

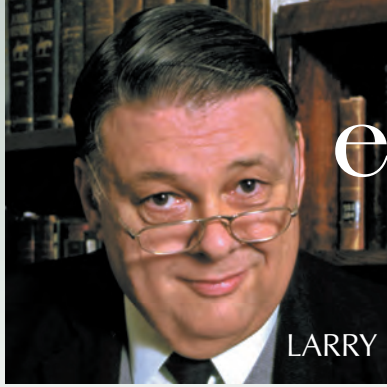
GOD'S REVIVALIST

April 2011

and Bible Advocate



King James Version
1611-2011



the editor's view

LARRY D. SMITH

THIS BLESSED BOOK

“**W**hat a business he made of his Bible-reading! When he came home from work, after his meal, he shaved, dressed himself more carefully and then settled down to the Bible, set under the lamp on the table before him.” Quoted by Dr. W.E. Sangster, this is how W.E. Orchard describes his devout old grandfather’s love of the Scriptures.

“When the Book had been opened at the proper place, his spectacles had to be polished to the accompaniment of anticipatory sighs over the treasures he was about to explore. The spectacles then being as carefully adjusted, a verse was slowly read, half aloud to himself. Deeper sighs then followed, perhaps accompanied by the exclamation, ‘This blessed Book!’ Further reflections would bring forth joyful tears, which meant that the spectacles had to be wiped again, and so on, but always with the same deliberation.”

It is to “this blessed Book” that every issue of *God’s Revivalist* is reverently dedicated. For 123 years, these pages have persistently heralded our founder’s passion expressed so succinctly in GBS’s time-honored motto, “Back to the Bible”! Whatever our failings, everyone of our editors has sincerely tried to focus this publication faithfully on what the Bible teaches—its doctrines, its exhortations, its warnings, and its comforts.

This issue adds a special dimension to that purpose, for it centers on the 400th anniversary of the King James Version of the Bible. With Christians around the world who are joining the celebrations, we gladly salute that noble translation of the Holy Scriptures which for generations became *the English Bible* for millions of believers. Not only is it the most beautiful book in our language, but it is also a faithful and devout rendering of the sacred text from the original languages.

All honor, then, to the beloved version of 1611! You’ll find much fascinating material about it here, but you’ll also be challenged by thoughtful articles about the Bible in general—its value, its inspiration, its versions, and its study; for we must not only honor the Scriptures, but we must also “hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them,” as the *Book of Common Prayer* reminds us.

So it is our hope that this issue of *God’s Revivalist* will lift you from its pages to the pages of “this blessed Book.” ■

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God’s Bible School and College seeks to glorify God and to serve His Church by providing higher education centered in Holy Scripture and shaped by Wesleyan conviction, thus preparing faithful servants to proclaim Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness throughout the world.

God’s Bible School and College does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national or ethnic origin, or against otherwise qualified handicapped persons in its admission of students or employment of its faculty and staff.

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the president's page



THE BOOK THAT STANDS ALONE

by Michael R. Avery, President

I am a lover of good books and highly value many that are on my shelves! But the Bible stands alone from all other books in my life! I believe it to be the inspired, inerrant, infallible, and authoritative Word of God. It is the single most important source of my understanding of God and all of His creation. It shapes my faith, guides my life and gives me a lens in which to view and understand the world around me. It is the book that God has chosen to reveal the way to Heaven. I agree with the venerable John Wesley when he said, “O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God.”

The Bible stands alone in its origin. It was written over a span of 1500 years by 40 different authors from all walks of life, including kings, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statesmen, farmers, physicians, and scholars. It was written on three different continents (Asia, Africa, and Europe) in three different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek) from palaces, dungeons, and wilderness haunts, during times of war, peace, prosperity, and famine. Composed on stone, clay, papyrus, and parchment, those original manuscripts were written under the inspiration of the Holy

Spirit without contradiction or error—thus providing for us God’s holy Word.

It stands alone as the mind of God. Scripture is indeed the revelation of God’s mind. It is certainly not His entire mind, but it is all that He has chosen to share. If we are to think as God thinks; if we are to see life as He sees life; then we must saturate our minds with Scripture. The Apostle Paul admonished the Roman Christians to readjust their thinking by the “renewing of your mind,” using the Bible as the means to do so.

Scripture stands alone as the source for absolute truth. The Bible is the only reliable moral compass that we have. We are moral and spiritual creatures living in a world that is controlled by moral and spiritual values. The concepts of good and evil are innate in our human psyche; yet sin has distorted our understanding of truth as well as disabled our ability to live it. We cannot, either individually or collectively, decide what truth is or what is to be accepted as a true standard for moral behavior without the transcendent absolute truths that are given to us in Scripture. To deny Scripture as the standard for absolute truth is to remove any absolute standard for moral behavior and reasoning.

The Bible stands alone in its ability to change the course of history as well as the lives of those who live out that history. A simple verse of scripture, quickened to the heart by the Holy Spirit, can radically alter the course of a life and a nation—writing a new future for both! No other spoken word has such impact. No other book has such power. “Oh, give me that Book! At any price, give me the Book of God.” ■

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Letters should be addressed to the Editorial Office, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, or emailed to revivalist@gbs.edu. Letters reprinted here do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editor of God's Revivalist nor those of the administration of God's Bible School. Names and locations of writers will be withheld at their specific request or at the discretion of the editor. We reserve the right to edit and condense.



WINTER COVER

What a beautiful cover on the winter issue of the *Revivalist*! Those full-of-life, fresh-faced, young Christian women—how uplifting! I can almost hear the girl in the red gloves giggle. These young ladies are on my daily prayer list. Thanks for your guidance for these young people. It makes my day to look at them!

“AN OLD FRIEND”
Indianapolis, Indiana

GENERAL COMMENTS

We have taken your paper since 1949 and would miss it [if it should cease coming to us]. I especially love to read articles by Drs. Phil and Allan Brown, as well as others [including] Larry D. Smith. We hope for revival fires as of years ago. Keep up your good work. We need it.

MRS. HUGH BLAIZE
Petersburg, Indiana

I'm elderly and unable to attend church services regularly. The *Revivalist* is a great inspiration to me.

HAZEL WALLACE
Monroe, Louisiana

What a pleasure this magazine is! In a day when most churches are chasing after the world and its ways, your magazine holds to biblical truth and upholds the godly way of the cross.

DEBRA MILLER
Indianapolis, Indiana

“For some years now I have read through the Bible twice every year. If you picture the Bible to be a mighty tree and every word a little branch, I have shaken every one of these branches because I wanted to know what it was and what it meant.”

—Martin Luther

“Most people are bothered by those passages of Scripture they do not understand, but the passages that bother me are those I do understand.”

—Mark Twain

“The Bible is worth all other books which have ever been printed.” —Patrick Henry

“Who decides what is right and wrong in the world? Who has the authority to define morality for all of creation? It is not the courts, congress, the media, public opinion, the ‘politically correct’ police, the ‘tolerance’ brigade, or even the church. The only answer has been, is, and always will be Jesus Christ. You can find His opinion on a great variety of subjects in His best seller...the Bible.”

—Jeffrey E. Ramey

“Bible reading is an education in itself.”

