

How To Preserve The Bible

Intro: Jesus promised that His Words would not pass away; Luke 21:33 ^{“33} Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.” No doubt, every Christian wants to see the Scriptures preserved. We are not discussing the physical book of the cover and paper (as it needs to be used which will lead to its dilapidation), but of its contents. Usage will wear out a physical book so a physical book that is preserved might indicate a neglect of it and its contents. In this lesson, let us notice five steps to follow in preserving the Bible.

I. STUDY IT

A. Almost every home in the United States has at least one Bible.

1. If they do not have one, they are still easily accessible to anyone.
2. The real question is: what are they used for?
 - a. Is it simply a good luck charm?
 - b. An ornament to look at?
 - c. An object to make you look spiritual?

B. It should be read and studied.

1. 1 Tim. 4:13 ^{“13} Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”
2. 1 Pet. 2:2 ^{“2} As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”
3. 2 Pet. 3:18 ^{“18} But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”
4. 2 Tim. 2:15 ^{“15} Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

C. Failure to study it.

1. Every day we fail to read and study it, it contributes to our spiritual bankruptcy and diminishes our influence in the world.
2. Hos. 4:6 ^{“6} My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”
3. Isa. 5:13 ^{“13} Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.”

II. BELIEVE IT

A. The Gospel is God's power.

1. Jam. 1:21 ^{“21} Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”
2. It is only powerful if men believe it:
 - a. Rom. 1:16 ^{“16} For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”
 - b. If you do not believe, it has not power.

B. The Bible was written to produce belief.

1. John 20:30-31 ^{“30} And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: ^{“31} But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”
2. Rom. 10:17 ^{“17} So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

C. We must unite faith with our hearing of the Word for it to be profitable.

1. Heb. 4:2 “²For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.”
2. Jam. 1:21-25 “²¹Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. ²²But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. ²³For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: ²⁴For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. ²⁵But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

D. Unbelievers and skeptics

1. They do not care about the preservation of God’s Word.
2. They will do everything within their power to destroy it.
3. God’s Word stands against them; thus, they stand against it.

E. Its preservation depends on those who believe it.

1. Jude 3 “³Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”
2. 1 Tim. 6:20 “²⁰O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.”

III. LIVE IT**A. True saving faith must be lived out in life.**

1. Our life demonstrates Biblical faith, defines it. We understand Biblical faith by our obedience to the message of salvation.
2. Jam. 2:18, 22, 26 “¹⁸Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. ¹⁹Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. ²⁰But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? ²¹Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? ²²Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? ²³And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. ²⁴Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. ²⁵Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? ²⁶For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

B. Faith and obedience are equated.

1. John 3:36 “³⁶He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth [obeyeth—ASV] not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”
2. From a negative standpoint; Heb. 3:18-19 “¹⁸And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not [disobedient—ASV; did not obey—NKJV]? ¹⁹So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.”

C. Our regard for the Scriptures is proved (or disproved) by how closely we follow its teachings.**IV. DEFEND IT****A. There will be false teachers.**

1. Mat. 7:15 “¹⁵Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”
2. Acts 20:29-30 “²⁹For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”

B. We, like others, must defend it.

1. Paul, Phi. 1:17 ¹⁷ "But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel."
2. Peter, 1 Pet. 3:15 ¹⁵ "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:"
3. Jude 3 ³ "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

C. Some say, "The Bible can defend itself."

1. If it can defend itself, then why can it not propagate itself?
 - a. It cannot propagate itself just like it cannot defend itself.
 - b. Stand up and speak up for the Truth when it is attacked.

V. SHARE IT**A. The Bible has been abused:**

1. By enemies attacking it in various ways.
2. By believers in hoarding it.

B. The early church could not help but speak it.

1. Acts 4:20 ²⁰ "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."
 - a. Said by Peter and John before the Sanhedrin.
 - b. Were they speaking only for themselves or all Christians?
2. Acts 8:4 ⁴ "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."

C. It is our duty to share it with others today.

1. The Great Commission is as valid for us today as it was for the apostles.
 - a. Mat. 28:19-20 ¹⁹ "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."
 - b. Mark 16:15 ¹⁵ "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."
 - c. Keeping the Gospel to ourselves is a sin.
2. The more we share it with others, the more lasting will its influence be.

Conclusion: In these ways we can preserve the Bible in our world and in subsequent times.