

Bible Version Controversy:

Is the *King James 1611* English Bible.... (which is actually the *King James 1769* Version)....the *exclusive*, inspired, preserved Bible? (see pg. 25, item I)

What are some reasons offered for the theory?

What is the biblical response to this controversy?

For a quick summary read these first:

page 6, item F page 23, item F page 34, A Final Word

Skip this paper. Read Appendix C. It is the best refutation of KJV ONLY

"It is not within the capacity of man to corrupt the Scriptures."

- Daniel B. Wallace

Receiving and understanding God's truth is not a matter of which version is read or heard; it is a matter of whether the reader or hearer's comprehension is illuminated according to John 16:13."

-M.J. Greene

Claiming there is only one version of the Bible amounts to turning the Bible into an idol.

-M.J. Greene

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Bibliology: The Doctrine of the Scriptures

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I EXPLANATORY NOTES

A. Abbreviations

These abbreviations appear throughout this work:

KJV = King James Version *KJVO* = King James Version ONLY
KJVOT = King James Version ONLY Theory *AV* = authorized Version
KJVOP(s) = King James Version ONLY Proponent(s)

B. Term 'Bible Versions' Generalized

There are many Bible translations, versions, and formats; written in Greek Hebrew or Latin, some paraphrased; some of these incorporate study helps, etc. Throughout this work the phrases "versions" or "other versions" will refer to all these variations, with no particular distinction unless noted.

C. Works Excluded from Research

This research does not include any discussion of the extra-biblical 'sacred books' often considered 'types of Bibles' by those who read them. These include, but are *not limited to* 'scripture' esteemed and used by followers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Christian Scientists or Seventh Day Adventists. This writer considers all such works as errant.

D. General Purpose of the Research

This topic evokes strong opinions; it should not be trivialized or considered 'a resolved issue', despite the fact that sufficient accurate teaching and correction is offered to refute the *KJV* "exclusivity" theory. But the important need is to encourage believers to know they *are indeed reading God's holy, inspired, preserved Word* if they read other than the *KJV*.^{1 2}

Christ Jesus, the true Light, illuminates all darkness. Therefore, credible inquiry must acknowledge that 'false' revelation (darkness) does in fact exist. The Coming prince will likely have his own 'sacred scriptures' during the Tribulation. But there is no proof for, or agreement, that false Bibles (substituting for divine revelation) are identified, codified, distributed, and in common use *now*. While false works do exist, such as the Satanic Bible, the Urantia Book, A Course in Miracles, the Gnostic Gospels, etc., these are openly identified by their producers as outside the doctrine of the 66 Book canon, and **admittedly compete with the**

¹ An entirely different question is whether that one reading their Bible correctly understands what they read and appropriately applies that knowledge to their life. But the Bible they read does not control this.

² Also published in 2003 is the resource, ***God's Word in Our Hands: The Bible Preserved for Us***. Twenty-two pastors and Bible college instructors, self-identifying as conservative and fundamental, do not support *KJVOT*. This writer's work was completed prior to reading theirs; yet it corroborates my view.

gospel. It is this pattern, not other Bible versions, that signals true controversy.

Meaningful investigation of the version controversy must first ask the question, "What is the paramount truth revealed by God to man?" The answer: **The Redeemer of all men is alive; and because He is lives, individual souls are commanded to be born again in Him, being redeemed from the second death.** Holy Spirit-indwelled souls discern the difference between this **truth and distortions of this truth.** Therefore, discernment must be applied when reading *all* Bibles, including the *King James*. But the fact is, even the *AV* does not always provide the best translation in some of its words, grammar, syntax and idioms.

This is crucial: When born again followers of Christ speak and live biblical truth, referencing their walk and witness to other versions, it is disingenuous to discount their testimony as less valuable than that sourcing to the *KJV*. *KJVOP*'s do this, claiming readers of other versions receive "watered down' truth or 'only part of God's Word'. **But truth is truth, no matter its source.** There are those genuinely converted, living by God's Word, who aren't taught by the *King James!* But how can this be if all Bibles except the *King James* have a corrupting influence?!

False teaching and / or false understanding of revelation are not necessarily version-related. This writer discusses several topics with some *KJVOP*'s who incorrectly communicate Bible theology and doctrine. Again, how can this be, if the King James, *their* source of spiritual truth, is deemed perfect? This is so because discernment is a far better tool in the hands of Bible students than is slavish loyalty to the traditions of men.³ It is the tradition of men to reject all non-*KJV* Bibles. This research intends to demonstrate the error of the *King James* exclusivist mindset --in order to assure readers of the veracity of other versions.

E. Specific Purpose of the Research: What IS and ISN'T the Question?

The pertinent and germane question *is* this: **Does God's revelation in English extend [exclusively] to the *KJV*, therefore disqualifying other versions?** The question is *not* "Are *all* words or phrases in *all* versions comparably valuable, accurately translated, equally representative of the 8,000+⁴ manuscripts?" Instead of the obvious correct answer to the second question, "NO", serving as proof the *King James* is the exclusive Bible, this rather demonstrates the need for due diligence in study, making certain Bible students gain the correct, most accurate understanding of any text or teaching. This writer proposes we do not have to confine our Bible study to the *KJV* to accurately understand revealed truth.

³ "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. (Colossians 2:8)

⁴ There are approximately 3,000 manuscripts of the Old Testament and more than 5,000 of the New Testament, with no debate over the Masoretic text. The controversy involves the 5,000+ Greek texts.

It is the Divine Author who eternally preserves holy, inerrant revelation --despite variations in manuscript translation and successive version revision. Divine revelation self-proclaims its own truth, preservation and immutability. It is not man who thinks he "discovers" what is false in Greek documents that is consequential. **It is the whole of revealed Scripture --continually seeding the earth --bringing forth regenerated souls --that proves the worth of all versions.**

F. This Writer's History with Bible Versions

Suspicious or baffled is the reaction by *KJVOP's* when they hear this writer studies the *King James Bible* --and has done so since beginning to read the Bible at age eleven. Most *KJVOP's* simply cannot understand why anyone would *not* agree with *KJV* "exclusivity", if, in fact, they value their own *KJB*. (Understandably these are not in agreement with devotees of the *NIV* or *The Living Bible*. But a *King James* reader not sharing their bias leaves most of them either angry or unable to discuss the truth.) The most read, highlighted, marked-in-the-margin Bible this author owns is a large print, \$8.00 *KJV* Bible purchased at Wal-Mart nearly 25 years ago. I carry my "Scofield when away from home. Yet despite my familiarity with and confidence in the *KJV* I am not convinced of the claims of exclusivity assumed by *KJVOP's*. My history as a Bible student also includes significant time reading the *NKJV* and *The Complete Jewish Bible*. In younger years I read *The Living Bible*, and occasionally the *RSV*. Only recently, based on Bible scholar recommendation, have I begun to reference the *NASB*.

Please see the writer's **Statement of Belief** posted at the website www.pprsinc.com. My beliefs reflect orthodox biblical truth and faith. But how can this be, if in fact, I am not exclusively taught by what *KJVOP's* claim is exclusively God's Word?!" The answer is intuitive. God's truth is always available to the reader --of nearly any Bible version. **Vital to correct understanding of God's truth is not the version of it read.** Our beliefs are a result of a range of additional influences, not just our preferred Bible. Bias, life experience, reading comprehension, susceptibility to peer influence, exposure to extra-biblical works all contribute to beliefs, not just our preferred Bible version.

II OVERVIEW

A. What Characterizes the KJV Only Controversy?

1. Peter Ruckman Influence: An Unfortunate Association

Succinctly, *KJVOT* teaches that all other Bibles are either partially or completely corrupted due to a belief that both the translated texts used to write those Bibles and the persons translating them were/are corrupted and not 'approved' by God. *KJVOP's* believe there is a perfection and finality which God 'exclusively

imprinted' on every page of a 1611 Bible since God did approve the texts used and the men of the Committee. Evidence offered by *KJVOP*'s to refute the validity of other versions ranges from minor complaints about verse numbering to major concerns about theology and doctrine they claim are damaged or changed. *The exact words as penned in 1611 are very, very important to these individuals.*⁵ One of the earliest and most irrational spokespersons for *KJVOT* is Peter Ruckman, who wrote "...So called mistakes in the A. V. 1611 are [not errors but instead are actually] advanced revelation!" (16)⁶ Dr. Ruckman is held up as a key founding father of *KJVOT*.⁷ While some do disavow Ruckman, the saying applies: *KJVO* apples do not fall far from the tree.

2. Relevant or Irrelevant Discussion?

From an academic viewpoint, an investigation of the Bible version controversy may appear inconsequential, prior correction of exclusivist theory having deflated its claims. However, in the 'real world' of those serving as pastors, evangelists, teachers and missionaries, the topic is often still debated, especially after the release of the *TNIV* New Testament. Depending on where one lives and in which circles of influence one moves, Bible versions can still spark great controversy. This writer lives in Appalachia, the enigmatic area often shrouded in secret and superstition.⁸ Here, a lack of loyalty to Fundamental beliefs is considered worth breaking fellowship over --dismissing pastors and splitting congregations. And *KJVOT* is chief among these beliefs. This research intends to demonstrate *KJV exclusivity* is not a legitimate tenant of normative, biblical Theology and Doctrine, but instead, is in error, is divisive, and serves only to create a distraction from the work to which each is called --that of winning souls while there is still day.

3. The "Next Generation" of the Controversy

The issue of Bible versions will not likely fade from heated discussion. With increasingly accurate archaeological research and broader-based use of the World Wide Web for independent investigation, researchers are provided more opportunity to translate the Scriptures directly from the Greek and Hebrew. This could ensure a continuing stream of additional translations and versions. Bible students will be challenged to make choices. Certainly, the implications of this

⁵ Regrettably, this writer continues to meet, nine years the first research, those who primarily focus on repeating false or inconclusive facts, on saving face, on beating dead horses --regardless of information that correctly identifies the strengths and weaknesses of *all* versions --the *King James* included. Many also do not understand that literary style, nuanced meaning, semantics, etc. all affect varied word choices in versions yet these variations do not rob the reader of receiving the writer-intended meaning. It's time for these exclusivists to admit their stand is unwarranted, biased, unsupported by God's Word, and even at odds with the non-exclusivist statement penned by the *AV* Committee.

⁶ John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *The Facts on the King James Only Debate* (Eugene, Harvest House, 1996) p. 15

⁷ John 8:41a

⁸ This is the region written about in the early 1900's story of *Christy*, the mountain missionary woman.

controversy need to be studied for the Body's sake. As new versions and manuscript translations are introduced, discord will continue --*not* because the various versions engender discord --*but* because those who argue against *any* version other than the English *KJV* incorrectly characterize the version controversy as the central battle from which all other religious battles emerge.⁹ Often using Bible versions as a litmus test for fellowship some even claim God's Word will be replaced by 'devil bibles' unless 'true and faithful believers' influence the next generation to maintain the primacy of the *KJV*.¹⁰ But the LORD does not support such tactics. Insecurity is not the mark of sheep cared for by shepherds providing peace and confidence that God's sovereign power is supreme over man's puny efforts, either to defend, or to distort His Word.

4. The Prior Generation of the Controversy

Similar opposition as this modern *KJVOT* existed during the Renaissance. "Translations of the Bible prior to the work of William Tyndale were done from the Latin text, which was itself a translation of the original Greek and Hebrew...With the dawn of the Renaissance however, renewed interest in the classics made the Greek and Hebrew texts available once again. By translating from the original languages, Tyndale helped to *improve the accuracy of English Bibles and set a new standard for Bible translation.*"¹¹ As with all translators, writers, and editors - before and after Tyndale --his work was vehemently resisted. Ironically, his work was key in the chain of events leading to the work of the 1611 Committee, despite resistance to change from the Latin status quo. This same competitive spirit continues to influence this modern version of the controversy.

But today, we have the highest standards for translation and revision¹², with more opportunity to consider further changes, that if accurate, do enhance, clarify and improve communication of the divine Word. Of note is a recent re-discovery of the better translation of 2 Thess 2:3's "falling away"¹³ taught by Beza and others.

