

Will Print Bibles Soon Be a Thing of the Past?

Since 2008, 's YouVersion Bible App has become perhaps the most popular digital innovation in the kingdom of God. It's grown far beyond and impacted far more people than what YouVersion CEO Bobby Greunewald or his team had ever imagined it would.

The YouVersion Bible App, which celebrated its 15-year anniversary this month, reaches people in nearly 2,000 languages around the world can be found on more than 575 million unique devices globally.

But the big question is, as the YouVersion Bible App continues to grow in popularity, will it one day replace the print version of God's Word?

Charisma Media CEO Presents Modern English Version of the Bible to Queen Elizabeth II

Although he's thrilled with how the YouVersion Bible App has progressed in since arrival in 2008, Greunewald doesn't see that happening. Statistics from the Barna Group back that up.

The print version of the Bible still continues to be the choice of the majority of young people. The State of the Bible (USA) 2021 report revealed that 59% of believers who participated in research say they still prefer a print copy of the Bible over a digital or audio version.

Barna Research says that women especially preferred the print version 50% to 24% digital. Men also listed a print Bible as their No. 1 choice in engaging in God's Word by 43% to 31% digital.

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“The Bible App has been an effective tool to help people read the Bible more consistently, but I don’t think the print Bible is going away,” Gruenewald told The Christian Post. “In fact, many of our users regularly use both.”

The Modern English Version of the Bible, first published in 2014 by Charisma Media, became a part of the YouVersion Bible app soon after.

Modern English Version Bible Translation Hits YouVersion

The YouVersion Bible App was a hit from the very beginning. In only three days, Apple CEO Steve Jobs reported an unbelievable 83,000 downloads of the app. It was one of 800 apps available at the time.

“Over the last 15 years, You Version has leveraged industry innovations to help people build consistent Bible engagement habits, including using push notifications reminders, gamification features like streaks and community features like friendships and prayer,” a YouVersion release stated.

In its early days, the Bible App text featured only two languages. By its fifth year, it had more than 500. The plan is for the app to feature Scripture in more than 7,000 languages by 2033.

“When we submitted the app for approval, we didn’t even know if it would make it into the App store on opening day or even at all,” Gruenewald said. “It ended up being one of only a couple hundred free apps available that first day and went on to have an incredible first weekend. Honestly, our minds were blown.” {eo}

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