



# The PROJECTOR

*"Projecting the Light of the Word of God on the Issues of the Day"*

Dr. Dayton Hobbs, Editor

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## THE TRANSLATION INERRANCY QUESTION

BY DR. DAYTON HOBBS



I'm afraid pastors have been guilty of not knowing and/or not teaching their flocks the truth concerning how we got the Scriptures. Specifically, I believe pastors have kept their congregations in the dark concerning the extent of the inspiration of the Scriptures: that is, that only the original autographs were "God-breathed"; and that although we have reliable and trustworthy translations, we do not have the original manuscripts; and even if we did we could not claim infallibility for a translation. An inerrancy claim for any translation has never been the position of the Church historically. The moment man touches anything there arises the possibility of error. An inerrant translation is not now, nor ever has been, a necessity for the faith of

saints, nor a requirement for the man of God to stand in his pulpit and declare that he is preaching the infallible Word of God. God has preserved His Word to us — not by making the King James translation infallible, thus indicating that He had been unable to preserve His Word for the first 1600 years, but by preserving for us translations that are trustworthy and reliable. God's principle of preservation did not begin with the 1611 King James edition thereby leaving men without the fruit of preservation for 1600 years, but has always been in operation protecting and preserving the Scriptures that men in every century might have the Word of God.

One pastor told me, that when students in his class in graduate school some years ago asked their

professor how to deal with the problem of inerrancy and translations, they were told to not bring it up in their churches, as their people could not grasp it. How foolish! Spiritual people can grasp spiritual truth. There are no such things as truths that cannot be taught to God's people. We may be afraid to teach them, but God's truth is spiritual truth and is often hid "from the wise and prudent" and revealed "unto babes."

Because of the fact of the close proximity (in distance) of our ministry to that of Dr. Peter Ruckman — the father of the heresy that teaches the inerrancy of the King James translation — I have, for about the past twenty years, had to keep my people informed on

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## GOTHARD RETURNS—WOES CONTINUE

In the September 19, 1980 edition, CHRISTIANITY TODAY reports that just three weeks after Gothard had stepped down as president of his "troubled Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts" and as a member of its board, "the board restored the IBYC founder to both former positions."

The article reports that Gustav Hemwall, IBYC board chairman, who has returned to that position after also stepping down in July, said that "Gothard remained on a temporary leave of absence from administrative duties" and that Gothard was "spending time in study and prayer, as well as developing new teaching material

that would incorporate 'lessons that have been learned' through the recent problems." He also indicated that the video taped seminars would continue and that he believed the IBYC is on the "long road to recovery."

CHRISTIANITY TODAY further reports that:

*For a number of veteran institute members and volunteer workers, however, Gothard's restoration came prematurely. Several IBYC area committees had canceled upcoming seminars. A number of staff members had resigned; still unresolved, they said, are many alleged inconsistencies between Gothard's teachings in his popular 32-hour,*

*six-day seminars, and his own actions.*

CHRISTIANITY TODAY stated that Bill Wood, who recently departed from his job as administrative director of the IBYC's Oak Brook, Illinois, headquarters said that "aside from 10 persons involved in immorality...at least 20 others had been dismissed or, like himself, had resigned in dissatisfaction over developments at IBYC."

**PREACHES ONE THING  
— PRACTICES ANOTHER**

The article further states:  
*Going over the list of de-*

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## Editor's Desk

On the night of September 10, 1980, Santa Rosa Christian College formally opened with 21 students enrolled. Because of work schedules, some of these are not taking full academic loads; however, most of them are enrolled in degree programs. Four of the courses offered are also offered at night for the benefit of some who have jobs and yet desire to work toward a degree. Students have come to us from four states to attend Santa Rosa Christian College.

We are thankful to God for this good beginning and for each student the Lord has sent us. We are looking forward with even more anticipation and excitement to the future of Santa Rosa Christian College.

In addition to adding college students to our dormitory, we have had a large increase in our junior and senior high school dormitory students. As a matter of fact, our girls dormitory is full and we must begin to plan how to provide additional space for next year. This is the type problem we like to have, however, and we are most grateful for the Lord's blessing.

I hope you will pray for us, and I hope you will recommend Santa Rosa Christian College to students interested in attending a good Fundamentalist college.

## We Get Letters...

Dear Dayton:

Thank you for The PROJECTOR. The article by Peter Foxx, "The Issue of Inerrancy: was very helpful. I read the attack by E. L. Bynum and appreciated this logical reply.

Sincerely,  
C. B.  
Memphis, TN

Dear Brother Hobbs:

Your publication is much appreciated and I wish to especially thank you for "Mixing Things" by Rev. Frank H. Sells — 2-80.

