

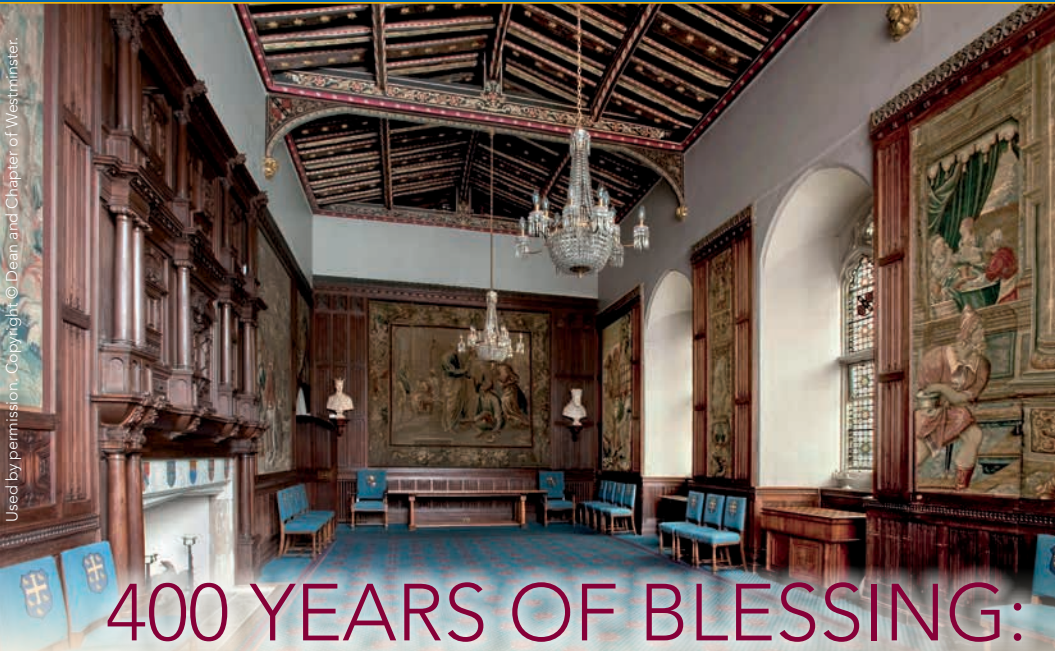
REDEEMING THE TIME

“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:16).

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400 YEARS OF BLESSING: The King James Bible

BY BRAD K. GSELL

At the dawn of the seventeenth century, James VI of Scotland attended the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. At that meeting in 1601, a proposal was made by some of the divines for a new translation to be made of the Holy Scriptures. In two short years, James acceded to the British throne with the title King James I of England. The very

next year (1604), he made an announcement which was to have astounding influence and blessing down to the present day. On July 22nd of that year, he announced that work on a new translation of the Bible was indeed going to commence. Finally, in 1611, the Authorized Version — commonly called the King James Version — was published.

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Photo at Left: The title page from the first printing of the King James Bible in 1611.

Photo above: The Jerusalem Chamber at Westminster Abbey in London, where some of the translation work on the King James Bible was done.



America, Repent!

BY DOUGLAS R. ARDIS

This article is abridged from a message preached on December 19, 2010, at the Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC.

As Mark begins the sixth chapter of his Gospel, we see Christ and His disciples going to Nazareth. Christ preaches the Gospel to His own people, but it is obvious that they do not understand Him and are offended by Him. Christ is amazed at their unbelief. He was so mistreated by His own relatives and countrymen that He said to them: “A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house” (Mark 6:4).

No sooner is this recorded than Mark tells us that Christ calls out the 12 disciples and gives them their assignment. They are to go and cast out demons and heal the sick, but primarily to preach that men must repent. They are to go out completely by faith. He commanded them in verses 8 and 9 “that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.” They are to go and preach, and it is clearly intimated that there would

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WORSE THAN AN EARTHQUAKE

BY ROBERT W. ANDERSON

The earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear plant disasters in Japan have dominated our newscasts in recent weeks. Halfway around the world, people are reeling from the devastations brought on their island nation. As Christians have a high priest who can be “touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” so we sympathize with those who have seen loved ones and beloved things swept away in a moment of time — their peace and security gone.

This is a time for men not only to be good Samaritans, but also to pray and ponder. Whether in our personal corner or on the world stage, all events should be viewed, not just through the eye of a camera, but through the grid of Holy Scripture.

The most notable earthquake mentioned in the Bible took place in the time of the prophet Amos around 750 B.C. When Jeroboam was king in Samaria (Israel) and Uzziah was reigning in Jerusalem (Judah), God called a shepherd and part-time tender of sycamore-fig trees to be His prophet to Israel, a nation which had turned away backward from God. In obedience to God’s call, Amos traveled from Tekoa in Judah (near Bethlehem) into the northern

kingdom of Israel. In Amos 1:1, the prophet tells us what God revealed to him “two years before the earthquake.” He leaves it until later for the significance of that earthquake to dawn upon his Israelite audience —

While their attention was on the earthquake, Amos focused more on the greatest disaster: the wickedness which was destroying the nation of Israel.

that the earthquake was God’s punishment on their sins.

Archaeological excavations have provided evidence of Amos’ quake. With its epicenter gauged to have been in Lebanon, its magnitude was rated as from 7.8 to 8.2, and it extended over 400 kilometers. There were frightening and immense consequences. It was so devastating that 250 years later it was still being talked about, when the prophet Zechariah wrote, “ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah” (14:5). They ran in fear, just as we saw people doing in Japan. As massive rebuilding is ahead for Japanese

cities like Sendai and Iwaki, so the building enterprises of King Uzziah mentioned in 2 Chronicles 26:2, it is suggested, came about as a result of their earthquake.

Amos starts his message with news that would gratify and attract the Israelites — their enemies, the surrounding nations, one by one will suffer calamities, thus demonstrating that God is the God of the nations. Amos mentions judgments on Damascus to the north, Philistia to the south, Moab east of Jordan, and several other surrounding nations. But then he turns to Israel itself. The nation was suffering disastrous consequences from its social sins, its economic injustice, and civil crimes. Most ruinous of all was Israel’s idolatry in which they worshipped the golden calf in Bethel, the Ammonite god Moloch (5:26) and other images “which ye made to yourselves.” They did suffer from the earthquake, and about 25 years later Israel would see the Assyrians pouring in like a tsunami wave, which destroyed the country and carried away her people into captivity. Isaiah 8:7,8, vividly describes the time the Assyrians invaded Judah: “the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the King of Assyria ... and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks ... he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck.” Though God sometimes sends varied disasters as judgment on sins, He also allows sin to be punished by sins more and greater.

While their attention was on the earthquake, Amos focused more on the greatest disaster: the wickedness

The Good News...

“For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live” (Amos 5:4).

which was destroying the nation of Israel. The destruction of the Japanese earthquake may be measured in the billions of dollars, but who can compute the loss in our own land from men's sins against their fellow men in greed, oppression, violence and injustice, all of which were addressed by Amos? Who can possibly calculate the cost that comes to the human race in abandoning or corrupting the worship of the one true and living God?

