

Why a New Translation?

Series: The Bible & Translations

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Text: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

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Introduction: Open your Bible to **2 Timothy 3:14-17**. Tonight we are going to talk why we are considering a new translation, and specifically, why the English Standard Version of the Bible.

Apart from our relationship with God Himself, nothing is more precious to the people of God than the text of Scripture. In this passage, Paul celebrates the incredible value of the Scriptures by identifying its indestructible qualities to change our lives!

Let's look at our text in **2 Timothy 3:14-17**, "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work."

1. They are **sacred** in their character and make us HOLY, because they are the "sacred writings" (**vs. 15a**). The motivation for reading and understanding the Bible is to see a holy God, and to be transformed to live a holy life.
2. They are **saving** in their power, because they "are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (**vs. 15b**). Without the Word of God there is no hope for our sins to be taken away. It is through the 66 books of the Bible that we learn who the only Lord and Saviour is!
3. They are **supernatural** in their authority, because "All Scripture is breathed out by God" (**vs. 16a**). There is no higher authority than the Word of God.
4. They are **sufficient** in their profit, because they are "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (**vs. 16b**). We don't need another book—we don't need psychology or drugs or anything else to renew our mind. We need the Bible. The Bible teaches us to face life's greatest problems in light of how we can become more like Christ. The Bible teaches us how to do that.
5. They are **superior** in their fruitfulness, so that "that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work" (**vs. 17**). This book will make you ready and able to do the work of ministry—seeing people saved and discipled and built up in the Body of Christ.

With that in mind, we all understand that the Word of God, written in Greek and Hebrew has had this effect on people throughout the world. The Bible has been translated thousands of times into various languages in the world. Listen to these statistics (from Wycliffe Bible Translators):

6.5 billion+	...the population of the world
6,900+	...is the number of languages spoken in the world today
2,000+	... is the number of languages without any of the Bible, but with a possible need of a Bible translation to begin
350,000,000+	... is the number of people who speak the 2,200 languages where translation projects have not yet begun

So before we get into our study, we need to realize that we are supremely blessed. We have the Word of God! The Bible has been translated over the centuries into about 5000 different languages. We are considering tonight one particular translation of the Bible in the English language.

The question is why should Tabernacle Baptist Church adopt the ESV as our primary preaching Bible?

Before answering that question, let me just say that adopting the ESV as our primary translation does not mean that you have to switch translations for your personal study. If we were to do this, I would want to have a pew Bible available in the ESV so that anyone who did not have a copy of the ESV translation, or someone who had a different translation could follow along with the speaker. Right now there are people in our congregation who study from the KJV, others who study from the NKJV, others who study from the NASB, and still others who study from the ESV. All of these translations are careful, literal translations. All are the Word of God.

But why should we choose the ESV over the others? While I believe that each of the above are very thorough literal word for word translations, there are several reasons I believe the ESV is the right translation for our church.

1. The ESV has the Beauty of the Language of the KJV, but Updated

The King James Version of the Bible was translated during the time of Shakespeare, and the beauty of the English style shows it. The translators of the ESV (over 100 of them) parallel the KJV committee in their scholarship and devotion to Christ. Some of their names will be familiar to you because we have benefited from their writing ministries over the years (including J I Packer, Kent Hughes, and Wayne Grudem—a full list is available online at www.esv.org/translation/team). The translators wrote this concerning their philosophy of translation work. They said that the “words and phrases of the ESV grow out of the Tyndale-King James legacy”. Furthermore...

... Archaic language was brought to current usage and significant corrections were made in the translation of key texts. But throughout, the translators’ goal was to retain the depth of meaning and enduring language that have made their indelible

mark on the English-speaking world and have defined the life and doctrine of the church over the last four centuries.¹

While there is a need to update some language, many of the texts are almost identical. Those portions that needed no updating are very similar, such as Psalm 23: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. 3 He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”

The Need for Updated Language

Obviously the Bible is a spiritual book and therefore the Holy Spirit must grant understanding, if a reader is to gain an understanding of the words they are reading. **1 Corinthians 2:14**, “The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.”

We also must be humble enough to realize that languages change. The ESV improves the understanding of the Word for our language today. There are at least 827 words and phrases in the KJV that have different meanings or are no longer used in our modern, everyday English. Some examples are: *gay clothing, filthy lucre, quick, lunatick, wax, charity, and suffer*.

Before we look at some of these examples take a look at the old English, middle English and Elizabethan English in Luke 2:1.

