

General Topics :: King James Only**King James Only, on: 2005/3/4 9:49**

I found the following writing recently, and have read it over several times. On this site some folks have jeered me a little for being a defender of the KJV. It doesn't bother me that that happens because I understand that a lot of times it comes from folks that really have never studied the real issues surrounding the entire debate.

This particular writing was written by a gentleman who has studied and written extensively for nearly 20 years on the KJV issue. When I read this, I said to myself "this states exactly where I stand on this!"

Too many times we lump people into one category or under one label, and that shouldn't be. I personally know those who have taken the KJV issue to extremes, and it can become irrational... as with any issue.

However, I believe the following piece is very well balanced, and may perhaps shed some light as to where I stand on this issue.

Krispy

Please read the entire article before you respond to this!

King James Only
by David Cloud

There is a lot of debate and confusion surrounding the man-made term "King James Onlyism." This term has been popularized in recent years by men who claim they are concerned about an alleged cultic view of the King James Bible. Rarely do they carefully define this term, though, and as a result a wide variety of Bible-believing men are lumped together and labeled with a term the meaning of which is nebulous.

I have been labeled "King James Only" because of my writings on the subject of Bible texts and versions. To set the record straight, let me explain what I believe. I know from decades of experience that this is also what a large number of other King James Bible defenders believe.

If "King James Only" defines one who believes that God has given an inerrant Scripture in Greek and Hebrew and that He has preserved that in the Hebrew Masoretic and Greek Received Text underlying the King James Bible and other Reformation Bibles and that we have an accurate translation of it in the English language in the Authorized Version, call me "King James Only."

If "King James Only" defines one who believes modern textual criticism is heresy, call me "King James Only." I have spent hundreds of dollars to obtain the writings of the men who have been at the forefront of developing the theories underlying modern textual criticism, and I have read them. They are not dependable. Most of them are unbelievers, and I refuse to lean upon their scholarship. I am convinced they do not have the spiritual discernment necessary to know where the inspired, preserved Word of God is located today.

If "King James Only" defines one who believes God guided the Reformation editors and translators in their choice of the Received Text and that we don't have to start all over today in an attempt to find the preserved text of Scripture, call me "King James Only." The theories of modern textual criticism all revolve around the idea that the pure text of Scripture was not preserved in the Reformation text but that the Reformation editors, because of their alleged ignorance and carelessness and lack of resources, rejected the pure text and chose, instead, an inferior text. You are free to accept that view if it suits you. I, for one, believe it is absolute nonsense.

If "King James Only" defines one who rejects the theory that the "preserved" Word of God was hidden away in the Pope's library and in a weird Greek Orthodox monastery at the foot of Mt. Sinai (a monastery which has a room full of the skulls of dead monks) for hundreds of years, call me "King James Only."

If "King James Only" defines one who believes it is important to have one biblical standard in a language as important as

English and who believes that the multiplicity of versions has created confusion and has weakened the authority of the Word of God in this century, call me "King James Only."

ON THE OTHER HAND

If "King James Only" defines one who believes that the KJV was given by inspiration, I am **not** "King James Only. The King James Bible is the product of preservation, **not inspiration**. The term "inspiration" refers to the original giving of the Scripture through holy men of old (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21). At the same time, I agree with the Pulpit Commentary when it says, "We must guard against such narrow, mechanical views of inspiration as would confine it to the Hebrew and Greek words in which it was written, so that one who reads a good translation would not have 'the words of the Lord.'"

If "King James Only" defines one who believes the English KJV is superior to the Hebrew and Greek texts upon which it was based, I am **not** "King James Only." In fact, I believe such an idea is pure nonsense and would mean the preserved Word of God did not exist before 1611.

If "King James Only" defines one who believes the English Authorized Version is advanced revelation over the Hebrew and Greek text that God gave through inspiration to holy men of old, I am **not** "King James Only."

