

## Popular Bible Verses (#35)

by Ron Banuk

23 May 2010

In the twenty-first century, a complete Bible in English can be purchased for as little as four dollars in paperback. As a chaplain, I pass out Bibles for free at Sunday gatherings or through the vent spaces on the opening side and bottom of the cell door. Everyone who wishes can have a Bible. That is not the case in the remainder of the world and was not always the case in earlier times. Let's go back in time to see how the Bible was read and heard.

The American Bible Society (ABS) was founded in 1816 in New York City as a non-denominational, non-profit organization dedicated to publishing, distributing, and translating the Bible and to end slavery in the United States. Its leadership in the early years was chaired by famous citizens. The first president of the ABS was Elias Boudinot who earlier was President of the Continental Congress from 1782 to 1783. In 1821, the first chief justice of the Supreme Court, John Jay, became the ABS president. Francis Scott Key, the author of the Star-Spangled Banner in 1814, was its vice president from 1817 to 1843. The ABS provided the first hotel Bibles and the first Bibles for soldiers during the Civil War. Today there are many organizations dedicated to distributing God's word in the United States.

In Puritan Massachusetts, the Bible every family owned was the Geneva Bible (published 1560-1644) with marginal notes. The notes in this Bible, such as Exodus 1:19 which admonished that the commands impious kings commands not be obeyed, so angered King James of England, that he made ownership a felony and authorized the publication of the King James Version in 1609. In the New World, Scripture would often be read with a brief discussion of the meaning interjected by the head deacon or the Pastor. This was done to distance the colonists from the ritual reading of the Bible by the Anglicans in England. This ritual reading was called "dumb reading". Reading out loud to the congregation without commenting from time to time was dumb reading.

Prior to the Great Reformation, the Bible was banned by the Catholic Church in 1229. While theologians had access to the "exegetical tradition" which included the Latin Scripture, commentaries, and sermons, the common man had what is today called the Medieval Popular Bible, which had pious writings, fables, drama, pictures of stained-glass windows, and retellings of Biblical stories. The actual Latin Vulgate Bible had 1520 pages divided into 9 volumes. It was rare that a seminary, cloister, or library had a complete set. The four accounts of the one Gospel outnumbered the Psalter 3 to 1. The common man did not read, but heard Scripture.

St. Jerome (342-420), the foremost Bible scholar of his day, was commissioned by Pope Damasus I to revise the earlier Latin Bible translations from the Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, Septuagint, and Old Latin into a better Latin Vulgate. In two years, he completed his work. This translation became the reference text of the Middle Ages and Renaissance even after the translation of the King James Version. The Latin words *salvatio, creatio, justificatio, testamentum, santificatio, regeneration, raptura, apostolus, ecclesia, evangelium, and angelus* all have English counterparts.

How did Jerome and the people of his day quote the Bible? Reading through the Letters of St. Jerome in the 37 volumes of the Post-Apostolic, Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers, I found about 7 Biblical references per page in his letters. This is a very high concentration of Biblical thought. In addition, he also quotes Virgil, Lictor, plays, Pliny, and the Papa (pope). In the first of his letters, he tells the story of a poor woman who was falsely accused of adultery with a young man in a Ligurian town near Genoa, Italy. Under torture, the man falsely implicated another. The woman, however, said: “You are witness, Lord Jesus (Rev 1:5), to whom nothing is hid (Mk 4:22), who tries the reins of the heart (Ps 25:2 DRV). You are witness that it is not to save my life that I deny this charge. I refuse to lie because to lie is a sin (Col 3:9).” After preliminary torture, Jerome who was a witness, said: Send help, Lord Jesus! This like Stephen’s last exclamation is a short prayer directed to the Lord (Acts 7:59). After a long torture session and three mis-attempts to sever her head by the headsman she cried out: “The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?” This is a quote from Psalms 118:6. (*The LORD is for me; I will not fear; what can man do to me?*) Since there were no written Bibles among the populace at that time, these quotes were from hearing the Psalters.