B. What Are Some Virtues of Varied Bible Versions?

1. Do Other Versions Offer Legitimate, Enhanced Clarity?

Is it wise to read and study various Bible versions or, is *there only one version of God's revealed, written truth?* Writers of other versions claim their work does benefit those not able to readily comprehend the *KJV* or at least find it difficult to

⁹ G. A. Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions* (Munroe Falls, AV Publications, 1993), passim

¹⁰ Pastor James Jones, *KJVO* conference lecturer, "King James Bible Conference", Grace Baptist Church

¹¹ Phillip W. Comfort, *Quicknotes™ English Bible Versions* (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2000), p.7

¹² Bibles International® is a leader in establishing translation standards that "...render the written Word of God as accurately as possible." *Anchor Points for Scripture Translation Work*, Grand Rapids, Bible Society of Baptist Mid-Missions, 1988. See **Appendix B** for seven principles to guide translation work.

¹³ The Greek is "departure" of the church. See Eternal Ministries, Inc., Rincon, GA, eternalministries.org

navigate the Old English language. G.E.M. (Gospel Evangelism Ministries)¹⁴ provides an alternate edition of the *KJV*. Craig Jacobs, publisher of the *King James Easy-Reading Bible*, believes the *KJV* stands above all other versions in its faithfulness to the original texts. In this sense, he is a *KJVOP*. However, he has replaced the thee's, thy's and thou's with modern forms of those words, as well as changed the -eth, -ith, -est, etc. word endings. These substitutions provide clarity for the reader, allowing them to read faster and with increased comprehension, since they do not need to think or speak in words that are foreign to modern thought, speech and tempo.

Likewise, this writer agrees with the editors of the *New King James Bible* who chose to capitalize pronouns for deity, while the *KJV* does not. **This is certainly an improvement.**¹⁵ There *are* legitimate reasons why individuals and committees revise Bible versions, before and after 1611. Man's deficient translation *is* amendable while also ensuring revelation is preserved. **But *preservation* is a fact of spiritual operation,** not a man-deemed preservation tied to only one version.

2. Is God's Word *Finally* Preserved or *Always* Preserved?

Is it 'permissible' to revise, re-translate or abridge any Bible version? According to *KJVOP*'s ANY change from the 1611 text constitutes an attempt to 'reinvent' the truth of God's Word, violating Scriptural prohibition.¹⁶ But two pertinent questions come to mind. First, who or what is being consulted *for* permission? This writer observes the obvious agenda of *KJVOP*'s to actually *speak for, and judge in God's place* when they insist 1611 is the date God chose to intern His Word. Second, we must consider whether it is actually possible to change or corrupt what is already **perfectly sealed in heaven** --the sovereign, eternal Word of God. This writer agrees it is not possible to alter, change, or obliterate the truth of the Living Word¹⁷. Professor Wallace states: "It is not within the capacity of man to corrupt the Scriptures."¹⁸ --not even if one sets out to accomplish just that. God's Word preserved is truth. Christ Jesus is that truth. Even with a poor quality 'picture' of Him, a deficient rendering of truth, He remains perfect, revealed truth.

What is the purpose of reading and studying the Bible?¹⁹ According to 2 Tim 3:16 it is to be instructed in doctrine, to be reprov'd, to be corrected, to be instructed in righteousness. **God does not design the process to fail. And, most assuredly,**

¹⁴ *King James Easy-Reading Study Bible* (Goodyear, G.E. M. Publications, 2001)

¹⁵ The *King James Easy-Reading Study Bible* also capitalizes pronouns denoting deity.

¹⁶ Revelation 22:18-19

¹⁷ Psalm 100:5, 117:2

¹⁸ Daniel B. Wallace, Greek Textual Criticism expert, "*King James Controversy Revisited*" televised debate, "The John Ankerberg Show", 1995, 2002.

¹⁹ 2 Timothy 3:16

He has not left it in the hands of imperfect men to safeguard His process.²⁰ He does not depend on man to determine the fact of preservation. The limitations, deficits, incongruities and even out right errors of *any* version, including the *KJV*, are discernable to a true Bible student, a Berean believer, “studying to show themselves approved.” (Acts 17:10-11 and 2 Timothy 2:15)

3. Do *KJVOP*'s Recognize Actual Attempts to Change the Word?

While this writer believes most other English Bibles are acceptable versions of the written Word of God, there is actually a heretical movement designed to accomplish exactly what *KJVOP*'s claim is the result of other versions --the desecration of Holy writ. Regarding the Jesus Seminar, the ‘work’ of these men qualifies as entirely unbiblical, and in this writer’s opinion, is heretical. The same false spirits that cast lots for Christ’s robe at Calvary now cast lots to decide which of Christ’s words should be removed from Scripture! These ‘scholars’ meet bi-annually to decide, based on research, whether Christ “*may* have said, *may* not have said, probably *did not say*, or *certainly did not* say the words appearing in red, the same words Bible believers understand are directly spoken by Christ.”²¹ *KJVOP*'s would do well to expose clearly errant works such as this, rather than denounce some who are their brothers in Christ, whose reward for Bible version work may be greater than their critics admit.

4. Is There Sound Basis for Writing Most Bible Versions?

A common stated motive for writing Bible versions has been the writer(s) desire to write either a more literal or less literal translation of the original languages. Both ends of the Literal/Dynamic Equivalent continuum have their advantages and disadvantages in providing clarity and accuracy for the Bible student. “In short, literal translations make great study Bibles (because of their consistency of wording) but poor reading Bibles (because of their lack of readability and emotive quality.) Because of this, an increasing number of translators up through the last century have turned to the thought-for-thought dynamic equivalent²² approach in an attempt to produce translations that are both reliable and readable --that is, they reliably convey the meaning of the text without sacrificing its readability.”²³

²⁰ Jude 3 directs we "contend for the faith", prove it. **Contend is to affirm. Defend means to guard.**

²¹ The Jesus Seminar, a Santa Rosa California “fellowship of international scholars”, began in 1985. See their work at www.westarinstitute.org.

²² This is not "broad spectrum dynamic equivalence" that misinterprets Scripture, producing paraphrased versions that fail to remain faithful to the revealed Word." Bible Society of Baptist Mid-Missions, Grand Rapids, 1988, p. 19 **See Appendix B** for translation / revision standards.

²³ Phillip Comfort, *English Bible Versions*, p. 3-4.

5. Only God Knows the Heart Motives of Version Writers

This writer proposes the following is true about the intention of most Bible translators and revisionists, at least up till now: The valid desire to apprehend the truth of the Living Word, to express it by unique combinations of the infinite number of words languages provide. This cannot be characterized, at least at face value, as a mark of evil intent. The marvelous power of God's Word to meet man's longing to know and embrace His truth is surely a valid motivator to attempt the daunting task of producing yet another Bible version.²⁴ So unless *KJVOP*'s can demonstrate this truthful, positive motive NEVER applies to other writers....there is no footing for their claim other versions are not true revelation.

III INTRODUCTION

A. A Sample Text Demonstrates the KJVO Complaint

To demonstrate the controversy, nine varied wordings of Proverbs 24:1 are listed:

"Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them."	<i>KJV</i>
"Be not envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them."	<i>Amplified</i>
"Do not be envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them."	<i>NAS</i>
"Do not envy wicked men, do not desire their company."	<i>NIV</i>
"Do not be envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them."	<i>NKJV</i>
"Don't be envious of evil people, and don't desire to be with them."	<i>CJB</i>
"Be not envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them."	<i>RSV</i>
"Don't envy godless men; don't even enjoy their company."	<i>TLB</i>
"Make no friendship with a wrathful man, lest you learn his ways and entangle yourself in a snare."	<i>Reader's Digest Bible condensed from the RSV</i>

KJVOT claims all versions except the *KJV* change the Word of God, that these variations 'speak' meanings for this verse which do not reflect God's intended meaning. *KJVOT* claims the effect of these changes ranges from, at minimum -- unnecessary confusion for the Bible student, to at worst --outright blasphemy.²⁵ Yet, it is obvious these and many other variant examples convey the same, not different thought and meaning.

B. "Autographs are the Perfect Blueprint & the Copies are the House"

This writer agrees with most conservative theologians that it is "...only the original autographs that are both inspired *and* inerrant. But how do we know what represents the originals? We know by the collective body of the available and extant manuscripts. Certainly, X, Y or Z wording may vary in versions from the autographs (which are no longer available.) But we know God's self-proclamation of His eternal Word promises that He compensates for man's

²⁴ This writer is not contradicting herself when she writes in "**13 Teachings**" that there is discounted and diminished value in some other versions. Based on the deficiencies evident in *The Message*, she agrees it is apparently very, very difficult to accurately re-state divine truth without mangling it. This paraphrase and other work may trend away from accuracy and toward mangling God's revelation.

²⁵ Gail Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions*, Chapter 2 and passim

deficient handling of the Word. He preserves Scripture throughout time. Despite variations, we are not left with only 'lost' or 'changed' theology and doctrine in other Bible versions.

C. Literal and Dynamic Spectrum

According to Ken Barker, Editor of the *NIV*, the many Bibles published today range "...from those which are nearly exact *literal* equivalents of the Hebrew and Greek to versions which generally paraphrase and freely interpret the original languages. The *KJV*, the *NKJV* and the *NASB* are examples of the more literal end of the spectrum; the *Good News for Modern Man* and the *Living Bible* are examples of paraphrased, dynamic equivalents. The *NIV* is somewhere in the middle. The *NIV* committee lists their work as a "balanced, eclectic approach to interpreting the original texts."²⁶

D. Acceptable Tests of Credibility

Is there a 'test' of credibility for Bible versions? Certainly, each editor or team states **they believe their work is credible** (the only exception this writer found is Dr. Frank Logsdon,²⁷ Editorial Board, *NASB*, who, after the fact, says he's 'repented' of his prior work.) Aside from this odd confession, it is incumbent upon any who claim a version is not God's Word, to prove that, not simply assert that bias. Providing actual proof that another version is corrupt is a key failure of the KJVO movement. Objective review of the *NKJV* and *NASB* rank them at least as credible as the *KJV*, if not more so in some of their consistent features.²⁸

Dr. David Stern writes a forty-four page Introduction to his *Complete Jewish Bible*. (An Introduction this writer finds as valuable as some entire commentaries.) Dr. Stern explains how we know the Bible is God's Word. **"Because it claims to be, it seems to be, and it proves to be"** [God's Word].²⁹ He describes in detail the methodology and principles guiding his translation work, arriving at the finished work of the *CJB*.^{30 31} Transparency in the work is credible proof for modern versions that match *King James* standards.

²⁶ Kenneth Barker, Editor of the *NIV*, guest on "*King James Controversy Revisited*"

²⁷ G. A. Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions*, endorsement quote, no page number

²⁸ John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *Facts on the King James Only Debate*, p. 18, quoting James White's *The King James Controversy*

²⁹ David Stern, *Complete Jewish Bible*, p. xxvi

³⁰ *ibid*, Introduction, *passim*

³¹ Two thirds of a Bible is the Old Testament. The *CJB* is a combination of Dr. Stern's use of the Jewish Publication Society's translation of the Masoretic Text (accepted by *KJVOP*'s) and his New Testament translation of the Greek. It is Christ Himself who will judge Dr. Stern's work. God did not appoint any man to judge another's work. No *KJVOP* is qualified to say with certainty that X or Y version is not God's Word, if in fact, it claims to be a faithful representation of the 66 Book canon.

J. B. Phillips³² in the Foreword to *The New Testament in Modern English* cites "...three necessary tests which any work of transference from one language to another must pass before it can be classed as good translation. First, is simply that it must not sound like a translation at all. "If it is skillfully done, and we are not previously informed, we should be quite unaware that it *is* a translation, even though the work we are reading is far distant from us in both time and place....the second test is that a translator does his work with the least possible obtrusion of his own personality. The third and final test....is that of being able to produce in the hearts and minds of his readers an effect equivalent to that produced by the writer upon his original readers."³³ This criteria is met in more than just the *KJV*.