We know earthquakes occur along particular fault lines. Human history is built on the fault line of Adam's first transgression, which is charged to us, and on his fallen nature inherited by us. Ultimately all the miseries which visit the fallen, ruined race of men are the aftershocks from men sinning in Adam and falling with him in his first transgression. The Catechism says, "The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery." Today we have earthquakes all over the world, but man's sins against man and God produce catastrophic devastations on our own nation, as well as other countries.

Sin does more damage to the soul than a nuclear meltdown could do to the body; sinners under the wrath and curse of God are more tragic than those who have lost homes, towns and loved ones.

Sin, which is accompanied with the tsunami waves of sorrows, should drive men to Christ, the only Savior and refuge. We do well to listen to the Apostle Peter, who warns us that "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. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein

the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:10-13).

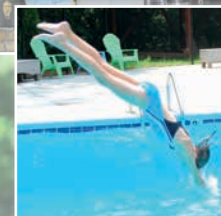


The Rev. Robert W. Anderson is a minister in Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church. He is presently ministering at the Marcus Hook, PA, Bible Presbyterian Church.

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What Is a Christian Marriage?

In the last issue of Redeeming the Time we discussed the disintegration of marriage in the United States (“Four in 10 Say They See Little Need for Marriage”). The following was written by the Rev. Al Bean, when asked by a Fundamental pastor to describe a Christian marriage and how he performs a Christian wedding. Pastor Bean has preached for over 65 years, and served for nearly 30 years as moderator of the South Atlantic Presbytery of the Bible Presbyterian Church. He is presently an active minister in Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church. Married for nearly 58 years, he devotedly cares for his precious wife, who now has advanced Alzheimer’s disease. All Christians would do well to heed the principles laid out in this article by Pastor Bean!

BY ALBERT C. BEAN

A Christian marriage is the permanent joining together of a man and woman under the living Lordship and Saviorhood of Jesus Christ, in the bonds of holy wedlock. Christ is the Architect (Psalm 127:1a) and the Foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11) of their relationship. The Christian man and woman will have already studied the Bible, the Word of God, and

prayed together before the wedding day.

And what is a Christian wedding? It is NOT a wedding on the beach or up in an airplane or in a supermarket or in front of a civil magistrate: it is a ceremony in a Bible-founded, grace-preaching, Christ-exalting church, among God’s people, in front of a Spirit-called man of God. The sacredness and spirituality of a church setting cannot be reproduced in any other place. The clothing of the participants and the music will carefully bring glory to God.

The Christian ceremony has a Scriptural introduction and then a double-pledge, double-troth, double-ring procedure that includes the frequently repeated words, “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” Near the end of the ceremony, the bridegroom faces the bride and declares, “I, as a blood-bought sinner saved by grace, a saint by position and practice, in absolute dependence upon God’s sovereign grace, the power of the Holy Spirit, the presence of the living

Christ, and the precious promises of God’s Word, do pledge to love you as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it. I shall promote your spirituality and love you even as I love my own body, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.” Then the bride, facing her groom, and vowing the identical words of heavenly dependence shall ultimately declare: “I ... do pledge to submit myself unto you as unto the Lord. For you are my head, even as Christ is the Head of the church, and Savior of the body. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so shall I be to you in everything, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.”

The couple shall kneel together as the pastor prays, and then, rising and joining right hands, the couple shall hear the minister proclaim, “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:6). With a few more vital words, the pastor declares that they are man and wife, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Finally, the Christian reception will NOT have alcoholic beverages, dancing, or raucous worldly music. It will be a time for refreshments, congratulations, and joyous Christian fellowship.

Because even the best of saints are encompassed with infirmities, strengths and weaknesses, maturities and immaturities, let the bride and groom realize that no one is the paragon of all virtue — except the Lord Jesus Christ. No one can meet all of another’s needs — except the Lord Jesus Christ. Let the Lord Himself fill your cup, and then you share that running-over cup with that beloved person of the opposite sex. You are married “until your toes are turned up”! No bailouts; no desertions! Next to the day of your salvation is the day of your marriage, in the will of God. •



400 YEARS OF BLESSING:

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There certainly had been previous English translations of the Scriptures. The names William Tyndale, John Wycliffe and Myles Coverdale are all known for their earlier work in making the Scriptures available to the common man in his mother tongue. The sixteenth century had seen wide use of the Geneva Bible (which our Pilgrim fathers brought with them on the Mayflower). The Great Bible and Bishop's Bible (so named because many bishops in the United Kingdom performed the tedious translation work) were also in use in England.

Six translation teams were assembled — two each in Cambridge, Oxford, and at Westminster Abbey in London. The teams were comprised of many faithful men of God, who were also consummate scholars. They were fiercely dedicated to producing a translation with fidelity to the Scriptures in their original languages.* At the conclusion, the work of all the teams was brought together and melded into a version with consistent and unsurpassed style, accuracy and beauty.

By the first half of the 18th century, the King James Version was

virtually unchallenged in use in the Protestant churches of the English speaking world. By the 1760s, many decades of printings by numerous publishers had made for many errors and even purposeful deviations to the text. In 1769, an edition was

We have little doubt but that the King James Version will continue to be a blessing to God's people for many years — and even centuries — to come!

published in Oxford, which sought to remove the errors and changes, and to update the English usage. This is virtually the exact King James Version that you and I use today. David Daniell, in his 2003 book, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence*, states that the King James Version really had no rivals from the 1700s until the 1950s.

The souls saved, the messages preached, the missionaries led to take the Gospel to foreign lands, by the work of the Holy Spirit as they read and studied their King James Bibles, are incalculable. It is fair to say that God has never used any TRANSLATION of the Scriptures more so than He has used the King James Version.

Many of us continue to use the King James Version in our churches, personal study and devotional use for a number of reasons. We reject the King James Only position since we deny that any version is directly inspired by God. However, this is a version that has rightly received unprecedented trust from God's people through the centuries. It has stood the test of time. It was translated by those who believed that every word of the Bible was inspired by God and must be handled with the utmost of care. It maintains a strict translation, while representing the zenith of English prose and poetry. It uses the exact use of the singular and plural

pronouns as found in the original languages, but lost in virtually all new English versions. We have little doubt but that the King James Version will continue to be a blessing to God's people for many years — and even centuries — to come! •

* Differences in word order, grammar, shades of meaning, etc., precludes a mechanical writing down of one word after the other from one language to another. However, using sound rules of translation, derived through diligent study, makes it possible to translate the words and place them in the grammatical order to make them intelligible in the receiving language, while remaining faithful to the original. We reject the newer practice of seeking to determine the thoughts of the writers and placing them into the receiving language (dynamic equivalence).



Mr. Brad Gsell is an elder and minister of music of the Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC, and President of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.

Olasky Resigns Post at King's College

In our last issue we reported on the appointment of Dr. Dinesh D'Souza (who describes himself as "a believing Catholic") as president of the King's College in New York City. We mentioned that Marvin Olasky, editor-in-chief of *World* magazine, was the Provost of the school, as well as its "presidential scholar." *Christianity Today's* website reports that Olasky recently resigned as Provost, but will remain as "presidential scholar." Olasky declined an interview with the magazine, only stating that "It will come as no surprise to you that Dinesh D'Souza and I have different ideas about some things." Commenting on this, *Christianity Today* writes: "This is a shift from what he told CT in August..." D'Souza also declined an interview, but continues to downplay the significance of his Catholicism. •

REDEEMING THE TIME

Editor: Brad K. Gsell

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Redeeming the Time is a quarterly publication with the purpose of encouraging God's people and applying God's Word to the issues of our day.