In writing a letter to Rufinus the monk in 374 about the recently deceased servant Hylas, he says: “But the apostle’s words forbid us to mourn for those who sleep.” Referring to 1 Thessalonians 4:13 (*But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope* (NASU).

At another point in his letter, he says: “Bonosus, your friend, is now climbing the ladder seen in Jacob’s dream” referring to Jacob’s Ladder in Ge 28:12. Later he says that this monk on an island has “his name enrolled in the new city” referring to the New Jerusalem of Rev 21:2 and even though he was wearing sackcloth, he adds that “he will be caught up to meet Christ in the clouds” to emulate 1 Thessalonians 4:17 [This shows the Rapture is not a 20<sup>th</sup>-century construct.] and although this monk has no running source of water, he adds that “from the Lord’s side he drinks the water of life (Rev 7:17)”. Finally, he says that “he careless, fearless, and armed from head to foot with the apostles’ armor (Ephesians 6:13-17) now listens to God by reading Scriptures and speaks to God as he prays, and may it be that as he lingers on that island “he sees some vision such as that seen by John” referring to Rev 1:9-10.

Even earlier, in the Book of Acts, there are many quotations from the Psalms, Isaiah, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Habakkuk, Amos, 2 Thessalonians, and the four evangelists. As an example, Luke writes that Moses said: “*the Lord God shall raise up for you a prophet like Me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed in everything He says to you* (Acts 3:22 quoting Dt 18:15).” So then, by those well versed in Scripture, quoting the Word was the warp and woof of their letters and speeches. But since chapter and verse notation was not available to the early church,

the following was sometimes heard: *But one has testified somewhere, saying, WHAT IS MAN, THAT YOU REMEMBER HIM, OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT HIM* (Heb 2:6 quoting Psalms 8:4 saying “somewhere”)? And again, the unknown author writes: *For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS"* (Heb 4:4 quoting Genesis 2:2 saying “somewhere”). At that time the Torah was divided into unnumbered chapters, and verses had not yet been specified.

### Sayings Not Specifically in the Bible

**Moderation in All Things:** Concerning physical things, Paul said: <sup>24</sup> *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.* <sup>25</sup> *Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we are imperishable.* <sup>26</sup> *Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air;* <sup>27</sup> *but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified* (1 Cor 9:24-27). Here Paul advocates self-control or moderation in physical matters so as to gain the prize. Remember that all chemicals, proteins, foods, exercises, and sunshine can be beneficial in the correct quantities. There is no such thing as a poison per se. Arsenic when taken in a few parts per billion can be beneficial, but in large quantities it can kill. Even water behaves the same way. Water intoxication or hyper-hydration can be fatal. One glass of wine may be beneficial, but two may impede driving or induce a sleepiness that prevents you from your ministry. So, without moderation, a beneficial element can become a poison in the physical world.

Concerning spiritual matters, moderation does not mean a little bit of sin is ok. Greeting a member of the opposite sex with a “holy kiss” as taught in Ro 16:16, 1 Cor 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12, and 1 Th 5:26 should in no way lead to adultery. If it does, then the kiss was not holy in the first place. Notice that Paul blends the physical with the spiritual in the above verse when he says: but we [receive] an imperishable [wreath]. Paul exercised self-control over his spiritual life in a manner similar to that of the athlete. This does not mean that zeal is to be tempered in our ministry, just as the athlete’s fervid goal is to win, or that we are not to act like Simon the Zealot or the Boanerges (Sons of Thunder or James and John from Mk 3:17). But rather this means that our Boanerges are still to find time for wife and children. A pastor who appears excellent in the pulpit but has a fractured home life is not well rounded. Did not Peter say: *Live with your wives in an understanding way* (1 Pt 3:7). Praying when we should be working is wrong. There is a proper time for everything. A personality defect of often caused by a good character trait used to excess, just as in the physical world a poison is too much of a normally good thing.

So, while the expression “all things in moderation” is not in the Bible, it does draw support as self-control in both the physical and spiritual worlds as long as one doesn’t try to moderate evil and punish zealotry for the Lord.