This treatise is the best I have read on Gothard and exposes his weakness in areas never before exposed....It would appear Divine providence that this has developed to bring to light the inconsistency of the basic principles he proclaims. As one writer put it, he tried to teach the principles of the Word of God, without teaching the Word of God.

It should cause the demise of the entire organization, but most of his followers will remain unchanged worshipping the man as in the case of Graham. Keep up the good reporting.

Your brother in  
Christ,  
G. M.  
Newtown, PA

Dear Rev. Foxx:

...I believe God has infallibly preserved His Word. I believe His churches have always had His Word to preach. I do not believe God allowed His Word to languish in a wastebasket in some monastery.

I do not believe God preserved His Word with an apostate church.

One further word about deception - I think it is deceptive for you to imply that you are preaching God's Word when you do not really believe you really have a correct copy of that Word. Nor do you really believe that you can obtain a correct copy anywhere on this planet.

I do not know Peter Ruckman. I do not possess any of his books. I have heard some of his tapes. Some things he teaches I agree with. Other things I do not.

I have believed in an infallible Bible ever since I was a boy. My mother taught me the Bible could be trusted in all matters of faith and practice. My pastor and my church taught me the same thing.

I have heard nothing from you, The Projector, Faith for the Family, The Sword of the Lord, nor any other source to cause me to believe my Bible has proven error.

I still think you ought to print a list of all the "errors" you believe you have found in The Projector. This would sure correct us heretics and stupid folks. Besides it would be the only kind thing to do.

It also seems strange that in 30 years of reading, studying, and preaching from the KJV I have not been able to document one proven error.

I rather suspect you people are trying to defend BJU in their

position on the Bible.

Yours because His,  
D. W. B.  
Craigsville, VA

## Our Answer

Dear Brother B.:

The confusion that exists over the doctrine of preservation is due, in part, to the purposeful withholding of the truth from Christians by some fundamentalist pastors and professors. The fact that translations are not inerrant but only the original autographs has often been willfully concealed. It was done with the belief that ordinary Christians could not grasp the technicality of the arguments of textual criticism. This was sheer nonsense, and the devil has used such irresponsibility to cause unnecessary schism over a spurious issue.

We are planning an article for an upcoming issue of The PROJECTOR in which the doctrine of preservation will be dealt with with a degree of specificity. The position of The PROJECTOR is the historic position of bedrock, Biblical orthodoxy. The article will substantiate this claim.

I do plead with you not to contribute to the schism and confusion by taking a position on preservation out of blind emotionalism. The Bible can withstand the closest scrutiny. We have an infallible Bible although we do not have infallible translations. I am not a Protestant Pope, and therefore, I cannot deliver to you an inspired list of errors in each translation. I can preach from my King James or from a very limited number of other translations, with the confidence that the discrepancies are minor and present no significant doctrinal difficulty. However, as a faithful preacher of the Word, I cannot be sloppy in my Bible study and ignore the tools of textual criticism. Accuracy, precision and honesty lend themselves to sound exegesis and exposition.

Sincerely yours,  
Peter J. Foxx  
Associate Editor

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### The PROJECTOR

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## Focus On Religion

BY

PETER J. FOXX

# CHRISTIANITY IN POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

I would like to devote much of my space for this month's column to a guest editorial by Bob Spencer, Pastor of Metropolitan Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. His article on Christian political responsibility in this election year is timely and informative.

The most important responsibility for Christians in America is not to save America from the political liberals. The most important responsibility for Christians in America and everywhere else is to keep and defend the Faith. Many sincere, but misguided, Christians are advocating that the only way to save America is for "conservatives" of whatever religious persuasion to band together to elect "conservatives" to political office. Some people are even saying that if we do not unite with all the "conservatives" the nation will fall within the next couple of years. The desperate cry of these people is: "We must forget our religious differences until after we save the country!"

No person in this country has been more concerned for America than I over the past 20 years. I have done all I could to stir patriotism and responsibility for government in the minds of Christians. However, I have had an even greater concern for the maintenance of the historic Biblical Faith. The Psalmist asked: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" He was certainly not referring to the government; rather, he was speaking to the spiritual foundation of the people. During the Republican Convention the press reported that Dr. Jerry Falwell said that he would vote for Mr. Reagan even if he chose the Devil to be his running-mate. For a preacher who claims to be a Fundamentalist to make such a statement is a classic illustration of the spiritual foundations being destroyed in an effort to do something that in and of itself is good.

