

Reasons Why We at Elwood Bible Baptist Church Use The King James Bible Exclusively!

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On occasion I have been asked why we at Elwood Bible Baptist Church use the “outdated” King James Bible. The issue of the text of the Bible became an issue for me as a Pastor in the early 1980’s. As I listened to different people I became concerned about the desire to literally do away with the King James Bible. Sitting in a preacher’s meeting several years ago I heard a leader of a fellowship of Independent-Fundamental Baptist Churches state, “The New International Version of the Bible is an easier Bible to read. I would suggest that you go home to your churches and encourage your people to use this new Bible!” That particular fellowship followed the advice of that noted leader and today they are at the liberal end of the New Evangelical movement with churches that no longer have the word Baptist in their church names. Therefore, I decided to study the issue with great care because of the importance it played in my life and the lives of the people God had called me to minister to. I studied and totally read 36 different books written by authors on both sides of the issue. In my study, I found that the history of the Received Text (the text the King James Bible comes from) was associated with persecuted, martyred brethren, while the lineage of the Critical Text (all other versions come from) is linked to apostasy at virtually every step of its history. The Received Text or Textus Receptus in Latin was received by the church for more than 2000 years from the apostolic era to current time. That is the reason it is called the Received Text because it was received by the church. In my study of this critical issue it becomes readily apparent that one lineage is linked with apostasy and the other with true believers. I became convinced that the issue at hand is the integrity, accuracy, and trustworthiness of the Word of God. Our church does not believe this is a preference issue, but one that goes to the very foundation of our faith.

TEXTUAL REASONS

Many in the pew do not know that most of the more than one hundred new versions of the Bible are not translated from the same Hebrew and Greek texts that the King James translators used! When somebody says that the translation of a certain verse in the King James Version is “unfortunate,” usually the problem is text rather than translation. In the late 1800’s a committee of British and American scholars began work on a revision of the King James Bible. It was decided by them that the Greek text of the New Testament used in the translation of the old Bible was seriously defective, although that text represented the New Testament as most Christians had accepted it over the centuries. Almost all of the new versions are actually translations of the new Greek text generated by this committee, the Critical Text, Eclectic Text, or what is called The Alexandrian Text. This new text is significantly different from the Traditional Text or Received Text.

When the reader comes to John 7:53-8:11 in translations such as the New American Standard Bible (N.A.S.V.) or the N.I.V., he finds the whole story of the woman taken in adultery set apart with lines or brackets. A note is placed in relation to the bracketed section that says something like this:

“The earliest and most reliable manuscripts do not have John 7:53-8:11.”

Something similar is done to the Great Commission in Mark 16:9-20. What the textual critics of a century ago were saying is that a large amount of the New Testament read, believed, preached, and obeyed by most of our spiritual forefathers was actually uninspired material added to the text! If this new text theory were true, it would be revolutionary news to the church. However, the new theory is still very controversial. Jesus said, **“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”!** A man’s needs will not be met unless he has received “every word” that God has spoken. So said the Lord Jesus. Jesus also said “Heaven and earth shall pass away, **but my words shall not pass away.**” (Matthew 24:35) With this promise, Christ assured us that the very words we need in order to live as we should would be preserved throughout the ages, through wars, persecutions and disasters, and even through the fiery end of creation! Psalm 12:6-7.

Then entered something called Textual Criticism. Textual Criticism is an academic discipline in which scholars study existing Greek and Hebrew Biblical manuscripts. Prior to the advent of the moveable type printing press in 1455 by Gutenberg, all copies of the Bible were hand copied by scribes and were called manuscripts. Because they were individually produced by human hands, they were prone to mistakes in normal copying. Textual critics study the various extant (existing) manuscripts and note any discrepancies which may have occurred between different copies. Then by comparing them, a majority consensus is established. Should a misspelled word be found, or should

a word have been accidentally added or omitted from a given manuscript, the textual critic endeavors by consensus to establish the correct reading. A **major theory** of textual criticism is that since later manuscripts were copied from earlier ones, therefore, the earlier manuscripts are presumed to be a more accurate source of the Scriptures. (This presumption is how subtle errors would accumulate in later copies). **Hence, textual critics gave much more credence to early manuscripts than to the later copies even if the later were greater in number. The problem with this theory is that the early church had great reverence and respect for their “accepted” or “received” manuscripts of the Scriptures. Accordingly, when a given copy of the Scriptures became tattered and worn, it was carefully copied and then burned.** Hence, there are virtually no copies of the earliest manuscripts used by the churches. However, there is evidence how certain cults and sects within the early Christianity followed the opposite practice. They preserved their manuscripts regardless of condition. **Therefore, the crucial premise of textual criticism-that the older manuscripts are always to be preferred to more recent copies, is critically flawed.**

