



Seek The Old Paths

“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths. . . and walk therein”
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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FOUR SOBERING FACTS ABOUT DENOMINATIONALISM

John Chowning

Denominationalism, by its very definition, is division (many). Division is condemned by God (1 Cor. 1:10; Rom. 16:17; Eph. 4:3-6).

Fact #1: Denominationalism is nothing new. Although Protestant denominationalism has only been around since the days of Martin Luther (1482-1546), the origin of denominationalism can be traced all the way back to the first century to a group commonly designated by Bible students as “Judaizers.” These men are the forefathers of all denominationalism because they were the first of many subsequent teachers who espoused the belief that there must be things added to the Gospel in order to be saved. In their case, they taught that a person must obey the Gospel *and* be circumcised (Acts 15:1) to be saved. Shortly thereafter, they added that a circumcised Christian *must* keep the Law of Moses to be saved (Acts 15:5). The noxious taproot of denominationalism, regardless of what century it is espoused and practiced, is the belief that it is no big deal to add to or subtract from God’s revealed word.

This fundamental belief of denominationalism is clearly *NOT* derived from either a casual or careful reading of the Scriptures. In the beginning, middle, and end of God’s word there are explicit directions to not add to it or subtract from it. Who is unable to understand: “*Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it*” (Deut. 4:2); “*Every word of God is pure...Add thou not*

unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar” (Prov. 30:5-6); or, “*For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book*” (Rev. 22:18-19)?

Sadly, the Scriptures clearly record the fact that Satan has been adding to and/or subtracting from God’s word since the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:4; 2:17). Sadder still is the fact borne out by history that Eve’s descendants have repeatedly fallen for Satan’s heinous lie. Denominationalism stands out as a shameful testament to these horrific facts.

Fact #2: Denominationalism teaches a gospel different than the one taught by the apostles. When the Judaizers showed up in the region of Galatia in the first century with the message of: “the gospel plus circumcision and the Law equals salvation,” they sought to persuade their listeners that this was no big deal. Their doctrine, they claimed, was the same as the apostles; it was another of the same kind. The inspired apostle Paul adamantly disagreed; he wrote: “*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another (heteros, different) gospel*” (Gal. 1:6).

The word Greek word translated

“soon removed” (turning away) has the idea of reversing one’s course. It is used by Stephen in Acts 7:39 to describe the children of Israel’s decision at Mount Sinai when they came to Aaron and said, “*Make us gods to go before us*” and then “*they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands*” (Acts 7:40-41). What Biblically literate person would contend that Israel’s worshiping of the golden calf was just “another” way of worshipping Jehovah? The idol erected at Mount Sinai was a “different” (*heteros*) god; i.e. it was different in quality and character than the one true God.

This same word (*heteros*) was used to describe the difference between the Gospel taught by the inspired apostles and the gospel proclaimed by the first century denominationalists — the Judaizers. Whenever a promoter of denominationalism ignores God’s plain words about not adding to or subtracting from His word, the message proclaimed is different in quality and character than the Gospel proclaimed from the apostles’ doctrine.

Fact #3: Denominationalism is what grows when the seed of a perverted gospel is planted. When one realizes that:

- 1) the principle of sowing and reaping (that the seed in the grass, herb, and fruit trees will only produce after its kind) has

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Sobering Facts...



Guest Editorial

WITHOUT NATURAL AFFECTION

Johnny O. Trail

The Bible speaks of the unborn as having attributes of the fully grown prior to birth.