We should do all we can, without compromising the Biblical Faith,

to elect good men to office. We must not, however, jeopardize the line of distinction between false and true doctrine. For Christians to set up a religious-political organization which includes Roman Catholics, Jews, Mormons, Charismatics, new-evangelicals and other false religions is to undermine the Faith. Fundamental Christians cannot separate themselves from their doctrinal position in order to achieve a political goal without undermining their spiritual foundation and blurring the line of Biblical separation. There is no value to Fundamentalists in having a "conservative" political atmosphere if our Biblical distinctives are lost in the process. Moreover those who are making this compromise are, no matter how sincere, conceding to the false religionists that God is not strong enough to save our country without the help of His enemies. I am not prepared to make such a concession.

We will not "save" our country by political means. The hope for America is a spiritual revival — not an improvement in the moral climate. If Roman Catholics, Jews, other unbelievers, and the compromising Christians can produce an improvement in morality through politics, then why preach the Gospel? I believe these people, no matter how "conservative" they are politically, are LOST. Rather than using them to "save" America I need to try to lead them to Christ. Now, if they happen to agree with our political beliefs that is well and good. However, Biblical Fundamentalists are still commanded to separate from them organizationally. We do not have Biblical grounds on which to unite with them in a crusade for Morality.

Let me remind you that true Conservative beliefs must come from a Christian philosophy of life. No one who refuses to accept Christ as personal Saviour is a conservative in the eyes of God. It is a dangerous thing for us to unite with unbelievers in order to bring about morality because we might encourage them to think their efforts will make them "good enough" to go to Heaven. We must always remember that our primary responsibility is to "earnestly contend for the Faith." To place the goal of political conservatism above the maintenance of the pure Faith is just as humanistic as what the Humanists are doing. Fundamental Christians must work to elect good men to office, but we must do so within a Biblical framework!"

VAN IMPE LOSES SHULER BACKING

Some time ago, The PROJECTOR

mentioned the impropriety of Evangelist Phil Shuler's open support of Jack Van Impe in light of the latter's open movement into the new-evangelical camp. Apparently Dr. Shuler has finally become convinced of the futility of attempting to reclaim an evangelist who has sold out to compromise. We rejoice that Dr. Shuler has come out clearly on this issue. In a recent issue of The ITINERANT EVANGELIST, Shuler writes:

I will not get into all of this, for I don't think it is pertinent to the fact. Suffice it to say, Dr. Van Impe has thought it correct to have on his program, to be aired in the month of August, a Mr. Sid Roth, who has traveled widely in the Charismatic circles and has a radio ministry. For instance, Sunday, August 10, on Channel 62 in Detroit, he stated on another program that he wished to spend his ministry getting the Charismatics and Fundamentalists together. This is his statement, quoted to me by one who saw the program: "The Charismatics have the power; the Fundamentalists have the truth. If we could get them together, we could punch the devil in the nose." This pretty well types the man. Well, some of the staff tried to reason with Dr. Van Impe about having a Charismatic like Sid Roth on his program but to no avail. TV director, Jonathan Byrd, was responsible for Roth being on the program, and Jack chose to stand with Jon Byrd.

It is with sadness that I did not see my dream come true. It still might, but for the life of me, I can't see it on the near horizon. Jack Van Impe, in throwing in with Jon Byrd (who also recommended Jack get Col. Sanders of Kentucky Fried Chicken fame, who still runs with the Full Gospel people), and having this known Charismatic on his show, has lost the backing of Phil Shuler, and that saddens my heart. I've known Jack for years, and we have been friends. I cannot put my hand to the ministry of a man who would promote a Charismatic by having him on his TV program. I don't say this in animosity; I just can't bring myself to let friendship get in the way of Biblical direction.

For your information, Ross Davis, Field Director to the Jack Van Impe Ministries (and my son-in-law), and Eldon Martens, Executive Director of the Jack Van Impe Ministries, have resigned, and are no longer there. Their resignations came over this same problem; the Sid Roth Telecast.



## Stars of the Morning

By "Aunt Carolyn"

### THE INDOMITABLE SUNFLOWER



The prairie bred singing people — people who sang of open skies, of waves of golden grain, and of cowboys' dreams and laments. From the innocence of the cradle to the responsibility of mature years, hearts eased and tensions relaxed in response to the simple melody and beautiful harmony of "Home On The Range." Songs of melancholy, romance, courage, spirit, and faith all expressed the heart and life of the prairie, but no matter how wide the range of his musical experience, sooner or later every Kansas youngster learned and sang with fervor:

*I was born in Kansas,  
I was bred in Kansas,  
And when I get married  
I'll be wed in Kansas.  
She's a true blue gal  
Who promised me she'd wait,  
She's my sunflower  
From The Sunflower State.*

The hearty sunflowers in their brilliant golden color speak volumes for the stamina, courage, and depth of character of prairie people. Their sturdy stalks support the rich green leaves and the lovely flowers. Beautiful in their simplicity, the plain black centers are surrounded by a single row of slender yellow petals radiating outward like rays from the sun. The cultivated varieties may grow to twelve feet in height and have giant-size flowers a foot or two across. From these come the good seeds so rich in fat and protein. Roasted and salted, children like them for snacks. Raw, they are delicious for the birds. Crushed, they make valuable oil for food and other products. The sunflower stalks and leaves become fiber and fodder for animal feed.