—Lord Tennyson

“Reading the Bible without meditating on it is like trying to eat without swallowing.”

—Anonymous

“One of the many divine qualities of the Bible is that it does not yield its secrets to the irreverent and the censorious.”

—James I. Packer



*Around the world, Christians celebrate
400 years of the King James Version of the Bible.*

THE YEAR OF THE BIBLE

by Mark Mander

This year the English-speaking church celebrates the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Version of the Bible. Noted for its majestic language and poetic cadences, it can be stated that no other collection of literature bound together in one book has had such a profound influence upon culture, language, morality, and theology than this translation. *The Encyclopedia Britannica* says, "The Bible...has been the most available, familiar, and dependable source and arbiter of intellectual, moral, and spiritual ideals in the West." (p7)➔

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APRIL 2011

05

MAY 11-15, 2011

Dr. Michael Avery, president
Rev. Mark Cravens, campus pastor

PRAYER SERVICES

Thursday – Friday, 7:30 am

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS

Thursday – Friday, 9 am

MORNING WORSHIP SERVICES

Rev. Blake Jones: "Heart Talks"

Thursday – Friday, 10:30 am

Rev. Larry Smith: "Serving Our Generation
According To The Will Of God"

Sunday, 10:30 am

EVENING SERVICES

Rev. Mark Cravens: "Victory In Jesus"

Wednesday, 7 pm

Rev. James Plank: "God Wants To Do
Something In Zarephath"

Thursday, 7 pm

Attorney David Gibbs Jr: "In The Last Days
Perilous Times Shall Come"

Friday, 7 pm

Rev. Bob Bolois: "When God Was At His Best"

Saturday, 7 pm

Rev. Chris Cravens: "The Best Of Things
In The Worst Of Times"

Sunday, 6 pm

GBS COMMENCEMENT

Saturday, 10 am

COMMUNION SERVICE

Sunday, 9 am

STUDENT MINISTRIES

SERVICE

Sunday, 2:30 pm

CAMP MEETING 2011

Michael Avery



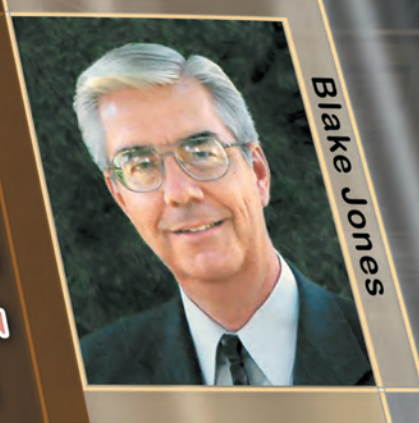
Mark Cravens



Larry Smith



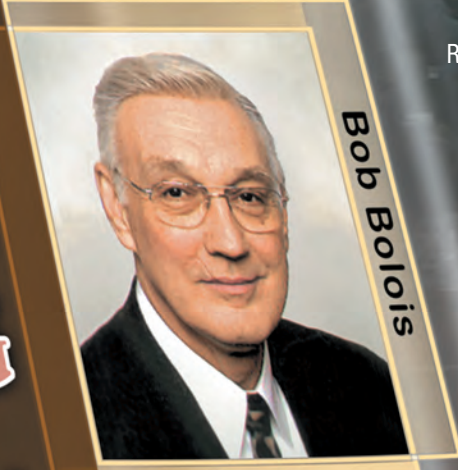
Blake Jones



Chris Cravens



Bob Bolois



James Plank



David Gibbs



As a result, secular writers, historians, politicians and theologians will hold national and international events all throughout 2011 to commemorate the birthday of the printing and circulation of the King James Version. With such interest in the publication of the Bible, Christians ought to be encouraged to join in the celebration of God's Word and be personally challenged to evaluate their devotion and adherence to Scripture.

The King James Version was commissioned by King James I who ascended the throne of England in 1603. Shortly after gaining power, he gathered together his bishops, clergy, and spiritual advisors to discuss and evaluate the state of the Church in England. This gathering became known as the Hampton Court Conference of 1604. From listening to the concerns of those present, it was decided that a group of scholars be organized to produce a new translation of the Holy Scriptures. This decision was in direct response to concerns raised by the conservative and evangelical wing of the Church of England, known as the Puritans, regarding the credibility of the Geneva and Bishops' Bible.

A team of scholars was assembled soon after the Hampton Court meeting to begin the work of translating the Bible from the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts known as the *Textus Receptus* into contemporary English. The scholars were divided into groups, and worked in various locations throughout England. These men worked under strict guidelines imposed upon them by the 1604 Hampton Court meeting to ensure maximum preservation of the original meaning in their translation of the text.

The authenticity and credibility of the translation was of paramount importance to those who authorized the translation process. Having just experienced centuries of having the Word of God hidden from the common people under Roman Catholicism, the translators desired to produce a Bible that would be understood as it was publically read from pulpits and studied in homes.

After seven years, the work was completed, and the first copy of the King James Version was published in 1611. It was decided to name the translation in honor of the King, since he had been the person who authorized the translation work. Over the next number of years, many copies were circulated; and it soon became the translation of choice for English-speaking Protestants. Indeed, by the 18th century, the King James Version was the only version of the Bible being used in the Protestant Church of England.

While there are many English translations of the Scriptures in circulation today, it is fitting for the church to commemorate the anniversary of the King James Version's publication. Anniversaries allow the church to understand history and enable today's Christians to capture and personalize the passion of the past. In 2011, the Church once again has an opportunity to evaluate its personal response to God's Word as it is revealed in our English Bibles.

Christians should give thanks to God for receiving His word in the vernacular, examine their personal level of respect for the Bible, and allow this ancient yet modern book to reshape their focus of living in an intimate relationship with God. John Wesley articulated this thought best when he wrote:

"I want to know one thing, the way to heaven: how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end he came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book! O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri* [a man of one book]."

May the Christian church return to a position where we exalt God's Word to its honored and authoritative position. ■

Rev. Mark Mander (GBS '05 BA Min. Ed.) is pastor of the Ballycastle Rd. Independent Methodist Church, Coleraine, Northern Ireland. He is married to former GBS faculty member Deanna (Wolf) Mander (GBS '98 BA Music Ed.), the daughter of faculty members Garen and Sheila Wolf.

***"The word of God hidden in the heart is a stubborn voice to suppress."
—Billy Graham***

***"It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."
—George Washington***

***"The Bible is no mere book, but a Living Creature with a power that conquers
all that oppose it."
—Napoleon***

A Birthday Worth Celebrating!

by Victor Knowles

The King James Version of the Holy Bible will be 400 years old on May 4, 2011. Happy Birthday, KJV!

Like many readers who are 60 and older, I was raised on the *King James Version*. It was the only Bible we used in church, VBS, or Christian service camps.

Not that we were *King-James-Version-only Christians*. It just happened the *King James Version* was the only Bible used in the Midwest where I grew up in the 1950's and '60's. There were very few translations available other than the *American Standard Version* (1901), the *Revised Standard Version* (1952), and the *Amplified New Testament* (1965). Indeed, all of my memory work throughout grade school, junior high, senior high, and Bible college was based on the *King James Version* of the Bible. When I quote Scripture today, it is almost always from the *King James Version*. To read Psalm 23 at a funeral from any other translation is almost like hearing "Holy, Holy, Holy" sung by Three Dog Night. It just doesn't sound right.

