

GOD'S WORD TO US

**An Introduction to the Bible,
Bible Preservation,
and Bible Translations**

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Introduction

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matthew 4:4

How do people think of the Bible? Here are a few things that people think about this Book:

- Stories
- History
- Wisdom
- Guidebook
- Religion
- Mythology
- Old Fashioned
- Judaism
- Christianity
- Prophecy
- Philosophy
- Forbidden
- Laws
- God's opinion
- Ancient writings
- Faith
- Irrelevant
- God's Word

Before we get started, let's look at the goals of this publication.

1. If you are not yet a Christian, to convince you of the truth of the Bible, and the need for salvation through Jesus Christ.
2. If you are a Christian, to strengthen your faith and encourage you to read and study your Bible daily.
3. Convince everyone that the Textus Receptus is God's preserved word, and that the King James Version (KJV) is God's preserved word for the English language.

This publication will seek to answer the following questions, and many more:

- Where is God's Word?
- What is the Bible?
- How do we know the Bible is true?
- Which translations are reliable?
- Did God inspire the Bible?
- What are God's requirements for a translation?

Note: Please challenge me on the truth! Please point out any Biblical, historical, and factual errors by providing me with the relevant documented facts. You may not agree with everything. I challenge you to hear me out.

Inspiration and Authority of God's Word

The Need for Authority

The world needs authority. To begin, let's consider the analogy of a brand new car. You buy a new car, but you ignore the owner's manual. ("I know how to drive," you think.) You don't break in the engine. You never change the oil. And you wonder why it is seized up before 100,000 miles? Now, take it a step further. Not only do you disregard the owner's manual, you disregard all traffic laws. You race through town, and run every red light.

As reckless as may sound, this is exactly how many live their lives; ignoring any law and authority over their lives, and living them as they wish. God has established His law, His operating manual for human life and behavior. But many of you cringe at this statement. You do not want God having any authority over you. This is our human, sinful, rebellious nature.

God's commandments are for your benefit, not for your hurt. God's law is not intended to keep you from having "a good time," but to keep you from a life of sorrow, despair, and misery. Just as traffic laws are intended to keep you and others safe, God's laws have the same intention. God knows where sin leads, and has warned us with many examples. However, none of us are perfect. Therefore, the Word of God also tells of God's love for us, and of the way which God has established for us to get right with Him. God knows that we are sinners, but loves us any way. He has sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to take the punishment for our sins, that if we believe in Him, we should be cleansed of our sin, and made right with God. However, Jesus is the ONLY way to God, and the only way to Heaven. This contrasts with the religious beliefs of this present time, which is based primarily on humanism.

The Need for Absolutes

Modern, western religion is based on humanism and relativism. We live in an age of spiritual and moral relativism. Humanism states, in brief, that the purpose of life is to be happy. We are on this earth to be happy. Relativism is the notion that what is true and moral for one person may not be true and moral for another, but both are acceptable. "What's true for you may not be true for me." Relativism states, in brief, that all sincerely held beliefs are valid. All beliefs are acceptable, as long as another's sincerely held beliefs are not questioned. The emphasis is placed on the sincerity of one's beliefs, and not the validity, as relativists believe there to be many paths to God. Hence, many are adapting a hodgepodge of religions, taking beliefs from a multitude of religions, or inventing their own. They pick and choose whatever religious beliefs please them. As this kind of "religion" seeks to make men happy, the notions of God as a judge and eternal punishment are quickly rejected.

This is in direct contradiction to Biblical Christianity, in which truth is absolute, whether accepted or not. However, does not even nature teach that the holding of contradictory beliefs is confusion? Does

not nature show that there are absolutes? If two scientists have conflicting and irreconcilable theories, can they both be correct? For this is the teaching of relativism. If a man *sincerely* believes the earth to be flat, or the sun to orbit the moon, does his *sincerity* make it true? Likewise, would a loving God leave us to guess the way to Him? Would a merciful God have us trying various religious beliefs, not sure what will lead to Him? There are many differing religions. Can God, who is not the author of confusion, be the author of all of them? Or is the Bible correct in stating that God has allowed everyone to go the way of their own choosing, not forcing anyone to follow His way? “Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.” (Acts 14:16). Would He have made the way clear for us? The truth is, that God HAS made the way clear for us, and this way is revealed in His Word. Without absolutes, you can have beliefs, but you can never be sure of them. You can never be sure of beliefs that seek to please yourself and your tastes, instead of God. This humanism and relativism has infiltrated the Christian church. We need to reject this humanism. We need to reject this relativism. We need to stop seeking to please ourselves, and start seeking to please God. God declares how to please Him, He makes the way plain, and this way is found in the His very Word.

How is God’s Word Revealed to Us?

There are three kinds of revelation. General revelation is that which is seen by all peoples in God’s creation. God testifies to His existence from the tiniest atom to the outermost parts of the universe. Specific revelation is that which God gives to man in the form of a written or verbal message. God can speak audibly, but seldom chooses to. A few examples include speaking to Moses, giving the Ten Commandments to the Israelites (Exodus 20, especially vs 19-22), to Job (Job chapters 38-41), and to the witnesses of Christ's baptism (Matthew 3:17). Instead, He chose to speak through men known as *prophets*. The prophets spoke or wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:21). God would give a prophet a word, with a burning desire to proclaim it. The prophet Jeremiah describes it: “...But *his word* was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not *stay*.” (Jeremiah 20:9). The *Scriptures* are all the inspired writings of the prophets, bound in a single book commonly called the Holy Bible. The Bible is the written Word of God. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the greatest prophet, and is declared the living Word of God (John chapter 1). Jesus is the personal revelation of God’s Word. Jesus stated that He spoke His Father's Word: “...the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.” (John 14:24).

The means of revelation can be summarized as:

1. General Revelation – Nature
2. Specific Revelation – Scripture
3. Personal Revelation – Jesus Christ

Bibliology is defined as the Doctrine of the Scriptures. In other words, it is what the Bible has to say about itself. God has magnified His WORD above His Name: “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.” (Psalms 138:2). His Word is more important to Him than His very Name. Many scriptures tell us to exalt the Name of the Lord. Here are a few:

O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. Psalms 34:3

And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts *is* the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee. 2 Samuel 7:26

... the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. Acts 19:17

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.
Psalms 69:30

The name of the Lord is holy, reverend, and magnificent. But the Lord God gives His Word more preeminence than His very Name. His Word is important because He inspired it. It clearly explains the gospel, the good news of how to get right with God. God wrote the Bible, it is perfect, and it is our final authority on ALL matters on which it speaks. Therefore, the Scriptures bear the inspiration and authority of God.

The Divine Inspiration of God's Word

The Word of God came from God, being inspired of Him. 2 Timothy 3:16 says it best: “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” The Scriptures are given by inspiration of God, who moved holy men to speak and write His word. “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). The Scriptures are not of man; not ONE word came by the will of man. ALL came by inspiration of God. It is all of God, and reflects His purity and perfection. It contains all that God intended. Nothing is added or omitted. But note that God only uses HOLY men to transcribe His word. He does not use unsaved individuals or carnal Christians to relay His Word. (This will be covered in more detail in Chapter 4.) These men wrote and spoke as God led them.

God wrote through many different people, including:

1. Moses (Genesis – Deuteronomy)
2. King David (Acts 1:16) (much of Psalms)
3. King Solomon (much of Proverbs, some Psalms)
4. The Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, etc...
5. King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel Chapter 4)
6. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James, etc...

Many failed to recognize their own writings as sacred literature, even though they had felt the Lord's presence and anointing on their work. God, however, in His own timing and guidance, caused all the inspired writings to be united into one volume.

The Bible was written by men who were from different time periods and backgrounds. Some were rich; some were poor. Some were kings; some were simple farmers. Some were called to full-time ministry, some only ministered part-time, and some, such as Amos, ministered only briefly. While God wrote through them, he allowed them to use their own writing styles (John and Paul especially).

Infallibly Inspired

Since God, not man, wrote the Scriptures, they are infallible, perfect, without shadow of error. The wisdom of God is greater than that of man. The Bible contains many statements that have baffled the learned for centuries, but much of these have been proven correct. An example is 2 Peter 3:10: “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” Scientists laughed at the notion of elements melting, until the invention of the nuclear bomb. It is evident that God's word is perfect because God is perfect. God is pure and holy and true. His Word is pure and holy and true. God cannot lie. “...God, that cannot lie...” (Titus 1:2). “God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar;” (Romans 3:4). God's Word reflects his purity and truth. “Every word of God *is* pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him.” (Proverbs 30:5). “For the word of the LORD *is* right; and all his works *are done* in truth.” (Psalm 33:4). God's word is described as being pure, true, faithful, perfect, righteousness, and infallible. What does this really mean?

God's Word is pure.

Pure is defined as:

- Not mixed with any other matter
- Free from tainting, pollution¹

The words of the LORD *are* pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Psalms 12:6

The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. Psalms 19:8

Thy word *is* very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it. Psalms 119:140

Every word of God *is* pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Proverbs 30:5

God's Word is pure. It contains nothing that is not from Him. It contains no filler. It contains nothing amiss or extra. While God has used men to inspire and pass it down, their sinful nature hasn't polluted the Word of God. There is nothing in the scriptures that can rightly be said to not be the Word of God.

God's Word is true.

True is defined as:

- Honest, having no lie or falsity
- Legitimate²

¹ “Pure.” *Merriam-Webster*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 21 June 2012.

² “True.” *Merriam-Webster*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 21 June 2012.

Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth. Psalms 119:142

Thou *art* near, O LORD; and all thy commandments are truth. Psalms 119:151

Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever. Psalms 119:160

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. John 17:17

...And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. Revelation 21:5

The Word of the Lord is true. God's Word is the truth. Every word of God is true. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2). It is impossible for God to lie (Hebrews 6:18). Therefore, the Word of God is true. The Word contains no lie or falsity. (However, the Word might quote liars, such as the serpent in Genesis chapter 3. In these cases, it *is* true that the individual said it, but what they said wasn't true.) The Word of God is truth.

God's Word is faithful.

Faithful is defined as:

- True to the facts, or to an original.
- Firm in adherence to promises.
- Given with strong assurance, binding.³

All thy commandments *are* faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me. Psalm 119:86

Thy testimonies *that* thou hast commanded *are* righteous and very faithful. Psalm 119:138

O LORD, thou *art* my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful *things*; *thy* counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. Isaiah 25:1

...And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. Revelation 21:5

God's Word is faithful. It is true to the originals. The promises therein will not fail; all will be fulfilled. The entirety of God's Word is given with strong assurance that it is true and reliable. God's Word will never let you down; it is reliable.

³ "Faithful." *Merriam-Webster*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 21 June 2012.

God's Word is perfect.

Perfect is defined as:

- Being entirely without fault or defect, flawless
- Faithfully reproducing the original
- Lacking in no essential detail, complete⁴

The law of the LORD *is perfect*, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple. Psalms 19:7

I have seen an end of all perfection: *but thy commandment is* exceeding broad. Psalms 119:96

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. James 1:25

God's Word is flawless. Having no errors, it reproduces the originals exactly. The Word of God is complete; it lacks nothing that God intended it to have. It has no error; it perfectly contains all that God desired.

God's Word is righteous.

Righteous is defined as:

- Morally right
- Acting in accordance with divine or moral law.⁵

The statutes of the LORD *are right*, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes. Psalms 19:8

Therefore I esteem all *thy* precepts *concerning* all things to be right; *and* I hate every false way. Psalms 119:128

My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness. Psalms 119:172

God's Word is morally pure. The morals and values taught therein are the very morals of God. The Scriptures contain nothing amiss morally. If the Bible calls it sin, then it is sin. Everything the Bible calls holy, pure, and right, is holy, pure, and right. The morals taught in God's Word are true and correct. (This will be covered in detail later.) The Bible leads in the path of righteousness.

⁴ "Perfect." *Merriam-Webster*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 21 June 2012.

⁵ "Righteous." *Merriam-Webster*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 21 June 2012.

God's word is infallible.

Infallible is defined as:

- Incapable of error (in defining doctrines touching faith or morals).
- Not liable to mislead, deceive, or disappoint.
- Certain⁶

The Word of God never calls itself infallible. However, from the previous descriptors, we can conclude that the Word of God is infallible. The Word of God is described as true, pure, perfect, faithful and righteous. What else can it be, but infallible? How can anything having ALL these attributes NOT be infallible? If something is pure, perfect, true, righteous, and faithful, it can only be described as infallible. Therefore, we can conclude that the Word of God is infallible. The word *infallible* is found only once in the Bible:

To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by **many infallible proofs**, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: Acts 1:3

Jesus Christ proved His resurrection with MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS. Christ's resurrection is the most important event in the entire Bible. If it is not true, the Bible is not true, and is not worth believing. The scriptures reflect the nature of God. They are pure, holy, faithful, righteous, true, and infallible.