These cultivated sunflowers certainly have earned a place of respect and usefulness, but the delightful ones to see are those that grow wild and run free; those that ramble along roadsides, revel along fence rows, and crowd around low places in the fields; those

that tilt their bright smiling faces to cheer a passing stranger or tease a playful child skipping by. These smaller sunflowers wave forward and back with the hot dry wind of summer but always keep their precious faces toward the sun.

Ah, there is the secret of the sunflower's brightness and beauty. From morning to evening as the sun moves from east to west, the faithful sunflower gently turns to follow the sun. When the sun rises in the morning, the sunflower lifts its head to seek its source of light and strength. All day long, even through the grueling heat of the afternoon, it keeps its face to the sun, and at last in the evening when the sun sinks beneath the horizon, the sunflower bows its head to rest, awaiting dawn and the fresh appearance of the source of life whose name it bears.

What an example the sunflower sets for Christians. We should be hearty, faithful, enduring soldiers even through the heat of opposition or temptation — not because we are strong or capable ourselves, but because we keep our faces humbly turned to the source of our light and strength, The Son, The Lord Jesus Christ. Our first thought and attention in the dawn of the

morning should be upon Him. Our constant meditation should be of Him as we follow His voice and leadership through the day. If we let the horizon of any matter — sin, pleasure, pride, selfishness, lack of devotion, being too busy to do God's work, or any other thing — hide His face from view, our heads will be low. We will be dejected, defeated, and ineffective Christians. Our joy, our testimony, our brightness depend on how we face The Son and how we follow Him. Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, is our light and life. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). The promise of Scripture is "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

The sunflower faces and follows the sun, its source of light and whose name it bears. What a privilege for believers to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, our life and whose name, as Christians, we bear.

## Guest On PTL Telecast

Mrs. Beverly LaHaye was a guest on the PTL Charismatic show during the second week of July 1980. Mrs. LaHaye was interviewed by Jim Bakker, the president of PTL, about conditions in America with regard to family life, etc.

Mrs. LaHaye is the wife of Dr. Tim LaHaye, a member of the Executive Board of the Moral Majority. It is interesting that just a few weeks before, Mrs. Tammy Bakker, the wife of the PTL president, spent considerable time on the telecast

speaking in tongues.

It is amazing how the lines of ecclesiastical separation are subtly being erased in the interest of moral issues. PTL with its worldly, shallow music that appeals to the flesh and its carnal, gyrating singers, along with its tongues and charismatic emphasis seems to me to be the last place a true fundamentalist would want to be.

— The MARANATHA,  
August, 1980

## IGNORANCE OR ARROGANCE?

When the Dean Burgon Society was formed we reported it in this column, giving the mailing address and telling how one could join if he wished. While this group does not approve of any Greek text other than the Textus Receptus and repudiates all English translations other than the King James Version — a position narrower than ours — we appreciate the strong defense of inspiration and inerrancy the Society maintains. We are for it, not against it.

Imagine our surprise, however, to see in a periodical which maintains inerrancy for a translation — something seldom done in the history of Christendom — a com-

mendation for a brother who resigned from the society because it maintains inspiration and inerrancy for the original autographs only. And the writer went on to beseech others to quit the society also, quoting II Corinthians 6:17 as his authority: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."

Such an abuse (misuse) of the Word of God is absolutely incredible! Should we excuse it as ignorance? Or should we condemn it as arrogance?

From THE BIBLICAL EVANGELIST  
September, 1980



## The Other Side

with Dave Johnson

# POTPOURI

Occasionally, as various publications and/or "junk mail" come across my desk, I deposit them in a "pending" box for possible use in a future article in this column. Many of these "pending" articles do not deserve a great deal of attention; however, they are of importance and deserve a paragraph or two.

### REAGAN TRIPS OVER BUSH

Two months ago I wrote about the candidates who will be running for president in the November election. The response to that article was heavier than usual, which only proved that the subject of a "Christian" candidate is on the minds of the people.

Wes Auger, in his newsletter for August, wrote about candidate Reagan in typical Wes Auger fashion:

*THE WHITE KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOR MOUNTED HIS CHARGER...rode down the hill, AND TRIPPED OVER A BUSH!*

Millions of dollars and months of time were invested in a mad scramble to prove what a hero Ronald Reagan is and what a rascal George Bush was. The "clash" of "ideologys" was heard throughout the land as the man in the White Armor rode to the lists against the man in the Black Armor—and when the Sound and Fury was done — we end up with two clowns in checkered attire riding with each other!!

