

It all started in the garden



**An examination of the textual basis
of the Holy Scriptures**

by: John Eggers

Preface

As we approach the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ the times are getting more and more difficult. We witness the decay of morals and increasing violence. In many countries there is a sense of hopelessness as financial markets struggle with increasing national debt. Is it a doomsday scenario developing to the point of finally going over the edge? No! There is still a message of peace and hope for an ever darkening world. That message is found in the Bible. The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is mankind's only hope for now and the future. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

This message of truth is needed now more than ever. Our eternal future depends on it. There has always been opposition to its proclamation but it remains as solid as ever. God has promised it to be so. "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." Psalm 12:6, 7.

The Word of God, The Bible, is the rock solid foundation for every need of mankind. The great need of our day is to hearken to its truth and rest in unwavering faith in that truth. Of course one must read the Bible to find its message. It is both clear and simple while it is also deep and profound. God has given His Word to us for our blessing. He has revealed His great plan of redemption in the Scriptures. As the woman said to the Lord in John chapter four "the well is deep". So let us draw from the pages of the Bible to experience the fullness of the endless supply God has put there. May the Lord use this little booklet to stir up a deeper interest in and a firm faith placed on the Word of God.

An appeal is here made especially to young men to dedicate themselves to the systematic and consistent study of the Scriptures. Let it be said "thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." Revelation 3:8. Give yourself to the Word of God and press on in the strength of the Lord. Be like Ezra and be a ready scribe in the Word of God whose heart is prepared to seek the Scriptures and do them and teach if God has given you a gift. Be all you can be for Him in these difficult days.

John Eggers, November 2012

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My Story

I was born in 1957 and was blessed with loving parents who sought to raise their three children with the utmost of care. My growing up years were happy years that carried with them a sense of security and love. Now many years later I still look back at those times with appreciation even though there was a very large void in my life then.

After six years in Oregon we moved to San Jose, California in 1964. My life was filled with family, Boy Scouts, grade school, friends and all of the adventures of a boy growing up. My family started going to a large denominational church in California. I even used to help in the service by lighting candles for the service. Every year we went through the Bible stories of the birth, life, crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was all so normal and really had no real meaning to me personally. I remember one time that I lost a kite I was flying because the string broke. It blew away and so I prayed that God would give me a new one. Eventually my parents bought a new one. I don't remember if I thanked God for the kite or not.

In 1970 my dad was transferred with IBM to their Vancouver, B. C. Office. It was a new chapter in my life in a new country. Grade seven was fairly uneventful but in grade eight I met Frances, who I later married, in Mrs. Bell's social studies class. At that time I had classes on Saturdays called confirmation class with the church. We learned church teachings and after completing the classes we were allowed to take communion. It was still pretty well meaningless but I did it because it was part of our lives and the expected thing being members of the church. Frances and I were pretty good friends during grade eight but in grade nine we were just so-so friends.

In 1973 my family moved to Corvallis, Oregon where I finished high school in 1976. During these years I received a letter from Frances where she wrote of becoming a Christian in March 1975. I did not think much of it because at that time I pretty well thought that almost everyone in North America was a Christian. An old friend from B. C. asked me to take her to graduation so I went. I saw Frances receive her diploma but when I tried to find her she was nowhere to be found. In the fall of 1976 my family was going to B. C. to visit my sister and her husband for thanksgiving. I contacted Frances and she agreed to see me and we had supper at my sisters with the family. When I took her home I promised to come back after the New Year for another visit.

In January 1977 I visited Frances again and this time she took me to some young people's meetings and some Gospel meetings. At this time in my life I had been feeling the burden of sin but I always thought that just by taking communion that that took care of that month's sin. At these meetings I heard about the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross and how that the blood He shed for sin was for my sin. It did not really hit me right away but after I returned to Oregon I was struggling to know that my sin was forgiven by God and I could not

understand how that could be possible. In the middle of February 1977 I told God that I don't know how I can be forgiven and I had given up trying to understand. It was then that the profound truth that the answer for my sin being forgiven was to be found in the Lord Jesus. What He had done for me when He suffered and died on the cross was brought before me it was then that I trusted the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me as my own Saviour. I was saved right then, I did not know much but I had eternal life and my sin was forgiven. Being a Christian is not a religion but rather a living relationship with the Lord Jesus. The void in my life is filled and the true meaning of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross is a reality to me now and forever.

Frances and I married in June 1979 and have sought to live for the best of Masters. One of the big changes that took place for me in February 1977 was regarding the Bible. It had been a dead and meaningless book to me but became the living Word of God. It became a regular and essential part of daily life. I found out all kinds of things that I never saw before. I eventually found out that the Lord wanted me to be baptised as a believer and so I was baptised at Fleetwood Gospel hall, Fleetwood, B. C. in August 1978. I also became convinced of the scriptural pattern for gathering with other Christians and so I was received into assembly fellowship in may 1979 at Salem Gospel hall in Salem, Oregon.

The Word of God is always unfolding further truth as I read it and study it to my personal blessing. I am convinced that even after a lifetime of studying the scriptures the pages of the Bible will not be exhausted of their treasures. So I press on being helped and strengthened by this glorious Book of God, looking forward to being in the presence of its Author some day.

That's the story of my conversion to Christ and it lays a bit of a foundation for the purpose of the writing of this book. There are many other works on this subject and this work will not be as extensive as many of them but it is my burden that the Lord will use it to strengthen His people in the Word of God and even some who do not know the Lord Jesus may be spoken to and find help in being able to trust the Bible.

From the Beginning

From the beginning of the historical account of the scriptures we find that the Word of God was twisted and then outright denied as to its truth. Genesis 2:8-17 tells us of the command of God to Adam regarding the trees of the Garden of Eden. Every tree that God had caused to grow in the garden was to be freely enjoyed except one tree. That tree was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God's command was simple and clear and He made the consequence of disobedience clear as well. To disobey would bring separation from God and death to the human race. In fact, according to Genesis 3:17-19 and Romans 8:22, the whole creation of God was greatly affected by the entrance of sin into the world.

Genesis 3:1-24 gives the sad account of how Eve was deceived (2nd Corinthians 11:3 and 1st Timothy 2:14) and took the fruit and ate it and how Adam, in disobedience to God's command (Romans 5:12-20), took the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and plunged the whole human race into sin and separation from God.

