History of the Received Text

The Proper Defense of the King James Bible

Study Pak 12B

Score Key

Dr. Phil Stringer

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"Let me state quite simply and plainly the position for which I contend. I believe the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of the living God and because the Authorized Version is a faithful English translation of the original Hebrew of the Old Testament and the original Greek of the New Testament, it is the very Word of God in my mother tongue. Being a translation does not alter one iota of its integrity, inerrancy and infallibility of God's Word.

I believe the Authorized Version preserves the Word of God for me in the English tongue and that it contains no errors."

~~ Ian R.K. Paisley, *My Plea for The Old Sword*, p. 9 ~~

I. PRINCIPLE ONE

You can't defend the King James Bible without living in obedience to the King James Bible.

II. PRINCIPLE TWO

Remember that everyone doesn't have the same information that you do.

III. PRINCIPLE THREE

Understand that there is a difference between not fully understanding the King James issue and being against the King James Bible.

IV. PRINCIPLE FOUR

Never forget that you are not the pastor of more than one church (if you are a pastor at all). Always respect the God-ordained position of the pastor. The pastor will answer to God for his church.

V. PRINCIPLE FIVE

Always treat the brethren as brethren, not as enemies.

VI. PRINCIPLE SIX

Make helpful materials available in a kind way.

VII. PRINCIPLE SEVEN

State your position clearly.

VIII. PRINCIPLE EIGHT

Respond graciously to gracious disagreements.

IX. PRINCIPLE NINE

Be prepared to be misunderstood and attacked for your position.

X. PRINCIPLE TEN

Be prepared to respond strongly when the situation calls for it.

XI. CONFESSIONS OF A NEW VERSIONS ADDICT BY A.W. TOZER

"Since shortly after my conversion to Christ as a teenager, I have been addicted to the habit of acquiring and being disappointed with new versions and new translations.

It is a habit I cannot shake off, in spite of a long record of frustrated hopes and cruel disappointments, to this day I have but to hear that a new version of the Scriptures has come out and I am off to the book-seller to pick up a copy. As Ponce de Leon, otherwise a sensible enough fellow, knocked about the world looking for a non-existent fountain of youth, so I continue to look for the new version that will make any other new versions unnecessary by bringing out the meanings of the Holy Scriptures as sharply as the developer brings out the details of the picture on a photographic plate.

But it never works out that way. After poring over the new book for a few days or weeks and finding that it is just one more version, I put it aside and return to my first love, the familiar King James Bible. I know its mistakes very well, its mistranslations and confused tenses; I should, for the Bible teachers are forever correcting it in public and the introductions to the new versions never tire of pointing out these flaws in the grand old English Bible.

It has been my experience that the new versions make at least one mistake for every one they correct, so by the time the trusting reader has reached the last chapter of the Book of Revelation, he is back where he started and just goes out by that same door wherein he went. And in the meanwhile, he has lost the incalculable benefit of constant and intimate mental association with the clearest, richest and most beautiful English to be found anywhere among the libraries of the world, the Authorized Version.

I believe that my error has been that I have nursed the hope, perhaps subconsciously, that my dullness of spirit and coldness of heart are the result of not hearing the truth expressed clearly enough in the common language of the street; that if I could hear a promise or a

commandment couched in different words it would be easier to believe and obey. But this is a gross fallacy. Words are only arbitrary symbols to convey meanings, and the meaning is all that matters.

God would impart an idea to mankind, so He employs a verbal symbol which the reader can understand. That is what language is for, and that is all it is for, unless, as I have suggested above, the language becomes a thing of beauty in itself and so exerts a cultural influence upon those who read it and hear it spoken. But that is secondary; the primary purpose of language is to express truth, and it is before the bar of truth that we must all stand at last.

