



Digital Evangelism with e-Sword (Part 2)

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In the June issue of CCMAG, I discussed the value of using e-Sword's Topic Notes editor for composing your weekly sermons and/or Sunday School or Bible Study lessons. If you missed it, you can read the archived issue at community.ccmag.com in the "Digital Evangelism Community" at your leisure, although you'll need to be a subscriber to the community, of course.

After my article was published in June, Rick Meyers, the developer for the e-Sword software, wrote to advise me of a better way to save and share Topic Notes files. I've addressed these points on my Website at www.parsonplace.com/mysermons.html, if you're interested in reading about them.

In this issue, however, I'll discuss the value of using e-Sword's Graphics Viewer for Sunday School, Bible Study, and practically any other type of Biblical instruction. I've used this feature to print some of the charts and maps for both a Sunday School class I've taught and a weekly Bible Study I've taught. Although I also displayed them on a screen using a digital projector connected to my laptop, there's really no substitute for having

something tangible to hold in your hand and study over, as opposed to merely gazing at a computer or projector screen.

To access e-Sword's Graphics Viewer, you must first install at least one graphical resource. You can download many of these for free from within e-Sword. Just choose the resources you wish from the Download menu. There are some paid resources, including Bibles, books, and other resources designed for e-Sword which you can buy as well, if you like. I spent several years using strictly the free resources that are available for e-Sword until just two or three years ago when I decided to buy some additional Bible versions (including the NKJV and NASB, which I use frequently, and the Complete Jewish

Bible, which I use occasionally for comparison), plus Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, and a few other resources. I also have my eye on Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts, which I intend to buy eventually.

Once you've installed all of the graphical resources you wish to use, click on the Graphics Viewer icon, located at the right-hand side of the e-Sword main toolbar, or just choose "Graphics Viewer..." from the Tools menu. After the Graphics Viewer starts, it will display as a "floater" window apart from e-Sword's main window. Based on whichever graphical components you have installed, you can pick what you want to view from the drop-down menu in the pane at the right side of the viewer. As a minimum, I recommend the American Bible Society maps, the Classic Bible Maps, Larkin's Book of Charts, and the Bible Timelines components, though installing all of the available components would be useful to you at some point. For instance, the CIA World Factbook has some especially insightful information about practically every nation on the globe, and NASA's Satellite Images are simply stunning. Since the Bible maps, Larkin's charts, and the Bible Timelines contain content that is particularly useful for Bible study, I will focus on those for now.

One really good thing about the maps is that you can print and distribute them to your class members to help them identify locations and gauge distances, such as when Abram left Ur to travel to the Promised Land by way of Haran or when Jesus travelled around during His earthly ministry or when Paul embarked on his three missionary journeys. These are tremendous visual aids when trying to convey geographical facts; they truly make a Bible story come to life.

While most of Larkin's charts and the Bible timelines may not fit on standard sizes of paper without making them difficult to read (and you have to use the "Fit Graphic" option on e-Sword's Print Preview screen to do that), you can still try printing some of them on Legal paper (8.5" x 14") or even larger sizes of paper if you can obtain it and if it will fit in your printer. Perhaps you can encourage your class members to get their own copy of



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e-Sword with these graphical components installed in order to take full advantage of these great learning tools.

Of course, if you or your church or other organization can afford a digital projector and screen, you can connect the projector to a laptop computer with e-Sword installed on it with all of these various components and show them to the entire class at once, providing your class size is able to accommodate such a setting. Unfortunately, the larger the class or the greater the distance the screen is from the viewers, the more difficult it will be for everyone to clearly distinguish points on a map, chart, or timeline. A good laser pointer may help, however, so that even if members can't distinguish a point on a map, they can follow the red laser light as you move it from one point to another to identify the locations you're referencing.

However you choose to use these graphical tools, they are a great asset to any classroom. I highly recommend them. With a variety of other graphical components to install into e-Sword, your options are seemingly endless.

In next month's issue I will discuss using e-Sword's dictionaries and commentaries components. These tools can greatly enhance your knowledge and understanding of any sermon topic or Bible lesson, so don't miss it!

*Michael L. White is the founder and Managing Editor of Parson Place Press, an independent Christian publishing house in Mobile, Alabama. His book *Digital Evangelism: You Can Do It, Too!* (Parson Place Press, 2011) is available wherever books are sold. Visit his Website at books.parsonplace.com for a list of his other books and articles.*

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