The state of New York passed a bill allowing abortions through the third trimester of pregnancy. This bill was passed on the anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision (Jan/1973) that allows a mother to abort a child as late as the third trimester of gestation. Considering recent changes to the United States Supreme Court, the state of New York believed that this law was vital in protecting a woman's "reproductive rights." The passage of this legislation was immediately bemoaned by those against abortion and embraced gleefully by those who are "pro-choice."¹

The flood of opinions on social media immediately appeared on the screens of those who keep up with such things. The stark contrasts between those on each side of the debate became immediately apparent. One post showed the supporters of the pro-choice legislation signing the bill into law. They all had big smiles on their faces as if they had done some magnificent thing for all of humanity. When the bill was passed in the legislative chambers, a great cheer went up from just about all those who were present.²

As this writer watched the video of these proceedings, one phrase from the book of Romans immediately came to mind. Romans 1:28-32 says, "And even as they did not like to retain God in **their** knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenant breakers, **without natural affection**, [emp. mine] implacable, unmerciful: Who

knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." This same word is translated as "heartless" by other versions of the Bible.

When one considers the sacrifices that some women endure to see their children born healthy, it becomes clear that those in jubilant support of abortion on demand are "without natural affection" and "heartless" regarding the unborn. Those who stand as champions regarding the lives of the unborn stand decidedly against the heartless. Certain mothers have refused life saving treatments for various diseases because they wanted to give their unborn children a chance at life.³ Many women, my wife included, were forced to be on restrictive bed rest to ensure their children were carried full term and born healthy. Women who have had miscarriages and still-births mourn their losses.

Individuals who have felt the pain of losing a child or the desperation of wanting a child of one's own would express anything but celebration over laws that allow the slaughter of unborn, innocent children. Instead of celebration, there should be weeping and mourning over such an atrocious piece of legislation. Jeremiah 31:15 says, "Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not."

Some political commentators disagree, but it seems the new law would allow a mother to terminate her child up until the point of birth if the child was born with certain "disabilities." One wonders what constitutes a "disability?" Also, who gets to make that determination?

Andrew Cuomo, the Governor of New York, described the legislation as an important step in a "woman's right to control her own body." He is incorrect regarding the second life living within its mother's womb. It has a body and genetic code all its own. It is a distinct human being with its own traits and personality.

In celebration of the new legislation, Governor Cuomo ordered the needle portion of the World Trade Center to be light pink. Some people on social media ironically observed that the top portion of the World Trade Center resembled a large needle that is sometimes employed in various abortion procedures. How horrific!

Our country has fallen in lock step with other world leaders. Hitler killed six million Jews during WWII and various other nationalities of people.⁴ It is hard to determine exactly, but Joseph Stalin killed somewhere over 20 million people during his tyrannical reign.⁵ Pol Pot killed about two million during his blood thirsty reign over Cambodia.⁶ Mao Zedong killed around forty-five million people in his communist revolution.⁷ Each of these world leaders are viewed with disgust *ad nauseum* for the manner in which they slaughtered human beings to accomplish their political and social agendas.

According to one web site 60,069,971 babies have been aborted since Roe v. Wade!⁸ Over sixty million innocent, defenseless human beings have been put to death. We are critical of the atrocities of former world leaders, but we as a nation cannot see or do not care about the atrocities being performed in our own country.

Most of these unborn children are aborted in the name of "reproductive freedom." Laws like the one just passed in New York would provide a longer amount of time for one to seek an abortion and make it possible for people other than doctors to provide abortions. This will widely open the door for incompetent, unscrupulous medical professionals and ensure injury to mothers seeking to abort their unborn children.

The Bible speaks of the unborn as having attributes of the fully grown prior to birth. Jeremiah 1:5 says, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I or-

dained thee a prophet unto the nations.” Evidently, God knew Jeremiah before he was ever born and knew he would be ordained a prophet for God’s purposes.

By the same token, God knew over sixty million babies before they were ever born. If the blood of Abel cried out, what of the blood of sixty million aborted children? In Genesis 4:10 God asks Cain, *“What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.”*

The Bible speaks of a day in which God will judge all human beings that have ever lived. Revelation 20:12-13 says, *“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.”* I, for one, would hate to be numbered among those who had a part or role in aborting over sixty million unborn children.

