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**1. Introduction**

This study is basically a miniature study in Bibliology, extended to consider some contemporary issues in translation. A major occasion for this study is my concern about the KJV-only view of the Bible. This view comes in several different varieties:

1. Radical English KJV-onlyism.
  - a. Re-inspiration applied to the KJV English translation.
  - b. Their mantra is “the King James Bible alone = the Word of God Alone.”
  - c. Must translate other languages from the KJV, not Greek or Hebrew.
  - d. Knowledge of Greek and Hebrew unnecessary for anyone, scholars included.
  - e. An even more radical view is that the KJV corrects errors in the Greek and Hebrew (“KJV is advanced revelation”).
  - f. KJV must be used for someone to be saved or led to the Lord.
  - g. Vitriolic propaganda against “modern perversions” and non-KJV-only believers, often misquoting literature of those they oppose.
  - h. Advocates: Peter Ruckman, Gail Riplinger, Jack Hyles.
2. Greek KJV-onlyism.
  - a. Perfect preservation of the Greek Textus Receptus or miraculous restoration of the Textus Receptus.
  - b. Only translations from the Textus Receptus are valid, so the KJV is valid.
  - c. KJV is most accurate.
  - d. Translation footnotes (giving textual variants or other translations) are confusing and invalid. Therefore, the NKJV is blemished and invalid even though it is translated (in the NT) from the Textus Receptus.
3. Moderate Practical KJV-onlyism.
  - a. Textus Receptus is the best Greek text.
  - b. The Ben-Chayyim text (Second Rabbinic Bible) is the best Hebrew text.
  - c. Verbal and formal equivalence in translation is the only valid way to translate.
  - d. English style is very important, and the beauty of the KJV English is unsurpassed.

- e. The translators must be very godly men.
  - f. The very old Sinaiticus and Vaticanus Greek manuscripts are rejected.
  - g. The KJV is the only English translation that meets these requirements and so is the best one.
  - h. These folks would call the Radical English folks heretics.
4. Non-KJV-onlyism.
- a. There are some folks who are hard to categorize in the above areas because they are not really KJV-only.
  - b. Some are “Majority Text” advocates that may use the KJV but would prefer another translation based on a larger selection of Greek manuscripts.
  - c. There are some who just like the KJV but are not KJV-only.

Note that the points above specify a continuum of KJV-only beliefs. It is sometimes hard to fit a person or institution precisely into one of those categories. But what is clearly true is that the radical view includes most of the beliefs of the stringent Greek view, which in turn includes most of the beliefs of the moderate view (except where they criticize one another). So there is a spectrum of beliefs in this area. What is the common thread between views 1-3? It is this: the exclusive use of the KJV and its underlying texts is treated as a doctrinal issue.

The practical outworking or application of my concern is this:

- I *do not* mind if someone likes the KJV or is accustomed to the KJV or because he has memorized so much of it wants to stick with it. Such a person is tolerant of other translations and not militant in his stance. In fact, I have used the KJV for years.
- I *do very much* mind those who want to propagate their KJV-only views amongst the people in our assembly. They are intolerant of other translations and militant in their stance. I believe the doctrine is seriously wrong and is enough of a basis for me to ask those folks to leave. If that is their agenda, they can take their agenda somewhere else.
- I *do not* want this issue to become the basis for a church split now or in the future. Is there any danger of this now at Fellowship Bible? Not that I know of. But I want to have a little insulation against such error. Your being informed is insulation. Splits on this issue in other churches are too numerous to count at this point.
- With this seminar, I intend not to make a big deal about it, but I want to show that those who do make a big deal about it are in serious error and must be avoided (Rom. 16:17).

The KJV-only view touches almost all the areas that comprise the study of Bibliology and so I will mention these connections as we go along.

Another occasion for this study is the need to know about the English translations that are available—their textual basis, quality, and style of translation. There are so many available today, and the question is very often asked, which translation should I use?

## 2. The Miraculous Origin of the Bible

### A. Introduction

As with the question of the origins of life and many other areas of study, the study of Bible origins has been polluted by the idea of **evolution**. Of course, the Bible did not spontaneously arise out of the “slime of a primordial earth,” as they say, but many liberal theologians believe that it did slowly develop over time. For example, they might say:

1. Myths, legends, traditions and the like were initially passed on orally.
2. These oral traditions were written down in primitive form. Generally these writings are hypothesized to be from about 1000 B.C., around the time of Solomon.
3. These written traditions grew and changed over time, with one or more layers of editors called redactors working them over to suit their own theological agendas or time in history. This development from one era to the next is the evolution.
4. What resulted was a messy tangle of the work of many authors over years of development. Study of the Bible is reduced to trying to ascertain which portions are core, original beliefs, and which are unoriginal accretions. The Biblical text is left in shambles and its meaning is bypassed.

As a result, many liberal theologians believe that the Jewish law and culture was not supernaturally originated at Mt. Sinai, but developed over many years until Deuteronomy was finally finished quite late in OT history. The Hebrew people developed over time from polytheists (many gods) to henotheists (one god among many) to monotheists (only one God).

The most common school of thought in this whole area of study is called the JEDP theory or the development hypothesis. These letters represent four strands of writings that were supposedly combined into the present form of the Pentateuch, and specifically with the proposed authors of those four sections, so that J = Jehovah writer, E = Elohim writer, D = Deuteronomistic writer, and P = priestly writer. Though there is disagreement among liberal scholars as to the details, generally the P material (Leviticus, for instance) is thought to arise very late, about the time of the exile or after (500-400 B.C.).

We need to keep in mind the main problems with this whole school of thought:

1. It is anti-supernatural in its presuppositions.
2. It is based on hypothetical source documents which have never been found.
3. The P material has been proven to be very early, based on archaeological data.
4. It denies the clear teaching of the Bible.

### B. A Little Bit of Old Testament Chronology

To address the concerns raised above, it is important to note the date of the Exodus from Egypt, and the corresponding Biblical claim to Mosaic authorship for all of the Pentateuch.

First, let us examine 1 Kings 6:1. This text tells us that 480 years after Israel left Egypt, Solomon began to build the temple. This was the fourth year of Solomon's reign. Extra Biblical sources put Solomon's reign starting at about 970 B.C. So: 4 years after that is 966 B.C. Then 480 years before this is  $966 + 480 = 1446$  B.C. This tells us the date of the Exodus, plus or minus a year. I usually remember 1445 B.C. as the date.

Second, look at Judges 11:26. Here we can arrive at an approximation of the date of the conquest, and thus the Exodus. Saul began to reign about 1050 B.C. The issue in

Judges 11 is Jephthah's rebuke to the Ammonites for trying to contest the possession of land that the Israelites had held for 300 years. If we allow 50 years before Saul's reign for the life of Jephthah (roughly), and then an additional 300 years, this brings us back to 1400 B.C. for the time that Israel conquered the region of Heshbon. This is certainly within the realm of agreement with our earlier analysis from 1 Kings 6.

We know from Exodus 7:7 that Moses was 80 years old at the Exodus. Deuteronomy 31:2 and 34:7 tells us that Moses was 120 when he died. So, if we believe that Moses wrote the Pentateuch (of course, granting Joshua or someone else wrote the postscript 34:5-12), then he had to do so no later than 1405 B.C. This date is much earlier than the liberal JEDP theorists allow. But it is where the Biblical data leads us.

### C. Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch

We do believe Moses wrote the Pentateuch! There are 77 occurrences of "Moses" in the NT, many referring to what he commanded, spoke, and said. Many of these occurred on the lips of Christ, showing that he accepted Mosaic authorship. Consider Mark 12:19, Luke 24:44, John 1:17, 1:45, and 5:46. Acts 3:22 shows Mosaic authorship of Deut 18:15; Romans 10:5 shows it for Lev. 18:5. Acts 7:22 shows us that Moses was certainly qualified as an educated man to be a writer of such a work.

### D. Key OT Texts

Each of the following texts speaks about the prophetic office and God's communication through the prophet. They tell us about the supernatural origin of the message God wanted to convey:

- |                  |                    |                   |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Exodus 4:12   | 2. Exodus 7:2      | 3. Numbers 12:6-8 |
| 4. Deut 18:17-18 | 5. Jeremiah 1:9-10 |                   |

Then there are texts related to the actual writing of the text:

1. Exodus 24:4
2. Deuteronomy 31:19, 22, 24, 26 (the latter mentions the storage of the manuscript)
3. Jeremiah 36:2, 4, 6, 8, 14, 17-18, 27, 28
4. Hosea 8:12 and 2 Kings 17:37 (here we see that what Moses wrote, God wrote)

### E. Key NT Texts

We have already briefly examined 2 Tim. 3:16-17 and 2 Peter 1:19-21. These are the key texts on the inspiration of the Bible. 2 Timothy speaks mainly of the **product**, the written Scripture, and how it is profitable. 2 Peter speaks of the **process** by which the prophets *received* the revelation from God (they did not *generate* it) and they wrote it down.

The other main NT text that relates to inspiration is 1 Cor. 2:13. Here Paul speaks of the words that the Holy Spirit taught him to say.

### F. Inspiration Defined

**Inspiration** is that miracle by which God through the Holy Spirit superintended the action of the human authors of the Bible so that in their writing, they did not err, omit, or add anything to the words God wanted recorded in the original autographs of Scripture. Inspiration applies to the process of writing or "reducing God's word to paper."

Edward J. Young defines it this way: “inspiration is a superintendence of God the Holy Spirit over the writers of the Scriptures, as a result of which these Scriptures possess Divine authority and trustworthiness and, possessing such...are free from error” (*Thy Word is Truth*, p. 27).