	Old English Wessex Gospels	Middle English Wycliffe	Early Modern English King James 1611
2:1	Soplice on þam dagum wæs geworden gebod fram þam casere augusto. þæt eall ymbehwyrft wære tomearcod;	Forsope it is don, in þo dazis a maundement wente out fro cesar august, þat al þe world schulde ben discriued,	And it came to passe in those dayes, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

It is necessary to update language. If we say it is not, then we need to put aside our 1769 King James Bible update, and go back to the more difficult 1611.

So we need to realize that the actual meanings of 827 words have changed. We cannot go into all of them, but let’s look at some of them. Here are some examples of what language meant in 1769.

¹ ESV Translators, “From KJV to ESV: A Historical Legacy”.

Examples of Updated Language

Advertise meant to tell, not to sell a product.

Ruth 4:4

KJV: And I thought to **advertise** thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem *it*, redeem *it*

ESV: So I thought I would **tell** you of it and say, ‘Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.’ If you will redeem it, redeem it.

Allege meant to prove something, not simply to bring it up for questioning. **Opening** meant to explain something.

Acts 17:3

KJV: **Opening** and **alleging**, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

ESV: **Explaining** and **proving** that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.”

Conversation meant behavior or manner of living, not simply our words. **Waste** meant to destroy, not to let something expire.

Galatians 1:13

KJV: For ye have heard of **my conversation in time past** in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and **wasted** it:

ESV: For you have heard of **my former life** in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to **destroy** it.

Communicate meant to share something, not to speak to some one. Gal. 6:6 teaches that we ought to financially support the teaching elders in the church.

Galatians 6:6

KJV: Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

ESV: One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches.

Take thought meant be anxious.

Matthew 6:34a

KJV: Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.

ESV: Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself.

Prevent meant precede or meet ahead of time, not to stop some one.

Psalms 59:10

KJV: The God of my mercy shall prevent me: God shall let me see *my desire* upon mine enemies.

ESV: My God in his steadfast love will meet me; God will let me look in triumph on my enemies.

Vessel meant body. **Concupiscence** meant passion.

1 Thessalonians 4:4-5

KJV: That every one of you should know how to possess his **vessel** in sanctification and honour; not in the **lust of concupiscence**, even as the Gentiles which know not God;
ESV: That each one of you know how to control his own **body** in holiness and honor, 5 not in the **passion of lust** like the Gentiles who do not know God;

Wit meant to know.

2 Corinthians 8:1

KJV: Moreover, brethren, **we do you to wit** of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

ESV: **We want you to know**, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia,

Succour meant to help.

Hebrews 2:18

KJV: For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to **succour** them that are tempted.

ESV: For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to **help** those who are being tempted. (ESV here also better reflects the tense of the verb as aorist active infinitive—"being tempted").

Shambles meant market place.

1 Corinthians 10:25

KJV: Whatsoever is sold in the **shambles**, *that* eat, asking no question for conscience sake:

ESV: Eat whatever is sold in the **meat market** without raising any question on the ground of conscience.

Anon meant immediately.

Mark 1:30

KJV: But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and **anon** they tell him of her.

ESV: Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and **immediately** they told him about her.

By and by meant at once or immediately.

Mark 6:25

KJV: And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me **by and by** in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

ESV: And she came in immediately with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me **at once** the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

Other Examples of the Need for Updated Language

James 3:1-4

KJV: My brethren, be not many **masters**, knowing that we shall **receive the greater condemnation**. 2 For in many things we **offend** all. If any man **offend not in word**, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body. 3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. 4 Behold also the ships, which though *they be* so great, and *are* driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small **helm**, whithersoever **the governor listeth**.

ESV: Not many of you should become **teachers**, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be **judged with greater strictness**. 2 For we all **stumble** in many ways, and if anyone does **not stumble in what he says**, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. 3 If we put

bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. 4 Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small **rudder** wherever the will of the **pilot directs**.

Psalm 139:13

KJV: For thou hast **possessed my reins**: thou hast **covered me** in my mother’s womb.

ESV: For you **formed my inward parts**; you **knitted me together** in my mother’s womb.

