

The Bible, The Preserved Word of God

A 22-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

This 22-lesson series is the sixth and final course of study in Level One of the Enjoy the Bible Institute. It examines the foundational Bible doctrines that Scripture sets forth about itself — what God wants every believer to understand and appreciate about His written Word. The series is organized around three major issues: (1) the proper understanding and appreciation of God’s Word from His perspective, grounded in inspiration and the nature of Scripture as the living Word of truth; (2) the completeness of the canon, establishing with confidence that the 66 books of the Bible are the finished revelation of God with nothing missing and nothing to be added; and (3) the doctrine of divine preservation, tracing the Bible’s preservation through the multiplicity of manuscript copies, the Satanic policy of evil against the written Word, the history of textual criticism, and the practical question of which Bible is the preserved Word of God for English-speaking believers today. The series answers that question unequivocally with the King James Version.



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Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 1	Introduction: three major issues; the Bible as most precious possession; overview of the course
Lesson 2	God writes books: precedents of other God-written books and the confidence they produce for the Bible
Lesson 3	Inspiration: 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:21; what it means that Scripture is God-breathed
Lesson 4	Inspiration continued: the profit of Scripture; handling the Word as the Word of God, not of men
Lesson 5	Scripture as the Word of Truth: the Bible as final authority and God's ordained point of contact with man
Lesson 6	The Word of God came: John 10:34–35; “the scripture cannot be broken”; Psalm 82
Lesson 7	Canonicity begins: Psalm 119:89; divine design of Scripture; the 66 books as completed revelation

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 8	Completeness: no lost books, no Apocrypha, no missing gospels; extra-biblical revelation dismissed
Lesson 9	Sense and sequence: self-testifying completeness in Israel's program and the Body of Christ program
Lesson 10	Internal safeguards (part 1): pointed declarations within Scripture against adding or taking away
Lesson 11	Internal safeguards (part 2): the Laodicean epistle and earlier Corinthian letter questions answered
Lesson 12	Doctrine of preservation begins: Revelation 22; promises of preservation; textual criticism overview
Lesson 13	Verses declaring preservation; the Satanic policy of evil against the written Word introduced
Lesson 14	Writing as God's means of preservation: Isaiah 30:8; Deuteronomy 31; purpose of the Holy Scriptures
Lesson 15	Policy of evil: mechanics of additions, deletions, and rewordings; modern textual criticism's failure
Lesson 16	History of textual criticism: God's original design as ally of preservation; the modern departure
Lesson 17	Multiplicity of copies: God's design for preservation and safeguard against the policy of evil
Lesson 18	Majority vs. minority manuscripts: how the multiplicity principle exposes corrupted copies
Lesson 19	Mechanics of preservation: copies, not autographs; custodianship in Israel and the Body of Christ
Lesson 20	Historical synopsis (part 1): Masorettes; Origen and Clement; Vaticanus and Sinaiticus identified
Lesson 21	Historical synopsis (part 2): Westcott and Hort; the two streams of manuscripts confirmed historically
Lesson 22	Final lesson: five tenets of modern textual criticism; the KJV as the preserved Word of God in English

Lesson Summaries

L1

Introduction *The Bible — God's Most Precious Gift*

- The sixth and final course of study in Level One of the Enjoy the Bible Institute
- Three major issues to be examined in this course:
 - Proper understanding and appreciation of God's Word from His perspective
 - The completeness of the canon (canonicity)
 - The doctrine of divine preservation
- The Bible is the most precious physical possession a believer can have; lip-service Christians often lack the full appreciation God Himself has for His Word
- God wants believers to view the written Word exactly as He does — with full reverence for what it is and what it means
- Psalm 138:2 sets the standard: God has magnified His Word above all His name

L2

God Writes Books *Confidence from Precedent*

- Revelation 5 used to anchor the study: the book in God's right hand and its significance
- God has written books other than the Bible; these serve as important precedents
- God's books accomplish exactly the purpose He writes them for — they last, survive attacks, and endure through time
- What God has done with other books He has written establishes what we can confidently expect Him to do with the Bible
- The scriptures are designed points of contact between believers and God — dealing with the written Word is dealing with the living Word
- Appreciation for God's track record as an Author builds a foundation for confidence in divine preservation