It applies to words, so we call it **verbal inspiration**. It is helpful to keep in mind that inspiration applies to *more* than the words. It applies to the syntax, sentence structure, arrangement of verses, thoughts, the message of a passage, and the argument of an entire book.

Inspiration applies to the whole Bible, all the words of it, so we call it **plenary inspiration**.

### G. Inerrancy Defined

Because of the miracle of inspiration, coupled with the character of God, there could be no errors in the original autographs. What the Bible affirms to be true is true. What it affirms to be false is false. It is accurate in its presentation of events (like Satan’s speech to Eve in the Garden, even though what he said was wrong). It is free from mistakes, exempt from error. This we call the **inerrancy** of Scripture. It is closely related to the doctrine of **infallibility**, which means that the Scriptures are certain and do not deceive. They are reliable, they will not fail.

Inerrancy extends to all matters touched on in the Bible—matters of faith, science, history, geography, indeed everything.

Note that we are not so simple-minded as to say that inerrancy therefore requires five decimal points of accuracy on all numbers. The Bible is not a science textbook. It is true in what it affirms. This can include rounded numbers and so forth.

### H. Alleged Problems with Inspiration and Inerrancy

We should note two items initially. First, errors in copying do not necessitate errors in the original. Second, just because we don’t understand everything does not mean there is an error. We may simply lack the necessary data to confirm or understand something.

We do not have the space (nor the desire, for that matter) to try to catalog all the ways that people have claimed errors in the Bible. We can deal with a couple of representative examples. The first has to do with math in the Bible. 2 Chronicles 4:2 says that the diameter of the laver was 10 cubits, and its circumference was 30 cubits. From geometry, we remember that  $C = \pi * D$ , so this data seems to indicate  $\pi$  is exactly 3. But it is 3.14159... We can arrive at a satisfactory explanation if we suppose that the diameter given is an outside diameter and the circumference is inside the rim of the laver. The diameter should then be reduced by 4 inches on one side (a hand-breadth, v. 5) and 4 inches on the other side. Converting to inches, we have 10 cubits = 180 inches minus 8 inches = 172 inches diameter inside the rim.  $C = \pi * 172 = 540$  inches, which when divided by 18 inches per cubit yields 30 cubits. It seems plausible.

A New Testament example regards the death of Judas. Acts 1:18 says that he fell headlong and burst open.” Matt 27:5 says that he hanged himself. Which is correct? What probably happened was that he hung himself, then his body fell and was damaged. Both texts are accurate.

Believers are predisposed or “spring loaded” to believe the Scriptures even when they are faced with seemingly difficult texts. Our attitude in such situations is very revealing.

## I. As Relates to the KJV-Only View and Modern English Translations

The KJV is not inspired in the sense we use that term in the study of doctrine. It is inspired insofar as it accurately reflects the originals into the language of the speaker. Where it errs, it departs from inspiration and inerrancy. So, it has a “derivative” inspiration and authority.

Don’t get me wrong, I think the KJV is accurate in the main and so is authoritative. But to say it is without error is to put our heads in the sand. It is the work of man with God’s good providence. The originals were the work of God and man together, with God miraculously superintending.

## 3. The Providential Preservation of the Bible

### A. Terminology and Summary

A *manuscript* is a hand-written original or copy of a text, in our case, the Bible. We abbreviate this as MS. The plural, *manuscripts*, is abbreviated MSS.

An *autograph* is the original manuscript of a Biblical book. This term is very common in studies of the Bible text.

An *apograph* is a manuscript copy of the original manuscript, or a copy of some copy of the original. This term is not commonly used in studies of the Biblical text, though some KJV-only advocates use it a lot because they talk about (supposedly) perfectly preserved apographs.

The *text* is the actual words written on the manuscript. The text is preserved in manuscripts. One apograph may have some errors in its text, but another apograph may have that text perfectly written down, with no mistakes.

A manuscript is called *extant* if it still exists, i.e. has not been destroyed or lost, and has survived to this day.

We will argue that though the *autographs* have not been preserved, and though the *apographs* are imperfect, the *text* of the Bible *has* been preserved in the multitude of extant manuscripts and versions.

### B. Meaning

Briefly stated, the view called *providential preservation* states that God has preserved the text of the Bible through normal means, including copies and translations made by fallible humans.

The term *providential* is meant to clarify that God operated through means of secondary causation, not direct intervention. If it were the latter, it would be called a miracle.

### C. Providential As Opposed to Perfect (Miraculous) Preservation or Restoration

Many KJV-only advocates try to say that the Textus Receptus or some particular version thereof is the perfectly preserved, or perfectly restored, Greek manuscript of the NT. They claim certain Bible verses teach perfect preservation.

What I disagree with is the notion that there was a miracle either all along the way, at the copying of each manuscript, or finally in the 1500s with the production of the Textus Receptus. So many problems attend this view that it is untenable. For instance, which of dozens of editions of the Textus Receptus is the right one? Why that one? Why would God miraculously restore that manuscript in the 1500s? Why not keep it pure all along?

Why not put a special marking on that manuscript to make it clear which one was right and which was wrong? Why not put clear texts in the Bible that say there would be a continuous miracle to preserve the Word?

The problem with the last point is that there is no such verse. There is no such miracle promised in the Bible. God promises to preserve the Word. However, he does not promise *how* that will take place. Since we lack Biblical evidence as to the *how*, we turn to historical evidence to see what happened. What happened was not perfect preservation of one manuscript or line of manuscripts. This much is obvious just looking at the historical data.

#### D. Key Texts

Following are two texts about the preservation of God's Word.

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Psalm 119:152** Concerning Your testimonies, I have known of old that You have founded them forever.

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Psalm 119:160** The entirety of Your word *is* truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments *endures* forever.

There are other texts often cited for preservation. Consider the following:

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Psalm 12:5** "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, Now I will arise," says the LORD; "I will set *him* in the safety for which he yearns." <sup>6</sup> The **words** of the LORD *are* pure words, *Like* silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times. <sup>7</sup> You shall keep **them**, O LORD, You shall preserve them from this generation forever.

This text is always cited by KJV-only advocates in support of preservation. However, verse 7 probably does *not* refer to the preservation of God's words. The word **them** is a *masculine* plural pronoun (technically it is a pronominal suffix on an imperfect tense verb, but I will spare you such gory details). The word for **words** in verse 6 is a *feminine* plural. Since the pronoun should agree with the antecedent, the antecedent of **them** is found elsewhere. It refers to the poor and needy in verse 5. In other words, the flow of the passage is this: In verse 5, God will rise up to help the poor and needy. In verse 6, His words are trustworthy—they will not fail. These words are contrasted to the idle, flattering, and proud words of the wicked in verses 2-3. So therefore, in verse 7, we learn that God's concern stated in verse 5 and supported in verse 6, will indeed be carried out and he will preserve the poor and needy forevermore, those who are looking to God for help.

Another text is Matthew 5:18:

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Matthew 5:18** "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

The issue here, of course, is not *preservation* of the text, but *fulfillment* of it in all that it says, say all of the prophecies. That's just plain on the face of the passage. We could ask hypothetically if there were only one MS of the entire OT, whether that MS would have to be visible to human eyes for all of the prophecies and such to be carried out. It would seem not, as God's ordained plan will come to pass whether people are looking at

His word or not. Given this type of argument, we can see that the text need not primarily speak of preservation of the Word.

It is commonly stated about this text that it proves that not even one little letter (jot) or stroke of a letter (tittle) will be erased from the Law. Given what we will see below, in the Problem Text section, this is somewhat dubious. Furthermore, the jot was a little letter in the Hebrew text in Jesus' day, but was probably a very large letter in the original text as written in the script that Moses used.

Note again how these texts do not tell us anything about *how* God would preserve the Word.

#### **E. Preservation Also as a Corollary to Inspiration and Authority**

It is helpful to think about preservation as a corollary of inspiration. That is, if God took the effort to inspire the Word, and He commands us not to corrupt it, and to learn it and obey it, then it must be preserved for his saints to use.

The Matthew 5:18 text discussed above, plus John 10:35 and 1 Peter 1:9-13 teach about the continuing authority of the Word of God. That authority would seem to be undetermined if no one ever had access to that word.

Though the word is preserved, God does not promise that it will always be available in every place or time. For instance, see 2 Kings 22:8 for a reference to a time in which the Word was "lost" but was still preserved.

Note that copies of the Scripture were made from the earliest times. Deuteronomy 31:24-26 indicates that the original copies of the 10 commandments were kept in or right next to the Ark of the Covenant. But the king was supposed to write his own copy of the law, as specified in Deut. 17:18. 2 Tim. 4:13 mentions parchments, which were likely copies of Scripture.

#### **F. Lost Books?**

Are there some books that were inspired that were lost? For instance, what about Paul's letter referenced in 1 Cor. 5:9? It seems that it had some authoritative content. If preservation is a corollary of inspiration, this is not possible. That letter is not inspired; if it were, it would be preserved and part of the canon of Scripture today. We will examine the issue of canonicity in the next section.

#### **G. Problem Text: 1 Samuel 13:1**

Probably the most difficult text in this whole study is 1 Samuel 13:1. To say that the Hebrew text of the Bible has been perfectly preserved *in Hebrew* is not possible. There are no known manuscripts that contain the correct reading of 1 Samuel 13:1:

LITERAL TRANSLATION of HEBREW **1 Samuel 13:1** Saul was a son of a year in his reigning; and he ruled two years over Israel.

SMOOTHER TRANSLATION of HEBREW **1 Samuel 13:1** Saul was a year old when he began to reign; and he ruled two years over Israel. [Saying one is a "son of X years" is how you tell his age in Hebrew.]

