

WHICH ENGLISH BIBLE?

A Presuppositional Defense

A CRISIS OF FAITH

*“And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, **The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.** And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, **This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.**” –Luke 4:17-21*

When Jesus stood in the synagogue at Nazareth and was handed the *Book of Isaiah*, even though it was a copy of the original autographs, He verified, without question, the reading as the inerrant, perfect, and preserved *Words of God*. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for all Bibles today. There is a glut of modern translations of the Scriptures in *English*. These modern versions of the Bible, to justify their existence, usually attack the long-standing standard, the *King James Bible*, as a poor translation and thereby cast a shadow on the accuracy of Scripture. Sadly, after over a hundred years of modern Bible versions, confusion and unbelief abound (*1 Cor 14:33*). Amazingly, the modern church, for the most part, denies the tangible existence of a perfect and infallible Bible. Most say the Scriptures are only inerrant in the original autographs, which, to our knowledge, no longer exist. In other words, they accept Biblical infallibility in theory, but reject it in practical experience. This leaves such professing Christians in a very precarious situation indeed: *hypocritically claiming divine authority from a book they vehemently insist is flawed*. Even though few admit it, this spiritual contradiction poses a glaring crisis of faith.

“I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.” –Ecclesiastes 3:14

THE INSPIRED SCRIPTURES: OUR OBJECTIVE STANDARD

“All scripture (holy writ) is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” –2 Timothy 3:16-17

As Christians, we often casually affirm the “*inspiration*” of Scripture. However, the compound Greek word *theopneustos* translated “*inspiration*” in *2 Timothy 3:16*, literally means “*breathed out of God*”. The implication of this truth is profound. The origins of the *written Word of God* are not human, but divine; Scripture came directly *out from God*. Thus, the Scripture is exactly what God thinks, what God says, what God wills, and what God commands. Moreover, the authority of God is perfectly and uniformly reflected in the authority of Scripture. He who obeys God, obeys the Scripture. He who loves God, loves the Scripture (*Jn 14:23-24*). This being true, Scripture is the Christian’s only objective standard for truth. Hence, if there is no available, tangible, inerrant, infallible *written Word of God* then we have no epistemological foundation. The challenge to those who reject their Bibles as literally infallible (*if our Bible is not error-free it cannot be inerrant*) is that they have no authoritative epistemological principle by which to judge one part of Scripture to be accurate and another part to be inaccurate. Since Scripture is the only objective source of information from which the entire Christian system is constructed, one who considers any portion of Scripture as fallible must reject the whole Bible. If there is no objective standard who is to know what is actually accurate or not? Biblical infallibility then, is the epistemological foundation of the Christian faith. Hence, if Christians have no infallible Bible to read, to study, and to apply, then they have no authoritative grounds to claim to know God, His mind, His will or call others to believe. If God has not perfectly preserved His Word for us, how can we know anything for sure? If our Bible is not inerrant, every claim of Christianity can be boldly challenged. This demands we find a translation of the Bible which is perfect and inerrant.

GOD’S PERSON AND GOD’S WORD ARE ONE IN THE SAME

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” –John 1:1

God and His Word are synonymous and are one in essence (*Jn 1:1; 1 Jn 5:7*). Any attempt to separate the *Word of God* (the written Word) from the *Person of God* (the living Word) must be viewed as unscriptural and spiritually reckless. Hence, it is only logical to conclude what is true of God, is true of His Word. God is perfect. Perfection is an attribute of the divine nature. If God ceases to be perfect, He ceases to be God. Accordingly, God's Word is perfect and any translation of God's Word that falls short of perfection cannot accurately be referred to as *God's Word*. Likewise, God is self-evident, meaning all moral creatures have, at the very least, a limited but sufficient revelation of His existence (*Rom 1:20*). God is also self-attesting and needs no external authority to validate Himself (*Heb 6:13*). Therefore, seeing God and His Word are intrinsically the same, God's Word must also be self-evident and self-attesting. This simply means God's Word bears witness with the human conscience and it authoritatively verifies itself (*Rom 2:15*).

The Scriptures are of divine origin, character and authority; hence, they bear the marks of divinity. They clearly authenticate themselves as God-breathed, however, man is unable to perceive this apart from the internal testimony of the *Holy Ghost* (*Jn 15:26; 1 Cor 2:12-14*). Thus, discerning God's Word is a spiritual matter. True, it involves our reason but cannot be approached by mere intellectual *sight*, but *by faith* (*Heb 11:3*). Thus, in considering the validity of a translation of the Bible, we must understand, as mere men, the concept of empirically proving the Scriptures is an impossibility (*though some empirical examination is unavoidable*). How can we then know? We must concede, only *by faith*. No matter how much research, no matter how trained or educated we are, the only way to truly know any translation of the Bible is perfect is *by faith*. The beginning, or starting point, of knowledge and understanding is the “*fear of the Lord*”, not the carnal examination of subjective evidence (*Prov 9:10*). Even in the case of the original autographs, only *by faith* can they be established and believed as perfect. We must see, God, as omniscient, is the only One with all information. Thus, He is the lone individual qualified to empirically verify His Word. The key then, to finding a perfect and infallible Bible is twofold:

- You must believe such a Bible exists (*Matt 24:35*).
- You must trust God alone to reveal it to you (*Jn 10:27, 16:13*).