Mark Twain, when asked what he did about the passages of Scripture he could not understand, is supposed to have replied that these did not bother him. "But the ones I can understand," he said, "often make me sweat" I believe that there is serious danger that we ignore the plain truth (which, incidentally, is about the same in all versions) while we search for novel meanings and more modern expressions of old truths which we know well enough but make no effort to obey.

The chief purpose of the Word of God is to reveal saving truth, to bring men to Christ, to make them holy, to draw them into loving communion with God and to teach them how to do good to all men, especially to them that are of the household of faith. Let a man study prayerfully any of the generally recognized versions, done by proficient and responsible scholars, and the Spirit will quicken the truth to his heart and lead him toward the ends God has in view for him Almost everything depends upon his response to the Spirit's workings. While it is important that the translation be accurate and faithful, yet better versions do not make better men.

And this brings us to consider those translators who think to do God service by packing into the English text every possible shade of meaning the word will bear in the original. The synonyms are put in brackets and the reader, apparently, just takes his choice.

This would never do anywhere else. Imagine reading to a child:

> *"Twinkle, twinkle (blink wink shine intermittently, sparkle), little (diminutive, small, wee, tiny) star (heavenly body, luminary, orb, sphere), How I wonder (question, puzzle over, dubitate) what you are (be, have identity with, belong under the description of), Up above (atop, opposite to down, contrary to direction of gravity) the world (the earth, the abode of humankind) so high (elevated), Like a diamond (gem, precious stone, crystallized carbon) in the sky (the heavens, the firmament, the empyrean)."*

Yet this is the latest religious word game in evangelical circles and we are all urged to play at it. For myself, I cannot keep serious while reading such a version, so I just pass up these uncertain translators and turn to one who can make up his mind. I have a secret love for decisiveness.

It is quite natural for us humans to ignore the high moral intent of the Holy Scriptures and get lost in verbiage. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," says the Old Version, and multitudes over the centuries have knelt in penitence and tearfully sought to know true poverty of spirit; lately the fad seems to be to try to find shades of meaning for the words and to express them in more colloquial language. I wonder if anyone benefits by having the same thing said several different ways for him.

A few hundred years ago, it was considered very much the thing for ministers preaching in English to interlace their sermons with frequent Greek and Latin words and phrases, always left untranslated by the speaker. His hearers were no doubt duly impressed with his learning but they had not the faintest notion what he was talking about. He has now been displaced by the preacher who knows enough Greek to make him uncomfortable and can never resist the temptation to turn every sermon into a classroom lecture. I have sometimes thought (and I trust not uncharitably) that the knowledge of a little Greek is a great convenience to such a man, for the Greek being a remarkably accommodating language enables him to preach anything he wants to without being challenged.

All this is not to cry down true scholarship nor to discourage honest attempts to put the Bible into modern speech. It is rather to confess that I have not become a holier man nor a better preacher by my incurable addiction to new versions of the Scriptures. I find that if I am failing to live in accordance with the will of God I get no relief by reading about that will in a new translation.

As soon as God shows a man the way, it is his duty and happy privilege to walk in it. If he refuses or neglects to walk in it, he may seek some temporary consolation by looking about for some version that will say the same thing to him in a different way. While he is jockeying about for new shades of meaning his conscience may get a bit of rest, but I am sure that a faithful God will not let him escape. Sometime he'll have to face up to the meaning of things, no matter in what version they are expressed.

As I write, I can see fifteen versions before me without turning my head and there are many more stashed about here and there. And they all say the same thing to me; namely, that I must trust Christ Jesus the Lord as my Saviour, love God with all my heart, soul and mind, and my neighbor as myself. They all say that I must be holy, humble, obedient, prayerful, pure, kindly, courageous and faithful. They all say that God is my Father and the Holy Spirit the inhabitant of my nature through the mystery of the new birth. And they all end with the cry for Christ's returning.

I really don't need any more new versions, but I'll probably buy the next one that comes out. Maybe someday I'll find something sufficiently different to justify the expense. But I haven't up to now."

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