**Spare the Rod and Spoil the Child:** Although the actual words are not in the Bible, Scripture says this about the concept: *He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently* (Pr 13:24).

*Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the **rod of discipline** will remove it far from him (Pr 22:15).*

**13** *Do not hold back discipline from the child, although you **strike him with the rod**, he will not die. **14** You shall strike him with the rod and rescue his soul from Sheol (Pr 23:13-14).*

*The **rod and reproof give wisdom**, but a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother (Pr 29:15).*

**God Helps Those Who Help Themselves:** If this means that God helps those who work, then it is correct since our faith is shown by our works (James 2:18). How does a man get what he wants? A great general once said by planning, work, and prayer. By these three elements a man gets what he wants and since he is praying, what he wants is aligned with God's will. *Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it (Ps 127:1)*. But if the expression meant that, then it would have said: God helps those whose works are aligned with his will.

The expression as it stands is selfish implying that the self comes first. But sometimes this may be necessary. If an airplane loses oxygen at a high altitude and the breathing masks are deployed, the mother should attend to herself first because only then can she properly help her child. We should see to it that our automobiles are in excellent working condition so that they do not break down thus placing ourselves at the mercy of others and so that the jumper cables we carry are not just for our own use, but to help others with dead batteries. The cables can be there for you or for others. It is your intention that makes the difference. But if this is what the expression meant, then it would have said: God helps those who help themselves to help others.

Finally, the expression could be amended to simply say: God helps those who help others. This statement includes helping yourself so that you can help others and is in line with Biblical thought as follows:

*He has told us about the love for others that the Holy Spirit has given you (Col 1:8).*

*You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD (Leviticus 19:18 and Matthew 19:19).*

**To Thine own self Be True:** In *Hamlet* (3.1.81), a Shakespearian tragedy, councilor Polonius spoke these words to Laertes. Are they Biblical? Proverbs says quite pointedly: *He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but he who walks wisely will be delivered (Pr 28:26)*. It also says in Jeremiah: *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it (Jer 17:9)*? To this John adds: *Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things (1 John 3:18-20)*.

So, the Christian can follow his heart, but not the unbeliever. This is because the Christian is sensitive to condemnation from his heart, i.e., his conscience. If the Christian is not sensitive to his heart, behind every smile will be a tear.

**Neither a Borrower nor a Lender Be:** This also is from Hamlet (3.1.78). But what does the Bible say about that? Regarding both lending and borrowing, we read in Ezekiel: *if a man does not oppress anyone, but restores to the debtor his pledge [borrowing], does not commit robbery, but gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with clothing, if he does not lend money on interest or take increase, if he keeps his hand from iniquity and executes true justice between man and man, if he walks in My statutes and My ordinances so as to deal faithfully — he is righteous and will surely live," declares the Lord GOD* (Ezekiel 18:7-9).

*The wicked borrows and does not pay back, but the righteous is gracious and gives* (Ps 37:21).

*The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower becomes the lender's slave* (Proverbs 22:7).

*"You shall not charge interest to your countrymen: interest on money, food, or anything that may be loaned at interest. "You may charge interest to a foreigner, but to your countrymen you shall not charge interest, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all that you undertake in the land which you are about to enter to possess* (Dt 23:19-20).

*One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the LORD, and He will repay him for his good deed* (Proverbs 19:17).

While borrowing is not against Scripture, it must be paid back (Ezek 18:7) and according to Pr 22:7 the borrower becomes a slave. Scripture recommends that one lend to the poor interest free or preferably as Proverbs 19:17 states that you give him a grant and thus indirectly lend to the Lord who will repay. Otherwise, interest is permitted, but rates are not discussed. So, if the verse were to align itself with Scripture, It would say: Try not to borrow, but give to the poor, and in doing this, you will be lending to God who will repay. In any event, the initial saying "Neither a lender nor a borrower be!" is wise advice.

