

The Quincentennial Anniversary Of the Erasmian *Textus Receptus* (1516-2016)

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Introduction

In February 1516, Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus, or Erasmus of Rotterdam (Oct. 28, 1466 to July 12, 1536), gave Roman Catholic Europe the first printed edition of the Greek New Testament (NT), later known as *Textum nunc ab omnibus receptum* (“the text now received by all”). In all, Erasmus produced five Greek NT editions (1516, 1519, 1522, 1527, and 1535), giving foundation to a succession of Greek NT editions of the Received Text, and resulting in the translating of the NT in Luther’s German Bible (1534), in Tyndale’s Translation (1534), in the King James Version (1611 KJV), and in the Spanish *Reina Valera* (1602).

The Lord has honored the English version built upon the Erasmian *Textus Receptus*, namely the King James Version, with over four-hundred years (1611-2011) of Christian popularity and church use. Just as Bible Baptist Theological Seminary honored the Quadricentennial (400th) anniversary of the Authorized Version, it is fitting that Bible Baptist Theological Seminary honor the Quincentennial (500th) anniversary of the *Textus Receptus*. Although the world ignores and most of Christendom rejects the biblical importance and textual value of the Received Text, it is the only Greek text predicted by Scripture (Jn. 17:8). The Critical Text behind the modern versions of the Bible has no biblical basis and cannot possibly be the preserved Greek Scriptures about which the precious Saviour promised verbal preservation (Mt. 24:35).

Understanding the history and biblical value of the Erasmian *Textus Receptus* will result in the following:

1. By giving refutation of the CT and all modern versions.
2. By giving clarity in the errors of Ruckmanism and the “inspired KJV” movement.
3. By giving authority to Biblical Greek teachers as they teach the very words of the preserved and inspired Greek vocabulary and grammatical constructions.
4. By giving confidence to pastors and believers in evaluating the right tools to study the KJV and its underlying text.
5. By giving encouragement to pursue missionary translation work.

The Received Bible Movement

The *Received Bible Movement*¹ looks to the Bible for its prediction and to history for its fulfillment. The following are biblical principles which find their fulfillment in the Received Texts of the OT and NT, and in translations built upon these Received Texts (Hebrew Masoretic and Greek Received Texts), such as the OT and NT of the 1611 KJV:

1. God's Words are preserved in Heaven.

- a. *"For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven"* (Ps. 119:89).
- b. *"But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince"* (Dan. 10:21, 11:2 ff.).
- c. *"The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw..."* (Amos 1:1).
- d. *"The word of the LORD that came to Micah the Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw..."* (Mic. 1:1).
- e. *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John"* (Rev. 1:1).

2. God's Words were inspired perfectly in the *autographa*.

- a. *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"* (II Tim. 3:16-18).
- b. *"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"* (II Pet. 1:21).

3. The Lord promised to preserve these inspired Words for each subsequent generation.

- a. *"Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever"* (Ps. 119:160).
- b. *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"* (Mt. 24:35).

4. He used the Jews to preserve the OT Scriptures and the NT candlesticks to preserve the OT and NT Scriptures.

- a. *"Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them [Jews] were committed the oracles of God"* (Rom. 3:2)
- b. *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen"* (Mt. 28:19-20).

5. These preserved inspired words were made available for each generation.

- a. *"For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off...But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it"* (Dt. 30:11, 14).

¹Thomas M. Strouse, *The Lord GOD Hath Spoken: A Guide to Bibliology*, Revised and Expanded (Cromwell, CT: Bible Baptist Theological Press, 2015), pp. 123-136.

b. *“And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God”* (Lk. 4:4).

6. His NT churches have recognized, received and preserved the Lord’s Words while rejecting wrested Words and forged canons offered by Satan.

a. *“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe”* (I Thess. 2:13).

b. *“As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction”* (II Pet. 3:16).

c. *“That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand”* (II Thess. 2:2).

d. *“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”* (Gen. 3:1).

7. These same churches were the basis for the Received Bible Movement begun by the Lord Jesus Christ, Who received canonical words from the Father and in turn gave them to His apostles who in turn received and inscripturated His words.

a. *“For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me”* (Jn. 17:8).

b. *“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls”* (Acts 2:41),

c. *“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John”* (Acts 8:14).

d. *“And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God”* (Acts 11:1).

e. *“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so”* (Acts 17:11).

f. *“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe”* (I Thes. 2:13).

