

REMINDER

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Textual Criticism Fact and Fiction

A fresh look at Bible Inspiration Preservation And Translation

by Dr. Thomas Cassidy, Pastor - First Baptist Church of Spring Valley, California

(continued from last week)

Most recently, Dr. Larry Pettegrew, Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology, wrote a paper entitled “*The King James Only Religion*”, in which he states that those who hold the King James Only position are in fact (1) not fundamentalists, (2) doctrinally deviant, (3) of a “*new view that was not held by the prominent Bible teachers, pastors, and leaders of early historic fundamentalism*” (in spite of the fact that the founder of the very seminary that now supports him believed these men pre-dated him!). He goes on (and on and on) to say “*...there are some poor translations in the King James Version.*”

He then gives an “example” of one of these “poor translations” -

“When the Anglicans translated the Greek word, 'baptizo,' for example, they were afraid to translate it as 'immerse.' So they simply transliterated it as 'baptize.' Most Bible-believing Baptists would consider that a mistake.”

It never ceases to amaze me that so-called scholars, who obviously consider themselves to be well educated, can spout such nonsense. Any person who knows how to read can look up the word “baptize” in the Oxford English Dictionary (any good college library will have one) and see that the word “baptize” did not enter the English language in 1611 via a transliteration of the Greek word “baptizo”, but rather, had been in common usage in England for over five hundred years, having come into the English language via the French “baptiste”, at the time of the Norman invasion under William the Conqueror in 1066 AD! A look at the word “immerse” in that same dictionary will reveal that at the time the King James translators were working, the word immerse did not mean the same as it does now - to submerge in - but at that time, it meant “*to fill and co-mingle with*”, as a sponge soaks up water. No intelligent person would suggest today such a meaning for baptism, yet these so-called scholars are constantly assaulting our ears and intellects with such nonsense! If a student of mine handed in a paper full of such errors in simple research I would give him an “F”, and make him start over. Too bad Central doesn't have such a standard for its faculty.

Now - I want every reader to understand, that none of the comments to follow constitutes an attack on any man, or upon his work. I have no axes to grind, nor am I mad at anyone. These are observations of facts as I see them and are not meant to be a denunciation of any one man or his work, and I hope and pray that those reading these words, if they seem to apply, will take them in the spirit of love in which they are offered.

The truth ought never offend any child of God. If these words are not truth, then they do not apply to you, and they ought not offend. If they are true, and you do feel offended, perhaps a careful examination of your position and ministry might be in order. I know how difficult it is to bring about change in the lives of Christians. When I took my present pastorate, the church had only been separated from the American Baptist Convention for about five years, and continued to practice much of the American Baptist methods of government, worship, and work. When I attempted to initiate change, the charge was made that I was repudiating all that had been done before. If what was being done required change, then they must have been doing it wrong all those years. The church had been started by the late husbands of many of our widows, and by the parents of many of our middle-aged members, and they felt that if we changed our practices we would dishonor the memories of their dear departed loved ones. My intent, of course, was not to dishonor any person, but to honor God. It took a long time for many of our people to understand this, and forgive me for changing the long held practices of their church. We must remember, if we can see farther than our forebears, it is because we have the advantage of standing upon that which they have built, giving us a higher vantage point so that we can see beyond their horizons.

(continued inside)

There are several positions on biblical inerrancy and preservation that have been taken over the centuries. They may be represented as follows, and are the works of our spiritual forbears upon which we have built.

I. Position Number 1 - is held by those who separated from the old Northern Baptist Convention over the doctrine of inerrancy and the encroachment of liberalism, starting in about 1920. These separatists today usually hold to a view of inerrancy that accepts the views of the orthodox writers of the last century such as Augustus Strong, and writers from the first half of this century such as Henry Thiessen and others. These men, and the churches and schools they control, usually accept and use the critical Greek text, and later (1937) BHK (Biblia Hebraica Kittel) Hebrew text in their classrooms. Their schools are often organized apart from the local church, usually owned and governed by a "state association," or a "state fellowship," or they are governed by a "board" of pastors and businessmen. Their financial base is often the high tuition fees that they charge.

Their churches generally take a good stand on baptism, eternal security, dispensational premillennialism, and have good music standards, but they sometimes have a slight tendency towards formalism in their services. They often use the old Northern Baptist form of government by committee, have a "board" of deacons acting as an executive committee, often also having a "board of trustees" to oversee the "business" matters of the church, and to act as an advisory committee to advise the Pastor and others in areas both spiritual and temporal. These churches generally have "business" meetings fairly often, such meetings sometimes chaired by a "moderator" instead of the pastor. These churches are often less inclined to emphasize areas of personal holiness such as dress standards and modesty, sometimes characterizing those who do as "legalists."