The Bible as the Written Word of God

Christians believe the Bible to be the scriptures, God's written Word. However, IS the Bible the Word of God, or does it just CONTAIN the Word of God? Your answer to this question determines how you treat this book. The eighth article of faith of the Mormon (LDS) church states: "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God."⁷ Who determines what passages have been translated correctly? Likewise, if the Bible only *contains* the Word of God, who determines which passages are authoritative, and which are not? Is the Bible the Word of God, or does it only *contain* the Word of God? To settle this issue, we turn to the Bible itself.

ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God... 2 Timothy 3:16

The apostles and early church leaders did not debate which parts of the Old Testament Scriptures were the Word of God, and which parts were not. They simply believed ALL things that were written therein. The Apostle Paul believed "...ALL things which are WRITTEN in the LAW, and in the PROPHETS." (Acts 24:14). After the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, He rebuked His disciples for NOT believing ALL the scriptures, and showed them from ALL the scriptures the things concerning Himself.

Luke 24:25-27

⁶ "Infallible." *Merriam-Webster*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 21 June 2012.

⁷ Smith, Joseph. *The Articles of Faith*. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d. Web. 21 June 2012. <<http://www.lds.org/library/display/0,4945,106-1-2-1,00.html>>.

25. Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:
26. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?
27. And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

Later, He told them that ALL things in the scriptures must be fulfilled:

Luke 24:44,45

44. And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.
45. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

Therefore, we believe the Bible to be the Word of God. It does not simply contain it; it is it. God does not hide His Word (see Deuteronomy 30:11), but makes it plain. He would not place His Word amongst uninspired words, leaving the common man guessing and doubting it's authenticity. What if an authentic portion is mistaken as unauthentic? What if an unauthentic portion is mistaken as authentic? God inspired the writers to write, and the prophets to prophecy. He then led others to compile the books into a single volume, and spread the text around the world. Every word of Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Every word of Scripture is pure. Every word of the Bible is authentic. "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17). Faith is the polar opposite of doubt. Faith comes by hearing and reading the Word of God. If the Bible only *contains* the Word, this only creates doubt and confusion in the reader who attempts in vain to determine which passages are the inspired Word of God. And we know that "...God is NOT *the AUTHOR* of CONFUSION, but of PEACE..." (1 Corinthians 14:33). And if we doubt the inspiration of any portion of the Bible, are we not falling into the trap of the devil, whose "Yea, hath God said..." (Genesis 3:1) was an attack on the authenticity of SOME of God's Words? For God had commanded Adam, saying

Genesis 2:16-17

16. Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:
17. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Satan cast doubt on a portion of the law: "Ye shall NOT surely die..." (Genesis 3:4), and with the seed planted, the enemy added his *private interpretation* of God's Word:

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. Genesis 3:5

Mankind fell because we didn't take heed unto the entire Word of God. We doubted the Word. We allowed outside sources to have equal authority with God. Creating doubt in the Word is literally the oldest trick in the book. And the consequences of falling for it are enormous. For example, the following passage relays the consequences of a man who believes a lying prophet over the Word of the Lord:

1 Kings 13:14-19, 23-24

14. And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, *Art* thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I *am*.
15. Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread.
16. And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place:
17. For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.
18. He said unto him, I *am* a prophet also as thou *art*; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him.
19. So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.
- ...
23. And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, *to wit*, for the prophet whom he had brought back.
24. And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase.

Therefore, God has provided us “a more sure word of prophecy” (2 Peter 1:19) that we can believe and trust. The Bible is the Scriptures, the complete, inspired Word of God, with no additions or omissions. It will never fail us. Therefore, we consider false everything that contradicts it (see Psalms 119:128). So it being evident that all Scripture is the inspired Word of God, we must never doubt its authority and authenticity.

Scripture Verifying Scripture

The authenticity of some scripture passages can be internally verified, as they are quoted by other passages as scripture. For example: Acts 1:16 mentions scripture “...which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake...” Many of David's Psalms are quoted as scripture in the New Testament. Instances of New Testament writers calling Old Testament passages “Scripture” are especially seen in prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. The New Testament (NT) quotes many Old Testament (OT) messianic prophecies, calling the OT passages inspired scripture. A few examples include:

Christ's virgin birth, to be named Emmanuel:

Matthew 1:18,22, 23

18. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.
- ...
22. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,
23. Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and

bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14.

Christ called out of Egypt:

And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son. Matthew 2:15.

When Israel *was* a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. Hosea 11:1.

Christ betrayed by a close friend:

I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. John 13:18

Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up *his* heel against me. Psalms 41:9.

Christ resurrected from the dead:

Acts 2:31-32

31. He [David] seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Psalms 16:10

The table below gives several more examples of New Testament Scripture referring to Old Testament passages as Scripture.

OT Scripture	NT Reference
Genesis 15:6	Romans 4:3; James 2:23
Genesis 22:18	Galatians 3:8
Psalms 69:21	John 19:29
Psalms 78:2	Matthew 13:35
Psalms 82:6	John 10:34-35
Psalms 118:22	Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17
Isaiah 53:7	Acts 8:32
Isaiah 53:12	Mark 15:28
Isaiah 61:1	Luke 4:17-21
Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:15
Jonah	Matthew 12:39-41

However, this is not limited to OT scriptures. The Apostle Peter referred to the Apostle Paul's writings as scripture.

2 Peter 3:15-16

15. And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;
16. As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the **other** scriptures, unto their own destruction.

In saying that the unlearned and unstable are wresting Paul's writings, and the OTHER Scriptures, Peter is labeling Paul's writings as Scripture. As can be seen, even the Scriptures themselves label other Scriptures as Scripture. There are many more examples, but these have been limited for sake of space.

In conclusion, the Scriptures are given by inspiration of God. They are "God breathed." As God is the author, the Scriptures reflect His Divine nature. The Scriptures are pure, holy, righteous, faithful, perfect and infallible. Every word of the Scriptures is inspired; there is no word in the Bible that is not inspired. Therefore, we can be confident in every word of the Bible, not doubting, that we may truly live by every word of the inspired Word of God.

How you treat this book will reflect how you view this book. Is it written by God, or by man? Is it fully inspired, or partially inspired? Beware how you treat this book. Your eternity depends on it.

The Authority of the Bible

The Bible is infallible because it is inspired of God. It is also authoritative because it is inspired of God. The Christian's response to the infallible, inspired Word of God *should* be:

Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way. Psalm 119:128

The Bible was written by God, and it derives its authority from its Author. As the Bible is the very Word of God, it is authoritative on ALL matters on which it speaks. God's Word has authority over the Christian and non-Christian alike. It is the FINAL authority on all matters of Christian faith and practice.

We should consider God's Word concerning anything and everything to be right. We should hate every false way that contradicts God's Word. We should accept the Bible as it is, the Final Authority on ALL matters of faith and practice. The Bible is the final authority on doctrine, conduct, and eternal salvation.

Final Authority on Doctrine

The Bible is the final authority on doctrine, what we as Christians should believe. The Bible tells us everything we need to know about life, death, Heaven, Hell, salvation, righteousness, sin, faith, holiness, God, and Jesus. It tells us how to worship God, with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16). The Bible is also full of examples of faith, soul-winning,

supporting missionaries, and helping the poor.

John 8:31,32.

31. ...If ye continue in my word, **then** are ye my disciples indeed;
32. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Jesus' true disciples are those who believe in, continue in, and follow His Word. This means to stay in God's Word, not deviating from it in any way. As we are Christ's disciples, we must continuously read, study, and obey His word. We must "...study to shew [ourselves] approved unto God..." (2 Timothy 2:15).

All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 2 Timothy 3:16

The Bible is PROFITABLE for doctrine, reproof, and instruction. Many in this day scoff at the idea of doctrine. They want to believe what they will. However, the Bible makes it clear that doctrine is important, and that the Scriptures are needed for doctrine and correction.

Therefore, we need to read and study daily, not just for the sake of doctrine and beliefs, but also for correction, to root out any sin that may have crept into our lives.

Psalm 19:7-11

7. The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple.
8. The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes.
9. The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.
10. More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.
11. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

The Bible is also our defense against strange and false doctrines. By it we are warned. By reading, knowing and understanding the truth, we build up immunity against all heresies. Many have turned away from the true faith because they have put the teaching of man above the Word of God. We shouldn't believe everything we're told, but should be like the Berean Christians, and search the scriptures to verify them (see Acts 17:10,11)⁸. Below are some quotes from personal conversations, when I have questioned some new or strange doctrine. Note how these individuals did not know how to defend their beliefs with the Bible:

Myself: "Where's that in the Bible?"

Catholic: "I don't see anything in there against it."

Myself: "Where's that in the Bible?"

⁸ This is why I challenge you; if this work contains anything contrary to the Word of God, please let me know.

Charismatic: "It's Biblical."
Myself: "But where is it found?"
Charismatic: "I don't know."

Myself: "Where do you see that in the Bible?"
Baptist: "I can't see why you don't see it in the Bible!"

The Bible is our sole source of doctrine. It is our final authority. When someone comes expounding a doctrine that they do not or cannot prove from the Holy Scriptures, do not believe it. Question it, and exhort them to believe the Bible. Many well-meaning Christians carry doctrines that are supported by the Bible. Many will say that you have to have an open mind. Leave your mind open to the Word of God. Close your mind to all that contradicts or violates the Word of God.

Therefore, the Bible is authoritative on its teaching of doctrine. It tells us what to believe, and serves as an immunization against false beliefs.

Final Authority on Morality

The Bible is authoritative in its teaching of morals. It reflects the holiness of God. It plainly gives God's view on sin and righteousness. It lists things such as lust, fornication, sodomy, greed, theft, deceit, drunkenness, and murder as sin. It plainly separates between works of the flesh, and fruits of God's Holy Spirit:

Galatians 5:19-23

19. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
20. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
21. Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.
22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.
23. Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

God's Word is full of righteousness and virtue. It is the final authority on morality. However, God does not force His commandments upon anyone. His law is established for our good, not for our hurt. He wants to keep us from activities and behaviors that He knows will destroy us. He knows that "the way of transgressors is HARD" (Prov 13:45), and He wants to keep you out of that disastrous way. He knows that the life of a sinner is void of peace, and full of turmoil. "*There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.*" (Isaiah 48:22)

There are many examples of people who rejected His laws, and what became of them. Samson was given a special anointing giving him incredible strength. However, he couldn't stay away from bad women, and it cost him his anointing, and eventually his life. King Saul started out humbly serving the Lord. But he grew to reject the Lord's way, and lost his kingdom and life.

The Bible warns "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of

death.” (Proverbs 14:12.)

The Bible warns against drunkenness:

Proverbs 23:29-30 (see also verses 31-35)

29. Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

30. They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

It is commonly known that heavy drinking will destroy your brain and liver, and will eventually kill you. Yet the drunk, when he sobers up, seeks it yet again.

The Bible warns against greed and covetousness:

1 Timothy 6:9-10

9. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Greed leads men to commit other sins, to fulfill their lust for money. Greed leads men to lie, cheat, steal, and gamble. No one can say that these are beneficial for the individual or the society. As the passage says, the desire to be rich will cast you into further temptation to commit further sin.

The Bible warns against sexual sin:

Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 1 Corinthians 6:18.

Fornication is defined as **any** sexual relations outside of the marriage of one man and one woman. The Bible declares that they that do such sin against their own body. Those who fornicate are at great risk of contracting AIDS or other crippling sexually transmitted diseases. However, those who obey the Bible's mandate to wait until marriage, and live monogamous lifestyles will never get these diseases.

Therefore, God's commandments are not for our hurt, but for our benefit. They are intended on keeping us out of bad situations. God knows that sin such as drinking, drugs, gambling, and adultery will lead to great loss, including loss of family, loss of savings, and loss of work. However, living a virtuous life will lead to the peace and blessings of God.

Benefits of living by God's Word

Obedying the Word of God has great benefits. Keeping the Word will bring you peace, it will remove your shame and reproach, it will make you fruitful, it will result in answered prayer, and make you a friend of Christ.

There are no regrets to following God's Word. Obedience to God's law will also remove the shame and reproach of your sin. The word will make you clean (John 15:3). For when you obey the Word of the

Lord, you will have a clear conscience.

Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. Psalms 119:6

Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies. Psalms 119:22

When you live by God's Word, you will have nothing to be ashamed of. You will not be ashamed of your life. Others will have no reason to reproach or scold you. "So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word." (Psalms 119:42). For if you are living in obedience to God's commandments, you will exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, against which there is no law (Galatians 5:22,23), and against which none can reproach.

Keeping God's commands will also bring you peace. It will give a great peace the likes of which nothing in this world can provide.

Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them. Psalms 119:165

But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: Romans 2:10

The Lord Jesus Christ said that if we keep His commands, we are His friends. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." (John 15:14) You can be the friend of the Son of God. Being the friend of the Son, you will have access to the Father, to make your requests know to Him.