Satan had used the serpent (Revelation 12:9) to do his awful work of deception and treachery. The first thing that Satan did was to distort or twist the Word that God had spoken. God had said "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:16, 17). Satan's initial question to Eve was designed to suggest that possibly God was not fair to put such a restriction on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Satan emphasized the prohibition of God and not the truth of what God had said to the couple in that they may "freely eat" of all the trees except the one tree. Eve's response shows that her mind was already turning by what she said in Genesis 3:2, 3. In verse two she misquoted God, first in that she left out that God had said "freely eat" and second that God had also said "every tree". In verse three Eve added the thought that God had said "neither shall ye touch it". So we can see that the suggestion of Satan had not only twisted the command of God but it had also caused Eve to be thinking beyond the command of God regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Having deceived Eve, Satan then spoke in direct denial of what God had said. In Genesis 3:4, 5 Satan said that eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would not bring death but rather open their eyes and make them as gods, knowing good and evil. This outright lie would not have been possible unless the deception had come first. The questioning of the command of God had to be introduced first then the lie could be put forward. The tragic results are recorded in verses 6-8 where Adam and Eve are found hiding from God.

At this point there must be made mention of the grace of God that was found by Adam and Eve. Even though they had sinned God promised the couple that there would be a deliverer through the seed of the woman. In Genesis 3:15 there is promised "One" who would have "His" heel bruised but "Who" would also bruise the head of Satan. This promised

deliverer is none other than The Lord Jesus Christ who would eventually shed His blood to redeem mankind from sin and its awful consequences. God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of skins (Genesis 3:21), of His providing, speaking of the death of another for sinners.

This tactic of Satan to first change what God's Word says and then deny the truth by presenting a lie is still being used today. 2nd Corinthians 2:11 tells us that we are not "ignorant" of the devices of Satan. The trickery of Satan is nothing new and God has made that known to us in His Word so we will not be fooled by the enemy of God's Word.

In the Days of Noah

In the days of Noah, found in Genesis chapter six, we see that mankind had not improved but rather grew worse. Genesis 6:5 says “that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Sixteen and a half centuries have passed since the fall of man and at this time in the history of the earth man displays his unbelief of God’s Word and his rebellion is going full speed ahead. 2nd Peter 2:5 tells us that Noah was a preacher of righteousness so we understand that Noah not only built the ark but also communicated the message of God to those of his day. Noah believed God (Hebrews 11:7) and prepared the ark to the saving of his house but the rest of mankind perished in the judgement of the flood.

The Word of God was clear to those of Noah’s day but they would not believe and suffered the consequences of their unbelief. If they had only placed more value on the Word from God to them the people of Noah’s day could have been saved. The condition of mankind was anything but good but God saw to it that His warning came to man. God was faithful to His creation even though they were in rebellion to Him. Noah revered the warning from God and took heed to it. Noah would not dare to change anything and he would not neglect to preach the entire message from God.

Imagine if Noah watered down the message from God to make it more acceptable to his contemporaries or that he would willingly change the message to deceive the people of his day. Noah took God seriously and feared God with the greatest of reverence. In Genesis 6:14-22 and 7:1-6 the command of God came directly to Noah. Every detail of the construction, supplies and the call of God to come into the ark were carefully followed by Noah. If Noah had taken any other course than that that God had directed the results would have been disastrous. Twice we read that Noah did exactly what God had commanded, first in Genesis 6:22 and then in Genesis 7:5. Imagine the possibilities if Noah had just changed the design of the Ark. It is an established fact that ship builders acknowledge the relationship of the dimensions of the Ark to be optimum for the stability and reliability of the Ark. The design of the Ark was from God Himself and Noah was careful to follow that design to the details God had given him.

This essential principle in the Word of God will be an important detail when we consider the importance of the Divine preservation of the Word of God.

The Importance of Details

The importance of details in the scriptures is seen by a number of examples that we can look at. It has already been suggested that the details of the construction of the Ark, given by God Himself, were essential for the preservation of Noah, his family and the animals.

Take the example of the tabernacle that typifies the person and work of the Lord Jesus. There are the dimensions, materials to be used and the methods of construction that were specified by God Himself. Then there are the furnishings of the tabernacle and their details given by God. The furnishings carry many pictures of the Lord Jesus in their materials and use in the tabernacle. Specifications were given by God as to the different locations that these furnishings were to be found in the tabernacle or outside the tabernacle proper. Of course there are the details given by God regarding the priests for the service of the tabernacle. The fabrication of their garments had to be out of certain materials and made according to a Divine pattern.

God gave details regarding the orientation of the tabernacle when it was set up. The tribes of Israel were instructed as to whether they camped to the east, west, north or south. The transporting of the tabernacle had to be done in a certain way by the tribe of Levi only.

Another example is the Temple that king Solomon built. The Divine instructions were originally given to David but David was not to be the one to build the Temple. Once again dimensions, materials and the construction methods for all that pertained to the construction of the temple would need to be carefully followed. The functions of the High Priest and all that served in the temple also needed to be followed with attention to detail.

There are many pictures concerning the person and work of the Lord Jesus to be found in the Temple and its service. If any of these pictures were compromised, changed or even lost because of man made changes then the Divine pattern would lose its full meaning.

This principle regarding the need to pay attention to the many details that God gives us in His Word can be applied to all the Scriptures. It is said that there are about three hundred prophecies in the Old Testament that relate to the details of the Lord Jesus' time that He was in the world. Every one of these prophecies was Divinely given, by God Himself, to communicate His message concerning His Son to the people of the world. Would we even question just one of the prophecies let alone be satisfied that one was either changed or left out of the Word of God. The answer is "of course not, all are equally important".

The reason I mention this is that there are people who say that "if some passages are changed or left out that is not a problem, since there are plenty of other passages that satisfy the needed teaching". Let's apply this to something far less important than the message of God regarding eternity and what He has done in His grace to make it possible for us to be with Him forever. A simple illustration is the manual that a car manufacturer provides to the

purchasers of their cars. All of the essential information to operate the car properly and maintain its mechanical integrity is included in the manual. To change or delete any of the information in the manual could be catastrophic either to the occupants or the vehicle itself. Even the instructions for changing a flat tire, usually found in the trunk of the car, are important. It would be too bad if these instructions were not clear or complete and some car owner changed the flat tire and went on down the road to have the spare tire fall off and cause some harm. Would we be satisfied with such deficiencies in needed information?

To reinforce the need to acknowledge the detail of Scripture we can briefly look at two of the Old Testament writers. Moses and Jeremiah both pay attention to the very “words” that God gave them. Moses wrote in Exodus 19:7 that he “laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him”. In Exodus 20:1 we read “And God spake all these words”. Other places we find the same thought in the writings of Moses are Exodus 24:8; 35:1; Deuteronomy 5:22; 12:28; 17:19. The very words are given by God to convey His message to Israel.