Likewise, Craig Jacobs, publisher of the *King James Easy-Reading Study Bible* includes notes to validate his work (even though the strict criteria set forth by *KJVOT* would likely rule out this Bible being a "true" *King James Version*.) Jacob's work does qualify as a legitimate *KJV*, despite his changes. Do thee's replaced with you's constitute a changed Bible? I think not. Where do we draw the line between what is an improvement (Jacob's work) and what is a false work? *KJVOP*'s fail to assess this accurately. They simply nix all other versions.

E. Theological Consideration

1. Doctrine of the Word of God Compares Belief to Disbelief

Here is where this writer believes discussion of versions belongs. If rightly viewed through theology's lens, the issue is clearly seen, understood and resolved. Dr. Christopher Morse does not address the Bible version controversy, per se, in his book, *Not Every Spirit: A Dogmatics of Christian Disbelief*. But his work sheds light on the issue by allowing the Word to speak for itself. By citing 2 Corinthians 4:6, "For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ", Morse illustrates how this text is a 'mini theology' of the Doctrine of the Word of God.³⁴ **Scripture self-declares** in 2 Cor 4:6 its own identity, purpose and effect, logically demonstrating **why the *KJV* cannot be the sole, exclusive Word of God**. Following is a paraphrased outline of 2 Cor 4:6:

- a. **God speaks**
- b. **God speaks through words** alluding to Creation
- c. **God's words call forth and accomplish**
- d. **God's called forth words are confirmed, internally illuminated in man**
- e. **Illumination, the light of the glory of the knowledge of God, is revealed to man through the Word**

³² J. B. Phillips, *The New Testament in Modern English* (London, Geoffrey Bles, 1960)

³³ *ibid*, p. vii

³⁴ Christopher Morse, *Not Every Spirit: A Dogmatics of Christian Disbelief* (Valley Forge, Trinity Press International, 1994), p. 87

f. Revealed, glorified knowledge of God is focused in Jesus Christ

Morse further summarizes *disbeliefs* that are logically and naturally deduced from *positive beliefs* about the Word. (Agreeing with Dr. Morse, this writer believes it is necessary to know what we believe the Bible affirms, and also what we believe the Bible *refutes* as error.) Regarding the Doctrine of the Word of God, Dr. Morse lists seventeen disbeliefs, four of which are pertinent to the version controversy:

No. 2 "Christian faith **refuses to** believe all teachings that tend to **equate the Word of God with some object**, including the Bible, and thus turn God into a thing." [Claiming there is only one version of the Bible turns it into an object.]

No. 4 "Christian faith **refuses to** believe any claim that **God's Word can be confined** and is not now free to speak wherever and as God chooses." [God's Word is dynamic; and cannot be confined in a static state by man.]

No. 5 "Christian faith **refuses to** believe that **God has no new things to say through the continuing proclamation of the canonical Scripture as God's living voice.**" [Fidelity to the canon and its doctrine is best test of Bible versions.]

No. 14 "Christian faith **refuses to** believe that **there is any Word of God that does not bear witness to the way, the truth and the life** revealed in Jesus Christ." [Criteria of a true Bible requires it must reveal to the reader Christ Jesus.]

This discussion of belief and disbelief regarding the Doctrine of the Bible means the **test of a Bible version is its witness to Christ Jesus**. "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." (1 Cor 2:2) *KJVOT* does not concede Christ revealed is the basis of version validity, preferring instead to claim He is missing or maligned in other than the *KJV*.

2. The Perfect Revelation: Inspired, Verbal, Plenary, Inerrant

KJVOP's claim this perfection exists only in the *KJV*--and no other version. Yet credible scholars, theologians, and 2 Timothy 2:15 Bible students know this perfection is controlled by the Holy Spirit, with no evidence He limits the attributes of perfection to one version. "Excellent" is often used to describe the *KJV*. Without argument, the *KJV* is an excellent Bible. *Excellence however, is not perfection*. Perfection requires a unique standard, which in this case, is the original autographs --not the work of fallible humans³⁵ deemed inspired as the first authors. Believing perfect inerrancy bridges from the autographs to the man-convened, man-controlled, man-certified *AV* Committee is entirely untenable.

3. Many Components Characterize the Doctrine of the Bible

³⁵ This is not a slight to the integrity or the intelligence of the *AV* Committee. But honest inquiry must ask: what is the historical evidence to support *KJVOT*? Scripture records **its own proof of perfection**. But where in the work of the 1611 Committee is this claim? **No where**. Those men refused to assume their work was exclusive or perfect, the very claim *KJVOP*'s would have us believe.

Broad, not narrow, theological discussion provides the best framework to pin down this controversy. The study of Bibliology, with its sub-components, provide the composite picture of the Doctrine of the Bible. Together, they describe the true defining parameters of divine revelation. **Preservation is only one of the parameters.** The parameters are revelation, inspiration, canonicity, authority, illumination, animation, preservation, interpretation, dispensations, covenants, evidences, criticism. The veracity of any Bible version is assessed by comparing all these parameters, not just preservation. In their argument, *KJVOP's* do not address the full range, typically covering only inspiration, interpretation and preservation. The most extreme of the arguments actually proposes that divine revelation and inspiration apply to the work of the *AV* Committee, but with absolutely no evidence provided to support that claim.³⁶

- ***First Major Point:*** It is not possible to prove the *KJV* is the ***exclusive*** Word of God by **demonstrating** that certain words do not appear in or are changed in X or Y versions. Instead, **doctrinal truths deduced from words in those versions must be identified**, determining whether these reflect received truth. But this type of analysis is much more difficult to accomplish than merely making charts of missing words or verses. Attempting to stack evidence that a version is not a valid Bible, based on word changes, even when meaning and truth remain in tact, is poor strategy, if the goal is to prove *KJV* exclusivity theory.

F. Three Valid Purposes for Other Bible Versions

For at least three reasons individuals and committees attempt valid Bible revision. They do so in order to:

1. bring comprehensible meaning to obscure or nonsensical passages. *KJV* adherence to literal interpretation as opposed to dynamic equivalent interpretation often obscures meaning.³⁷ For example, "The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth." (Matthew 27:44) There is no good literal translation from the Greek to express the plain meaning, i.e., "They reviled Him" (a non-*KJV* term). Among many examples, this indicates the value that comes from reading such passages in other versions. "....the Greek words

³⁶ These ultra-*KJVOP's* admit, it is only as a matter of 'faith' that divine revelation and inspiration are attributed to the *KJV*. They fail to understand we are called to place our faith in Jesus Christ alone. He is the embodiment of the truth of the Living Word. If all the Bibles in the world were destroyed, we would still be saved in Christ. As was recently expressed by a young girl testifying that she's learning that it is entirely our relationship with Jesus, i.e., having ***Him*** --and not our faith, our salvation, or our witness --that is the reality of truly ***being in Christ***.

³⁷ Some who read this immediately react with "No!", claiming all one must do is keep reading and eventually understanding will come. *KJVOP's* claim scientific analysis verifies the *KJV* is largely written in language understandable by a ninth grader. But this does not take into consideration the fact that even ninth grade reading comprehension is beyond the average citizen in western culture. "Dumbing down" has changed the culture from literate to nearly-non-literate, with people preferring to think and send and receive ideas in images, icons, code and abbreviations rather than words and punctuated sentences that communicate ideas beyond the most basic. Reading the Bible does not produce meaning if what is read cannot be understood. Complexity simplified is good! This is valid rationale for version revision.

for cast the same in his teeth mean simply, "abused Him".³⁸ Not only did the *AV* Committee fail to select the most obvious correct and most meaningful rendering of the Greek, "abused Him", but they obscured the meaning of the text with what they did select --all because it fit the literal interpretation." Other versions capture for the Bible student better wording that leads toward, not away from correct understanding.³⁹ (This writer includes this example not to 'prove' the King James is in error but to demonstrate that it is *KJVOP*'s who claim it is other versions that are in error. But the facts do not support their theory.)

2. correct inaccuracies in other versions. For example, "Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri king of Israel. (2 Kings 8:26 and 2 Chronicles 22:2). Athaliah is accurately listed as the granddaughter in other versions.⁴⁰ It's always valid to correct factual error. Doing so improves the understanding of, the quality of, and the credibility of a work.

3. change literal words to words that bring dignity to passages which Bible detractors claim prove God's Word is "blasphemous, vile, filthy." For example, in Isaiah 36:12 and 2 Kings 18:27, the word p-i-s-s appears in the *KJV*. The word has been changed to "waste" in other versions -with no loss of the true meaning or the intensity of the passage⁴¹ but with less shocking vulgarity for the reader.

Valid reasons for version revision also source to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Using previously unavailable information to make legitimate change is done with confidence because revisers know established orthodox theology and doctrine are not harmed or altered by those changes. And yet, *KJVOP*'s claim otherwise, saying not only have some of these Scrolls been proven corrupt but, they are certain future discoveries sourced to the Scrolls will also be corrupt [!] Illogically, *KJVOP*'s distrust even correction of texts indicated by study of the 5,000+ New Testament manuscripts, along with distrust of non-*KJV* versions.

G. Claimed evidences in support of *KJVOT* (rebuttal answers in Section V)

1. Psalm 12:6-7

KJVOP's claim the primary evidence directing the faithful to continue the *KJV* legacy is found in this eight-verse Psalm. Verses 6-7 in the *KJV* read: "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."

2. "Lucifer: Bright Morning Star"

In 1994 I was apprised of a most disturbing claim, and one that began my journey to investigate and understand truth regarding Bible versions. *KJVOP*'s call it the

³⁸ J. B. Phillips, *The New Testament in Modern English*, p. ix.

³⁹ *The King James Controversy Revisited*

⁴⁰ *The King James Controversy Revisited*

⁴¹ *ibid*

"Morning Star" deception. "How are thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" (Isa 14:12) Among other versions, the *Amplified*, *NAS* and *NIV* leave out "Lucifer"; and according to *KJVOP*'s, thus create confusion for the reader as to whether it is Jesus or Satan referred to in the passage

3. Evil Men Are Responsible for the Text Used in Other Versions

Large on the horizon of 'evidence' found by *KJVOP*'s is their 'discovery' that 'evil men' are responsible for corrupting Greek texts and therefore contribute to 'corrupted' versions from these 'corrupted' translations. Extensive efforts have been expended to dig into the lives of these now-departed men in order to try them, convict them, and execute them. --at least their professional reputations.

4. Other Versions are Evidence of Reverting to Romanism

"The goal of the 'modernist movement' is to remove the authority of the Book and replace it with a return to man's authority. This is reverting back to the example of Romanism."⁴²

5. The Devil is Directly Behind Other Versions

"Who gave the first revised version of the Scriptures? The Serpent. He's the engineer behind all modern versions."⁴³

6. *KJV* is the Only Proof of Preservation

"If you don't believe the King James is inspired then you cannot believe the Scriptures have been preserved."⁴⁴

7. The "All Time Champion"

The long standing primacy (but measured only relatively) of the *KJV* is called "the reign of *King James*."⁴⁵ The 400 year anniversary is observed this year, 2011.

8. The 1611 *KJV* Was Changed, But Actually is Not Changed

KJVOP's claim the *KJV* has *not* been revised; therefore establishing precedent disavowing any other revision; But Thomas Strouse, proponent and defender of the *1769 revision* of the *King James* believes *that* version is the preserved Word of God based on Matthew 4:4 and John 12:48. He asks, "Where's the voice of the Lord?" He answers, "In the **traditional 1769** text, not the 1611."⁴⁶ Distortion of the historical facts of King James revision is at the heart of the difficulties with this theory. Revisions have been made, but with no acknowledgement of this fact.