II. Position Number 2 - is held by those who separated from the conservative Protestant churches over the doctrine of inerrancy at about the same time, but have retained at least some of the characteristics of their former denominations.

These characteristics may include, but are not limited to: a tendency toward formalism expressed in the wearing of "clerical" garb such as robes, etc. in the pulpit; an unbiblical or unstated position on baptism; an unbiblical or unstated position on eternal security; an unbiblical or unstated position on eschatology manifesting itself lately in a definite swing towards the covenant position, holding to a mid/post/ or prewrath rapture position.

Much more alarming, many are now denying the necessity of the blood of Christ for salvation, saying the blood is merely the symbol of His death. There is a large segment of this group who are now dividing the Biblical role of pastor into "ruling elders" and "teaching elders." These men also often hold an unbiblical or unstated position on the primacy of the local church; an adherence to the somewhat liberal position of their former denominations in the area of inspiration and preservation of the Scriptures, using the critical Greek text, and later (1937) BHK

Hebrew text in their classrooms.

These separatist Protestants often have an incomplete understanding of Biblical standards and personal separation, while practicing what they call "secondary separation" which they often interpret to mean anyone who is not part of their group, fellowship, school, or organization (don't misunderstand what I am saying - I believe in separation, both from the lost and from the unruly saved. However, I don't believe any separation is "secondary", all separation is "primary", meaning it is a requirement for obedience, consecration, and holiness). Their schools are seldom, if ever, organized under the authority of a local church, and they often hold "church" services in the school auditorium, said "churches" not being congregationally governed, and if this "convenience church" has a "pastor", he is either the school leader, or works for the school leader, thus denying, in practice, the primacy and autonomy of the local church.

These schools are generally organized as "para-church" organizations, a term borrowed from the New Evangelicals, and without Biblical support. These schools and organizations are usually run by one man, but are sometimes governed by a "board" made up of pastors, politicians, and business men. Their financial base comes from the high tuition fees they charge, or occasionally from income associated with other aspects of their "ministry", rather than from the tithes and offerings of God's people given through their local church.

III. Position Number 3 - is held by those who separated from the Southern Baptist Convention, beginning in the mid 1940's, over standards, convictions, separation, etc., before the doctrine of inspiration was called into question in the Convention. These men and their churches are generally characterized by strong stands on baptism, eternal security, the local church, pastoral leadership, and an inspired, infallible, inerrant, preserved scripture. About half of the schools controlled by these men are under the authority of their local churches and are sometimes, but not always tuition free. These schools generally use the traditional Masoretic Hebrew text (BHK 1906 - 1912), and the Received Greek text in their classrooms, never having fallen under the influence of the modernistic German rationalists of the last century. These men and their churches generally have a strong position on personal separation, expressed as good standards in the areas of music and dress. *[Pastor's Note: Though fewer in number than they were at one time, there are also those who stayed in the SBC who hold to the same position as do the ones he refers to as "Position #3. They are hold-outs who have not felt God's call to leave the SBC, but, rather, to stay true to the Faith in the midst of the continuing leftward drift the SBC is taking, especially with regard to music, modesty, and the separated life. Your Pastor is one of these.]*

IV. Position Number 4 - is held by those who are unaffiliated with any of the conventions, associations, fellowships, and never have been! This group tends toward the historic "Landmark" position, believing in the local church only, Baptist perpetuity, and a faithful Bride identified as the church of the New

Testament, and educates their preachers in local church-centered Bible schools.

Because of the above differences in background and training, it is no great wonder that there exists a tremendous diversity of opinion among those calling themselves fundamentalists. It is with this great diversity in mind that I endeavored to put on paper a concise, well reasoned statement of the controversial subject of Bible inspiration, preservation, and translation.

Section One - Inspiration



Inspiration is defined as that work of the Holy Spirit of God upon the minds, souls, and bodies of the Scripture writers which makes their writings the record of a progressive divine revelation. When God determined to give to His creation the Self-revelation that we today call the Bible, He selected the Prophets of the Old Testament, and the Apostles of the New Testament, and through the agency of His indwelling Holy Spirit, He so overcame the sin nature of these men that the words which He selected from the reservoir of the culture, education, experience, and personality of the man were His chosen words, and no others.

This process of inspiration was two fold: **Verbal** - , the very words that God selected were the very words that best revealed the mind and will of God to His creation. Thus, every word so inspired was in fact, the Word of God. **Plenary** - the collection of words that we call the Bible is, in its whole, the complete Word of God, without error or contradiction. The entire Bible, regardless of subject matter, is the infallible, unailing, Revelation of God.