Footnotes:

- 1 www.yahoo.com/news/andrew-cuomo-signs-abortion-bill-084216083.html?ncid=facebook_yahoonews_akfmevatca
- 2 www.yahoo.com/news/andrew-cuomo-signs-abortion-bill-084216083.html?ncid=facebook_yahoonews_akfmevatca
- 3 www.aol.com/article/news/2017/09/11/mom-who-refused-cancer-treatment-due-to-pregnancy-dies-just-three-days-after-giving-birth/23204874?fbclid=IwAR2l9voOvtwIr3kCOT104TrzlxQxJloqlzjG5K7sliM1PxxcnqXFgoL3KMx
- 4 encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/documenting-numbers-of-victims-of-the-holocaust-and-nazi-persecution
- 5 www.nytimes.com/1989/02/04/world/major-soviet-paper-says-20-million-died-as-victims-of-stalin.html
- 6 www.history.com/topics/cold-war/pol-pot
- 7 www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/news/maos-great-leap-forward-killed-45-million-in-four-years-2081630.html
- 8 www.lifenews.com/2018/01/18/60069971-abortions-in-america-since-roe-v-wade-in-1973/

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Sobering Facts...

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existed since the third day of creation (Gen. 1:11-12);
2) the word of God is the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11); and
3) the word of God when planted in good soil in the first century only produced churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16) which were comprised of (unhyphenated) Christians (Acts 11:26), then any backyard gardener can quickly figure out that the only way to get a church different than what the word of God produced in the first century is to use a different seed.

How significant is this? The inspired apostle Paul calls this a perverted apostle Paul calls this a perversion of the Gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:7). The word translated “pervert” in Galatians 1:7 (*metastrepho*) has the idea of transforming something into that which is opposite in character. It is used in Acts 2:20 where Peter is quoting part of Joel’s prophecy, *“The sun shall be turned into darkness.”* By its inherent nature, the sun is bright and full of light. It is a perversion (*metastrepho*) of the sun for it to be darkness.

Now, consider the impact of this word in relation to the Gospel. The inherent nature and power of the Gospel is *salvation* (Rom. 1:16). When a Judaizer adds to or subtracts from the Gospel, the result is opposite in character to salvation! In other words, the perverted Gospel of denominationalism produces condemnation. The Gospel’s sunny offer of salvation is turned into the darkness of condemnation.

Fact #4: Denominationalism is a big, Big, BIG deal. Just in case someone is tempted to shrug off the significance of adding to or subtracting from the Gospel, the apostle Paul writes: *“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed”* (Gal. 1:8-9). The word “accursed” (*anathema*) means “devoted to destruction.” God does **not** play with those who play with His word. Of the several Greek words and ways available to the apos-

tle Paul to describe the condemnation of those who pervert the Gospel, he chose the strongest possible way available to him in the Greek language.

Satan, a liar and the Father of lies (John 8:44), says that adding to or subtracting from God’s word is no big deal. God, who cannot lie, says it is a big, Big, BIG deal.

Whom do you believe? The devil or God?

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FAITHFULNESS AND FOOLISHNESS

Marvin L. Weir

*Will you and I be found faithful or foolish?
The choice is ours to make.*

Jeremiah was a prophet of fearless integrity. Spokesmen like this faithful prophet are sorely needed today. Dryden is quoted as saying, "To take up half on trust, and half on try, name it not faith, but bungling bigotry." Jeremiah was not one to only trust half-way in Jehovah!

The Commission! God told His mouthpiece, "*Stand in the court of the LORD'S house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD'S house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word*" (Jer. 26:2). The Lord's house is the last place one should seek to diminish the Word of God! What the "cities of Judah" needed was strong proclamation of God's truths so they might "*turn every man from his evil way*" (26:3). Jeremiah knew that professed proclaimers of truth who were afraid of offending the princes of the people were like salt that had lost its savor. Such salt is not fit for land nor dunghill (Luke 14:34), and is "*cast out and trodden under the foot of men*" (Matt. 5:13).

