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Electronic Publishing & Archiving

By [James C. Moberg](#)

Ok... you've just authored your 500th Bible lesson and you feel it's time to compile your collection. You started with [WordPerfect](#) in college and used [Lotus WordPro](#) your first year in ministry and then switched over to [Microsoft Word](#). You've since started your own ministry and are using Sun's free [StarOffice Suite](#) which is also compatible with Microsoft's Word Format. All these word processors are able to save their documents as HTML, but the formatting either gets messed up in the process or the entire document gets converted to a graphic. What format should you convert everything to so that it can be read by everyone regardless of their operating system, software or budget?

"Adobe® Portable Document Format (PDF) is the open de facto standard for electronic document distribution worldwide. Adobe PDF is a universal file format that preserves all the fonts, formatting, graphics, and color of any source document, regardless of the application and platform used to create it. Adobe PDF files are compact and can be shared, viewed, navigated, and printed exactly as intended by anyone with free Adobe Acrobat® Reader® software." [\[credit\]](#)

I'm not going to go into too much detail concerning the PDF file simply because there is already an abundance of information available online concerning it. If you've done your taxes online, you'll notice that the IRS has all of the forms available in PDF format. PDF files are used everywhere and it's time you learned how to use them too.

You can purchase Adobe Acrobat 5.0 for about \$250 (gasp) or you can purchase a similar-featured PDF converter from other companies. There is another solution called FreePDF that combines 3 FREE programs to offer PDF creation from any Windows 9x/ME application. This method is entirely legal, and Adobe won't get mad... it just requires initial configuration and doesn't provide you with any enhanced features.

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If your ministry publishes a newsletter, save it as a PDF, upload it to your website and send email to everyone regarding where they can find it. This will really reduce the amount of money your ministry has to shell out to the government in postage to keep your sponsors & members up-to-date. This will also keep them returning to your website for information.

If you have an upcoming event that requires registration with a signature, printed a limited number of the forms for your members that do not have internet access and request that others go to the website and print out the form for completion. This will reduce your ministry's supply cost as well as provide you with a growing library of easily accessible forms.

Keep in mind:

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[James](#) manages YouthPastor.com and has created numerous websites that have extensive PDF libraries. He is also in the process of converting all of the online lessons to PDF format.

Please notify me of any broken links and I'll immediately and gladly correct them. Email your questions, ideas, review requests and comments to 2000@YouthPastor.Com.

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