⁴² Pastor James Jones, "*King James Bible Conference*", 7/14/03

⁴³ Pastor James Jones, "*King James Bible Conference*", 7/14/03. This and similar statements are frequently repeated in *KJVO* materials. Of course, it is Lucifer, the angel of false light who is the source of all evil (Luke 11:35). However, *KJVOP*'s generalize this truth, leaving its application so vague it fails to profit the Bible student needing to discern specific truth from general error.

⁴⁴ Group discussion by *KJVOP*'s, "*King James Controversy Revisited*"

⁴⁵ Joseph Chambers, 1611 *KJVOP*, guest speaker, "*King James Controversy Revisited*"

⁴⁶ Thomas Strouse, 1769 *KJVOP*, guest speaker, "*King James Controversy Revisited*"

9. Other Versions Represent "Dimmed Illumination"

"Regarding the Doctrine of Illumination, the motive of modern writers is to write a Bible a lost man can understand."⁴⁷

10. Deity of Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit Removed

Gail Riplinger and other *KJVOP*'s claim J. B. Phillips' work and that of other version writers is "swept of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit."⁴⁸ Exemplifying the following verses Riplinger claims The New Testament in Modern English (*NTME*) voids two members of the Godhead:

Luke 24:49 "And behold, I send the promise of my father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with the power from on high."
KJV

Luke 24:49 "Now I hand over to you the message of the Father. Stay in the city, then, until you are clothed with power from on high." *NTME*

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." *KJV*

John 1:1 "At the beginning God expressed Himself." *NTME*

Galatians 2:17 "But if, we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid." *KJV*

Galatians 2:17 "Now if, as we seek the real truth about justification, we find we are as much sinners as the gentiles, does that mean that Christ makes us sinners? Of course not!" *NTME*

11. The *KJV* is Necessary to Maintain Unity and Avoid Chaos

If all else fails in discussion of this controversy, *KJVOP*'s pull out their final argument: "Reading different Bible versions only confuses people. The Devil attempts to create confusion and lack of order in the body by use of other versions." (But no mention is made of reader responsibility for due diligence or common sense that agrees corporate reading is best with one version but individual study can benefit from consulting varied versions.)

IV. BACKGROUND

A. Source of Most Recent Controversy

This writer believes advances in research, communication and information storage and retrieval largely contribute to the persistence of this controversy in the past ten to fifteen years. Modern tools have provided momentum for and allowed isolated persons to ally themselves with other isolated persons and conclude they have reason to rally around this issue as well as other distracting and divergent non-issues.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ James Jones, "*King James Bible Conference*" 7-15-03

⁴⁸ G. A. Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions*, p. 450

⁴⁹ This writer acknowledges that some *KJVOP*'s believe this to be the central issue that defines all of fundamental faith. However, from my perspective, far more damage is done by insistence on breaking fellowship with those who do not agree with the theory. The Adversary certainly benefits by the distraction created by this movement --its

Often, it is a particular person who catapults a movement into wide recognition and acceptance. In the case of the recent wave of the controversy, Gail Riplinger (and a handful of men who follow her) is the main source of the contemporary controversy. This, despite the fact that credible biblical research was offered to correct *KJVOT* prior to 1980. But in 1994 Riplinger asserted, "The changes, additions and omissions discovered in the new versions have affected the health of the body of Christ and *taken it step by step from the image of God*."⁵⁰ This writer does not believe it is possible for a "re-imaging" of the body of Christ to occur. Why? Because God will gather to Him a spotless Bride. He will recognize her by the indelible marks He alone creates in her through the indwelling work of the Holy Spirit. There is no evidence from the Bible to suggest that true believers will be inspected and rejected by Christ, based on their preferred Bible version.

B. Riplinger's "Et al" Dilution of the Facts

There are very few specific references in *New Age Bible Versions* to *all* the versions listed on the book's cover. Instead, "et al" is often substituted, which only serves to reduce printed space. Examination of the book shows that eleven of the fourteen versions listed are rarely specifically cited. Most of Riplinger's complaints concentrate almost entirely on the *NIV, NASB and the NKJB*, yet she makes broad claims regarding all versions other than the King James.

C. "Money Answers All Things"

The *NIV* and the *NKJV* are the main Bibles read, after the *KJV*, if measured by total sales and placement of volumes. "Since 1987, it [the *NIV*] has ousted the *King James* Version, the best-seller for centuries --a remarkable indication of its [*NIV*'s] popularity and acceptance in the Christian community. The *New International Version*, sponsored by the New York Bible Society and published by Zondervan Publishers, has become a standard version used for private reading and pulpit reading in many English-speaking countries."⁵¹ This writer understands that it is a *competitive spirit*,⁵² rather than love for the integrity of the Scriptures, that fuels this controversy.

The Bible describes man's motives in all things, including, the version controversy: "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things."⁵³ The *NASB* reading of this verse is: "Men prepare a meal for enjoyment, and wine makes life merry, and money is the answer to everything." (*emphasis added*) *KJVOP*'s claim the ultimate reason why non-

conferences, and ministries --that exist solely for the purpose of indoctrinating any who will listen to *KJVOT*. But we are called to peace and reconciliation, not war.

⁵⁰ G. A. Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions*, p. 5

⁵¹ Philip W. Comfort, *Quicknotes™ The Origin of the Bible* (Wheaton, Tyndale House, 2000), p. 72

⁵² "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1

⁵³ Ecclesiastes 10:19 *KJV*

King James Bible versions have been produced is as simple as greed --but they cite only the assumed greed of those who've profited by other versions.⁵⁴ It appears *KJVOP*'s have not thoroughly analyzed their own hearts.

D. Bias is Universal in All Versions

In the Introduction to the *Jewish New Testament* (Section V Translation Issues) Dr. David Stern provides honest discussion of a core issue that *KJVOP*'s do not discuss: Does any writer (now, or any time since the original autographs) interject bias⁵⁵ in their work? Dr. Stern "...cautiously answers in the affirmative, on the ground that bias inevitably happens anyhow, so that...[if] one claims neutrality....[he] deludes both himself and his readers."⁵⁶ Depending on which source is read, there are those who claim the *KJV* Committee was inspired in the biblical sense, just as the original writers were inspired,⁵⁷ making this claim based on nothing more than conjecture and wishful hoping. They claim the Committee was controlled by the Holy Spirit such that no element of human bias, error, oversight, or misunderstanding made its way into their work. This is truly a preposterous claim, an elevation to perfection for these fallible men. The folly of this theory is well documented. Though few in relative number, there are clear examples of where the Committee did in fact miss the mark of perfection, with later Bible versions making changes that better reflect the meaning conveyed in the thousands of copied manuscripts. This is not an accusation that other versions "try to correct a perfect God and His Word". It means rather that valid correction of the work of imperfect men and their words is still possible, even if applied by equally imperfect yet qualified men after 1611.

V. REFUTATIONS of CLAIMED EVIDENCES of *KJVOT*

A. False Accusation by *KJVOP*'s

This writer does not agree that writers and publishers of other versions *seek to argue against the KJV, claiming it is inferior or needing to be "corrected"*.⁵⁸ A different use, or order of words in a version does not prove the *King James Bible* is being 'corrected' by these version writers. Rather, changes are often footnoted, telling why the variation is a better translation. Dr. Gipp hyper-focuses

⁵⁴ Citing that the *KJV* has no copyright (a non-impressive fact considering this is also true of many other works published during that era), *KJVOP*'s say it's simply greedy men seeking royalty rights from copyrighted versions that explains the push for other versions. Yet they ignore large profits from selling the *KJV*.

⁵⁵ Bias: an inclination that prevents unprejudiced consideration of a question. Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, 2001, p. 202

⁵⁶ David H. Stern, *Jewish New Testament* (Clarksville, Jewish New Testament Publications, 1989, pp xx - xxi.)

⁵⁷ "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21)

⁵⁸ Samuel C. Gipp, 1611 *KJV* guest, "*King James Controversy Revisited*"

on 'defending' exact words; but Gipp's 'defense' does not 'defend' God's Word. It merely defends the traditions of men. *KJVOP's* are disingenuous and incorrect if they accuse writers of other versions as guilty of "correcting God."

B. Psalm 12:6-7

Using Psalm 12 to claim exclusivity for preservation in the *KJV* is a false argument based on misinterpretation of the Hebrew. Dr. Gipp asserts historical acceptance of the *KJV* demonstrates fulfillment of Psalm 12:6-7.⁵⁹ First of all, prophecy is fulfilled. But Psalm 12 is not a prophetic text. Gipp believes verse 7 is God's command to preserve His Word; now fulfilled in the *KJV*.⁶⁰ But the accurate interpretation of the Hebrew in verse 7 refers to *people* and does not refer to *a thing*, i.e., the Scriptures. The true meaning of the word refers to the Jews. God's people are the subject of the Psalm, and their preservation in the midst of evil. Verse 6, which *does* refer to God's Word, is the vehicle of *preservation* that sustains God's people --Jew and Gentile alike. In error, Dr. Gipp asserts, "Psalm 12:7 is *not* God's promise to preserve the Jews, a promise which flourishes elsewhere in Scripture. Verse 7 is God's promise to preserve His words, and is a direct reference to those as described in Psalm 12:6."⁶¹

As evidence against this *KJVO* claim, is the margin note in the *King James Easy Reading Bible*⁶² that lists "the godly" as the meaning for "them" in verse 7. Staunch *KJV* supporters like this editor, Jacobs, corrects the error of interpreting Psalm 12 as support for *KJVOT*. Verse 7 refers to people, not the Scriptures.

"There are not a large number of errors in the *KJV* but they do exist, which is not surprising for a translation made some 400 years ago. For example, in Psalm 12:7 the translation "Thou shalt keep *them*" should be "Thou shalt keep *us*." Contextually and grammatically, the [Hebrew] pronoun refers to people, not words. Ninety-five percent of Hebrew scholars agree the *KJV* [is in] error here. (17)"⁶³

C. "Lucifer: Bright Morning Star"

This is the 'hook' that caught my attention in 1994. With no reason to doubt the concern expressed by Gail Riplinger after she reported students were failing to understand the Bibles they were reading, this writer took the complaint as a possible serious flaw uncovered in her research. However, this many years later I realize Ms. Riplinger should have informed her students that they simply had not done enough study; that they were seriously lacking in their 'big picture' grasp of

⁵⁹ Samuel Gipp, "*King James Controversy Revisited*"

⁶⁰ *ibid*

⁶¹ Samuel Gipp, *The Answer Book: A Help Book for Christians* (Northfield, Day Star Publ., 1989), p. 86

⁶² *King James Easy-Reading Study Bible*, p.848

⁶³ John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *The Facts on the King James Only Debate*, p. 15

God's Word. Any serious reader can find the link of Scriptures associated with this Isaiah text, including Ezekiel 28:2 and 14 and Daniel 8:10. There is no way a discerning Bible student could miss the clear difference between Scripture referring to Christ and Scripture referring to Anti-Christ. We are called to study.

D. Evil Men Are Responsible for the Text Used in Other Versions

Regarding accusations against now-departed souls, this writer is reminded of similar accusations against J. B. Philips. (His *New Testament in Modern English* was a great source of comfort to me decades ago.) But according to Riplinger, we must "...recall he [Philips] is a voiceless, necromancer, who suffered from clinical psychosis."⁶⁴ Based on this accusation (that cannot be corroborated), is my earlier study of God's Word using Philips' translation a mark against my mental soundness also? No doctrine I've learned, all these years later, suffers in my understanding, resulting from any deficiencies of this "necromancer's" translation. If this man had serious defects in walk or witness, apparently God protected His Word in Philips' version. It is God, and not *KJVOP*'s, who will judge Philips' work.

Regarding the most maligned of all men by *KJVOP*'s, Riplinger writes, "A cannon ball, in the form of a *new* and altered Greek New Testament text, was catapulted in the 1880's by two pirates, Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort; it [their 'altered' Greek text] carries its doctrinal deathblow into the laps of unsuspecting Christians holding translations of the text."⁶⁵ Carried throughout her and other *KJVOP*'s work is this same kind of sensational, dramatic rhetoric. Unfortunately, much of their research is not reasonably supported by the best standards and most accurate facts. See *God's Word in Our Hands* for correction.