You can see that there is some disagreement between the English translations:



<sup>CSB</sup> **1 Samuel 13:1** Saul was 30 years<sup>1</sup> old when he became king, and he reigned 42 years<sup>2</sup> over Israel.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Samuel 13:1** Saul was...<sup>1</sup> years old when he began to reign, and he reigned... and two<sup>2</sup> years over Israel.

<sup>KJV</sup> **1 Samuel 13:1** Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, {reigned one...: Heb. the son of one year in his reigning}

<sup>NAS</sup> **1 Samuel 13:1** Saul was *forty* years old when he began to reign, and he reigned *thirty-two* years over Israel.

<sup>NET</sup> **1 Samuel 13:1** Saul was *thirty*<sup>1</sup> years old when he began to reign; he ruled over Israel for *forty*<sup>2</sup> years.

<sup>NIV</sup> **1 Samuel 13:1** Saul was *thirty* { <sup>1</sup> A few late manuscripts of the Septuagint; Hebrew does not have thirty. } years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel *forty*-{ <sup>1</sup> See the round number in Acts 13:21; Hebrew does not have forty-. }two years.

The ESV avoids putting anything in the slots where there are questions in the text!

From ancient translations and cross-referencing other passages of Scripture, we have a good idea what the text should say. For the first part of the verse, some Greek translations (dating from before the Hebrew text we have) put Saul's age at 30. This is very plausible. It might be objected that in verse 2 Saul's son Jonathan does not seem old enough to be a military leader. Even if he was 16 it is hard to imagine that Saul was 30, if he installed his son as a commander at the outset of his rule. But this assumption is not necessary; he could have installed his son somewhat after the start of his reign. Had Jonathan held that post for the majority of Saul's rule, this summary record is acceptable.

For the second part of the verse, Acts 13:21 gives us a round number for the length of Saul's reign – forty years. Some translations have forty-two (adding the two in the Hebrew text to the forty), NASB has thirty-two, or some just replace two with forty. Accordingly, when Saul went out to battle and died in 1 Samuel 31, he would have been either 60-62, or 70-72 years old.

The text of Scripture certainly has a difficulty here, so that what we would hope – preservation in the extant Hebrew manuscripts – does not seem to have happened. But given the ancient Greek version and our conviction that the original autographs were inerrant, this is the best explanation.

I think God has given us pause here to remember that no human enterprise is perfect. While the originals were inerrant, there are no manuscripts worthy of worship as if they are directly from the finger of God. We believe the Bible is the word of God, but we do not worship the Bible (bibliolatry). It would be nice to make some more Hebrew MSS discoveries that might shed more light on this problem text, but we need not let this shake our confidence in God's word.

## H. As Relates to the KJV-Only View

It should be clear by now that we do not believe in a miraculous preservation of the Bible. However, this does not dull our certainty about the Bible in the least. This is an important issue to many who hold the KJV-only view. They are worried that if they do

not ascribe perfection to the doctrine of preservation, they are doubting the Word of God. Stop worrying! We have the text preserved for us, though not in one single manuscript. Diligent study is required, including expertise in the languages. Most people do not have this, but I can say with 100% confidence that you don't need it to read and understand the Bible. Our English translations are reliable translations of the original. The words have been preserved to us. God has seen to that through secondary means—not miracles.

The radical English KJV-only view and the slightly less radical Greek KJV-only views are simply not sustainable.

#### 4. The Canonicity of the Bible

We will first look at the definition of the term “canon” and related words, and then look at very brief sketches of the OT and NT canon. Then we will examine further details.

##### A. Definitions

The word *canon* originally referred to a ruler or measuring rod. It is used in the Bible passage Gal. 6:16 of a rule or measure of conduct. In terms of our discussion, it is used to refer to the “rule” or “standard” of authority. The *canon* of Scripture is the correct list of Bible books. There are two parts to the discussion—one is the correct list of books, and the other is the process of collection of those books. In one sense, a book is immediately *canonical* if it belongs in the canon; in another sense, a book becomes *canonical* when it is recognized as such by being added to the collection of recognized, inspired writings.

*Canonicity* is the historical process by which the Spirit of God led the church to *recognize* the writings that belonged in the correct list, that is, the books which were *inspired*. God inspired the Bible, and people accept that. It is this latter idea of acceptance and the associated collection of books that is covered by the term *canonicity*.

Note that the definition of canonicity refers to the doctrine of inspiration. They are not the same. We know that when a book was completed, it was *inspired*. This is how it received divine authority. No men or church gave authority to the Scriptures. God did. A book was inherently *canonical* at the moment it was finished, but was not necessarily recognized as such immediately.

Note secondly that we are talking about *recognition*, not *constitution*. Men recognize the status of a book; they do not by their declaration of it as Biblical constitute or make the book as canonical. From its original autograph it has all the qualities it needs to be inspired and perfect and canonical. However, the process of recognizing this and settling on the correct list of books took some time because the books had to be replicated, transmitted to various part of the world, and used in the churches.

Note also that *canonicity* does not refer to the extent that something is canonical. A book is either canonical or it is not—all or nothing. This is because inspiration is not a matter of degrees. God inspired all the Bible books equally.

Remember finally that the church did not give us the Bible; the Bible gave us the church. Actually God gave us the Bible which gave us the church. Some would object that local churches were formed first, before the Bible was completed. True enough. But they were founded upon the doctrine of the apostles and prophets (Eph. 2:20) which was divinely revealed and was simply the Word of God in oral form before it reached paper. If you landed on an isolated island with you and a few other people and there was a Bible

there, you could form a church. But if you landed on an island with a church and no Bible, the church could not give you the Bible.

I hesitate to use the verbal form *canonize* or the related term *canonization* as they may cause someone to incorrectly assume that we impart canonical status to a book of the Bible. Not so. We could use the term as long as it is understood that to *canonize* simply means to include a book in the list that it inherently belongs to in the first place.

**B. NT Canon in Brief**

Of the 27 NT books, 20 have been almost universally accepted by Christians as Biblical from the beginning. The other 7 are the following, along with questions that caused them to be “antilegomena,” that is, the books which have been “spoken against.”

- Hebrews – question about authorship
- James – teaching on justification
- 2 Peter – style different than 1 Peter
- 2 & 3 John – arguments about authenticity
- Jude – reference to pseudepigraphal book of Enoch
- Revelation – premillennial teaching

**C. OT Canon in Brief**

Of our 39 books in the OT, only five were on the “antilegomena” list. They were:

- Ecclesiastes – written from a human perspective; focused on physical pleasure
- Song of Solomon – too sensual
- Esther – does not mention God
- Ezekiel – the size of the temple in Ezek 40-48 is wrong compared to the first temple
- Proverbs – some apparent contradictions

Even though these books raised such concerns, they were included in the canon. The rabbis used the expression “defile the hands” to describe a book as being canonical—so that someone would not handle it carelessly because they had to wash after using it and before touching other things. The Jewish list of the canon is as follows:

<b>Law, or Torah</b>	<b>Prophets, or Nebi'im</b>	<b>Writings, or Kethubim</b>
1. Genesis	<i>Former Prophets</i>	Poetic Books
2. Exodus	6. Joshua	14. Psalms
3. Leviticus	7. Judges	15. Proverbs
4. Numbers	8. Samuel (2 in 1)	16. Job
5. Deuteronomy	9. Kings (2 in 1)	<i>Megilloth (5 Rolls)</i>
	<i>Latter Prophets</i>	17. Song of Solomon
	10. Isaiah	18. Ruth
	11. Jeremiah	19. Lamentations
	12. Ezekiel	20. Ecclesiastes
	13. The Twelve (12 in 1)	21. Esther
		<i>Historical Books</i>
		22. Daniel
		23. Ezra-Nehemiah (2 in 1)
		24. Chronicles (2 in 1)

Because these 24 books include content that the Christian canon breaks into separate books, the list is the same as our list of 39 books. It has been this way from 400 B.C. to the present, about 2400 years!

Note the three-fold division of the canon – the TNK, or TaNaK.

#### **D. Books Not Included in the Canon**

There are two categories of books: the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha. The following are **OT apocryphal books**:

1. 1 & 2 Esdras
2. Tobit
3. Judith
4. Additions to Esther
5. Wisdom of Solomon
6. Ecclesiasticus/Sirach
7. Baruch
8. Letter of Jeremiah
9. Additions to Daniel, including Prayer of Azariah, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon.
10. Prayer of Manasseh
11. 1 & 2 Maccabees

These books have problems that show they are not canonical. For instance:

<sup>NRS</sup> **Sirach 3:3** Those who honor their father atone for sins.

Here is an obvious reference salvation by works. Or, consider:

<sup>NRS</sup> **2 Maccabees 12:44** For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen would rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead. <sup>45</sup> But if he was looking to the splendid reward that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Therefore he made atonement for the dead, so that they might be delivered from their sin.

This supports the doctrine of prayer for the dead and making atonement for them. The problem is that this has no connection with the gospel whereby we are called to repent and believe in our lifetime, else we will be lost forever with no chance of recovery, not even by prayers of very pious people.

These books have several characteristics besides bad theology that showed they lacked the general recognition of the church. They are not quoted in the NT. No council of the church included them as canonical. The Jews never included them as part of the Hebrew Bible (OT). They contain historical and chronological errors. However, their witness to the canonical status of other books is helpful. For instance, the prologue to Ecclesiasticus was written about 130 B.C. and gives evidence of a three-fold structure to the OT. It indicates this structure was completed some time before 130 B.C.—in fact, by about 400 B.C. it was completed.