*The union of Ronald Reagan and George Bush is the same thing in politics that the National Council of Churches, the Southern Baptist Convention, and all other forms of total compromise are in religion.*

*Syncretism (the attempt to blend opposite and contradictory tenets into one system to produce union and concord) may be the key to success in politics — and if it is — then a Christian has no more business in politics than a virtuous woman has in a brothel! Our hope is NOT in Political Action! Our hope is NOT in Ballot Boxes that are already so rigged that they are a farce! Our hope is NOT*

*in replacing one wheeler dealer with another wheeler dealer! Our hope has always been — "RIGHTEOUSNESS exalteth a Nation!"*

*Christians are being USED right now just as they were manipulated 4 years ago.*

*Bud Newman, writer for the Palm Beach, Fla. POST, told his readers of the meeting that 6 Conservative Leaders had with Ronald Reagan on the morning of the day that he chose Bush as his running mate... Reagan informed them of the fact that Strom Thurmond and John Tower had already endorsed Bush for the ticket and it was then that Jerry Falwell was quoted by Bud Newman as saying, "If you have the devil on the ticket, we'd vote for you, Gov. Reagan, but we would pray you would outlive him."*

*THAT is Syncretism at it's worst! Anybody who buys that philosophy is part of anything BUT a MORAL Majority, Minority or Serendippity!*

*I have heard for years that GOOD CITIZENS VOTE. That may well have been the case when there wasn't so much wheeling and dealing. Now, however, I think it's time to say — "Don't vote — it only encourages them!"*

*Our hope is NOT in the BALLOT BOX. We've had Crusade after Crusade for Goldwater, Maddox, Wallace — and now Reagan. Christians will invest TIME and MONEY that would be far better invested in sound Gospel effort. I haven't got a DIME to give to ANY Political effort and I haven't got a minute to invest in any either. ONLY WHAT'S DONE FOR CHRIST WILL LAST!!*

### UNICEF DAY

"Hunger shouldn't be kid stuff" — Kermit the Frog.

This year's UNICEF drive is being pushed by a Muppet in a bold attempt to get more children involved in the UN program to send food to the Communists under the pretense of loving little children in foreign lands.

UNICEF, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, works exclusively through the governments of the countries to which the contributions are sent. This means that when a person donates money in the U.S., that money is sent to a foreign government for disbursement. If the government is anti-communist, you are supporting the benevolent state or socialism. However, if the government is pro-communist, the money is used to blackmail citizens into obeying their communist rulers.

We, as Christians, should

have nothing to do with any program of the UN world government organization of the anti-Christ. The psychological propaganda, designed to give guilt feelings to "wealthy" Americans of the "First World Nations," is hard to ignore. When the trick-or-treaters for UNICEF come to your door this year, don't be guilty of supporting the religion of anti-Christ by donating to the UN.

### AUDIO VISUAL AIDS

A twelve-page catalog of new audio visual aids, which was addressed to the "social studies chairperson" at our school, recently landed on my desk. I wasn't too interested in it until I noticed that all of the programs advertised were eligible for purchase under Federal Funds. If the government is going to pay for it, it must be worth looking into.

Among the programs suggested for our school children are the following titles:

- ★ "In the Eye of the Beholder." Obscenity/Pornography
- ★ Runaways: Children of Despair
- ★ Family Violence
- ★ Incest: The Last Taboo
- ★ Suicide: Who Will Cry for Me?
- ★ Teenage Pregnancy
- ★ To Hell With Grandma
- ★ You Have the Right: Underage in America
- ★ The Women's Movement
- ★ Prejudice: Harvest of Hate
- ★ Indians: Strangers in Their Own Land
- ★ Poverty: Living in The Other America

A brief summary of each program is given in the catalog and the authors are quick to point out that these programs do not make moral judgments. The right and wrong is ultimately decided by an individual's personal philosophy.

My purpose for even mentioning these programs is three-fold:

1. Our tax money is paying for them.
2. Unfortunately, many Christians are still sending their children to public schools where these programs are being used.
3. Our children, who are sheltered from this kind of trash, are exposed to it through their friends who attend public school.

We are told in Romans 16:19, "...I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil." Christian young people are supposed to be ignorant of many of the above listed topics.



From p. 1

## GOTHARD RETURNS—WOES CONTINUE

parted staff members, Wood commented that "most of the people leaving were ones who had to meet the public and represent Bill." Because they believed Bill's practices did not match his teachings, they felt they could not in good conscience do so, he asserted.

The crucial issue to the former staff members relates to Gothard's own teachings. For instance, Gothard teaches how to resolve conflicts scripturally, but "he resolves his by firing them," asserted a departed executive.