If you will live by the Word of God, your prayers will be answered, according to the will of God. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7) (If your prayers aren't being answered, is there sin in your life that you won't deal with? If there is sin on your conscience, God WILL NOT hear your prayers. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*:" (Psalms 66:18).) This is the essence of Christianity, a relationship with your loving Creator. Christianity is not about religion or ritual, but about a relationship.

However, many of you disagree. You reject a relationship with your Creator. You do not want God having any authority over you. You want to live your life as you wish. This is our human, sinful, rebellious nature. By despising God's authority, you prove yourself in rebellion against God. But no one is perfect, we have all sinned, we have all rebelled against God.

Romans 3:10-18

10. As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

11. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13. Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps *is* under their lips:

14. Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness:

15. Their feet *are* swift to shed blood:
16. Destruction and misery *are* in their ways:
17. And the way of peace have they not known:
18. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

God's commandments are the final authority on sin. If God's Word calls it sin, then it is sin. God's commandments are for your benefit, not for your hurt. Following them will give blessings that can only come from above. God's law is not intended to keep you from having “fun,” but to keep you from a life of misery, despair, and heartbreak. God knows where sin leads, and has warned us with many examples. All of us have sinned; there is none that is perfect. There is none that haven't broken God's laws. Many of you who are saved remember your life before Christ, with the misery and regrets of that life. There may also be some who have yet to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour. You may outwardly enjoy your life, but deep down you loathe and despise it. You want a fresh start. You have been living in rebellion against God's word, and have reaped the consequences. However, all is not lost. The very word of God that you have ignored tells us how to be “born again,” to get right with God, and get a fresh start in your life.

Final Authority on Eternal Salvation

The Bible is also the final authority on how to be saved, and made right with God. It is the book by which all will be judged, both the saved, and the unsaved. You will be judged based on your obedience or disobedience of God's Word. This BOOK tells us what God expects of us. Unfortunately, none of us are capable of keeping the Word of God perfectly. We are all sinners, we have all fallen short, we have all broken God's laws. Therefore, this BOOK also tells us how to be forgiven of our sins, and be made right with God. This book informs us how God made a way for us, by sending His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to this world, to live a perfect life, and die a sinner's death. He died to take your punishment for your sins. The Word clearly states, that if you will REPENT of your sins, believe on the name of Jesus, and accept His death and resurrection as the payment for your sin, you will be forgiven. If you will repent and believe, all your past, present, and future sins will be forgiven.

The Way to Salvation

The Scriptures lead to salvation found in faith in Jesus Christ:

The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple. Psalms 19:7

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. John 20:31

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:15

So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Romans 10:17

The ONLY way

God's Word spells out the way He prepared for us to be made right with Him. He also makes it clear that this way is the ONLY way. There is only one way to the Father. There is only ONE way to Heaven, and that is through Jesus Christ. No one else can save us. No one else can forgive our sins.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14:6

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. John 3:36

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. John 8:12

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. John 10:1

The only way to get right with God the Father is through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. All other ways are false, are lies, and will lead straight to Hell. The Bible also makes plain that trying to get to God through doing good works or religious rituals will never work. You can never do enough good to cover even one of your sins.

Ephesians 2:8,9

8. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

9. Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Romans 3:28.

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Titus 3:5.

Hence, it is made clear that salvation is found solely in faith in Christ's sacrifice. No amount of good works can save you. The path to the Father passes through the Son. And the Word of God has made it clear that this is the ONLY way to reconciliation with the Father.

However, this is not a license to sin. When you are saved, you are empowered by the Holy Spirit to keep God's commandments. You are more able to resist temptation to break God's laws. Yet, some Christians willingly continue in sin. If this is you, know this, that God WILL hold you accountable. He won't send you to Hell, but He will punish you in this life, and withhold earthly and eternal blessings that He desired to give you. While God's Word is authoritative, He does not force it upon anyone. He gives us the free will to believe or doubt, obey or disobey. A sinning Christian is out of

fellowship with God, yet man was created to have fellowship with God. Adam and Eve would go with God on evening walks through the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:8). Their sin broke off this close fellowship. When you CHOSE to continue in sin, you are ruining the most important aspect of your Christian walk, your fellowship with your Creator, who gave you the gift of salvation.

In conclusion, the Bible is the very Word of God. God directly inspired every word of the Bible. The Bible is complete. It lacks nothing, and contains nothing extraneous (extra). It is the pure, perfect, holy, inspired, righteous, faithful and infallible Word of the Living God. The Bible is the final authority on ALL matters on which it speaks. It is definitive on matters of doctrine, morality, and eternal salvation. In it, God spells out His expectations of mankind, and explains how to get right with Him. It shows how to be forgiven for your sins. For none have kept His law perfectly, we have all sinned. We all deserve the wages of our sins, which is eternal death in Hell. But God made a way. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to take your punishment, to die on the cross in your place. Three days later, He rose Himself from the dead. God's Word states that if you will repent of your sins, and accept the sacrifice of Christ as the payment for your sins, you will be saved. You will be "born again." With your sin burden lifted, you will literally have a new start on life. How about you? Are you ready to give up your misery, your sorrow, and your rebellion against the Most High and His Word? Are you ready to acknowledge the holiness of God? Are you ready to admit your own sinful, rebellious nature? Are you sick and tired of the life you've been living? Do you want to loose your sin burden? Come unto Christ, for His burden is light:

Matthew 11:28-30

28. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
29. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.
30. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

Come unto Christ, for He will replace your rebellion with a desire to serve Him. Believe the Bible, for it is God's truth. Would you like to see God's truth revealed to you? Come to Christ today, for His Spirit will lead into all truth. (Psalms 25:5 "Lead me in thy truth..."). (Jn 16:13) There are many lies in the world. Politicians lie; advertisements lie; news reports lie. Do you want to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? If you follow Christ, "...ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Are you 100% sure, if you were to die today, that you would go to Heaven? If the Bible happens to be wrong, this author has little to lose in believing it. However, if it is correct, you have much to lose in rejecting it. Please, do not take the risk that the Bible is right.

Christian, does God's Word live in you today? "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed..." (John 8:31). Jesus said that His real disciples will "continue" in His Word. Do you read your Bible daily? Do you seek to obey the Bible? Does the Word of Christ dwell in you? "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; ..." (Colossians 3:16). Do you accept the Bible as authoritative in your life? Do you accept the Bible as the inspired, infallible, Word of God? Are you continuously seeking to rid your life of sin? If you answered "No" to any of these questions, you need to do a serious heart-check, and make things right with God.

Psalms 139:23,24

23. Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:
24. And see if *there be any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Your Heavenly Father is waiting to forgive, you just need to ask. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9).

2

Preservation of God's Word

Matthew 4:1-4

1. Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.
2. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered.
3. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.
4. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

When Satan was trying to tempt our Lord, he tried to get Him to change rocks into bread. Satan knew that He had been fasting for forty days, and He was now very hungry. The devil taunted Him, saying "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." Jesus responded by saying "MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT BY EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDETH OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD." (Matt 4:4) He rebuked the devil by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, stating that man needs spiritual food to live, and not just physical nutrition. Therefore, we need to live by every word of God. But in order to do that, we must have **every** word of God. We must have every word of God in order to live by every word of God. How do we know that we have every word of God today? Do we even have every word of God today? Of a truth, we do, for God has promised to preserve them for us.

Recall that the Word of God was inspired directly by God. "[H]oly men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21) and "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim 3:16). God inspired His word. He wrote it by using the Holy Ghost to inspire holy men to write. They were His pens. The inspired word of God was pure, infallible, spotless:

Thy word *is* very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it. Ps. 119:140

Thou *art* near, O Lord; and all thy commandments *are* truth. Ps. 119:151

Thy word is truth. John 17:17

If ye continue in my word ... ye shall know the truth... Jn. 8:31,32

The last of the Bible was inspired over 1900 years ago, and those original manuscripts have long since disappeared. If we no longer have the originals, then how are we supposed to live by "every word of God?" Simple! God not only inspired His words, He promised to preserve them to this very day! God preserved His words for us here on earth, forever. This is made so plain in Scripture; it is not a theory or speculation, but a very DOCTRINE of the Christian faith.

The Promise of Preservation

God Promised in His Word that He would preserve His Word for us! Here are just some of the many Scriptures declaring this promise:

Psalm 12:6,7

6. The words of the LORD *are* pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.
7. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.

The Lord made a covenant (contract) with Israel that His words would never depart out of their mouth forever. They would always have God's words:

As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever. Isaiah 59:21

Jesus Christ assures us that His words would never pass away:

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall NEVER pass away. Luke 21:33

Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Matthew 5:18

King David praised the Lord because His truth endures forever. God's word is the truth. (See Jn 17:17):

For the LORD *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations. Psalms 100:5

Psalms 117

1. O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.
2. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

Isaiah tells us that the Word of the Lord stands forever:

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.
Isaiah 40:8

Peter expands on Isaiah 40:8 by informing us that the Word of the Lord LIVES and ABIDES with us FOREVER:

1 Peter 1:23-25

23. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.
24. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass

withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

25. But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

So it can be clearly seen from the Holy Scriptures themselves that God did indeed promise to preserve His Word. How did this happen? If God inspired His word by using holy men, no doubt He could also have used holy men to preserve it.

The manuscript evidence even shows that God's Word has been preserved. Ninety-Five percent⁹ of all available NT manuscripts generally agree with each other, showing that God has indeed preserved His Word. (Manuscript evidence will be examined further in Chapter 4.)

Preserved Forever

If God has preserved His words, it is evident that He must then have preserved them forever. If it wasn't preserved FOREVER it wasn't preserved, period. In fact, the Bible says that He preserved them FOREVER:

Psalm 12:6,7

6. The words of the LORD *are* pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.
7. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation **for ever**.

This means that God's pure words have been with us since He inspired them, and will always be with us. Jesus told His disciples, "My words shall not pass away." "The word of God abideth with us for ever" (1 Pet 1:23). This means the word of God lives with us, dwells with us, abides with us forever.

Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them **for ever**.

Psalms 119:152

Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth for ever*. Psalms 119:160

God's word endures forever. So we can know for sure, that; even though we live 3000+ years since Moses wrote the first book, and about 1900 years since the last New Testament book was written, we can be sure that we have the infallible, perfect, pure, holy, inspired Word of the living God available to us today.

Preserved for the People

Now that we know that God did indeed promise to preserve His words for us, another question arises: Exactly WHO did God preserve His word for? For the common people or for the Bible scholars? For everyone, or for an elite to lord over His flock?

⁹ D.A. Carson. *The King James Version Debate: A Plea for Realism*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1979), 50.

Psalms 117

1. O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.
2. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

Psalm 100

1. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.
2. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.
3. Know ye that the Lord he *is* God: *it is* he *that* hath made us, and not we ourselves; *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
4. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name.
5. For the Lord *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

God preserved His word for the people. O praise the Lord, all ye nations, praise him, all ye people. And why do the people praise the Lord? Because the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. The people were praising God because He had preserved His truth, His word for them. "Thy word is truth" (Jn 17:17).

The Lord Jesus Christ declared, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matt 4:4. Now if the common man does not have access to every word of God, then how are we supposed to keep this commandment? Therefore, are we, who do not know Greek and Hebrew, willfully disobedient of God's commandment? If we are all required to give an account before God (and we are), what did we say then? "We could not keep every one of Thy words because we did not have the means to learn Greek and Hebrew?" "Do you REALLY think that a loving God would give us a commandment impossible for us to keep? No He did not, for it is evident, that God preserved His word for the PEOPLE.

The Protestant leaders sought to put the Bible in the hands of the common people. One of Martin Luther's famous sayings was "A simple layman armed with Scripture is to be believed above a pope or a council without it." We do not comprehend what a revolutionary statement this was. The Catholic popes and church councils were considered infallible, the final authorities on matters of faith and doctrine. Today's scholars-for-profit flood the market with hundreds of Bibles, and then insist that we cannot really know the 'true' Words of God. What is our final authority? Is it the infallible Bible, or the infallible Bible scholar? Are we forced to rephrase Martin Luther:

A SIMPLE LAYMAN ARMED WITH SCRIPTURE IS TO BE BELIEVED ABOVE A SEMINARY OR DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY WITHOUT IT!!

The Protestant Reformation sought to throw off the chains of the "infallible" pope and infallible councils. Do we now need a new reformation to throw off the chains of the "infallible" Bible scholars?

God preserved His word for the common people. Therefore, God's infallible Word is preserved in the common languages of the people, and not just in the original languages. How can a translation ever measure up? "...with God all things are possible." (Matt 19:26) The word of the Lord is not hidden from the common man.