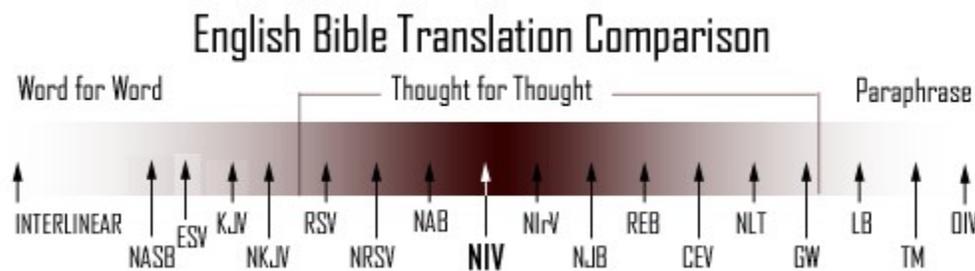
Psalm 139:15 – both are literal. You have a Hebrew metaphor for womb “lowest parts [or depths] of the earth”. Dynamic equivalency would have changed this. So both are literal, but the language of the ESV is updated. You can also see that the Hebrew translation here is unclear, and the KJV translators have added words such as “my members” and “as yet there was”. It ends up giving us an idea that all our body parts were fashioned by God, which they were (verse 15), but this verse says something different. That my very “days” were written in God’s book before I was born.

KJV: ...when I was made in secret, *and* **curiously wrought** in the lowest parts of the earth. 16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and **in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.**

ESV: ...when I was being made in secret, **intricately woven** in the depths of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance; **in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there were none of them.**

2. The ESV is Just as Literal and Sometimes More So than the KJV

Both the ESV and the KJV primarily employ a literal word for word translation of the Greek and Hebrew texts. This called “formal equivalence”. The other philosophy of translation is a thought for thought translation which is called “dynamic equivalence”. Some **formal equivalent** translations are the KJV, NKJV, NASB, and the ESV. A **dynamic equivalent** translation would be the NIV. As far as how literal a translation is compared to others, here is a chart that might be helpful.



Examples

2 Corinthians 2:17

KJV: For we are not as many, which **corrupt** the word of God

ESV: For we are not, like so many, **peddlers** of God’s word

Note: the KJV went with a dynamic equivalent translation of the word “**kapelos**”. The Greek Lexicon entry for the word gives the following definition:

from **kapelos** (a huckster)

- 1) to be a retailer, to peddle
- 2) to make money by selling anything

Colossians 3:1

KJV: **Set your affection** on things above, not on things on the earth.

ESV: **Set your minds** on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

Note: the KJV went with a dynamic equivalent translation of the verb “**phroneo**”.

from **phroneo**

- 1) to have understanding, be wise
- 2) to feel, to think
- 3) to direct one’s mind to a thing, to seek, to strive for

The Phrase “God Forbid” found 15 times in the KJV New Testament

The phrase translated “God forbid” in the King James Bible (as in “Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? **God forbid**”²) is a dynamic equivalent translation of the word μη. The word μη (me) is “a primary particle of qualified negation” and is literally to be translated “no, may it never be, never, by no means, or surely not”. Luke 20:16; Romans 3:4, 3:6, 3:31, 6:2, 6:15, 7:7, 7:13, 9:14, 11:1, 11:11; 1 Corinthians 6:15; Galatians 2:17, 3:21, 6:14. The ESV consistently translates this phrase literally as “Surely not” or “By no means” or “Never!”.

Jeremiah 17:9

KJV: The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately **wicked**: who can know it?

ESV: The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately **sick**; who can understand it?

Note: the KJV went with a dynamic equivalent translation of the adjective “**anash**”. Instead of “sick”, they translated “wicked”. That is the metaphorical idea of the passage, but the literal rendering is “sick”

0605 אָנָשׁ ‘**anash** aw-nash’

- 1) to be weak, sick, frail

3. What About the Missing Verses?

1. **Verses Transplanted.** Some verses are missing because they were found to be transplanted in the process of transcribing each copy.
 - This occurs eleven (11) times, and they all occur in the Gospels except one. It would have been very easy to do this. Every single verse can be located in another place in the Gospels as noted below.
 - No two copies of the early manuscripts are exactly alike because of human error.
 - But when you look at the majority of Greek manuscripts and compare it with early translations and quotations, you quickly find these verses to be additions. They are not wrong, they are just what someone added perhaps to fill out the detail of the passage or simply putting a note in the margin from one of the other Gospels that eventually got incorporated.
 - **Matthew 17:21**, KJV: Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.
Comments: Taken from **Mark 9:29**, ESV (also in KJV): And he said to them, “This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer.”