If "King James Only" defines one who believes that we do not need to study Greek and Hebrew today or that it is not proper to use lexicons and dictionaries, I am **not** "King James Only." God's people should learn Greek and Hebrew if possible and use (with much caution and wisdom) study tools. When the Bible says that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," we know that the words they spake were Hebrew and Greek words. I encouraged my youngest son to begin studying Greek in high school, and he is scheduled to have four years of Greek and two of Hebrew when he graduates from Bible College. But foundational to the study of the biblical languages is a thorough understanding of the textual issue. We must study the right Greek and Hebrew, and we must also be careful of the original language study tools, because many of them were produced from a rationalistic position and most were produced with great bias against the Received Text.

If "King James Only" defines one who believes the preserved Word of God is available only in English, I am **not** "King James Only." The Masoretic Hebrew and Greek Received texts translated properly into any language is the preserved Word of God in that language, whether it be German, Spanish, French, Korean, or Nepali.

If "King James Only" defines one who believes that translations in other languages should be based on English rather than (when possible) Greek and Hebrew, I am **not** "King James Only."

If "King James Only" defines one who believes that a person can only be saved through the King James Bible, I am **not** "King James Only."

If "King James Only" defines one who believes that the King James Bible's antiquated language is holy or who believes that the KJV could never again be updated, I am **not** "King James Only." I doubt the KJV will ever be replaced in this apostate age, but to say that it is wrong to update the language again after the fashion of the four updates it has undergone since 1611 is not reasonable, in my estimation. Having dealt constantly with people who speak English as a 2nd or 3rd language, I am very sympathetic to the very real antiquation problem in the King James Bible. ***But I am not going to trade a Bible with a few problems due to old language for a Bible filled with error due to a corrupt text and/or a corrupt translation methodology.***

Re: King James Only - posted by Agent001 (), on: 2005/3/4 10:39

I have no interest in getting into the "King James Only" debate. I do not think the KJV is merely "a Bible with a few problems due to old language," nor do I think the modern translations are "filled with error due to a corrupt text and/or a corrupt translation methodology." In my opinion, the problem of the Church today is **not** which version to use, but how to encourage believers to make use of all the available resources to engage in *life-changing* Bible studies.

As for David Cloud, who represents the fundamental baptist wing, would be classified by many as "**extremely conservative**". It is quite hard to find **any** brethren in Christ outside of his circle not being nit-picked for some "apostasies," e.g. Charles Stanley, Billy Graham, Chuck Colson, Philip Yancey, Jim Cymbala, Elisabeth Elliot, Jerry Bridges, etc. His attitude has always come across to me as, "everybody's wrong but me, David Cloud."

Re: King James Only - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/3/4 10:52

Quote:
-----If "King James Only" defines one who believes that God has given an inerrant Scripture in Greek and Hebrew and that He has preserved that in the Hebrew Masoretic and Greek Received Text underlying the King James Bible and other Reformation Bibles and that we have an accurate translation of it in the English language in the Authorized Version, call me "King James Only."

Well, it all depends on what you mean by 'Received Text'. If you mean that you can ignore the remainder of the Byzantine Textform, and that the 6 manuscripts were word perfect copies of the original writings, which would be difficult in that there will have been divergences even in the 6 manuscripts...

It all depends on what you mean by 'accurate translation'. Do you mean that the KJV's obsession with role and hierarchy is a good translation of the original concepts, and that church is better than assembly, and charity is better than love, and confession better than acknowledgment. If by accurate translation you are comparing it with other translations... in strictest terms of meaning the ASV is a more 'accurate translation' but, in my view, based on inferior manuscripts. However when based on the Masoretic text or NT texts which are identical in Western and Byzantine textforms, the ASV is often much more 'accurate'.

Quote:
-----But I am not going to trade a Bible with a few problems due to old language for a Bible filled with error due to a corrupt text and/or a corrupt translation methodology.