Deuteronomy 30:11-14

11. For this commandment which I command thee this day, it *is* not hidden from thee, neither *is* it far off.
12. It *is* not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?
13. Neither *is* it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?
14. But the word *is* very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

God's Word is not hidden from us. It is not hidden in some foreign language that we cannot understand. It is not concealed in the Greek and Hebrew, which only the learned understand. It is not afar off in some distant land. It is not buried in some cave in Israel, waiting to be "rediscovered." It is not in some other land far over land and sea, that we must make pilgrimage to obtain. It is not settled only in Heaven, readable only to us when we have left this world. But the Word is very nigh unto us, available to be placed into our minds and hearts and mouths. We have the very word of God, that we may live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The Word of the Lord is not preserved only in Heaven or in some language we cannot understand. God's Word is preserved for us, on earth, in our language, that we may live by "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." It is preserved for us, everyone who is a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Preserved to the Word

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matthew 4:4

If God expects us to live by His every word, then He must have preserved every word. "Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever." (Ps. 119:160).

Jesus Christ Himself said that His WORDS would not pass away, but be preserved:

Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.
Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Matthew 5:18

Now if Christ Himself declared that His Words would last forever, there is no disputing it. The Word was preserved to the very words. But it may have been preserved even better than that. It may have been preserved to the very letter. In Matthew 5:18 (quoted above), Christ states that not a jot or a tittle shall pass away. Now a *jot* means the least part of something¹⁰, and *tittle* means a very small part of quantity¹¹. The least part of God's Word will never pass away. In fact, another meaning of *tittle* is a dot or other small mark in writing or printing. In these verses, did Christ not promise that not even a letter of His Word would ever fail or pass away?

¹⁰ "Jot." *Merriam-Webster*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 21 June 2012.

¹¹ "tittle." *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Random House, Inc. Web. 21 Jun. 2012.

Inspiration Verses Preservation

The difference between inspiration and preservation needs to be clarified. Inspiration, the act of God moving holy men to write, happened only once in history. The faith was ONCE delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3). Scripture will never be re-inspired. Preservation is the process by which the original inspired words have passed down unpolluted to all generations. The inspiration of God's Words was a process that happened only once; preservation of God's Words is a process that will continue until Christ's return. The preserved Word is equal to the originally inspired Word.

God Has Preserved His Word

Now you can see that God has preserved His word, and He preserved it for YOU. He preserved it perfectly. It is pure, perfect, infallible, error-free TODAY, not long ago and far away in manuscripts that no longer exist. He preserved it to the word, so that you could live by every word, and he preserved it forever so that we would always have it. Now that you know that you have access to a perfect Bible, what are you going to do with it?

3

Corruption of God's Word

In Psalm 12:7, God promised to preserve His Word from “this GENERATION for ever.” Preservation served to prevent accidental corruption of the text during transmission. Also, this divine preservation counters the deliberate, concentrated war on the Bible by Satan and his agents. This conspiracy to pervert the Word of God is worldwide, and dates to the most ancient of times. The Word has been under attack since the serpent deceived Eve. The enemy of mankind, knowing that the scriptures lead to salvation, causes man to doubt the Bible, reject the Bible, and even alter the Bible. The corruptions are as numerous as the heresies that spawned them. God has strengthened and purified His Word that it may stand against this assault. Martin Luther once said, “The Bible is like a lion; it does not need to be defended; just let it loose and it will defend itself.” God has preserved His Word, and it can defend itself. Despite the opposition of devil and man, God's Word remains pure, inspired, and inerrant. How do we know that heretics have attempted to change the Word of God? God has given us warning about heretics bringing perversions of the gospel.¹² The Lord takes His Word very seriously. He has preserved it for us. He has commanded us not to change it in any way. He has also given us warning about those who would alter it, and to those who would alter it.

Thou Shalt Not Change My Word

God has commanded us to not change His Word. As He is the author, He holds the eternal copyright. He allows us, nay, commands us, to copy and spread His Word to the entire world. However, He strictly forbids the addition or removal of anything from His Word.

Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. (Deuteronomy 4:2)

If you add to His Words, you make yourself a liar: “Add thou not unto [God's] words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” (Proverbs 30:6) Prohibition on altering God's Word is not limited to the Old Testament. The closing verses of the New Testament contain a very strong warning against tampering with God's Word:

Revelation 22:18,19

18. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:
19. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

¹² For the textual viewpoint on preservation and corruption, See Chapter 4.

God has a very high opinion of His Word. He inspired it perfectly, and He forbids us from polluting it by adding to or subtracting from it.

Warnings about Corrupters

To keep us from accepting a counterfeit Bible, God has warned us of those who change it. The primary culprits include Satan, hardened sinners, heretics, false prophets, false teachers, and false apostles, along with their followers (ignorant as they may be). The war on the Word of God began with the devil in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 2:16-17

16. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:
17. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

The Devil

The old serpent challenged this command, saying “Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (Genesis 3:1). Calling God a liar, he removed SOME of His Words: “Ye shall not surely die:” (Genesis 3:4). Next, Satan added his lie to the Word: “For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:5). The devil cannot touch the Word of God without corrupting something. When he was tempting the Lord Jesus Christ, he misquoted Psalm 91:11,12. Note the following changes.

God's truth: Psalms 91:11,12

11. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee **in all thy ways**.
12. They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Satan's perversion: Luke 4:10,11

10. For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:
11. And in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest **at any time** thou dash thy foot against a stone.

The dragon REMOVES “in all thy ways” and ADDS “at any time.” These corruptions give the reader the impression that we can do things that we know are foolish, and the Lord will **always** get us out of it. Jesus Christ is not deceived, and responds with “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” (Luke 4:12). It is the devil that takes the Word of God out of the heart, lest the sinner be saved. “...then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word...” (Luke 8:12). Satan has always sought to do away with the Word of God.

Hardened Sinners

The devil is not alone in his attack on the Bible. His human agents are fast at work to change and discredit God's Word. The Bible clearly exposes the human element in perversion of the Word, from the false prophets of old to the false teachers of today. We are strongly admonished to separate

ourselves from these individuals and their message. (This does not mean that we are not to seek to bring them out of their error unto repentance and the true gospel. But we are not to have fellowship with them as Christians, but unbelievers.)

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.
Romans 1:21

Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. Romans 1:25

These people, having rejected God, have “changed the truth of God into a lie.” They are hardened sinners, who love their sin, who want nothing to do with God and His salvation. They go beyond rejecting the Word of God in their own lives. They want to change the Word, that they may be justified in their sins. Being convicted by scripture, but being hardened against God, they have pressed for legislation effectively banning the preaching of the convicting passages; passages which could lead to their salvation. This is done through “hate crimes” laws that forbid the “intimidation” of protected groups. These laws typically don’t ban specific Scriptures, but forbid the “offending” of Jews, Moslems, homosexuals, and other groups. If a member of a protected group is offended by the reading of Scripture, they can press charges, accusing the reader of a hate crime. They, being convicted by Scripture, fight the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and seek the conviction of the preacher.

Chief among those who alter the Word are Christ-rejecting Jews and homosexuals. Jewish groups have argued that the reading of Isaiah chapter 53 needs to be re-translated, because of it's strong witness to Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. Some of these groups, including the American Interfaith Institute, also insist that translators even remove so-called anti-semitic passages from the Bible.¹³ Homosexual groups have protested reading of passages against their practices as hate crimes. Some of these alterations are de-facto perversions, the scripture remains intact but is ignored or outlawed, and some are outright mutilations of the text. However, the unregenerate man has no knowledge that the Bible is a spiritual Book, and that it cannot be changed by human hands and human decrees. “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Heretics and False Prophets

Heretics and false prophets are more crafty than the unsaved in their alteration of Scripture. Also known as false brethren, false teachers, and false apostles, these come in by stealth, professing themselves to be Christians. The heretic takes inspired Scripture, and “adjusts” it to match his own twisted teaching. The false prophet produces his own Scripture, conjuring up false dreams, false visions, and false words, and then stamps “Thus saith the Lord” on it as if it were the Word of God. The inspired apostle Paul warned of many, which “[handle] the word of God deceitfully” (2 Corinthians 4:2) and “which corrupt the word of God” (2 Corinthians 2:17). Paul reproved the Galatians for falling into “another gospel” (Galatians 1:6), a false gospel, and warned them of those who “pervert the gospel

¹³ Borowsky, Irvin J. "The American Interfaith Institute Is Dedicated to Removing Anti-Jewish References from the Bible and the Pulpit and Building Christian Support for the Democratic State of Israel." *American Interfaith Institute*. American Interfaith Institute, Fall 2008. Web. 21 June 2012. <<http://www.americaninterfaith.org/articles08.html>>. Note: Just because a passage has been misinterpreted to incite genocide is no reason to change the Scripture.

of Christ.” (Galatians 1:7). The apostle Peter gave a very blunt warning about false teachers bringing false words:

2 Peter 2:1-3

1. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.
2. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.
3. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

The false teachers will come bearing “feigned words,” fake words, false words, words that appear to be the Word of God, but are not. Their words are but a perversion of the inspired writings. The motive? Covetousness! They lust after wealth, they lust after fame, they lust after followers, and they are willing to make a mockery of the Word of God to satisfy their lusts. Peter continues his warning against those who use “great swelling *words* of vanity” (carefully crafted lies) and the “lusts of the flesh” (2 Peter 2:18) to draw followers. We are *repeatedly* warned because many will get caught up in the deception. “...MANY shall follow their pernicious ways...” If these would take heed to the Word of the Lord, they wouldn't fall for the deception. We are to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” (Jude 1:3). The faith was given to us ONCE; God will not send another with a new faith that contradicts the old. If any preach another faith, they need to be corrected. The Bible makes it clear, that if someone comes in bearing an unscriptural doctrine, and won't consent to correction by wholesome words (1 Timothy 6:3), that person is to be rejected and expelled. “A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;...” (Titus 3:10).

Therefore, the heretics produce their own version, or perversion, of God's Word, in agreement with their heresy, to lead others astray. “Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” (Acts 20:30). The Bible is full of warnings and examples of false teachers and false prophets corrupting the Word of God, and bringing forth “another gospel.” Therefore, it is correct to acknowledge that altered scriptures have been produced, and passed off as genuine. For example, the Jehovah's Witnesses have produced their own Bible translation, the New World Translation, which, among other perversions, renders, John 1:1 as “In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.”¹⁴ Also, the Mormons have taken portions of the Bible, added more to it, and produced their own Bible, the Book of Mormon. The eight article of faith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) states: “We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.”¹⁵ These alterations are not limited to known cults. The Roman Catholic Church and many Protestant denominations have perverted the Gospel of grace into a gospel of works. The Catholic Church even forbade the common people from owning a Bible! (For details, please see an unabridged edition of Foxe's Book of Martyrs.) The telling sign of a false prophet is a prophecy that does not come to pass. If a prophet wasn't 100% accurate, they were declared a false prophet, to be stoned

¹⁴ *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1984. Print.)

¹⁵ Smith, Joseph. "The Articles of Faith." *The Articles of Faith*. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d. Web. 21 June 2012. <<http://www.lds.org/library/display/0,4945,106-1-2-1,00.html>>.

under Mosaic law (Deuteronomy 18:20-22). Have the apostles of old given us a false prophecy, in their warning of heretics perverting the Word of God? No, indeed history has confirmed them. Truly, alterations of the Bible text have been made. God has warned us, and it has come to pass. However, despite these attempted alterations, we still have God's pure Word.

Warning to the Corrupters

God gives a severe warning to those who would tamper with His Word. He ends His holy Word with this warning:

Revelation 22:18,19

18. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:
19. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

For those who add to God's Word, He will punish with the plagues of Revelation. However, those who take away from the word are threatened with removal from the book of life, literally the loss of their salvation. All which add to the Word are declared liars (Proverbs 30:6). Jeremiah chapter 23 proclaims judgment on false prophets.

Jeremiah 23:31-32,39-40

31. Behold, I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say. He saith.
32. Behold, I *am* against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.
- ...
39. Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, *and cast you* out of my presence:
40. And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

Therefore, if you are guilty of willfully changing God's Word, be aware that He will punish you. Attempts to change, rewrite, outlaw, and destroy His Word will come to naught. God has kept His word pure; your modifications are but a counterfeit. Repent of your deeds, and God will forgive you.

God's Word is under attack. He has preserved His Word to thwart this attack. However, counterfeit gospels and counterfeit Bibles do exist, God having warned us in His Word of them. Sinners and heretics, wanting to be justified for the error of their ways, have produced these forgeries. God has threatened with the severest of judgments those who would dare alter His Word. God has preserved His Word, this is evidenced both in the original languages and in translations. The devil and his minions have produced their counterfeit words, and these are evident both in the originals and in translations. Despite Satan's attacks, we have the preserved, inerrant Word of God today. How can we

tell the pure Word of God from a counterfeit? How do we know that the Bible has been preserved? Where is the preserved Word of God? This will be covered in the next chapter.