² Romans 6:1-2

- **Matthew 18:11**, KJV: For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.
Comments: Taken from *Luke 19:10*, ESV (also in KJV): For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.
- **Matthew 23:14**, KJV: Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.
Comments: Transplanted from *Mark 12:40*, ESV (also in the KJV): who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.
- **Mark 7:16**, KJV: If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.
Comments: This verse is found again in both KJV and ESV in the three other places.
Mark 4:9, ESV: And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."
Mark 4:23, ESV: If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.
Matthew 11:15, ESV: He who has ears to hear, let him hear.
- **Mark 9:44**, KJV: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.
- **Mark 9:46**, KJV: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.
Comments: The verse is found in the ESV two verses later in *Mark 9:48, ESV:* 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.'
- **Mark 11:26**, KJV: But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.
Comments: Taken from *Matthew 6:15, ESV* (also in KJV): but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
- **Mark 15:28**, KJV: And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.
Comments: Taken from *Luke 19:10, ESV* (also in KJV): For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors.' For what is written about me has its fulfillment."
- **Luke 17:36**, KJV: Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.
Comments: Taken from *Matthew 24:40*, ESV (also in KJV): Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left.
- **Luke 23:17**, KJV: For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.
Comments: This verse is found again in both KJV and ESV in the three other Gospels.
Matthew 27:15, ESV: Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted.
Mark 15:6, ESV: Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked.
John 18:39, ESV: But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"
- **Romans 16:24**, KJV: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

Comments: This is a repeat of Romans 16:20, ESV (KJV also): The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

2. **Doubtful verses.** There are six (6) instances of this where the verse is not found in the earliest manuscripts and translations. These as well would be absent from the writings of the church fathers who would have commented on and quoted from these passages without mentioning them or said they were doubtful.

Erasmus, Athanasius and the Omission of 1 John 5:7

Let us consider one case, **1 John 5:7**, KJV: “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.”

Theologians such as Athanasius of Alexandria and Sabellius and Origen never quoted or referred to that passage. Athanasius is extremely important, because he is considered the Great Defender of the Trinity. Born in 296 AD, Athanasius grew up in the early church which was under attack by Arius, who denied the divinity of Christ. Athanasius’ battles led to the Council of Nicea which met in 325, the decisions of which are incorporated into the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed basically called Arius and all Arians (like the modern JW’s and Unitarians) false teachers and heretics and promoted the doctrine of the Trinity.

The important fact is that if Athanasius wanted a text that clearly defended the Trinity, he would have used 1 John 5:7, which he didn’t.

Erasmus when putting together his Greek compilation of 1517 could not find a legitimate Greek manuscript that included 1 John 5:7 so he omitted it.

“Erasmus omitted them from his first edition; but when a storm of protest arose because the omission seemed to threaten the doctrine of the Trinity (although that doctrine had in fact been formulated long before the textual variant), he put them back in the third and later editions, whence they also came into the *textus receptus*, ‘the received text’.³

We don’t have time to go over in detail each of the six (6) verses that are not included in the ESV that are in the KJV, but the reasoning behind not including them is similar—lack of early manuscript evidence / verse lacking in the early writings when the passages are quoted. Each doubtful verse is listed below. Again, the doctrinal truth in these verses is found throughout the New Testament (specifically referring to 1 John 5:7 and Acts 8:37).

- **1 John 5:7**, KJV: For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.
- **John 5:4**, KJV: For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.
- **Acts 8:37**, KJV: And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
- **Acts 15:34**, KJV: Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.
- **Acts 24:7**, KJV: But the chief captain Lysias came *upon us*, and with great violence took *him* away out of our hands.

³ Jaroslav Pelikan, *Whose Bible Is It? A Short History of the Scriptures*, Penguin Books Ltd, 2005, p. 156)

- **Acts 28:29**, KJV: And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

Conclusion: **Revelation 22:18** warns us not to add or take away from the prophecy of that book. I think we can apply that to the entire Bible. We need to be careful to distinguish those who may have added or taken away from the Scriptures because of human error. I believe these verses are warning false teachers from deliberately changing the Word of God. As we see, there is very little difference in the manuscripts, and many of those verses that were added were simply brought in from other places. In a very few cases, probably copyists comments were included, but did not change the meaning of any doctrine whatsoever.

Let me close with a quote from Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the prince of preachers. There are many other quotes I have included for you.

