

Paul's Letters to the  
**GALATIANS,  
EPHESIANS,  
PHILIPPIANS,  
& COLOSSIANS**

THE MORNINGSTAR VISION BIBLE

by Rick Joyner



MorningStar Publications

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***Paul's Letters to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, & Colossians***

by Rick Joyner

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Trade Size Edition

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# Paul's Letters

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# PREFACE

## *THE MORNINGSTAR VISION BIBLE*

BY RICK JOYNER

Next to His Son and the Holy Spirit, The Bible is God's greatest gift to mankind. What treasure on earth could be compared to one Word from God? There is good reason why The Bible is the bestselling book of all time by such a wide margin. The importance of The Bible cannot be overstated. If Jesus, who is the Word, would take His stand on the written Word when challenged by the devil, how much more must we be established on that Word to take our stand and live our lives by it?

The most basic purpose of *The MorningStar Vision Bible* is accuracy and faithfulness to the intended meaning of the Author, the Holy Spirit. His written Word reveals the path to life, salvation, transformation, deliverance, and healing for every soul who would seek to know God. The universe is upheld by the Word of His power, so there is no stronger foundation that we could ever build our lives on other than His Word. Therefore, we have pursued this project with the utmost care in that what is presented here is His Word and not ours. We were very careful not to let anyone work on it that had an agenda other than a love for the truth and the deepest respect for the fact that we were handling this most precious treasure—God's own Word.

The primary accuracy of any translation is its adherence to the original text in the original languages The Bible was written in, Hebrew and Greek. However, there are problems when you try to translate from a language such as Greek into a language like English because Greek is so much more expressive than English. For example, there are several different Greek words with different meanings that are translated as one word "love" in our English version. The Greek words distinguish between such things

as friendship love, erotic attraction, or unconditional love. When we just translate these as "love," it may be generally true, but something basic in what the Author tried to convey is left out. As we mature in Christ by following the Spirit, these deeper, more specific meanings become important. Therefore, we have sought to include the nuances of the Greek language in this version.

A basic biblical guide we used for this work was Psalm 12:6: **"The words of the LORD are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times."** Every Book we release of this version has been through a meticulous process at least seven times to ensure faithfulness to the original intent. Even so, we do not yet consider this to be a completed work. We are releasing these Book by Book in softcover to seek even further examination by those who read them. We are asking our readers to send us challenges for any word, phrase, or part that you think may not be accurate, along with your reasons. These will be received, considered, and researched with openness. If you have insights that you think should be added to the commentary, we will consider those as well.

You can email these or any comments that you have to bible@morningstarministries.org, or mail them to us at:

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375 Star Light Drive  
Fort Mill, South Carolina 29715

Please include any credentials that you might have that would be relevant, but they are not necessary for this.

My personal credentials for compiling and editing such a work are first my love for The Bible and my respect for its integrity. I have been a Christian for more than forty years, and I have read The Bible through from cover to cover at least once a year. I do have an earned doctorate in theology from a good, accredited school, but have not used the title because I want my message received on the merits of its content, not by a title. Though I have been

in pursuit of knowing the Lord and His Word for more than forty years, I still feel more comfortable thinking of myself as a student rather than an expert. If that bothers you, I understand, but when handling the greatest truth the world has ever known, I feel we must be as humble and transparent as possible.

Most of those who have worked on this project with me have been students at MorningStar University. This is a unique school that has had students from ages sixteen to over eighty. Some have been remarkably skilled in languages, especially Hebrew and Greek. Some have been believers and students of the Word for a long time. Others were fairly new to the faith, but were strong and devoted to seeking and knowing the truth. These were the ones that I was especially interested in recruiting for this project because of the Lord's statement in Matthew 11:25:

**At that time Jesus answered and said, "I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You did hide these things from the wise and intelligent and did reveal them to babes."**

Because **"God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble"** (see James 4:6; I Peter 5:5 *κκνν*), the humility of a relatively young believer can be more important for discerning truth than great knowledge and experience if these have caused us to become proud.

Also, as Peter stated concerning Paul's writings in II Peter 3:15-16:

**Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,**

**as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.**

So the untaught can be prone to distort the truth if they are also unstable. This is why the relatively young believers that I sought to be a part of our team were not just stable but strong in the Lord and their resolve to know the truth.