Not the First

It may surprise some that the *King James Version* was not the first translation of the English Bible. Preceding the KJV were the *Wycliffe Bible* (1380), the *Tyndale Bible* (1525), the *Coverdale Bible* (1535), *Matthew's Bible* (1537), the *Great Bible* (1539), the *Geneva Bible* (1560), the *Bishops' Bible* (1568), and just one year before the KJV, the *Douay Bible* (1610). But the *King James Bible* would prove to be the people's choice for 270 years until the *English Revised Version* appeared in 1881. Even then, the KJV continued to be the best-selling Bible for another hundred years until the *New International Version* finally replaced it in top sales in 1984.



Four hundred years since the KJV's introduction, there are a growing number of English translations available, far too many to mention here. The decade of the 1970's started the new wave of translations such as the *New English Bible* (1970), the *New American Standard Bible* and the *Living Bible* [a paraphrase] (1971), *Today's English Version* (1976), and the NIV (1978).

According to the Christian Booksellers Association, the best-selling Bible translations (based on dollars) in October 2010 were (1) the *New International Version*, (2) *King James Version*, (3) *New King James Version*, (4) *New Living Translation*, (5) *English Standard Version*, (6) *New Revised Standard Version*, (7) *New International Reader's Version*, (8) *New American Standard Bible* [updated], (9) *The Message* [a paraphrase], and (10) the *Holman Christian Standard Bible*.

In unit sales, the *New King James Version* and the *King James Version* are still ranked numbers two and three, respectively, with the *New International Version* being number one.

An Enduring Link

Concerning the *King James Version*, Sir Winston Churchill said, "The scholars who produced this masterpiece are mostly unknown and unremembered. But they forged an enduring link, literary and religious, between the English-speaking people of the world." In 1604, England's King James I authorized a six-panel translation team. Seven years later the 54-man team of scholars and linguists finished their work and named it in honor of the king. The translation was to be read out loud at church services. Many Bibles were actually chained to the pulpits. The Pilgrims brought the KJV to America in 1620.

So why does the *King James Version* of the Bible, with its quaint Elizabethan language, continue to appeal to so many readers? One might as well ask why the works of William Shakespeare are still studied and discussed in universities the world over. There is beauty, cadence, rhythm—indeed, soaring majesty at times—in the lilt and sway of the words selected by the translators.

In their preface to the 1611 edition, the translators confessed that their purpose was not "to make a new translation...but to make a good one better." This was in reference to William Tyndale's translation, as well as to other early English translations.

The *New King James Version*, produced in 1982, achieved the same goal, as did its predecessor in 1611, in this writer's opinion. One of the best improvements in the NKJV is the capitalization of pronouns referring to God and Christ (also found in the NASB and the HCSB). The majestic language and sometimes-musical arrangement are retained, even though "thee" and

"thou" are replaced with "you" and "your" (unless deity is being referenced; then it is "You" or "Your").

To the Masses

Is the 17th-century English the best way to communicate God's Word to the masses today? Probably not, and that is one reason those who are dedicated to the work of translating the Bible have produced so many new translations, versions, and even paraphrases.

I posed this question to Dale Simpson, head of the Department of English and Philosophy at Missouri Southern State University (and elder at Mount Hope Church of Christ, Joplin, Missouri). He said, "Despite its language being 400 years out of date, the *King James Version* of the Bible remains, with Shakespeare's works (written during the same period), a towering monument of the English language. It has been supplanted by modern translations for improved reading comprehension (a necessity), but it will never be surpassed among the Bibles as a literary work of great dignity and beauty."

Unfortunately, "battle lines" have been drawn by some, both to defend the KJV and attack the newer versions and translations of the Bible, or to disparage the KJV and mock its obsolete language (although this has been rectified in the NKJV).

The last thing we want is to destroy the work of God for the sake of version preferences. I don't see where fighting over translations does any of us any good. There is no perfect translation of the Bible. Each one has strengths and weaknesses. (Exceptions would be Bible translations by cults such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, whose weaknesses make them unusable.) Some will appeal to one set of readers, while others will find favor with a different set. If I may paraphrase Romans 14:5, "One man considers one version more sacred than another; another esteems every version alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind."

God can bless the teaching, preaching, and writing done from the KJV and He can bless similar efforts from the NIV. The transforming power is in the Word of God, not in just one translation or version. "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12, NKJV, but nearly identical in the NIV).

Having written all this, is it best to give a KJV to a young child for his first Bible, or to present a new convert with a copy of the KJV? I would not do so. But neither would I propose to read the Christmas story from Luke 2 to my children and grandchildren on Christmas Eve from any translation other than the KJV. Verily, I do believe my children would rise up and say, "We protesteth!"

And so I say, "Happy Birthday, *King James Version*!" You have served the church well for 400 years. Your translation team, were they alive today, would no doubt encourage the new translators to "make a good one better." ■



NEWS

from the Hilltop

HARRY CROUSE ADDED TO ADJUNCT COLLEGE FACULTY

Mr. Harry Crouse joined the adjunct faculty of God's Bible School and College in January 2011 to teach business courses. Mr. Crouse retired from his Baltimore hometown to



Cincinnati after a career in manufacturing. He served as Vice President of Avalon Industries, Inc. for over 25 years. —Faith A. Avery, Director of Institutional Advancement

STUDENTS HONORED FOR MINISTRY TO THE SICK

GBS college students have been cited by the *Mt. Auburn Town Crier* for their ministry to the sick during this past Christmas season. Issued by the Chamber of Commerce of Mt. Auburn, the Cincinnati community where GBS has been located since 1900, the publication honored fifteen students who "spent their Sunday afternoon on December 5, caroling to the patients at The Christ Hospital in Mt. Auburn. They wished to spread the Christmas spirit to those around them, espe-

cially those spending the holiday season away from home."

MUSIC DIVISION ANNOUNCES FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The GBS Division of Music announces the following musical events which it will sponsor: (1) Choral presentation of *Saint Paul*, an oratorio by Felix Mendelssohn, at 7:00 PM, May 5, 2011, at Newport First Church of the Nazarene, Newport, Kentucky; (2) Concert on the Lawn, at 7:00 PM, May 10, 2011, on the GBS campus proper.

PROFESSOR TIM CRATER DIRECTS COLLEGE CHOIR ON LATE-WINTER TOUR

"Without doubt the success of the tour can be attributed to the faithfulness of our God." This assessment by choir director Tim Crater summarized the impact of

REVIVALIST FAMILY

On these pages, we feature items about GBS alumni, significant events scheduled throughout the "Revivalist family," and brief news notes from across the holiness movement.

BIRTHS



To **Darrell II and Elizabeth Stetler**, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, a son, **Caleb Charles Stetler**, born September 14, 2010. He was joyfully welcomed by his parents and three siblings, Gracie, Darrell III, and Heath. Both parents are GBS alumni.