C.H. Spurgeon (1881)

“Concerning the fact of difference between the Revised and the Authorized Versions, I would say that no Baptist should ever fear any honest attempt to produce the correct text, and an accurate interpretation of the Old and New Testaments. For many years Baptists have insisted upon it that we ought to have the Word of God translated in the best possible manner, whether it would confirm certain religious opinions and practices, or work against them. All we want is the exact mind of the Spirit, as far as we can get it...” (“Heart Disease Curable”, June 19, 1881, Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, Sermon 1604).

John R. Rice (1969)

Founded our church in 1953, Baptist evangelist, author, editor of The Sword of the Lord
The translators of the American Standard Version had the advantage of having access to the three oldest manuscripts with which we are familiar—the Vatican, the Alexandrian, and the Sinaitic manuscripts. It corrects some mistakes in the King James Version.... Now there is available the New American Standard Bible New Testament, published by Moody Press. The American Standard Version of 1901, widely acclaimed for its word-for-word fidelity to the Greek, has been painstakingly revised by the Lockman Foundation in light of the latest textual advances (Our God-Breathed Book—The Bible, pp. 382-383).

And in 1979, a year before his death, he said, “Where in the Bible does God guarantee that any translator of the Bible, anyone who copies the Bible.... will be infallibly correct? There is no such Scripture. The doctrine of the infallibility of the translation in the King James is not a Bible doctrine; it is a manmade scheme (“Some Questions for King James Fans,” The Sword of the Lord, March 30, 1979).

Other Trusted Voices on Bible Translation

To update these words so that they accurately reflect the Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic is our responsibility. The voices of faithful men through church history have said the same.

King James Translators (1611)

“We do not deny, nay, we affirm and avow, that the very meanest translation of the Bible in English, set forth by men of our profession... containeth the word of God, nay, is the word of God... No cause therefore why the word translated should be denied to be the word, or forbidden

to be current, notwithstanding that some imperfections and blemishes may be noted in the setting forth of it. For whatever was perfect under the Sun, where Apostles or Apostolic men, that is, men endued with an extraordinary measure of God's spirit, and privileged with the privilege of infallibility, had not their hand? (The Translators to the Reader, p. xix).

John Smyth (before 1612)

considered to be the first English Baptist

“The holy Scriptures viz. the Originalls Hebrew & Greek are given by Divine Inspiration & in their first donation were without error most perfect and therefore Canonical . . . no translation can possibly express all the matter of the body originals, nor a thousand things in the Grammar, Rhetoric, & character of the tongue” (*The Works of John Smyth, fellow of Christ's College*, ed. W.T. Whitley, vol. 1, pp. 279-280).

John Owen (1659)

Puritan theologian, author of 24 volumes of theology, vice-chancellor of Oxford

“Translations contain the word of God, and are the word of God, perfectly or imperfectly, according as they express the words, sense, and meaning of those originals. To advance any, all translations concurring, into an equality with the originals – so to set them by it as to set them up with it on even terms – much more to propose and use them as means of castigating, amending, altering any thing in them, gathering various lections [*variations*] by them, is to set up an altar of our own by the altar of God, and to make equal the wisdom, care, skill, and diligence of men, with the wisdom, care, and providence of God himself” (*The Integrity and Purity of the Hebrew and Greek Text of Scripture, Works of John Owen, Volume 16, p. 357*).

Richard Baxter (1673)

Pastor and Puritan Theologian

“[There are those who] give too little to the Scripture who deny it to be indited by inspiration of the infallible Spirit of God, and be wholly true. . . [And at the other end are] those give too much (in bulk, but too little in virtue) to the Scripture, and. . . say that God hath so preserved the Scripture, as that there are no various readings and doubtful texts thereupon, and that no written or printed copies have been corrupted. . . . All these err in over-doing.” (*A Christian Directory*, p. 725)

Benjamin Keach (1682)

“The Word of God is the Doctrine and Revelation of God's Will, the Sense and Meaning, not barely or strictly the Words, Letters, and Syllables. This is contained exactly and most purely in the Originals, and in all Translations, so far as they agree therewith. Now though some translations may exceed others in Propriety, and significant rendering of the Originals; yet they generally, (even the most imperfect that we know of,) express and hold forth so much of the Mind, Will, and Counsel of God, as is sufficient, by the Blessing of God upon a conscientious Reading thereof, to acquaint a Man with the Mysteries of Salvation, to work in him a true Faith, and bring him to live godly, righteously, and soberly in the World, and to Salvation in the next” (Benjamin Keach, *Tropologia: A Key to Open Scripture Metaphors* (London: n.p., 1682), xxi.).