KJVOT teaches no good comes from the work of Westcott/Hort. But how far do we go to avoid 'guilt by association'? The damaging effects of embracing *KJVOT* are significant. Conspiratorial assumptions require us to 'look over our shoulders' to make sure no one is sabotaging our Bible study. This writer agrees with conservative Bible scholars who embrace the obvious value of the *KJV*, but who nonetheless do not support the exclusivity theory believed by *KJVO* proponents. "We can be sure today that we have that which is as close to the autographs as anything possibly can be; and I believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the autographs --that is, the *original autographs*."⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions*, p. 548

⁶⁵ *ibid*, p. 397

⁶⁶ J. Vernon McGee, *Guidelines for the Understanding of the Scriptures* (Thru the Bible Network, p. 14)

E. Other Versions are Evidence of Reverting to Romanism

This provocative claim requires evidence that is lacking. *KJVOT* assumes other versions lead the reader to assign authority beyond God's Word, embracing Papal authority. But the fundamental principle of *sola scriptura* is *not* unique to the *KJV*. What is the rationale offered to support evidence for this complaint? *KJVOP's* claim that valid Textual Criticism leads to the embrace an anti-Protestant history. Specifically, it is charged that Textual Criticism leads to Catholic Gnosticism. Romanism and Gnosticism are certainly not biblical; yet there is no evidence other Bible versions lead the reader to embrace these errors.

F. The Devil is Directly Behind Other Versions! (An Opinion)

Typically, alarmist cries are offered instead of honest *proof* for *KJVOT*. We are all entitled to our own opinions --but we are not entitled to our own facts. *KJVOP's* typically begin and end their short arguments with claims that are impossible to verify. Therefore, they are self-defeated by their flamboyant sensationalism, merely denouncing other versions. To begin their argument, proponents say, "Our faith is *in* the Word."⁶⁷ Doesn't this sound good? But it's not true. Our faith is *in the person of Jesus Christ*, the Living Word, the Logos. The Word of God is *not* synonymous with a singular Bible --or else all versions other than the autographs would not be true Holy Writ. This confusion regarding what is the Word of God obviously accounts for much of the error, the illogic of *KJVOT*. False reasoning leads these persons to make God's Word an *object* of faith. This invites idolatry. This is why God did not preserve the Ten Commandment tablets. If so, those tablets would also be used in idolatrous worship. The nature of idolatrous man is such that *if* the Word of God were 'contained' in any one 'package', e.g. the *KJ* Bible, we would then desire to worship that repository, just as many idolatrously worship the Shroud of Turin. Idolatry follows from 'enshrining' God's eternal truth in only one temporal, physical vessel.

G. *KJVOT* Is the Only Proof of a Preserved Bible

Without appearing shallow or trite regarding this serious topic, this writer must ask whether *KJVOP's* understand how man's attempt to 'pickle' God's Word is not commensurate with God's preservation of His Word. (Yes, this is an intended pun.) Consider man's ability to "preserve". Formaldehyde is "a colorless pungent gas used in solution as a strong disinfectant and preservative."⁶⁸ Formaldehyde certainly does preserve well but it also destroys the fragrance, beauty and life of that which it preserves. Similarly, by not granting the possibility of other versions as valid wording of God's truth, *KJVOP's*, in effect, try to 'pickle' God's Word -- preventing any other fragrance, beauty and life to be revealed. Here is what we

⁶⁷ Pastor Wayne Ownby, *KJVOP*, host of the "*King James Bible Conference*", 7/16/03

⁶⁸ *Webster's New World Dictionary*, Second College Edition (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1984)

must not lose sight of: *Preservation is only one proof of divine inspiration.* Following are texts which proclaim God's preservation of His Word; None of these rely on the 'pickling' efforts of man:

1. "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven."⁶⁹ [This means, long before the *KJV* Committee completed their work the truth of Scripture was established.]

2. "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."⁷⁰ [This means it is false to believe that man has the power to either (positively) 'pickle' or (negatively) pervert God's Word.]

3. "...having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever..."⁷¹ [The incorruptible seed is Christ Jesus Himself; We are born again of His seed and His eternal Word. This is strong evidence that refutes claims man can corrupt God's Word.]

4. "And it came to pass, *that* when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that *was* on the hearth. Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, *neither* the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words...Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words."⁷² [There is no precedent to believe the Word of God is able to be destroyed, either figuratively or literally, including when "many like words are added. Reading, speaking, thinking God's truth in varying words does NOT destroy or alter it.]

5. "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished."⁷³ [Shamefully, KJVOP's actually exhibit **more confidence in man than God.** But no human is charged with responsibility for the integrity of God's Word.]

Further, preservation has been assured by 1) repeated copying 2) extant distribution and 3) re-gathering of over 5,400 manuscripts over a thousand years. Manuscripts were/are not housed in one location, under any one person's control, thus eliminating the possibility of tampering with the **whole** of Scripture.

⁶⁹ Psalm 119:89, *NASB*

⁷⁰ Matthew 24:35 *NKJV*

⁷¹ 1 Peter 1:23 *NKJV*

⁷² Jeremiah 36:23-24, 27, 28a, 32 *KJV*

⁷³ Matthew 5:18 *NASB*

The integrity of God's Word is preserved in the **total body of manuscripts**, hidden in diverse places over a long period of time.

H. **"The All Time Champion" is Only a Relative Concept**
It is not logical or believable to agree with *KJVOT* based on the "400 years" premise. *KJVOP's* fail to understand the obvious factors that account for why the well-funded *AV* remained unchallenged until the last century. It was prior, limited access to conduct research, to study source language, to print in quantity, to use technology, and to mass distribute that factually explains the *King James* "reign".

I. ***KJV* Changed, But Not Changed**

It is simply not true that the *King James* we read today is the same as penned by the 1611 Committee. (See **Appendix C** for the detailed history of changes after 1611.) Careful research of this fact reveals that within just a few years after 1611 revisers were 'tweeking' the work of that Committee. And it was not rivals that sought to produce an entirely different version. There are multiple dates for *King James* Bibles. In effect, the *King James* has evolved over time. It has been revised, even if not extensively, to produce new versions. And by virtue of these small revisions, it is a fact there are different versions of the *AV*. As an example, Strouse's preference for the 1769 version merely indicates every one has their own preferred Bible version. Failure to acknowledge this reality only causes strife among the body of Christ. But *KJVOP's* do not admit to these documented facts. **It is the 1769 version that is sold today as the 1611 King James Bible.** In other areas of life, this cover up would qualify as fraud. If *KJVOP's* would own responsibility for revealing all, rather than selected facts, they would gain more respect from those who have adequately researched this controversy.

J. **Other Versions Represent "Dimmed Illumination"** (Another opinion.)

It is wearisome to hear the nebulous and vague criticism leveled at all non King James versions. How is it possible that this Pastor fails to understand it is precisely the lost man who must understand God's Word ?! If lost souls do not understand divine revelation, they will not respond to its call.

K. **Deity of Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit Removed**
(See Section VI, letter E)

VI. **ADDITIONAL REFUTATIONS of *KJVOT***

A. **Inspiration Must Be Uniformly Defined and Acknowledged**

KJVOP's draw incorrect correlation between the Doctrine of Inspiration (2 Peter 1:21) and modern day preservation, defining that Doctrine not only in the universally acknowledged sense, but extending that anointing to the writers of

only one latter history translation --the *KJV*.⁷⁴ But in reality, *KJVOP*'s are able to make this statement *only as a matter of faith*, not documented proof--and this 'faith' is held despite all objective evidence against it. "If God *inspired* one text, He must have *preserved* one Bible."⁷⁵ This supposition is both illogical and unproven. This is known: "The Scriptures are indestructible. God who chose to provide the inspired revelation will see to its preservation."⁷⁶

B. Ethnocentrism Not Compatible with Divine Revelation

A cornerstone of *KJVOT* is the assumption that *English is the perfect language divinely determined by God as the final language of the Bible*. It is claimed to be the most advanced, pure language. But if this were the case, God would have introduced English into man's linguistic vocabulary at the time revelation was first received. Rather, it is biblical Hebrew that is the closest to a 'pure' language. There are no swear words. When a Jew speaking Hebrew wants to swear, he must borrow words from other languages. Based on unfounded confidence in English, fear is expressed that translating *from* English somehow 'dilutes' or even 'pollutes' the Word. This ethnocentrism is puzzling. This writer finds nothing in the Bible to substantiate this fabrication. Dr. Gipp was asked what a foreigner would need to do if they desired to read the *King James Bible* but did not read English. "Learn English", was his matter of fact answer.⁷⁷ This perspective does not benefit missionaries carrying the hope of the gospel to non-English speaking people. God's Word is never limited in time or location to a particular language.

C. Excellence is Not Perfection

Prior to moving to Appalachia this writer did not meet *KJVOP*'s. Over a thirty year period, living in five states, I've known believers who understand that even the *1611 Committee denied inerrancy or inspiration for their work*. "Actually, if we examine what the KJV translators stated about their [own] translation, the proof rests entirely against the *KJVO* camp. The translators made no claims for divine inspiration; indeed, they frankly conceded theirs was *not* a perfect translation."⁷⁸ "...it is plain to see that the *King James* translators went through a process of changing and correcting their own translation to try to make it better. Obviously, if divine inspiration had been on these men, there would have been no need for this [revising]."⁷⁹

"They [the *KJV* Committee] admitted the eclectic revision process produced a

⁷⁴ Samuel Gipp, Joseph Chambers, "*King James Controversy Revisited*"

⁷⁵ Samuel Gipp, "*King James Controversy Revisited*"

⁷⁶ The writer's **Bibliology Course Study Guide Outline**, Chafer Theological Seminary, page 53.

⁷⁷ Samuel Gipp, "*King James Controversy Revisited*"

⁷⁸ John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *The Facts on the King James Only Debate*, p. 11

⁷⁹ *ibid*, pp. 13-14

composite, with the stated intent to retain all of the value of previous work."⁸⁰ The evidence does not support the theory which claims the *KJV* is the exclusive, final version of God's Word. Therefore, *KJVOT* misappropriates, and even absconds with God's Word, serving the purposes, agendas, and claims that support the traditions of men, not the revelation of God.

D. Dearth of God's Word Until 1611? Pollution of His Word After 1611?

This research discovered a curious thing --the insistence that a 'gap' in time exists between God's *original* seal of divine preservation, and the year 1611. It is said that the *KJV* bridged that gap, building over 2 millennia of error! But this begs the question, "Which written text(s) were divine revelation during the large amount of time from the original transmission of the autographs to the relatively recent time of 1611 A.D.? How is this gap explained? The ultimate question is: What was God's Word prior to 1611? This writer agrees with Arthur Farstad, Editor of the *New King James Bible*. "To say that God was not well represented on earth until 1611 is just plain wrong and unhistorical."⁸¹ See also **Appendix C**.

Further, this writer believes it is all together possible that God's permissive will allows the *flood of Bible versions to surface* in these last hours in order to ameliorate the adversary's attempts to hamper God's Word reaching to the ends of the earth. With man's technology-driven ability to destroy, leaving no trace behind, is it not plausible that massive quantities of Bibles, coming from many sources, written in many versions, sent out in all directions, by all means, is an indicator of God's providential will, assuring His written testimony of saving faith reaches the ends of the earth so that no single destructive force can uproot and destroy all of them? This makes better sense than restrictive *KJVO* thinking.

E. Doctrine Tampering a Matter of Changed Meaning, Not Words

Other reasons explain why someone either accepts or rejects the deity of Christ -not which Bible they claim teaches their belief. A Bible's theology and doctrine is comprehensive. Changed words among versions does not negate the full counsel of God that testifies of Christ. Yet *KJVOP*'s insist on comparing exact words. Regarding the **deity of Christ**, Gail Riplinger and others claim J. B. Philips corrupted the Doctrine of Christ by his translation of John 1:1. This writer thinks that Philips' rendering of the text "At the beginning, God expressed Himself" is actually thought provoking, expressing axiomatic summary --a virtue of brevity that benefits any written work. Do I love to read and hear "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"(?) Of course! Those words are profound, revelatory, and beautiful. But Philips' rendering does not change the intended meaning. It merely picks up the tempo. Precise, sparse

⁸⁰ Glenn Conjurske, "Composite Character of the King James Version as a Source of its Excellence", *Old Paths and Ancient Landmarks*, Vol. 2, No. 4 April 1993, p. 87. See **Appendix C**.