DEATHS



Hazel Janet (Peterson) Gayjikian, 81, died at her home in Lucerne Valley California, January 18, 2011. A native of Iowa, she was married February 18, 1961,

to the love of her life, Samuel Gayjikian. Funeral services were held at Calvary Bible Church, Lucerne Valley, California.

Charles M. Mitchell, 85, Hicksville, Ohio, died February 11, 2011. He graduated from Immanuel Missionary Bible School, Colorado Springs, Colorado. It was there that he met Glenna Maxine Porterfield, to whom he was united in marriage in 1952. A realtor in Arkansas and Missouri for 30 years, he was also a member of the Lost Creek Emmanuel Missionary Church, Hicksville, Ohio.



Charles is survived by his wife, Maxine; two sons, Gaylen and Gary; three daughters, Karen, Connie, and Dorothy; twelve grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; one brother; and two sisters. Funeral services were held at Lost Creek Emmanuel Church with burial at Scipio Cemetery, Harlan, Indiana.

GBS's College Choir Late-Winter Tour, February 24 – March 6. In an itinerary covering over 3,000 miles, the choir presented sacred concerts in churches, schools, and auditoriums in the states of Alabama, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Indiana, and Ohio.

Audiences were invariably enthusiastic in their response.

“It was a productive trip and inspirational to so many people along the way,” reported Public Relations Director Don Davison, who directed and coordinated the tour. “Our students are high caliber,” he adds, “with an apparent abandonment to God and His will. They are doing this college proud.”

This was Professor Crater's first tour as choir

director. He was capably supported by veteran faculty accompanist Martha Miller and Jessica Smith, assistant director. Driving the bus was GBS alumnus, Rev. Steve Mills.

The choir tour is a longtime GBS tradition designed both as a ministry and public relations activity, boosting student recruitment and financial support. ■



The College Choir at Faith Mission Church, Bedford, IN

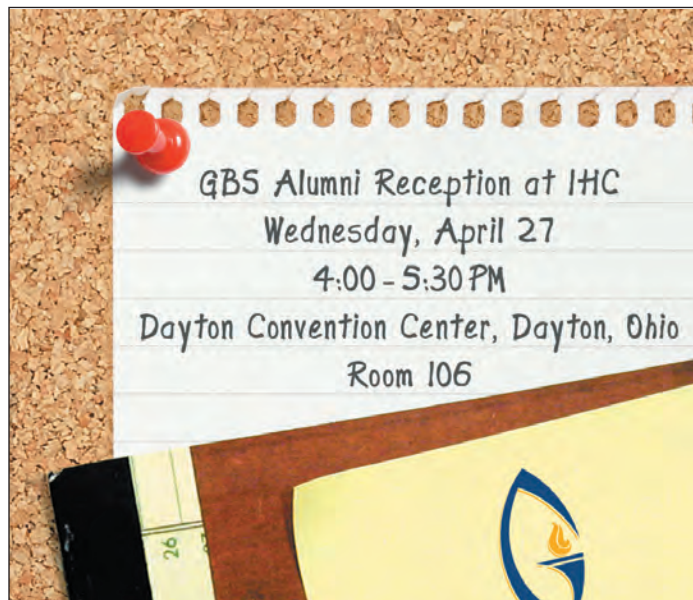


MARTHA MILLER RELEASES NEW RECORDING

Longtime GBS Music Division faculty member and gifted pianist Martha Miller has just released a new CD recording. Entitled *Piano Hymns II*, it



features her arrangements of 12 popular and cherished hymns evoking a variety of moods. To obtain your copy, send \$15 per CD, plus \$2 shipping and handling, to Martha Miller, 522 Channing St., Cincinnati, OH 45202-6804. ■



Why are there so many translations of the Bible?

FROM THE MIND OF GOD

by Allan P. Brown

God spoke to men and women in the languages they understood. For example, when God spoke to Moses, He did not use Summarian or Akkadian. He used Hebrew because Moses and the Israelite people to whom He was giving His self-revelation understood Hebrew. When God was speaking through Daniel and Ezra, He had them write large portions of their books in Aramaic because that was the language of the people to whom they were writing.

When God inspired the New Testament, He could have used the Greek of Plato, Aristotle, and Homer—classical Greek of the well-educated. Instead, He chose to reveal Himself and His truth in the common Greek (koine Greek) that ordinary people used and understood. Further, when the New Testament quotes the Old Testament, it often uses a quotation from a Greek translation of the Old Testament (Septuagint) instead of the original Hebrew. Thus we learn that when God was inspiring the New Testament writers, He permitted them to use a Greek version of the Hebrew Old Testament. This tells us that God is greatly concerned that His self-revelation be communicated in language which the intended audience can understand.

God wishes to reveal His Truth in language people can understand.

God's purpose is not to hide Himself from people, or to conceal His revelation by using language people do not understand. Rather, God's desire is to reveal Himself to us and He does this by using languages people under-

stand. This, therefore, gives us warrant to take His original revelation in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, and deliver it to people in languages that the people will understand today. Such translations are called versions.

Which version of the English Bible is best?

When people ask, "Which English version is the best?" they need to answer the following questions, "Best for what? For reading? For studying? For memorizing? And best for whom? For young people? For adults?" These questions reflect the complexity of the true situation.

There is not one best English version.

Generally speaking, all translations seek to convey the meaning of the "original language" in the "receptor language." The question is whether the translator will follow the actual wording of the original. A translator wants to communicate what the original says, but will he communicate it in the exact way that the original does? Scholars differ regarding the best translation approach to use. There are three basic theories of translation.

First, the free translation (paraphrase) method of translation.

A free translation is usually called a paraphrase. In a free translation, the translator is more or less unconcerned about the wording of the original. His goal is to present the thought of the original in his own words and in a fresh and contemporary way. He often takes the liberty to insert into the text what he thinks it means.



TO THE MIND OF MAN

Probably the best-known free translation in English is *The Living Bible (LB)* produced by Kenneth Taylor. Here's what it does with Ephesians 4:29: "Don't use bad language. Say only what is good and helpful to those you are talking to, and what will give them a blessing." Other examples of the paraphrastic method of translation are Goodspeed's translation, Philip's translation, and *The Message*.

How should we view free translations? We should view them the same way we view commentaries. They are presenting God's Word *plus* men's ideas regarding that Word. Consequently, a free or paraphrastic translation is inappropriate as a primary study Bible because it will not consistently tell you simply what God guided the Scripture writers to say. It will be colored by the translator's personal opinion and theology.

Second, the dynamic (functional) equivalence method of translation.

The dynamic equivalence method of translation endeavors to stay closer to the actual wording of the original Hebrew and Greek than does the paraphrase method. However, rather than a word-for-word equivalency, the translator focuses on the conceptual meaning of the words. He then seeks to put the meaning in the best idiomatic English that he can. We may call this a thought-for-thought translation method. The translators will use words and grammatical constructions that differ from the original when they feel that such changes will best communicate the meaning of the original.