8. The Lord has given His explicit words of revelation to man in order that man may be able to demonstrate his stewardship with all of God’s words at his respective judgment.

a. *“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day”* (Jn. 12:48)

b. *“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works”* (Rev. 20:12).

9. The Lord Jesus Christ expects man to receive by faith His revelation and produce accurate translations based on the Received Bible movement which originated with Him.

a. “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word” (Jn. 17:20).

b. “Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith” (Rom. 16:25-26).

10. This Received Bible Movement was recognized and so named in 1633 (*textum...nunc ab omnibus receptum*)—the Received Text (TR) movement.

11. The Lord’s NT immersionist assemblies have employed the TR and KJV texts in their Baptist confessions from the 17th to 21st centuries.

The Alternative Text to the *Textus Receptus*

By 1881, the manifestation of textual resistance against the “text received by all” was the Westcott-Hort text, ultimately known now as the *Textus Criticus*, or *Novum Testamentum Graece, Nestle-Aland 27th Edition*. The following are a composite of the propositions posited by proponents of the Critical Text of both the OT and NT and its subsequent modern versions including the ERV (1887), the ASV (1901), the RSV (1952), the NAS (1971), the NIV (1973), and the ESV (2001), as the alternative to the Received Text and KJV:

1. That God did not promise to preserve His words (but just his concepts [hence “word preservation”]).

Contra “The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever” (Ps. 12:6-7).

2. That God in fact did not preserve His inspired words.

Contra “But he answered and said, **It is written**, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Mt. 4:4).

3. That man’s responsibility is not to receive by faith the Lord’s preserved words, since they are in fact “not preserved,” but “to restore or reconstruct” the non-preserved words of God to a close approximation of the originals. How one would know when and where the non-preserved words are finally “restored” is not known nor should be asked.

Contra “He that **rejecteth** me, and **receiveth not my words**, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (Jn. 12:48).

4. That “Christian” scholars are to do this restoration or reconstruction process by using the principles of secular Textual Criticism, which include using the “oldest and best manuscripts” and the “hardest” readings, which must be closer to the originals and

therefore more pristine, since early, pious scribes always improved the manuscripts by changes and/or additions.

Contra “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, **ye received it not as the word of men**, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe” (I Thes. 2:13).

5. That the Holy Spirit is not involved in revealing the words of Scripture, but instead the practice of Textual Criticism is the means that the best of Christian scholarship may employ to determine the right readings in manuscript evidence.

Contra “But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as **the same anointing teacheth you of all things**, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him” (I Jn. 2:27).

6. That Christian scholars may trust the textual research and interpretation of theological infidels and liberals since they are unbiased critical scholars.

Contra “But unto **the wicked** God saith, **What hast thou to do to declare my statutes**, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee” (Ps. 50:16-17).

7. That NT church members should not expect to hear the voice of the Lord regarding His words since He works exclusively through Textual Critics and secular Textual Criticism.

Contra “**My sheep hear my voice**, and I know them, and they follow me” (Jn. 10:29).

8. That this process of restoration will continue as long as archaeologists continue to discover ancient manuscripts for Textual Critical scholars to continue to apply their secular principles.

Contra “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, **If any man shall add** unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: **And if any man shall take away** from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Rev. 22:18-19).

9. That all manuscripts are “good” and therefore must be considered in the manuscript pool, even though there are many doctrines affected in their voluminous differences.

Contra “Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, **Yea, hath God said**, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (Gen. 3:1).

10. That these manuscripts are “good” because there was no known conspiracy to change the text of Scripture.

Contra “And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which **they that are unlearned and unstable wrest**, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction” (II Pet. 3:15-16).

11. That para-church organizations and pseudo-church groups have the exclusive privilege to be the primary agencies involved in determining textual readings and changes.

Contra “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, **the pillar and ground of the truth**” (I Tim. 3:15)

12. That the Lord’s churches and pastors have no little or no stewardship responsibility in bibliology, including receiving, recognizing, preserving and defending of the Scriptures, which are not preserved anyway. All responsibility and authority is left to the Textual Critics.