L3

Inspiration *All Scripture Is God-Breathed*

- 2 Timothy 3:16 — "All scripture is given by inspiration of God"; the words on the page are God-breathed
- 2 Peter 1:20–21 — Holy men of God spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost
- Human instrumentality (Paul, Peter, Moses, Isaiah, Daniel) was used but is not the source of the words
- The personalities and authorship of the human writers are evident, yet the ideas, the very words, are from God Himself
- The writers acknowledged that what they wrote were the words of God, not the product of their own imagination
- Inspiration is a foundational plank: without it, neither the canon nor the doctrine of preservation can be properly understood

L4

Inspiration Continued *Handling the Word as the Word of God*

- 2 Timothy 3:14–17 examined closely: Scripture is “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”
- The man of God is to be thoroughly furnished through the inspired scriptures — not through extra-biblical sources
- Receiving the Word “as it is in truth, the word of God, and not the word of men” (1 Thessalonians 2:13) is the required posture
- Inspiration demands a specific attitude: the Word is to be handled with complete respect and confidence
- The practical impact of inspiration on daily study and doctrine is underscored throughout

L5

The Scripture of Truth *God's Word as Final Authority and Contact Point*

- Hebrews 4:12–13 — the Word of God is “quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword”; it pierces and judges
- Scripture is the repository of truth — not one of several options but the final absolute authority
- God has designed and ordained His written Word to be the primary point of contact between Himself and believers
- The Word is not merely a textbook of information; engaging with it is engaging with God Himself
- Galatians 3 and Romans 9 contribute additional statements about how God treats Scripture as a living, active agent

L6

The Word of God Came *The Scripture Cannot Be Broken*

- John 10:31–38 examined: “the scripture cannot be broken” (v. 35) — a statement of absolute inviolability
- The Lord appeals to Scripture as the unbreakable final authority even in the most charged confrontation
- Psalm 82 examined: the title “gods” given to those in Israel “unto whom the word of God came”
- The word coming to someone in Israel carried authority, obligation, and weight — a pattern that informs how we approach God’s written Word today
- Psalm 138:2 closes the section: God has magnified His Word above all His name — the proper attitude of awe and appreciation is now fully established

L7

Canonicity Introduced *The Completeness of God's Written Revelation*

- Section Two begins: the issue of canonicity — appreciating that the 66 books are the completed revelation of God
- Psalm 119:89 — “For ever thy word is settled in heaven” — the cornerstone of the canonicity discussion
- The divine design of Scripture: God’s Word is a pre-planned, architecturally coherent whole, not an accidental collection

- Understanding canonicity is essential not only for confidence in completeness but as preparation for the doctrine of preservation
- The 39 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books together form the complete written revelation for all of God's programs

L8

Completeness of the Word *No Lost Books — No Missing Revelation*

- Genesis 1 used as a starting point: from the very beginning God's written revelation has a purposeful, complete design
- There are no lost books of the Bible — the Apocrypha is not Scripture; there are no missing gospels or epistles
- Claims to extra-biblical revelation (spiritual gifts, prophetic words) are to be categorically dismissed based on the completed canon
- The science of textual criticism is introduced: its proper historical role as an ally of God's Word versus its modern departure
- Modern translations with footnotes questioning words and passages are placed in context as a challenge the course will fully address

L9

Sense and Sequence *Scripture's Self-Testifying Completeness*

- Leviticus 26 examined: a key passage for understanding God's program with Israel and its bearing on completeness
- The sense-and-sequence principle: as each program (Israel's prophetic program; the Body of Christ program) unfolds, everything spoken about is accounted for in what is written
- Nothing in either program is left hanging or unresolved — the written revelation testifies to its own completeness from within
 - Israel's program: Genesis through Acts 8, Hebrews through Revelation
 - Body of Christ program: Romans through Philemon
- The more a believer grows in knowledge of both programs, the more self-evident this internal testimony becomes

L10

Internal Safeguards (Part 1) *Pointed Declarations Against Alteration*

- The third matter regarding completeness: internal safeguards — specific warnings placed within Scripture itself
- Deuteronomy 4:2 — "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it"
- Proverbs 30:5-6 — "Every word of God is pure"; add not to His words lest He reprove thee
- Revelation 22:18-19 — the strongest New Testament declaration: cursed is anyone who adds to or takes away from the words
- These are not casual warnings — they reflect God's own assessment of the finality and completeness of His written Word
- The internal safeguards work together with inspiration and sense-and-sequence to form a three-fold confirmation of completeness