Preservation in the Original Greek

Having established God's promise to preserve His Word to all generations from all who would dare alter it, the question arises, "Where is it?" If God's Word is available today, then where is it? If God requires us to live by every word, and has preserved every word, then we must have every word. But where is it? God's inspired, preserved Word IS available today, BOTH in the original languages, AND in translations. In this document, God's Word as preserved in the original languages will be examined.

Preserved in the Greek

God's preserved Word is available in the original Greek and Hebrew. The original autographs are the inspired Word of God. The copies of these originals are the inspired, preserved Word of God. God's Word, being preserved, has not lost its original inspiration. (The original Hebrew will be covered at a later time.)

The manuscript evidence proves that God has preserved His Word. There are three kinds of manuscript witnesses: The first is the manuscript copies, or the reproduction of the Scripture text in the original language. There are several different kinds of copies, including papyri, uncials, minuscules, cursives, and lectionaries. The second kind of witness is the versions, or ancient translations of the Scriptures into other languages. The third kind of witness is quotations of the Scriptures by early church fathers.

However, when considering the original languages, it must be realized that there are disagreements among the manuscripts. The manuscripts do not have the exact same text. About 80% of the Bible text is undisputed, while 20% is disputed. But, as shall be seen, this does not disprove preservation. Manuscripts have been classified into text-types based on the text they contain. A *text-type* is a group of manuscripts containing a similar text, having a general agreement, especially on passages on which other manuscripts have different readings. Thus, there are several different branches of the Greek text.

The two main text-types are the Byzantine and the Alexandrian. (There are a few others, but they can be generally classified as Alexandrian.) Which of these is the true Word of God? Most modern Bible versions have come from the Alexandrian text, while virtually all Protestant Reformation Bibles, including the KJV, have come from the Byzantine text. The Alexandrian text boasts the (supposedly) oldest known manuscripts, but very few manuscripts (1-5%) are of this type. The Alexandrian text practically disappeared after 400 A.D., only to be rediscovered in the mid 1800's. Over ninety-five percent of all known manuscripts are of the Byzantine text-type, including 99% of all manuscripts after 400 A.D. New research has shown that the Byzantine text is at least as old as the Alexandrian. Supporters of the Alexandrian text insist that the Byzantine was a result of a revision of the Alexandrian. However, Byzantine advocates insist that the Alexandrian was produced by a revision of the Byzantine and was eventually rejected as heretical. (The Alexandrian text had originated in Egypt, the source of the first church age heresies.)

So which is the true Word of God, the Byzantine, or the Alexandrian? Textual criticism is the science of the determining the correct reading of disputed readings. John W. Burgon, who served as the Dean of Chichester in the mid 1800's, established seven Biblical principles of textual criticism: continuity, antiquity, variety, number, weight, context, and internal considerations¹⁶. No one of these principles can alone verify a particular reading. The reading that shows the strongest evidence from the most of these criteria is considered the true reading. Careful analysis of these shows the superiority of the Byzantine text over the Alexandrian.

Continuity

Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations;
1 Chronicles 16:15

God's Word, having been preserved unto all generations, will need to have been available to all generations. This is expressed in the principle of continuity, which states that the true text is the one manifested in all time periods. This is the core, the basis, of the doctrine of preservation. If God's word has NOT been preserved, then the manuscript evidence would resemble Figure 1a. It would slowly divert and branch out from the original (represented by the dashed line), as the text evolved. If this is the case, the oldest manuscripts must be sought out in order to recover the original text.

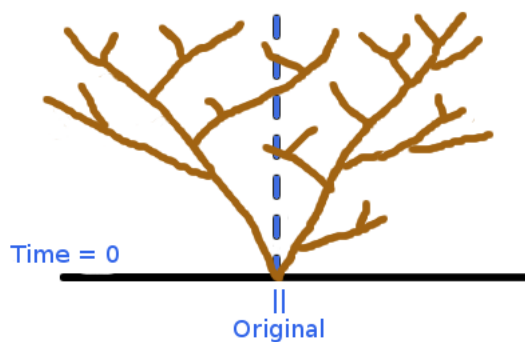


Figure 1a. No Preservation.

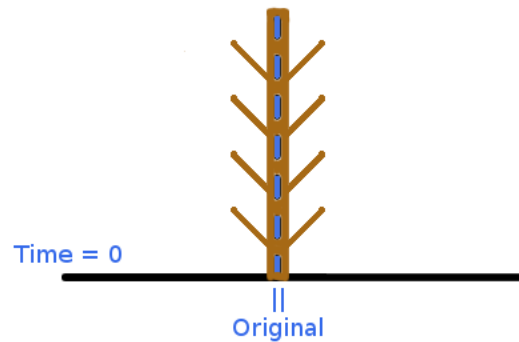


Figure 1b. With Preservation

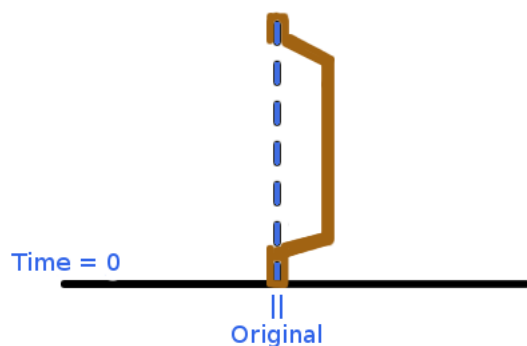


Figure 2: Alexandrian Preservation?

However, if preservation is true, than the bulk of the manuscript evidence will remain grouped very close to the original throughout all time periods, with only a few heretical branches as the only exception. The “evidence tree” will have a thick, upright trunk, with only a few branches, as shown in Figure 1b.

The Alexandrian text disappeared around 400 A.D., and resurfaced in the mid 1800's. Therefore, this text does NOT display continuity. It went missing for 1,500 years. Did God lose His Word? If the Alexandrian text is God's Word, then the manuscript evidence resembles Figure 2,

¹⁶ Adapted from Burgon, John William, and Edward Miller. *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels: Vindicated and Established*. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1896), 29

with the Scripture diverting from the original for fifteen centuries. On this point alone, the Alexandrian text is not the preserved Word of God. Thus, the doctrine of preservation is the strongest testimony against the Alexandrian text. The Byzantine text, however, shows complete continuity, back into antiquity, and it is at least as old as the oldest Alexandrian text.

Antiquity

Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.
Proverbs 22:28

In order to maintain continuity, a reading must date back to ancient times. A text, having antiquity, completes the unbroken chain of succession from the original autographs until the present time. Thus, antiquity is an important criteria of textual criticism. However, some scholars make it the only criteria, not regarding other factors.

The Byzantine text is as old as the Alexandrian text, if not older. One of the principle arguments for the Alexandrian text, and against the Byzantine, is that the Alexandrian *manuscripts* are generally older than the Byzantine *manuscripts*. While there may be few Byzantine manuscripts dated before 350 A.D., this matters little to the “preservationist;” a 14th century manuscript can be as good as a 4th century manuscript. However, the Byzantine text-type is evident BEFORE 400 A.D., in ancient versions (translations), and in the quotations of early church Fathers. The Peshitta Syriac (145 A.D.) and the Old Latin (157 A.D.) translations both originated in the second century. Of these, Bishop Ellicott, a contemporary of Burgon and an Alexandrian advocate, wrote “It is no stretch of the imagination to suppose that portions of the Peschito might have been in the hands of S. John, or that the Old Latin represented the current views of the Roman Christians of the IInd century.”¹⁷ These two versions show a definite Byzantine text-type, centuries before the oldest Alexandrian manuscript witness.¹⁸ A Gothic version of 330 A.D. also represents the text of the “majority of Greek manuscripts” (that is, the Byzantine text).¹⁹

The early church Fathers also testify of the antiquity of the Byzantine text. Burgon examined 46 Fathers who died before 400 A.D., and these Fathers were found to quote a Byzantine text at a ratio of 3:2 to other texts.²⁰ More recent research by Dr. Jack Moorman has shown this ratio to be 7:3 (“2.3:1”) in favor of the Byzantine text.²¹ Therefore, both the ancient versions and the ancient Fathers show the existence and use of the Byzantine text before the close of the fourth century. Even though there are few known manuscripts from that time, the Byzantine text is still evident in other witnesses. This also shows the continuity of the Byzantine text from ancient times to modern. Virtually all scholars acknowledge the continuity and dominance of the Byzantine text after 350 A.D. This evidence showing the Byzantine text in use two centuries earlier proves continuity before 350 A.D. The fact of antiquity and continuity in the Byzantine text proves first that God has preserved His Word, and second, His preserved Word is found in the Byzantine text-type. Continuity is required for

¹⁷ Quoted in Burgon, John William. *The Revision Revised*. (London: J. Murray, 1883), 9

¹⁸ Grady, Dr. William P. *Final Authority: A Christian's Guide to the King James Bible*. (Knoxville, TN: Grady Publications, Inc., 1993), 34-35

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pg 34

²⁰ Burgon, John William, and Edward Miller. *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels: Vindicated and Established*. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1896), 94, 99-101

²¹ Moorman, J.A. *Early Manuscripts, Church Fathers, and the Authorized Version*. (Collingswood, NJ: The Bible for Today Press, 2005), 361

preservation, and this continuity is NOT found in the Alexandrian text-type. Preservation, however, transcends both antiquity and continuity.

Variety

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the
name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
Matthew 28:19

The disciples of Christ are commanded to take the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. They preached and distributed the Word as they went. Due to the missionary efforts resulting from the great commission, the Word of God has been distributed worldwide. The Bible has been translated into the languages of these distant lands. The principle of variety informs us that the true reading is that which is evident in diverse languages and diverse locales across the world. The true text has been taken across the world by missionaries. These diverse witnesses vary in their text, being “in no single instance absolutely identical in their text...”²² There are few, if any, manuscripts which agree exactly. This does not disprove preservation; it only insures that a particular text has not been enforced by a church authority or heretical cult. If multiple witnesses have the exact, word-for-word testimony, they would be accused of collusion.

No one can doubt, for it stands to reason, that Variety distinguishing witnesses massed together must needs constitute a most powerful argument for believing such evidence to be true. Witnesses of different kinds; from different countries; speaking different tongues:-witnesses who can never have met and between whom it is incredible that there should exist collusion of any kind:-such witnesses deserve to be listened to most respectfully. Indeed, when witnesses of so varied a sort agree in large numbers, that they must needs be accounted worthy of even implicit confidence...

Variety it is which imparts virtue to mere number, prevents the witness-box from being filled with packed deponents, ensures genuine testimony.²³

Textual witnesses of different kinds, languages, and locations insure that the text hasn't been standardized and forced on the body of believers. Not only does variety show that God has preserved His Word through the Great Commission, it insures that the witnesses are independent and genuine.

The Alexandrian text is centered around Alexandria, Egypt, the region which spawned the first heresies. Alexandrian proponent D.A. Carson says of this text “This text-type was probably prepared by trained scribes, most likely in Alexandria and its regions.”²⁴ Most of the Alexandrian manuscripts have been found in Egypt, as D.A. Carson admits: “...[M]ost early non-Byzantine manuscripts have been found in Egypt...”²⁵ Alexandria is even recognized in the Bible as a place of bad and incomplete doctrine.

²² Burgon and Miller, *The Traditional Text*, 51

²³ *Ibid.*, 50

²⁴ D.A. Carson. *The King James Version Debate: A Plea for Realism*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1979), 27

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 49

Acts 18:24-26

24. And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.
25. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.
26. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

The Byzantine text originated around Antioch, Syria, where the disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11:26), and the base of operations for Paul's missionary trips (Acts 15:35). The Byzantine text has spread worldwide due to the efforts of missionaries. Byzantine manuscripts "belong to so many divers countries,-Greece, Constantinople, Asia Minor, Palestine, Syrian, Alexandria, and other parts of Africa, not to say Sicily, Southern Italy, Gaul, England and Ireland..."²⁶ Thus, the Byzantine text shows geographic (and language) variety, while few Alexandrian manuscripts have been found outside of Egypt.

Number

The number refers to the amount of testimony in support of a particular reading versus the number against. This principle states that the reading with the highest number of witnesses is to be preferred. It is constantly said, that "witnesses are to be weighed, not counted." However, number is the most natural form of weight.

But the axiom in question labours under the far graver defect of disparaging the Divine method, under which in the multitude of evidence preserved all down the ages provision has been made as a matter of hard fact, not by weight, but by number, for the integrity of the Deposit.²⁷

It is the testimony of the text which God has chosen to preserve and propagate. It is the testimony against the text which God has rejected. The Byzantine text represents 95% of all manuscripts, while the Alexandrian is represented by less than 5%. This glaring difference in proportion is a fact that cannot be ignored.

