
KEY ISSUE CHECKLIST — EXAMINING THE VALIDITY OF SCRIPTURE
AND SUBSEQUENT CANONICAL CHOICES

√ Accepting Deity/Human Assumptions

Assumptions about Deity

- I) Deity is.
- II) Being Deity, Deity will reveal Himself.
- III) Being Deity, Deity will reveal Himself perfectly.

The reliability and validity of Scripture as an evidentiary reliable epistemology is based on accepting these three assumptions. Accepting these epistemological assumptions about Deity does not overcome, however, three epistemologically problematic assumptions about human beings.

Assumptions about Humans

- I) We are not Deity.
- II) Not being Deity, we will see Deity as we want to see, understand, and remember Deity.¹
- III) Not being Deity, our understanding of Deity's revelation will be subject to our epistemological biases (e.g., sense motivated, mind motivated, experience based).

√ To what extent were canonical choices directed by Holy Spirit?

√ To what extent can we be confident in our translations of the best manuscripts we have of Scripture?

√ What relative weight which should be placed on the four key sources of revelation about Deity? History, Scripture, Nature, His Presence. What are the problems associated with placing equal weight to each? Ignoring one or more of the four?

√ I've always wondered... _____

¹A reflection of Porter's First Law of Human Behavior; i.e., Humans believe, remember, and do what they *want* to believe, remember, and do (cf., *Porter's First Law of Human Behavior*; see <https://TheScoop.DThomasPorter.com/?p=150>). Thus, we need an *independent* body of evidence. Christians use the Scriptures as their independent evidence

TRANSLATION/MANUSCRIPT OVERVIEW

Examples of Substantive Differences/Readings Between Alexandrian (A) and Byzantine (B)

Alexandrian	Omitted by Byzantine but in <i>Textus Receptus</i> (i.e., out of KJV, but not Alexandrian)
<p>Matthew 12:47 present.</p> <p>Matthew 17:21 mostly omitted.</p> <p>Matthew 18:11 mostly omitted.</p> <p>Matthew 21:44 omitted (eclectic).</p>	<p>Luke 17:36 omitted.</p> <p>Acts 15:34 omitted.</p> <p>Acts 24:7 omitted.</p>

KJV "Test Passages" (Used by KJV Only Group as Evidence of a "True" KJV)
(Passage in neither A nor B above, but added later)

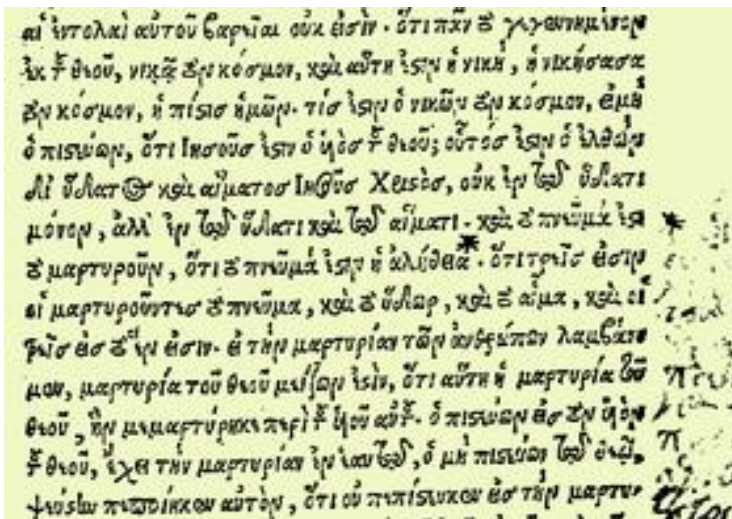
<p>Acts 8:37</p> <p><i>Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The eunuch answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."</i></p>	<p>2nd century baptismal practice, a pious expansion. From Eastern Church, 6th to 8th century</p>
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I John 5:7-8

7For there are three that testify: 8the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

Addition (substitute for 8) ...

testify in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. And there are three that testify on earth: the



Clearly added. While a great Trinitarian statement, but 500 mss in Greek do not have this verse; 9 mss do have it but the earliest date of the 9 are no earlier than the 12th century. And the 12th century mss, the verse is written in the margin. And, on top of that, the “marginal” reading was actually 16th century as per pediagraphical analysis. Finally, only 1 mss has it prior to Erasmus’ compilations.