L11

Internal Safeguards (Part 2) *Answering the Missing Epistle Questions*

- Galatians 2 examined in connection with the completed Pauline canon
- Colossians 4:16 — the “epistle from Laodicea”: does this indicate a lost epistle?
 - No — this refers to the epistle to the Ephesians circulated among the churches, not a missing letter
- 1 Corinthians and the reference to a previous letter: does this mean “1 Corinthians” is really the second letter?
 - No — the earlier reference was a limited, situational communication, not a God-breathed epistle for the canon
- The internal safeguards are not undermined by these references — they are fully answered by right division and an understanding of Paul’s ministry
- Section Two concludes: complete confidence in the 66-book canon is fully warranted and doctrinally established

L12

The Doctrine of Preservation Begins *God’s Promise to Keep His Word*

- Section Three begins: the doctrine of divine preservation — the culminating subject of the entire series
- Revelation 22 examined: the closing words of Scripture frame the preservation discussion with finality and weight
- Four sub-issues that make up this final section are outlined:
 - 1. Verses declaring the reality and necessity of preservation
 - 2. The Satanic policy of evil against the written Word
 - 3. The mechanics of preservation (copies and multiplicity)
 - 4. The historical synopsis — and the ‘which Bible’ question
- Modern textual criticism’s footnotes and challenges to specific words and passages are set in context as the practical problem the doctrine addresses

L13

Verses Declaring Preservation *The Necessity of Preservation in Scripture’s Own Words*

- A run of preservation passages examined: the Word of God “liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Peter 1:23–25)
- Psalm 12:6–7 — “Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever”
- Isaiah 40:8 — “The word of our God shall stand for ever”
- Matthew 5:18; 24:35 — not one jot or tittle shall pass; heaven and earth shall pass but God’s words shall not
- Preservation is not a theological add-on — these verses demand it; denying preservation contradicts the plain statements of God’s own Word
- The Satanic policy of evil against the written Word is introduced as the second major sub-issue

L14

Writing as God's Means of Preservation *The Purpose of the Scriptures Is to Be There*

- Isaiah 30:8 — “Write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever”
- The purpose of God writing His Word in a book is explicitly stated: so it may be there in the future — preservation
- Deuteronomy 31:24–26 — the book of the law placed beside the ark as a witness; the book is there to be there
- You cannot divorce the Holy Scripture from the doctrine of preservation — they are inseparably linked by God's own design
- Man's modern pseudo-scholarship separates preservation from Scripture; this is described as arrogance and theological foolishness
- Written Scripture, by its very nature and purpose, carries the doctrine of preservation with it

L15

The Satanic Policy of Evil *Attacking the Written Word Through Uncertainty*

- The mechanics of the policy of evil against the written Word:
 - Additions — inserting words or phrases not in the original
 - Deletions — removing words, phrases, or passages
 - Rewordings — altering meaning by changing specific words
- The goal of the policy of evil is to produce uncertainty: to make believers question whether they actually know what God said
- The modern phase of textual criticism denies the existence of this adversarial campaign — this is a fatal flaw in its methodology
- A foundation of uncertainty is exactly what is needed for winds of doctrine to take root and flourish
- The “which Bible” question is now fully in view and will be answered in the closing lessons

L16

The History of Textual Criticism *From God's Ally to Preservation's Enemy*

- Deuteronomy 4 frames the lesson: God Himself established the principle of textual criticism — it is not a man-made invention
- For most of history, textual criticism functioned as a ready ally of divine preservation — it was designed to detect and exclude corrupted copies
- The Masoretes: Jewish scribal scholars who served as faithful guardians of the Old Testament text
- The modern phase of textual criticism (approximately the last 200 years) has departed from its historic foundations
- Two pillars of traditional textual criticism abandoned by the modern phase:
 - The doctrine of divine preservation
 - The recognition of the Satanic policy of evil against the written Word
- The fruit of this departure: modern Bibles that present ongoing uncertainty about what God actually said

