

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: ESV ?****ESV ? - posted by Delboy (), on: 2004/5/19 9:44**

I'm sure the thread on the NASB will continue with gusto !

I read on a day to day basis NASB and KJV but do look at others for study/interest and preaching purposes

I wanted to start a new thread; Does anyone have thoughts on the English standard version

I read in an add in christianity today John Piper saying

" The ESV satisfies the preaching, memorizing, studying, reading needs of our church, from children to adults. We are building all our future ministry around it"

april 2004

**Re: ESV ? - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/5/19 13:43**

I have used the ESV a little. It comes with built-in support from the likes of J.I. Packer and others and has been heralded as the version we have all been waiting for.

I have been disappointed in it. The blurb says "It sits in the classic stream of word for word Bible translations, using the Revised Standard Version as a base but incorporating all the most recent advances in scholarship and changes in modern language use". I fail to see how anyone can regard the RSV as a word for word translation, and the ESV is not 'word for word' (literal equivalence) to anything like the extant of the NASB. However it is very readable which was one of the strengths of the RSV. The ESV claims to be an 'essentially literal equivalence' translation. It cannot be if it is based on the RSV.

If you look at footnotes in the book of Ezra in an RSV you will see it has decided that the Septuagint is preferable to the Masoretic text. (see my comments on the NASB thread). The ESV follows the same line. This means that when we say the all translations begin with the Masoretic text except the RSV we should now add and the ESV.

I have four simple tests for any new version. I look up these verses

Acts 20:28 which refers to the blood of God. If it says 'of the Lord' or tells me in the footnotes that some manuscripts have 'of the Lord' I know it is giving more weight to the Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus than I like, and is following, (although at a distance) the line of the 1881 RV/ASV.

1 Tim 3:16. If the version has 'He' was manifested in the flesh rather than 'God' I know the translators have followed the Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus again. (the ESV has 'He!')

Rom 6:6 If it says anything other than 'our old man' I know that I am reading a theological interpretation rather than a strict translation. Any other translation breaks the link and contrast with 'the new man'.

1 Pet 1:13 If it doesn't have a reference to 'girding up your loins' it has lost the link with the Passover (Ex 12:11) and Covenant which is the essential foundation to 1 Peter.

The ESV fails on all these. However my version is beautifully produced with good clear text, and the text in blocks rather than separated verses (which I prefer)

just my thoughts on the matter.

**Re: - posted by KeithLaMothe, on: 2004/5/19 15:00**

Ron,

I've recently been reading on the KJ-only (or KJ-superior) issue, and I've come to the conclusion that it's a simple matter of which text is more faithful to the autographs. I've yet to determine that, though. For the OT it's obviously the Masoretic text, but for the NT it seems a bit harder to defend the Textus Receptus. What evidence convinced you of the reliability of the TR and conversely what evidence convinced you of the unreliability of Aleph and B (Sinaiticus and Vaticanus)?

**Re: Received Text v Wescott & Hort - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/5/19 15:44**

I've recently been reading on the KJ-only (or KJ-superior) issue, and I've come to the conclusion that it's a simple matter of which text is more faithful to the autographs.

Keith

You are absolutely right. This is the key to the whole discussion. Your question is the key one too; "what evidence convinced you of the reliability of the Received Text etc?"

I read the David Otis Fuller books (Which Bible and True or False) many years ago and they have tried to follow the English end of the battle. The Codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are priceless but their very survival is questionable. Why did the Vatican Codex lie unused on a shelf for centuries? Why did the Sinai Codex end up in a basket of waste kindling for the monastery fires? I think the speculation that they were unused because they were untrusted is feasible.

The thought that the Church was without the true text for 1800 years and had it restored by Westcott and Hort, I find unlikely to say the least. Westcott and Hort were obsessed with things Catholic and saw the Roman Church as the purest stream; I have problems with that too. W&H concluded that the Vatican Codex was the touchstone by which all others should be judged, but it shows evidence of more than 20 editors. W&H also concluded that 'older' necessarily meant 'better' an illusion that is continued in the footnotes of many a modern version which say 'the best mss say...' This means the mss which are in closest agreement with the Vatican Codex say...

