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### Footnotes: Wayback Machine + Rob Bell

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# Footnotes<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Curated Resources for Ministers

## Wayback Machine

### Gone, But Not Forgotten

May 28, 2018

The Bible says that God "will remember their sins no more" (Jer. 31:34). While we can all dispute what exactly this means, we can agree that it is supposed to be a good thing. There is a difference, however, between forgiving and forgetting. Forgiveness is a virtue, while repeatedly forgetting might just be a character flaw. Best of luck to the husband who claims that forgetting to take out the trash is simply an exercise in becoming virtuous.

But what about Artificial Intelligence? Does it forget?

Well, it depends who you ask. Some of us aren't quite ready to trust our devices to keep all of our records without print backups. That's not surprising, since we are already embarrassed by our dependence on the memory of our devices for appointments, passwords, and friends' contact information (take a moment and think of a close friend's phone number. At one point you probably knew not only this one, but also the number of your 3rd favorite pizzeria). Librarians are very aware of the frailty of digital records, which is why even the most [privileged institutions](#) still line their walls with [stacks of paper](#).

There is another story: we all believe this digital content is not lost. In fact, we actually believe it is omnipresent and eternal. At least, that is how we talk to our kids, "It will be out there everywhere, forever, for everyone." Snapchat once promised that it would erase messages after reading, Mission Impossible-style. But no one should believe those are totally gone. The Library of Congress [recently quit](#) their ambitious task of collecting every single tweet. Incidentally, their announcement came just weeks before it became the primary means of presidential communication and, in the eyes of many, answered the question of why the Library of Congress would want these things anyway. Digital content is like goldfish crackers in the backseat of my car: sometimes hidden from view, but probably always there if you know where to look.

We live in the weird spot of knowing that our stuff is never lost, but yet we have no idea where to find it. Our digital information is basically our missing car keys: somewhere, but we don't exactly have time right now to find out where. This is particularly true in the case of one of the earliest forms of digital mass communication: websites.

They always change. This is what has driven them [from the beginning](#): they actually deliver timely content. This is a main feature of the digital paper over its print predecessor: a dynamic, 24-hour cycle. The news that didn't drive traffic could get taken down and replaced by newer news and new clicks. But what about the untimely content that you wanted to revisit? Time to visit the [Wayback Machine](#). Since the earliest days of the internet (remember those AOL discs in the mail?) the Wayback Machine has been capturing images of websites on a daily basis. Their goal has been to create an archive of the internet. Think of it as the Library of Congress for dot coms.

It is really easy to use. All you have to do is enter a web address and click on the calendar for which day of its history you'd like to view.



So how is it useful to you? Only you will know. But there is an incredible research value to being able to look at old versions of relevant websites. For example, here is the site for the New Orleans Times-Picayune during the anticipation for Katrina on [Sunday](#) and [Monday](#), and then compare it with the devastation on [Tuesday](#). Or, if you heard about a [website removing particular items](#), you can simply find them on [older versions of that site](#). We encourage students to use it to locate old copies of [course syllabi](#). They go back that far...displaying lots of unsightly websites. It's a little like looking through your high school yearbook during your worse stage of acne.

A few things:

1. The Wayback Machine captures images of sites, but it doesn't always get all of the content. You'll have better luck on the front page of a site than on deeper levels.
2. You aren't going to have any luck with password protected sites, so sorry if you were hoping to get online access to a newspaper by simply conceding that you would just be one day late on the news. Further, you can't get into password protected social media sites like Facebook. That said, you can still view MySpace.
3. As you'll see, only the sites with the heaviest traffic (CNN, ESPN) get captured every day. The number of captures is driven by the traffic of that site: more traffic=more captures.

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## What is the Bible?

### Rob Bell



**Rob Bell**  
New York Times Bestselling Author of *Love Wins*

I'm reading Rob Bell's new book about the Bible. I admit that I don't interact with him as much as I did a few years ago. Because of the perceived evasive quality to some of his work (yes, that is being kind) *What is the Bible?* rightfully returns Bell to a place that his talent and following justifies: a polarizing, charismatic figure within an American Protestant Christianity that is severely lacking in Christiania. Right now, there are about six national faith leaders you might actually recognize if you saw them in the grocery store. But Bell is recognizable. And again, he has caused a stir, being [praised](#) by some and [panned](#) by others (not including [fake critics](#)). The reviews are probably right in their praise and their critique. He is fun, engaging, enigmatic, sensationalistic, brilliant, compelling, and unclear. But I've begun thinking that I've misunderstood him. Maybe his role is not to speak to cradle-to-grave Evangelicals. No, Rob Bell is Protestant Christianity's literary missionary to the Nones; he is the last stop before full-blown skepticism. I know--a little far afield from the Bible Belt (or his former home in Grand Rapids, Michigan) for many readers. Too Portland or Austin for you? I get it. He is the avocado to you? I join McArthur's pot roast and Beth Moore's cherry cheesecake. He's not for everyone. But maybe he doesn't have to be. But I do think it is worth reading if we want to think about how to engage an increasingly post-Christian world in Bible study. It's a quick read and worth your time. So read it. It's a book, not a tattoo.

### A Few More Footnotes.

1. [A Celibate Lesbian's Cold Hard Look at Sexual Immorality.](#)
2. NYT's David Brooks on [What Moral Heroes are Made Of.](#)
3. My thoughts on how [loving BBQ can help us love people.](#)
4. "And people today are spending billions of dollars to persuade you to embrace that tragic dream. And I get forty minutes to plead with you: don't buy it," John Piper's *Seashells* sermon from Memphis, [18 years later](#).
5. Nice piece in *Journal of Youth Ministry* by Lani Fraizer and Greg Anderson, "Leadership Strategies and Practices of Long-Tenured Youth Ministers in Churches of Christ." Takeaways for ministers who want a long tenure: 1) emphasize relationships, 2) do an internship, 3) find a mentor, and 4) get training in conflict management.
6. [Why the Literature of Antiquity Still Matters.](#)
7. Ten Reasons why [Ministry isn't for Wimps.](#)

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FOOTNOTES helps church leaders discover the resources that will improve and sustain their ministries. It will regularly feature interviews, book recommendations, site reviews, and editorials. It is a project of Bob Turner. You can direct any questions or feedback to [rjturner@harding.edu](mailto:rjturner@harding.edu). Complaints can be sent to his [Juno](mailto:Juno) account.

UPCOMING

June 11

The Old Testament is Dying

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