The NIV has done the most to popularize the dynamic equivalence approach to translation. Here's what it does with Ephesians 4:29: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up, according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

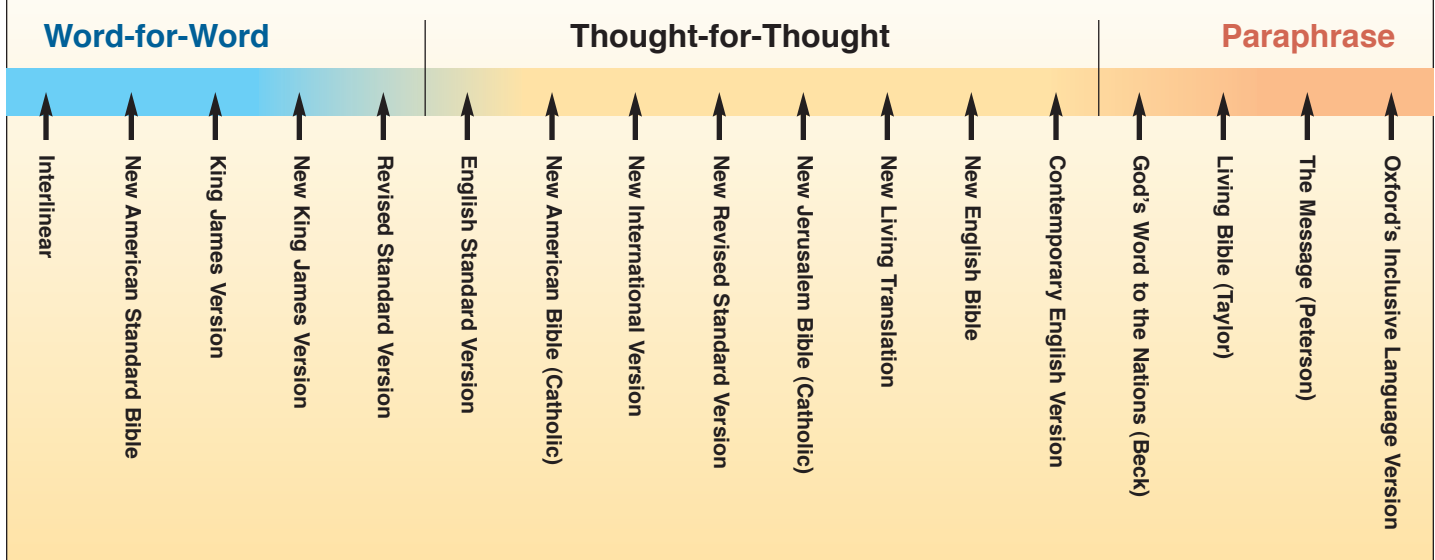
One of the major problems with this method is it removes all ambiguities from the original Hebrew and Greek texts. In removing all ambiguities, the translator tends to translate the text according to his own interpretation. As a result you will not realize a certain passage may have more than one interpretative meaning because the translator has given you only his own view and his view becomes part of the text you are reading. If your goal in Bible study is to come to your own conclusions about meaning, then you'll want a translation that reflects all ambiguities in the original languages.

Third, the literal (formal) equivalence method of translation.

I recommend that you choose an English version that reflects the formal equivalence method of translation. This method attempts to remain as close as possible to the actual wording of the original. It is sometimes called the "literal" word-for-word method of translation. The focus is on individual words, and the translator tries to duplicate those words in the receptor language as long as they make sense. Sometimes this doesn't make for the smoothest English, but the translator is willing to make that sacrifice in order to get across exactly what the original says. You can usually



COMPARISON OF ENGLISH BIBLE TRANSLATIONS



identify a literal word-for-word translation by the words that are italicized in the text. Italicized words are words that have been added for sake of clarity.

Among popular Bibles in conservative circles, the KJV, NKJV, and NASB generally follow a formal equivalence philosophy of translation. Here is how the KJV translates Ephesians 4:29: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Here's the NASB: "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a *word* as is good for edification, according to the need of *the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear."

Conclusion:

If you cannot read the Hebrew and Greek languages, I recommend that you study from a version that reflects the formal equivalence method of translation

and that is clearly intelligible to you. Do not use a version that conceals its meaning from you because you do not understand the vocabulary. The goal is to understand what you read. If possible, read from several versions that reflect the literal word-for-word translation method. This will help you detect passages that contain ambiguities. The places the translations differ from each other are the places which reflect ambiguities in the original language. ■

Dr. Allan P. Brown is chair of the Division of Ministerial Education at God's Bible School and College.

For Further Reading (available at Amazon.com):

Kent Ramler and Randy Leedy, *How Firm A Foundation* (Bob Jones University Press, 1999).

Ron Rhodes, *The Complete Guide to Bible Translations: How They Were Developed, Understanding Their Differences, Finding the Right One for You* (Harvest House Publishers, 2009).

"It is impossible to enslave mentally or socially a Bible-reading people. The principles of the Bible are the groundwork of human freedom."

—Horace Greeley

"Voltaire expected that within fifty years of his lifetime there would not be one Bible in the world. His house is now a distribution center for Bibles in many languages."

—Corrie Ten Boom

It has been many years since the original preface to the King James Bible, "The Translators to the Reader," has appeared in most editions. Here abridged, paraphrased, and updated in language are excerpts from that significant document.

HOW CAN WE HAVE THE **WORD OF GOD** WITHOUT THE SCRIPTURES?

How can there be piety without truth? Or truth, saving truth, without the Word of God? And how can we have the Word of God without the Scriptures? We are commanded to search them, for they can make us wise to salvation. If we are ignorant, they will instruct us; if out of the way, they will bring us home; if out of order, they will reform us; if in heaviness, they will comfort us. Why should we marvel at this, since the Scriptures, as they were given in their original form, are from heaven, not from earth?

Their author is God, not man, and their inspirer, the Holy Spirit, for they do not come merely from the wisdom of the apostles or of the prophets. Their content is truthfulness, purity, uprightness, and their effects are light of understanding, stability of purpose, repentance from dead works, newness of life, as well as holiness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. In studying them we are rewarded by fellowship with the saints, partaking of the heavenly nature, and an inheritance immortal, undefiled, and that never shall fade away. Happy is the person who delights in the Scriptures, and thrice happy is he who meditates upon them day and night.

But how can we meditate upon the Scriptures when they were given in languages that we do not understand? It is translation, of course, that opens the window to let in the light, breaks the shell that we may eat the kernel, and draws back the curtain that we may look into the most holy place. Indeed, without translation into the common language of the people, those who do not understand the original texts are like children at Jacob's well who have no bucket to draw water.

Many have asked about this translation and why it is even necessary. Were not the earlier translations good enough? Why force a new one on the people? We certainly are not condemning the labors of any who have gone before us. Indeed, we acknowledge that they were raised up by God and that they deserve to be held in everlasting remembrance. Yet, as nothing is begun and perfected at

the same time, it is our purpose to make even better what they did so well.

Truly, good Christian reader, we never thought from the beginning that we should need to make a new translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one, but to make a good one better. This has been our endeavor and our mark. For this purpose many were chosen who were greater in the eyes of others than in their own, and they sought the truth rather than their own praise.

In this confidence and with this devotion they assembled together. If you ask what they had before them, we answer that it was the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and the Greek text of the New Testament. We set these before us, for the Greek and Hebrew were the languages in which God was pleased to speak to His Church by His prophets and apostles. We have consulted other translators and commentators and were willing to revise what we had already done, bringing back to the anvil what we had hammered before. We have at length, through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought the work to completion, as you can see.