**Do unto others as you would have them do unto you:** This saying in its present form originates with the Roman Catholic Catechism of 1583. The Royal Law according to James is: *Love your neighbor as yourself* (James 2:8). Rabbi Akiva (50-135 AD) summarized the Golden Rule from Leviticus 19:18 saying: Love your fellow as yourself. Rabbi Hillel (110 BC –10 AD) used the Silver Rule (negative form of the Golden rule) in saying: "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. That is the whole of Torah; the rest is the explanation; go and learn." Notice that the Silver Rule is not the same as the Golden Rule. It does not go as far and allows one to be aloof from the other. The Golden Rule, on the other hand, forces one to participate in the life of the other. Jesus summarized the Golden Rule saying: *In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets* (Mt 7:12).

So, the initial saying (Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.) has the intent of the Golden Rule and is an excellent paraphrase.

**Money is the root of all evil:** Paul writing to Timothy in 63 AD says: *For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs* (1 Timothy 6:10). He also says: [Be] free from the **love of money** (1 Timothy 3:3b). In Hebrews we read: *Make sure that your character is free from the*

*love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU (Heb 13:5)."*

So the saying is wrong because the wrongful desire (**love of money**) is missed.

**Pride comes before the fall:** The saying is essentially correct. Scripture says: *When pride comes, then comes dishonor (Pr 11:2a) and Pride goes before destruction (Pr 16:18).*

But what is the opposite? If pride brings you down, what brings you up? The Bible says: *A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor (Pr 29:23).*

**Beat Swords into Plowshares:** In the garden of the UN Headquarters in New York City is a Russian statue by Yevgeny Vuchetich with the words: Let Us Beat Swords Into Plowshares. Is this possible? This was taken from Isaiah who prophesied:

<sup>2</sup> Now it will come about that

*In the last days*

*The mountain of the house of the LORD  
Will be established as the chief of the mountains,  
And will be raised above the hills;  
And all the nations will stream to it.*

<sup>3</sup> *And many peoples will come and say,  
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
To the house of the God of Jacob;  
That He may teach us concerning His ways  
And that we may walk in His paths."  
For the law will go forth from Zion  
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

<sup>4</sup> *And He will judge between the nations,  
And will render decisions for many peoples;  
And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.  
Nation will not lift up sword against nation,  
And never again will they learn war (Isaiah 2:2-4).*

This clearly takes place during the Millennium and will not occur before then. God is the doer, not the UN.

**This too shall pass:** This saying has its origin in a tenth century English 42-line poem called Deor or Deor's Lament.

There is no Biblical component here.

*And so, we should not be like cringing, fearful slaves, but we should behave like God's very own children, adopted into the bosom of his family, and calling to him, "Father, Father." For his Holy Spirit speaks to us deep in our hearts and tells us that we really are God's children. **And since we are his children, we will share his treasures-for all God gives to his Son Jesus is now ours too. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering. Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will give us later.** For all creation is waiting patiently and hopefully for that future day when God will resurrect his children. For on that day thorns and thistles, sin, death, and decay — the things that overcame the world against its will at God's command — will all disappear, and the world around us will share in the glorious freedom from sin which God's children enjoy (Romans 8:15-21 TLB).*

So, the saying could be amended to say: This too shall pass *for what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory that will be given to us later* (Ro 8:18).

**The eye is the window of the soul:** Matthew (Mt 6:22) and Luke (11:34) speak about this. Luke quotes Jesus as saying: **34** *"The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness. 35 "Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness. 36 "If therefore your whole body is full of light, with no dark part in it, it will be wholly illumined, as when the lamp illumines you with its rays (Lk 11:34-36)."*

The eye is the lamp of your body because when the eye is clear, it, like a window, will pass light. (God is light per 1 Jn 1:5 and the lamp per Rev 21:23.) When a window is clear, light will enter the interior. When our eye is clear, light will enter our soul. Our eye will be clear only when it has the vision and understanding of the Law of Christ (Gal 6:2 and 1 Cor 9:21) and thus act like the lamp of the Lamb. So then more clearly the eye is the window of the soul for the lamp of the Lamb of God (1 Sam 3:3 and Rev 21:23). Let the Shekinah Glory shine in!