Even so, not everyone who has great knowledge and experience has become so proud that it causes God to resist them. Those who have matured and yet remained humble and teachable may be some of the greatest treasures we have in the body of Christ. Such elders are certainly worthy of great honor and should be listened to and heeded. Nowhere in Scripture are we exhorted to honor the youth, but over and over we are commanded to honor the elders.

So it seems we have a paradox—the Lord reveals His ways to babes, but elders are the ones responsible for keeping His people on the path of life, walking in His ways. This is not a contradiction. As with many of the paradoxes in Scripture, the tension between the extremes is intended to help keep us on the path of life by giving us boundaries. Pride in our experience and knowledge can cause us to stray from this path, as can our lack of knowledge if it is combined with instability. The vision and exuberance of youth are needed to keep the fire of passion for the Lord and His ways burning. This is why the Lord said that the wise brought forth from their treasures things both new and old (see Matthew 13:52).

For this reason, I sought the young in the faith who are also stable and displayed a discipline and devotion to obedience to the truth. I also sought the contributions of the experienced and learned who continued to have the humility to whom God gives His grace. As far as Greek and Hebrew scholars, I was more interested in those who are technically-minded, devoted to details, and who seemed to be free of doctrinal prejudices.

This is not to give the impression that all who worked on this project went over the entire Bible. I did have some who went over the entire New Testament, but most only worked on a single Book, and sometimes just a single issue. I may not have told many



of the Greek and Hebrew experts that it was for this project when I inquired about a matter with them.

I realize that this is a unique way to develop a Bible version, but as we are told in I Corinthians 13:12 we "see in part" and **"know in part."** Therefore, we all need to put what we have together with what others have if we are going to have a complete picture. This version is the result of many years of labor by many people. Having been a publisher for many years, I know every editor or proofreader will tend to catch different things, and so it has been with this project. We also realize that as hard as we have worked on being as accurate as possible, we may have missed some things, and we will be genuinely appreciative of every one that is caught by our readers. Again, our goal is to have the most accurate English version of The Bible possible.

Even though accuracy and faithfulness to the original intent of the Holy Spirit were our most basic devotions, we also sought insights that could come from many other factors, such as the culture of the times in which the different Books of The Bible were written. Along with myself, many other contributors have spent countless hours of research examining words, phrases, the authors of the Books of The Bible, their times, and even the history of cities and places mentioned in it. Though the knowledge gained by this research did not affect the words in the text of The Bible, they sometimes gave a greater illumination and depth to their meaning that was profound. Sometimes they made obscure, hard to comprehend phrases come to life.

One of the obvious intents of the Author was to be able to communicate to any seeker of truth on the level they are on. For the most basic seeker, knowing such things as the nuances or more detailed meaning of the Greek or Hebrew words may not be important. As we mature, we will seek deeper understanding if we follow the Holy Spirit. We are told in I Corinthians 2:10, **"For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God."** Therefore, those who follow the Spirit will not be shallow in their understanding

of anything and will especially search to know the depths of the nature of God.

Our single greatest hope is that **The MorningStar Vision Bible** will accurately reveal the will and intent of the Lord, and compel all who read it to love Him more, which is the chief purpose of man. If we love Him more, we will then begin to love one another more. As we grow in love, we will also grow in our devotion to know Him even more, know His ways, and do the things that please Him. He deserves this from us more than could ever be expressed.

There is nothing greater than knowing Him. I am convinced that anything we learn about God will make us love Him more, which is our chief purpose and the one thing that will determine if we are successful human beings. This is also the only thing that can lead to the true peace and true joy that is beyond anything this world can supply. There is no greater adventure that can be had in this life than the true Christian life. The Bible is the map to the greatest quest and the greatest adventure that we could ever experience.

# INTRODUCTION

## PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

Galatia was not a city, but an entire region in Asia Minor. For this reason, Paul addresses this letter to “the churches of Galatia” (see Galatians 1:2; 3:1). This region was also sometimes referred to as Gallogriecia because of its Gallic and Celtic conquerors and settlers that dominated the region as the ruling aristocracy during this period.

Most theologians fix the date of this Epistle shortly after the apostle's second visit to Galatia, on or about A.D.51.

