

How to Preserve the Bible

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Jesus promised, "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Luke 21:33). Surely, every Christian wants to see the Bible preserved. I speak not of its cover and paper, but of its words. The best-preserved binding and paper may indicate an utter neglect of the contents. I suggest five steps to follow in preserving the Bible:

1. **Study it.** "Give heed to reading" (1 Tim. 4:13). "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). Most homes have a Bible, but what for? Is it kept around as sort of a "sacred horseshoe," a coffee table adornment, or a mantelpiece? Every day one lets pass without reading and studying some Scripture contributes to his or her own spiritual bankruptcy and diminishes the influence of the Word in the world.
2. **Believe it.** It is powerful only if men believe it (Rom. 1:16). John wrote his Gospel account that his readers might believe in the Deity of Christ (John 20:31). It is God's source and vehicle of faith for mankind (Rom. 10:17). We must unite faith with our hearing of the Word for it to be profitable (Heb. 4:2; Jam. 1:21-25). Unbelievers and skeptics couldn't care less about the preservation of God's Word; rather, they would destroy it if they could do so. Its preservation depends upon those who believe it.
3. **Live it.** Biblical, saving faith can't be fully defined, demonstrated, or understood without obedience to the Biblical message. Thus, Hebrews 3:18-19 equates **disobedience** and **unbelief**, while Jesus equated **belief** and **obedience** in John 3:36. One's regard for the Bible is proved or disproved by how closely one tries to follow its teachings.
4. **Defend it.** Some say it doesn't need defending: "The Bible can defend itself," they declare. Paul was set to defend it (Phi. 1:16). Peter and Jude teach us to defend it (1 Pet. 3:15; Jude 3). If it can defend itself, why can't it also propagate itself (which we know it can't do [Mat. 28:18-19; Mark 16:15-16])? Stand up and speak up for the Truth when it is attacked.
5. **Share it.** For centuries men have abused the Bible by burning it and verbally attacking it. However, many professed believers in it likewise abuse it—by hoarding it. The early saints could not keep from speaking it, and when persecution scattered them, they went everywhere preaching it (Acts 4:20; 8:4). We must keep the Gospel pure, but only keeping it to ourselves is a sin. The more we share it with others, the more lasting will its influence be.

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