Two manuscripts entered the scene, Aleph and B. In the latter half of the 19th century when textual criticism was perhaps at its zenith, two ancient manuscripts were found in the Mediterranean world which would come to revolutionize the work of textual critics. A manuscript was found in a monastery at the foot of Mt. Sinai in the Sinai desert. It came to be known as manuscript Aleph and it was known as Codex Sinaiticus (“codex” is the Latin word for bound volume). About that same time, another ancient manuscript was “found” in **a trash can in the Vatican**. It became known as Manuscript B or Codex Vaticanus. Both of these manuscripts were determined to have come from the 4th century A.D. and are considered to be the oldest basically complete copies of the New Testament to exist. Hence, they were considered by the textual critics to be the mother lode of ancient Bible Manuscripts. It is noteworthy that Vaticanus was found in the Vatican library. (The Roman Catholic Church historically has never given great credence to the Scripture or its teachings). Moreover, Codex Sinaiticus had been produced by scribes of the Alexandrian sect in early church history. Some Alexandrians held various heretical views similar to the modern day Jehovah’s Witnesses. Some held major doctrinal deviations pertaining to the person of Jesus Christ. Notwithstanding, even though the source of Codex Sinaiticus was suspect and extremely questionable, it became the premiere source for future textual criticism. It should be noted that the Critical Text or Eclectic Text represents less than one percent of existing manuscripts. From this critical text and its direct predecessor, the Westcott and Hort Text, virtually all modern translations and versions of the Bible have been translated in to English.

So-called “textual criticism” is more faith than it is science. If one studies the thousands of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament with the belief that God has preserved His Word through the years, he will come to different conclusions than one who studies the same documents with the belief that such preservation is unlikely. Much of the work is guesswork and many of the conclusions are debatable. For this reason, thoughtful conservative Christians will decide that it is safer to stay with the traditional text than to adopt the revised one. The only widely used English versions that are translated from the Received Text are the King James Version and the N.K.J.V. **It is our position that the**

Received Text is the correct text therefore, the correct text line that has been used for more than 2000 years. We believe the Critical Text, also called the Alexandria Text is a flawed text and not reliable both by where much of it was found and by whom worked on the text. The critical text can also be called the Westcott-Hort text. Westcott and Hort were men who championed the new text in 1881. They were men who were theological liberals in the crucial areas of inspiration and inerrancy, theology proper, evolution, the resurrection, salvation and Christology. The apostate beliefs of these noted textual critics of the 20th century are factually documented. They could in no way be considered fundamentalists as the term was later coined and used. A study of these men shows their intellectually untenable positions are exposed as deceptive and misleading. Dr. David Sorenson in his book "*Touch Not The Unclean Thing*" documents Westcott and Hort's (a) theological liberalism, (b) liberal associates, (c) occult activities, (d) their fondness for Charles Darwin and his evolutionary views and (e) their defense of Unitarianism. Sorenson closes his book with this stimulating and unanswerable question: "Why would God hide the best representation of His Word in such places of spiritual darkness such as in the pope's library and in an apostate monastery near Mt. Sinai for 1500 years if it in fact most closely represents the *autographa*?" (p. 223). Sorenson also states, "The Received Text is based in belief of Providential Preservation, while the Critical Text is based in scientific reconstruction of the text. The RT is guided by usage of believing churches, while the CT is guided by the philosophy of rationalism. These two streams center in (a) two contrasting types of Bibles, (b) two different textual bases, and (c) two different underlying philosophies". Since the Bible is the very authority of a Christian's life (II Timothy 2:15), the devil will certainly use confusion about this issue to deceive Christians, I Corinthians 14:33, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." Since God is not the author of confusion on the Bible issue, you can be sure that Satan is. God wants each Christian to understand that His Word is the key to his/her life. John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth". We need to understand that it is Satan's desire to confuse the truth because of its importance in our lives, and has done so by trying to confuse which text is the correct text. II Timothy 3:16-17, Revelation 22:18-19, Proverbs 22:18, II Peter 1:20-21.