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What About Modern Versions?: The New International Version — a Case in Point

New

Voices are growing exceedingly louder in stating that the King James Version is obsolete, that its language is hopelessly outdated and archaic, that it is not understandable by today's young people, and that it is translated from inferior texts. Many today, even in evangelical circles, clamor for the newest translation they can get their hands on. The Bible departments in "Christian bookstores" are like a menu at McDonald's. Every kind of version and translation imaginable can be found. On top of that, these are marketed for every interest and walk of life: an athlete's Bible, a teenagers' Bible, a homemakers' Bible, "just-for-kids' translations," to name a few.

Lifeway Christian Stores even has a large fold-out brochure entitled "Your Personal Bible Selection Guide," with a chart to help you negotiate the apparently complicated process of choosing a "translation [which] is best for my needs." The chart is conveniently color coded to match up with the "Find-it-Fast Color-Coded Shelf Identifiers" in any Lifeway store and gives sample renditions of several verses, together with the "translation philosophies" of each.

Are New Versions Wrong?

There is nothing wrong with using faithful Bible scholarship to better translate certain words and to use words which currently best carry the meanings correlating to the Scriptures in their original languages. Certainly no TRANSLATION of the Scriptures is perfect. There is a reason why most Fundamental churches and denominations require, or strongly encour-

age, their pastors to go through rigorous training in the original Hebrew and Greek (and perhaps Aramaic) languages, since it is only the Scriptures as originally written in those languages which are inerrant.

Even when the King James Version was produced, not all were confident of its superiority, and there was a level of suspicion by some concerning this "new" translation. The Geneva Bible, which was brought on the Mayflower by our Pilgrim fathers, was published well into the middle of the 17th century, and was preferred by many. However, gradually the King James Bible became the

"[Despite] multitudes of perfect-answer versions (all of them duly approved, lauded, bought, revised, expanded, etc.), and millions of dollars squandered, most of these modern efforts have been weighed in the balances and found wanting."

Rev. Clyde Field

unchallenged Bible of the English-speaking world.

Although the Revised Version and the American Standard Version appeared in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the first serious attempt to replace the King James Version was the Revised Standard Version, copyrighted in 1952 by the apostate National Council of Churches. Bible-believing Christians rightly mobilized in opposing this version, as it sought to diminish and attack many of the doctrines of Scripture. Translating

the Hebrew in Isaiah 7:14 as "young woman," instead of "virgin," in referring to the mother of Christ, is one such example — an attack on the virgin birth of Christ.

Following decades saw the introduction of the New English Bible, the New International Version, the Living Bible paraphrase, the New Living Translation, and so forth. These appeared, with much fanfare and professional advertising — each declaring its superiority, or at least why it was a "must have." The sale of these new versions has been an extremely lucrative enterprise. We certainly won't judge the motives of any individuals or publishers, yet the facts cannot be disputed that much income has been generated from these new translations, and the copyrights ensure a continuing cash stream.

Then, *Reader's Digest* produced its Condensed Bible and the National Council of Churches came out with a "Non-Sexist" Bible. To add further confusion, the New International Version has gone through revisions, including *Today's New International Version* (TNIV), which caused a firestorm of controversy even among compromising evangelicals. Now, the English Standard Version is being touted as a "faithful" remake of the liberal Revised Standard Version, with input by more conservative, evangelical scholars.

The Philosophy of Translation

We find the philosophy of translation of most newer versions to be very dangerous. Although every translation stands on its own, and has its own strengths and weaknesses, the New International Version (NIV) is a case in point of what is all too common in the prevailing philos-

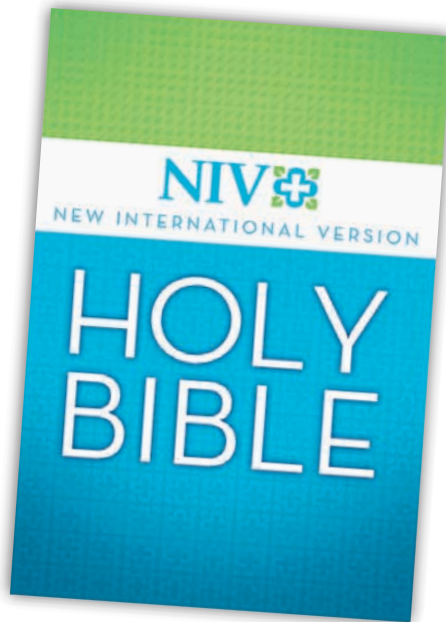
ophy of translation — even among evangelicals. When the NIV first appeared in print, it was widely heralded by conservative evangelicals as the anticipated replacement for the “old, antiquated” KJV. Even some men whose scholarship we respect served on the translation committee.

There has been much valuable scholarship concerning the various manuscripts, and families of manuscripts. There have been faithful men of God, who most of us have loved and respected, who have differed on various historical details, and the weight and conclusions which should be given to various facts of history. There are areas where brethren may agree to disagree. However, there is evidence that some men, in promoting their “scholarship,” have taken to themselves powers which do not belong to them.

Shortly after the introduction of the NIV in 1978, Bible Presbyterian pastor and professor Clyde Field, himself a careful scholar of the original languages, went against the tide and expressed this concern: “If one is naive enough to believe the extensive promotional ads for the NIV, there is nothing to do but junk all other English versions. Boasts in its favor pour forth on every hand with uncontrolled arrogance and the rarest of humility.... One could almost imagine that God Himself would be in trouble had not these modern experts in erudition arrived on the scene of history. His [God’s] teaching as to faithfulness (*e.g.*, as in distinguishing singular and plural by thou and ye) is obsolete, for ‘to retain these archaisms ... would have violated their aim of faithful translation’ [from the introduction printed in some editions of the NIV].

Solomon tells us that there is “no new thing under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:9). At the end of the 19th century, Southern Presbyterian theologian Robert Dabney had similar concerns. He wrote at a time when “higher criticism” was invading the

churches. He stated: “The salient trait of their work [many translators and textual critics of his day], here is, that, as to nearly all the important and contested ‘various readings,’ whose genuineness has been and is [the] subject of debate among competent biblical critics, the committees have arrogated to themselves the prerogative of deciding, and deciding on the side of innovation.”



He further expressed alarm that many Bible believers were being corrupted in their thinking. Dabney wrote: “Evangelical critics have adopted from the mint of infidel rationalism.”

Which NIV?

Today, when one discusses the NIV, the first question to be asked must be: “Which NIV?” The NIV has a continuing Committee on Bible Translation (CBT). Its latest effort became available in print in March 2011. When the NIV was first released, Zondervan Bible Publishers released a little booklet which had a series of questions and answers. One question was: “Will there be further revisions of the NIV?” The answer: “Yes and no. Basically no....” How’s that for clarity! However, the words “Yes,” and “Basically,” seem to have left the word “No” in the dust!