As long as men trust their autonomous intellect and second-hand expertise to judge between this Bible and that Bible, the truth will remain obscured to them. For the Christian, *Jesus* is Lord. This means the Christian's highest authority is God and His Word. Only God can verify His Word. Why? To be the *ultimate authority*, that authority must be self-attesting; otherwise the one testifying to it is greater. That is why God “*sware by Himself*” (*Heb 6:13*). Therefore, it stands to reason, anything used to authoritatively verify Scripture must possess more authority than Scripture. If we use extra-biblical evidence above Scripture in an effort to objectively identify Scripture we place something from outside the Scripture above Scripture. We thus, violate our own confession and undermine the doctrine of *sola scriptura*.

“*In all cases, the church is to be judged by the Scriptures not the Scriptures by the church.*” —John Wesley

What are the self-attesting standards God declares of His Word in His Word?

1. Perfect and true (*Ps 19:7; 119:151-152; Jn 17:17*).
2. Unmixed and pure (*Ps 18:30; 119:140; 1 Pet 2:2*).
3. Preserved and eternal (*Lk 21:33; Ps 12:6-79:144*).

Hence, in our search for a Bible that truly contains ‘*the very Words of God*’, we see it will be *perfect, true, pure, preserved and eternal*.

THE BASIC ARGUMENTS

As clearly indicated above...

1. God's Word is our highest authority and is self-evident and self-attesting.
2. Biblical infallibility then, is the epistemological foundation of the Christian faith; if our Bible is not perfect we cannot defend our faith.
3. God has promised to preserve His Word in His Word (Ps 12:6-7; Matt 24:35).
4. If you reject the idea, as many professing Christians do, that a perfectly preserved Bible exists, then you call God a liar and you are guilty of unbelief. Hence, you are certainly disqualified to discern God's Word while you, by default, resist and renounce His declaration of Himself.

“He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.”

—John 8:47

5. However, if you agree that there must be a perfect, infallible Bible, then you must concede that the KJV and the modern translations cannot both be it, as they vastly differ and two perfect books cannot contradict one another. Remember, we are not talking about ‘*Gone with the Wind*’, but God's Word, which by strict definition, must be inerrant or it ceases to be God’s Word.
6. The gross apostasy in the Western church has paralleled the popularity of the modern translations.
7. I believe, by faith, the *King James Bible* is God's perfect, preserved, infallible Word to the English-speaking people.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF BELIEVING THE LIE

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, YEA, HATH GOD SAID, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” —Gen 3:2

If you have foolishly listened to the textual critics, the Bible-correctors, and the Bible-agnostics, believing their accusations against the *King James Bible* and receiving the demonic lie that there is no perfect translation of the Bible, there are three sobering implications to your choice...

1. By appealing to something other than the Scriptures to identify the Scriptures you reveal Scripture cannot be your ultimate authority.

By seducing you to implement empiricism and put the *Word of God* on trial, the enemy has enticed you to partake of the “*tree of knowledge of good and evil*”, thinking you could independently, with your autonomous mind, discern the very *Words of God*. In doing so, he has pitted you against the very faith you claim. While you call men to forsake their metaphysical commitment to natural science and walk by faith to follow *Jesus*, you place *God’s Word* under an empirical microscope. Man may not see this, but God does.

2. You, *by faith* in the opinions of fallible men, have crippled your faith in God’s written infallible Word.

Ironically, we can only discern God’s Word *by faith*, but likewise, we can only deny it *by faith* as well. Whatever you believe about God’s Word you believe *by faith*. All the information (*Hebrew, Greek, research, dictionaries, lexicons, etc.*) are all second-hand expertise by someone you trust as accurate. All your assertions about the Bible have been established *by faith*. You cannot empirically verify anything you believe about the written Word of God. What you know about the Scriptures, right or wrong, you know *by faith*. So, *by faith* in what man has said against *God’s Word* in English, the *King James Bible*, you have undermined your faith in *God’s Word*.

3. You have an imperfect Bible.

This is the end of swallowing the attacks of the textual critics of God’s Word: *by faith*, you have an imperfect Bible whereby you can, if you are honest, believe nothing, prove nothing, or preach nothing. Oh, of course, you can say you *believe* and you can insist you can *prove*, and you may even continue to *preach*; however, in actuality, you can only *pretend*. For all your intellectual savvy, you are left standing in thin air, declaring to an unbelieving generation that God literally created the universe in six days while you secretly doubt God can keep His own book together.

You may laugh me to scorn, saying “*You are so ignorant and stubborn to deny the facts so as to hold to your archaic and outdated King James Bible*”.

My response?

“*Yes, I may be a simple-minded, backwoods, King-James-Only Bible-thumper to you, but at least my archaic and outdated Bible is perfect.*”

—B.W.