I have seen the Sinaiticus close up at the British Library and it is interesting to note that the copyist clearly knew of the longer ending of Mark's gospel. He has left a space of exactly the right area before he moves on to Luke. This shows that at a Roman copyist made an editorial decision, and knowing that the Roman church had by this time sunk into dead tradition I am not surprised that he chose not to have the verses which spoke of the continuing work of the Spirit. But these are the mss that W&H venerated.

I have a lot of respect for the champions of the Received Text eg Christopher Wordsworth and Scrivener and have tried to follow their defence of the Received Text. Their reasoning seems logical and unstrained. I accept their views.

I have no 'killer fact' that has convinced me, rather the arguments of the Westcott & Hort camp leave me unconvinced. Their work coincided with the rationalism of the day and I think was infected by it.

I am unconvinced by the transmission philosophies of Westcott & Hort and am comfortable with the sense that the text I use has come down the centuries whole.

Is it likely that the Lord would leave the Church with inferior texts for 1800 years? Is it likely that the rationalism of Westcott & Hort would be the tool by which He restored the text to the Church? When it comes to such a major change I think the burden of proof lies with those who want to change. Westcott & Hort's 'evidence' leaves me unconvinced, so I remain 'unchanged'.

**Re: - posted by KeithLaMothe, on: 2004/5/19 17:36**

Thank you for the detailed reply, I've encountered much of the same arguments, it's certainly a good case.

Have you read James White's "The King James Only Controversy"? He takes the anti-KJ-only side (doesn't bash the KJV, really, just refutes KJ-only), whether or not it would convince you, it has probably the best arguments on the other side.

**Re: - posted by ravin, on: 2004/5/20 0:35**

Yes there is all kinds of new versions, new ones coming out every year it seems. I've read the Kingdom is in power not in word. how many of the new ones are bringing out the power of the kingdom?

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/5/20 11:54**

Hi Keith

No I haven't read James White. I could not support a KJV-only stance, although I do think the 1611 translators had a respect for their handling of the word of God that has never been equalled.

If you compare the KJV to the Geneva Bible (there is an e-sword module available) which is very close to Tyndale's 1536 version you can see some of the changes the translators made which I could not support. In particular the changes in the monarchy seem to have caused a reverence for the status quo which has persisted in later translations to the detriment of accuracy. EG Acts 20:28 has the elder 'over' the church in Ephesus in the KJV. Tyndale and the Geneva have them 'with' or 'of'. The NASB has them 'among' the church. The preposition is 'en' in Greek which means 'within'; it could never mean 'over'. The KJV is much more authoritarian than Tyndale. There are several other issues where I think KJV is inferior to Tyndale.

**Re: - posted by KeithLaMothe, on: 2004/5/20 12:07**

Yes, KJ-only is a good bit more than the evidence justifies.

The main reason I'd suggest reading White's book is the arguments he makes for the non-Byzantine text-types and Aleph and B in particular.

**Re: ESV ? - posted by Delboy (), on: 2004/5/21 4:42**

Hi Ron and Keith,

thanks for the replies there plenty to chew over keep it coming :-)

**Re: ESV ? - posted by Chancellor (), on: 2004/7/13 23:27**

I like the ESV; though it's not as good as the NASB or the Spanish-language Reina-Valera. The fact that J. I. Packer is behind it is a significant plus. Someone suggested that the Masoretic text is preferable to the Septuagint, even though the Septuagint is what Greek-speaking churches would have used in the first century for their Bible. It's good to use several different translations (all of them formal equivalence, of course: avoid dynamic equivalence translations like the plague) and to use references such as Strong's and Thayer's.

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/7/14 4:29**

Hi Chancellor

welcome to the discussion...

I still use the ESV, and its linguistic style, no doubt derived from the RSV, is pleasant to read, but I don't trust it. I find myself constantly checking what it says. My main objection to it is that it is not literal or formal equivalence.

The blurb says "It sits in the classic stream of word for word Bible translations, using the Revised Standard Version as a base but incorporating all the most recent advances in scholarship and changes in modern language use". I fail to see how anyone can regard the RSV as a word for word translation, and the ESV is not 'word for word' (literal equivalence) to anything like the extant of the NASB. However it is very readable which was one of the strengths of the RSV.