Nor me, which is why the KJV is still my version of choice, but to close our eyes and ears to nuances which other translations may have captured is self impoverishment.

Re:, on: 2005/3/4 11:02

Quote:
-----As for David Cloud, who represents the fundamental baptist wing, would be classified by many as "extremely conservative". It is quite hard to find any brethren in Christ outside of his circle not being nit-picked for some "apostasies," e.g. Charles Stanley, Billy Graham, Chuck Colson, Philip Yancey, Jim Cymbala, Elisabeth Elliot, Jerry Bridges, etc. His attitude has always come across to me as, "everybody's wrong but me, David Cloud."

I'm not... let me repeat... NOT promoting everything that David Cloud writes. I do, however, have a lot of respect for his knowledge of Bible versions. I've personally corresponded with him on several occasions, and have found that your characterization of him is incorrect. He brings up some concerns about those that you mentioned, and I have to say that he does make some interesting points. **HOWEVER...** this is not a thread about David Cloud, so please do not make it one.

Quote:
-----I have no interest in getting into the "King James Only" debate.

...but you responded with your opinion on the issue. Does this mean you don't want to hear opposing views while you give yours? If you're going to jump in with your opinions, then you should be open to debate. That's just good chat board manners. I posted this knowing full well it would spark a debate... isn't that why we're here??

Quote:
-----I do not think the KJV is merely "a Bible with a few problems due to old language"

...elaborate.

Quote:

-----nor do I think the modern translations are "filled with error due to a corrupt text and/or a corrupt translation methodology."

Why do you think this? Which underlying text is correct then? They cant both be right. One, or both, has to be wrong.

Quote:

-----In my opinion, the problem of the Church today is not which version to use

It may not be THE problem... but to say it isnt a problem is to totally ignore all of the issues surrounding the versions. Thats just putting a spiritual head in the sand and wishing the problem away.

Quote:

-----but how to encourage believers to make use of all the available resources to engage in life-changing Bible studies

Well, you certainly get no argument from me about that. The church is weak because most believers have abandoned any real meaningful study of God's Word. We are in one accord on that one.

However, I do not believe the answer is to study Bible versions that are based on corrupted text. Thats akin to saying that there are starving people in Africa... lets ship them 20 tons of rice cakes, and no fruits or vegetables or meat.

Krispy

Re:, on: 2005/3/4 11:07

Quote:

-----Nor me, which is why the KJV is still my version of choice, but to close our eyes and ears to nuances which other translations may have captured is self impoverishment.

I'm with ya, brother... I agree. However, when it comes to the modern versions (NIV, NASB, NLT, etc etc) it is certainly not an issue of "nuances which other translations". As your know, I love the Tyndale Bible, and I'm working on getting a Wycliff... as the article I posted stated... it is **not** an issue of the KJV being perfect in every way, and it's the only Bible English speaking people should ever read. I dont believe that at all.

Krispy

Re: - posted by dann (), on: 2005/3/4 12:40

Like most of us, Mr. Cloud's opinions are influenced by his bias -- a bias that is self evident in his tone, word choice, and selective information.

At (or near) the heart of his bias is the opinion that textual criticism is a "corrupt methodology."

I think it was Daniel Wallace, who took a whole congregation one day, gave them an english translation of some apocryphal text - split the church in two - and had one half of them corrupt the text through various means - introducing many errors and whatnot back into the text.

He then took the other half of the church on the next day, and they were not given the originals, but only the corrupted texts - and using the most basic methods of textual criticism were able to reconstruct (in a matter of hours) the original text except for a word or two.

This was not a group of trained linguists, or textual critics - but your standard church pew fodder. Likewise the violence

done to the original texts was *far more* sophisticated than the minute and near insignificant variances we find in the Alexandrian body of text - on top of this, they didn't dedicated their lives to it, but spent only a disinterested hour or two in the process.