One of the main planks in Gothard's teaching is the necessity of obedience to persons and structures of authority, because these have been established by God. This created tensions for IBYC staff members: Should they be obedient to Gothard, their employer and authority figure, even when (as they said) he interfered in an unwarranted way in their personal affairs, such as in their choice of spouse? Former executive Wood fears that Gothard's teachings are interpreted so that some staff and alumni become loyal to the extreme.

### AREA COMMITTEES CANCEL SEMINARS

IBYC seminars have been cancelled or invitations withdrawn in Phoenix (Sept. 15-20), in San Diego (Sept. 29-Oct. 4), and in Los Angeles (Oct. 6-11) by the sponsoring committees for these areas, CHRISTIANITY TODAY reports; however, the board of the IBYC "told the Los Angeles committee that it was bringing its seminar anyway and would appoint a new committee if necessary."

### GOTHARD'S SIMPLE LIFESTYLE IN QUESTION

The following quote is from the September, 1980 edition of ETERNITY MAGAZINE.

While no official announcement has pin-pointed the cause of the violent internal explosion, it has been learned that staff morale deteriorated because of Bill Gothard's apparent tolerance of gross misconduct on the part of a high administrative officer. Gothard is not accused of misconduct himself. In addition, some staff members were disconcerted by Bill Gothard's public declarations of living a simple lifestyle which contrasted, they say, with what has been described as the lush ambience

of his retreat in the "north woods."

This is the North Woods Research Center, located in Gogebic County, six miles west of Watermeet, Michigan. Access to the 3000-acre property is reached by one of two airplanes owned by the organization — a three million dollar Lear executive jet and an MU-2 prop jet. A 5000-foot runway — long enough to accommodate a 727 jet, according to some experts — has been installed as well as an ample hangar.

The North Woods complex can accommodate 300 guests, but some staff members have indicated the property has not been used frequently for large gatherings but has been a retreat for Bill Gothard to conduct his research, and especially for brother Steve Gothard, who has spent much of his time there in recent years.

### EDITORIAL COMMENT

It seems obvious to us that there are serious flaws in Bill Gothard's teachings. Many of those who have been closest to him are

now disillusioned and confused by his inconsistencies. Gothard doesn't teach the Bible, he takes things from the Bible and forms his own system of teaching. The Bible will speak for itself. The Holy Spirit must be the interpreter as we are warned that "no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." I'm sure Bill Gothard is a sincere man. I've spent some time in private conversations with him in years past. My concern, however, is for those hundreds of thousands (an estimated 1.5 million), mostly young men and women, who are being deceived by Gothard's ministry, and the approximately 40,000 pastors who swallow his twisted ideas and then preach them unquestioningly to their congregations. I, for one, see the results of Gothard's ministry serving to further weaken the churches it invades and take us one step farther down the ecumenical road.

Will Gothard followers now decrease? Will pastors who believe and preach the Word of God now reject the IBYC seminars and warn their people not to attend? I doubt it — that is, not in any great number — however, some will wake up, and for those I am thankful.

From p. 1

## THE TRANSLATION INERRANCY QUESTION

this issue in order that they might not be taken in by this error. Needless to say, it has been distressing to me to see good but misinformed men pick up the Ruckman banner.

Some of the correspondence we have received about this issue of late has attempted to give the impression that Ruckman's position is not a new one, and that in fact, great men of the past held to the position of inerrancy for a translation. I do not believe this is the case, and as far as we have been able to determine, it is the brain child of Peter Ruckman. In the remainder of this article, we will quote some of the scholars of the past and of the present on this most important issue.

In the September, 1980 issue of THE BIBLICAL EVANGELIST, edited by Robert L. Sumner, Charles Haddon Spurgeon's position concerning inerrant translations was made very clear.

...Some have been using an alleged "quote" of Charles Haddon Spurgeon which purports to positionize him as a "King James only" man. We have written to several who

have published the quote, asking for documentation, but in vain. One brother simply attributed it to Peter Ruckman, but we replied that he was too unreliable for us to trust; we wanted to know where Spurgeon said it. (We are confident he never did!)

We have, heretofore, published documented proof that Spurgeon used every translation available, not in any sense limiting himself to the KJV. The other day a brother in Cincinnati, who has sent us such documentation before, called our attention to Spurgeon's sermon, "Heart Disease Curable," preached on Sunday morning, June 19, 1881. His text was Isaiah 51:1 and he explained: "I intended to have preached from these words in Luke 4:18, but when I looked at the Revised Version and found that the words were not there at all I was somewhat startled. I began to ask whether the omission was a correct one or not; and, without making pretense to scholarship, I feel convinced that the revisers are acting honestly in leaving it out. It was not in the original manu-

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script of Luke, but probably some pious person added it with the intention of making the quotation more complete."