These apocryphal books (except 1 & 2 Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh) were accepted as canonical by the Roman Catholics at the Council of Trent on April 8, 1546.

The **OT pseudepigraphical books** number about 65, though there is no exact list agreed upon. They were basically never given serious consideration for inclusion in the canon. It is obvious that they were not Biblical books. Three of them—3 & 4 Maccabees and Psalm 151 are included as somewhat authoritative by the Eastern Orthodox churches.

The **NT Apocryphal books** include:

1. The Gospel of Judas  
A second century A.D. Gnostic gospel that supposedly records conversations between Christ and Judas Iscariot. Judas was not a betrayer but a catalyst for Jesus to get out of his physical “prison-body.” The true gospel was given to Judas, not to the other disciples.
2. The Gospel of Thomas  
Includes short dialogs and sayings attributed to Jesus. It is not a narrative form like the other gospels. It is also Gnostic in character, having a dualistic philosophy, contrasting material with spiritual.
3. The Gospel of Bartholomew  
A text that has been lost, but is referenced in other texts.
4. The Gospel of Peter  
A narrative of the suffering of Christ that suggested that the cross could talk and that Herod Antipas was the one who killed Christ, not Pontius Pilate.
5. The Gospel of Philip  
Another Gnostic gospel, probably from the third century A.D. It emphasizes marriage, and is the origin of some translations that suggest Mary Magdalene was married to Jesus, an idea popularized in the modern book and movie “The Da Vinci Code.”
6. The Gospel of James  
Probably written about 150 A.D., suggests the veneration of Mary and the idea of “perpetual virginity” in which she was supposedly a virgin for her entire life, and had no other children.

There are others as well. Obviously these are not included in the canon because they have serious theological errors.

#### **E. How Do I Know the Bible Has the Right Books?**

There are four steps to an individual being certain about the Bible. They are:

1. **The Church settled on the proper canon in 397 A.D.** This is a good first step, but you might still have questions. After all, they could have been wrong!

2. **The Scriptures are self-authenticating.** The Bible is a valid witness on its own behalf, just like one can testify on one's own behalf in court. So, Paul says that his words are the words of God (1 Cor. 2:13, 14:37, 1 Thess. 2:13, 4:2). The difference here is that there is no higher authority to which one can appeal than God and His Word. We presuppose that God exists and that He has revealed Himself in the Bible. There is no more basic or elementary principle that we can appeal to than that.
3. **The Holy Spirit convinces the believer of this claim of self-authentication to being the Word of God.** Theologically this is a part of regeneration which is called "initial illumination." The light bulb is turned on by the indwelling Holy Spirit so that the believer can see and accept that the Bible is the Word of God. This is taught in 1 Cor. 2:12-14. It is necessary because the unsaved person does not accept the Word of God as he should. Note that illumination is not the same as revelation.
4. **This witness of the Holy Spirit convinces the believer of the divine origin and authority of particular parts of the Bible.** As the believer studies the whole of the Bible, he can see that all the texts of the 66-book Bible have this quality, and form a whole system of interlocking truth that is coherent and non-contradictory.
5. **The four steps above applied to the believers in the early church and to us.** For them, it led them to recognize the canon as completed by 397 A.D. at the latest. For us, it leads us to see the same thing.

In the next section, we will see some rubrics that are considered in the careful examination of each book to determine if a claim to canonicity for it is valid or not.

## F. Qualities of Canonical Books in the NT

There are four qualities that are generally recognized by Christians as marking a book as part of the Bible in the NT.

**First** is whether it originated with an **apostle** or one of the apostolic band. Mark was not an apostle per se but seems to have been largely influenced by Peter; Luke by Paul, etc.

**Second** is whether it was universally applicable to the church. It could not be a letter to one's grandmother. This is often called the "**catholicity**" quality, not that the book is part of the Catholic church because the western and eastern churches came much later than the Bible books themselves.

The **third** quality used to recognize canonicity was its **orthodoxy**. Did it teach correct doctrine? This is admittedly a circular argument, but such cannot be avoided when you are examining the standard of absolute, ultimate truth. For the gospels and the Pauline epistles, this was basically assumed. The other books are compared to these, much like in the OT the books were compared to the standard of the Pentateuch to see if they agreed.

The **fourth** quality was external to the book itself (the other three are internal) and had to do with its **usage in the churches**. If it were employed in the worship and teaching of churches then it was considered part of the canon. After some centuries it became clear which books were to be discarded because the church was not affording them common usage.

## G. Qualities of Canonical Books in the OT

An OT book was recognized as canonical if it met the following criteria.

**First**, it had to be clear that it came from God at the hand of a prophet. For the Torah, this was clearly the case—Moses was a prophet Deut. 18:15, 18; the books claim to be from God (e.g. Exodus 24:12). See also Eccl 12:9-11 where the Shepherd appears to be God himself. This corresponds to the apostolic-origin criteria of the NT.

**Second**, the book had to be consistent with the Torah. All of the OT is consistent with the Torah (this is denied by those who suggest a developmental or evolutionary theory of Israel's religion). If it did not agree with what was clearly the Divine standard laid up by the Ark of the Covenant, then it was not part of the canon. Note that Deut 13:1-5 teaches that if a so-called prophet arises, claiming to be from God by means of a miraculous sign, but bringing a message contrary to the Law, then the people were not to listen to him, they were to kill the prophet, and they were pass God's test by walking in his commandments. This corresponds to the orthodoxy requirement mentioned above about the NT.

**Third**, the book had to have significance for the nation of Israel. For instance, it could be significant in that it includes history of the nation, or genealogical material for kings or priests. It could present the nation's failures in covenant loyalty and lessons for the future; it could reflect times when the survival of the nation was in question (as in Esther) or when the nation was blessed or (more often) punished by God for failing to obey His Law. This corresponds to the "universality" criteria mentioned above for the NT.

Historically, it is clear that all the OT books were used by Jews from the earliest days of their composition and the close of the canon at the time of Malachi.

There is an additional factor that we can consider relative to the NT. While not necessary to establish the canon, since the canon was clearly recognized before Christ, we have the advantage of seeing many of the books quoted by the Lord and the apostles, proving their authoritative status.

## H. Some More Historical Detail for the NT Canon

**NT Era.** The collection and reading of Paul's letters is suggested in 1 Thess. 5:27, Col. 4:16, and 2 Peter 3:16.

**96 A.D.** Clement of Rome writes to Corinth and mentions many NT books.

**Early 100s** Pauline letters were in circulation and were gathered into a collection. The gospels were similarly collected and circulated.

**110** Ignatius refers in his letters to the gospels and Paul's writings.

**110** Papias refers to the gospels (except Luke), 1 Peter, 1 John, and Revelation.

**135** Polycarp refers to many NT books as well.

**150** Justin Martyr recognizes many of the NT books, including Paul's letters, Acts, Hebrews, Revelation.

**150** Marcion of Asia Minor and Rome tried to limit the canon. He was a Gnostic heretic who did not accept the OT because its God was inferior. He accepted Luke's gospel but rejected the others; he accepted 10 of Paul's epistles (rejecting the Timothy's and Titus). He also edited the "acceptable" books to remove certain parts.

**150+** Montanus and followers claim new revelation. He claimed to be the "Helper" of John's gospel. He tried to expand the canon.

**180** Ireneus lists 22 NT books. Remember that 20 were basically always accepted and 7 were on the "questioned" antilegomena list.

~ 200 Date of “Muratorian Canon” which was found by Muratori (Italian) in 1740. 22 books are listed which are deemed apostolic and fit for public reading. The five missing are Hebrews, 1 & 2 Peter, 3 John, and James.

**155 to 220** Clement of Alexandria lists 22 books. He questioned Philemon, James, 2 Peter, 2 & 3 John.

**170 to 220** Tertullian lists 23 books, excluding James, 2 Peter, 2 & 3 John.

**185 to 254** Origen had all 27 modern books, but noted questions about James, 2 Peter, and 2 & 3 John.

**265-339** Eusebius was a church historian of the time who wrote on the canon. He spoke of 22 books that were universally accepted, and 5 that were considered canonical but were questioned. These were James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 & 3 John. He listed some books that were outright rejected, such as the *Acts of Paul*, *Shepherd of Hermas*, *Apocalypse of Peter*, and the *Epistle of Barnabas*.

**350** Athanasius (296 to 373), Bishop of Alexandria and a famous theologian of the fourth century, writes *Decrees of the Council of Nicea* that *The Shepherd of Hermas* is not canonical.

**363** Council of Laodicea uses the term “canonical.”

**367** Athanasius writes his “Easter Letter” (the 39<sup>th</sup> Festal Epistle) which uses the term “canonical” to refer to the authoritative list, and lists the 27 books we have today.

**397** The Third Council of Carthage, including theologian Augustine, also listed the 27 books we have today in our Protestant NT. Historically we accept this as the close of the issue on the canon for both the OT and NT.

**1546** Council of Trent on April 8, 1546 accepts the apocryphal books into their canon. They were a bit late to the game, it appears.

## I. Some More Historical Detail for the OT Canon

Remember when we started out that we said that when we talk about the canon, there are two key items—the list of books and the historical process of collecting those books. This section will focus on the latter—the historical process.

We start from the beginning, with the earliest written OT books, the Torah, the five books of Moses. These were initially placed beside the Ark of the Covenant: Exodus 25:16, 21; Exodus 40:20; Deut. 10:1-5; 31:9, 26 (note beside, not in). Remember in Deut. 17:18 the future kings were commanded to write out a personal copy of the Law.