Knowing that in the real world, godly (dare I say it - *conservative*) men dedicate their whole careers to putting this puzzle back together the right way - I feel Mr. Cloud's description of this 'methodology' to be ...less than charitable.

Anyone who imagines that "textual criticism" is a corrupted methodology may want to watch the series I mentioned above and, if nothing else, they will at least have more than Mr. Cloud's opinion on how corrupt it is. The series can be found (http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page_id2439) -here- I think.

The problem with a translation such as the NLT (New Living Translation) is not that it is translated from an inferior text family - it is that it isn't an accurate translation - rather it is half translation and half interpretation!

The Islamics say that the Qu'ran is only binding and valid in the original language - that it's meaning and message cannot be rightly understood in a translation.

The bible, on the other hand, no matter how miserable and polluted the translation - no matter what language it is mashed into - it always has one effect - it produces faith which saves.

I love that - people have been genuinely saved when all they could find was a JW's bible! Praise the Lord!

Yet arguments about endless genealogies (and this is the sort of argument Paul was talking about) are to be avoided.

The question I ask myself - if men and women are being saved and living fruitful Christian lives with English translations other than the KJV - then who are the KJVO people striving against?

As Gamaliel said to the Sanhedrin - Let these guys be - if what they are doing is not from God, it will come to nothing. But if what they are doing is from God's hand you may well be opposing God Himself.

Dan

Re: Baby Blues - posted by ZekeO (), on: 2005/3/4 13:35

Hey Krispy, good to have you back.

Just a question, is the baby keeping you up, you sound a little cranky.....? :-P

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/3/4 13:39

Wycliff??

Treuli, treuli, Y seie to thee, whanne thou were yongere, thou girdidist thee, and wandridist where thou woldist; but whanne thou schalt waxe eldere, thou schalt holde forth thin hondis, and another schal girde thee, and schal lede thee whidur thou wolt not. (Joh 21:18 WycliffeNT) Could be a good cure for that insomnia?

Re:, on: 2005/3/4 14:33

Quote:

-----Just a question, is the baby keeping you up, you sound a little cranky.....?

Could be... babies are wonderous kreaures, dont you think? Kouldnt live without 'em!

Krispy

Re:, on: 2005/3/4 14:53

Quote:
-----The question I ask myself - if men and women are being saved and living fruitful Christian lives with English translations other than the KJV - then who are the KJVO people striving against?

Well, that is an interesting question, and one that deserves some discussion.

As you know, if you read my original post thoroughly, I certainly believe that people have been truly saved reading versions other than the KJV. I was! I was a staunch NIV supporter who switched to the NASB.

I find it interesting that we have a plethora of modern versions these days... supposedly in order to help people read and understand the Bible better... and yet I see incredibly gross compromise with the world in the church today. Barna research has done surveys in the past that show just how ignorant most people who call themselves "Christians" are of the scriptures.

So if all these new versions are supposedly helping everyone understand the Bible better... where is the evidence? I don't see it.

And I do believe sound Biblical doctrine is worth striving for... and doctrine is weakened (and in some cases removed) from modern versions. Doctrine is a huge deal, and Paul's letters to Timothy prove it. So also do the writings of the early church fathers.

Krispy

Re: - posted by Angyl, on: 2005/3/4 15:43

Quote:
-----The question I ask myself - if men and women are being saved and living fruitful Christian lives with English translations other than the KJV - then who are the KJVO people striving against?

Well it is said of us (people) that our perfect God has nothing but crooked sticks to work with.

Likewise, I would contend that, yes, many millions do get saved and grow reading other Bible versions...some incredibly corrupt and, IMO outright hellish works too, (*Such as The Message*)...

that is simply a matter of them being saved DESPITE what they are reading, however. Praise God we have a savior that can work through evil as well as good...can do his wonders in the good circumstances and in the bad.

God doesn't need perfection (humans or human works) to save people. If He did, none of us would be here.