Jeremiah was commanded by God in Jeremiah 7:27 “thou shalt speak all these words”. In Jeremiah 11:6 God told Jeremiah to “proclaim all these words” and in Jeremiah 16:10 God said to Jeremiah “shew the people all these words” and in Jeremiah 25:30 God said “prophesy thou against them all these words”. Then in Jeremiah 26:2 we read “Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD’s house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD’s house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word”. Jeremiah chapter 26 is an interesting chapter regarding the necessity of Jeremiah giving exactly the message that God gave to him to give. Verses 5, 7, 12, 15, all refer to the exact “words” that God gave to Jeremiah to give the people. The initial response of the Jews to this message from God was to kill Jeremiah but some in the end of the chapter spoke otherwise and Jeremiah was preserved. The point of all this is that God placed great importance on the very “words” that He wanted told to His people. God warned Jeremiah that he should not diminish (scrape off, shave or remove) even one word. The message from God to Israel was not only necessary but it needed to be accurate in every detail.

We can be thankful that the Word of God is not found with one deficiency. The Scriptures are a wonderful revelation from God and the fullness that is found in its pages is evidence of the hand of its Author and His concern for the blessing of His creature. If any individual or segment of society will obey the Word of God there will only be blessing to follow. The Word of God is full of promises regarding the value of its contents. Hebrews 4:12 states that the “Word of God is quick (living) and powerful (effective)” so we can rejoice that the Bible is the message from God that we need to hear and take heed to.

Two Basic Doctrines of Scripture

Before getting into the mechanics of the textual basis of the Holy Scriptures it is important to consider two basic doctrines of scripture. Those two doctrines are first the “Divine Inspiration of the Word of God” and secondly the “Divine Preservation of the Word of God”. An entire book could be written on each one of these doctrines. In fact many excellent books have been written on these subjects but for the purpose of this booklet we will be concise and keep to the basic teaching.

The Divine inspiration of the Scriptures is important to the examination of the textual basis of the Scriptures. Unless one accepts the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures one is left without a basis to believe that the Scriptures are from God Himself. Since we are told in the Word of God that God did inspire His Word then we can expect that He gave it as He willed it to be in its original form. This will give us assurance that what was given can be relied upon as the truth as God gave it. A common phrase defining this truth is “We believe in the verbal, plenary, Divine inspiration of the Word of God, the Bible”. Put simply this states that every word (verbal) and all (plenary) of the Bible is Divinely (by God) inspired.

Three Scriptural considerations could be looked at to show this first great doctrine. First the Lord Jesus, while He was here, referred many times to the Old Testament Scriptures. In Mark 7:9, 10 quoting from Exodus 20:12, the Lord Jesus refers to this Old Testament passage as the “commandment of God”. This makes it plain that the Lord Jesus considered the passage from Exodus as the Word of God. In Matthew 22:31, 32 the Lord Jesus in quoting from Exodus 3:6 clearly stated that the passage was “spoken unto you by God”. So the Son of God taught that the Scriptures are from God Himself.

Second in 2nd Timothy 3:16 the Word of God says that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God”. We do not read that some of it or most of it but rather that all of it is given by inspiration of God. The Scriptures do not teach that they contain the Word of God but rather that all of it is the Word of God. At the time of the writing of this passage in 2nd Timothy the Bible was not complete yet. The truth of the passage nevertheless applies to all the completed Scriptures now. There is an important point to consider regarding the completion of the Word of God. There is an idea that it was determined by some council at some point around 300 AD which books would be considered the canon of Scripture. The fact is that the book of 2nd Peter clearly states that the letters of Paul were considered to be the Word of God. Peter wrote this in 2nd Peter 3:15, 16. So the early Christians of the first century AD knew that the books of the New Testament were the Word of God as they were written. Another important point to consider along this line is that it is evident that there were fraudulent letters being circulated by some claiming apostolic authorship. This is found in 2nd Thessalonians 2:2 where Paul writes that there were some who claimed that what they wrote

was actually from the apostle Paul. He made it clear that this was deceptive teaching that was not given by him.

Third, in 2nd Peter 1:20, 21 Peter writes that the Scriptures did not come by the will of man but rather by holy men of God being borne along by the Spirit of God to write what they gave. So the writers of the Word of God did not just give what they thought was the mind of God but rather what God gave them to write. Though the human channel was used still the communication given by God was from Himself as He intended it to be. This applies to all of the writers of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Divine preservation of the Scriptures is also important to the examination of the textual basis of the Scriptures. The Scriptures have been written over a period of some sixteen hundred years by some forty different writers. There are no originals of the books that compile the Scriptures available to us today. We have copies of the originals that the various translations have been taken from. Many Christians are settled as to the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures but some do not have a good understanding of the truth that God has promised to preserve His Word. This can lead to a compromise in thinking as to the accuracy and reliability of the Word of God. The thinking is that “most” of the Bible is true to the original but we cannot be fully sure. As we will look at the textual basis later we will see how this kind of thinking can be put away and full trust can be put in the Word of God. Again just three Scriptural considerations will be looked at regarding this doctrine.

First in Psalm 12:6, 7 David writes that God has promised to preserve His Word forever. Note that it is not just the thoughts or general teaching conveyed but the very “words”, each one. God tells us through His servant David that He will see to it that His Word will be around forever. It will be preserved by Himself not by human efforts but rather by Himself.

The two words “keep” and “preserve” in verse seven, though different words in the original, are similar in their meaning. Their idea is to hedge about, guard, maintain etc. So God promises to see to it that His Word is kept pure as verse six states. Many have tried to do away with the Scriptures down through the time of its existence. The Bible’s preservation to this day is testimony to this truth of God’s preservation of His Word.

Second in Isaiah 40:8 we read that the “Word of our God shall stand forever”. The context of this verse tells us that the things of the world will come and go in their time but the Scriptures will endure all of the changes and beginnings and endings that the world experiences. The centuries come and go and yet the Word of God stands. Kingdoms rise and fall but the Word of God stands. Its message of love and grace spans the years of man’s existence and it is as relevant today as when it was given by God Himself. Time does not dim its light nor does man’s varied need exceed its ability to meet that need.

Third, the Lord Jesus, in Matthew 24:35 stated that even Heaven and Earth shall pass away but the Word of God shall not pass away. This is the promise from the Son of God

Himself as to the preservation of the Word of God. Once again it is worth noting that the Lord Jesus said my “words”. The very words that were given are promised to be preserved by God Himself. So we can rejoice that God has declared to us that He will preserve His Word for all eternity. This preservation does not depend upon man or his efforts, though God in His dealings may choose to use men to be a channel in its preservation.

Comments at a Conference

I have heard over the years different brethren make comments concerning the different modern versions. Some comments were positive and some were negative. Sometimes comments were made about the different texts of Scripture such as the Received Text or the Critical Greek Text or the Nestle's Text. In my study of the Scriptures I left the consideration of texts up to the "scholars" and tried my best to work with what I felt was within my grasp of understanding.

I was listening to a recording of the messages from the 2005, Vancouver, B. C. Thanksgiving Conference and some short comments from two brethren in one of the Bible Readings caught my attention. Some brethren, during the normal discussion that occurs in a Bible Reading, gave a warning concerning modern translations. The warning was just a simple warning to be careful about the translations. When I heard that, I thought "why not check it out" so I typed "Nestle's Text" into Google.