The answer continues: “More ancient manuscripts could be found ... which would affect the underlying Hebrew or Greek text.” So, in effect, they are saying that we really can have no confidence that we have God’s Word. New discoveries may await! They also state that “New linguistic insights into the ancient languages could clarify presently obscure words and idioms. [English] words may change their meaning.” This last sentence might be valid if considering a period of many decades. However, in just 33 years, this Committee openly declares that the March 2011 NIV reflects a 5% change in the text from the original 1978 NIV! The name on the new edition will show no evidence of a change (see image at left), and they state that they will work in helping churches and ministries make good use of their obsolete previous editions of the NIV. Their stated solution is to donate them to “people in need.” These Bibles must now be replaced with the new and improved! We can’t help but wonder if they have something in mind like giving obsolete computers or old rotary phones to Good Will. It appears that one must now turn to the copyright page to make sure he has the latest and greatest!

Even their stated goal of continually updating English words whose meaning has changed is suspect, as there is evidence of a CHANGE IN PHILOSOPHY, rather than a mere modernizing of language to aid comprehension. The Committee declares: “Like the NIV founders, the CBT is deeply conscious of the need that exists for a Bible that offers the whole church — from experienced Bible-handlers to interested newcomers and from older readers to younger ones — access to God’s unchanging Word in language that all can understand.” However, when the radical “gender-inclusive” changes were introduced a few years ago, it was obvious that

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WHAT ABOUT MODERN VERSIONS?

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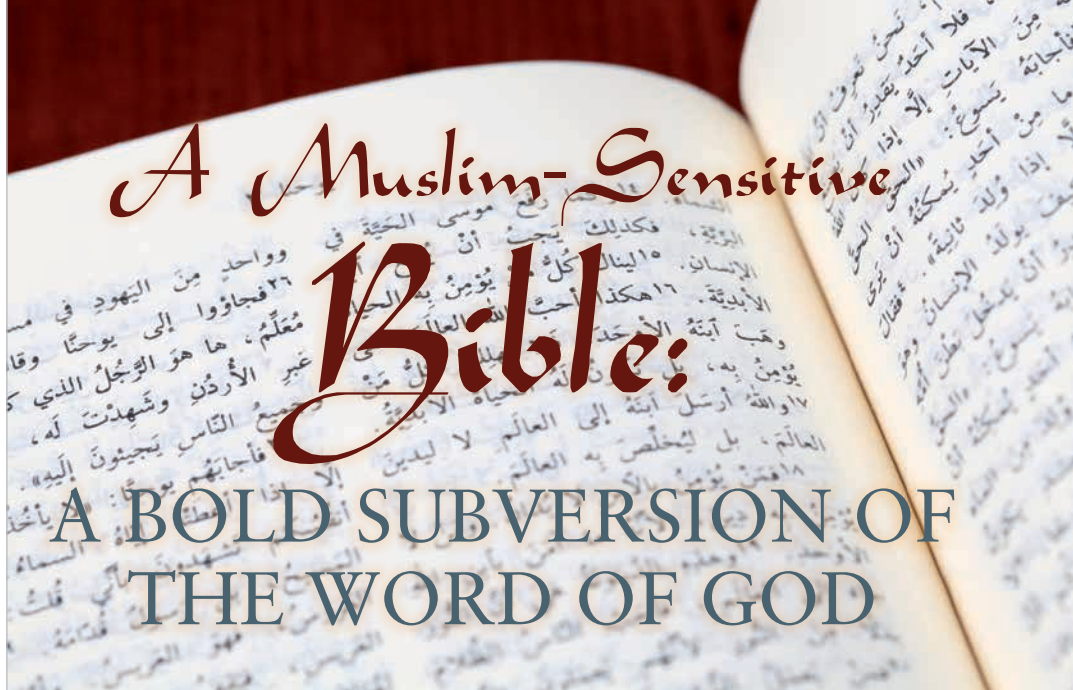
masculine Hebrew words were being purposely mistranslated to be “gender-inclusive” — an unwarranted and illicit practice — which clearly changed what the Scriptures in their original languages actually said. This was being done not to faithfully translate the words of Scripture, but to accommodate a change in societal views. The Committee states: “To the extent that gender inclusive language is an established part of contemporary English and that its use enhances comprehension for readers, it clearly was an important factor in decisions made by the translators.”

Furthermore, the NIV appears to be a continually evolving Bible. Its committee declares that “The CBT has a larger responsibility to the original NIV charter that requires them to monitor developments in biblical scholarship and changes in English usage and to reflect these changes in periodic updates to the text.” Therefore, it is not irresponsible to conclude that perhaps we have a “Word of God” which is still waiting on the unprecedented genius of “Biblical scholars” to let us know what God REALLY has to say to us!

Some “translators” even appear on the committees of different versions. Bill Mounce, New Testament chair of the English Standard Version writes: “I strongly believe in different translation philosophies, that there is not a ‘One Size Fits All.’” He also served on the new NIV committee, and enjoyed switching philosophies as he translated! He did express some concern about the gender-inclusive language, but stated: “Who knows where the NIV 2011 will go and how I will vote.”

In principle, we are not opposed to a new translation, or the replace-

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As Bible “translators” become ever bolder in replacing God’s Word and words with the thoughts of man, *Christianity Today*, February 2011, reports on new efforts to produce Muslim-sensitive Scriptures in Arabic and other languages used by Muslims. Of particular focus is the subversion of the text when referring to Christ as “the Son of God,” or even to believers as “God’s children.” Islam denies that God has a Son, and finds the concept offensive. In the Qur’an, Sura 112, it says “Say He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him.”

Muslims also deny the Trinity. Sura 5:73 says: “They do blaspheme who say: Allah is one of three in a Trinity: for there is no God except One God. If they desist not from their word (of blasphemy), verily, a grievous penalty will befall the blasphemers among them.”

Writer Collin Hansen reveals in this article that Rick Brown, associate area director of SIL-Eurasia, is in

favor of tampering with the translation of the Biblical text to neutralize and soft-pedal these concepts. Brown “wrote in the winter 2005 issue of the *International Journal of Frontier Missions* (IJFM) that ‘the terms “the Son” and “the Son of God” can be translated by terms like “the Christ” and “the Christ of God.”’ Or, as he suggested to me, a translation of the literal ‘Son of God’ might say, ‘the One who is like a Son to the living God,’ or ‘the Christ, the Beloved

One of the Living God.’ The literal translation could still appear in the notes, he added.” So here we see an INTENTIONAL mistranslation. Without shame, Brown says we should turn the fact that Christ IS the Son of God, into a simile: that He is LIKE a Son. There is a great and crucial difference between these two,

which goes to the very heart of the Gospel. We suppose we are to be grateful to Brown for allowing that what God ACTUALLY said “could” appear in a footnote!

Brown fails to acknowledge the seriousness of such tampering with the text of Scripture, but rather con-

“... a translation of the literal ‘Son of God’ might say, ‘the One who is like a Son to the living God,’ or ‘the Christ, the Beloved One of the Living God.’ The literal translation could still appear in the notes, he added.” So here we see an INTENTIONAL mistranslation.