Now, gentle reader, we commend you to God and to the Spirit of His grace, who is able to build further than we can ask or think. He removes the scales from our eyes and the veil from our hearts, opening our minds that we may understand His Word, enlarging our hearts and correcting our affections, that we love it above gold and silver—yes, that we may love it to the end.

O receive not so great things in vain! O do not despise so great a salvation! It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, but it is a blessing, and it will bring us to everlasting blessedness, to listen to God. When He stretches out His hand to us, we should answer, "Here I am. Here we are to do Your will." May the Lord make us careful and earnest to know and to serve Him that we may be acknowledged of Him at the appearing of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, to whom with the Holy Spirit be all praise and thanksgiving. Amen. ■

the Great Classic

by Larry D. Smith

Throughout the English-speaking world, we're celebrating 400 years of the most famous, as well as the most beautiful, book ever published in our language. For it was in the year of grace 1611 that the Authorized King James Version of the Bible was first "set forth" in the providence of God and by the "special command" of King James I. Since that day, the Authorized Version—known generally in this country simply as the KJV—has become the most cherished possession of millions of our people. Its lofty cadences have challenged them to conquer the dangers of battlefield and wilderness, its solemn admonitions have called them to righteous lives and unselfish service, and its sublime promises have brought them assurance in the hour of trial and the agony of death.

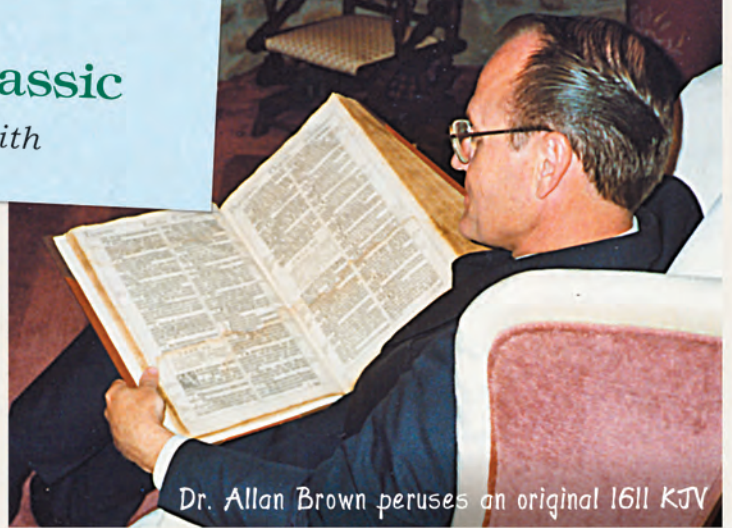
Though it's impossible to divorce contents from method, it's the KJV's magnificent literary style that has caused it to be regarded as "the greatest English classic ever written." Most of its readers, of course, have concerned themselves with its spiritual message. Yet many others who reject the Scriptures as divinely inspired still pay homage to the sublime beauty of the King James Bible.

What, then, is unique about the literary quality of this 17th-century version? *As the critics point out, the answer is found in the translators' careful blending of simplicity of style with dignity of expression.* For each richly complements the other, and together they weave a memorable tapestry of divine truth powerfully and faithfully rendered from the Biblical languages into our native tongue.

SIMPLICITY OF STYLE

Consider, first, the endearing and almost child-like simplicity of the King James Version. Invariably, there are three levels of general usage in any language. On one hand, there is the refined, and sometimes pedantic language of the scholars. To the other extreme is the coarse and often vulgar language of the lowest classes. Between is the language of the common people—the colloquial level of the great majority. It is in this colloquial usage that the version of 1611 is written.

To be sure, the scholarly translators knew the artificial and elegant phrases of their day. In the "Epistle Dedicatorie," still printed in some editions of the KJV, they addressed "the most high and mightie Prince James" with the usual high-sounding flattery of the royal court. "Great and manifold were the blessings, Most Dread Sovereign, which



Dr. Allan Brown peruses an original 1611 KJV

Almighty God...bestowed upon us...when He first sent Your Majesty's Royal Person to rule over us.... The appearance of Your Majesty, as of the Sun in his strength, instantly dispelled those supposed and surmised mists."

Yet ostentatious display never corrupted their translation of the scriptural text. For example, the English words the translators used were short. Dr. McFee states that the average word in the Authorized Version has only a little over four letters. Of the 319 words of the Ten Commandments, 259 are words of only one syllable; and in the familiar 23rd Psalm, 95 of its 119 words are of one syllable, with none over three syllables. The same scholar also points out that the translators usually retained old, familiar forms over newer, more trendy ones. For instance, "anxiety" was rapidly coming into vogue, but they refused to substitute it for the familiarity of the older and more common word "thought." That is why we read in Matthew 6:24, "Take no thought for the morrow."

Another mark of their simplicity of style was the translators' avoidance of a tendency of their times to "refine" the English language by adding a ponderous array of foreign terms, especially from French and Latin. While the KJV scholars were perfectly at ease using such terms as "occidental," "propagating," and "transitory" in the "Epistle Dedicatorie" to the king, they generally avoided foreign embellishments in their actual rendering of the Scriptures. As Professor March observes, 93 percent of the 1611 version is plain, unornamented, natural Anglo-Saxon! The common people quickly embraced the KJV because they could so easily read it.

DIGNITY OF EXPRESSION

Yet to the translators, simplicity did not mean coarseness or rudeness of expression. Though their literary usage was easy to understand, it also was characterized by profound dignity and elevated

beauty. It was for this reason that Andrew Lang referred to the Authorized Version as "that immortal monument of English prose."

This stemmed in part from the KJV scholars' intense earnestness about their task. For as they declared in their original preface to the reader, Holy Writ was the "very lively Word of God." Scripture was rapidly replacing the church as the infallibly supreme "rule of faith and practice"; and as convinced Protestants, they were determined that not one line of trifling would mar their efforts to make it clear, accurate, and authoritative. That is why the version of 1611 takes itself with great seriousness; and while the Bible is never a sad book, it never jests. One contemporary scholar notes a pun in the Hebrew text which the translators did not try to duplicate in English, apparently for fear that they might lower the noble gravity of their work.

Consistently they chose English words and phrases that would state the great scriptural narratives with dignified restraint. Much of the Bible is history, but never did the translators cast its sweeping themes into the dramatic and highly-colored form of so many historical works. Milton's magnum opus, for instance, is based on Scripture, yet the reverent simplicity of the Bible's account of man's "first disobedience" is in marked contrast with *Paradise Lost*. This classic work is in magnificent language, to be sure, but still it "labours with it, complicates it, entangling it with endless details which are to the Scripture unimportant," as McFee assures us.

Everywhere scenes of unparalleled drama appear in the Bible. For example, Nathan confronts King David with murder and adultery, thundering, "Thou art the man!" Even this, however, is told in direct and dignified language rather than in the overwrought phrases of "dramatic" presentation. There is also splendid oratory in the KJV, but it is rendered not in the stiff and ornamental style of Elizabethan language (as in the "Epistle Dedicatorie"), but in the simple elegance of reverent translation. Consider the force of St. Peter's words in Acts 2, where he tells the vast throngs at Pentecost, "...[Christ] have ye taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; Whom God hath raised up...." That is powerful public address, as is St. Paul's address before Agrippa in Acts 26 in the KJV.