It is no different today with the Lord's church! Professed preachers who attempt to modify the **force** of God's Word because of fear of losing members should be rebuked by godly elders. In far too many instances, however, those who are called "elders" have no desire to "cross" the people in the pew. Preachers and elders who do not want "*the whole counsel of God*" (Acts 20:27) taught to the congregation and refuse to repent will see God take their part "*from the tree of life, and out of the holy city*" (Rev. 22:19). Christians are commissioned to teach and honor **all** of God's Word!

The Message! "*Thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, ... To hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, ... I will make this...city a curse to all the nations of the earth*" (Jer. 26:4-6). Unbelief and disobedience have a way of catching up with people. It is a terrible thing

for people to have no interest in God, but it is especially tragic when the light of truth grows dim in God's house.

The Lord's church today is a disgrace and a curse upon society when it will not stand for the truth. A terrible thing it is when ten righteous people cannot be found (cf. Gen. 18:32). A congregation is of no value to the city or community when it is no longer a beacon of light (truth) to a lost and dying world.

The Opposition! "*When Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded [him] to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD*" (Jer. 26:8-9). God's spokesman, Jeremiah, clearly shows they were dishonoring and degrading both the "house" and the "city." This was more than their pride could bear, and they turn on Jeremiah. But God's house and His city are worth nothing if its occupants are living in sin!

To kill Jeremiah would not kill God's purpose. Neither will dismissing faithful preachers of the Gospel deter the purpose of the Lord!

The Call To Repentance! "*Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you*" (Jer. 26:12-13). A faithful mouthpiece of God can take back nothing that has been proclaimed. The "house" and the "city" can only be saved by the people's repentance and steadfast obedience to God's Word.

If congregations today are to be delivered from desolation and destruction, the voice of Jehovah must be obeyed. No comfort will be forthcoming to those who hear God's Word but refuse to obey it!

The Personal Conviction! "*As for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you. But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the LORD hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears*" (Jer. 26:14-15). A loyal and true servant of God is always **more** concerned about the **faithful** delivery of his message than the deliverance of himself from the hands of his enemies!

Knowing that God cannot lie (Heb. 6:18), the Christian has "*as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and stedfast*" (Heb. 6:19). The "*sword of the Spirit*" and the "*shield of faith*" are indispensable in quenching "*the fiery darts of the evil one*" (Eph. 6:16-17).

The Voice of Reason! "*Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets; This man is not worthy to die: for he hath spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God*" (Jer. 26:16). Is it not amazing that the princes and people reasoned correctly while the priests and prophets refused to do so?

Often today one sees those who sit in the pew willing to embrace reason and truth more quickly than the preacher or the elders. Religious pride and desire for power are bitter enemies to God's truth!

Will you and I be found faithful or foolish? The choice is ours to make as we journey through this life. Let us remember that the Lord said, "*My sheep hear my voice...and they follow me*" (John 10:27). May we prove to be the Lord's sheep!

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BROKEN-HEARTED BECAUSE OF LOST SOULS

Roger Campbell

Sin stains the soul and slays those who practice it.

Maybe it is a life of unbridled immorality. It might be a fellow defiantly refusing to accept the Lord's authority. Perhaps it is a person who has been swept away by false teaching. For others, it could be that indifference has taken root in their heart. Regardless of what the reason(s) might be, when a soul is lost, it is an immeasurable tragedy.

Sin stains the soul. Sin slays the practitioners of it. Sin separates its participants from the Lord. Sin slams shut the door to heaven. Yes, sins stains, slays, separates, and slams. Sin is one hundred per cent detrimental.

As we think about the horribleness of sin, we are reminded that our Father calls on all of His children to be tender-hearted (Eph. 4:32). Each of us has his/her own unique personality/character/makeup. Some Christians rarely show their emotions outwardly, but they have a tender, caring heart. Others among us tear up, blubber, and sob at the slightest provocation. Surely we all have this in common, though: we are saddened by the fact that people live and die outside the Lord.

The God of heaven is devastated when humans refuse to submit to Him and accept His salvation. In speaking about the rebellious Jews of Ezekiel's generation, God said, "...because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols..." (Ezek. 6:9). Man's sin crushes God's heart.