THEOLOGICAL REASONS

Some new Bibles are dangerous because of the theological bias of their translators. The Revised Standard Version (R.S.V.) of the Bible was presented to the public as a completed work in 1952. The notoriously liberal National Council of Churches authorized it. The unbelieving bias of the majority of the translators is evident in such readings as Isaiah 7:14

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (R.S.V.)

The difference between this reading and the way the verse reads in the King James Version (K.J.V.) is very important. The old Bible says that "a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son." The liberal bias against the doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ is reflected

in the R.S.V. translation of this verse. To make matters worse this liberal version translates Matthew 1:23, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son." This is a correct rendering of the Greek, but with the incorrect translation of Isaiah 7:14 in the same Bible, the impression is given that Matthew misquoted Isaiah. Not only is the doctrine of the virgin birth undermined in the R.S.V., but also the doctrine of the infallibility of the Bible! No fundamentalist Christian would accept as his standard a theologically liberal translation of the Bible like the R.S.V.

Hence, all of the modern translations based upon the Critical Text have deleted references to the blood of Christ, Romans 3:25, Colossians 1:14, Revelation 1:5, Luke 2:20. The deity of Christ, Jude 4, Revelation 1:11. The inspiration of the Scriptures, II Timothy 3:16. Salvation by faith, John 3:16. These are just a few verses, but I could go on for many more to the numerous instances of serious changes or deletions of major doctrinal truth in modern versions, but it is lengthy. There are thousands of textual changes.

The Good News Bible, (or, properly, Today's English Version) was translated by neo-orthodox Richard Bratcher, and purposely replaces the word "blood" with the word "death" in many New Testament passages that refer to the blood of Christ (such as Colossians 1:20, Hebrews 10:19, and Revelation 1:5). Bratcher also replaces the word "virgin" with "girl" in Luke 1:27. His theological bias ruins his translation.

The New International Version (N.I.V), probably the most popular version of recent days calls into question these same doctrinal issues, as well as teaching the false doctrine of baptismal regeneration. In Acts 8:26-40 you will find the account of Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch the N.I.V. completely omits the 37th verse, which says, "And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." This leads the reader to believe that salvation is not a prerequisite to baptism.

Liberal or neo-orthodox religionists also produced other versions, such as Phillips Translation and the New English Bible. For this reason we will not use them.

In thirty years of ministry, I have seen many churches and Bible colleges that have moved from the King James Bible to the new versions from the corrupt Critical Text become liberal and apostate. They soon leave the matter of holiness behind for the culture. They leave the doctrine of separation for words like "we agree to disagree". Folks, the matter of the integrity of the Bible is not a place to "agree to disagree". This is not a preference issue but a separation issue, Revelation 22:18-19, II Corinthians 6:14-17. The churches or schools that state they use the KJV as a preference but can use other versions as well end up in confusion (Satan is the author of such confusion) and eventually end up in New Evangelicalism and apostasy as well. The church ends up with no evangelistic outreach and instead settles into a meaningless existence of no passion for the lost and a sliding of standards in dress, holiness, music, compromise, and other areas.

PHILOSOPHICAL REASONS

Christians ought to be interested in having the very words of God, since this is what Jesus said we need! The King James Version is a translation that seeks what scholars call “formal equivalence” to the original text. Others, however, seek “dynamic equivalence.” The “formal equivalence” approach seeks to express in English the meaning of the words in Greek. The “dynamic equivalence” approach seeks to express the meaning of the writer in modern idiom (thought). Anyone who takes seriously our Lord’s admonition in Matthew 4:4 will want formal equivalence translation. The new versions do not offer this to us. The so-called “Living Bible” does not even pretend to be translation of the words. Copies of this book clearly identify it as a “paraphrase” of God’s Word. Dr. Kenneth Taylor wrote the Living Bible, and freely admitted that it was his paraphrase of the scriptures. In other words he was putting the Bible into his own words. When a pastor reads John 3:16 to his congregation Sunday morning, that is one thing, but when he rephrases it in his own words in order to explain what the verse means, that is another thing. Preachers make it clear when they are reading God’s Word and when they are paraphrasing it. It is acceptable to paraphrase the scripture in explaining it, but it is unacceptable to confuse the paraphrase with the actual Word! The Living Bible is not a Bible; it is Dr. Taylor’s paraphrase of the Bible. Please keep in mind the distinction. Sadly, the result of Dr. Taylor’s paraphrasing was not always very helpful even though he claims to hold “a rigid evangelical position” in his theology. For example, in 1 Samuel 20:30, he introduced vile profanity in the Holy Writ without warrant from the original text!