⁸¹ Arthur Farstad, Editor of the *NKJV*, guest, "**King James Controversy Revisited**"

words do not necessarily obliterate the power and truth conveyed in more 'wordy' renditions of the same concept. "Se breve" is instructive for all communication.

- ***Second Major Point:*** God's truth is not the exact words, and only those words, penned in any one version of the Bible. The truth of the Living God is expressed over and over in many ways. Only if a text *refutes* divine truth is it invalid, a corrupt version. Otherwise, we can say it this way: I may say the sky is azure; you may say it's blue. **Either way, sky is still sky; azure is still blue.**

F. Forerunners of Antichrist Bibles?

Now, as will be during the Tribulation, heresies and lies are accepted as truth. After the Body is translated, false faith will be taught by false Bibles. But the *KJVO* controversy has NOT exposed what it claims it has: corrupt Bibles in **current** translations and revisions. It is far more reasonable to speculate that fabricated, **new "scriptures"** will surface during the Tribulation to support 'revised' truth that will falsely explain the events of Jacob's Trouble on the earth.

G. Fringe, Conspiracy Fears

"The battle for the *preservation* of God's Bible is the *greatest battle of all time*. Which side, my friend, will you be on --the evil side of polluters of God's Holy Bible, or the righteous side of those few who will fight and give their very lives, if necessary, to preserve the purity of God's Word? It's your decision, Dave,^[82] and I'm praying it will be the right one." *KJVOP*'s should consider the company they keep. Texe Marrs is quoted here. He, like many other 'stars' of the *KJVO* movement keep Christ's flock fearfully suspicious that they are not reading a Bible unless it is a *King James*. But conspiracy theory is perpetuated by **biblical fools**.

H. KJVOT's Shaky Foundation: Unsubstantiated Assumption

"The *King James* Version we have today [*AV*] has not been revised but *purified*. We still have no reason to doubt that the Bible we hold in our hands is the very word of God preserved for us in the English language. The authority for its veracity lies not in the first printing of the King James Version in 1611, or in the character of King James I, or in the scholarship of the 1611 translators, or in the literary accomplishments of Elizabethton^[83] England, or even in the Greek

⁸² G. A. Riplinger, *King James Version Ditches Blind Guides*, (back cover) quote by Texe Marrs writing in a letter to *KJVOT* critic Dave Hunt, regarding Hunt's criticism of Riplinger's *New Age Versions*

⁸³ Ironically, this spelling error appears in Pastor Reagan's essay, reprinted in *The Answer Book: A Help Guide for Christians*, p. 28. Even though this typographical error is inconsequential (correct spelling is Elizabethan), we must ask, "would it be wrong in future printings of this book to correct this error?" The answer is of course, no; in fact it would be beneficial, for the sake of accuracy. But this example exposes a major problem with the *KJVOT*. Even errors that the 1611 Committee would have corrected, if they'd had more time, would be considered unfounded changes to the *AV* by modern Bible crusaders. This type of irrationality characterizes thinking in this *KJVO* movement.

Received Text. Our authority for the infallible words of the English Bible lies in the power and promise of God to preserve His Word! **God has the power. We have His Word.**"⁸⁴

This is typical of crusader-sounding rhetoric characterizing much of the *KJVOT*. But here's what is missed by these individuals: **Truth needs no defense. It simple needs declaration.** This writer has experienced one proponent literally shake his Bible in her face, asserting his 'dying loyalty' to defend the *KJV*. Such antics do not demonstrate mental soundness, humility, loving witness for Christ, and most of all --biblical truth. They are more the tactics characteristic of cultic, fanatic, idolatry. **The best apologetic (of anything) is methodical, offensive declaration, not reactive, defensive drama.** Modern 'crusaders' come in all forms, including *KJVOP*'s.

I. "Those Who Cannot Remember the Past are Doomed to Repeat It."⁸⁵

Erasmus, the primary translator of the 1516 and 1522 Greek texts⁸⁶ was also accused of committing the same 'heresy' (then) as those who write, or who *even so much as read* any other version *today*. It was Erasmus who translated directly from the Greek, preparing the way for the **1611 Committee**. He faced much resistance from voices of status quo, the rationale being "We've used the Latin for years and there's no reason to change." This is also what modern *KJVOT* asserts: "There's no reason to change the [~~A~~V] English that has proven itself worthy."⁸⁷ *KJVOT* repeats this error, and worse, makes false accusations.

J. Non-Authorized "Authorized Version"

It is more folklore, than fact, that surrounds the 'official' sounding superiority of the title "*Authorized Version*". Understanding the history and political conditions at the turn of the 17th century⁸⁸ is necessary to keep "authorized" in proper context.

In January 1604 King James I desired to subdue controversy among nearly one thousand Puritan leaders of the Church of England.⁸⁹ Careful study of historical facts shows there is no evidence to support the "goodness" that *KJVOP*'s invest in the King's motives. Nothing indicates his motive was to honor God's Word and provide increased availability for his subjects. Rather, "the king expressed his support for the [1611 work] because it would help him to be rid of the two most

⁸⁴ The article can be viewed on-line at www.learnthebible.org

⁸⁵ George Santayana, Spanish philosopher, from *The Life of Reason*, volume 1, 1905, www.quotationspage.com

⁸⁶ Norman Geisler and William E. Nix, *From God to Us* (Chicago, Moody Press, 1974), p. 239

⁸⁷ James A. White, *KJVOT* critic, guest, "*King James Controversy Revisited*"

⁸⁸ The year 1611 was in the 17th century. *Holidays and Anniversaries of the World*, Gale Publishers.

⁸⁹ *From God to Us*, p. 238-239

popular translations [the *Bishops* and *Geneva* Bibles which contained 'notes' he considered as seditious, thus] raising his esteem in the eyes of his subjects." ⁹⁰

Per the King's directive "no marginal notes were affixed to the [1611] revision, and the so-called *Authorized Version* was never actually authorized, nor was it actually a version. It replaced the *Bishops Bible* [in church pews] because no editions of [*Bishops*] were published after 1611."⁹¹ "While the 1611 version is called "the *Authorized Version*", no act of Parliament was ever passed approving it. King James vigorously promoted such an undertaking, but there was no subsequent official act."⁹²

K. Chapter and Verse Numbers Serve Different Purpose Than Claimed

Another unjustified complaint is raised in an attempt to support *KJVOT*, claiming that chapter and verse numbers are altered or missing in some other versions. It is assumed this results in 'missing truth' in these versions. There are very few instances where this is the case; and those discrepancies are noted in any valid version. Changed or missing chapter or verse numbers are largely inconsequential for at least these reasons:

1. The 8,000+ manuscripts do not have chapter or verse numbers. These numbers were added relatively late in history for the purpose of facilitating group reading of the Scriptures and providing ease of location when studying and cross-referencing. Chapter numbers were added in the 1200's and verse numbers were added in 1551.⁹³ Numbered locations of words *are not sacred*.

2. An example of acceptable variation in numbering is well established in the *TANAKH*, the Old Testament known as the Jewish Bible. This text has always contained slightly varying verse numbers from Christian counterparts. Dr. David Stern cites this in his *Complete Jewish Bible*.⁹⁴

3. Missing verse numbers in some versions are simply that: just a missing number, and not missing truth. A careful reading for the *subject content* reveals no concept or idea is omitted. These are sometimes combined; therefore reducing the numbered verses, but covering the same subject/truth content.

L. "Going in Circles" is an Unprofitable Foundation for *KJVOT*

In attempts to prove that changes from the exact *King James* words actually changes (and therefore corrupts) God's truth, *KJVOP*'s often begin their

⁹⁰ *English Bible Versions*, p. 19

⁹¹ *From God to Us*, p. 239

⁹² From the FOREWARD, *The Holy Bible, The New King James Version, The Open Bible Expanded Edition* (Nashville, Nelson Publishers), 1985.

⁹³ *"The Forbidden Book"*, New Liberty Videos, ISBN 9136811080, POB 25662, Shawnee Mission, KS

⁹⁴ David Stern, *The Complete Jewish Bible*, p. xxviii

arguments exactly where they claim to **finish**. This is called circular reasoning.⁹⁵ It is sometimes difficult to self-correct this subtle error in logical reasoning, but exposing (false) circular reasoning is foundational to rational, credible research and documentation.⁹⁶ *KJVOT* does not prove its theory by circular reasoning.

M. Majority Not in Majority

The 1611 Committee used "The Majority Text". While this is the rightful title for this family of manuscripts, it is not so based on the *quantity* of texts represented. From the second to the ninth centuries the Alexandrian Texts were by far the most numerous texts, i.e., the majority in number. It was only from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries that the Majority or Byzantine Text was in the numerical majority. And now again, centuries later, the Alexandrian Texts are in the majority due to the many new discoveries of buried and lost texts. A major reason no Greek texts were produced after the ninth century was that fact that Islamic prohibition prevented text copying⁹⁷ which thereby led to a 'shortage' of copying for a long period of time. We must understand that the number of copies of a text is neither the only, nor or best criteria of the value of a translation.

N. Just because Something is Literal Doesn't Mean it Tells the Truth

KJVO insistence on 100% literal translation as the only standard places their theory right along side the theory offered by Jehovah's Witnesses. They insist on what they consider a perfect, literal Bible in their *New World Translation*. Jehovah's Witness theology does not affirm the deity of Christ, nor other foundational doctrines of received faith.⁹⁸ Insistence on literalness causes *KJVOT* to have more in common with cultic belief than it does divine revelation. Repeatedly it is shown that insistence on maintaining the precise literality of a specific King James word is *not* the most *accurate translation* of the manuscript's *meaning*, nor is it the best equivalent thought expressed by that word. As a result, *KJVOP*'s agree to some nonsensical words and phrases in order to remain loyal to strict literality, but often cause the version to be less than reflective of the truth. Effective Bible study consults several versions for the best understanding.

O. Plain to One May Be Greek to Another

⁹⁵ <http://www.2.sjsu.edu/depts/itl/graphics/adhom/circular.html>

⁹⁶ Circular reasoning is most often exposed in philosophical and apologetic debate. We all are subject to falling into this trap of applying circular reasoning: In our effort to convince others of our beliefs, we certainly make it clear that we are adamant about our position. Circular reasoning keeps pounding away, making the same statements over and over, essentially never leaving the place where the position started. This reasoning fails to lead through a logical progression of worthwhile ideas to arrive at the sound conclusion suggested at the beginning. Instead of citing separate, point by point arguments, that if taken together, would prove the thesis, circular reasoning just moves in the same circle of thought. This characterizes *KJVOT*. It does not 'connect the dots' from one meaningful fact to another to prove the theory. But circular reasoning bores those who are trained to THINK and to analyze.

⁹⁷ *King James Controversy Revisited*", also cited in extensive sources of historical research

⁹⁸ "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

KJVOT denies other versions are meeting genuine need in an increasingly illiterate world. At the same time that increased technology and increased knowledge⁹⁹ prevail, "advanced" western culture nonetheless regresses in the ability to read and comprehend the written word. *KJVOP*'s claim the *KJV* is not difficult to understand;¹⁰⁰ that if a text is not clear, the best remedy is to simply wait on the Holy Spirit to illuminate the meaning. This is unwise. **Every** time God's Word is read or heard, divine purpose intends that the reader/hearer **understand** what they read and hear. But exclusivist theory ignores this reality.