Later writings were probably added to this collection in short order, as in Joshua 24:26 and 1 Sam. 10:25, and indicated in 2 Kings 22:8, 2 Chron. 34:14-15, 30. Earlier, some itinerant officials and Levites went out with copies of that law to teach it (2 Chron. 17:9). Some books like the Psalms are a little hard to fit in neatly because the dates of their composition range from 1400 B.C. (Moses, Psalm 90) to the exilic and probably post-exilic periods in 500s and 400s B.C. (see Psalm 137). But we know that the Psalms were completed at the latest by the first century B.C. (at least the first three sub-books of the Psalms, up to Psalm 89) because Psalm 79:2-3 is quoted in 1 Maccabees 7:17. But an even stronger case can be made for the closure of the Psalms by the third century B.C. because the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the OT, included the Psalms in the order of the Hebrew version. The Septuagint was initially translated between 250 and 150 B.C.

Historically, the Jews believed in a closed canon after Malachi which included precisely the list of books that we have in the OT today. The first major work written after



the close of the canon, Ecclesiasticus/Sirach, was written in the second century, and it was not counted as one of the books that “defiled the hands.” Josephus indicates that the inter-testamental literature was not authoritative like the earlier books. 1 Maccabees 9:27, written no later than the first century B.C., says:

<sup>NRS</sup> **1 Maccabees 9:27** So there was great distress in Israel, such as had not been since the time that prophets ceased to appear among them.

The author here recognized a cessation of revelation. Back in Malachi 4:4-6, there is another possible indication of the close of the canon, in which God tells the Israelites to remember the law, apparently until the appearance of Elijah. They had to hang on in the interim, from the close of the OT era to the opening of new revelation with the sudden appearance of John the Baptist and then shortly thereafter of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is why you hear often about the “400 silent years” between the OT and the NT.

Another key concept in the collection of the OT books is the three-fold division of the canon that was mentioned above (the TaNaK). The OT was referred to by this three-fold designation in a way that indicated it was complete—by Jesus ben Sira’s grandson translation of Ecclesiasticus in 130 B.C., and by the Lord in the gospels (Luke 24:44). Note:

<sup>NRS</sup> **Sirach Prolog 1:1** Many great teachings have been given to us through the Law and the Prophets and the others that followed them...So my grandfather Jesus, who had devoted himself especially to the reading of the **Law** and the **Prophets** and the other **books** of our ancestors...

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Luke 24:44** ¶ Then He said to them, "These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the **Law** of Moses and *the* **Prophets** and *the* **Psalms** concerning Me."

Today in English Bible study, it is common to divide the OT into *four* sections:

1. Torah (Genesis to Deuteronomy)
2. History (Joshua to Esther)
3. Poetry (Job to Song)
4. Prophecy (major and minor prophets)

The Lord also spoke of two endpoints of the OT in Matthew 23:35 and Luke 11:51 when He referred to Abel and Zecharian (Genesis 4:8 and 2 Chron. 24:20-22). Thus he incorporated the whole OT (the Hebrew OT is arranged to end at 2 Chronicles).

You might hear of the Council of Jamnia in 90 A.D. as if it established the OT canon or the close of the “Writings” section of the canon. However, there is scholarly debate as to whether there actually was a council of Jamnia that considered such questions, or if it did so in a final and authoritative manner. The main issue in Jewish debate (which extended beyond Jamnia in any case), seems to be whether the antilegomena should be included. But, they already *were* included! And the other books were well accepted with no questions. The OT had been recognized from its earliest origins as of Divine authority.

## J. A Problem

Are there books inspired that are not in the canon, i.e. that were lost? We discussed this in the section on Preservation. The short answer is no, because of the interconnection between inspiration and preservation. Even if one of Paul’s other letters were unearthed,

we could read it and see portions that are not of Biblical quality or character, or that do not contribute anything new to the canon.

#### K. As Relates to the KJV-Only View

I am not aware of any debate in the KJV-only movement as to the correct list of books that belong in the Bible. Theoretically, some advocates of this movement may reject the human recognition part of canonicity and suggest that God revealed that information to those He was using to preserve or restore the Word. We have previously dealt with this idea of ongoing miraculous revelation in our study of preservation.

#### L. The Talmud and the Apocrypha

The Talmud does mention Sirach and other “extra” or “external” books as not belonging to the canon. Some were treated so strongly as to make the reader of them cursed, or that reading them would bring trouble on his house. To the Jews, the gospels and other Christian books were heretical and are included as “apocrypha” from their perspective.

See the Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 100b available at [http://www.come-and-hear.com/sanhedrin/sanhedrin\\_100.html](http://www.come-and-hear.com/sanhedrin/sanhedrin_100.html) which refers to uncanonical (lit., “external”) books. Folio 90a also includes a reference to this in a paragraph listing those who would not obtain eternal life ([http://www.come-and-hear.com/sanhedrin/sanhedrin\\_90.html](http://www.come-and-hear.com/sanhedrin/sanhedrin_90.html)).

#### M. Modern Heretical Movements and the Canon

There are several related movements within Christianity that lay claim, like Montanus, to new revelation. Given the foregoing information, it should be clear that many believers over centuries have accepted the canon as it stands in the 66 books, closed and awaiting the coming of the King of Kings in Jerusalem for more Divine revelation. Such movements claiming new revelation must be rejected as in opposition to both the historical apprehension of the church as to the canon, and the Biblical teaching about a closed canon (see next section).

Of course, there are also the Mormons and Muslims and others that claim new revelation. These claims are clearly false given the criteria and historical study outlined above.

#### N. Biblical Texts on the Close of the Canon

The Bible itself speaks about the close of the canon before it was closed! Consider the following key texts:

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Ephesians 2:20** having been built on the **foundation** of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*,

<sup>NKJ</sup> **1 Corinthians 13:8-12** ¶ Love never fails. But whether *there are* prophecies, they will **fail**; whether *there are* tongues, they will **cease**; whether *there is* knowledge, it will **vanish away**.<sup>9</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part. <sup>10</sup> But when that which is **perfect has come**, then that which is in part will be done away. <sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. <sup>12</sup> For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

Church truth is foundational only if it is complete. This author takes the “perfect” to refer to the canon of Scripture instead of the second coming of Christ.

## 5. The Textual Analysis of the Bible

### A. Terminology and Limitations

*Textual analysis*, and what is called *textual criticism*, is the activity of comparing the many *apographs* that have survived, and making decisions about the originality of specific texts within those apographs. The ultimate goal is to understand the exact words of the original *text*. Recall the definitions of the terms *apograph* and *text* from earlier.

When we use the word “criticism” we should not think in terms of *higher criticism* that denies inspiration and inerrancy. What we are speaking about is technically called *lower criticism*.

This section of the notes will focus on NT textual criticism. The subject of OT textual criticism is somewhat different because the extant evidence is much more limited.

### B. Much Ado About Nothing

I want to make clear that text critical problems affect a very small percentage of the Bible text, and any of the mainline views do not change any doctrine. We could use the NIV, NASB, KJV, NKJV, NET, etc. in our doctrinal statement with no problem.

Consider data given by James White in his book *The King James Only Controversy*, p. 39–40. There are variants in 10,000 locations in the New Testament. Only about 1/8<sup>th</sup> of these variants have any significance, the rest being trivial differences like spelling and so forth. This means if you compare the KJV textual basis with the modern eclectic text, you will find the text is 98.33 percent without problems. This is remarkable for such an historic document with 5,300 Greek manuscripts of the NT. Of these variants, there are only about 400 that affect the sense of a passage, and 50 that are of enough weight to worry about. Schaff, a liberal church historian, said that none of these affected “an article of faith or a precept of duty which is not sustained by other and undoubted passages, or by the whole tenor of Scripture teaching.” Greek scholar A. T. Robertson says that only 1/1000<sup>th</sup> of the entire text was of any concern.

This does not prove that every translation is as good as any other, but it does lend great confidence to all good translations of the Scripture. We will look at translations in the next major section of our notes.

### C. A Simple Example of a Textual Problem

A simple example is 1 Thess. 4:13. Note the NIV and NKJV renderings:

<sup>NIV</sup> **1 Thessalonians 4:13** ¶ Brothers, **we** do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.

<sup>NKJ</sup> **1 Thessalonians 4:13** ¶ But **I** do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

The textual apparatus of Hodges and Farstad’s Majority Text shows the reason for the difference. The Textus Receptus (TR) has θέλω, and the rest of the manuscripts (Majority Text, Critical Text, etc.) all have θέλωμεν. Here is a clear-cut case where the TR goes against the witness of all other manuscripts. The original reading is “we” and so the KJV and NKJV are incorrect at this point.

Note that I used *external evidence* in this explanation—that is, evidence not in 1 Thessalonians itself, but of the various manuscripts. We can also use *internal evidence* in some cases, like this: “Paul never anywhere else uses this debated word/construction, but he uses this other word/construction many times.” Such an argument would provide credence to the view that a textual error may have occurred in transmission so that the more common variant is the right one. Or, maybe not! This is the thing about transmission errors. They don’t always make perfect sense by their very nature as errors.

#### D. A More Complicated Example of a Textual Problem

A more complex example is known by the name *Comma Johanneum*, the Johannine Comma. We can illustrate the textual problem using the NKJV and ESV texts:

<sup>NKJ</sup> **1 John 5:7-8** For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. <sup>8</sup> And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 John 5:7-8** For there are three that testify: <sup>8</sup> the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.

Note that the bold and underlined part in the NKJV text is not present in the ESV. KJV-only advocates say that the ESV is denying the doctrine of the Trinity. Others say that this text just simply has no evidence to support its inclusion in the Bible, and that it doesn’t matter anyway, as the Trinity is taught many other places in the Bible.