I was surprised to find the amount of material and the great variation of opinion regarding this text. It was obvious that some viewpoints were extreme and went too far to make their point but there was clearly a controversy concerning the subject. I wrote one of the brethren who made the comments about this and he guided me to some good material on the subject. I began to compare different English versions of the Scriptures and found some very shocking differences that I never saw before. One of the most shocking finds was in a Bible that I was given when I had finished some religious classes. I should mention that I was given this Bible before I trusted Christ as my own personal Saviour and the classes were part of the denominational church I went to before I was saved. I was reading a footnote regarding Hebrews 1:8 in this Revised Standard Version I had and it said "or God is thy throne" for an alternative rendering. I was shocked by this as I knew that the New World Translation of the Jehovah's Witness cult had translated this portion as "God is your throne". I thought, now wait a minute this is going too far, I better pursue this further.

I started to research this further and found many changes in the modern versions that were not just "mechanical" changes but those changes had an effect on the doctrinal integrity of the Scriptures themselves. If these changes were just minor changes that did not compromise or weaken the truths of the Word of God then one would not sound the alarm. The fact of the matter is there is a genuine concern. When one understands the reason for the differences in English translations then it is a simple matter to see that concern and keep to the reliable versions of the Scriptures.

Two Different Texts

To get to the core issue of the difficulty we will look at the basic foundation of the Scriptures themselves. Many who read the Scriptures today do not know why there are so many differences in the translation of the Word of God into English. Many just think that the differences are in the use of the words chosen for the translation. In other words, that the word in the original is translated differently into English or whatever language of translation is being used. The fact is there are two basic textual bases that the New Testament is translated from. The Old Testament has not been divided in its textual basis. The Jewish scribes kept the O. T. Scriptures pure from any significant variations in the text. So the problem does not exist in the Old Testament. We will see that the differences in the N. T. variations are not a copyist problem but a deliberate omission, change or addition to the text.

It has been stated already that there are no original autographs of any book of the Bible. We do not have, for example, any of the actual writings of Paul but what we do have are copies of those writings. This is why it is not only essential that we believe the doctrine of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures but that we also believe the doctrine of the Divine Preservation of the Scriptures. God has promised, as we have seen, to preserve His Word forever and so we rest on this truth that what we have is kept or guarded by God Himself.

The problem of differences in the Word of God did not start at some point after the Scriptures themselves were completed. There is indication from the New Testament writings themselves that there were men who were corrupting the Word of God in the days of the apostles. 2nd Corinthians 2:7 speaks of those who were corrupting the Word of God in Paul's day. Also 2nd Thessalonians 2:2 gives indication that there were some who were writing fraudulent letters as if they were from the hand of Paul. Paul warns the saints regarding these false letters and the false teaching in them. As has been noted already, Peter acknowledged the writings of Paul to be "The Scriptures" in 2nd Peter 3:15, 16. The New Testament books were recognized in their day as being Divinely inspired and the corrupted or fraudulent books were also exposed for their faults.

The corrupted or fraudulent manuscripts were produced for the purpose of putting forward wrong teaching. Another purpose was to undermine the character of the apostles and subsequently their teaching. Many of these corrupted texts came from the area of North Africa since there was a large following of these wrong teachers and their teachings in that area. The term "Alexandrian Texts" came to define these corrupted texts because of the connection with Alexandria in Egypt. The Gnostic heresies were incorporated, by the false teachers, into the actual writings of the apostles. These corruptions were accomplished by adding, changing or subtracting portions of the Word of God. This is why so many of the differences in the translation of the scriptures are related to basic teachings. We will consider many of the different portions that are obvious problems later in this book.

The Apostle John in the book of the Revelation writes of the reasons for which he was held on the isle of Patmos. He states in Revelation 1:9 that he “was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ”. It is clear that John wrote his 1st epistle to strengthen the saints in the truths related to the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus. 1st John was written to give the saints a solid footing to stand against the heresy of Gnosticism which was proliferating in John’s day. Among the false teachings of Gnosticism was the denial of the Deity of the Lord Jesus and the denial of His eternal existence as the Son of God. John’s burden from the Lord was to write his Gospel, epistles and the book of Revelation with a view to give the saints the great truths regarding the Person of the Lord Jesus.

For example: in 1st John 4:1-3, John writes a warning to be careful to examine what anyone may teach. The Gnostics taught that the Christ came upon the Lord Jesus at a time subsequent to His birth. Modern day cults teach that the Christ came upon the Lord Jesus at His baptism which is a false teaching stemming from the Gnosticism of John’s day. John clearly states that if anyone confesses that when the Lord Jesus came into the world He was not the Christ then that teaching is not of God and the person who is giving that teaching is not of God. In Luke 2:11, in the message given to the shepherds, it is said that the One that they would find lying in a manger was “Christ the Lord”. Also Luke 2:25-35 gives the testimony of Simeon regarding the Lord Jesus that Simeon had seen “the Lord’s Christ” (v.26). There are other references that could be given to further establish this truth. The point being made here is important when considering the so called “earlier manuscripts”, which we will consider in short order. The “earlier manuscripts” make changes to portions regarding these important truths.

There are two basic groups of texts that any New Testament uses as its basis for translation. One is the “Received Text”, which is also called the Byzantine text for its accepted use during the Byzantine period. The other is the “Critical Greek Text” which was put forward by Westcott and Hort in 1881. The “Nestle Text” and other variations are taken from the Critical Greek Text.

There are some 3,031 N. T. manuscripts known to us today. Some are older than others; some are just small portions while others are larger portions of the New Testament. None of these portions are actual original autographs, or in other words, the actual portion written by the original author. These portions are copies of other copies which are copies of the originals.

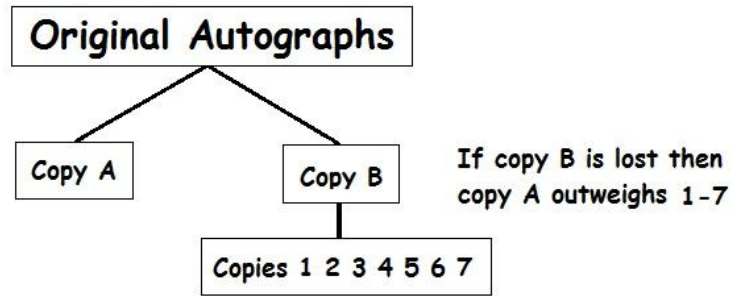
Of this body of available manuscripts there is what is called “Greek Uncials” of which there are 267. These uncials are written in all capital letters. Only nine support the Critical Greek Text of Westcott and Hort. That is 3% of the available uncials that agree with the Critical Greek Text. The other 258 support the Received Text or 97%.

