amazing home groups in India. Ask Him to multiply them in number and in languages. And pray in faith for open doors and hearts so millions will encounter God's Word in new ways. Is God asking you to do something big or uncomfortable in your life? Have faith He will prepare a way and give you all the strength you need to complete the task.

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

**GO TO [TTB.ORG/PRAY](https://ttb.org/pray) TO SIGN UP.**

# What's Happening at THRU the BIBLE

## CELEBRATING OUR PARTNER MINISTRY:



"Tonight, I'll be attending the Blue Letter Bible 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. [BlueLetterBible.org](https://BlueLetterBible.org) is one of our great digital partners, and it's extraordinary they've been doing online ministry since 1996!

**They were a pioneer in what, in those days, was an untested ministry platform. We're so grateful that, through our partnership with them, in a typical year 2-3 million downloads and streams of Dr. McGee's teaching are heard."**

-Gregg Harris



THRU the BIBLE

## A WORD FROM GREGG HARRIS

It's a mystery.

People like you who have been impacted by the teaching of God's Word on THRU the BIBLE often ask, *How can I most effectively be involved in taking the whole Word to the whole world?*

That's the kind of question I love to answer. But the answer may surprise you.

**The best way we can link arms and be part of what God is doing in our generation is to pray for God's will to be done through us.** Wait. Not tell others? Not financially support? Albeit, those are great secondary ways to come alongside; but the primary way for you to make a difference is to pray.

Yes, I know—it's a mystery. James 5:16 says the prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

**Would you pray right now for the effective impact of THRU the BIBLE as people listen to it today?** Thank the Lord that nothing will hinder God's purpose from being accomplished. Ask Him for many lives to be changed today through the power of His Word. Beginning with ours.

Grateful for your partnership in the gospel,

Gregg Harris  
THRU the BIBLE, President



# WHY STUDY MARK?

Join in the studies on *Thru the Bible* **OCTOBER 15—NOVEMBER 10** or anytime online, by podcast, or by mobile app.

In the first century community of believers, picture the faithful meeting together in homes. In Jerusalem, the early church met in a large home owned by Mary, possibly the sister of Barnabas who traveled with the apostle Paul. Her son, John Mark, was likely led to the Lord by Peter. This young man, Mark, recorded Peter's eyewitness testimonies of Jesus' life and ministry. He wrote this, the shortest Gospel, specifically for Roman readers, for the strong men.

### KEYVERSE

*"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."* —Mark 10:45

*"In Mark's Gospel, Jesus lays aside the regal robes of kingship and girds Himself with the towel of service. He is King in Matthew's Gospel; now He is God's Servant."* —Dr. J. Vernon McGee

**Jesus' work pictured in the Gospel of Mark was always for a larger purpose and always on the move.** Jesus' time on earth was short, and there was a lot to get done.

**Mark records 19 miracles illustrating Jesus' power and compassion.** He was the true God and a true man. People responded to Jesus with awe, amazement, and fear.

**The word "immediately" occurs 40+ times.**

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus' greatest acts of service pointed people to His death and resurrection as their Savior. **Only through faith in Him can we be saved.**

**MARK CHALLENGES US BY JESUS' EXAMPLE TO THINK BEYOND OURSELVES AND**

*give in love and service to others.*



An open book is shown at the top, with its pages forming a frame. Below it, a person with a backpack is walking away on a dirt path through a forest of tall, thin trees. The scene is misty and serene.

# WHY DO YOU

# the Bible?

“As someone who suffers from mental illness, I know **I can trust the Bible even when I can’t trust my own thinking.** If you struggle like I do, believe me, you can trust the Bible. God’s Word gives me a reality check from time to time. We can all be deceived. Romans 12:2 says, *‘And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.’* **God’s Word is our measuring stick to see if we’re on the right track.”** **Melissa**

“**I love the Bible because it’s God’s voice speaking to us** through His Word and directing us in all good things. Thank you, Lord.” **Pastor Al** | Brooklyn, NY

“I love the Bible. It tells the story of Jesus and gives hope for the future and provides guidelines for sound living. I believe loving God’s Word produces good citizens. **By reading the Bible I realize that I don’t have to be perfect, just forgiven** to be part of this community of believers. Thank you to J. Vernon McGee and *Thru the Bible* for helping to make the Bible come alive.” **Brother Barnes**



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