For the history of the inclusion of this text in the Textus Receptus produced by Erasmus in the 1500s, see White, *The King James Only Controversy*, p. 60-62. Here is a brief outline:

1. Erasmus did not include the **text** in his first two editions of the TR because no Greek manuscript that he had showed the text.
2. He annotated his conclusions in his *Annotations*.
3. Some folks attacked him as changing the Vulgate, and providing comfort to the Arians (or equivalent in their era), who deny the Trinity.
4. Erasmus replied that he was only going with the Greek texts that he had. He said “produce a Greek manuscript that has what is missing in my edition” and he will put it back.
5. An Irish manuscript called Codex Montfortianus appeared that had the **text**. The manuscript is doubtful because of its late date, and even worse, it “was created in the house of the Grey Friars, whose provincial, Henry Standish, was an old enemy of Erasmus, and whose intention was simply to refute Erasmus.”
6. Erasmus included the **text** in his third edition, but expanded the *Annotation* greatly to discuss the case. It appears he included the **text** to keep his earlier promise, not because he really believed the **text** belonged.

Because all the manuscript evidence is extremely late for the **text**, only the Textus Receptus includes the reading. The vast majority of manuscripts do not have the **text**. On the basis of this evidence, I believe that it should *not* be in the Bible. Furthermore, historically, it was never used in the controversies over the doctrine of the Trinity twelve hun-

dred years earlier. Such a text was ready-made for the debate, but it was never used. Why? I believe it is because no Greek manuscript had it!

Really the only question remaining for me is, “where did the Latin rendering come from?” Where did Jerome get it? I do not know the answer to that, but it would be interesting to find out.

White points out very helpfully that if you argue for the **text**, you are painting yourself into a very serious corner. Why? Because if the **text** belongs in the Bible, how could it totally disappear for centuries? That is what KJV-only advocates are saying here. In other words, preservation did not hold for that text. How then do we know that there are not many other such texts? Is not our confidence in the Bible totally shaken? It appears logically that it should be.

However, we need not have our confidence shaken. The Greek manuscripts do not have the text because the text is not supposed to be there! The Vulgate is a translation—it can be wrong. A few late manuscripts, one “made to order” for the occasion, can be wrong. But if basically all the Greek manuscripts are wrong, we are in trouble. But they are not. Thank God he has not left us hopeless in this situation but has preserved the Word faithfully.

## E. The Various Methods of Textual Criticism

There are two main camps when it comes to textual criticism. They are as follows:

**1. Textual criticism should not be done today.** In this camp are the KJV-only advocates. Note that the textual basis of the KJV is the Textus Receptus, which itself is the product of some textual criticism. Erasmus used a handful of manuscripts from the Majority Text or “Byzantine family” to produce the TR. The TR is not the same as one particular historical manuscript, but is a combination of various manuscripts. In addition, the KJV itself did not follow the Erasmusian TR exactly. The translators made some of their own decisions about the proper text as well. The short story here is that this position says there should be no text criticism *after Erasmus*. In that sense, it is inconsistent.

**2. Textual criticism can and should be done today.** In this camp falls EVERYONE else. That is, if you are unwilling to say that the TR is absolutely correct, and you are willing to say that we can weight the evidence and make careful decisions, then you are saying there is a place for textual criticism. Within this camp are two main sub-groups.

The first sub-group consists of those who hold the **Majority Text view**. This is represented by the Greek New Testament edited by Zane Hodges and Art Farstad, and the Greek New Testament edited by Maurice Robinson and William Pierpont. In short, it argues that in making decisions about textual variations, the external evidence of the number of manuscripts takes precedence. That is, **the majority of manuscripts are most likely right** according to this view. Technically the view is modified in some places where there is no clear majority, or where a reconstruction of the copying history can be undertaken. This view is a minority view in evangelical and fundamental circles today.

The second sub-group who allow for the practice textual criticism are those who hold the **reasoned eclectic view**. This view posits several criteria, based on both internal and external evidence, that are used to determine the originality of a textual reading. This

view is held by the vast majority of Bible scholars today. The criteria are as follows, starting with internal evidence:

- A. The reading that explains the other readings the best is most likely original.
  - A. 1. The harder reading is usually preferable.
  - A. 2. The shorter reading is preferable if an intentional change was made.
  - A. 3. The longer reading is preferable if an unintentional change was made.
- B. The reading that is less identical with a parallel passage is most likely original.
- C. The reading that is foreign to the author's style is not likely original.

The internal evidence is somewhat subjective. The criteria based on external evidence have to do with the manuscript history. Manuscripts are generally divided into four families based on their characteristics and origin: Alexandrian, Byzantine (the majority family), Western, and Caesarean. The Alexandrian family is considered by scholars to be the most reliable. This is the family that was over-emphasized by Westcott and Hort in their initial explanation of this method of textual criticism (and emphasis upon Sinaiticus [Ⲛ] and Vaticanus [B]). No one today uses their method like they did, but still the manuscript family is taken to be very reliable. One principle that we could suggest is that wide geographical distribution of a text, as evidenced by its appearance in multiple families, is a good indication of originality of a reading. The Byzantine family is considered to be somewhat unreliable in the sense that it often provides longer readings that evidence addition to the text.

Now for my commentary on some of this. I fall in between the two major views given above. I can see the validity of examining the evidence in individual cases. Sometimes there is no clear majority. Other times, when there is uncertainty, I default back to the majority text view. The arguments given in the eclectic view are quite subjective. Furthermore, they are circular at a certain point. Greenlee states in his *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism* that "The purpose of studying the external evidence is to decide which reading has the support of MSS and text-types that have been found to support more frequently the preferable readings" (p. 115). If I may boil this down, what he is saying is that external evidence is used to decide the preferable reading by using MSS that tend support the more preferable readings. It sounds somewhat circular.

Ideally, we would have markings on each MSS that would tell us what it was copied from, when, and where. This would help us construct a family tree of MSS and we could follow that back. Unfortunately, we are trying to approximate that with other criteria.

## **F. Should We Divide on the Issue of Textual Criticism?**

As long as one is within the circle of a proper belief on inerrancy and inspiration, the fact that one makes a different decision at particular text is not reason to separate from that person. Folks holding the Majority Text view and eclectic views should be able to harmoniously co-exist, even in the same church. Now if a textual decision violates a clear doctrine of Scripture, that is another matter. But apart from that, we need to have some charity in the matter, for most people do not know the details of Greek or Hebrew, and even among those who do, there is not uniformity in their decisions. This is why we have the various positions mentioned above.

One caveat to this—if someone is holding the KJV-only view and strongly campaigning for it, this becomes divisive. The Scriptures tell us how to handle that kind of situa-

tion—in short, by separating from him. Note in that case the division comes from the KJV-only advocate, not those who are trying to hold together the church.

## 6. The Translation of the Bible

### A. Translation Styles, Definitions

Here are some examples that point out differences in style.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Timothy 3:16** All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

<sup>ESV</sup> **2 Timothy 3:16** <sup>a</sup>All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

<sup>NIV</sup> **2 Timothy 3:16** All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

<sup>CEV</sup> **2 Timothy 3:16** Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word. All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live.

The word in Greek is θεόπνευστος (theopneustos, theo=God, pneustos=breath). The bold, underlined text gives the various translations for it. The KJV, normally known as a literal translation, is not as literal here as the NIV is, but the NIV is known as a dynamic equivalent translation. The ESV is known as a literal translation and lives up to its reputation in this verse. The CEV, known as a paraphrase, certainly fits the bill with its translation.

A *literal translation* attempts to translate the text word-for-word. Anyone who has translated or spoken multiple languages knows that it is impossible to carry this out exactly. Idioms and the varying semantic ranges of words have to be taken into account. For instance, “Abraham was 75 years old” would come across in a strictly literal translation this way: “Abraham was a son of 70 and five years.” Accordingly, modern advocates of this approach call this technique *essentially literal* because they understand they cannot violate such conventions of language without making the text un-readable.

A *paraphrase* attempts to convey the meaning of the text but may only loosely follow the words and syntax, or greatly expand on it in its attempt to do this. It very often makes decisions in translation that affect interpretive issues. Such a translation may hide interpretive problems, covering over them with the translator’s interpretation. For the English-only reader of such a translation, it becomes impossible to determine where such decisions have been made, unless the reader compares other translations.

A *dynamic equivalent* is in between the literal and the paraphrase. Such a translation attempts to convey the sense of the passage, remaining close to the original wording if possible but providing a “meaning-equivalent” or “equivalent effect” on the reader for those parts where a straightforward translation is not deemed to make good sense in the receptor language. It is sometimes called a thought-for-thought translation method as opposed to word-for-word. There are varying degrees of dynamic equivalence, depending on how far the translation is “modernized” or how many interpretive decisions it makes. In fact, a paraphrase can be considered a dynamic equivalent “on steroids.”

## B. List of Translations and Styles

I have mentioned various types of translations above. Here are examples of each.

<u>Paraphrase</u>	<u>Dynamic Equivalence</u>	<u>Literal or Formal Equivalence</u>
1966 Good News for Modern Man	1949 BBE	1885 RV
1971 Living Bible	1970 NEB	1901 ASV (based on RV)
1976 Good News Bible, aka TEV from '66 GNMM (above)	1978 NIV	1952 RSV (based on ASV)
1995 CEV	1989 REB	1971 NASB
1996 NLT (based on Living Bible)	1990 NRSV	1982 NKJV
2001 TEV renamed GNT	1996 Nlrv (Reader's)	1995 NASB update
2004 NLT	1996 NIVI (Inclusive Language)	2001 ESV
	2004 HCSB ("optimal" equivalent between dynamic and formal)	2004 HCSB
	2005 TNIV	
	2005 NET	

## C. The Debate Over Proper Methods of Translation

To start, it is important to note that there are two very high-level criteria for a translation: *accuracy* and *readability*. Often KJV-only advocates and others in favor of strict literal translation give the impression (or say outright) that accuracy and readability are competing criteria. They castigate the NIV (for instance) as introducing inaccuracy in the midst of its attempt to make the text readable. And while the NIV is not perfect, we need not pit accuracy versus readability. To take such an approach to its logical extreme, we should all read Hebrew and Greek since there would be essentially no loss of accuracy. The readability would not be so good, though, because most of us do not have that capability!