The Epistle is written in three basic parts. The first is apologetic. In the first two chapters, the apostle gives personal reasons why he is qualified to address the great issues he will take up in this letter.

The second part is polemical. Paul establishes the foundational truths of the crucial doctrine of salvation, which is by the grace of God through faith in Christ. This is the cardinal truth of Christianity, and Paul makes the strongest case found in the New Testament for this in chapters three and four.

The third part, chapters five and six, is an exhortation to the Galatians to stand fast in their freedom, warning them not to void their union with Christ by succumbing to false teachings that would bring them under the yoke of the law. Paul also exhorts them not to use their freedom to do deeds of the flesh, which would nullify their inheritance in the kingdom of God. In this he is warning them against the extremes on either side of life's path—legalism on one side and lawlessness on the other. Either of these could cost them their inheritance in Christ. The answer is to live by the Spirit that has been given to them, which is the power to live by love for God and love for one another. From the beginning of the New Covenant in the first century, navigating

between these extremes is the challenge of every believer, church, and movement.

The brief but concise Epistle to the Galatians is the most powerful discourse ever written to help us stay on the path of life between the extremes that would carry us away from Christ. For this reason, it is crucial to the New Testament and should be read regularly to help us stay on the path of life.

# PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

## *Galatians 1*

### **Salutation**

- 1 Paul, an apostle not sent by men, neither through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead,
- 2 and all the brethren that are with me, to the churches in Galatia:
- 3 Grace to you, and peace, from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ,
- 4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father:
- 5 to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

### **A Different Gospel**

- 6 I marvel that you are so quickly departing from Him who called you through the grace of Christ for a different gospel,
- 7 which is not another gospel, only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.
- 8 If we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you any gospel other than that which we preached to you, let him be accursed.
- 9 As we have stated, and now I say again, if any man preaches to you a gospel other than that which you received, let him be accursed.
- 10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

## Paul's Quest for The Truth

- 11 For I make known to you, brethren, about the gospel that was preached by me, that it is not from man.
- 12 For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it by man, but it came to me through a revelation of Jesus Christ.
- 13 For you have heard of my manner of life in times past in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God worse than anyone else, and tried to destroy it.
- 14 I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.
- 15 When it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me even from my mother's womb, and called me through His grace,
- 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with men,
- 17 and neither did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me. I went away into Arabia, and again I returned to Damascus.
- 18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and stayed with him for fifteen days.
- 19 I did not see the other apostles, except James the Lord's brother.
- 20 Now concerning the things that I write to you, before God I testify that I do not lie.
- 21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.
- 22 I was still not recognized by the churches of Judaea which were in Christ,
- 23 but they only heard, "He that once persecuted us now preaches the faith that he once tried to destroy,"
- 24 and they glorified God because of me.

## Salutation

**Galatians 1:1-5: This is Paul's typical salutation. He always identifies himself and his ministry, then gives his blessing of grace and peace that is ours through the cross of Jesus. This**

**begins the communication with the first, and most important, point of our relationship with one another—our redemption through Christ.**

## **A Different Gospel**

**1:6-10: The apostle, a little uncharacteristically, confronts his readers very quickly. This indicates the gravity with which he viewed their falling to the deception of a false teaching: one that perverts the basic gospel truth of the cross and seeks to bring believers under the yoke of the law. To this day, this false teaching perverts the lives of many believers. Confronting this is the primary reason for this Epistle.**

**In verse 10, Paul boldly states that if he were still seeking the approval of men, he would not be a bondservant of Christ. To the degree that we are controlled by what people think, we have likely compromised our service to the King. This one issue probably causes more leaders to divert from the way of truth than any other factor.**

## **Paul's Quest for The Truth**

**1:11-24: The apostle reminds the Galatians how he received and confirmed the gospel he preached to them—a gospel that, by then, was well-known throughout the empire. He continues to recount how he, who once persecuted the church, has now devoted himself to building it. He, the “Pharisee of Pharisees,” one of the most vehement defenders of the law and the traditions, was now the chief apostle of the grace of God. Paul had better credentials than anyone for addressing the subject of this letter—the conflict between law and grace that remains to this day and is so critical to the promulgation of the New Covenant.**