The very popular N.I.V. is a “dynamic equivalency” translation. The looseness of the N.I.V.’s translation is admitted by the publishers and well known. The scholars who did the translation believe that it is possible and beneficial to put into English what the writers of scripture meant rather than what they actually said. One great problem with this approach is the element of interpretation that is introduced into English. To interpret is to explain what it means. Experts will say that all translation involves some interpretation even when this is not the object of the translators. However, much more interpretation will go on when the composers of a new version try to convey the thoughts rather than the words. If we let the translators interpret the Bible for us, we might as well let the priest do it! Our belief in the priesthood of the believer calls on us to reject highly interpretive versions.

CULTURAL REASONS

Proverbs 22:28 says, “Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.” A landmark is a surveyor’s term and refers to a bench mark or property marker. It should not be moved or a survey is not reliable and everything else is off. Christianity has its foundations in a landmark an authorizing and governing document, the Bible. The Critical Text is a moved and suspect landmark and therefore, not reliable.

In the spirit of the fifth commandment, we are to honor the traditions given to us by the previous generations of our people. Of course, if such tradition contradicts Scripture, we are to reject it in favor of what the Bible says.

“Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” – Matthew 15:3

We never elevate tradition to the same level of authority as Scripture. But we should give our forefathers “the benefit of the doubt.” We should also be careful to preserve all we can that is truly Christian about our culture.

The King James Version of the Bible has played an important and unique role in the development of American culture. It can be said that the foundation of our society is the Holy Scriptures. The theology of the Bible influenced the ideas behind our Constitution. The language of the King James Bible was scattered throughout our early literature. The revivals that formed and changed our culture resulted from the preaching of Bible texts from the KJV.

For many years, Americans knew a certain amount of Scripture by heart. Many or most could quote at least the Twenty-Third Psalm, and recognize the Beatitudes, Ten Commandments, and parts of the Sermon on the Mount when quoted. But now the influence of the Bible has waned significantly. One reason for the decline of Biblical influence has been the loss of a standard version of the Bible.

For the first two hundred years as a nation, the King James Version was the Bible to most Americans. Even after so-called “modern” versions became popular, the King James Bible continued to be the version memorized, quoted, and publicly read most often. With the demise of the old Bible, our country has been left without a standard text of Scripture. Who can quote the Twenty-Third Psalm anymore? Who knows how to repeat the Christmas story? The question always arises: “Which version?” Everybody realizes that our nation’s spiritual and moral foundations have been crumbling, but few have understood how the multiplication of Bible versions has contributed to the decay. We use the King James Version out of concern for our country’s future, if for no other reason! Why should conservative Christians join in the mad movement to throw away the standards that made our county good? Our Constitution is jealously guarded against change by an elaborate and difficult amendment process. If it takes two-thirds of Congress and three-fourths of the states to change one sentence in the Constitution, why should the churches be so willing to accept great changes in the Bible without serious and extensive “due process”?

PRACTICAL REASONS

Believe it or not, some of the features most criticized in the King James Bible are among the best reasons to keep it! For example, consider the “thees” and “thous.” The King James Version was not written in the everyday language of people on the street in 1611. It was written in high English, a very precise form of our language. In modern English,

the second person pronoun is expressed with one word, whether in singular or the plural. The word is “you.” Most other European languages have both a singular and a plural pronoun in the second, as well as the first and third person. The first person singular pronoun in the nominative case, for example, is “I,” while the plural is “we.” The third person singular pronoun (also the nominative case) is “he,” while the plural is “they.” Modern English, however, has only “you” for its entire second person pronoun uses. High English uses “thou” for the second person singular, and “you” for the plural! In this way, the King James Version lets us know whether the scripture means a singular “you” or a plural “you.” “Thou” or “thee” mean one person being addressed, and “ye” or “you” mean several. This feature often helps us interpret a passage.

| | |
|--------|------------------------------------|
| “Thou” | - designates the subject of a verb |
| “Thee” | - designates the object of a verb |
| “Ye” | - designates the subject of a verb |
| “You” | - designates the object of a verb |

A personal pronoun beginning with “t” is a singular pronoun. (Thou, thee, thy, thine)

“Est” - indicates the second person singular. (The one spoken to)

“Eth” - indicates the third person singular. (The one spoken about)

“Shall” - refers to the first person in the future tense

“Will” - refers to the second or third person in the future tense.