Yet the translators always guard their language. Even in the record of the Crucifixion and the

Resurrection—certainly scenes which could be presented in excitable and melodramatic language, the KJV text employs only the inspired narrative expressed with dignity and restraint. It is this profound earnestness combined with grandeur of theme, all expressed in winsome simplicity, which caused Coleridge to remark, "After reading Isaiah or the Epistle to the Hebrews, Homer and Virgil are disgustingly tame, Milton himself barely tolerable."

MOST BEAUTIFUL PIECE OF LITERATURE

Thus, it is true—the unique literary quality of the Authorized Version is its careful blending of simplicity of style with dignity of expression. Simplicity and dignity—yes, each richly complements the other; and together they weave a memorable tapestry of divine truth powerfully rendered from the Biblical languages into our native tongue. For 16 generations, the KJV has endured as "the great classic" of the English-speaking world; and considered merely as a literary masterpiece, it has had more influence over English prose, composition, and linguistic development than any other book.

Though modern-language translations are now widely read and studied, the KJV will always remain a cherished part of our spiritual and literary heritage. Its influence is indivisible from our history, its unsurpassed purity of expression is indelibly written into our literature, and its concepts are firmly implanted into the fibers of our society. On earth and in heaven, we shall give thanks for its memorable phrases, as well as for its sacred message. If we thank God for new efforts to render His Holy Word into our native language, let us never forget the beauty and power of the old which has nourished and shaped us since 1611.

So we join enthusiastically in the worldwide celebration of the KJV's 400th anniversary, honoring first its sacred message but also its peerless beauty. We can say a hearty amen (or should it be "an heartie amene"?) to that renowned literary critic, H.L. Mencken, who once said of the KJV, "It is the most beautiful of all the translations of the Bible; indeed, it is probably the most beautiful piece of writing in all the literature of the world." ■

Larry D. Smith is editor of *God's Revivalist*. Updated and edited by him, this article was originally published in *The Antler*, Department of English, the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

God's Inspired Book

by A. Philip Brown II

Under the Spirit's guidance, Paul wrote, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16). The phrase "given by inspiration of God" translates the Greek word *theopneustos*. Since this word occurs only here in all of extant Greek literature, it may be that Paul coined it. The meaning of *theopneustos* appears to be "God-breathed" or "breathed out by God." Paul's point is that all Scripture, particularly the Old Testament, is God's word. Clearly parts of Scripture are reports of other persons' speech, but Paul is affirming that the reports themselves are God's.

INSPIRATION: PLENARY AND VERBAL

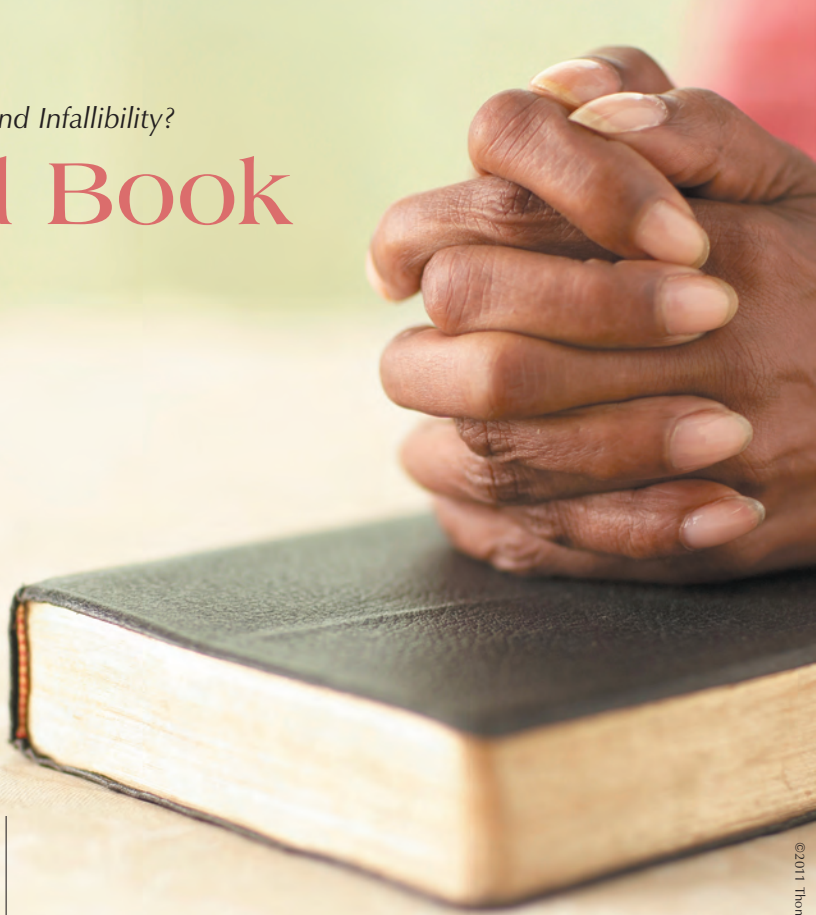
Theologians define "inspiration" as the process by which God superintended the writing of Scripture by His Spirit so that the human authors wrote the exact words that He wanted to be written. In some cases, God actually dictated the words He wanted written (e.g., the Ten Commandments). In most cases, however, He operated through the authors of Scripture with or without their awareness to produce through them the message He wanted to communicate (2 Peter 1:19-21).

One will often read theologians speaking of the "plenary, verbal inspiration" of Scripture. The word *plenary* means that "all the words" are God-breathed, not just some of them. *Verbal* inspiration means that the words themselves, not just the authors' thoughts, were God-breathed.

INERRANCY

The conclusion that Scripture is inerrant necessarily follows from Scripture's affirmation that it is God's word. Inerrant means without error. Since God speaks only the truth (Tit. 1:2), and the Bible is God's speech (2 Tim. 3:16), all that the Bible affirms is true. To be precise, we should say that the original writings, called autographs, were inerrant. The copies we have today contain copying mistakes. However, God has so marvelously guarded His word that by comparing the copies we have, we can be sure we have 99% of the original text. Amazingly, the 1% that is left in no way affects any of the central teachings of the Bible.

After the printing of the KJV, the Bible's inspiration came under attack from so-called Enlightenment scholars who claimed to have found myriads of errors in Scripture, thus invalidating its claim to be God's word. When these "errors" are carefully examined in the light



of the original culture, writing styles, and language habits of the authors, none of them turn out to be errors.

Wayne Grudem's *Systematic Theology* helpfully notes that denying biblical inerrancy creates the following problems: (1) *Morally*: If God intentionally lies in small matters, may we also? (2) *Theologically*: If God intentionally lies, then the Bible is wrong in its affirmation that God never lies. If it is wrong in its affirmation regarding God's truthfulness, how can we know it is not wrong in other affirmations? (3) *Spiritually*: If God intentionally lies in small matters, how can we trust Him implicitly as He calls us to do?