No doubt the brother quoted earlier in this item would consider Spurgeon's words blasphemy and we wonder if he would use II Corinthians 6:17 here also, appealing to everyone to separate from Spurgeon's writings? In the same sermon, Spurgeon went on to say:

"Concerning the fact of difference between the Revised and the Authorized Versions, I would say: that no Baptist should ever fear any honest attempt to produce the correct text, and an accurate interpretation of the Old and New Testaments. For many years Baptists have insisted upon it that we ought to have the Word of God translated in the best possible manner, whether it would confirm certain religious opinions and practices, or work against them. All we want is the exact mind of the Spirit, as far as we can get it. Beyond all other Christians we are concerned in this, seeing we have no other sacred book; we have no prayer book or binding creed, or authoritative minutes of conference; we have nothing but the Bible; and we would have that as pure as ever we can get it. By the best and most honest scholarship that can be found we desire that the common version may be purged of every blunder of transcribers, or addition of human ignorance, or human knowledge, that so the Word of God may come to us as it came from His own hand. I confess that it looks a grievous thing to part with words which we thought were part and parcel of Luke; but as they are not in the oldest copies, and must be given up, we will make capital out of their omission, by seeing in that fact the wisdom of the great Preacher, who did not speak upon cheering truths when they were not needed, and might have overlaid His seasonable rebuke."

As Spurgeon went on to note, we have lost nothing since what we do not have in Luke we have in Isaiah! And what Spurgeon said is what fundamentalists have always noted about the Word of God.

It is obvious that Spurgeon taught his people this issue as this is a quote from one of his sermons.

Henry C. Thiessen, in his book *LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY*, says:

And again, inspiration is affirmed only of the autographs of

the Scriptures, not of any of the versions, whether ancient or modern, nor of any of the Hebrew or Greek manuscripts in existence, nor of any critical texts known. All these are either known to be faulty in some particulars, or are not certainly known to be free from all error. Some one will remark, but the autographs are all lost! True, but textual critics tell us that the number of words that are still in doubt, whether in the Old Testament or in the New, is very small, and that no doctrine is affected by this situation.

Stewart Custer, in his book *DOES INSPIRATION DEMAND INERRANCY?*, on page 88 states:

The final court of appeal in all theological disputes must be to the text of the original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts. Conservatives are not contending for the infallibility of any translation, but only for the infallibility of the original documents. Undoubted Conservatives like James M. Gray have stated repeatedly that "the record for whose inspiration we contend is the original record—the autographs or parchments of Moses, David, Daniel, Matthew, Paul, or Peter, as the case may be, and not any particular translation or translations of them whatever. There is no translation absolutely without error, nor could there be, considering the infirmities of human copyists, unless God were pleased to perform a perpetual miracle to secure it."

It is the sphere of textual criticism to detect and to remove as many of these copyist's errors as possible. The diligent labors of many scholars have brought the text of the Bible to an exceptionally high state of accuracy. In fact, one theologian has stated that "we possess the text of the Bible today in a form which is substantially identical with the autographs," and he is careful to state, "For theological study the appeal is to the most correct available text in the original language."

Edward J. Young, in his book *THY WORD IS TRUTH*, states:

What, however, shall we say with respect to those copies of the Bible that are now in existence? Is the English Bible from which we read our devotions and which we hear read in the worship service on the Lord's Day an inspired Bible? Are the Hebrew and Greek texts which are now in

our possession inspired copies of Holy Scripture? It should be obvious that on the basis of the definition of inspiration which we have been using, such is not the case. If the Scripture is "God-breathed," it naturally follows that only the original is "God-breathed." If holy men of God spoke from God as they were borne by the Holy Spirit, then only what they spoke under the Spirit's bearing is inspired. It would certainly be unwarrantable to maintain that copies of what they spoke were also inspired, since these copies were not made as men were borne of the Spirit. They were therefore not "God-breathed" as was the original. This fact, of course, is not only taught in Scripture, but has also been recognized by the Church. The Nicene Creed, for example, states that the Holy Spirit spake by the prophets. That means that the words which the prophets uttered were Spirit-indicted words. It does not mean that copies of those words were spoken by the Spirit. To come closer to the present day, we may note that the Westminster Confession, which gives such a grand survey of the Scriptural teaching, asserts that the Bible was "immediately inspired of God." This, of course, means that the Bible was inspired "without means"; inspiration is a work of the immediate power of God Himself, and since this is so, it is clear that the Westminster Confession considered as inspired Scripture only those documents which were original.