I believe it is possible to provide a reasonably readable and yet very accurate translation of the Bible. Consider the NKJV and ESV as examples. Just because a translation is readable does not mean it is inaccurate. It also does not say that it is accurate, however. On the other hand, an accurate translation may be quite terrible as far as English quality; and it is debatable as to whether a translation is very accurate if no one can understand it. Anyway, my point is to say we should not have to sacrifice either readability or accuracy in a good translation. The translator's job is to produce a readable translation that is accurate. If it is not accurate, it is not good. If it is not readable, it is not good either. It must be both.

It is important to maintain the view of the Reformers like Luther and Wycliffe and Tyndale, who defended the need and propriety of translation into the common language of the people. The example of Nehemiah 8 as well as the NT being written in Koine Greek should be enough to convince us of this.

It is also important to be aware of the reader-centric nature of paraphrases and dynamic equivalent translations. What I mean by this is that the reader, his understanding, the conveyance of meaning to him (or her, to be gender neutral ☺), and similar concerns are driving factors in most modern translations. The reader-centered philosophy has im-



plications for the translation. What also must be taken into consideration is that the Divine Author has some interest in the translation as well!

It is also very important to note that the Scriptures are inspired—remember we said that includes words, syntax, sentence structure, arrangement of verses, thoughts, the message of a passage, and the argument of an entire book. All of these must be included. For instance, if a logical connector is used in the original, somehow that should be conveyed in the translation. Truly, some words are “untranslatable” particles like the direct-object marker in Hebrew. But such words are the rare exception.

Consider this example from Rom. 6:10:

<sup>BGT</sup> **Romans 6:10** ὁ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν, τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ ἀπέθανεν ἐφάπαξ· ὁ δὲ ζῆ, ζῆ τῷ θεῷ.

<sup>NIV</sup> **Romans 6:10** **[No word “For”]** The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Romans 6:10** **For** the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

Some may consider this a picky example, but this is characteristic of the NIV. I do not think these connector words are superfluous. But then again, sometimes the NIV makes a better connection from one sentence to another (through its better translation of participles, but we’ll forgo the gory grammatical details!)

#### D. As Relates to the KJV-Only View

In the main, those holding the KJV-only view do not admit any need for further translation of the Scriptures into the English language. Other translations are either viewed as inferior (at best) or heretical and demonic (at worst).

Most will admit a need to translate into other languages in the world, as long as the right Greek and Hebrew is used, or in the radical expressions of the view, as long as the KJV itself is used as the basis of translation.

#### E. Commentary on Modern Translations

There is a surplus of Bible translations in the English language. In fact, the surplus is so large we would have to say it is an excess or overabundance. Resources would be far better spent in a more global approach, translating Scriptures for other languages that do not have any Scripture in their language. The market (i.e. the opportunity to make money) does not encourage this harder work, unfortunately.

A good handful of translations in English is very sufficient for your reading and study. Updates at sensible intervals are needed when the language changes. Every ten years is too frequent.

Here are my picks: NKJV, NASB, ESV, NIV.

### 7. Illumination and Interpretation

Once the Bible has reached us in English through the whole process examined above, then we have to be able to read it and understand it.

## A. Illumination

The first pre-requisite to truly understanding the Bible is that the Spirit of God regenerate our minds so that we can understand the truth of God.

This is different than the Gnostic heresy where one has to receive “special knowledge” to be initiated into the “cult.” With the Bible, the revelation is open for all to see. There are no secrets. The problem is not revelation (because of inspiration and preservation and all that we discussed before), but rather the problem is understanding due to our sinful minds rejecting the truth of God. See 1 Cor. 2, Rom. 8:7-8, and Eph. 4:18.

Illumination describes the work of the Spirit by which he enables us to grasp the real meaning (significance) of the Scriptures for ourselves. Every believer has this basic ability, and because of the clarity of Scripture, the basic message is understandable. You do not need a Ph.D. to understand the Bible. In fact, such may hinder your understanding!

Though some portions of the Bible are more difficult than others (2 Peter 3:16), the Scriptures *can* be interpreted, and the interpreter can arrive at a correct interpretation because of the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:9-16) and the perspicuity (clarity) of the Scriptures (Psalm 19:7-11, 119:105, 130; 2 Peter 1:19). Only the initial and ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in illumination can ultimately convey the acceptance of and confidence in the Scriptures (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 John 2:27; 1 Cor. 2:14, 12). These can be bolstered by the witness of history, the consistency of the Scripture, its miraculous contents, etc., but at base, the Bible possesses self-attesting truth and authority because of its Source and how it was produced.

## B. Interpretation

We are really moving into a different topic here. Another whole seminar could be devoted to hermeneutics, the principles of interpretation.

The basic tools for interpretation are given to man in creation. Part of the image of God is the ability to communicate. These basic tools were corrupted with sin, however, and so the need for illumination (above).

The Scriptures are to be interpreted in a consistently literal fashion according to proper history, grammar, theology, and context, including prophetic passages not yet fulfilled. Allegorical or spiritual methods of interpretation are not warranted because they focus meaning in the interpreter’s idea of what the passage means, instead of in the words and meaning of the passage itself.

The Scriptures speak with “one voice,” that is, they mean one thing in each context. A passage does not have multiple different meanings. The meaning of a passage does not change over time.

The author’s purpose and intent in writing must be considered carefully when you are learning the meaning of a passage. The authorship of Scripture is actually dual—there is the human author and the Divine Author. However, what God wrote and intended to write, the human author wrote and intended to write. Of course, the human author may not have understood all the implications of what he was writing, but he knew the meaning of it.

A number of tools are available to assist us in interpreting the Bible correctly. These include Bible atlases, concordances (and their new computerized cousins), introductions to the OT and NT, Bible dictionaries, dictionaries, and commentaries. Of course, a good English translation is the most important tool in our toolbox.

## 8. More on the KJV-Only Issue

### A. Problems with the KJV Translation

None of the upcoming arguments are meant to trash the KJV, but they are objective problems with the translation which make it more difficult to understand than it needs to be.

1. English Vocabulary Problems. Words have shifted in meaning.

Example 1: The verb “Let”

<sup>KJV</sup> **Romans 1:13** Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was **let** hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:7** For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now **letteth will let**, until he be taken out of the way.

The verb “let” used to mean “to be hindered” or “to restrain,” so we should translate it as “restrain” today.

Example 2: The verb “Prevent” in the OT

<sup>KJV</sup> **Job 3:12** Why did the knees **prevent** me? or why the breasts that I should suck?

<sup>KJV</sup> **Psalms 88:13** But unto thee have I cried, O LORD; and in the morning shall my prayer **prevent** thee.

<sup>KJV</sup> **Amos 9:10** All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor **prevent** us.

In the OT, this verb means to “meet” or “confront” or “receive,” not to “prevent.” See also Psalm 59:10, 79:8, 119:48.

Example 3: The verb “Prevent” in the NT

<sup>KJV</sup> **1 Thessalonians 4:15** For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not **prevent** them which are asleep.

Here in the NT, the verb “prevent” means to come before or precede. The meaning is that we will not go ahead of those who have died in Christ ahead of us.

Example 4: The Verb “Wot/Wit” and Particle “Wit”

<sup>KJV</sup> **Romans 11:2** God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. **Wot** ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying...

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Corinthians 5:19** **To wit**, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Corinthians 8:1** ¶ Moreover, brethren, we **do** you **to wit** of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia

<sup>KJV</sup> **Philippians 1:22** But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I **wot** not.

This verb means “to know.” Almost no one uses it this way in common parlance today. In a couple of forms, it is used in 28 verses in the KJV. “To wit” in 2 Cor. 5:19 means “that is,” or “namely.” “Do to wit” in 2 Cor. 8:1 means “make known” to you.

#### Example 5: The Word “Withal”

This word is used in 33 verses in the KJV. For instance:

<sup>KJV</sup> **1 Corinthians 12:7** But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit **withal**.

This means “for the benefit of all” or “for the common good.” Other places it means “also” or “at the same time” or “meanwhile.”

#### Example 6: The Word “Quit”

Exodus 21:19 and 28 use this word as well as Joshua 2:20. In those cases, it means something like “acquit” or “release.” Perhaps this is a use like the modern “quit claim” deed. There are three other uses of “quit” in the KJV. They are:

<sup>KJV</sup> **1 Samuel 4:9** Be strong, and **quit yourselves like men**, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: **quit yourselves like men**, and fight.

<sup>KJV</sup> **1 Corinthians 16:13** ¶ Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, **quit you like men**, be strong.

The verb means “act like a man.” In older English, it meant to meet the expectations entertained of or to conduct, so, to conduct oneself like a man. Today we would say something like “act valiantly” or “be courageous” or “be strong.” Most uses of the verb in the LXX are translated this way.

#### Example 7: The Word “List”

<sup>KJV</sup> **James 3:4** Behold also the ships, which though *they be* so great, and *are* driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor **listeth**.

The last phrase means something like “wherever the pilot’s inclination desires.”