L17

The Multiplicity of Copies *God's Genius Design for Preservation and Safeguard*

- God's plan for preservation was never dependent on the survival of original autographs — it was always through copies
- The multiplicity of copies serves two purposes simultaneously:
 - Practical availability: making God's Word accessible to His people across time and geography
 - Built-in safeguard: the majority of copies expose and override the minority corrupted by the policy of evil
- Custodianship in Israel's program: the Levitical priests and later the scribes (Masoretes) maintained the text
- Custodianship in the Body of Christ: believers throughout the dispensation of grace copied and circulated God's Word
- The multiplicity principle was anticipated in God's design — He knew a minority would be tampered with

L18

Majority vs. Minority Manuscripts *The Multiplicity Principle Exposes Corruption*

- Daniel 9 anchors the lesson with the context of God's faithfulness to His Word across time
- Over 5,200 Greek New Testament manuscripts exist — the overwhelming majority (~99%) agree with each other
- A small minority (~1%) of manuscripts contain the additions, deletions, and rewordings of the policy of evil
- The majority testimony agreement against the minority is the God-designed mechanism for knowing the certainty of the words of truth
- The modern phase of textual criticism does the opposite: it elevates the minority manuscripts as more reliable
- Vaticanus and Sinaiticus are identified as prominent minority manuscripts housed in Roman Catholic institutions

L19

Mechanics of Preservation *Copies, Custodianship, and the Body of Christ*

- 2 Timothy 3 revisited: the scriptures as the instrument of the man of God's complete equipping
- Original autographs are not the issue — God never made preservation dependent on their survival
- Preservation is entirely through the multiplicity of copies, distributed among God's people
- The Body of Christ's role: believers in the dispensation of grace are the custodians of Paul's epistles (Romans–Philemon)
- The church, as a whole, carrying, copying, and circulating the Word is God's mechanism for this dispensation
- The historical synopsis is now ready to be examined: the doctrine predicts exactly what the manuscript evidence shows

L20

Historical Synopsis (Part 1) *The Two Streams of Manuscripts Through History*

- Proverbs 22:20–21 and 25:1 anchor the lesson: Hezekiah’s men copying Solomon’s proverbs as a concrete illustration of preservation through copying
- The two streams of manuscripts predicted by doctrine are confirmed by history:
 - Majority stream: ~5,200+ Greek manuscripts, representing ~99% of all manuscript evidence
 - Minority stream: a small number of copies adversely affected by the policy of evil
- The Masoretes identified as textual critics and allies of preservation for the Old Testament text
- Origen (184–245 AD) and Clement of Alexandria identified as sources of New Testament manuscript corruption
 - Origen taught Genesis as allegory, denied the sin nature, denied physical resurrection, and held to reincarnation
- Scrivener’s quote: “The worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected originated within a hundred years after it was composed”
- Note: the tape cuts off at the end of Lesson 20; Lesson 21 picks up from the same point

L21

Historical Synopsis (Part 2) *Westcott, Hort, and the Modern Departure Confirmed*

- Picks up directly from Lesson 20: the brief historical synopsis of preservation and the policy of evil continues
- Both streams of manuscripts — majority and minority — are confirmed by the full body of manuscript evidence accumulated to 1995
- The modern phase of textual criticism is shown to have sided with the minority manuscripts
- Westcott and Hort (1881): their new Greek text based on minority manuscripts becomes the foundation for modern translations
- The two lines of manuscripts coming down through history testify exactly to what the doctrine of divine preservation predicted
- The historical evidence validates the doctrine rather than the other way around — the doctrine was known from Scripture first

L22

Final Lesson — Which Bible? *The King James Version as the Preserved Word of God in English*

- The five tenets of the modern phase of the science of textual criticism are stated and examined:
 - 1. Denies divine preservation
 - 2. Denies the Satanic policy of evil against the written Word
 - 3. Restricts inspiration and holiness to original manuscripts only
 - 4. Declares the Masoretic (OT) and Traditional/Textus Receptus/Majority (NT) texts unfaithful to the originals
 - 5. Declares the reconstruction of the autographs as the only path to certainty

- Westcott and Hort's 1881 Greek text is the basis of modern translations that perpetuate uncertainty
- The King James Version (early 1600s) stands as the capstone culmination in English of the traditional, preservation-honoring textual tradition
- The KJV is affirmed as the preserved Word of God for English-speaking believers today
- The course concludes: a believer who understands these 22 lessons has a fully-grounded, doctrinally-based confidence in the Bible in their hand

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Inspiration vs. Preservation

Inspiration is how God got His words onto the page — through the mechanical instrumentality of holy men moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:21), producing God-breathed Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16). Preservation is how God keeps those words available and intact through time. The two doctrines are inseparable: you cannot acknowledge inspiration without also requiring preservation, since God's inspired words must endure "for ever and ever" (Isaiah 30:8). Separating them, as the modern phase of textual criticism does, is the foundational error that produces uncertainty about what God has actually said.