Nevertheless, despite these testimonies, there have been those who apparently think that the idea that only the original manuscripts of Scripture are inspired is a somewhat recent invention designed to avoid the difficulty caused by the presence of errors in the copies of the Bible which we now possess. In the nature of the case, however, if the Bible is actually "God-breathed," there must have been an original, and that original must have been free from error. Can it conceivably have been otherwise?

Those who oppose the doctrine of inerrancy sometimes assert that God evidently did not regard the preservation of this original as a matter of importance. He apparently was content for us to have imperfect copies of the Scripture. It is, of course, a fact which all

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admit, that the original copy of the Bible is not preserved. Is the loss, however, a great one? Are the copies of the Bible which are now in our possession so poor that from them we cannot learn the true Word of God? If that were the case, if the Bible that is now before us were so far removed from the original that we could not learn from it the will of God, then the situation would be tragic indeed. Then we could probably say nothing whatever about the original. We might think that it was without error, but we could not know. We would have no trustworthy Bible and we would be left to our own imaginations. Those, for example, who wish to learn something of the death of our Lord from the Talmud will find there only seriously garbled traditions. The truth has been so corrupted that they cannot place their confidence in what the Talmud has to say. So it would be with us if the copies of the Bible which are extant were hopelessly corrupt.

Are these copies, however, hopelessly corrupt? For our part, we are convinced that they are not. We believe that the Bible which we have is accurate and that it is a remarkably close approximation to the original manuscripts.<sup>1</sup>

In explaining how we got our present text, he gives the following illustration:

Suppose that a schoolteacher writes a letter to the President of the United States. To her great joy she receives a personal reply. It is a treasure which she must share with her pupils and so she dictates the letter to them. They are in the early days of their schooling, and spelling is not yet one of their strong points. In his copy of the letter Johnny has misspelled a few words. Mary has forgotten to cross her t's and to dot her i's. Billy has written one or two words twice, and Peter has omitted a word now and then. Nevertheless, despite all these flaws about thirty copies of the President's letter have been made. Unfortunately, the teacher misplaces the original and cannot find it. To her great sorrow it is gone. She does not have the copy which came directly from the President's pen; she must be content with those that the children have made.

Will anyone deny that she has the words of the President? Does she not have his message, in just those words in which he wrote it to her? True enough, there are

some minor mistakes in the letters, but the teacher may engage in the science of textual criticism and correct them. She may correct the misspelled words, and she may write in those words which have been omitted and cross out those which are superfluous. Without any serious difficulty she may indeed restore the original.

It should be clear that errors are bound to appear in almost anything that is copied. If the reader will copy out five pages of his English Bible he will doubtless make the discovery, on reading over his work, that he has made some mistakes. This does not mean that there are mistakes in the Bible but merely that there are some mistakes of copying (copyist's errors, as they are called) in what the reader has written out.

Such is the case with the manuscripts of the Bible which are extant. They are remarkably close approximations to the original, and by means of the careful study of textual criticism it is more and more possible to approach that original. An example will make this fact clear. The Hebrew language, in which our present manuscripts of the Old Testament are written, consists solely of consonants, and to these consonants there are added signs to indicate the different vowel sounds. These signs are written both within, above and below the consonant.

Hence it will easily be apparent how difficult it is to write with Hebrew characters. Nevertheless, despite this difficulty, the Hebrew manuscripts have been transmitted with remarkable accuracy. There are in Hebrew three basic short vowels, and these three vowels are written with different signs, depending upon the kind of syllable in which they are to appear. They follow the rules with an almost mathematical precision. When Hebrew words are compared for spelling with those of the other Semitic languages, there is quite an uncanny agreement. One cannot but exclaim, after having spent much time in a study of the Hebrew text — and, of course, the same is true of the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament — that these manuscripts have been preserved by the singular care and providence of God.<sup>2</sup>

He states in conclusion:

In the nature of the case, then, inspiration extends only to the original manuscripts of Scripture. Since these manuscripts

were inspired they were free from error. The originals are lost and we are today in possession only of copies, copies which contain textual errors and difficulties that no serious Christian can afford to ignore. These copies, however, do give the actual Word of God. No point of doctrine has been affected. The doctrine shines before us in all its purity. Why God was not pleased to preserve the original copies of the Bible, we do not know. Perhaps, in His infinite wisdom, He did not wish us to bow down to these manuscripts as unto images. Perhaps their preservation would have directed towards them veneration as relics and would have deflected one's attention from their message. One thing at least is clear. In His mysterious providence, God has preserved His Word. We do not have a Bible which is unreliable and glutted with error, but one that in most wondrous fashion presents the Word of God and the text of the original.<sup>3</sup>

### FOOTNOTES

1. Young, Edward J., *Thy Word Is Truth*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids (1957) p. 55.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 57,58
3. *Ibid.*, p. 61

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