Words like thee, thou, unto, chambering, cotes, wimples, wont, sackbut, froward, glistering, and many others are also problematic in the KJV.

## 2. English Grammar and Syntax Problems. English does not work like Greek.

#### Example 1: Subject/Object Ordering

<sup>KJV</sup> **James 3:2** For in many things we offend all.

It seems that James is saying that we go around offending everyone we meet. The Greek wording is literally this: “many things [direct object] for we offend all [subject].” Note that the word order in Greek cannot be carried over into English. Note also that the information in [square brackets] is part of the spelling of the words in the Greek. Therefore, we know “all” is not the object of the verb. So, the translation should be “For in many things we all offend” or better, “For we all stumble in many ways.”

#### Example 2: General Word Ordering

<sup>KJV</sup> **Romans 5:15a** But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift.

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Romans 5:15a** But the free gift *is* not like the offense.

The KJV here is nearly impossible to understand. It does faithfully reproduce the word ordering of the Greek.

### 3. Inconsistency in Translation of Words.

#### Example 1: Inconsistency in a Particular Passage

Matthew 20:1 and 20:11 both use the word οἰκοδεσπότη. Notice the translation:

<sup>KJV</sup> **Matthew 20:1** For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an **householder**

<sup>KJV</sup> **Matthew 20:11** And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the **goodman of the house**

To be sure, not all Greek words can always be translated into the same English word because their semantic range is different than the range of the English word. However, in this context, it is clear that the word should be translated consistently. Most other English translations consistently use “landowner,” and the ESV translates it as the “master of a house.”

#### Example 2: Inconsistency of Spelling of Names Throughout the KJV

<sup>KJV</sup> **Matthew 11:14** And if ye will receive *it*, this is **Elias**, which was for to come.

All other major English translations spell the name as “Elijah” which is the common way people know this prophet. Granted, the KJV basically transliterates the Greek because there is an “ias” ending in Greek. But for purposes of the English reader, it seems reasonable to translate the name consistently in English.

### 4. Greek Text Problems. Plain errors in translation.

Example 1: Wrong translation.

<sup>KJV</sup> **Matthew 23:24** Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

This verb means to filter out or strain out, not to strain at.

Example 2: Wrong translation.

<sup>KJV</sup> **Acts 12:4** And when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

Easter here should be Passover. Easter was not at all in the mind of Luke when he wrote this. He was thinking of the Jewish Passover celebration.

## 5. Greek Syntax Problems

Example 1: Theologically Misleading Translation

<sup>KJV</sup> **Acts 19:2** He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Acts 19:2** he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

Notice the difference in translation between "since" and "when." The latter suggests that one receives the Spirit upon belief in Christ. The former suggests that you might receive it sometime after initial salvation. Many Charismatics believe that Christians don't receive the Spirit until sometime after they are saved. We believe that all Christians receive the Spirit. See also Ephesians 1:13, where the KJV has "after that ye believed" but the NKJV has "having believed," clarifying that the sealing ministry of the Spirit comes with belief, not sometime (optionally) afterward.

Example 2: The Granville Sharp Construction

The following texts are mistranslated by the KJV. This is not faulting them however, because the man named Granville Sharp did not discover this grammatical rule in Greek until the 1790s, nearly 200 years after the KJV was completed, and some 20 years after the last revision in 1769 by Benjamin Blayney.

<sup>KJV</sup> **Titus 2:13** Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Titus 2:13** looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Peter 1:1** Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

<sup>NKJ</sup> **2 Peter 1:1** Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

In both cases, the KJV seems to specify two persons of the Trinity—God and Jesus. But the NKJ shows that the Greek actually refers to one member of the Trinity—Jesus, who is called our God and Savior.

The rule states this: when you have two non-proper nouns describing a person (here, *God* and *Savior*), when they are in the same case, when they are singular, when connected by “and” and the first has the article “the” in front of it but the second noun does not, both nouns refer to the same person. This rule is *without exception* in the New Testament. Therefore, these are bullet-proof texts for the deity of Christ.

## B. Other Notes

We should note several other important things about our critique of the KJV-Only view. First, our study does not solve the debate over valid translation options at certain texts. There may be complete or essential agreement between Hebrew or Greek texts and a translation may still be in question because of the semantic range of words, presuppositions that one brings to the text, grammatical difficulties, etc.

Second, there is a serious problem of circular reasoning in many KJV-Only advocates. They begin with the assumption that the KJV is correct, and then they proceed to show the other translations are deficient. What is needed is to prove that the KJV is a completely accurate and reliable translation of the original autographs. Once that is established, then the other question of KJV vs. modern English translations can be answered. But the problem is, the issue of accuracy to the originals *is* the question at issue, and the determination of what those original autographs were. Assuming your answer and then moving from there

This is related to a common technique that you see in KJV-Only literature, and that is to show that the other translations “deny” the deity of Christ or some other doctrine by virtue of leaving out a word here or there. If the KJV has “Lord Jesus Christ” and NAS has just “Jesus Christ,” then some KJV-Only advocates say that this proves the NAS is denying the deity of Christ. This is a serious fallacy, however, because a) omitting the title does not deny anything; b) there are dozens of other texts in the NASB that include the title.

<sup>KJV</sup> **1 Timothy 1:1** ¶ Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and **Lord Jesus Christ**, *which is* our hope;

<sup>NAS</sup> **1 Timothy 1:1** ¶ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Saviour, and of **Christ Jesus**, *who is* our hope;

See also Rom 6:11, 1 Tim 5:21, 2 Tim 4:1, Titus 1:4, 2 John 1:3.

## 9. Books, Articles, Authors, and Institutions

### A. Inspiration, Inerrancy, and Departures from These Doctrines

Lindsell, Harold. *The Battle for the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976.

McCune, Rolland. *Promise Unfulfilled: The Failed Strategy of Modern Evangelicalism*.

Greenville: Ambassador Emerald, 2004. **NOTE** Chapter 13.

Young, Edward J. *Thy Word is Truth: Some Thoughts on the Biblical Doctrine of Inspiration*.

Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1957.

### B. KJV-Only: Books and Articles Against

Beacham, Roy E. and Kevin T. Bauder, eds. *One Bible Only? : Examining Exclusive Claims for the King James Bible*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001.

Carson, Donald A. *The King James Version Debate: A Plea for Realism*. 1979.

Combs, William W. "Erasmus and the Textus Receptus" in *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal*, vol. 1 no. 1, p. 35-53, Spring 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Preface to the KJV and the KJV Only Position" in *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal*, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 253-267, Fall 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Errors in the King James Version?" in *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal*, vol. 4, p. 151-64, Fall 1999.

White, James R. *The King James Only Controversy: Can You Trust the Modern Translations?* Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1995.

Williams, James B. and Randolph Shaylor, eds. *God's Word in Our Hands: The Bible Preserved for Us*. Greenville: Ambassador Emerald, 2003.

### C. KJV-Only: Authors, Institutions and Books For (None of these are "recommended" but are listed FYI)

- Dr. Joseph Chambers
- Jack Chick (Chick Tracts). See [http://www.chick.com/reading/tracts/0031/0031\\_01.asp](http://www.chick.com/reading/tracts/0031/0031_01.asp) and <http://www.chick.com/information/bibleversions>. He believes in perfect preservation of the Textus Receptus.
- David Cloud, Way of Life and the Fundamental Baptist Information Service
- David Otis Fuller
- Dr. Samuel Gipp
- William P. Grady
- Dr. Thomas Holland
- Kent Hovind, who takes KJV as the inerrant Word of God.
- Jack Hyles. Believed that one could be saved only by use of the KJV
- Dr. Jeffrey Khoo, Far East Bible College in Singapore
- Texe Marrs
- Wallace A. Miller
- (the late) Dr. Henry M. Morris, Institute for Creation Research
- Kevin O'Brien, Texas pastor.
- Pensacola Christian College and seemingly moreso in the seminary
- Gail Riplinger



- Alberto Rivera
- Lester Roloff
- Peter S. Ruckman, Pensacola Bible Institute (not PCC)
- William Schnobelen
- Thomas M. Strouse, Emmanuel Baptist Theological Seminary of Newington, CT
- Sword of the Lord
- Trinitarian Bible Society “does not believe the Authorised Version to be a perfect translation, only that it is the best available translation in the English language.” They limit inspiration to originals.
- Dr. Timothy Tow, Far East Bible College in Singapore
- Dr. Laurence M. Vance, Dial the Truth Ministries, av1611.org
- Donald A. Waite, and his *Defined King James Bible*
- Dr. Terry Watkins, Dial the Truth Ministries, av1611.org
- Benjamin G. Wilkinson, Seventh-Day Adventist scholar

Cloud, David. *Answering the Myths of the Bible Version Debate*.

Cloud, David. *The Glorious Heritage of the King James*.

Fuller, David Otis, ed. *Which Bible?* 5th ed. Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids International, 1975.

Morris, Henry. *Defending the Faith: Upholding Biblical Christianity and the Genesis Record*. Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 1999. **NOTE** pp. 31-34.

#### **D. Textual Criticism**

Brotzman, Ellis R. *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.

Greenlee, J. Harold. *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*. Revised ed. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995.

Metzger, Bruce M. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. 2nd ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2000.

Metzger, Bruce M. *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*. Third, enlarged ed. New York: Oxford, 1992.

#### **E. Translations**

Comfort, Philip W. *The Complete Guide to Bible Versions*. Wheaton: Living Books (Tyndale), 1996.

Ryken, Leland. *Choosing a Bible: Understanding Bible Translation Differences*. Crossway, 2005.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Word of God in English: Criteria for Excellence in Bible Translation*. Crossway, 2002.