Now let's look at some of the various theories of inspiration that have been common in historic Christendom -

The **Intuition** or **Natural Theory** is held by the typical Modernist today, who believes that inspiration is merely a higher development of that natural insight into truth which all men possess to some degree. **In other words, to them, the Bible is merely a book by men with highly religious motivation, and is similar to a book about science written by men with highly scientific motivation.** This theory, holding as it does that natural insight is the only source of religious truth, involves a serious self-contradiction; if the theory is true, then one man is inspired to utter that which another man is inspired to condemn. The Koran and the Bible cannot **both** be inspired Truth, as they contradict each other. This theory reduces moral and religious truth to the subjective - a matter of private opinion - having no objective reality apart from the opinions of men.

The **Illumination** or **Mystical Theory** regards inspiration as merely an intensifying and elevating of the religious perceptions of the believer, the same in kind, though greater in degree, as the illumination of every believer by the Holy Spirit. This position holds that the Bible is not **the** Word of God, but only **contains** the Word of God, and that not the writings, but only the **writers** were

inspired. Of course, we must admit that there is an illumination of the mind of the believer by the Holy Spirit as we look into the Word of God, but this illumination only allows us to understand that which has already been written, and cannot impart new truth.

The **Dictation** or **Mechanical Theory** holds that inspiration consisted in such a possession of the minds and bodies of the Scripture writers by the Holy Spirit, that they became *passive instruments*, not participating in any way in the process of inspiration. This theory fails to explain the medical terms used by Luke, the military and sporting terms used by Paul, and the distinct differences between the books written by the various Old and New Testament writers. Of course, we must grant that there are instances when God's communications to mankind were in an audible voice, and took the form of spoken words, and that sometimes God commanded men to commit these words to writing for the edification of all men. However, the Dictation Theory would force this occasional event upon all of Scripture, quite apart from the evidence to the contrary.

The **Dynamic** or **Conceptual Theory** states that inspiration is not simply a natural, but also a **supernatural** fact, and that it is the immediate work of a personal God in the soul of man. This theory holds that the Scriptures contain a human as well as a divine element, so that while they present a body of Divinely revealed truth, this truth is shaped in human molds and adapted to ordinary human intelligence, and is thus **conceptual** (the idea, or thought, or concept is inspired) rather than **verbal** (the very words are inspired) in its view of inspiration. This is the view held, unfortunately, by many fundamentalists today, and is the basis for the proliferation of the many English language translations of the Scriptures now on the market, each one trying to put into different words the inspired thought, or idea, or concept of the original, while glossing over or even ignoring the words inspired by God.

The **Verbal and Formal Inspiration** position believes that, first of all, the Holy Spirit worked in the Prophets of the Old Testament and the Apostles of the New Testament in such a way that the very words of God were selected from the vocabulary of the man, taking into account his culture, education, and experience, and that not only the very words, but also the forms of the words, such as noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, singular, plural, etc., were written at the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

This view is the only one that can give us a completely inspired, inerrant, infallible, preserved Bible, as well as account for such statements as Paul saying that the very form of a word was inspired by God for a specific purpose as in Galatians 3:16, and Christ saying in Matthew 5:18 - that not only was **each word** inspired, **but every letter of every word was inspired.** The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the perfect mirror of the Lord Jesus Christ, which reflects Him and leads us to Him. Authority resides in the Scriptures just as it does in Him. Just as all authority is given to Christ (Matthew 28:18), the living Word, all authority is bound up in the Scriptures, the reflection of Him, the written Word of God.

- more next week

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Caryn Quinnelly
 Cradle Roll 2: Derek Quinnelly
 6:30 p.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Rebekah White
 Cradle Roll 2: Nathaniel White
 Wed. Evening Service ---- Cradle Roll 1: Shirley White
 Cradle Roll 2: LeAnna White

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of March 27, 2011

Sunday School ----- 19
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 35
 Sunday Evening Service ----- 33
 Wed. Evening, 03/30/11 Service ----- 23

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of March 27, 2010

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 1,390.00
 Insurance Fund ----- \$ 36.00
Total Received for Week of 03/27/11: \$ 1,426.00

**Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed
 to operate the church EACH WEEK,
 as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00**

INSURANCE FUND REPORT FOR THIS MONTH:

Monthly Requirement ----- \$ 273.08
 Amount Received since 03/06/11 ----- \$ 102.92
Amount Still Needed By 04/06/11: \$ 170.16

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WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. **Admit that you are a sinner.**
2. **Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.**
3. **Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.**
4. **You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).**
5. **By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.**

Please Remember To Be Faithful to Give!



As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go **up**. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start **today - OK?** Thank you.

Church Directory

Todd W. White ----- Pastor
 Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist
 Dickie Eberle ----- Greeter, Custodian
 Larry Mathews, Caryn Quinnelly, Todd W. White ----- S.S. Teachers
 Larry & Mary Byars, Brian & Charity Crawford,
 Dwayne English, Lou & Vicki Martin ----- Outreach
 Flowers ----- Hannah and Shirley White