Having said all that, what we "KJVO"s strive against is the **ever increasing deviation from the truth!** Granted..."what we PERCEIVE as truth."

If you don't stand for something...you'll fall for anything. Krispy is absolutely right in saying that we can't both be right. Either the KJV is right and the other versions based on other manuscripts are **NOT** the word of God or both are wrong...it is simply not possible for both sides to be right.

KJVOs have taken a stand, that's all, and no matter what your view, on a fundamental level, that is a sensible thing to do, because if you can't make up your mind, Satan will have no problems seducing you into thinking his way.

I choose to be 100% right or 100% wrong with the KJV. Those who don't make a choice and believe any version is okay as long as it sounds good to them, are setting themselves up to be nothing but 100% wrong when the time comes for truth.

Re: - posted by Angyl, on: 2005/3/4 15:46

Oops...double post.

Re:, on: 2005/3/4 15:57

I found this speech given by Ronald Reagan regarding the KJV... believe it or not. I find it quite interesting. Obviously I do not consider Reagan to have been a Biblical scholar... but I think his speech really hits on the whole "The KJV is hard to understand" issue.

Yes, his approach to it was simplistic... but thats ok. Sometimes on this website everyone thinks too hard about things anyway.

Check it out:

The following transcript is one of Ronald Reagan's famous radio addresses. In this address (which aired September 6, 1977), Ronald Reagan, the great orator, eloquently gives his thoughts on the "Good News Bible" (also called the Good News for Modern Man and Today's English Version) in comparison to the Authorized Version or the King James Bible.

What would you say if someone decided Shakespeare's plays, Charles Dicken's novels, or the music of Beethoven could be rewritten & improved?

I'll be right back. . .

Writing in the journal "The Alternative", Richard Hanser, author of *The Law & the Prophets* and *Jesus: What Manner of Man Is This?*, has called attention to something that is more than a little mind boggling. It is my understanding that the Bible (both the Old & New Testaments) has been the best selling book in the entire history of printing.

Now another attempt has been made to improve it. I say another because there have been several fairly recent efforts to quote "make the Bible more readable & understandable" unquote. But as Mr. Hanser so eloquently says, "For more than 3 1/2 centuries, its language and its images, have penetrated more deeply into the general culture of the English speaking world, and been more dearly treasured, than anything else ever put on paper." He then quotes the irreverent H. L. Mencken, who spoke of it as purely a literary work and said it was, "probably the most beautiful piece of writing in any language."

They were, of course, speaking of The Authorized Version, the one that came into being when the England of King James was scoured for translators & scholars. It was a time when the English language had reached it's peak of richness & beauty.

Now we are to have The Good News Bible which will be in, "the natural English of everyday adult conversation." I'm sure the scholars and clergymen supervised by the American Bible Society were sincerely imbued with the thought that they were taking religion to the people with their Good News Bible, but I can't help feeling we should instead be taking the people to religion and lifting them with the beauty of language that has outlived the centuries.

Mr. Hanser has quoted from both the St. James Version & the Good News Bible some well known passages for us to compare. A few thousand years ago Job said "How forcible are right words!" The new translators have him saying "Honest words are convincing." That's only for openers. There is the passage, "For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow". Is it really an improvement to say instead, "The wiser you are, the more worries you have; the more you know the more it hurts."

In the New Testament, in Mathew, we read "The voice of the one crying in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way." The Good News version translates that, "Someone is shouting in the desert. Get the road ready." It sounds like a straw boss announcing lunch hour is over.

The hauntingly beautiful 23rd Psalm is the same in both versions, for a few words, "The Lord is my shepherd" but instead of continuing "I shall not want" we are supposed to say "I have everything I need."

The Christmas story has undergone some modernizing but one can hardly call it improved. The wondrous words "Fear not: for; behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy" has become, "Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you."

