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# Does Your Bible Beep?

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# ***A VIEW FROM THE PEW***

## ***DOES YOUR BIBLE BEEP?***

***by Jeremy Kimble***

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**R**ecently I attended a chapel service where the preacher, instead of asking the audience to open their Bibles, told them to turn to a certain passage of Scripture in their mobile devices. Inherent in this statement is the assumption that people today are more prone to leave behind leather-bound versions of Scripture and instead opt for YouVersion or a Bible app on their phone or tablet. While this assumption may become increasingly prevalent, pastors and church members alike should be asking themselves whether or not they lose anything by only reading the Bible on their mobile devices. My contention is that Scripture, bound in a book

on actual pages, may be of benefit to us for long-term retention, helping us effectively concentrate and meditate on God's promises and fight sin.

Certainly people today will cite the benefits of reading their Bibles on a mobile device. They will not have to carry a bulky study Bible to their church service. They also will be able to quickly tweet key verses and quotes from their pastor on the spot. It is argued that people can also highlight and underline just as effectively as if there were a bound Bible in front of them, and all of this with the convenience of being able to carry this device in one's pocket. So why be so backwards and

insist that there is benefit to be had in bringing an actual Bible with you to church services? There are several reasons.

First, the use of a mobile device could cause us to become apathetic and casual in our treatment of Scripture. While it is convenient, it can also prove challenging to hold a device wherein we do our banking, gaming, news updates, and Bible reading. If we are not careful, the functionality of such a device can become rather neutral and mundane. And yet, we are told that God esteems those who are humble and who tremble at his Word (Isa. 66:1-2). It could be that the casualness with which we treat our phones could bleed into our treatment of Scripture as well. Certainly one could do this with a normal book, but having that item in your hands reminds you that this is a unique and holy book. It serves one purpose in your life, namely to remind you of the radiant splendor and glory of our God.

Second, there is the distinct possibility of distraction for you and those around you. The temptation to check email, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and the like will be palpable as you seek to listen to the sermon (at the Christian university

where I teach at, I see students losing this battle in chapel almost every day). It seems wise to eliminate this factor by using the book-version of the Bible where we can most readily concentrate on the words contained there, which give us life (Matt. 4:4).

Finally, there is something to be said for using your hands to turn pages, navigate the Bible, and underline and highlight actual pages. This offers a permanence that is missing in the digital medium. Also, people are forced to know their way around the Bible as they locate the sermon text, and this is very healthy.

My hope is that we do not lose sight of the benefits of a paper-bound version of the Bible, which we use for private study at home, as well as public worship.

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