INFALLIBILITY

The term infallibility means "not liable to error or incapable of failure." Some theologians have used this term in order to avoid affirming Scripture's inerrancy. However, conservative theologians have also used it to affirm something more than inerrancy. Something is inerrant if it contains no errors in its affirmations. Something is infallible if it cannot fail to accomplish its intended purpose. When Jesus said, "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35), I believe He was affirming in different words what Yahweh asserts in Isaiah 55:11, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Thank God for His inspired, inerrant, infallible word! ■

Dr. A. Philip Brown II is a member of the faculty in the Division of Ministerial Education at God's Bible School and College, and he is a regular contributor to God's Revivalist.

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Pastor, I'll just be honest with you. I don't read my Bible.... I just don't get anything out of it." Admittedly, I was shocked when my friend spoke these words. However, I've come to realize that his honest admission points to a more common dilemma than we would like to admit. I know multiple factors may contribute to a lack of enrichment in reading the Bible, but I think too often it is because many Christians have never been provided with basic guidelines on how to receive the greatest benefit from reading the Bible. Please allow me to offer some guidelines I've discovered to be extremely helpful in my life:

Read the Bible Contextually. To properly understand Scripture, it's so important to understand the context in which a particular verse or verses are found. That is why I often encourage people to read through an entire book, or at least a large portion of it, in one setting. Then, go back and read through the book slowly, verse by verse, in light of the bigger picture. This method of reading follows the basic rule of all successful interpretation: Meaning always flows from the top down, from the larger units to the smaller units, and not the other way around.

how to **READ** the **BIBLE**

*These simple guidelines
by Mark Cravens
will enrich your reading of Scripture.*

Read the Bible Prayerfully. Learn to incorporate prayer before, after, and throughout the entire process. Dialoguing with God during your Bible reading can be extremely helpful. Begin by asking Him to illuminate your mind as you read His Word. When you discover a truth that is pertinent to your life, stop and ask Him to help you make the needed application. If you come across something you don't understand, ask Him for guidance as you seek to gain an understanding.

Read the Bible Imaginatively. Step into the story! Through the doorway of imagination, try to experience what the writer and characters may have been experiencing. I remember when reading through the life of Elijah, I went and sat by a creek bank so I could visualize what it may have been like for Elijah to live for months hiding by the brook. Needless to say, the experience was extremely rewarding. Learning to incorporate your imagination can help bring the Bible to life!

Read the Bible Inquisitively. Like an investigator at a crime scene, you need to ask the important how, when, what, where, and why questions that demand an answer. For instance: *What is the setting? Who are the recipients? Why is the author saying this? Where does this fit into the larger context of Scripture? How does this story apply to my life?*

Read the Bible Meditatively. With our hurried, fast-lane lifestyle, it can be challenging to

slow down long enough to meditate on God's Word. Far too often we approach our Bible reading with a "checklist" mentality. This only leaves us with little more than the satisfaction of knowing one more thing on our overcrowded "to do" list is completed. This is certainly not what the Psalmist David had in mind when he penned: *"But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper."* Slow down and pause to reflect on what you are reading. Ask yourself, "How does this apply to my life?" or "What is God trying to say to me through this passage?"

Read the Bible Obediently. Needless to say, it will do us little good to read God's Word if our heart is not open to obeying it. The Bible is to be more than merely informational—it is to be *transformational!* Having the right information is crucial, but unless we intend to apply it to our lives, the soil of our hearts will remain barren and unfruitful. God wants His word to be powerful and life-changing for you!

Take a few minutes to consider these suggested guidelines, and then begin applying them to your daily Bible reading. See if you don't experience a difference! ■

Rev. Mark Cravens is the campus pastor at God's Bible School and College and a member of the faculty in the Division of Ministerial Education.

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4th C. Jerome translates the Bible into Latin. Called the Vulgate, this was to become the official Bible for Western Christianity for centuries.



8th C. The Venerable Bede, one of England's great scholars, translates the Psalms and gospels into Anglo-Saxon.

1228 The Bible is divided into chapters by Stephen Langton, although this innovation is also credited to Cardinal Hugo in 1250.



c.1384 John Wycliffe translates the Latin Bible into English. This was later banned and, 48 years after his death, church authorities had his

movable-type printing press, and marks the start of the age of the printed book. It is an edition of the Vulgate, printed by Johannes Gutenberg, in Mainz, Germany.

1477 Use of movable metal type for printing is introduced into England from Germany.

1488 The Old Testament is divided into verses by R. Nathan.

1525 William Tyndale's translation of the New Testament and the Pentateuch is published. Bitterly opposed by church authorities, Tyndale is publically strangled and burned as a heretic.

1535 Miles Coverdale publishes his revision of Tyndale's Bible together with the remaining part of the Old testament. This is the first complete English Bible, and an edition of this, called the "Great Bible" was placed in every parish church in England.

A BASIC TIMELINE OF

9th C. King Alfred the Great, considered one of history's finest rulers, orders a translation of the whole Bible into Anglo-Saxon but does not live to see this project completed.



body dug up, burned, and his ashes thrown into the river.

c.1454 The Gutenberg Bible is the first major book printed with a



1551 The New Testament is divided into verses by Robert Stephanus.

1560 Protestant scholars, who had fled to Geneva, Switzerland, to escape the



QUEEN MARY

persecution of Queen Mary, issue the "Geneva Bible," which was to be especially popular with the Puritans. This was the first whole Bible to be divided into verses.

- 1568 The Bishops' Bible, so-called because it was translated by a group of English Bishops, is



KING JAMES

- 1611 The Authorized King James Version is finally published.
- 1620 The Pilgrims sail to America, carrying with them the English Bible, an immensely important step in the worldwide diffusion of the Scriptures, also aided by the expansion of British influence in

Testament, using his own English translation of the New Testament.

- 1866 A translation of the New Testament is made by Dean Henry Alford of Canterbury, a poet, preacher, painter, musician, scholar, critic, and philologist.
- 1885 The English Revised Version is published.
- 1901 The American Standard Version is published.
- 1952 The Revised Standard Version is published.
- 1958 J.B. Phillips' translation of the New Testament is published.
- 1963 The New American Standard Bible is published.
- 1970 The New English Bible is published.
- 1976 The Good News Translation is published.

THE ENGLISH BIBLE

published. It was never very popular and soon fell into disuse.

- 1601 King James VI of Scotland attends the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in which a proposal for a new translation of the Bible is discussed.
- 1603 King James VI of Scotland becomes King James I of England.
- 1604 The Hampton Court Conference authorizes a new Bible translation. King James I and Richard Bancroft draw up the guidelines for the translators.
- 1608 The various sections of the new English translation are completed.
- 1610 The Rheims/Douay Bible is published by and for Roman Catholics.

India, Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

- 1755 John Wesley publishes his *Explanatory Notes Upon the New*



JOHN WESLEY

- 1979 The New International Version (NIV) is published.
- 1982 The New King James Version (NKJV) is published.
- 1984 The New International Version replaces the KJV as the best-selling Bible in the USA.
- 1989 The New Revised Standard Version is published.
- 1996 The New Living Translation is published.
- 2001 The English Standard Version is published.
- 2002 The Message (Peterson) is published.
- 2005 Today's New International Version (TNIV) is published.

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