The ESV claims to be an 'essentially literal equivalence' translation. It cannot be if it is based on the RSV.

As far as I know there are no conservative evangelical scholars who would prefer the Septuagint to the Masoretic text.

**Re: - posted by Chancellor (), on: 2004/7/15 19:41**

The RSV was, so I've read, an update of the 1901 ASV (as is the NASB). The ASV is supposedly an update of the KJV. RSV, to my knowledge is not a dynamic equivalence translation.

As for having to check what the ESV says, I do that with any English translation. English is a rather impoverished language into which to translate scripture.

I have no doubt that the NASB is still the most literal of all the English-language Bibles but I would definitely recommend the ESV over any of the dynamic equivalence translations.

**Re: - posted by KeithLaMothe, on: 2004/7/15 19:55**

Quote:

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Chancellor wrote:

The RSV was, so I've read, an update of the 1901 ASV (as is the NASB).

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The RSV, as I understand it, was done at least partly by theological liberals. Not that that conclusively proves it an inferior translation (there have been some staggeringly brilliant liberal theologians), but I wouldn't trust translation of God's Word to people who may or may not really believe it is God's Word.

Quote:

-----The ASV is supposedly an update of the KJV.

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In the O.T., perhaps, but in the N.T. they use different manuscripts (unless I'm quite mistaken); the KJV uses the Textus Receptus (Received Text) as Erasmus put together, through Beza, and I think some other fellow before the 1611 translators went to work; the ASV uses one of the compiled texts (Westcott-Hort?), largely based on Aleph and B (Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus), two manuscripts that, if I recall correctly, the KJV translators made no use of if they even knew of them.

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/7/16 5:15**

Quote:

-----The RSV was, so I've read, an update of the 1901 ASV (as is the NASB). The ASV is supposedly an update of the KJV. RSV, to my knowledge is not a dynamic equivalence translation.

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The RSV may have been marketed as such, but it certainly wasn't. It is dynamic equivalence in contrast to the ASV's literal/formal equivalence. The RV/ASV was supposed to be a 'revision' (hence its name) of the KJV. However, for the NT Westcott and Hort created an eclectic text based almost exclusively on the Vatican and Sinai Codices, this skewed the NT translation to an extent that it is a very flawed tool. However, the OT of the RV/ASV is based on the Masoretic text and is still the most 'accurate' translation readily available. (most online bibles will give it free)

Quote:

-----As for having to check what the ESV says, I do that with any English translation. English is a rather impoverished language into which to translate scripture.

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In some senses the opposite is true. English is richer in its number of words; it is the concepts which are sometimes difficult to convey.

Quote:

-----I have no doubt that the NASB is still the most literal of all the English-language Bibles but I would definitely recommend the ESV over any of the dynamic equivalence translations.

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The ASV is, by far, the most literal/formal equivalence translation. The ESV being based upon the RSV should not be regarded as a literal/formal equivalence translation.

**Re: The ESV revisited - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/9/17 14:34**

I thought I ought to modify my position on the ESV.

I have been using the ESV a little of late, and am growing in my appreciation of it. The translation philosophy calls it an 'essentially literal' translation. (ie literal equivalence as compared with dynamis equivalence) My objection to this has been that it is based on the RSV which was not. However it is much closer to literal equivalence than I had originally thought and I am particularly enjoying the narrative sections. It reads very smoothly and I would recommend Slers to try it where possible.

I still prefer the stricter literal equivalence of the KJV but I will report back on my reactions as I continue to read.

There is a free e-sword ESV module available.

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/9/18 6:43**

Today I came across a pattern of the ESV which is likely to repeat often in the New Testament.

But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. (Luk 9:55 KJV)

But he turned and rebuked them. (Luk 9:55 ESV)

But he turned, and rebuked them. (Luk 9:55 ASV)

But he turned and rebuked them. (Luke 9:55 RSV)

The omission of the final phrase is because the ESV and ASV and RSV are relying heavily upon the Western Texts. The latter phrase is omitted in the Sinai and Vatican mss but is present in those known as the Majority Text. In this the ESV is clearly showing its pedigree.