We also find the italics in the King James Bible a great help. The translators italicized words they put into the text that do not appear in the original language. The new translations do not do this. We appreciate the integrity of the ancient scholars in letting us know what was added and what was original, and are disappointed that modern translators have let us down in this area.

The matter of quotation marks is also a question of importance. The King James Version does not use them, because the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts do not have them. The reader determines where a quotation begins and where it ends by the context, and by other means of interpretation at his disposal. The new versions do not give us the luxury of deciding the extent of quotations ourselves because they have inserted quotation marks according to the translator’s interpretations of the various passages. John 1:15-18 and John 3:27-36 present examples of places in the Bible where the length of the quotation is a matter of interpretation.

Such features make the King James Version the most helpful translation of the Bible in English for the serious reader. Even the “New King James,” which is partially translated from the traditional texts, denies us the practical help of high English, italicized additions, and the absence of quotation marks. We also do not use the New King James because

many of the foot notes are from the corrupt Critical Text. Also, nine of the translators were involved in the NIV translation team using the Critical Text and Dynamic Equivalence and certainly had their mark on the NKJV. There are about 100,000 changes (a conservative estimate By Dr, D.A. Waite in his paper “Defects In The New King James Version). Based on the Logos Research Systems computer program comparing the KJV and the NKJV, in the NKJV the following words are missing.

1. The word “heaven” is missing 48 out of 550 times.
2. The word “hell” is thrown out 22 out of 54 times.
3. The word “blood” is deleted 18 out of 375 times.
4. The word “repent” is ejected 11 out of 43 times.
5. The word “new testament” is cast out all 6 times.
6. The word “damnation” is missing 11 times.

Question: By what authority do these revisers take away the precious words from God’s Holy Book? There are many other problems with the NKJV that are too numerous to mention here, but lead us to the conclusion that the NKJV is not a reliable translation.

Many publishers claim that the new translations are easier to understand, misleading people into thinking that they will be able to better understand the Word of God but the derivative copyright law insists that:

“To be copyrightable, a derivative work must be different enough from the original to be regarded as a ‘new work’ or must contain a substantial amount of new material. Making minor changes or additions of little substance to a pre-existing work will not qualify the work as a new version for copyright purposes.”

Therefore, all new Bible versions must change the simple one or two syllable Anglo-Saxon words of the King James Version into complex, multi-syllable Latinized words. Consequently, the King James Version reads at the 5th grade level and the N.K.J.V. reads at the 7th grade level. Because of copyright law, there will never be an easier to read Bible than the King James Version.

Here are a few examples, (there are hundreds) where the N.K.J.V. has a preference for more difficult words:

| Text | Hard Word <u>N.K.J.V.</u> | Easy Word <u>K.J.V.</u> |
|-------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Amos 5:21 | savor | smell |
| 2 Corinthians 5:2 | habitation | house |
| Ecclesiastics 2:3 | gratify | give |
| Isaiah 28:1,4 | verdant | fat |
| Isaiah 34:6 | overflowing | fat |
| Deuteronomy 28:50 | elderly | old |
| Romans 3:25 | sins that were previously committed | sins that are past |
| Romans 7:7 | covetousness | lust |

Modern versions have been marketed extensively as being easier to read than the archaic, old fashioned King James Bible. However, recent computerized computations document and have objectively revealed how the King James Version of the Bible is in fact easier to read than the NIV, or the NASB. The Fleisch-Kincaid research firm has shown how the KJV vocabulary has fewer syllables per word than the NIV or NASB. Furthermore, it has less complex sentences as well. In reality the KJV is easier to read than its modern counterparts in the matter of vocabulary and syntax. There is also undisputed eloquence in the KJV.

For all of these reasons, it just makes good sense for conservative, Bible-believing churches to keep the King James Bible as their standard text. The new versions present too many problems and simply are not fit to replace the English version we have trusted for so long. The movement to abandon the King James Bible will move us from clarity to confusion, from authority to anarchy, from faith to doubt. We reject the modern versions because they are from a corrupt text line and used by Satan to deceive God's people. With our church this is not a preference, but is a conviction based on the evidence that we know. We ought not to make such a move away from God's preserved word in the King James Bible because it has been preserved by God as He promised in the Received Text and is without error.