**The Sinner's Prayer:** There is no specific sinner's prayer. All prayers are made by sinners. Use the Our Father (Mt 6:9 and Lk 11:2) as an outline for prayer.

### **What are the current top ten Biblical quotations?**

1. John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (NIV)*
2. John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (NIV)*
3. John 14:6 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (NIV)*
4. Matthew 28:19 *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (NIV)*
5. Romans 3:23 *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (NIV)*
6. Ephesians 2:8 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – (NIV)*
7. Genesis 1:1 *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (NIV)*
8. Acts 1:8 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (NIV)*
9. 2 Timothy 3:16 *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (NIV)*



10. Romans 10:9 *If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (NIV)*

Romans 8:28 *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

Daniel 10:12-13 *Then he [angel] said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words.*

Watching Hollywood movies, I often see partial verses misrepresenting the entire verse. One such example is "All things will work together for the good" to comfort a person in tragedy, when, in fact, the complete verse is "God causes all things to work together for the good to those who love God and carry out His plan (Rom 8:28).

### **What are the top ten books of the Bible?**

(Ratings are based on the average number of times every verse is referenced.)

1. [Ephesians](#) (6) prison epistle: believers saved by grace, united in one body, protected by armor
2. [James](#) (5) trials, faith and works, wisdom
3. [Titus](#) (3) the church
4. [1 John](#) (5) theology for the believer on the Assurance of Salvation
5. [2 Peter](#) (3) faith and false teachers
6. [John](#) (21) theology for the unbeliever on the Memra, Trinity, and Circumincission
7. [Philippians](#) (4) prison epistle: humility in Christ, peace in Christ
8. [Colossians](#) (4) prison epistle; exaltation of Christ, Christianity, and his Believers
9. [Romans](#) (16) Gospel of Grace on Righteousness (you and the Lamb)
10. [1 Peter](#) (5) holiness, fear, love, growth, government, boss, husband, suffering, ministry  
Ref: <http://www.topverses.com/>

### **Ten Top Books of the Bible Based on Story Content**

(Ratings are based on up or down likes.)

1. [Psalms](#) (237 yes/ 64 no, R = 3.7)
2. [Genesis](#) (241/71, R = 3.4)
3. [Ecclesiastes](#) (208/59, R = 3.5)
4. [Proverbs](#) (186/49, R = 3.8)
5. [Job](#) (191/55, R = 3.5)
6. [Exodus](#) (167/46, R = 3.6)
7. [Daniel](#) (135/37, R = 3.6)
8. [Isaiah](#) (138/39, R = 3.5)
9. [Ruth](#) (130/35, R = 3.7)
10. [John](#) (193/76, R = 2.5)

Looking at the above statistics, one can see that the ratio of likes to dislikes is about 3.6 for 9 of the 10 books. John, however, is different (2.5). John was the premier theologian of the NT and



consequently because of his abstruse thoughts was the least understood. His inverse ratio (1/R) is much higher than the others indicating how misunderstood he is.

Ref: <https://www.ranker.com/list/best-books-of-the-bible/ranker-bible>

### **What are the top ten Chapters of the Bible?**

(Ratings are based on the average ranking of every verse.)

1. [2 Peter 1](#) (21) faith
2. [Psalm 1](#) (6) by Amenemope the Egyptian on our walk with God
3. [John 2](#) (25) wedding in Cana, casting out moneychangers, destroy this temple
4. [James 4](#) (17) submit, draw near, cleanse, purify, mourn, weep, humble
5. [Romans 12](#) (21) righteousness and God's will
6. [Isaiah 53](#) (12) Mashiach ben Joseph
7. [John 3](#) (36) Nicodemus
8. [Romans 1](#) (32) prayers, Gospel, righteousness, condemnation
9. [James 1](#) (27) trials and doers of the Word of God
10. [Acts 1](#) (26) 40 days in Jerusalem, Great Commission, choosing Matthias

Ref: <http://www.topverses.com/>

<http://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/sayings.cfm>