Contra “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches” (Rev. 2:6).

13. That Christians should expect to have the underlying Greek and Hebrew texts in an unstable and evolving form which will bring uncertainty and questioning to believers through the corresponding translations; but this is normative.

Contra “Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, That I might make thee **know the certainty of the words of truth**; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?” (Ps. 22:20-21).

It should be apparent that the Critical Text Alternative to the TR is neither predicted in Scripture as a viable option nor is based on any biblical principles. Therefore, it must be rejected as humanistic and diabolical, the subtle product of “*the doctrines of devils*” (I Tim. 4:1). It is a Gnostic-laced text fabricated and perpetuated by Bible critics and favored by cultists and theological liberalism. Its fruit is doubt and carnality within professing Christianity.

Contemporary Perspective

1. It is apparent that the Biblical doctrine of the preservation of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ has not been enunciated or elucidated Biblically by many Christian theologians of the past whose writings are extant.

2. Twentieth century historic fundamentalism, for the most part, has failed to study the Scriptures for Christ-honoring bibliology. It is apparent that historic fundamentalism, in doctrine and/or practice, is not necessarily the same as Biblical NT Christianity.

3. In spite of this recent spate of books purporting to espouse “Bible preservation,” great confusion has arisen, and therefore fundamental and independent Baptist pastors and parents who uphold the *KJV* need to study the Scriptures for their defense of the *TR* and *KJV*.

4. These same pastors and parents are the target of Critical Text Bible schools who want to change their individual and collective position on Bible texts and translations. The next generation of pastors (so-called “preacher boys”) is at stake.

5. The Bible says Christians should have all of the Words of God available in their own hands (cf. Mt. 4:4; Lk. 4:4). The proponents of the modern versions (based on the Critical Text) posit the unbiblical sentiment that although there may be passages suggesting the preservation of Scripture, God did not preserve all of His words and thus textual critics must restore the Hebrew and Greek texts that God purportedly did not preserve. Through humanistic and arbitrary principles of Textual Criticism, the textual scholar will restore the texts, he promises, to a closer approximation of the originals. When this final restoration will occur is not known, and no one

will know for sure if the alleged restored Hebrew and Greek texts are indeed the final form. But then, this position suggests in doctrine and practice that Christians should not expect to have all of God's Words in their hands anyway, or to think that this really matters.

6. The Christian in his local NT church with the Words of God and the indwelling Holy Spirit has all authority, privilege and responsibility, to reject the best of man's reasoning and receive all of the Lord's Words.

7. The Lord has inspired His *autographa* (II Tim. 3:16-17), promised to preserve all of His Words (Ps. 12:6-7), and commanded believers to make accurate translations (Mt. 28:19-20) based on the Received Bible mindset (Jn. 17:8, 20), which movement He began (cf. Acts 2:41, 8:14, 11:1, 17:11; I Thess. 2:13). The Masoretic Hebrew Text and the Erasmian *Textus Receptus* culminating in Beza's 1598 Greek NT have received the approval of Lord's churches' as the fulfillment of these truths (four hundred years of Baptist confessions demonstrate this approval). The translation corresponding to these truths in the English language is the *King James Version*.

History of Erasmus

The man Desiderius Erasmus was born on October 28, 1466 and died July 12, 1536. Erasmus of Rotterdam was a Catholic priest, Greek and Latin scholar, Dutch Renaissance humanist,² social critic and theologian. As a classical scholar, he wrote several works entitled *On Free Will*, *The Praise of Folly*, and *Handbook of a Christian Knight*. However, he is best known for his Latin and Greek editions of the New Testament (NT), the first of which started the "Greek received text ("TR" = *Textus Receptus*) movement" in early 1516. This heritage of Greek editions³ was ultimately named "the text now received by all" (*Textum nunc ab omnibus receptum*) in 1533. As the "Prince of Humanists" it was said of him that "he laid the egg that Luther hatched," referring to the impact of the Greek edition of the NT on the Reformation (Oct. 31, 1517).