The other 2,764 are Greek cursive manuscripts or sometimes called “minuscules” on account of being written in lower case letters. Twenty three miniscules support the Critical Greek Text or a mere 1% and the other 2,741 support the Received Text or 99%.

There are also 2,143 Greek lectionaries which were manuscripts containing Scripture lessons that were read as early as 400 AD. Of these lectionaries 100% support the Received Text. Of this total of 5,262 Greek witnesses together 5,217 or 99% are in agreement with the Received Text and the other 1% that are not in agreement with the Received Text are not even in agreement with themselves.

Nearly every English translation that has been published since 1881 has used the Critical Greek Text for its basis. At the time that Westcott and Hort introduced their text the Church of England was looking to modernize the language of scripture. With that desire in place the time was ripe for the introduction of The Critical Greek Text. Along with their text Westcott and Hort also sought to show their text to be more accurate by way of a theory regarding the age of the manuscripts that they used to construct their text. The basis of their theory is that the older the manuscript the more accurate or reliable it is. The fact of the matter is, no matter how old a manuscript is it is still a copy and not an original. The real question is, does the manuscript represent the true scriptures as they were originally inspired or does it represent some corrupted manuscript? As it has been already stated, there are indications in the scriptures themselves that there were some who were corrupting the scriptures and others who were writing fraudulent letters. With this in mind one must assume that some of these corrupted manuscripts would be found and that there would be differences from the other manuscripts found. This is exactly what the case is with the known manuscripts. As already shown the vast majority of manuscripts agree and are what form the basis for the Received Text. The theory of Westcott and Hort was accepted as true and the Critical Greek Text was viewed as being more accurate.

One large part of the “theory” that Westcott and Hort used to claim that their text was the “more reliable” text was what is called the “genealogical method”. The assumption being that the earlier a text was dated the more reliable it would be. Different methods are used to determine the date placement of a text. One of the factors is the type of material that the text is written on. Another factor is the type of writing used to create the text. To illustrate the genealogical part of Westcott and Hort’s theory this chart is supplied.



By this method Westcott and Hort claimed that the minority of manuscripts were more reliable than all of the other available manuscripts. This was part of their claim that the Critical Greek Text represented more accurately the original autographs. Even if there were no other manuscripts that agreed with Copy A it was, by their theory, still more accurate because it was an earlier manuscript. The big problem is that Copy A could be a corrupted text that was not faithful to the original.

Other parts of the Westcott/Hort theory were used to further verify their claims of their text being the best. They sought to divide the available manuscripts into families or types. Then they would by contrivances seek to show that whole families were not as old and hence less reliable and should be rejected. Another part of their theory was to refer to early writings by believers and what they referred to as far as which text and so by subjective reasoning dismissed many manuscripts. By time all of these aspects of their theory were put together it was a simple act of presentation at an opportune time that got the Critical Greek Text accepted as the more desirable text.

Any modern English translation of the Bible has an introduction written which usually states the textual basis that the translation uses. Some Bible introductions simply state that they use the “best or more reliable manuscripts” for the translation. In that case the buyer must assume that the translators have done exactly that. One factor to keep in mind is that the Bible is the best seller every year. It is never listed as the best seller in the world’s lists because it would be at the top every year. So if you were going to sell books what book would be the most likely to sell large quantities? This is one of the reasons for the large number of different versions available today and the constant addition of new versions.

In the final analysis this is the explanation for the differences in the many translations of the Scriptures. The actual texts that they are translated from are different in respect to their words and also either add or subtract some portions. There has been a proliferation of new versions since the introduction of the Critical Greek Text. There are many different “theme” Bibles introduced on a regular basis. By theme Bibles I mean special study Bibles for men, women, teens, children etc. While it is a good thing to appeal to different segments of society the many different versions are pretty well all taken from the Critical Greek Text basis. To be

honest, and I may sound like I have a big bias, the KJV is still the best English translation that is available.

By Way of Comparison

To show the differences by way of comparison we will look at some of the passages that differ. It is important to understand that the differences come from the use of a different textual basis as has already been explained. I have a four version comparison which I have put together dealing with some 240 portions which have significant differences. All of the portions are from the New Testament since that is where the problem exists. The KJV, ESV, NIV and NASB are compared in the comparison. Out of these four translations the KJV is the only one which has the “Received Text” as its textual basis. All of the other three use the “Critical Greek Text” or “Nestle’s Text” as their basis. The differences will be noted by being in italics in the KJV and a brief explanation will follow each set of compared portions.

KJV: Matthew 18:11 *For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.*

ESV: Verse omitted

NIV: Verse omitted

NASB: *For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.*

A footnote in the NIV says “some manuscripts include here the words of Luke 19:10”. A footnote in the NASB says that “early manuscripts do not contain this verse” This is an example of so called “earlier manuscripts” being considered closer to the original simply because of their age. These earlier manuscripts are still copies of yet earlier manuscripts. As has been noted in this book already there were portions of the Word of God that were corrupted even in the days of the apostles.

This same problem exists in Matthew 17:21; 23:14; Mark 7:16; 9:44, 46; 11:26; 15:28; Luke 17:36; 23:17; Acts 8:37; 15:34; 28:29. The verse is omitted in the ESV and the NIV with a footnote in the NASB saying it is not in the “early manuscripts”.

KJV: Matthew 27:35 *And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.*

ESV: *And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots.*

NIV: *When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots.*

NASB: *And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves by casting lots.*

An important point is omitted in regard to what the prophet spoke. Also an important distinction is changed in how the clothing of the Lord Jesus was handled. The coat of the Lord

Jesus, which was woven from the top throughout, was the only part of the Lord's clothing that lots were cast for, according to John 19:23, 24.

KJV: Mark 3:29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.

ESV: but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin.

NIV: But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin.

NASB: but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin.

The question must be asked, what is an eternal sin? That does not make sense since a sin is committed at a moment. Only the consequences of sin can be eternal. The sin does not keep being committed over and over forever.

KJV: Mark 11:10 Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, *that cometh in the name of the Lord:* Hosanna in the highest.

ESV: Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" "Hosanna in the highest!"

NIV: Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" "Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

NASB: Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest!"

An important phrase is left out of the three versions. This is indication of the difference in the textual basis of these versions.

KJV: Mark 16:9-20

ESV: portion included but questioned

NIV: portion included but questioned

NASB: portion included but questioned

This portion is included but questioned because of so called "early manuscripts" that do not include it.

KJV: Luke 2:14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, *good will toward men.*

ESV: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

NIV: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."

NASB: Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.

God's grace toward man is brought into question with the three other versions in the last phrase. The NIV has the least of the failure here. The ESV and NASB state that peace is given to people who earn it or have pleased God.