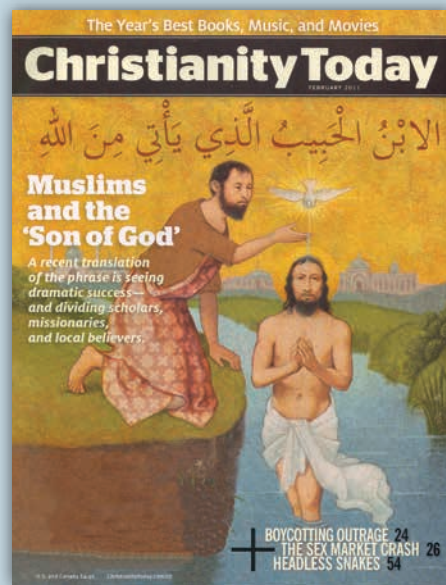
cludes: “Missionaries can live in a Muslim culture for decades, blaming Muslims for being ‘resistant’ to the gospel, when the problem actually lies with linguistic and cultural stumbling blocks.” We would respond that we are in favor of legitimate rules of translation and the proper use of linguistics, but any gospel which has to be manipulated to meet the approval of sinful man is a corrupt gospel. It is God who saves, not any clever “improvements” that we can make to God’s Word!

It should be remembered that SIL (formerly the Summer Institute of Linguistics) was founded by evangelical leader William Cameron Townsend in 1934. Townsend also founded the Wycliffe Bible Translators, which remains in association with SIL.

Hansen continues in describing the new translation techniques: “... translators may find a word for *son* in the native language that carries metaphorical connotations. (Translations that opt for a phrase other than the literal ‘Son of God’ commonly include it in the footnotes to preserve connection to the biblical authors’ word choice.) Or, they can nuance it with a more descriptive phrase, such as ‘spiritual Son of God’ or ‘beloved Son who comes from God.’ These phrases have been shown to clear up the biological misconceptions.” Here we are given a multiple choice menu of ways to subvert the Word of God! Christ being the Son of God is presented in the Scriptures as a fact, not a metaphor; and any man should be condemned who has the arrogance to think he can take God’s words and “nuance [them] with a more descriptive phrase.”

The *Christianity Today* article continues: “George Houssey is the founder-director of Horizons International, a missionary agency involved in preaching, teaching, and discipling Muslims.... Houssey grew up in the predominantly Muslim

city of Tripoli, Lebanon, and has worked in the Arabic, Farsi, Turkish, Kurdish, and Kabyl languages. Decades ago, Kenneth Taylor, translator of *The Living Bible* [this is a paraphrase, not a translation] and founder of Living Bibles International, commissioned Beirut-based Middle East Publications (MEP) to translate the Bible into several languages spoken by Muslims. MEP founder John Ferwerda tapped Houssey to lead the translation project and encouraged him to study in Kenya with missions legends Charles Kraft and Paul Hiebert. During this time, Kraft



was writing *Christianity in Culture*, which argued for dynamic equivalence in Bible translation. Ferwerda asked Houssey to contextualize his Arabic translation by using terms from the Qur’an. Houssey did not feel comfortable with this move, but he tested the strategy with a 32-page booklet called ‘The Greatest Event in Palestine,’ published in 1974. The booklet, which combined the birth narratives of Jesus from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, referred to Jesus as *Isa* and rendered ‘Son of God’ as *habib Allah* (‘beloved of God’).”

Notice the terms “contextualize” and “dynamic equivalence.” These are code words for replacing God’s words with man’s thoughts.

Hansen concludes his article: “Maybe that iceberg thaws when Christians respect and love Muslims enough to accommodate their misunderstanding about ‘Son of God’ by finding other ways to translate it. Or maybe this move goes further than the inspired text will allow. Thousands of new believers from a Muslim background may have genuinely encountered Jesus as Lord. And maybe some will need to unlearn some things now that they know him.” This is typical New Evangelical double speak. Instead of pointing out what is right and wrong, we are left with two equal choices.

In contrast, the Scriptures are clear and unambiguous. In Matthew 16:13-15, Christ asked His disciples: “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?” In verse 16, Simon Peter declares definitively: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”

In John 11, Jesus presents the Gospel message to Martha, and asks her if she believes it. Her answer: “I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.” Christ, as the Son of God, is crucial to the Gospel message.

The Gospels record that at Christ’s baptism, God in heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17). This same thing happened again on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:5). Peter verified this latter event in 2 Peter 1:17. Christ repeatedly declared that He was the Son of God and that God was His Father (e.g. John 10, John 14, John 17, Luke 23:34).

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John Calvin & Biblical Separation

BY MARK W. EVANS

From the beginning of the Bible to its closing chapter, the Lord reveals that He separates His people from the kingdom of darkness. When Ahab and Jezebel turned Israel's northern kingdom to Baal worship, God's prophet, after calling down fire from heaven, fled from Jezebel. Elijah escaped to Mt. Horeb and stood before God with these words: "I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." The Lord rebuked His servant: "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1 Kings 19:10,18). Even in the darkest hour, our sovereign Jehovah preserves a remnant, separated for His glory.

In the year 1526, John Calvin entered a Roman Catholic seminary in Paris. His teachers discerned his vast intellect and led him into the teachings of medieval scholasticism. Many great minds had wandered in this religious maze and remained ignorant of the truths of God's Word. Calvin's instructors believed their student would find satisfaction in following the same path.

The young scholar, although frail in body, gave himself to arduous study and strict observance of Rome's religion. At the same time, Paris was alive with news of the Reformation and its Scriptural doctrines. Calvin had a frequent visitor, a cousin named Pierre Robert Olivetan, who had embraced Chris-

tianity as taught in the Scriptures. Many discussions with his relative brought Calvin to discern serious weaknesses in the claims of Rome. While he struggled with this dilemma, his soul became clouded with doubts concerning his own standing before the living God. Guilt and distress led him to search the Scriptures. There he found the way of life through faith alone in Jesus Christ.

Although Calvin learned of the Savior, he still held to the hope that the Roman "Church," although riddled with defects, was the true Church. The "Church's" apostolic pretensions of authority, her ancient history, her hierarchy of clergy headed by the pope, seemed to validate her legitimacy. He informed some who had embraced the Reformation,

"There is one thing which prevents my believing you: that is, the respect due to the Church. The majesty of the Church must not be diminished. ... I cannot separate from it."¹

His friends urged him to consider the dogmas and practices of the Roman edifice in the light of the Bible. Calvin studied the sacred Scriptures and discovered that the unity of Christ's Church was not in an external structure, but was in the truth. He learned "that the true order of the Church has been lost; that the keys which should preserve discipline have been counterfeited; that Christian liberty has been overthrown; and that when the principdom of the pope was set up, the kingdom of Christ was thrown down."² D'Aubigne observed, "Thus fell the papacy in the mind of the future reformer; and Christ became to him the only king and almighty head of the Church."³ J.A. Wylie wrote that Calvin learned that "high sounding titles and lofty assumptions could give neither unity nor authority; these could come from the truth alone; and so he abandoned 'the Church' that he might enter the Church — the Church of the Bible."⁴