Do you recall how Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem because its inhabitants would not accept Him as the Messiah, and by rejecting Him brought condemnation on their souls? As He approached the city in what some call His "Triumphant Entry," despite the excitement of some, His heart was broken. Luke's concise record says, "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it" (Luke 19:41). A few days later, as He was drawing ever closer to the cross, the sadness in His heart sounded forth in these words: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. 23:37).

God's servants are broken-hearted, too, when people are lost. Jeremiah is labeled as "the weeping prophet" because we read about how his tears flowed due to the Jews' choice not to obey the Lord God (Jer. 9:1).

Have you ever paid attention to the following statement which the writer of the book of Psalms made to God? "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law" (Psalm 119:136). It is not revealed whom "they" were or what specific transgressions they had committed, but the Psalmist's heart was devastated by their disobedience and what such did to their relationship with the Lord.

Among the early Christians, more

than once we read about the apostle Paul being moved to tears because of false teachers and departures from the faith. As he was telling the shepherds of the church in Ephesus about a future departure from the truth, he reminded them that for three years he had warned them night and day with tears (Acts 20:31). While in chains in Rome, he wrote a letter to the saints in Philippi, warning them about enemies of the cross. As he brought up that unpleasant topic, he said he was weeping as he wrote (Phil. 3:18). The man was broken-hearted because of sin and its affect on people's eternal destiny.

Some look at the masses of the world who are steeped in spiritual darkness and just seem to shrug their shoulders with the observation, "Well, it always has been like that; there is not much we can do about it." Perhaps others of us have become desensitized to sin. We see it and hear it so much that it kind of feels like it is no big deal. May God help us if we ever get to the point we view sin as a small matter. And, God help us if we do not share His broken heart when people live and die separated from Him.

Compassion causes Christians to communicate to lost people what they need to hear, which is God's eternal, soul-saving truth. "Oh, will you not tell it, today?"

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THE CITY OF NO MORE

Bill Boyd

For ages, saints have turned to Revelation 21 and 22 to renew their hopes of heaven. Some read where the "holy city" is coming "down from God out of heaven" in Revelation 21:2, and conclude that the city cannot be heaven if it is coming out of heaven. By that logic, this would be a city without God, because it is "coming down

from God," but the next verse says, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev. 21:3). If the city can come "down from God" and yet be the city where God will dwell with men, then it can come "out of heaven" and still be the

heaven where men will dwell with God. It is a matter of perspective.

The expression, "coming down from God out of heaven" identifies neither its destiny nor its direction, but its source. Heaven is the source of all of John's visions. In this vision, the city that came "down from God out of heaven" was not on its way to earth, because

“the first earth and the first heaven passed away” (Rev. 21:1), indeed, *“the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them”* (Rev. 20:11). Considered in the larger context of Revelation, I am convinced this is a vision of the church overcoming its impending trials, but consistent with the exaggerated language of Revelation, the glory of this victorious church is described in terms of its eternal glory. That makes this a picture of heaven.

This *“holy city”* is the desire of our hope, in part, because of things that will not be there. Heaven has been called, *“The City of No More.”* Revelation 21:1 says, *“there was no more sea.”* Some identify the sea in Revelation as the source of trouble for the church, and indeed the beast rose up *“out of the*

sea” (Rev. 13:1). Others suggest that the sea is for separation, and because Revelation 21:3 tells of God with men, and therefore *“no more sea”* means no more separation from God. Either way, this is where I want to go. Revelation 21:4 tells us there will be no more tears, no more death, no more sorrow, no more crying, no more pain; *“for the former things are passed away.”* Revelation 21:8 says, *“the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”* I once asked my grandmother what she was looking forward to in heaven. She said, *“Everything everyone tells you will be the truth.”* She was

right about that, because there will be no liars in heaven.