KJV: Luke 2:43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and *Joseph and his mother* knew not of it.

ESV: And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it.

NIV: After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it.

NASB: and as they were returning, after spending the full number of days, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. But his parents were unaware of it.

The phrase "Joseph and his mother" protects the truth of the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus. The phrase "his parents" does nothing to prove the Lord's virgin birth. The same problem exists in Luke 2:33.

KJV: Luke 4:4 And Jesus answered him, saying, it is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, *but by every word of God.*

ESV: And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"

NIV: Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'"

NASB: And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.'"

It is ironic that these versions that use the Critical Greek Text for their basis have left out this phrase. The Lord Jesus said "but by every word of God" referring to the importance of each word of the scriptures. Seeing there are so many omissions changes and additions in the Critical Greek Text it is amazing that this very important phrase was removed by those who corrupted the text of Scripture.

KJV: Luke 11:2 And he said unto them, "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, *Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.*

ESV: And he said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.

NIV: He said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.

NASB: And he said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.

Only the NIV mentions that some manuscripts contain the missing phrase that the KJV includes. The other two versions don’t mention the missing phrase. Also in the Lord’s exemplary prayer, verse 4, the phrase “but deliver us from evil” is missing in the three other versions that come from the Critical Greek Text.

KJV: Luke 23:42 And he said unto Jesus, *Lord*, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

ESV: And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

NIV: Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

NASB: And he was saying, “Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!”

The title “Lord” is missing. This omission was not an accident. It takes so much away from the confession of the malefactor that repented and trusted the Saviour. Some would say that it is insignificant since there are so many other verses that show the Lordship of Christ. That kind of thinking though is a slippery slope away from the accuracy of the Scriptures.

KJV: John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time, *the only begotten Son*, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

ESV: No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.

NIV: No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

NASB: No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

Why is “the only begotten Son” changed? Why is the Sonship of the Lord Jesus taken away by this omission? The context of this verse practically demands the statement regarding the only begotten Son. The verses surrounding this verse are full of the person of the Son of God. In fact, the whole chapter is concerned with the greatness of the only Begotten Son. At least two other places leave out the word “begotten” in the Gospel of John. Chapter 3:16 & 18.

KJV: John 6:47 Verily, Verily, I say unto you, He that believeth *on me* hath everlasting life.

ESV: Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.

NIV: Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life.

NASB: “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

The little phrase “on me” is so important for salvation. By comparing this verse this way one would wonder what to believe. The Received text makes it clear that for salvation to be received one must believe on the Son. A lot of people believe about the Son but to place one’s trust “on” Him is essential.

KJV: John 6:69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, *the Son of the living God.*

ESV: and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

NIV: We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.

NASB: We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.”

Once again the Sonship of the Lord Jesus is omitted. Also the title “Christ” is omitted. These truths related to the Lord Jesus are areas where the Gnostics had false teachings. The Gnostics believed that the Christ came upon the Lord Jesus at some point subsequent to the Lord’s birth and that the Christ left Him at a point before He died on the cross. The Gnostics did not accept the “Eternal Sonship” of the Lord Jesus.

KJV: John 9:35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the *Son of God?*

ESV: Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

NIV: Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

NASB: Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

The Sonship of the Lord Jesus is exchanged for the manhood title of the Lord Jesus, “The Son of Man”. The Received Text has the words for “Son of God”.

KJV: Acts 2:30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up *Christ* to sit on his throne;

ESV: Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne,

NIV: But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.

NASB: And so, because he was a prophet and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT *one* OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE,

While the context indicates that Christ is the subject it is not good to change the title of Christ for the word descendant.

KJV: Acts 15:11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus *Christ* we shall be saved, even as they.

ESV: But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.”

NIV: No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.”

NASB: But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.”

The full title of the Lord Jesus Christ is changed to “the Lord Jesus”. In the context of this verse dealing with the question of Gentiles being saved and whether they should be circumcised the use of the full title of the Lord Jesus Christ is significant. He was not only Israel’s Messiah but came to save Gentiles too. The same problem is found in Luke 21:8; John 4:42; Acts 2:30; 16:31; Romans 1:3; 1:16; 14:10; 1st Corinthians 5:4; 9:1; 16:23; 2nd Corinthians 11:31; Galatians 3:17; 4:7; 6:15; Ephesians 3:9; 3:14; Philippians 4:13; 1st Thessalonians 2:19; 3:11; 3:13; 2nd Thessalonians 1:8; 1:12; 1st Timothy 2:7; 2nd Timothy 4:22; Hebrews 3:1; 1st John 1:7; 4:3; Revelation 1:9; 12:17; 22:21. All of these references omit the Title “Christ”.

KJV: Romans 1:3 Concerning his Son *Jesus Christ our Lord*, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

ESV: concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh

NIV: regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David,

NASB: concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,

Once again the full title of the Lord is omitted.

KJV: Romans 13:9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, *Thou shalt not bear false witness*, Thou shalt not covet and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

ESV: For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”

NIV: “The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not covet,” and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

NASB: For this, “YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, YOU SHALL NOT STEAL, YOU SHALL NOT COVET,” and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF.”

You can't help but wonder why the commandment “Thou shalt not bear false witness” is omitted? I know it is a stretch to think this but could it be that the one who changed this text didn't like this commandment? It is in the Received Text.

Romans 15:29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

ESV: I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

NIV: I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

NASB: I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

Paul starts the Roman epistle with mention of the Gospel of Christ in 1:16. When we think of “the Gospel of Christ” we are thinking of its subject being the Lord Jesus Christ.

KJV: 1st Corinthians 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

ESV: For you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

NIV: you were bought with a price. So honour God with your bodies.

NASB: For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

Inward and outward purity are both important. One of the teachings of the Gnostics was that it did not matter what one did with their body as long as their spirit was kept pure. 1st Thessalonians 5:23 states that the whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless. So why should this important aspect be left out?

KJV: 1st Corinthians 11:3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

ESV: But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.

This is not a difference in the text used but a poor translation of the word for woman or wife. When considering headship in the assembly, that is not displayed only by those who are married but by all the members. While the statement in the ESV is true the context of the local assembly requires the word “woman” to be used. The NIV and NASB don’t have this problem.

KJV: 1st Corinthians 11:29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, *not discerning the Lord’s body.*

ESV: For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself

NIV: For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.

NASB: For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly.

The truth being brought forth by Paul is the need to examine one’s self before the Breaking of Bread. This examination is to see that there is no sin that would cause communion with the Lord to be marred. If there was some sin in the way then one would be eating and drinking unworthily and bring judgment on one’s self. In the case of sin in the life it needs to be confessed and put out of one’s life. Possibly two members of the assembly are having a conflict. In this case the conflict needs to be resolved before the Breaking of Bread. In the case of sins listed in 1st Corinthians 5:11 the person who has committed any of them needs to be put out of the assembly. The restoration of the one put out of the assembly is always in view. The three modern versions do not make this truth clear.