Canonicity: Completeness of the 66 Books

The 66 books of the Bible — 39 Old Testament, 27 New Testament — are the complete, finished written revelation from God. There are no lost books, no missing gospels, no legitimate missing epistles, and no Apocryphal additions. Three lines of internal evidence confirm this: the divine design of Scripture, the sense-and-sequence principle (each program's revelation accounts for everything it introduces), and the pointed internal safeguards placed within the text itself (Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:5–6; Revelation 22:18–19). Claims to extra-biblical revelation of any kind are to be categorically rejected.

Majority Text vs. Minority Text

Over 5,200 Greek New Testament manuscripts exist. The vast majority (~99%) are in agreement with each other — this is the Traditional Text, the Textus Receptus, which underlies the King James Version. A small minority (~1%), including Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, contain the additions, deletions, and rewordings introduced through the Satanic policy of evil, primarily in the first two centuries AD. The modern phase of textual criticism has reversed the historic approach by elevating the minority manuscripts as more authoritative. The doctrine of divine preservation and the manuscript evidence both point to the majority as the preserved Word of God.

Traditional Textual Criticism vs. the Modern Phase

Textual criticism — the science of evaluating manuscripts — was established by God and for most of history served as a faithful ally of divine preservation. It operated on two foundational pillars:

acknowledgment of divine preservation and recognition of the Satanic policy of evil against the written Word. The modern phase of textual criticism (approximately the last 200 years, crystallized in Westcott and Hort's 1881 Greek text) has abandoned both pillars. It denies preservation, denies the adversarial attacks, and pursues a reconstruction of the autographs as the only possible source of certainty — producing instead a permanent state of uncertainty for any believer who uses translations based on this methodology.

Israel's Program vs. the Body of Christ Program

Scripture is written to two distinct groups under two distinct programs. Israel's prophetic program is addressed in Genesis through Acts 8 and Hebrews through Revelation. The Body of Christ — believers in this dispensation of grace — is directly addressed in Romans through Philemon, the letters of the apostle Paul. Right division (2 Timothy 2:15) is essential throughout this series: the custodianship of Scripture, the fulfillment of preservation promises, and the application of doctrine all require clarity about which program is in view. For believers today, the Pauline epistles are the primary curriculum.

Key Scripture References

Psalm 12:6–7	God's promise to preserve His purified words from this generation for ever
Psalm 119:89	For ever His word is settled in heaven — cornerstone of canonicity
Psalm 138:2	God has magnified His Word above all His name — the standard for our attitude toward Scripture
Proverbs 22:20–21	Written to thee that thou mightest know the certainty of the words of truth
Proverbs 25:1	Hezekiah's men copied Solomon's proverbs — preservation through copying illustrated
Isaiah 30:8	Write it in a book, that it may be there for the time to come, for ever and ever
Deuteronomy 4:2	Ye shall not add to nor diminish from the Word — an internal safeguard of completeness
Deuteronomy 31:24–26	The book of the law placed beside the ark as a witness — the purpose of Scripture is to be there
2 Timothy 3:16	All scripture is given by inspiration of God — the foundational inspiration text
2 Peter 1:20–21	Holy men of God spoke as moved by the Holy Ghost — the mechanism of inspiration
Hebrews 4:12	The Word of God is quick and powerful — its living, active nature as God's point of contact with man
John 10:35	The scripture cannot be broken — Christ's own declaration of Scripture's inviolability
Matthew 24:35	Heaven and earth shall pass away but God's words shall not —

	preservation guaranteed
1 Peter 1:23–25	The word of God liveth and abideth for ever — preservation in the New Testament
Revelation 22:18–19	Cursed is anyone who adds to or takes from the words — the final internal safeguard

For further study visit www.enjoythebible.org