Revelation 21:22 says there will be no temple in that city; *“I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.”* According to Revelation 21:23 there will be no need for the sun and no need for the moon; *“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”* The gates of old earthly cities were shut at night for security. We still shut and lock the doors of our homes, but in this city, *“The gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there”* (Rev. 21:25). Revelation 21:27 says, *“there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.”* Revelation 22:3 assures us, *“there shall be no more curse.”* Revelation 22:5 further affirms, *“There shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light.”* That sounds like heaven to me!

Finally, Revelation 22:14-15 says, *“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”* Where the King James Version says *“Blessed are they that do his commandments,”* the American Standard Version says, *“Blessed are they that wash their robes.”* The difference is in the ancient Greek manuscripts, but either way, we wash our robes when we do his commandments. Revelation 1:5 says that Jesus *“washed us from our sins in his own blood.”* Revelation 7:14 says, *“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”* According to Acts 22:16, the blood of Christ washes away our sins when we are baptized, *“calling on the name of the Lord,”* and according to 1 John 1:7, his blood keeps us washed as we *“walk in the light.”*

Make sure your name is *“written in the Lamb’s book of life”* (Rev. 21:27). Make sure you *“do his commandments”* (Rev. 22:14), and when we all get to heaven we *“shall reign for ever and ever”* (Rev. 22:5).

THE GREATNESS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The church of Christ as revealed in the New Testament is in existence today and one can be a member of it. The Lord himself promised to build it as recorded in Matthew 16:17-19. That promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost following the ascension of our Lord (Acts 1). We read of the beginning of the church in the city of Jerusalem as recorded in Acts 2. Acts 2 is a key passage in learning about the establishment of the church.

The church of our Lord has been restored today. If not, as some proclaim, how can I be a member of it today? One can know today whether he is a member of the New Testament church by looking at the Pattern — the Identifying Marks as presented in the New Testament.

The church of our Lord is the greatest institution that one can be a member of today. The importance and greatness of the church can be seen in her...

PLANNED COMPLETENESS. From the divine side the church is perfect, whole and lacking nothing. It cannot be improved upon. It will endure and last, for it was: 1) *Purposed* by God (Eph. 3:10-11); 2) *Prophesied* by God’s prophets (Isa. 2:2-4; Daniel 2:44); 3) *Promised* by God’s Son (Matt. 16:18-19) and 4) *Purchased* by the blood of God’s Son, Jesus the Christ (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:23-26).

PERFECT COMMANDER. Christ is the head of the church. As we obey his word, we are being led by Him. He will never lead us down the wrong path (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; Heb. 1:1-3; 4:15).

POWERFUL COMMUNICATION. That which the church is to communicate to others is the Word of God, the most powerful message of all (Rom. 1:16-17; James 1:21; 1 Peter 4:11; 2 Tim. 3:15-4:4).

PRIMARY CHARGE. The primary charge, commission of the church, is the salvation of souls through the spreading of the word, serving and strengthening others (Luke 19:10; Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 6:2,10; Rom. 14:19).

PLEASANT COMPANIONSHIP. What a fellowship we have in Jesus Christ. To have fellowship with God and those who are godly is truly a great blessing (1 John 1:6-7).

If we obey the will of the Father (Matt. 7:21) by *Believing* in Christ (John 8:24); by *Repenting of sins* (Luke 13:3); by *Confessing Faith in Christ* (Matt. 10:32-33); and by being *Baptized* (Acts 2:38), we will be added to the church of Christ.

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DANGERS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS #9

Randy Kea

In our further study of dangers of modern translations, by way of summary I want to place before you a comparison and contrast between the King James Version and modern translations:

1. KJV — The translators were multi-linguistic. (An example: Lancelot Andrews was conversant in 15 languages. He wrote private daily devotionals for himself in the New Testament Greek language. Another example: John Bois was a child prodigy who at the age of 5 had read the Old Testament in Hebrew. For further study, it would be worth your time if you could find these books: *Translators Revived* by Alexander McClure and also, *The Men Behind the King James Version* by Gustavus S. Paine).

Modern Translations — These translators are not in the same category as KJV translators when it comes to credentials and acumen.