Years later, in 1539, after Calvin was banished from Geneva for refusing communion to immoral citizens, a Roman Catholic cardinal sent a letter to the city, thinking that he could induce the citizens to return to Rome. In the letter, Cardinal Jacques Sandolet called upon Calvin to answer the charge of "schism" before the Judgment Seat. In defense of the Gospel, and in spite of the rude treatment he had received, Calvin refuted the letter. He answered the charge of "schism" as though he stood before the Judge of all the earth. He told the Lord, "With regard now to the accusation which I have been compelled to hear so frequently, that I am an apostate from the church, my conscience accuses me not, unless he ought to be called a traitor who, when he sees

the soldiers in a battle leave their ranks and take to flight, seizes the standard, and raising it on high calls them back to the fight. Thy people, O Lord, at that time were all dispersed: I raised not a strange standard, but Thine own ensign.... But to continue in peace with those who pretend to be the rulers of the church and the pillars of the faith, I must have purchased it at the expense of denying Thy truth. All danger, however, would have been preferable to incurring the guilt of yielding to such a condition; for Christ has told us, 'Though heaven and earth pass away, yet shall not My Word pass away.' I did not therefore consider that I was apostatizing from Thy Church, because I contended against these oppressors; for Thou didst warn us by Thy Son, that leaders of the church would arise with whom we must not be of one mind. It was not said of strangers, but of the pastors themselves, that they would be ravening wolves, of whom we must beware. How then could I give the hand of fellowship to such?"⁵

In time, the leaders and citizens of Geneva realized their grave mistake in rejecting the Reformer and prevailed upon him to return. Geneva reaped the blessing of Reformation, but beneath the surface, rebellion against God's Word increased. A faction, called the Libertines, believed they had freedom to indulge in licentious practices. Some adopted heresy. One of their leaders, Philip Berthelier, was excommunicated for gross immorality. For a year and a half, he submitted to the ruling; but, when Michael Servetus arrived in the city, with his rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity, the Libertines rallied and increased in influence. They succeeded in removing the pastors from the political councils, enabling their faction to dominate the leadership of the city. Berthelier used the opportunity to demand a reversal of the Church's sentence against him.

Calvin addressed the city's leaders, reminding them of their laws and warning them of the consequences of negating the discipline of Christ's Church. The Council granted Berthelier's demand. The Libertine leader was free to return to the communion of the Church. What would Calvin do? If he refused communion to Berthelier, he would defy the authority of the Council. If he received Berthelier, he would deny the authority of God's Word and the Head of the Church. The Reformation seemed in jeopardy of collapsing.

When the communion day arrived, Libertines and true believers crowded the church. Calvin conducted the service in his usual man-

Today we are reaping the consequences of the professing Church's accommodation to the world and toleration of false doctrine. The testimony of the Reformation must not be forgotten.

ner. However, he concluded his sermon with these words: "As we are now about to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, if any one who has been debarred by the Consistory shall approach this table, though it should cost my life, I will show myself such as I ought to be."⁶

When Calvin approached the table and prayed the Lord's blessing upon the bread and the cup, the Libertines, with their hands upon their swords, moved toward the table. Calvin covered the elements with his hands, and said, "These hands you may crush; these arms you may lop off; my life you may take; my blood is yours, you may shed it; but you shall never force me to give holy things to the profane,

and dishonor the table of my God."⁷ The words stunned the Libertines. The congregation opened a passage, and they departed.

J.A. Wylie said, "The act of Calvin in the Cathedral of St. Peter's, in 1553, stands side by side, its equal in spiritual sublimity and heroism, with the act of Luther's in the Hall of Worms, in 1521. 'I cannot,' said Luther. 'I will not,' said Calvin. The one repelled the tyrant, the other flung back the mob; the one stunned the haughtiness of power, the other bridled the raging fury of ungodliness; in both the danger was equal, in both the faith and fortitude were equal, and each saved the Reformation at a great crisis."⁸

As a young man, Calvin came face to face with the Scriptural teachings that shattered his prejudices concerning Rome and brought him to rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ. Only the power of the Holy Spirit could open the eyes and steel the heart of a frail, young scholar in such a way that led to unwavering separation unto Christ. Later, having filled his soul with the truths of God's Word, the Lord led him to enter the city of Geneva and face opposition that was within the professing church. He refused to compromise either doctrine or practice. His separation moved Geneva to cast him out of the gates of the city. Although rejected by Geneva, he defended the city from the flatteries of Rome and her attempt to convert the city. God brought him again into the city. Satan continued his war against the truth, using God's enemies to attack the steadfast Reformer. Wickedness seemed to prevail. God's servant refused to compromise. Rather than give the holy to the profane, he covered the communion elements with his hands and awaited death. The Lord delivered him and saved the stronghold of the Reformation. Today we are reaping the

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JOHN CALVIN AND BIBLICAL SEPARATION

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consequences of the professing Church's accommodation to the world and toleration of false doctrine. The testimony of the Reformation must not be forgotten. Our Savior is the same yesterday, today, and forever. His command requires obedience: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Corinthians 6:17). •

¹Merle D'Aubigne, J.H. (1880). *History of the Reformation in Europe*, vol. I. New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1880, p.396.

²*Ibid.*, p. 397.

³*Ibid.*

⁴Wylie, J.A., *The History of Protestantism*, vol. II. London: Cassell and Company, n.d., p. 154.

⁵Stebbing, Henry (1853). *The Life and Times of John Calvin*, vol. I. New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1853, pp. 152,153.

⁶Wylie, p. 327.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 328.



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be those who would not receive their message. But, the Lord Jesus lets them know that that is not going to go unnoticed by the Lord.

It is hard for us to step back in time and consider all the great changes which were taking place — as far as God's revelation that there was going to be a time when the worship would not be focused in Je-

rusalem, that the Gospel was going to go to all the world, and Israel was going to be set aside for a time. All these things were beginning with the ministry of Christ.

Then you have in this context in Mark 6 the account of the beheading of John the Baptist. It is as if the Lord Jesus is preparing His disciples, the Apostles, for a difficult ministry, just as John the Baptist had a difficult ministry. What made their ministry difficult was that they were commissioned to preach that men should repent of their sins—whether there was the sin of adultery, as there was here with Herod, or whatever. What does repentance involve? It involves turning away from sin. And He tells them that there would be those who would not receive their message.

Substantively, there was no difference between the message of John the Baptist, the message of the Lord Jesus and the message of the Apostles. When they preached repentance, we know that they got a lot of flack. When the Apostle Paul summarized his ministry in the Book of Acts, speaking to the Ephesian elders, he reminds them that he "preached repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21). He then tells them, undoubtedly out of experience: "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things..." (Acts 20:30). I want you to think about that as we read Mark 6:7-31.

Christ told His disciples to preach that men need to repent, to turn from their wicked ways. Go to the Ten Commandments. Which one do you want to go to — "Thou shalt not commit adultery"; "Thou shalt not steal"; "Thou shalt not bear false witness"? Go through them all. The Apostles must have preached on the Ten Commandments concerning sin, because that's how we know what sin is. If we don't know the commandments of God, we don't know what sin is.

Look at Mark 6:11: "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city."

Several months ago one of the history channels had a documentary on whether Sodom and Gomorrah had been found. Basically they said that they found two cities in the same region described in the Book of Genesis. They found that they had been destroyed. They found evidence of sulphur (brimstone). Yet, the producers of this show were not willing to say that this was indeed Sodom and Gomorrah. Men, with their unbelief, many times do not want to admit God's judgment. They just don't want to do it.