Then why is it in the Erasmus compilation (*Textus Receptus*)?

- 1st edition didn’t have it because it wasn’t in any of the Greek mss
- 2nd edition created a visit from the Inquisition. “Don’t you believe in the Trinity?” Erasmus responded by saying show me a Greek mss with the Trinity statement. #61 had it, in Greek, but Erasmus recognized the handwriting, and noted wryly the ink wasn’t quite dry yet. He defused the situation and added it anyway.
- 3rd to 5th editions had the statement.

TRANSLATION ISSUES

The logic behind the KJV-only group: God's divine will supervised this translation, even the ones listed below. Thus, the KJV is better than the Alexandrian or Byzantine Greek or even the *Textus Receptus* manuscripts. See Bruce Metzger's book for a full narrative.²

Since 1900, approximately 200 translations of the Bible have been made; most died a merciful death. Goodspeed and Moffitt's "translation," for example, took rather odd liberties with the text including moving the verses around—"This is the way it *should* read." RH Charles in the 1920's completely re-ordered the Revelation to suit his preferences.

Some current issues ...

- Copyright control promulgates new translations, creating new marketing opportunities into specific markets and demographics (e.g., the young woman's Bible, the urban Afro-American's Bible, *Cotton Patch*).
- Some current marketing compromises the seriousness of the Gospel.
- For an "up to date" version, "buy our version..."
- Such marketing poses, "Too many spiritual facials ... Holy Spirit is the best cleanser."

Nota Bene:

From 1611-1769 there were **11** editions of the KJV—primarily to improve readability. And, the 1611 version included the Apocrypha; moreover in 1885 KJV Bibles were published which still included the Apocrypha.

²Metzger, Bruce M., *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament (2nd Edition)*, Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994. To order see: <https://www.logos.com/products/details/1903>

TRANSLATION CLASSIFICATION (ENGLISH VERSIONS)

Formal Equivalent			Dynamic Equivalent				Paraphrase				
Difficult to Read (Untranslated)	KJV	NKJV ³	RSV	Amplified	NSRV	NIV	NLT	ISV	LB	Cotton Patch	Difficult e to Justify
	NASV1	ESV	NASB		GNB-TEV	NCV	TNIV			The Message	
	Geneva				HSCB		CEV				
	Bishop's Bible								NiRV		
	Wycliffe										
	ASV										
Literal ←—————→ Crazy											

EXAMPLES OF CHANGES/CORRECTIONS IN TEXTUS RECEPTUS TRANSLATIONS – MATTHEW 12:1

- ⌘ King James (1611-1769)—
At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.
- ⌘ New King James (1982)—
At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat.
- ⌘ English Revised Version (1881, 1885, 1895)—
At that season Jesus went on the sabbath day through the cornfields; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck ears of corn, and to eat.
- ⌘ English Standard Version (2001)—
At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat.

³Not a translation *per se*, but a corrected version (primarily for some anachronisms, e.g., “corn” meaning “wheat” or “grain” Matthew 12:1). In British English, corn means “the grain of a cereal grass that is the primary crop of a region (such as wheat in Britain and oats in Scotland and Ireland)” See <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/corn>

A SAMPLE OF PARAPHRASED EDITIONS OF THE BIBLE

Cotton Patch paraphrase excerpt ... John 3:22-30

After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized. ²³Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized.

²⁴(This was before John was put in prison.)

²⁵An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing.

²⁶They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."