Weight

For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.
Mark 14:56

The weight of an individual manuscript refers to its respectability and reliability. Weight is a relative measure; it compares the respectability of manuscripts one against another. Inferior manuscripts must be attributed less weight than those of a superior nature. Burgon gives us some criteria for establishing weight. First, if a manuscript is proven to be the exact transcript of another, they count as one, and not two manuscripts. Second, a single version (translation) outweighs a single copy, because translations

²⁶ Burgon and Miller, *The Traditional Text*, pg 51

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 44

would likely rely on multiple copies as their base text.²⁸ Third, the testimony of a single church Father outweighs that of a single copy, because the date the Father lived is usually well established, while the date of a manuscript is subject to speculation²⁹. However, the testimony of the body of copies as a whole outweighs the testimony of the Fathers and versions as a whole. But there is no known passage where the Fathers and Versions unite to disagree with the copies.³⁰

The copies themselves are weighed based on the proven reliability of their testimony. A copy whose readings for disputed passages are repeatedly proven correct by other testimony is attributed with greater weight. Likewise, a copy, repeatedly proven wrong, is given much less weight. Burgon explains: “As to the Weight which belongs to separate Copies, that must be determined mainly by watching their evidence. If they go wrong continually, their character must be low.”³¹ The witness, often proven wrong, is to be rejected as a false witness. So, the witness proven correct through other textual criticism criteria is to be given more weight each time.

A close examination of the primary Alexandrian manuscripts shows them to be utterly unreliable. Dean Burgon and his colleagues studied and collated manuscripts of both text-types. He studied the five most revered Alexandrian manuscripts in depth. These include Alexandrinus (A), Sinaiticus (Aleph), Vaticanus (B), Ephraemi (C), and Bezae (D)³². Codex B is shown to be in error over 7500 times, while Aleph errs over 8900 times³³. Codex D is in error over 13,000 times³⁴. These manuscripts don’t just disagree with the bulk of the evidence, **but also among each other**. Of all five, Burgon wrote, “[T]hey render inconsistent testimony *in every verse*.”³⁵ Of B, Aleph, C and D, he concludes,

It matters nothing that all four are discovered on careful scrutiny to differ essentially, not only from ninety-nine out of a hundred of the whole body of extant MSS. besides, but even *from one another*.³⁶

As an example, Burgon examined two small portions of scripture in the five Alexandrian manuscripts, as compared with each other, and with the Byzantine text (which he calls the “Traditional” text). He enumerated the alternate readings (those differing from the Byzantine text, including omissions, additions, substitutions, and transpositions) of the five manuscripts, also with the numbers of peculiar readings (those found *only* in *one* manuscript). In Luke 8:35-44 (a randomly chosen passage), he found 124 alternate readings, an average of 25 per manuscript. The number of peculiar readings per manuscript are: Codex A – 2, Aleph – 8, B – 6, C – 15, D – 93.³⁷ Most importantly, Burgon lists the number of times the alternate (or “various”) readings agree between the five manuscripts. In these ten verses, never do these five manuscripts agree on an alternate reading.³⁸ In Mark 2:1-12, Burgon counted 60 alternate readings, yet the five manuscripts agree only once on an alternate reading.³⁹ Of this variation among the Alexandrian manuscripts, Burgon makes the following note:

²⁸ Ibid., 56

²⁹ Ibid., 57

³⁰ Ibid., 58

³¹ Ibid., 58

³² Codex Bezae is now more commonly classified as “Western” as opposed to “Alexandrian.”

³³ Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, pg 12

³⁴ Ibid., 13

³⁵ Ibid., 31

³⁶ Ibid., 11-12

³⁷ Ibid., 17

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., 30-31

It must be further admitted, (for this is really not a question of opinion, but a plain matter of fact,) that it is unreasonable to place confidence in such documents. What would be thought in a Court of Law of five witnesses, called up 47 times for examination, who should be observed to bear contradictory testimony *every time*?⁴⁰

Therefore, these manuscripts are untrustworthy witnesses to the true text of the Word of God.

When Jesus Christ, the living Word of God, was on trial, witnesses were sought against Him, but none were found. “For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.” (Mark 14:55-56). Likewise, as witness is sought against the written Word of God, the Byzantine text, witnesses are found, but their witness “agrees not together.” The revered Alexandrian manuscripts are proven to be inconsistent and unreliable for reconstructing the original text. The Byzantine manuscripts, however, generally contain only minor variations.

Context

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.
1 Corinthians 2:13

The principle of context states that the correct reading for a disputed passage will fit in with the surrounding undisputed text. Burgon explains

A word,-a phrase,-a clause,-or even a sentence or a paragraph,-must have some relation to the rest of the entire passage which precedes it or comes after it. Therefore it will often be necessary, in order to reach all the evidence that bears upon a disputed question, to examine both the meaning and the language lying on both sides of the point in dispute.⁴¹

The correct reading will fit in with the undisputed portion of text. This principle is used verse by verse. Continuity is not able to prove a text type or an individual manuscript to bear the correct text at all times. Considering the context is very Biblical, as we are to compare scripture with scripture for an interpretation. To demonstrate this principle, two verses will be examined, Matthew 17:21 and Acts 8:37. Both of these are omitted in the Alexandrian text.

Matthew 17:18-21

18. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

19. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20. And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

21. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

The disciples had failed at casting out a devil, and they asked Jesus why. He gave them two reasons:

⁴⁰ Ibid., 30

⁴¹ Burgon and Miller. *The Traditional Text*, 61

lack of faith, and the need for prayer and fasting. The omission of verse 21 removes half of His answer. (It also removes His instruction for casting out stubborn devils.) The context implies that this verse should be included.

Acts 8:35-38

35. Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.
36. And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?
- 37. 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.**
38. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

The Alexandrians tell us that verse 37 should be omitted. In this passage, Philip is riding in the chariot of an Ethiopian eunuch and preaching to him the Gospel. The eunuch inquires of him of what is preventing him from being baptized. If verse 37 is omitted, the eunuch simply stops the chariot, and is baptized. However, this makes little sense. Philip does not answer his important question. The eunuch just asks his question, stops the chariot, and Philip baptizes him. Thus, this passage dictates the inclusion of verse 37. Also, this passage is one of the strongest witnesses for believer's baptism as opposed to infant baptism. Thus, considering the context is important on a verse-for-verse basis.

Text Editions

When scholars attempt to reconstruct the original text from the body of manuscripts, the resulting work is called an edition of the Greek text. Several editions of the Byzantine text were produced throughout the 16th and 17th centuries by Desiderius Erasmus, Robert Estienne (Stephanus) and Theodore Beza. These editions became commonly known as the *Textus Receptus* or Received Text, and were used to produce all of the Protestant translations. Editions of the Alexandrian Text include the Westcott-Hort text, the Nestle (and Nestle Aland) text (all editions), and the United Bible Societies text (all editions). Most modern translations have relied on one or more of the Alexandrian text editions. The preface of a translation will usually reveal its source texts.

Thus, the preserved Word of God can be found in the Byzantine text-type. It displays continuity and antiquity, dating back at least as far as the Alexandrian. It possesses the vast majority of manuscripts, and has been found in manuscripts around the world. As its manuscripts are in strong agreement, it is far more reliable than the Alexandrian text, the manuscripts of which disagree heavily amongst themselves. Therefore, the Byzantine text is the preserved Word of God, and the true text of the Bible. As the next article will cover, translations from the Byzantine text, when made correctly, preserve God's Word in the translated work.

5

Preservation in Translations

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matthew 4:4

The Bible has been preserved to the very word. However, in order to live by every word, you must read every word. There are two ways to read the Bible, in the original languages directly, and via translations. Reading the Bible directly in the original Greek and Hebrew requires a thorough knowledge of these languages. Most people do not understand the original Biblical languages. Translations put the text of the Bible in the languages of everyday people. The Protestant Reformers sought to put the hand of the common man, bypassing the gatekeepers of the day. But is a translation still the Word of God? The New Testament writers quoted the Old Testament frequently. In doing so, they translated the OT Hebrew into NT Greek. Which of these is the Word of God? It is self-evident, that both the OT Scripture and NT quotation are the Word of God. Therefore, a translation can be just as much the Word as the original, bearing the authority thereof.

Translation is necessary. You can't live by every Word if you can't understand the language. Can you understand the original Greek?:

ουτως γαρ ηγαπησεν ο θεος τον κοσμον ωστε τον υιον αυτου τον μονογενη εδωκεν ινα πας ο πιστευων εις αυτον μη αποληται αλλ εχη ζωην αιωνιον

– John 3:16, original Greek

However, in translating the Bible, there are generally three accepted methods of translation: word-for-word, or formal equivalence, thought-for-thought or dynamic equivalence, and paraphrase.

Literal (KJV)	Light Dynamic (NKJV)	Dynamic (NIV)	Paraphrase (NLT)
He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.	He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.	Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.	And anyone who believes in God's Son has eternal life. Anyone who doesn't obey the Son will never experience eternal life but remains under God's angry judgment.

This example of John 3:36 shows varying degrees between formal equivalence, dynamic equivalence,

and paraphrase. The KJV is a literal translation. The NKJV uses dynamic equivalence in restructuring “that believeth not” to “who does not believe.” The NIV replaces “he that” with the (gender neutral) “whoever,” and replaces “does not believe” with “rejects,” changing the meaning of the text.⁴² The paraphrase NLT, however, changes belief into obedience, turning salvation into salvation by works.

Translations can vary in style from very loose to very literal. Which of these is best? More importantly, which of these does God demand? Which of these styles produces results that can be truly called the Word of God? To determine this, the most common translation styles will be examined in the light of God's Word.

An **interlinear**, or **word-for-word** translation simply exchanges each word in the original language for its equivalent in the receptor language. While conveying every word of God, it can be difficult to understand.

So for loved God the world, so as the Son of Him, the only-begotton, He gave, that everyone believing into Him not may perish but have life everlasting.

- John 3:16, Green's Interlinear

A **literal** or **formal** translation arranges the translated words as necessary to make meaningful sentences in the receptor language. A literal translation has two components: Verbal equivalency (VE) seeks to translate word-for-word wherever possible. Formal equivalency (FE) seeks to preserve the grammatical structure of the original. Nouns are translated to nouns and verbs to verbs where possible. Both VE and FE are part of a literal translation.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

- John 3:16, King James Version

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

- John 3:16, New American Standard Bible

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son⁴³, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

- John 3:16, English Standard Version

⁴² It may be argued that not believing Christ is equal with rejecting Christ, however, the connection with the “believe” of the first half of the verse is lost. A person may not believe in Christ, but not conscientiously reject Him either. According to the NIV and NLT, this person is neither saved nor lost!

⁴³ The Greek word here is monogenes. This is a compound word. Mono means sole, single, only, alone. Genes means born, begotton, sired. Dynamic Equivalence translations translate “mono” but ignore “genes,” resulting in Jesus Christ becoming God's “only Son” or “one and only Son.” This creates a contradiction with Romans 8:14-17 among other Scriptures. We, as Christians, are God's adopted sons and daughters. Christ is NOT God's ONLY Son; Christ is God's only NATURAL Son. Instead of being easier to read, these dynamic Bibles have created a serious doctrinal contradiction here.

Sometimes words are *added* to translations if necessary for clarification or sentence structure. However, the original structure is kept intact and added words kept at a minimum. Honest translations indicate which words are added, usually by *italics*.

Note the following example from Psalms 32:1-3. The added text is bolded for emphasis. In verses 1 and 2, the KJV and NASB add the text “is he whose,” “there is,” “whose,” and “is.” The KJV italicizes these words, while the NASB does not. In verse 3, the NASB adds the words “about my sin,” while the KJV does not. It is important to note that ALL translations have added words to the text so that it will be grammatically correct. However, of the Bible versions listed here, only the KJV and NASB indicate which words have been added. Even the formal equivalent ESV does not flag its added words. If the dynamic equivalency Bibles, such as the NIV, were to highlight their added words, a larger percentage of the text would be italicized.

KJV	NASB
<p><i>A Psalm</i> of David, Maschil.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Blessed <i>is he whose</i> transgression <i>is</i> forgiven, <i>whose</i> sin <i>is</i> covered. Blessed <i>is</i> the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit <i>there is</i> no guile. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A Psalm</i> of David. A Maskil. How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit! When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long.

A **dynamic equivalent** (or **functional equivalent**) translation is a translation of sense or meaning, without concern for actual words. The emphasis of the translation work is placed on the thoughts or meanings, and not on the very words being translated. It gives the translators liberty to read their own interpretations into the text.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

- John 3:16, New International Version

For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life.

- John 3:16, Good News Translation/Today’s English Version

An **optimal equivalent** or **complete equivalent** translation is more literal than a dynamic equivalent, but less literal than a formal equivalent. It still grants translators some freedom to read their own interpretations into the text.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- John 3:16, New King James Version

For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

- John 3:16, Holman Christian Standard Bible

A **paraphrase** is a complete rewrite of the text in the translator's own words. It allows them maximum license to interpret the text.

For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

- John 3:16, New Living Translation

This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life.