He learned Latin and Greek at an early age in monastic schools. By 1512 he began collating Latin texts of the *Vulgate* for his Latin New Testament. Subsequently he began work on his Greek edition of the New Testament, working from a handful of Greek manuscripts (MSS). In the providence of God, the Lord arranged the combination of several events to produce the Greek edition of the NT for translation purposes. First, He moved Johannes Gutenberg (1398-1468) to invent the printing press around 1440. Second, with the threat of the Muslim overthrow of Constantinople in 1453, the Greek Orthodox clerics sent many Greek manuscripts into Europe to protect them from the infidels. Third, the Lord allowed the renowned Greek scholar Erasmus to have access to these Byzantium Greek manuscripts so he could

²"Humanism" focused on what the classical men of antiquity wrote in contrast with "scholasticism" which focused on what the (Roman Catholic) Church wrote. "Humanities" was the study of grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry, and philosophy.

³Others used Erasmus' Greek editions as a basis for their efforts, which included the four editions (1546, 1549, 1550, and 1551) of Robert Estienne or Stephanus (1503-1559), nine editions of Theodore Beza (1519-1650), and the two editions (1624 and 1633) of Bonaventure and Abraham Elzevir. Apparently the KJV (1611) was built on Stephanus' 1550 Greek text and Beza's 1598 Greek edition.

produce his Greek edition that represented the Traditional text of Christendom. Erasmus sent his Greek edition to his friend Johann Froben of Basel who published it in 1516, albeit with numerous transcriptional errors. He made improvements and produced the second Greek edition in 1519, which edition Luther employed for his German translation in 1522. His third edition contained the preserved words of the Lord known as the *Comma Johanneum* (I Jn. 5:7-8). This edition published in 1522 became the basis for Tyndale's English translation (1526), for the Greek text for Stephanus' 1550 edition, and for the Geneva Bible (1560). These texts and translations undergirded the King James Version. Erasmus' fourth Greek edition (1527) contained the parallel Latin text, whereas his fifth and last omitted the Latin (1535).

After a rich and productive literary life in the Roman Catholic Church and among kings of Europe, Erasmus died suddenly in Basel (1536). He was buried there in the Catholic cathedral of the city. He died as a baptized Roman Catholic, although he was a critic of the Roman Catholic Church and the Pope, and quite often sounded more like a Protestant in doctrine and practice. Theologically, the name Erasmus and the Greek *Textus Receptus* behind the New Testament of the KJV go together. Textually, Erasmus and the *Johannine Comma* are inextricably linked.

Erasmian Text and KJV

Erasmus had access to many Greek MSS, including Codex Vaticanus, but chose five representative texts of the Traditional Text of Greek-speaking Byzantine Empire. He had an eleventh century manuscript (MS) of the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles, a fifteenth century MS of the Gospels, a twelfth-fourteenth century MS of Acts and the Epistles, a fifteenth century MS of Acts and the Epistles, and a twelfth century MS of the Apocalypse.⁴ His knowledge of the Latin texts and the *Vulgate* guided him to place in his *Textus Receptus* readings supported by both Latin and Greek MSS. The following are some readings that are absent from the majority of Greek MSS but included in the Latin Vulgate and or the Old Latin (OL), as well as the *Textus Receptus*:

- 1. Mt. 10:8**—“*raise the dead.*” The Lord Jesus authorized supernatural power that only God has.
- 2. Acts 8:37**—“*And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*” This verse has the support of some patristics, the OL and Vulgate. Its obvious omission came from the theology and practice of ancient pedobaptists. The NIV skips from verse 36 to verse 38.
- 3. Acts 9:5**—“*it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*” This deals with biblical conviction.

⁴The common CT criticism that he used “few and late” manuscripts is hypocritical and facile because truth is not determined by majority or antiquity. Obviously, all “late” MSS had earlier exemplars. After all, every granddaughter has a grandmother!

4. Acts 9:6—“*and he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him.*” This deals with submission to the Lord’s will immediately after salvation.

5. Acts 20:28—“*church of God.*” The majority of Greek MSS reads “church of the Lord and God,” effectively eliminating that Jesus Christ is God since He shed His blood.

Critics leveled criticism at Erasmus for several significant passages included in his TR of the *Apocalypse*:

1. Rev. 8:13—“*an angel flying through the midst of heaven.*” The CT omits “angel” and substitutes instead, “*an eagle flying through the midst of heaven.*” Cf. Rev. 14:6.