2. KJV — They translated and cross-checked multiple times as individuals and groups. No less than 14 different times the translation for each book was gone over from beginning to end.

Modern Translations — Nowhere near this type of scrutiny before or since has been given to any modern translation.

3. KJV — They used a verbal (words) and formal (parts of speech) technique.

Modern Translations — Dynamic equivalence (adding and taking away words and modifying sentence structure) is widely used in modern translations (see the preface of the NIV).

4. KJV — These translators believed in verbal inspiration (1 Cor. 2:13) and verbal preservation (Matt. 24:35) and therefore produced a verbal translation.

Modern Translations — These translators either have a low view of inspiration and preservation or don't believe in them at all.

5. KJV — The Traditional *Received Text* was used for the New Testament and the *Masoretic Text* for the Old Testament.

Modern Translations — Faulty Greek texts are used. (Based on the works of *Westcott and Hort* for the

New Testament. Various other documents are used to “correct or modify” the *Hebrew Masoretic* text. See prefaces.)

6. KJV — There are 140,521 Greek words in the Traditional Received Text which underlies the King James Version.

Modern Translations — Modern Greek texts have deleted enough Greek words that would equal the books of First and Second Peter in total.

In this article I want to place before you for your consideration a host of examples where these deletions have occurred when compared with the KJV. You can take the time and do this for yourself. Take the NIV which is based on the UBSGNT text (which grows out of the Westcott and Hort Greek text) and look up the passages below and compare to the KJV. Space prohibits typing out or listing every example of how modern Greek texts have eliminated various Greek New Testament words and phrases. In some cases *entire sections* have been removed, sometimes *whole sentences* and *sometimes individual words and phrases*. Here are enough samples to prove my point and therefore alarm all who believe in verbal inspiration and preservation:

1. Whole passages questioned — Mark 16:9-20; John 7:53-8:11 (consider the comments in the marginal notes: “most reliable early manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not have Mark 16:9-20” and “the earliest and most reliable and other ancient witnesses do not have John 7:53-8:11”). These marginal notes are misleading and cast doubt on the integrity and verbal preservation of the text.

2. Entire verses omitted — the NIV omits Matt. 17:21; 18:11; 23:14; Mark 7:16; 9:44,46; 11:26; 15:28; Luke 17:36; 23:17; John 5:4; Acts 8:37; 15:34; 24:7; 28:29; Rom. 16:24; 1 John 5:7.

3. Parts of verses deleted or modified (because of space, I will only note a few in Matthew) — “without a cause” (5:22); “by them of old time” (5:27); “for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. Amen” (6:13); “to repentance” (9:13); “among the people” (9:35); “Lebbaeus, whose surname was” (10:3); “of the heart”

(12:35); “Jesus saith unto them” (13:51); “draweth nigh unto me with their mouth” (15:8); “at his feet” (18:29); “from my youth” (19:20); “for many be called but few chosen” (20:16); “and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with” (20:22-23); “take him away, and” (22:13); “observe” (23:3); “wherein the Son of man cometh” (25:13); “false witnesses” (26:60b); “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: they parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots” (27:35). Deletions like this run throughout the New Testament.

4. At the end of the day, if you go through the entire New Testament, modern translations, such as the NASV (New American Standard Version), NIV (New International Version), ASV (American Standard Version), and others, have shortened the Greek New Testament by basing their work on faulty Greek texts such as Nestle-Aland, thus depriving their readers of all of God's Word.

5. Any time you see in the preface or notes in a modern translation references made to which Greek text is used for the translation and they refer to United Bible Society texts, Nestle-Aland editions, eclectic texts, or the critical text, you will know that a faulty text base is being used with hundreds of words and phrases missing from the Bible.

All the “uproar” about the archaic words in the King James Bible pales into insignificance when compared to the above mutilation of God's Holy Word.

Heed the warnings: “*What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it*” (Deut. 12:32); “*For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ*” (2 Cor. 2:17); “*but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ*” (Gal 1:7).

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