The sponsors of the Good News version boast that their Bible is as readable as the daily paper — and so it is. But do readers of the daily news find themselves moved to wonder, "at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth"? Mr. Hanser suggests that sadly the "tinkering & general horsing around with the sacred texts will no doubt continue" as pious drudges try to get it right. "It will not dawn on them that it has already been gotten right."

This is Ronald Reagan. Thanks for listening.

— aired September 6, 1977

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/3/4 17:57

Quote:
----- They were, of course, speaking of The Authorized Version, the one that came into being when the England of King James was scored for translators & scholars. It was a time when the English language had reached it's peak of richness & beauty.

Surprisingly this is one of the main issues with the KJV; it was specifically designed to be rich and beautiful and to have a ring to it. The question is does the original have the same majestic ring to it? Well, the New Testament is written in market-Greek.

Re: - posted by PTywama3 (), on: 2005/3/4 18:03

From personal experience and observation, it seems to me that the translations do serve a purpose. Give a person in the modern western culture a KJV, and he'll likely laugh at you and walk away horribly bored. Give him an NIV, and he might just sink his teeth in.

Since it does take study to effectively read, the KJV is more of a developed taste - something that quite a few people in the Body come to enjoy thoroughly. It also has a high number of preestablished resources from Godly men of the past. It is my particular version of choice.

But I use the NASB 95 ed. to compare manuscripts and such, I don't think ignoring the age of the Alexandrian texts and the several major differences (i.e. Mark 16) is a wise thing for a studying Christian, especially since respecting differences is a great way to avoid arguments instead of debates.

And the Message... well, I would say don't ever take it to be the Real McCoy, but a level of eloquence is offered in the text that really can enrich my use of the word as a tool, and may even spark some new understanding. Just as long as I check it against a more direct translation and don't go hinging myself on such translated parts like "I was out of step with you for a long time, in the wrong since before I was born." Ok, so I think he messed up the psalms pretty badly.

I personally believe that a more literal translation should be a mainstay of any Christian's walk, but the scripture is difficult at best to understand. Many without the time and patience or knowledge/capacity to find and use a lot of resources still have to be adequately fed by the Word. If that means handing them an NIV instead of a KJV or NASB because they won't read them, then it's God's realm and not something I can or even should worry about right now.

Re: - posted by inotof (), on: 2005/3/4 18:23

I find that many who prefer the KJV only are those that were raised with that particular translation. It is comfortable to them. The way you can gauge any translation (or at least the way I've been trained is to see if it presents the plan of redemption and salvation clearly enough to get a person saved. Even a crummy translation like the NLT or the NRSV (no offense, excuse my choice of words) present the basic facts of the Gospel well enough for the ungodly to find repentance. Besides amid all the debate about translations (most recent being the TNIV P.U. ot be stankin!) you have to remember that God will not suffer His word to see corruption. (He will not suffer his holy one to see corruption, yes it is speaking about the fleshly body of our Lord, but I believe that this statement encompasses the Word of God as well). It will preserve itself. Even those God-hating people in the so-called "Jesus Seminar" when they went through and marked everything that

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hey "thought jesus did not say" even though they only attributed to him around 10% of what we have in our bibles, it still professed his diety, his resercuttion, his suffering and his redemptiive power and healing power.
i think it all comes down to the way you were raised. i was raised to major on the minors, to make much ado anbout noth ing (i beleive in Holy living, don't get me wrong) but there are more pressing issues facing the heathen than wear a pair of short pants and what version of the Bible he MUST READ. Just my 2 pennies.

Re: - posted by PTywama3 (), on: 2005/3/4 18:31

I was raised on the NIV, and quite enjoy the KJV. I think a lot more of it might have to deal on where God wants you to go. KJV is a great book to be packing around for missions, because it seems like the most established protestant englis h translation in the world. Its what I ran into in any case, and out of the blue I picked it up and used it as my main transla tion less than a year before I was out there.