As "proof" for how easy it is to understand the *KJV*, proponents often select one text with syntax, grammar and vocabulary that are simple and straightforward, rather than one of the many noted difficult archaic texts of the *KJV*. Certainly, this text: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people"¹⁰¹ is easy for even the youngest or least literate individual to comprehend. However, this text: "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart"¹⁰² is **not easily grasped**, even by the most educated. Honesty and fairness require this *KJV* deficit be acknowledged. But it is not --with claims that increased effort on the part of the reader is necessary.

P. Standing FOR the Bible does NOT mean standing BEHIND the Bible
"Which Bible would you have in your corner on the Day of Judgment?"¹⁰³ This smart-alec question does not reflect an understanding of Judgment. Anticipating **any form** of "battle" or defense of oneself at the Judgment Seat reflects failure to understand the nature of this post-Rapture event for all believers. No such scenario will occur as Christ judges our works. Standing before the Most High God will not be an occasion to present anything in our defense. And certainly we will not present our opinions about Bible versions as any basis for reward. We will stand naked before God with no answers except those He determines."¹⁰⁴

VII SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A. False Teaching and Inadequate Study

This writer does not believe that people spontaneously develop such strong

⁹⁹ "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Daniel 12:4

¹⁰⁰ In this writer's younger years the meaning of the *KJV* was less "available" than the words, grammar, syntax and idioms of other versions. Over decades of Bible study I've been able to 'internalize' the value of the *KJV*.

¹⁰¹ Matthew 4:23

¹⁰² Isaiah 57:27

¹⁰³ Wayne Ownby, "**King James Bible Conference**", 7/16/03

¹⁰⁴ John Ankerberg interview of Dr. Erwin Lutzer, Sr. Pastor, Moody Bible Church, Chicago, "**How You Can Do Well at the Judgment Seat of Christ**", Ankerberg Theological Research Institute, vjsc2.

convictions as *KJVOT* in a vacuum. Coming to this conclusion does not happen unless the one holding the conviction is lead through repeated indoctrination based on pride. This writer finds the following most accurately explains why the exclusivist movement persists, believing other modern Bible versions are corrupt:

- ***Third Major Point.*** Ordinary men --motivated by what seems to be good intentions --begin to ask questions and search a thing. They share their concerns with like-minded souls. Together, they 'discover' what they believe is significant error in a matter --so significant, exposing it becomes the focus of their walk and witness. Their operation advances from the work of individuals to the basis of a self-sustaining movement. Over time, the movement gains momentum, finally solidifying into a monument bigger than original intentions. These monuments become idols. (We are called to cast down every idol. It is always difficult to cast down idols when pride has become ensconced in error.)

The error of *KJVOT* could be remedied if individuals would voluntarily subject their convictions to the scrutiny of objective examination. But this writer finds *KJVOP*'s limit their study of this controversy only to materials written by other proponents that naturally reflect *only* the perspective of the theory (circular reasoning again). They do not allow for the necessary process of testing their hypothesis, required of any sound scientific research. There are many excellent works that succinctly and credibly refute *KJVOT*. The truth is, insistence on exclusivist theory is regionally held --in pockets here and there. This controversy is largely a product of the post 1960's fundamental movement. But it is not legitimately traced to the nearly century old Fundamentals of the Faith publications that sought to affirm correct doctrine. *KJVOT* is not a doctrine that can be deduced from the Scriptures. Unless *KJVOP*'s are willing to dismantle and inspect their theory, rather than dismiss those that are in disagreement with them, there is not much hope they will repent.

B. Better Use of Time¹⁰⁵ Is Refutation of Non Biblical Texts

Much time is wasted by *KJVOP*'s in attempting to prove this theory. The theory is roundly refuted by the best research. No good comes from alienating brother from brother. And most of all, truly false 'sacred works' continue to gain readers and advocates, all the while *KJVOP*'s are conducting their conferences and writing publications. It would be far more beneficial to expose the false teachings followed by the majority of the world, refuting them with sound biblical theology and doctrine. But because most *KJVOP*'s believe they will be rewarded in heaven for claiming all Bibles except the *KJV* are false, they miss opportunities God gives them to make meaningful contributions to spreading Christ's gospel in refutation of false gospels. Hindu, Buddhist, New Age, Gnostic, Mystic,

¹⁰⁵ Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." (Ephesians 5:16)

philosophical and psychological doctrine and American-born cults should be the target of their investigation and research. *KJVOP's* would gain eternal reward by learning how to refute these errors with the Sword of the Spirit rather than claims their particular preferred sword of the word is the only Sword of the Lord.

VIII A Final Word

If you are a *King James* Exclusivist (actually reading this far!) and you're puzzled by so many challenges to your perspective --possibly thinking, "That doesn't apply to *me*" or "I don't insist on X or Y in *my* arguments" --then by all means, please, don't take offense. If the shoe does not fit, then don't let anyone try to make you put it on! But, if by reading this research, you've found instances where you don't identify with the well documented and recorded exclusivist theory, then you just might not be in that camp after all --and didn't know it until you read this. Perhaps you've simply been expected to agree with the theory, never having done your own investigation. Perhaps you are able to discern truth from error and are not afraid to pick up any version, knowing you can profit from it, even if you come back to the *King James*. Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, now at Home with Christ, eloquently reminds his readers that the proof of life in Christ is not demonstrated by whether one claims this picture (version) or that of Him. **But rather, it's a matter of whether that one dies with Christ.** Wurmbrand spent many years in solitary prison confinement (aka "solitary revinement") as punishment for His loyalty to Christ in Communist Romania. Wurmbrand was not concerned with Bible versions. He was dead to that controversy. His only concern was abiding in Him who sustained him all those years in prison--the entire time never seeing any Bible version. We would do well to heed his life experience that speaks to the truth of divine revelation --irrespective of the version.

IX Appendix A - Scriptures Cited

2 Kings 8:26
2 Kings 18:27
2 Chronicles 2:22
Psalm 12:6-7
Psalm 100:5
Psalm 117:2
Psalm 119
Proverbs 24:1
Ecclesiastes 10:19
Isaiah 14:12
Isaiah 36:12
Isaiah 57:27
Jeremiah 36:23-24
Daniel 12:4
Matthew 4:4
Matthew 4:23
Matthew 5:18
Matthew 24:35
Matthew 27:44
Mark 12:36
Luke 14:49
John 1:1
John 5:39
John 8:41a
John 10:34-36
John 12:48
John 14:9
Acts 17:10-11
1 Corinthians 2:22
2 Corinthians 4:6
Galatians 2:17
Ephesians 5:16
Colossians 2:8
2 Thessalonians 2:3
2 Timothy 2:15
2 Timothy 3:16
Hebrews 1:1-3
Hebrews 3:7
1 Peter 1:23
2 Peter 1:21
1 John 4:1
Jude 3
Revelation 22:18-19

X Appendix B (see Footnote 12)

From the “Baptist Mid-Missions Translation Policy Statement”
reprinted in *Anchor Points for Scripture Translation Work*, Appendix, page 21
Adopted January, 1987

“Accepting the Bible is the very Word of God, given to us by plenary-verbal inspiration, and totally without error in its original manuscripts, the translators of Bibles International, a ministry of Baptist Mid-Missions, shall base their work upon the divinely preserved Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts, and seek the guidance and help of God in achieving a good and accurate translation of His Word. While many texts in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, and many versions in English and other languages may be consulted, final decisions on textual content shall be based on the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament and the Majority Text of the New Testament. Translations produced by Bibles International shall express the very Word of God as literally as possible in the receptor languages without resort to dynamic equivalency and without distorting or obscuring the meaning of the original text.”

[Following are the Mission’s principles of translation]:

Principle No. 1:

The completed translation is to be understandable by those for whom it is prepared.

Principle No. 2:

The language of the translation is to be clear.

Principle No. 3:

The primary effect of our translation will be redemptive.

Principle No. 4:

It is the Word of God we translate. Respectfully translate what the text says. Add nothing to it; subtract nothing from it.

Principle No. 5:

Balance careful translation of words with careful translation of the units of speech.

Principle No. 6:

Differentiate between that implicit information which we clearly understand and that which we do not clearly understand.

Principle No. 7:

Differentiate between what the receptor language actually requires and what the receptor culture is said to require.

XI Appendix C

The Refining and Polishing of the King James Version

by
Glenn Conjurske, Editor

Old Paths and Ancient Landmarks, September 1995

“From my earliest acquaintance with the modern King James Only doctrines, it was evident to me that these are the doctrines of men who have done very little thinking. This is a system of doctrine which is absolutely untenable --as much at variance *with itself* as it is with the facts of history. The *doctrine* affirms that God has *promised* (in Scripture) to *preserve* His word, and that therefore the word of God, *preserved in perfection*, does exist. This doctrine is applied not only in the original texts in Greek and Hebrew, but also to the *English translation*. We are told that the perfectly preserved Greek text is the Textus Receptus, and the perfectly preserved English translation is the King James Version. But these assertions immediately raise some serious questions in the minds of all who are accustomed to think. Some of those questions are: *If* the supposed promises of God to preserve His word in perfection secure *to us* a perfect version in English, why did those same promises *fail* to secure any such perfect version before the year 1611? Those promises were not given by God in 1610, but thousands of years before that --most of them in the Old Testament. How is it that those promises secured nothing of this before 1611? *Why, with these same promises in force*, was there no perfect English version in John Wycliffe’s day --or a hundred years before Wycliffe’s day? If for some reason those promises did not apply in the days before 1611, what reason do we have to think that they apply today? If these promises of God *did not* secure a perfect version in English *before* 1611, who can say that they *do* secure a perfect version *after* 1611? If these promises of God to preserve His word are such that He may *fail to keep them* for the space of *hundreds of years*, what possible reason can we have to suppose that He has any obligation to keep them today? For observe, anyone who takes the trouble to *think* may plainly see that these King James Only doctrines *absolutely necessitate* that conclusion, that for hundreds of years God failed to keep those promises. If the promises of God *actually mean* what these men contend --if to keep those promises God is obligated to give *to us* a perfect English version --then those promises must have meant the same thing 600 years ago that they mean now, and God must have had the same obligation to keep His promises *then* as He has *now*. Yet none of these men will so much as pretend that there was any perfect English version before the year 1611. Their own system forces them to believe (if they will but think) that for hundreds of years God failed to keep His promises, from the dawn of the existence of the English language, until the year 1611. Those promises which are supposed to mean so much *to us*, and *secure* so much *for us*, meant absolutely nothing for Englishmen 500 years ago, for God was not in the business of keeping those promises *then*. If the children of God looked to Him for bread in the year 1350, He gave them nothing --except the Latin Vulgate, for those who could read it. If they looked to Him for bread in the year 1450, He gave them a serpent --an English Bible translated from the Latin Vulgate, which the King James Only men are pleased to call “the devil’s Bible.” If the children of God looked to Him for bread in the year 1550, He gave them a stone --an English Bible which, whatever it may have been, was certainly *not* the perfect word of God, for it differed in countless places from the version which they hold

to be perfect. Thus during century after century, the Lord left these alleged promises of preservation on the shelf, and *did not keep them*. But, *now*, we are told, we *have* a perfect Bible in English, and the proof alleged for this is, God has promised to preserve His word! Since 1611, then, God has been keeping His promises, but He did not trouble Himself to keep them before that --for none of these men *can* affirm that there was a perfect version in English *before* 1611, without making manifest fools of themselves. If there *was* a perfect Bible in English before 1611, then the King James Version can only be regarded as a *corruption* of that Bible, for it differs in hundreds of places from all of its predecessors. There is no doubt that if any man *today* were to put forth a revision of the King James Bible, reinstating the readings of the early English Bibles, which were displaced in the process of revision, the King James Only men would be the first and foremost to denounce it as corrupt --and that entirely irrespective of the character of the *translation*. They would denounce it as corrupt because it was translated from a different Greek text --for it is a plain matter of historical fact that the Greek text of Tyndale's version differs in dozens of places from that of the King James Version. Nor are many of those differences trivial in their nature, but extend to the addition or omission of words, phrases, and whole clauses. But the men who have flooded the church with this King James Only clamor have been men who have done very little thinking. They sent their doctrines into the world without ever thinking so far as to be aware of the existence of the questions and issues which I have just rehearsed. Others, however, have done some thinking for them, and forced them to face questions like these. But with what result? Alas, they have responded exactly as did the Jehovah's Witnesses, when *they* found themselves forced to face the absurdities of *their* system. They have not stepped forward in a manly fashion to acknowledge their errors, but have rather entrenched themselves more deeply in those errors --and added folly to foolishness in order to do so. The men who fathered these doctrines did not trouble themselves about the fact that there was no perfect Bible in English before 1611-- obviously [they] never *thought* of it. Now that the fact has been forced upon their attention, they must endeavor to account for it, but in so doing they have only added to the self-contradictions of their system. From a little sheet called "The Enchiridion" (Feb-March 1995), put forth by William W. Van Kleeck of the "Institute for Biblical Textual Studies," come the following statements:

"God the Father has entered into a covenantal relationship with the Son to preserve His Word (Isaiah 59:21). The preserved Word of God therefore *exists*. The inscripturated (written) Word is limited to a finite number of words that can be empirically (actually) compared and rationally understood. The (Holy Spirit filled) believer's role is to identify the existing Word of God and unite it by way of collation with the rest of the canon (books of the Bible.) When the covenant keeping believers (not textual critics) have identified all the words that God had prepared to receive the autographs (the original language text) and made them a part of the exemplar (the received language) the translation is complete and no further translation is required nor possible. To the degree that the translation in process reflects the autographs it is authoritative[,] but the final edition is not relatively authoritative, it is absolutely authoritative." "The King James was refined from 1525 to 1611 and polished until 1769. It is the true Word of God." For those who are unfamiliar with the events corresponding to the dates which Mr. Van Kleeck mentions, I pause to inform them that in 1525 (or 1526) William Tyndale published his first New Testament, in 1611 the King James Version was first printed,

and in 1769 Benjamin Blayney put forth the revision of the King James Version which is now in common use. But in these statements Van Kleeck has actually *given up* -- doubtless without thinking far enough to realize it --almost everything distinctive in the King James Only position. He's given up the very foundations of the system, while still, of course, holding that system fast. He grants that a Bible version may be the word of God without being perfect. He grants that the English Bibles which preceded the King James Version were the word of God, only in an unrefined state. He grants that they were the word of God, though they were not "absolutely authoritative." They were "relatively authoritative --authoritative that is, only is so far as they truly represented the originals. **This is precisely what the rest of us have held from the beginning --and we have been accused of *modernism* for it by the King James Only men.** And if those who follow Mr. Van Kleeck in this opinion would but *think* a little, they would be obligated to admit that if *one* version may be the word of God, though not perfect, *so may another*. If William Tyndale's New Testament may be the word of God, though less than perfect, and less than absolutely authoritative --if the same may be true of Coverdale's Bible, of the Great Bible, of the Geneva Bible, and of the Bishops' Bible --then the same may be true also of the Latin Vulgate and of the Septuagint, and *the same may be true of the King James Version*. But more, yea, much more. Mr. Van Kleeck actually grants that the same *is* true of the King James Version --at least that it *was* true of the original King James Version of 1611. He grants that the version has been "polished" since 1611 -- and the polishing of which he speaks has explicit reference to something so major as the *omission of the Apocrypha* from later printings. But he is certainly aware that a good deal more "polishing" than that has taken place --with spelling or punctuation changed in every verse, italics added throughout, and many words added, omitted, or changed. And in granting this much, he has actually *entirely given up* the King James Only position. These men have told us for years that every *jot* and *tittle* of the Bible is preserved pure and perfect and without error, and this doctrine has unhesitatingly, steadfastly, and belligerently applied to the King James Version of 1611. *Now* we are told that the 1611 version was not perfect at all, but contained many thousands of jots and tittles, besides whole letters and whole words, which must needs be changed. The version needed to be *polished* for 158 years, the final result of which is the perfect and completely authoritative word of God. But men who *think* will naturally ask, if the 1611 version needed such a long course of alteration in order to make it perfect and authoritative, how do we know that the process is finished yet? If the English publishers were free to *revise* the book as they pleased in 1616, and again in 1629, and again in 1638, if Thomas Paris was free to revise it again in 1762, and if Benjamin Blayney was free to correct it again in 1769, then who is to say that C. H. Spurgeon was not equally free to correct it in 1869, or F. H. A. Scrivener in 1873, or Glenn Conjurske in 1995? For more than twenty years these King James Only men have been condemning us unbelievers and modernists all who dare to correct a single word in the "KJV --1611," and now they tell us that that process of correction went on for 158 years, from 1611 to 1769 (or 244 years from, from 1525 to 1769), and that all of that correcting was the work of God, in order to secure the "final edition", which is not subject to correction. Thus does the mistaken zeal of these men *vitate* the doctrine of inspiration. For, make no mistake about it, what they are actually claiming for the King James Version is *inspiration*. They claim that it is the word of God in every jot and tittle, perfect and without error, and this, whatever they may call it, is precisely the doctrine of inspiration.

This is precisely what the whole church of God has always claimed for the original texts of Scripture, as they came from the original writers. But anyone who had dared to teach such a *process of inspiration*, as these men are forced to claim for their inspired English version, would have been disclaimed as a heretic and a modernist. Let any man today claim that the Greek original of the *epistles of Paul* were written first by himself, and thus became "the epistles of Paul *in process*" --were afterwards *revised three times* by Paul himself --revised again by Barnabas while Paul lived --revised by Timothy after Paul died --Timothy's revision revised by Barnabas, then again by Apollos, and once more by Barnabas --then Paul's final version revised by the king's scribe, adopting many readings from the last edition of Barnabas --the scribe's version then made the basis for a new edition, thoroughly revised --that edition thoroughly revised again three years later, by a company of exiles --then the last edition of Barnabas thoroughly revised by a company of bishops, and revised again two years later --the same thoroughly revised again after the passing of nearly forty years, this time by a company of scholars appointed by the king, adopting readings from all the previous editions, including one put forth by the heretics --and this latest edition subjected to minor revisions numerous times by various scribes, until at length the whole was revised throughout by a single scholar, and so, after 244 years "in process", became "the preserved (!!)" epistles of Paul, perfect and without error." The man who made such a claim would be denounced immediately as a heretic or a lunatic, by the very men who make *exactly the same claim* for the King James Version --for mark, the "process" which I have just described is no imagination, but the *actual history* of the King James Version. And *who* determined that the edition of 1769 is the one which is perfect and authoritative? Ah! *Bible believers*, no doubt *Spirit filled men*, no doubt. The real, final authority, then, does not rest in the King James Version at all --but in *themselves*. The final authority is not in the Bible, but in the *men who give us their ex cathedra* pronouncement as to which version and edition is authentic and genuine. Here, then, is but *one more way* in which this ill-advised and intemperate reaction against an imagined threat of Romanism brings us directly back to the true doctrines of Romanism. The *main tenant* of this system, which exalts a human and imperfect translation to the place of perfection, giving it an authority and equal (or superior) to the original, is a tenant of Romanism, which no Protestant ever believed before the advent of the present generation. Surely this is no accident, but the hand of the Lord, to confound ignorance and pride. But to return, the real authority is now made to rest in certain covenant-keeping believers, who determine which edition if the final one. Doubtless Mr. Van Kleeck must suppose himself to be one of these covenant-keeping believers. No doubt David Otis Fuller's Dean Burgon Society would qualify also, but Dean Burgon himself must be excluded, for he was a textual critic. I suppose I am disqualified as well, for I dabble in textual criticism also. Must we then resign ourselves to the judgment of who[m]ever inscripturated the unspiritual and scarcely English jargon quoted above from "The Enchiridion"? The fact is, we very much doubt that many of Mr. Van Kleeck's fellow King James Only men will endorse this new position. We strongly expect that a large portion of them will continue to fight for the "KJV --1611", while they continue, of course, to *use* the "KJV --1769", the same as Mr. Van Kleeck does, and the same as they have always done. These men do not much concern themselves about the facts of history, and most of them are doubtless unaware that there is any difference between the "KJV -- 1611" and the "KJV -- 1769". But how is it that they have settled upon the work of Benjamin Blayney in 1769 as the

"final edition", subject to no further revision? The answer to this question is exceedingly simple. They have determined upon *this* edition because *this* is the edition which is in everybody's hands. There was obviously no critical inquiry of any sort in back of this dictum --no exercise of any reason or judgment of any kind, but only a fixed determination to pronounce the edition which is in their hands to be perfect and without error. If *reason* had been consulted --if any "Biblical Textual Studies" had entered into the matter --they must clearly have decided otherwise. For observe, if the work of Benjamin Blayney, which he carried out haphazardly and inconsistently, was so excellent as to exalt his edition to the place of supremacy, how far superior must that edition have been if his excellent design had been carried out with greater care and consistency? But mark, his design *has* been carried out with care and consistency, and that by a conservative, reverent, able, and very careful and painstaking scholar. His name is F. H. A. Scrivener. His edition was published in 1873, under the title, *The Cambridge Paragraph Bible of the Authorized English Version, with the Text Revised by a Collation of its Early and Other Principle Editions, The Use of the Italic Type Made Uniform*, etc. Now, since one of the major contributions of Benjamin Blayney was to make the italics *more uniform* than the earlier editions left it, it is without all reason to leave the matter there, when a little more painstaking work (such as Scrivener excelled in) might remove all inconsistencies --and when in fact the work was done a hundred and twenty years ago. **But these men are determined only to pronounce the version in their hands to be perfect, regardless of any consideration of truth or fact or reason.** If men had been of this same spirit four centuries ago, the King James Version would never have existed. Then the Geneva Bible would have been "the Bible which God uses, and Satan hates" (it *was*, by the way), and any attempt to revise it would have been belligerently denounced. But there is yet more. Suppose it to be the very truth that "KJV was refined from 1525 to 1611 and polished until 1769" and that the final result of this process "is the true Word of God." The fact is, 1769 was too late, and a good deal too late. So was 1611. So was 1525. Remember, the foundation of this system is the supposed promises of God to *preserve* His Word. It was far too late for *preservation* in 1525, or 1611. If these men had done a little less *asserting* and *denouncing*, and expended a little more of their time and energies in *thinking*, they must soon have realized that the very meaning of *preservation* completely overturns their entire system. It destroys it root and branch. If they were to tell us God had promised to *restore* the purity of His Word in 1611, or 1769, we might at least give them the credit for common sense and consistency, but *restoration* and *preservation* are two different things. If God has actually promised to *preserve* His Word in perfect purity, 1611 is much too late to begin keeping that promise. The very meaning of "preservation" *necessitates* that He should *keep it pure always*, and not merely that He should *restore it to purity* after the passing of hundreds of years. If the New Testament which Tyndale produced in 1525 needed 244 years of *refining* and *polishing* ere it could be regarded as "absolutely authoritative", this operation was not *preservation* at all, but *restoration*. In making these affirmations about the refining and polishing of this "translation in process", Mr. Van Kleeck has in fact *totally given up*, so far as the English translation is concerned, any *possible* doctrine of *preservation*. Not that it much matters, for *all* of these men have in *fact* repudiated their own doctrine of preservation from the first day that these King James Only doctrines existed. What they have really been contending for all along is the *restoration* of the Word of God, though they have been so little

engaged in thinking as to suppose that they were contending for its preservation. It really makes no difference whether they affirm that the point of perfection was reached in 1611, or 1769. Either position is an admission that the English Bible was *not* perfect *before* that date, and therefore *not* preserved in perfection by God. But all of this serves to demonstrate the unsoundness of the *foundation* of the entire King James Only system. These men, if they are honest, *must* confess that there was no perfect version in English before 1611 (or before 1769). They *must* therefore confess that the promises of God which form the foundation of their system *do not* necessarily secure to any people a perfect translation in their language. They *must* confess therefore that those promises *do not mean* what they have till now contended that they do mean. And thus their *whole system*, from the foundation up, falls to the ground."

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