2. Rev. 16:5—“*and shalt be.*” Although the CT has “holy one,” this reading disrupts the triadic formula found with variations (Rev. 1:4, 8; 4:8; and 11:17). The Latin gives the future tense (*eris*). On rare occasions the LORD God apparently used Latin readings (supported by unknown Greek MSS) to perpetuate His preserved text.⁵

3. Rev. 22:19—“*the book of life.*” The majority of Greek MSS has “the tree of life.” However, the TR teaching is that the punishment fits the crime—if you tamper with the book that is important to the Lord (i.e., the Bible), He will “tamper” with the book that should be important to you (the book of life). Taking one’s part out of the tree of life does not make literary sense. With the TR reading “*the book of life*” fits the context and occurs then a total of seven times in Revelation.

Erasmus and the Johannine Comma (I John 5:7-8)

Textually, the passage that is connected directly to Erasmus is the *Johannine Comma*,⁶ the so-called *Comma Johanneum* (or just *Comma*), or “*For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*”⁸ *And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one*” (I Jn. 5:7-8). The emboldened words are omitted in the CT and all modern versions. This is the clearest reference in all of Scripture for the biblical doctrine of the Trinity, referring to God the Father, God the Word, and God the Holy Ghost as “one” (cf. Dt. 6:4). Liberals and cultists reject the *Comma* and the Trinitarian doctrine. Evangelical Christians, ensnared by the “scholarship” of Higher Criticism manifested in the CT and modern versions, likewise reject the *Comma* but accept the Trinity doctrine (which may be found elsewhere in Scripture). Historically, Erasmus has been viciously attacked for including the *Comma* in his third edition (1522), and theologically many arguments have been leveled at the textual authenticity of the

⁵The value of ancient translations is that they had a Greek textual base. Ancient translations were not created out of a vacuum but they evince the Greek MSS available to the translator.

⁶In the expression “*Johannine Comma*,” obviously “*Johannine*” refers to the Apostle John who wrote this Epistle, and the “*Comma*” refers to the ancient practice of calling a cluster of words (depending on size) either a “*cola*” or “*comma*,” which terms today refer to punctuation marks (: or ,).

Comma. An argument such as Erasmus was duped into including the *Comma* in his *Textus Receptus*, or that there is little textual support for the *Comma*, or that the MS support is “late,” receive commendation from all sides. However, there are several defenses for the inclusion of the *Comma*, the last being irrefragable.

1. Manuscript Evidence

a. Of the 480 MSS that contain I John, there are only 12 MSS before the “late” period of the 10th century, none of which contain the *Comma*.

b. Eleven MSS of the “late” period contain the *Comma*, either in text or margin: 629 (14th century), 61 (16th), 918 (16th), 2473 (17th), 2318 (18th), 221 margin (10th), 635 margin (11th), 88 margin (12th), 429 margin (14th), 636 margin (15th), and 177 margin (11th).⁷

2. Ancient Translations

a. The Old Latin (pre-*Vulgate*) texts such as Codices *Frisingensis* (7th) and *Legionensis* (7th) contain the *Comma*.

b. The *Vulgate* (4th century), Clementine edition (1592), contains the *Comma*.

3. Patristics

a. Greek Fathers: Athanasius, Origen, Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, and Ignatius of Antioch alluded to the *Comma*.

b. Latin Fathers: Tertullian, Cyprian, Phoebadius, Priscillian, Augustine, Tigilius Tapsensis, Victor Vitensis, Fulgentius, and Cassiodorus knew of the *Comma*.

4. Internal Evidence

a. If *Comma* is omitted, “*the Spirit is truth*” agrees with “*water*” and “*blood*” which is faulty theology since these later two do not dictate truth.

b. If *Comma* is omitted, “*these three agree in one*” has no antecedent (except in the TR: Father, Word, and Holy Ghost).

c. If *Comma* is omitted, there is a gender mis-match because the masculine participle “*bear record*” becomes the antecedent of the three neuter nouns “*spirit*,” “*water*,” and “*blood*.”

