

April 13, 1991

Dear Sir,

I was given your name by a friend who feels you will be able to answer my questions on the King James only doctrine. I became interested in this issue a short time ago when it was introduced to me by friends and certain bible teachers. Let me say that I am sincerely inquiring as to the validity of the biblical claims made by certain people on this subject. I am not a Greek or Hebrew scholar, nor do I have formal training at a bible school or seminary. The Lord has taught me very early in my Christian life to test and validate all teaching by his word (II Tim.3:16, 17). Teaching must make biblical sense to me in order for me to zealously hold and defend it. I am very leery of accepting any teaching (as binding on my conscience before God) not based upon explicit statements of the bible. It's upon that basis that I ask you the following questions.

1. Hypothetically speaking if there is a difference between the original languages (Greek and Hebrew) and the K.J.V., English translation, which would you choose and why?
2. Were the translators **verbally** (Holy Spirit led them to pick appropriate English word) and **plenary** (the translation is without error in the whole and in the part) inspired in their exact choice of English words in translating the original Greek, and Hebrew words (and figures of speech) in the same way, and in the same degree that the original writers were inspired by the Holy Spirit.
3. Is the K.J.V. a perfect translation? In other words, is it a perfect translation like the original autographs were a perfect and error free representation of God's mind and his truth? Or is it an excellent approximation of the original autographs with occasional human errors and therefore not perfect like the original, but substantially conveying God's truth.
4. If the scriptures are the sole basis for establishing the validity of particular truths taught by man (II Tim. 3:16, 17; Acts 17:11; Col. 2:6-8), what is there in the scriptures (of course using the K.J.V., 1611) that would substantiate the teaching that the K.J.V. is the only acceptable translation of the original languages.
5. If the scriptures are not the sole basis for determining whether the K.J.V is in fact God's authorized translation then what biblical principles must I use to validate this teaching? Also please develop the principle by which non explicit statements, commands, types' etc. can be used to bind the conscience of God's people on bible doctrines.
6. What authorization and blessing do I have from God's word to "wave the banner" of the K.J.V translation as the only translation that God uses and blesses. In other words, God makes it very clear in the scriptures the priorities I am to be engaged about in my life. Where does He address this issue so that I to can get excited about teaching this vital doctrine?
7. I've heard a number of friends compare the K.J.V with other translations operating under the assumption that the K.J.V. is the standard. Isn't that putting the cart before the horse? What point is there in comparing the K.J.V. with other translations when the assumption that the K.J.V. is God's only endorsed translation is the very point that needs to be proved? It seems to me (and I might be wrong) that only after that fundamental point is proved can we use it as a standard for comparing other translations.
8. Has God limited himself in saving sinners exclusively from the preaching of the K.J.V? If that is true how do we account for the many saints that came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ from the preaching of foreign language translations? How do we also account for the many saints saved prior to the K.J.V. translation in 1611? I understand Martin Luther was saved reading the Latin Vulgate. What is the biblical basis for such a claim?

These questions are very perplexing to me and I would appreciate any help you could give me in answering them.

Sincerely in Christ,

Paul M. Ripley