Francis Turretin (1685)

Swiss Puritan Theologian in Geneva

“All versions are the streams; the original text is the fountain whence they flow. The latter is the rule, the former the thing ruled, having only human authority. . . . Hence it follows that the versions as such are not authentic and canonical in themselves. . . . There is one perfection of

things and truth to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be taken away; another perfection of the version itself. The former is a strictly divine work and is absolutely and in every way self-credible (*autopiston*). Such perfection is the word carried over into the versions. The latter is a human work and therefore liable to error and correction – to which indeed authority can belong, but only human (according to the fidelity and conformity with the original text), but not divine.” (*Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, Volume 1, p. 126).

John Wesley (1754)

“I design first to set down the text itself, for the most part, in the common English translation, which is, in general, (so far as I can judge) abundantly the best that I have seen. Yet I do not say it is incapable of being brought, in several places, nearer to the original. Neither will I affirm, that the Greek copies from which this translation was made, are always the most correct. And therefore I shall take the liberty, as occasion may require, to make here and there a small alteration” (Wesley’s Notes on the Whole Bible-the New Testament, pp.3-4).

C.H. Spurgeon (1881)

“I do not hesitate to say that I believe that there is no mistake whatever in the original Holy Scriptures from beginning to end. There may be, and there are, mistakes of translation; for translators are not inspired” (*The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*. Vol. 35).

In his autobiography, recounting the laying of the foundation-stone of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Spurgeon explains why they chose a Grecian design for the building: "Greek is the sacred tongue, and Greek is the Baptist's tongue; we may be beaten in our own version [the KJV], sometimes; but in Greek, never" (*Autobiography*, vol. 2, p. 327).

James M. Gray (1917)

Dean of the Moody Bible Institute – writing in the famous volumes “The Fundamentals”

"Let it be stated further in this definitional connection, that ***the record for whose inspiration we contend is the original record***-the autographs or parchments of Moses, David, Daniel, Matthew, Paul, or Peter, as the case may be, and not any particular translation or translations of them whatever. There is no translation absolutely without error (emphasis in Gray's: "The Inspiration of the Bible-Definition, Extent and Proof," in *The Fundamentals*, vol II. pp.12-13).

W.E. Vine (1923)

Author of Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

“The importance of most of the variations in the manuscript readings has been greatly exaggerated... There is no doctrine in Scripture which would be affected if all the disputed words, or those about which there is any doubt, were omitted” (*The Divine Inspiration of the Bible*, pp. 27-28).

Amy Carmichael (1932)

Missionary to India, devotional writer, founder of Dohnavur Fellowship

“In case any are puzzled by the different translations from which I draw strength and help and delight, it is like this: In studying any object with the microscope we use different lenses and turn the mirror in various ways; such change brings out some new wonder and beauty. So it is for those who are not Greek or Hebrew scholars, and who use the work of scholars to open the meaning of the inexhaustible Word-the Bible is richer than any single version can fully show” (quoted in *Edges of His Ways*, p. vii)

R.V. Clearwaters (1968)

Founder of Pillsbury Baptist Bible College and Central Baptist Theological Seminary

“Honesty compels us to cite the 1901 American Revised as the best English Version of the original languages which places us in a position 290 years ahead of those who are still weighing the King James of 1611 for demerits... We know of no Fundamentalists... that claim the King James as the best translation. Those in the mainstream of Fundamentalism all claim the American Revised of 1901 as the best English translation” (Richard V. Clearwaters, *The Great Conservative Baptist Compromise*, pp. 192, 199).

Again in 1974 he said, “At the present time, only two translations are recommendable: “The King James Version” and the “New American Standard Bible.” The “King James Version” is unsurpassed in the beauty of its language... The “New American Standard Bible” is unsurpassed in its accuracy and its fidelity to the Greek text. Its language is also very readable” (“Bible Versions,” Central Bible Workshop, p.6; cited in *The Bible Version Debate*, written and edited by the faculty of Central Baptist Seminary, pp. 16-17).

Bob Jones, Jr.

President of Bob Jones University from 1971-1998

“There are other good translations in the midst of all the bad ones. Unfortunately, there are no perfect ones, including the Authorized Version, as evidenced by the many corrections and amendments that have been made through the years (letter to a friend, quoted by Daniel L. Turner in *Standing Without Apology: The History of Bob Jones University*, p. 245).