The NASB which is more moderate in its veneration of the Sinai and Vatican mss has given due weight to the testimony of the Majority Text and has restored the fuller text, as can be seen below. The NASB put the fuller phrase into with a marginal note.

But He turned and rebuked them,

**Re: - posted by swsojourner (), on: 2004/9/18 17:38**

Hello Philogos,

There is also McCheyne's reading program <http://www.gnpcb.org/esv/devotions/one.year.tract/>  
<http://www.gnpcb.org/esv/devotions/>

I'm pretty much Authorized all the way, but I switched over a month ago after reading and memorizing in the ESV.. Have some more thoughts also, about the "omph" factor, and the Textus Receptus, etc

There is one thing that really, really suprised me about the ESV and and that is how easy it is to memorize and it layers well with the King James at the same time

I'm still working through it, but hands down it beats any other modern version out there :)

(IMHO, of course)

KN

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/9/19 3:44**

I'm not planning to make a daily habit of this report card, but today's readings were enlightening on the topic of the 'best' manuscripts.

After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

(Luk 10:1 KJV)

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. (Luk 10:1 ESV)

Now after these things the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself was about to come. (Luk 10:1 ASV)

After this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to come. (Luk 10:1 RSV)

What is interesting here is that the ESV appears to be even more committed to the Western Text than were the British RV/ASV revisers. They put the 'extra two missionaries' into the footnotes, but the ESV sticks them straight into the text and puts its comments into the footnotes.

I think this is where the crunch is going to be with the ESV for me. As swsojourner says it is very readable and the flow makes it very easy to memorise. The movement of narrative passages is very smooth. But, and to me it is a big but, it is very heavily committed to the Western texts. The ESV preface comments "the ESV... is based on the Greek Text in the 1993 editions of the Greek New Testament (4th corrected ed) published by the United Bible Societies (UBS) and the Novum Testamentum Graece (27th edition) by Nestle and Aland." The preface continues to comment that "in a few difficult cases in the New Testament, the ESV had followed a Greek text different from the text given preference in the UBS/Nestle-Aland 27th edition." On the present showing they are likely to be very few indeed.

**Re: - posted by Agent001 (), on: 2004/9/21 11:44**

I am not sure this one verse reveals a stronger commitment to one MSS over another in general, or simply an exceptional case in which textual considerations have convinced the editors of ESV to favour one rendition over the other.

Quote:  
-----There is a difficult textual problem here and in v. 17, where the number is either "seventy" (A C L W Q X Y Å<sup>1,13</sup> Å and several church fathers and early versions) or "seventy-two" (A B D 0181 pc lat as well as other versions and fathers). The more difficult reading is "seventy-two," since scribes would be prone to assimilate this passage to several OT passages that refer to groups of seventy people (Num 11:13-17; Deut 10:22; Judg 8:30; 2 Kgs 10:1 et al.); this reading also has slightly better ms support. "Seventy" could be the preferred reading if scribes drew from the tradition of the number of translators of the LXX, which the Letter of Aristeas puts at seventy-two (TCGNT 127), although this is far less likely. All things considered, "seventy-two" is a much more difficult reading and accounts for the rise of the other. Only Luke notes a second larger mission like the one in 9:1-6.

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(NET footnote)

P.S. I'm sorry the textual note did not come out right here, but I think most people don't care anyways.

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/9/21 13:49**

Hi Sam

I'm sure you are right that not too many will want to delve into the intricacies of textual criticism but for those who might there is an interesting site run by Michael Marlowe

Michael has strong opinions and takes no prisoners but there is some excellent material on his site.

As a simplification I have studied quite a bit about Burgen and Scrivener and Christopher Wordsworth. I have a wonderful set of 2 volumes of Christopher Wordsworth on the Greek Text. He was a strong follower of Scrivener.

The Englishman's Greek New Testament was published by Bagsters and without credit to its author who was Thomas N

ewberry. It has an editors critical apparatus at the foot of the pages which is really quite simple to use. Generally I am happy to take Wordsworth's judgements.

I note that Michael Marlow has the following textual notes on Luke 10:1

Luke 10:1. Add "two" after "seventy". Lt WHt NAt signifying that Lighfoot, Westcott-Hort and Nestle-Aland. Of the older editors only Lachman added the extra 'duo'