²⁷To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. ²⁸You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.' ²⁹The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. ³⁰He must become greater; I must become less. (NIV, 1978)

Following this, Jesus and his students went to south Georgia, and he spent a while there with them and was doing some baptizing. John was baptizing at Eufaula near Georgetown, because there was plenty of water there, and people were coming to him and getting immersed. (This was before John had been thrown in jail.) Well, John's students and a Methodist got into a fuss over dipping and sprinkling. So they came to John and told him, "Reverend, you remember that fellow who was with you on the other side of the Chattahoochee, who you yourself praised? Guess what! Now he's dipping and everybody is joining up with *him!*" John answered, "A man can't take an office that hasn't been given him from above. You yourselves can bear me out that I told you, 'I am not the Leader, but I was sent ahead of him.' The man with the bride is the bridegroom. The best man stands with the groom and shares his joy. That's why I'm so happy. That man must grow, while I must fade out."

—Clarence Jordan

<https://rockhay.tripod.com/cottonpatch>

A BRIEF STUDY⁴ IN ONE “DYNAMIC EQUIVALENT” TRANSLATION/PARAPHRASE

The real difficulty of dealing with multiple translations is that all have faults, some more than others. In their attempt to be readable, some translations leave out some of the meaning of the original languages (Aramaic/Hebrew/Greek) used by the human authors as led by Holy Spirit. The language of other English translations is sometimes so lofty and beautiful (KJV), it often not only misses the meaning of the original language, it is also hard to understand. Still others are not translations at all, but paraphrases of the Scriptures.

Each translation reflects the work of different groups of scholars, and as such, each translation gives different perspectives on the Scriptures—such differences can be a rich source of insight into what the LORD God is revealing to us. Remember, you're trying to understand the LORD God's will, not what a particular group of scholars came to agree upon. Compare and contrast translations, check out the original language and its meanings for the first readers—Holy Spirit will reward you with new insights for His will for you today; He is, after all, the real Author of Scripture (2 Peter 1:21).

Worry not about using a translation instead of reading the Scripture in the original language. Our LORD and Savior used a Greek translation (the LXX Septuagint) of the Scriptures, for example, to support His claim to deity. Learn from different translations, and do not become “addicted” to just one. Choosing between what is easy to read and what is correct is always a challenge, especially when dealing with the pre-literate.

The NIrV, used by the WMU in GA materials, may be one such version. It is designed to meet the needs of the pre-literate (4th grade) that the NIrV purports to meet.⁵ This comparison of the current GA Lifestyle Verse may give you some information as to how you might, if you so choose, to address your concerns, if any, to the WMU. My concerns are articulated below and in the footnote.

⁴This section of the article was penned in 2009.

⁵According to the publisher, “The New International Reader's Version® (NIrV, 1996) is a new Bible version developed to enable early readers to understand God's message. Begun in 1992 and co-sponsored by International Bible Society and Zondervan Publishing House, the New International Reader's Version is a *simplification* of the New International Version (NIV), today's most popular translation of the Bible.” Interestingly, its validity is claimed by its “compatibility with the NIV.” It is then, by definition, not a translation, but a paraphrase of the NIV, and not from the original language. No wonder the differences are problematic. As per <https://www.biblica.com/bibles/nirv/> downloaded December 8, 2009.

NIrV AND OTHER TRANSLATIONS OF MICAH 6:8

NIrV	NIV	KJV	AKJV	ASV	NLT	NASB
The Lord has shown you what is good. He has told you what he requires of you. You must treat people fairly. You must love others faithfully. And you must be careful to live the way your God wants you to.	He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.	He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?	He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?	He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?	No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.	He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?

In this passage, the NIrV equates loving mercy with loving faithfully, and being careful to live God's way is equated with walking humbly with your God. While their version is indeed simplified, they have changed the message, even from their "standard," the NIV. This is unacceptable paraphrasing, and is not a translation. Loving faithfully is important, of course, but that is not what Micah said. Our children, indeed all of us, need to learn early that mercy is a Godly attribute. It is in short supply today.

Furthermore, if we human beings have one problem, it is our inability to walk, and especially to walk humbly, with our God. But, to use the "simplification" language of the NIrV, the critical question of *how* we "live the way [our] God want us to" is not answered. Micah provided the answer. The answer: read any of the *other* translations—"Walk *humbly, with* God."