John 3:16, The Message

All the Words of God

A formal equivalency translation gives the receptor language a transparent view of the original. When it comes to selecting a Bible translation, we need to use Biblical guidelines. We are to live by *every word* that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Matt 4:4). The ideal Bible translation must give us every word of God, with no words of man. The paraphrase is excluded immediately, because it is an interpretation, not a translation. It has been rewritten in the words of man. The Scripture text can have many layers of meaning. When it is interpreted, often only one or few of these layers are considered. When a text is translated by interpretation, some of its deeper meaning is lost.

O LORD, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep. A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this. Psalm 92:5,6

As for thought-for-thought dynamic translations, consider what God has to say about His thoughts and our thoughts. God's thoughts are very deep. Man cannot know them, unless He chooses to reveal them. Man cannot read God's mind. God's thoughts are not our thoughts. Yet can man really claim to know the very thought of God when He inspired His Word? The only way for man to know God's thoughts is through Divine revelation. The means by which God reveals truth have already been touched on: a) general, or nature; b) special, or the written Word; c) Personal, or the Living Word, Jesus Christ. For a translator to claim to be translating God's thoughts means he is receiving new inspiration from God. Since the canon of Scripture is closed, new inspiration is clearly not occurring. The Scripture text was ONCE DELIVERED unto the church. "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**." (Jude 1:3). Thus, the

only way to know God's thoughts is to read His Word!

Where does God place the emphasis, the thoughts or the words? He clearly emphasizes the WORDS:

Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Proverbs 30:5

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by **every word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. Deuteronomy 8:3

Exodus 4:28-30

28. And Moses told Aaron **all the words** of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.
29. And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel:
30. And Aaron spake **all the words** which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people.

Exodus 24:3-8

3. And Moses came and told the people **all the words** of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, **All the words** which the LORD hath said will we do.
4. And Moses wrote **all the words** of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.
5. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD.
6. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.
7. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, **All that the LORD hath said** will we do, and be obedient.
8. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning **all these words**.

Note how Moses and Aaron were careful to transmit ALL of God's Words.

Therefore thou shalt speak **all these words** unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee. Jeremiah 7:27

Then the LORD said unto me, Proclaim **all these words in the cities** of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them. Jeremiah 11:6

Thus speaketh the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write thee **all the words that I have**

spoken unto thee in a book. Jeremiah 30:2

Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears. Ezekiel 3:10

After a period of persecution, the early church comforted by an angel, who told them to continue preaching about new life in Christ:

Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. Acts 5:20

God puts His emphasis on His very words, and not His thoughts. Thus, a translation needs to be word-for-word. Does this mean that we all must use interlinear Bibles? No, it does not. As mentioned before, an interlinear is a word-for-word exchange into the receptor language. However, as it retains the word order of the original, it can be very difficult to read. There is nothing wrong with interlinear Bibles. They can be very helpful when learning the original languages of Greek and Hebrew. A formal translation, however, takes a word-for-word translation, rearranges the words into meaningful sentences in the receptor language. It adds words if needed for clarity. But what about God's multiple warnings to not add to His Words? As mentioned before, honest translations flag their added words, usually with italics. However, those producing optimal, dynamic, and paraphrase translations should take heed, because they are offering their own words in place of God's. Dynamic and paraphrase translations may make the text seem more understandable, but there is a huge difference between arranging words into coherent sentences and placing one's own interpretation into the text. Yes, the dynamic Bibles may seem easier to read, but it is not God's very words. These profess to be Bibles but are, at best, Bible commentaries. Therefore, a word-for-word translation gives all the words of the original; a formal translation makes these words understandable.

The Myth of the Easy-to-Read Bible

A common misconception of dynamic equivalency is that the entire Bible must be very easy to read and understand. The great Reformers such as Tyndale, Luther and Calvin sought to put the Scriptures into the hands of the common man via translation. They were careful to not change any words in translation. However, there are passages that are noticeably hard to understand. The Bible even mentions that some parts are hard to understand. It contains varying degrees of difficulty, from very easy to very hard. The Bible speaks of itself as meat and milk. Milk is the basics of the faith, while meat is the deeper, more difficult material for the more mature. A fuller understanding is gained as the Christian grows and acts on that which they already understand. This understanding is gained through listening to preachers explain it, and through personal study with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Hard Passages

The Bible contains passages that are naturally hard to understand. The Bible even mentions this fact.

As also in all *his* [Paul] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. 2 Peter 3:16.

Peter is saying that Paul has been used of God to inspire Scripture, but not all of Paul's writings are easy to understand. Peter warns that heretics are twisting the difficult passages, to their own

destruction. (Dynamic translators, take heed.)

Many therefore of His disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? John 6:60

Jesus had told His followers that they must eat His flesh and blood (vs 54-57). When many were confused by this saying, He told them that these words are spiritual, not literal (vs 63). However, many of His followers abandon Him (vs 66), not comprehending His hard to understand Words.

Growth in Understanding

The Word contains milk and meat. The milk is the basics of the faith, and is important for new Christians to understand. The milk IS easy to understand. Hebrews 6:1-2 lists these principles as repentance from dead works, faith toward God, baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. New Christians and carnal Christians cannot handle the meat.

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:
1 Peter 2:2.

I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able. 1 Corinthians 3:2.

The meat of the word is the deeper doctrines beyond the basic principles. This is for mature Christians; those who have gained discernment by exercising the Scriptures. The meat consists of varying levels of difficulty. As the Bible is an infinite Book, no one can have complete understanding of it. However, further understanding is gained by acting on and exercising (using) the Scriptures that you already understand.

Hebrews 5:12-14

12. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.
13. For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.
14. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

The Scriptures are meant to be searched and studied. We have been commanded to study and search out the Scriptures, comparing Scripture with Scripture. We gain this understanding by studying, not by using an easy-reader translation.

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (ie comparing Scripture with Scripture). 1 Corinthians 2:13.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15.

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. John 5:39.

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Acts 17:11.

1 Peter 1:10-11

10. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you:

11. Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

The Holy Spirit is our Guide as we study the Scriptures. As we search, compare and study the Bible, He guides us in the Truth. This is yet further indication that the Scriptures are intended to be studied.

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. (Ps. 32:8)

Behold, God exalteth by his power: who teacheth like him? Job 36:22

...he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake Ps. 23:3

Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way. Ps 25:8,9

Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name. Ps. 86:11

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that shall he speak*: and he will shew you things to come. John 16:13.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 1 Cor 2:12,13

The Need for Preachers

Faith cometh by HEARING. Generally speaking, the lost do not get saved on their own accord, but by the preaching of the Gospel by a man of God. The lost need the Gospel explained to them. This is the Biblical role of the pastor or missionary. It is the role of the preacher, not the translator, to make the Scriptures understandable. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Here are a few examples of a preacher explaining the Word to people.

Nehemiah read the Scriptures passage by passage, and explained it to the people:

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading. Nehemiah 8:8.

In addition to interpreting dreams, Daniel was able to explain hard sentences (passages) of Scripture.

Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation. Daniel 5:12.

Acts Chapter 8 gives an example of a man being saved through another's preaching. Here, we have the lost Ethiopian eunuch who cannot understand the Scriptures. He asks Philip to help him; Philip explains the Gospel, and the eunuch gets saved.

Acts 8:27-35

27. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,
28. Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.
29. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.
30. And Philip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?
31. And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.
32. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:
33. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.
34. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?
35. Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

In each of these cases, no one had an easy-reader edition, and they needed a preacher to explain the Word. Dynamic equivalence confuses the translator with the preacher. The translator converts the Scripture into the common language; the preacher explains it to the common people. Dynamic equivalency short-circuits this process, and offers man's explanation in place of the very Words of God. Once the lost is saved, God will give him more understanding of His book. As he grows and reads and hears and applies God's Word, God will give him more understanding. For "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4). Herein is a strong indication of God's emphasis on the very Words. He inspired every word (2 Tim 3:16), He promised to preserve every word (Psalm 12:6,7), even to the jot and tittle (Matthew 5:18). He demands that we live by every Word. This command originated in the Mosaic Law (Deuteronomy 8:3), and is reiterated in the New Testament by our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt 4:4). The Bible is inspired to the word, and preserved to the word, that it may be lived to the word. However, it must be translated to the word to be lived to the word. Thus, formal equivalence is required to know what God actually said, and to be able to live by it.

To grow in understanding, the Christian needs to 1) Read their Bible 2) Pray for understanding 3) Act on the parts that they understand 4) Study the Bible with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, 5) Listen attentively to preaching and teaching. The Bible has varying shades of understandability, from very easy to very hard.

Therefore, Bible translations must be done using formal equivalency, because God demands obedience to every Word, and because dynamic equivalency and paraphrase allow the translators to insert their own interpretations into the text. Of the English Bibles commonly available today, there are only three formal equivalency translations: the King James Version (KJV), the New American Standard Bible (NASB), and the English Standard Version (ESV). Of these, the NASB and ESV use Alexandrian texts, while the KJV uses Byzantine texts. What does this mean for you? In the next chapter, these three translations will be compared side-by-side to reveal the differences between the Byzantine and Alexandrian texts in plain English.

6

Comparison of Translations

What does all of this information about the Byzantine Text and the Alexandrian Text, the *Textus Receptus* and the Westcott and Hort text mean to you, the average Bible reader? It means a lot, because a Bible translation can only be as good as the text from which it was translated. The omissions of the Alexandrian text are reflected in translations produced from it. A literal translation gives the reader a transparent view of the original, and comparing these literal translations will reveal textual differences that are not the result of translator liberality (dynamic equivalence). By comparing literal Alexandrian translations with literal Byzantine translations, we can see the differences in plain English. Here, three Bible translations are compared, the King James Version (KJV), New American Standard Bible (NASB) and the English Standard Version (ESV). As mentioned previously, the KJV was translated from the Byzantine Text via the *Textus Receptus* of 1550. The NASB uses the 23rd edition of Nestle's text, and the ESV uses both the UBS 4th edition and the Nestle Aland 27th edition. (Remember that the Nestles and UBS texts are Alexandrian in nature.) For each of these verses, a doctrinally important question is raised, the passage is quoted from all three translations, the differences are highlighted and a detailed explanation of the differences is provided.

Mark 10:24	Is it hard to get to heaven?
KJV	And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, <u>how hard is it</u> for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!
NASB	The disciples were amazed at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, <u>how hard it is</u> [] to enter the kingdom of God!
ESV	And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, <u>how difficult it is</u> [] to enter the kingdom of God!

This omission has Christ stating that getting into the kingdom of God (that is, Heaven) is difficult. This contradicts all the Scripture that states that salvation is the free gift of God.

Salvation is by faith, not works:

Ephesians 2:8,9

8. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:
9. Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. Galatians 2:16.

Salvation is a free gift:

Romans 5:15-18

15. But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.
16. And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification.
17. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)
18. Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life.

Thus, it is not hard to enter the kingdom of God, except here in the Alexandrian text.

Matt. 9:13	Sinners are called to do what?
KJV	But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance .
NASB	But go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners []."
ESV	Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners []."

In the Byzantine text, sinners are called to repentance. In the Alexandrian text, sinners are called, but not to repentance. They are not called to do anything. The Alexandrian version will preach well in today's "come as you are, stay as you are" false gospel. However, repentance was clearly emphasized

in the preaching of the early church:

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:38

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; Acts 3:19

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Acts 17:30

Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 20:21

And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Matthew 3:2

And they went out, and preached that men should repent. Mark 6:12

The early church clearly and consistently told sinners that they must repent. The sinner is called to repent, but not in this verse in the Alexandrian text.

John 6:47	What must we believe to have eternal life?
KJV	Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.
NASB	Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes [] has eternal life.
ESV	Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes [] has eternal life.

“[W]hoever believes has eternal life.” Believes in what? Who/what are we to believe in for eternal life? Anything we want? The Byzantine “believeth on Me” clearly indicates that it is Jesus Christ in whom we should believe.

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Matthew 18:6

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: John 1:12

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. John 2:11

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John 3:18

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. John 3:36

It is Jesus Christ in whom we believe for eternal life. However, this passage in the Alexandrian Text appears to open it to believe in anything.

Phil. 2:6	Is Christ equal with God?
KJV	Who, being in the form of God, <u>thought it not robbery</u> to be equal with God:
NASB	who, although He existed in the form of God, <u>did not regard equality with God</u> a thing to be grasped,
ESV	who, though he was in the form of God, <u>did not count equality with God</u> a thing to be grasped

In the Byzantine KJV, Christ didn't think that it was robbery to be equal with God. In the Alexandrian, Christ was the form of God, but didn't regard Himself as equal with God. Equality with God was out of His reach. He won't grasp for it. He didn't consider it a thing to be reached or grasped. Is this not what the Alexandrian translations are saying here? This is a subtle affront on Christ's deity, which is affirmed throughout Scripture:

Hebrews 1:1-3

1. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
2. Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;
3. Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:19.

I and My Father are one. John 10:30.