KJV: 1st Corinthians 15:47 The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the *Lord* from heaven.

ESV: The first man was from the earth, a man of dust, the second man is from heaven.

NIV: The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man is of heaven.

NASB: The first man is from the earth, earthy, the second man is from heaven.

To take the title “Lord” out it sounds like the Lord Jesus was only a man from heaven.

KJV: Galatians 4:7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God *through Christ.*

ESV: So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

NIV: So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

NASB: Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

The phrase “through Christ” gives the means by which a believer becomes an heir. Why was it necessary to remove this important point?

KJV: Ephesians 3:9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things *by Jesus Christ*.

ESV: and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things.

NIV: and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.

NASB: and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things;

The equality of the Son with the Father is a foundation truth in the scriptures. This omission of “by Jesus Christ” takes away an important portion of scripture showing this truth.

KJV: Ephesians 3:14: For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father *of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

ESV: For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,

NIV: For this reason I kneel before the Father,

NASB: For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,

The context of this verse suffers if this phrase is taken out. There is much written about the Lord Jesus surrounding this verse.

KJV: Ephesians 5:9 (For the fruit of *the Spirit* is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

ESV: (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true).

NIV: (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)

NASB: (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth).

There is a big difference in the meaning when this change is made. The person of the Holy Spirit is removed. There is much in the context regarding light but to change this reference to the Holy Spirit changes the source of goodness and righteousness and truth in the walk of the believer.

KJV: Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through *Christ* which strengtheneth me.

ESV: I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

NIV: I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

NASB: I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

The change from Christ to Him does not change the thought of receiving strength but it certainly changes the specific source of the strength.

KJV: Colossians 1:2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father *and the Lord Jesus Christ*.

ESV: To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

NIV: To God's holy people in Colossae, the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

NASB: To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

The phrase "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" shows the equality of the Son with the Father. This same omission is found in 1st Thessalonians 1:1.

KJV: Colossians 1:14 In whom we have redemption *through his blood*, even the forgiveness of sins:

ESV: in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

NIV: in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

NASB: in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

God has shown from the beginning the necessity of blood being shed for redemption. This omission is seeking to remove something that is an offence to some.

KJV: 1st Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: *God* was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

ESV: Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.

NIV: Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

NASB: By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.

This verse is one of the most blatant differences in the two basic texts. The title God is changed for He causing the loss of the teaching of the essential Deity of the Lord Jesus. While it is true that other portions retain this doctrine this one has been changed.

KJV: Hebrews 2:7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, *and didst set him over the works of thy hands:*

ESV: You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor,

NIV: You made them a little lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honor

The NASB includes the phrase that these others omit. A footnote in the NASB states that the “earliest manuscripts” do not include the phrase. Much is lost by the exclusion of this phrase.

KJV: Hebrews 7:21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever *after the order of Melchisedec:*)

ESV: but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest forever.’”

NIV: but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever.’”

NASB: (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, “THE LORD HAS SWORN AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND. ‘YOUR ARE A PRIEST FOREVER’”).

The phrase that has been omitted is very important to the context of the portion. The teaching about the priesthood of the Lord Jesus loses much without the phrase.

KJV: 1st Peter 4:14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: *on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*

ESV: If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

NIV: If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

NASB: If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

Once again an important phrase is omitted from the Scriptures. It gives further encouragement to those who suffer for the Lord so why remove it.

KJV: 2nd Peter 2:17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved *for ever.*

ESV: These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved.

NIV: These people are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them.

NASB: These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved.

Here is a clear removal of the doctrine of eternal punishment. Basically one word is removed but it changes the meaning greatly.

KJV: 1st John 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus *Christ is come in the flesh* is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

ESV: and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

NIV: but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

NASB: and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

Here is a loss of one of the tests that will expose those who are teaching false doctrine. The Gnostics believed that the Christ came upon the Lord Jesus at a point subsequent to his birth. The scriptures clearly indicate that the Lord Jesus was the Christ at His birth. To simply confess Jesus is no test of doctrinal purity but one who does not believe that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh does not hold the truth regarding Him being the Christ at His birth. This is one of the clearer attempts at corrupting the Word of God.

KJV: 1st John 4:19 We love *him*, because he first loved us.

ESV: We love because he first loved us.

NIV: We love because he first loved us.

NASB: We love, because He first loved us.

The believer has first responded to the Love of God for him personally. Out of this initial response the believer also loves fellow believers. This is the context of this verse.

KJV: 1st John 5:7, 8 For there are three that bear record *in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.*

ESV: For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.

NIV: For there are three that testify: the Spirit, the water and the blood, and the three are in agreement.

NASB: For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

There is no real reason to exclude this much disputed portion. Scholars have satisfactorily proven its inclusion is valid. There has been much attack on this portion but when one considers the value of the portion one can see why the attacks have been made.

KJV: Revelation 1:8 I am Alpha and Omega, *the beginning and the ending*, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

ESV: “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

NIV: “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

NASB: “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

The removal of part of the title of the Lord Jesus is a great loss.

KJV: Revelation 1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the patience of Jesus *Christ*, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus *Christ*.

ESV: I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

NIV: I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

NASB: I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

Once again part of the title of the Lord Jesus is omitted in this verse. The title “Christ” is one of the problems with the false teachings of the Gnostics. It is no surprise that these omissions are made in the corrupted texts.

KJV: Revelation 1:11 Saying, *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last:* and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches *which are in Asia;* unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

ESV: saying, “Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”

NIV: which said: “Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.”

NASB: saying, “Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”

The portion containing the extended title of the Lord Jesus is omitted. Also the region of Asia is left out in this verse. There is much lost in this omission of Scripture.

KJV: Revelation 2:15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, *which thing I hate*.

ESV: So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans

NIV: Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

NASB: ‘So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

The Lord reinforced His hatred for this wrong doctrine. The corrupted text does not include the clear condemnation of the Lord.

KJV: Revelation 5:9, 10 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed *us* to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made *us* unto our God kings and priests: and *we* shall reign on the earth

ESV: And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

NIV: And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”

NASB: And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. “You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.”

The change from “us” to “people, persons, them and *men*” changes the meaning of the portion completely. What was a new song with a very personal meaning becomes less personal with this change.

There are other changes, omissions and additions that could be compared. These comparisons will be sufficient to show that the problem is not just some small insignificant issue. The problem is very real and the different portions affected by the differences are not obscure portions. Important doctrines, related mainly to the Lord Jesus, are weakened by these changes. I would never attempt to speak with anyone in a cult without being able to refer to the KJV. In fact many in the cults are not aware of this textual problem. They have been told by their teachers that their Bible is the most accurate translation produced.