Did Jesus believe that Sodom and Gomorrah were real places? You had better believe it!

What was the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah? Was it that they were not hospitable enough? No! Look at Jude 7. If you know anything about Jude, it is a book of judgment. It says: "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." That's breaking the Seventh Commandment. What happened to Sodom and Gomorrah? They were destroyed because of sin.

In this context, all of a sudden we hear about John the Baptist. Look at verse 12: "And they went out, and preached that men should repent." We know that this was the message of John the Baptist. If you go to the Book of Matthew, chapter 3, you read about the ministry of John the Baptist. He went about preaching that men ought to repent. He told everyone, including the Saducees and Pharisees, to repent and to turn from their wickedness.

In verse 14, it says: “And king Herod heard of him [John the Baptist].” Did that just come out of the blue? As Mark is the penman of the Holy Spirit, he’s writing with intent. Again, I believe the immediate intent is that Jesus is preparing His disciples for a difficult ministry. We can’t prove it, but it’s quite plausible that all of the Apostles suffered martyrdom, except for the Apostle John, as he was exiled on the Isle of Patmos.

Brethren, I fear for our country! What is happening to our country that our Congress is going ahead and saying in effect: “Homosexuality can now be condoned in the military, and it’s OK with us”? What’s going to happen when some Bible believing chaplain teaches that men ought to repent of that sin? Of course, he could keep his mouth shut; he could avoid passages of Scripture which deal with that.

Look at Herod. He was the King. Did that mean that he could get away with sin? Did that mean that he could break the seventh commandment and marry his brother’s wife? John the Baptist said, “Herod, You have sinned against God!” John the Baptist could have kept himself out of a lot of trouble, couldn’t he? That’s going to be what happens in the military with our Bible believing chaplains. You watch what I tell you. These Bible believing chaplains are going to be told, “You don’t preach against homosexuality anymore.” These homosexuals can openly practice their immorality in the military, and you can’t do a thing about it. And, if you preach against it, you are going to be accused of a hate crime, and you’re going to be discharged from the military if you don’t stop it.

You can just keep your mouth shut and avoid trouble. John the Baptist didn’t do that. That’s what unbelief wants to be done. “Don’t point out my sins! I don’t want to hear that I’m a sinner! Don’t tell me I’m wrong! Don’t tell me I can’t do this.”

In reading of John the Baptist in the Gospels, you don’t get the idea that he was fearful of what others thought of him. He knew what he was called to preach, and he preached it. He wasn’t arrogant, but he preached against the sin of Herod. It made Herod’s wife so angry that she wanted John the Baptist to be killed.

You get unbelievers all stirred up, and they’ll want to destroy you. Why? Because you believe in something called sin, and that sin is against

As John the Baptist preached that men ought to repent, as Christ and His disciples preached that men ought to repent and believe the Gospel, I tell those of you listening to me today that if YOU do not repent and believe the Gospel, you are going to suffer the fire and suffering of hell forever. Do you know Christ?

God. John the Baptist believed in sin, and he believed that Herod had committed it. Jesus knows that His disciples are going to go into great conflict. Oh, there are going to be joys along the way. There are going to be blessed conversions. There are going to be many people who come to faith in Jesus Christ, and rejoice in Christ as Saviour. But there are going to be some like Herod, who have the power to have them killed because they preached that men ought to repent.

In America, we’ve gone from being a Christian nation, to one which was neutral concerning Christianity, to where we are now — an anti-Christian era in the public discourse of the United States. And there is no room for preaching like John the Baptist preached. It ought to make us cry that the Congress of the Unit-

ed States says that homosexuality will be protected by the military of the United States. It is an abomination. I don’t care what your friends say, I don’t care what your neighbors say, the Bible says it is an abomination. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah over this very behavior.

We have become so desensitized towards sin that we’re more likely not to be like John the Baptist, but to be like Herod. That’s how our nation has become. We are living in wicked times.

In verse 18, John says unto Herod: “It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife.” You can just hear Herod say: “John the Baptist, what gave you the right to say that?” But woe unto the preacher who will not call men to repent and believe the gospel. You see unbelief’s hatred for righteousness.

Look at verse 19: “Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not.” Unbelief hates righteousness — it always has and always will. Herodias might not have had the power to have John the Baptist killed, but Herod surely did. Herodias’ daughter came in and danced. I don’t know what kind of dance she danced, but it had such a seducing effect upon Herod that he would have done anything “unto the half of my kingdom” (verse 23). Because of his pride, and because of what he had said, he wasn’t going to back down. “If you want John the Baptist’s head on a charger, there you go.” Unbelief hates righteousness.

As we keep sliding more and more into moral decay as a nation, unbelief is going to hate righteousness more and more. Brethren, it is going to cost us something to be a Christian. God has His way of weeding out false disciples any time there is persecution and hardship.

This man Herod was a troubled soul. He was superstitious, he had a

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The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22,23

Temperance

by Brad K. Gsell



In Galatians 5, the Apostle Paul describes for us the fruit which is to be found in the life of every Christian. This is the tenth in a series of articles which will discuss these characteristics of the Christian life.

The last in the list of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 is perhaps one of the most difficult for many believers. It is one which on a secular level is often lauded by the world because of the acknowledged long-term physical benefits of avoiding certain excesses.

Columnist George Will recently summed up very well the situation facing those of us living in affluent lands (*Charlotte Observer*, 1/6/11). He discusses a recently-published book by Daniel Akst, entitled *We Have Met the Enemy: Self-Control in an Age of Excess*. Akst says that the problems of freedom and affluence — of ‘managing desire in a landscape rich with temptation’ — are desirable problems. But they *are* problems....”

Elsewhere he states: “American life resembles ‘a giant all-you-can-eat buffet’ offering ... invitations to excess. Americans accept these invitations so promiscuously that bad decisions about smoking, eating, drinking and other behaviors account for almost half of U.S. deaths in ‘our losing war with ourselves.’

“Life in general has become what alcohol is — disinhibiting. First America was transformed from a nation of want into one of wants. Then

the 1960s repudiated restraint, equating it with repression. Next, inflation in the 1970s discouraged delay of gratification.

“Environmental stimuli and our genetic inheritances circumscribe self-control, but Akst insists that we are not merely fleshy robots responding to them. Skepticism about free will has, however, become convenient

*“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.”
(1 Corinthians 9:24-25)*

and soothing, because exculpatory behaviors once considered signs of bad character have been drained of moral taint by being medicalized as ‘addictions....”

Earlier, Will writes rhetorically: “Do not blame yourself — heaven forbid. Enlist modern sophistication and blame your brain’s frontal cor-

tex, affluence, the Internet (the ‘collapse of delay between impulse and action’) and ‘the democratization of temptation.’”

Temperance is a virtue taught all throughout the Scriptures. Titus 1:8 and 2:2 tell us that it is one of the marks of a church elder. Peter writes that we should add “to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness” (2 Peter 1:6).