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Titus 2:13.

The Deity of Christ is a fundamental of the faith. This passage in the Alexandrian text seriously distorts this doctrine to the point of denial.

Acts 8:37	What hinders me from being baptized (Acts 8:36)?
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.
NASB	[BRACKETED]
ESV	[OMITTED]

The Ethiopian eunuch had asked Philip an important question in Acts 8:36. “See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?” In the Alexandrian text, Philip does NOT answer his question. The Alexandrian text omits his response, and has him immediately baptizing the Ethiopian. This is perhaps the strongest passage testifying to believer's baptism, as opposed to infant baptism. In the Alexandrian text, NOTHING hindered the eunuch from being baptized. He didn't have faith. He wasn't saved. But Philip baptized him anyway. In the Byzantine KJV, we see Philip baptizing the eunuch only after he has made a profession of faith.

Acts 16:31-33

31. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.
32. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.
33. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Acts 8:12

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:38

Acts 16:14-15

14. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul [was saved].
15. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she

constrained us.

One must be saved before they can be baptized, but in the Alexandrian text, the Ethiopian eunuch is an exception to the rule.

Luke 4:4	Man lives by what?
KJV	And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.
NASB	And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE. []'"
ESV	And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone. []'"

This companion verse to Matthew 4:4 is missing the reference to the Word of God. The statement is incomplete in the Alexandrian text. The context demands more information. If man shall not live by bread alone, then upon what does man live? This doctrine is found in three verses (Deut 8:3, Matt 4:4 and Luke 4:4). The Alexandrian text removes the doctrine in one verse, weakening it by one third.

Luke 2:14	Did Christ come for all, or only a select few?
KJV	Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.
NASB	"Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased. "
ESV	"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased! "

This passage records the angel's proclamation of Christ's birth. Christ came for all men, not just those with whom He was pleased. He came to reconcile the sinner with God, and God is not pleased with sinners. Christ came for all, that all might have the opportunity to be saved.

Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 1 Timothy 2:4.

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to

repentance. 2 Peter 3:9.

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. John 3:17

Christ came to save sinners, but at this passage in the Alexandrian text, He came to visit the righteous, those in whom He was pleased.

John 7:8,10	Did Jesus lie?
KJV	8. Go ye up unto this feast: <u>I go not up yet unto this feast</u> : for my time is not yet full come. 10. But when his brethren were gone up, <u>then went he also up unto the feast</u> , not openly, but as it were in secret.
NASB	8. Go up to the feast yourselves; <u>I do not go up [] to this feast</u> because My time has not yet fully come.” 10. But when His brothers had gone up to the feast, then He Himself also went up, not publicly, but as if, in secret.
ESV	8. You go up to the feast. <u>I am not [] going up to this feast</u> , for my time has not yet fully come.” 10. But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private.

In the KJV, Christ tells his brothers that he wasn't going to the feast **yet**. He goes a little later, as recorded in verse 10. In the Alexandrian, Christ states that He is not going to the feast, but then goes anyway. This turns Jesus Christ, the living Truth, into a liar.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John 1:14.

For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. John 1:17.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14:6.

Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. John 8:44.

And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not. John 8:45.

Did Jesus Christ, the living Truth, ever tell a lie? According to the Alexandrian text, He did.

Matt 5:22	Is it okay to be righteously angry?
KJV	But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment...
NASB	But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother [] shall be guilty before the court;
ESV	But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother [] will be liable to judgment...

Christ's display of wrath against the money changers serves as an example of anger with a just cause.

John 2:14-16

14. And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting;
15. And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;
16. And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

However, the Bible also states that we should be slow to anger, that we should put off anger whenever possible, and that when anger is justified, that we should not sin in our anger.

Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Ephesians 4:26.

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city. Proverbs 16:32.

A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but *he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.* Proverbs 15:18.

But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Colossians 3:8.

For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; Titus 1:7.

Thus, it is acceptable to be righteously angry, but not here in the Alexandrian Text. (If the Alexandrian Text were correct, then Christ sinned when He cast the money changers out. And if Christ sinned, we have a serious problem, because He then wouldn't be able to give Himself in payment for our sins.)

Matt 19:9	Should I marry a divorced woman?
KJV	And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.
NASB	And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery. []”
ESV	And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery. []”

This doctrine is addressed to Christians in three passages, Matthew 19:9, Matthew 5:31-32 and Luke 16:18. (Levitical priests were also forbidden to marry divorced women in Lev 21:7, however the general population was not.) It is removed from the Alexandrian text here in Matt 19:9, weakening the doctrine by one third.

1 John 4:3	How do I recognize an evil spirit?
KJV	And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.
NASB	and every spirit that does not confess Jesus [] is not from God; this is the <i>spirit</i> of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.
ESV	and every spirit that does not confess Jesus [] is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

The deciding factor in discerning a spirit is whether or not it confesses the incarnation of Christ. Does the spirit confess that Jesus Christ came *in the flesh*? The demons 'believe' in Christ. Evil spirits DO confess Jesus Christ. “And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?” (Acts 19:15) However, they will not acknowledge that He has come in the flesh, that He became a man. If you are confronted with a demon, and you use the test as given in the Alexandrian Bibles, it would answer 'Yes,' and you would think it to be a good angel. Thus, this test of the spirits has been completely changed and invalidated here. The test is restated in 2 John 1:7, (and here the Alexandrian Text agrees with the Byzantine), however this passages refers to “deceivers,” and not

“spirits.”

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. 2 John 1:7.

It is evident that human deceivers exist who deny Christ's incarnation. If a professing Christian denies the incarnation, they are clearly deceived (or a deceiver). However, if they confess the incarnation, this does not necessarily mean that they are not deceptive. 1 John 4:3 establishes the test for spirits, 2 John 1:7 restates it for human agents. The ‘spirit test’ is found nowhere else in Scripture, and thus this doctrine has been completely demolished within the Alexandrian Text.

Matt 17:21	How do I resist powerful demons?
KJV	Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.
NASB	[BRACKETED]
ESV	[OMMITTED]

Mark 9:29	How do I resist powerful demons?
KJV	And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting .
NASB	And He said to them, "This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer. []"
ESV	And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer. []"

The answer to this question is only found in these two verses, Matt 17:21 and Mark 9:29. (A computerized search for the words “pray” and “fast” within 20 verses of the words “spirit,” “devil,” or “ghost” produced no other results.) Certain kinds of unclean spirits can only be resisted and cast out by special means, as testified by this story. The disciples had tried to cast it out themselves, but couldn't. They asked Jesus why, and He stated that prayer and fasting was required. In the Alexandrian text, “fasting” is dropped from Mark 9:29, and Matt 17:21 is completely omitted. Thus, readers of Alexandrian Bibles are denied this important truth, that spiritual warfare is aided by prayer and fasting. Specifically, casting out stubborn or powerful demons requires both prayer and fasting. This doctrine is completely removed in the Alexandrian Text.

Luke 14:5	Is my donkey my son?
KJV	And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?
NASB	He said to them, "Which one of you shall have a son or an ox fall into a well, and will not immediately pull him out on a Sabbath day?"
ESV	And he said to them, "Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?"

In this passage, Christ is pointing out to the Jews that they would break the Sabbath to rescue their *animals*. Of course, they would break the Sabbath if needed to rescue their children.

This has been just a small sample of the omissions of the Alexandrian text. Some doctrine is weakened, by removing a passage here, but retaining a related passage elsewhere. Some doctrines are even removed entirely. Some passages are changed such as to create a contradiction with the rest of Scripture. Further research will diligently compare other alleged differences with the whole counsel of the Word of God to determine if the existence and seriousness of a change and comparison with various translations, with a focus on the doctrines that seem to have especially been targeted for corruption. However, many will still doubt and even deny that there are any serious textual differences. The writings of Dr. Bruce M. Metzger refute this notion. Dr. Metzger was considered by many to be the greatest textual critic of the twentieth century. He wrote what is considered to be the textbook on textual criticism: *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, And Restoration*. However, Metzger was an advocate of the Alexandrian manuscripts. In this book, he admits that there are "drastic" differences between the Byzantine *Textus Receptus* and the (Alexandrian) text produced by Westcott and Hort.

Speaking of Dean Burgon, he wrote

Consequently it was inconceivable to Burgon that the *Textus Receptus*, which had been used by the Church for centuries, could be in need of the drastic revision which Westcott and Hort had administered to it.⁴⁴ (Emphasis mine)

Metzger admits that there are "drastic" differences between these sets of manuscripts. Thus, we have here, from the pen of one of the Alexandrian text's greatest proponents, the admission that there are serious differences between the Alexandrian text and the Byzantine text. With literal translations, these differences are hidden in plain sight, for anyone to study and see.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Metzger, Bruce M. *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, And Restoration*. 2nd Edition. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 136

⁴⁵ Many have already addressed the topic of textual differences. Here are a few helpful resources.

- *If the Foundations Be Destroyed* by Chick Salliby Compares passages doctrine by doctrine. While it compares with the NIV, much of the changes are also reflected in other Alexandrian Bibles.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Bible is the very Word of God. It was inspired directly by Him in the original manuscripts. The Bible does not simply contain God's Word; it *is* God's Word. Since the Bible was given directly from God, it reflects His attributes. It is pure, true, faithful, perfect, righteous and holy, among other things. God's Word bears God's authority; it is the final authority on all matters that it addresses. It is not just the final authority on matters of faith and doctrine, but on everything on which it speaks. It is the final authority on Christian doctrine, morality, and eternal salvation. It informs us that we all deserve Hell, and spells out how to make it to Heaven: through the shed blood of Jesus Christ alone.

The Bible was given by inspiration once, yet God has miraculously preserved it through the centuries. The text of the Bible has been preserved completely, to the word, and forever. It has been preserved to all generations. It has been preserved, not just for the scholars, but for everyone. It has been preserved, not just in the original Greek and Hebrew, but also in translations. It has been preserved in the face of attempts to corrupt it by Satan and his minions. God has given many warnings against tampering with His Word, and those ignore them do so at their own peril. Yet many corrupt God's Word, by denying it, contradicting it, and offering their own ideas in place of it. Many Christian denominations have even replaced the Gospel of Christ with a gospel of works, deceiving many into thinking that they are saved.

Yet, God's Word endures forever. The original Greek text has been preserved in the Byzantine text-type. Its existence can be traced from the present time back to the 2nd century. While proponents of the Alexandrian text-type claim that it is older, the Byzantine has been shown to be at least as old as the Alexandrian. The Alexandrian text-type disappeared before 400 A.D., and thus, it was *not* preserved. However, it was resurrected in the 19th century, and most Bibles produced since then use it as their basis. Close comparison of Byzantine translations with those from the Alexandrian text reveals serious doctrinal errors in the Alexandrian text. Future research will seek to analyze and explain the doctrinal differences between the texts. Also, many modern translations have been done loosely, being translated using dynamic equivalence instead of formal equivalence. However, every one of God's Words is important to Him. The Bible was inspired to the word, and preserved to the word; therefore it is logical that it must be translated to the word.

The King James Version is a literal translation from the Byzantine text, and has endured the test of time, for over 400 years. It gradually replaced all other English translations before it, and for nearly 300 years was *the* Bible of the English language. Every attempt to render it obsolete has failed; it is

<<http://www.chick.com/catalog/books/0132.asp>>

- 448 Reasons Why I Cannot Trust Any Modern Version by Dr. Ken Matto <<http://www.scionofzion.com/448a.htm>>
- *Early Manuscripts, Church Fathers, and the Authorized Version* by J.A. Moorman. See "A Manuscript Digest of 356 Doctrinal Passages" (pg 119) for passage comparisons and manuscript evidence supporting the Byzantine reading for each. <<http://www.amazon.com/Manuscripts-Fathers-Authorized-Manuscript-Summaries/dp/1568480482>>

still in print today.

Can it be said, then, that the KJV is the God-ordained English translation? Can it be proven? No, it can't be proven; it needs to be accepted by faith. It can be shown that it is the best English translation because it uses the proper source text and translation method. It can be shown historically that it replaced venerable translations that came before it, such as the Geneva Bible. It can be shown that it is superior to the modern Bibles in doctrine, textual basis, and translational style. Is the KJV the preserved Word of God in English?

Logically, the KJV *is* the best English translation. When our "best English translation" tells us that God has preserved His Word forever, we accept that by faith. When our "best English translation" tells us that "Ye must be born again," we accept that by faith. We are saved by our faith in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Without faith, it is impossible to please the Lord.

We then, must accept by faith that the King James Version *is* the preserved Word of God in the English language. We must accept by faith that the KJV is God's Word in English. And once we do, we must recognize it as authoritative in our lives. We have a more sure word of prophecy. We have a Bible we can read, without confusion, without the need to go through some theologian to understand it. The KJV is the God's Word, preserved in English.

Now that you know that you can, by faith, have access to the true Word of God, what are you going to do with it?