Let's not be critical

It is to no avail to criticise the Scriptures. It only undermines the believer's confidence in the Word of God. There are some translation problems with the KJV but the textual basis of the KJV is fully trustworthy. With careful study of the Received Text basis of our English Bible we can be settled as to the meaning of words. By using basic Bible study principles the endless blessing of the Word of God can be appreciated and the written message from God will be used for His glory and the blessing of mankind. To be fair to the modern versions some consideration must be given. The failure of the modern versions is obvious in the textual basis that they follow but there are some helps that these modern versions can give. Some of the old English words are difficult for some to understand and the more modern translation relating to these words can be a help. The difficulty in referring to a translation that uses the Critical Greek Text as its basis is that those who are listeners may get the idea that the translation is a better translation. In the many cases of failure in the textual basis of the modern versions it is to no avail to lean on the modern translation's given English text. It would be best to mention the meaning of the word, as found in the Received Text, and leave it at that as an alternative to the way it is translated in the KJV. An example of this is found in James 2:3 where James writes of one coming into an assembly meeting in "gay" clothing. The word for gay simply means magnificent or gorgeous and a simple explanation of this is all that is needed. In fact James 2:2 translates the same word as "gorgeous". To throw out an entire version because of an old English word that may cause difficulty in the minds of some would be foolish. Great benefit can be accomplished by studying the Word of God and getting the meaning of words for one's self. With all of the Bible study helps available to the student of Scripture today there is a wealth of blessing to be found. There is no easy path to getting to know the Word of God but the work of others who have gone before makes it easier to find, compare and understand the meaning of the text. In defense of the KJV there is no other version that has so many study helps associated with it.

It seems that there is a great push to move away from the KJV amongst assemblies gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. This move will not be to the building up of these called out companies. Those who argue for this change cite the "need" for change and that our present society has changed in its use of the English language. Where this argument fails is we should not seek to conform the Scriptures to the changes in society but rather those who receive Christ as Saviour need to conform to the Word of God. It is true that the Lord Jesus used the common man's language while He was here to fulfill His ministry. Within that framework of the common man's language He spoke with distinction and made His teaching perfectly clear. For example: the use of Thee and Thou and you and ye in our English translation was chosen because of the difference between singular and plural. To take that away from the English translation removes the understanding of those distinctions. It is like removing the amounts from a recipe and saying that it does not matter how much of each

ingredient is used, just so long as the ingredients are there. We need to value the distinctions of the Scriptures and guard the accuracy that God has placed in His Word.

In Revelation 3:10 the assembly in Philadelphia is commended for its keeping of the Word of His patience. The word for “kept” in this passage has the thought of guarding or preventing from escape. Many view the seven assemblies in Revelation chapters two and three as indicating general conditions in relation to the church age. Most that hold this view see the assembly in Philadelphia relating to the time when many came out from the denominations and gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ during the nineteenth century. This awakening came as the result of the Word of God being opened up to those who were seeking for truth in the Scriptures. The Lord acknowledges the assembly for keeping His Word and promises to take His own out of the world and “keep” (guard) His own from the great tribulation period. Is this not enough to cause us to value the Scriptures as the Word of God and keep them until the Lord comes for His own. As has been stated the KJV is not a perfect translation but it is still the best that we have. Until there is a better translation available that uses the Received Text as its basis we should not be satisfied with anything else. After all it is His Word not ours to do with as we desire.

Let us hear the Word of the Lord and let us tremble at His Word as Isaiah 66:5 states.

This Booklet

This booklet is not written to be an extensive resource regarding the textual subject. This subject could easily be a person's "life work" over many years. I have just sought to present the subject in a simple manner to make the basics known. It is not my intention to create any polarization of the saints that may cause division. This is a controversial subject for some and over the last seven years has been a concern of mine. When I first began to look into this subject I wondered what direction this would take me. It soon became apparent that there was a large spectrum of opinion. Some views were obviously too extreme in their position. On one side there are some who claim that the translators of the KJV were inspired in the same way as the holy men of God that Peter wrote of in 2nd Peter 1:21. The Scriptures were complete a long time before the KJV translation was done. With that in mind there is an interesting point that one brother made concerning translations. When the day of Pentecost had come each one heard them speak in their own language. Would we be right to say that that event was only a translation for those who heard the wonderful works of God in a different language from which it was being given? Each one that heard in their own language heard exactly the "wonderful works of God". This shows that an accurate translation has great weight and carries the Divine approval of Heaven.

On the other side of the spectrum there are those who have very little conviction regarding the accuracy of the Scriptures. They feel that as long as the general idea of the Word of God is given then that is good enough. It is sad that one of the first things that many who go through seminary training learn is that they cannot be sure as to the accuracy of the Word of God. They are taught that on account of the differences in the manuscripts that are available the true text of the Scriptures cannot be determined with any real certainty. So some who desire to become teachers of the Word of God are faced with a conflict at the start, namely that they cannot really trust what they are seeking to teach.

This uncertainty is one thing that I wondered about being the outcome of my inquiry at first. The question arose concerning the possibility that it would only be up to the most scholarly textual critics to determine the reliable textual basis of the Bible. So the average student of the Scriptures was left to rely on the opinions of others which varied. To the contrary the more I looked into the subject the more I became convinced that the Received Text or the underlying text of the KJV was the reliable text of Scripture. Not only is it the Divinely inspired Word of God but it has been Divinely preserved and will continue to be so. The uncertainty that was the initial response was replaced by a settled certainty and a deeper sense of appreciation for the wonder and grandeur of the Bible.

We have come back to the words of the Lord Himself: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33).

Some helps

There is a vast amount of material available in printed form and also online dealing with the textual subject of the Scriptures.

The first book I found was “Crowned With Glory, The Bible from Ancient Text to Authorized Version” by Dr. Thomas Holland ISBN 0-595-14617-1 Dr. Thomas Holland also has a set of lessons on the subject on the internet. The lessons can be found at:

http://wilderness-cry.net/bible_study/courses/mssevidence/index.html

Another helpful book is “Which Version is the Bible?” By Floyd Nolen Jones ISBN 0-9700328-5-4

A book recently recommended to me by a brother in Australia is called “Which Bible?” edited by David Otis Fuller, D.D. ISBN 0-944355-24-2 This book is a collection of articles by different writers about the textual subject.

A helpful website with various articles is the Trinitarian Bible Society website. The articles can be found at: <http://www.trinitarianbiblesociety.org/> On the left side of their homepage under “Online Publications” click on “Articles”.

A biography of F. J. A. Hort who is one of the men who helped produced the Critical Greek Text may be of interest to some. Some of Mr. Hort’s doctrinal beliefs are given in this book along with aspects of his involvement in things which throw a very questionable view on his character. The book is called “F. J. A. Hort Eminent Victorian” by Graham A. Patrick ISBN 1-85075-098-X