⁷Earlier Christians had more Greek MSS which included the *Comma*, as the following reveals: “But it is objected by some that the words, *These three are one*. I Joh.5.7 are not to be found in some ancient Copies, and therefore it will not be safe to build a point of such weight and consequence upon such a weak foundation. To which we answer, It is true that these words are not to be found in the Syriack Edition, but they who speak most modestly, do acknowledge that the Syriack Edition is not Authentick...But then it is farther objected, that these words *These three are one* are wanting in some other Greek copies; for answer I proceed with my observations...These words, I Ioh.5.7. are to be found in copies of great antiquity and best credit.” Francis Cheynell, *The Divine Trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* (London: T.R. and E.M., 1650), pp. 251, 253, and 255.

5. Transmission History: The *Comma* came from John through the Latin Fathers, the later Greek Fathers, the later Greek MSS, the 1522 TR, the 1611 KJV, and the 1904 Patriarchal Text of the Greek Orthodox, finally residing in the 1984 NKJV.

6. Church Recognition

a. The Lord's assemblies are the pillar and ground of truth, perpetuating truth through the centuries by recognizing the TR readings.

b. For example, the Waterford Baptist Confession (1580) cited I Jn. 5:7 as proof-text for the Trinity doctrine.

c. Also, the Second London Confession (1677) employed I Jn. 5:7 as an argument for the Triune Godhead.

7. "My sheep hear my voice" (John 10:27)

a. The irrefragable argument is that believers through the centuries have heard the Lord's voice with regard to the passage.

b. The Holy Spirit Who lives in believers will not allow them to be dissuaded by liberals, cultists and critics. The Spirit of Truth Who is true impresses upon the hearts of the Lord's flock that "*in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*"⁸ *And there are three that bear witness in earth*" are the inspired and preserved words of God!

Common Questions about the Received Text

1. Are the KJV words inspired? Both inspiration and preservation deal with the biblical language words of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. God preserved the originally inspired words for all subsequent generations and made them available for accurate translations, such as the *KJV*. Inspiration and preservation extend to the original language words only.

2. Where was the word of God before 1611? It was in the received "Traditional" Old and New Testament texts behind the translations of the Waldensians (pre-Reformers), of Luther's German (1522), of Tyndale's NT (1525), Matthew's Bible (1537), of the Great Bible (1539), and of the Geneva Bible (1560).

3. Which *Textus Receptus* is inspired? All of the "*Textus Receptus*" editions (Erasmus, Stephens, Elzevir brothers, Beza, etc.), were based on the Traditional Text or Received Bible Movement, with minor differences primarily based on spelling or word order. By faith (Jn. 20:29; I Cor. 2:5; I Thes. 2:13) we receive as preserved and inspired the text behind the 1611 *KJV*, which ultimately is the Greek Text compilation by Scrivener (1894). The *KJV* is the translation based on the TR which God has exclusively honored in the English-speaking world for over four hundred years.

4. How can the *KJV* be called "the word of God" if it is not perfectly flawless? The Bible gives guidelines for accurate translations (e.g., Neh. 8:8) coming from the preserved texts which the Lord expects church members to employ in making translations (Mt. 28:19-20). Accurate,

faithful, and true translations in any language before or after 1611, coming from the Received Bible Movement, may be called “the words of God” in that respective language.

5. If local immersionist churches (i.e., Baptist) are the pillar and ground of the truth, why weren't they involved in the early translations (i.e., 1611)? The Lord's NT assemblies are indeed the pillar and ground of the truth and have indeed had very strong impact on both the canon and the words of Scripture. The Roman Catholic Church (including Erasmus), the Greek Orthodox Church, and Protestantism, under **the providential influence of the Lord's Baptist assemblies**, have popularized and perpetuated the results of the divine process of the preservation of inspired OT and NT texts. The truth of the text and canon of the OT and NT Scripture has been preserved by the Lord's only authorized institution of truth, the Baptist church movement (Mt. 28:19-20; I Tim. 3:15).

Conclusion

The Lord Jesus Christ started the Received Bible Movement, His first churches recognized, received, and preserved the received Bible, the later immersionist assemblies continued this preservation, the Reformation Protestants so-named this movement the “*Textus Receptus*” movement, and the Lord's Baptist churches affirmed through confessional usage that the preserved Greek text of which Erasmus was the human editor fulfilled the Lord's promise, “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*” (Mt. 24:35).

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