Dr. James Fields, pastor of Cedar View Independent Methodist Church in Kingsport, Tennessee, made the point recently that these are not nine separate, isolated “fruits” in Galatians 5:22,23, but are rather manifestations of the one “fruit of the Spirit.” The man who is devoid of the other eight manifestations, will certainly not be a temperate man, for godly temperance is required in all of them.

Matthew Poole comments: “Temperance: a sober use of meats, drinks, apparel, or any thing wherein our senses are delighted.” In a similar vein, Matthew Henry wrote: “temperance, in meat and drink, and other enjoyments of life, so as not to be excessive and immoderate in the use of them.” The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines temperance as “habitual moderation in the indulgence of the appetites or passions.”

However, temperance is not just some strange “virtue” with its only purpose being to limit our fun and enjoyment in life. True godly temperance promotes our relationship and

duties to God, our families, our Christian brothers, our society, and our own well-being. It is a restraint on our sinful impulses to provide for that which is infinitely more important and good.

I remember as a child winning the bronze medal for reciting Joshua 1:1-9 from memory before a local chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. This organization was started in 1874 to oppose the destructive effect of alcohol on the nation and the home. They borrowed their definition of temperance from Greek philosopher Xenophon: "Moderation in all things healthful; total abstinence from all things harmful." The Bible Presbyterian Church has been known throughout its history for taking a similar stand. Many have criticized it for its Biblical position against the use of alcohol, tobacco, and worldly amusements which are harmful not only to the physical, but also to the spiritual life of every man.

God gives us good things as a blessing, but sinful man is bent on taking these blessings and abusing them in illicit ways. Gluttony, drunkenness, adultery, are all excesses and abuses of things which God made for our benefit. We all need food to sustain us, but its abuse often brings disease and an early demise. We all need to spend money to provide for our needs, but deriving pleasure from an irresponsible shopping spree may cause one to be unable to buy necessary food and clothing later.

No matter what gives us pleasure — travel, sports, music, gardening, antique cars — these must all be regulated with temperance so as not to interfere with what God expects of us. In the Spring 2010 issue of *Redeeming the Time*, we quoted Bishop J.C. Ryle concerning such lawful recreations. He compared them to "healthful medicine in small quantities,—downright poison when swallowed down in huge doses."

In another vein, someone who does not allow passions and feelings to cause them to go to excess in the formulation of their views and the stand that they take on various issues is often described as "temperate." It is easy for any of us when facing a controversy to have strong feelings within ourselves. This certainly is not wrong in itself, but we must make sure that we rely on the Spirit of God to give us reason, fairness and justice in our thinking and actions, and that carnal impulses do not take control.

However, some Christians seem to have the idea that not taking a stand when they should is an expression of moderation and temperance. This is not the temperance spoken of in the Bible. The secular media often refers to liberals in church bodies (such as the Southern Baptist Convention) as "moderates." Their positions are not moderate or temperate,

but merely against the Word of God. For the Bible believer not to stand boldly for what God teaches in His Word is not temperance — but rather disobedience and compromise. Being a "centrist," as one surveys the prevailing winds, is no virtue unless the position taken is Biblical.

As we "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14), Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 9:25 that "every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." If our heart is set on heaven, even lawful enjoyments will not consume us and be the desire of our hearts. They will not become idols, or take us away from serving the Lord. Then, true happiness and pleasure will be enjoyed as we find our delight in the Lord. •

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guilty conscience, he thought that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead. He had respect for John, he knew he was a just and holy man, and he observed him; but when it really came down to it, he was nothing but a filthy old man. That's all he was.

Verses 26-29: "And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother." Sin hates righteousness. The unrepentent sinner hates any talk of righteousness. Sin is still sin, and we must stand against it. We must preach against it, and we must be willing to pay a price and not give in to the sin of this

world and of our nation. Brethren, pray for our country.

Notice that even many of those who don't want to allow homosexuality to be practiced openly in the military will never discuss it from a moral basis whatsoever. Woe be unto us as a nation, for we will no longer say, "Thus saith the Lord." The Bible says that "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalm 9:17). If you think that things are going to get better in our country the way sin is going these days, you've forgotten what this Book says!

As we get more wicked as a nation, don't forget that God destroyed Jerusalem because of sin. In AD 70, the Romans came in and just tore it apart. Why? Because they rejected Christ. They would not repent and believe the Gospel. The immediate intent I believe is that Jesus wanted to prepare His disciples. They would have a blessed ministry, but they would have a difficult ministry.

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WHAT ABOUT MODERN VERSIONS?

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ment of archaic English words with ones in contemporary usage. However, we have not seen much to make us want to switch from the tried and true King James Version. Bible Presbyterian pastor Clyde Field, quoted earlier, wrote that despite "...multitudes of perfect-answer versions (all of them duly approved, lauded, bought, revised, expanded, etc.), and millions of dollars squandered, most of these modern efforts have been weighed in the balances and found wanting."

God Has Preserved His Word

What we do know is that God has preserved His Word. Psalm 12:6,7, states: "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." The Westminster Confession of Faith 1:8 states the firm belief of believers for thousands of years: "The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old) and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical, so as in all controversies of religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them."

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

Christ Himself said that "the Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35) and "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).

We believe far too much emphasis is placed today on finding "the Bible

that is right for me." In our man-centered culture, we look for what pleases us. If men would spend half as much time in meditating upon and learning God's Word as they do in looking for translations which are constantly being updated like a new style of clothing, we believe we would see a spiritual revival in our country.

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. 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: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Peter 1:23-25). •

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What is the application to us. I'll tell you, things have not changed one bit. Technology may have changed. We may have telephones and modern transportation, but the heart of man is just as wicked today as it was in the days of John the Baptist.

And as John the Baptist preached that men ought to repent, as Christ and His disciples preached that men ought to repent and believe the Gospel, I tell those of you listening to me today that if YOU don't repent and believe the Gospel, you are going to suffer the fire and suffering of hell forever. Do you know Christ? Do you love righteousness? Have you come to the place where you can say, "I hate sin — even in my own heart." That's how you know if you have really repented and believed the gospel. •



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A MUSLIM-SENSITIVE BIBLE

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Many were so offended at this claim by Christ, that they took up stones to harm Him (John 10). In fact this was the very doctrine which led to His crucifixion. Mark 14 and Luke 22 report that the elders of the people and chief priests and scribes asked Him point blank: "Art thou then the Son of God?" Christ replied simply and clearly: "I am." Their reaction: "What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth." They declared His answer to be "blasphemy," and "they all condemned him to be guilty of death."

When the people cried "Crucify him, crucify him," Pilate declared that he found no fault in Christ. But, the Jews responded that they wanted Him to be killed "because he made himself the Son of God."

Christ and the writers of Scripture knew nothing of this modern day philosophy of changing the Gospel to make it non-offensive. They would not betray the truth.

Let us be thankful that John 3:16 states: "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," and not "...that he gave 'One who is like a Son,'" as these modern-day subverters of God's Word might change it to say.

We do not need a Muslim-sensitive Bible — or for that matter a Communist-sensitive Bible, an atheist-sensitive Bible, or any other special interest perversion of the precious Word of God. Peter tells us that the Biblical Gospel will be a "stone of stumbling and a rock of offense" to many. However, it is the blessed message of redemption and salvation to all who believe! Let us continue to preach it boldly — unaltered and undiluted! •