

Is the King James Version the Only Bible Christians Should Trust and Read?—Part Three

By Dr. John Weldon

Why KJVO Claims and Arguments Cannot Be Trusted

It is one thing to have made a reasonable argument for one's claims. If true, then others must give such claims serious consideration. But it is another thing entirely to have a case so tenuous that its primary support must often be based upon poor logic, misrepresentation, wild allegations, or inflammatory falsehoods.

Dramatic claims require dramatic proof. Arguments of major corruption in modern conservative translations must really be documented, not just made to look good. Allegations that godly Christians are actually **opposed** to Christ and part of a devilish conspiracy to have everyone worship Satan are extremely serious.¹ This is why those who make such charges must "be held to the highest standards of scholarly acumen and accuracy."² Of course, almost every philosophy, religion, cult, world view, etc., can make what **seems** like a good defense for its position—at least until the other side is examined. Only the unwise rush to say something before thinking it through. "He who answers before listening—that is his folly and his shame" (Prov. 18:13, NIV).

In light of this, consider a few comments by those who have thoroughly studied the KJVO debate. Doug Kutilek writes, "Just once before I die, I want to pick up a book that advocates KJV Onlyism and find that the author at least gets his facts straight. Of the armload that I have examined so far, not one of them is even moderately factually accurate. I suspect this... is because none of the KJV Only... advocates do any serious original research but merely rely on [their] unreliable predecessors."³

Dr. D. A. Carson observes, "Their presuppositions...have made most of them careless about determining the truth of many of their oft repeated contentions, with the result that not only their interpretation of the facts is incorrect, but also their alleged 'facts' are far too often simply untrue."⁴ James White, author of what may become the definitive refutation of the KJVO position, *The King James Version Only Controversy* (Bethany, March, 1995) and president of Alpha and Omega Ministries told us:

Generally speaking, KJV Only writers have no interest in being fair or impartial in their handling of the manuscript and textual data of Scripture. They also have little desire to accurately or honestly reflect the opinions of those with whom they disagree. Indeed, there is no effort made to appreciate the strengths of the positions of **anyone** who would speak a word against the inerrancy of the KJV.

The problem this raises is that sincere Christians who read KJV Only materials do not realize that proponents' citation of historical facts is **always** skewed. However, the most consistent problem with KJV Only authors is their use of double standards. For example, the very arguments that would completely disprove the inspiration and inerrancy of the KJV itself are used with regularity against modern versions. Even though this does not cause KJVO promoters the slightest difficulty, can anyone maintain such an approach is either intellectually credible or fair to other Christians?... I can honestly say that in many years of reading and debates with leading advocates, I have never encountered more circular

reasoning in **any** religious group, **including among Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and Roman Catholics**. And this is a sad commentary to be sure, given the tremendous division such arguments have caused within the Church.⁵

A major difficulty in accepting the arguments of the KJVO authors is: ***If*** their claims are true concerning the superiority of the KJV and the corruption of all modern translations, why aren’t the hundreds of **godly** Evangelical scholars who have evaluated their arguments convinced? One would assume that **clear** evidence of superior manuscript tradition should be convincing to godly, objective scholars. But the evidence isn’t that clear.

Further, consider the implications of those who offer the kinds of New Age conspiracy theories G. A. Riplinger does. It means that literally scores of Evangelical scholars, scholars who are, in fact, godly men and who truly love Jesus Christ, now become members of a New Age satanic conspiracy whose end goal is to cause the world to accept the Antichrist and worship Satan. Among such “Luciferians” who have worked on the NIV or NASB committees are Drs. Gleason Archer and Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Merrill C. Tenney of Wheaton College, Charles Ryrie and Kenneth Barker of Dallas Theological Seminary, William Hendrickson of commentary fame, Kenneth Kantzer, former editor of *Christianity Today*, noted Evangelical scholar Leon Morris of Ridley College in Melbourne, Australia, Roger Nicole of Gordon-Conwell Seminary, R. Laird Harris and J. Barton Payne of Covenant Theological Seminary, Bruce K. Waltke of Regent College in Vancouver, and many others. But not only have these men penned some of the finest Evangelical texts written, more than anything they have taught thousands of seminary students to love Jesus Christ and honor Him above all else. And yet we are asked to believe **all** these men and others like them actually oppose Christ and are part of a satanic conspiracy to destroy the purity of God’s Word and institute worldwide Satan worship!

Perhaps we can best listen to what God Himself wrote to us in the King James Bible: “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness.... But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ” (Eph. 4:14–15).

Beginning next time, we will examine specific KJVO arguments and document their errors—especially those of Riplinger. We will also examine what lessons the Church can learn over controversies like this.

Notes:

¹ One of the theses of Riplinger’s book.

² James White, *New Age Bible Versions Refuted*, (Phoenix, AZ: Alpha and Omega Ministries, 1994), p. 3.

³ Doug Kutilek, “The Septuagint: Riplinger’s Blunders: Believe It or Not,” *Baptist Biblical Heritage*, Vol. 5, no. 2, 1994, p. 3.

⁴ D. A. Carson, *The King James Version Debate: A Plea for Realism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1981), p. 43.

⁵ Edited letter of September 1, 1994.