

Salvation—By What Standard

(The study for today establishes the standard by which we not only define and describe the doctrine of salvation and its related subjects, but it is the foundation on which all our podcasts are constructed. This seeks to avoid the confusion caused by the plurality of so-called translations propagated in modern times. It is essential that we know the will of God given by Him in the Holy Scriptures.)

In order to discuss anything there must be a standard whereby topics are to be measured. There cannot be two different standards used to derive the truth. For example, if two people desire to work together to build a house and one person believes twelve inches equals to a foot but the other person believes that a foot equals eighteen inches they cannot construct a house using different measurements. Likewise, when people do not agree on the standard of the Word of God they are likely never to agree as to what the truth is about salvation or any other ecclesiastical doctrine. Therefore, I will borrow from a previous podcast to establish the standard that I will use to discuss the subject of salvation and the related doctrines. Much of the following paragraph is quoted verbatim with some adjustments to blend in with the subject at hand.

Without doing a lengthy study on the various religions of the world and seeking to verify which God is to be obeyed and worshiped and what salvation is, I will simply state that there is only one God and He alone is to be worshiped and there is only one book that gives this information to man. This God is Jehovah and He is designated as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. The book is called the Holy Scriptures as given to man by divine inspiration in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and the Greek text of the New Testament. The text of the Old Testament is designated as the Masoretic Text and the text of the New Testament is identified as the Textus Receptus or the Received Text. I am aware of those designated as “higher critics” that challenge this but time will not allow us to validate why we make this claim. We may enlarge on this in later broadcasts. The Bible does not seek to prove the existence of God and the salvation as declared therein, it simply declares these truths. Also, to avoid much confusion as to what these Hebrew and Greek texts say, we present the truths of the Word of God from what we believe to be the best English translation from them in the King James translation of 1611. I am aware of the plurality of translations today and that this plurality of translations has done more to confuse man than to clarify the truths declared in the Hebrew and Greek texts. Nevertheless, I believe the position I am taking is the best and wisest course in the obedience of man to the one true and living God. This is not to say that the King James translation is without fault. There are some problems with it mainly due to the restrictions placed on the translators by the rules set forth by King James I. Still, I believe the virtues and merits far outweigh the difficulties found in it.

In order to show the confusion today that is caused by the plurality of the modern translations, let us look at one verse of the Scriptures; it is Hebrews 11:1. As stated in the King James Version (KJV), it reads, “Now faith is the *substance* of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” The New International Version (NIV) states, “Now faith is *confidence* in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.” The New American Standard Bible (NASB) says, “Now faith is *the certainty* of things hoped for, a proof of things not seen.” The New English Translation (NET) declares, “Now faith is *being sure* of what we hope for, being convinced of what we do not see.” The American Standard Version (ASV): “Now faith is *assurance* of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen.” The list could be enlarged but this should be enough to show why so many people are confused as to what the Bible teaches. All who believe the Bible agree that salvation is by grace through faith and that it is the gift of God, Ephesians 2:8. Therefore it is essential that we know *what* faith is. By

looking at the different translations of Hebrew 11:1, we find that they do not agree at least regarding one part of the verse. This is seen in the how the Greek word ὑπόστασις (hypostasis) is translated. The KJV says **substance**; the NIV states **confidence**; the NASB gives **certainty**; the NET says **being sure**; and, the ASV supplies **assurance**.

Thayer gives the meaning of this Greek word as follows: ... **1.** *a setting or placing under; substructure, foundation:* ... **2.** *that which has foundation, is firm; hence, a. that which has actual existence; a substance, real being:* ... **b.** *the substantial quality, nature, of any person or thing.* [Joseph Henry Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1967). pp. 644-645.] Richard Soule in his thesaurus give the following synonyms for substance: reality, hypostasis, ... essential nature, real being, real existence, ... essence, ... soul, chief part, essential part, vital part, body, ... stuff, ... (*Theol.*) divine essence, divine being. (Richard Soule, *A Dictionary of English Synonyms*, rev. ed. by George H. Howison (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1891, 1920). p. 413.) “By this we find that *faith* is the real *existence*, the *essence*, the *essential part*, the *vital part*, the *stuff* of things for which we hope. Faith is not a dream. It is not self-persuasion. It is not the product of one’s imagination or something which has been conceived in the mind by emotional desires. This would be mysticism and existentialism. However, this is usually the contemporary concept of faith: a leap in the dark. But faith cannot actually be unless that in which faith rests is an actual fact.” (*Justification: The Heart of the Gospel* by Jimmy Barber, page 102. From this we are told that faith is *reality*, *real existence*, *essence*, or *stuff* of that which is “hoped for” or of that which one expects to receive, it is not derived by the *confidence* or *assurance* that is conjured by a person’s inner thoughts, mental process, or human will.

With all of these different ideas of faith as given by the various translations (and many other examples could be given), the average person is confused as to what faith is. One person thinks one thing and another person believes it to be something else. Multiply this by the many different ideas presented by the different translation and the average person in the pew is perplexed as to what faith really is. However, this is simply a small fraction of the problem. Multiply all the differences of the translations by the various translations and the confusion is so astronomical that hardly can any two people agree on anything that the Bible says. There must be a standard and that standard must be one and not two or three or more different concepts. Therefore, the standard that I use is the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament and the is Textus Receptus or the Received Text of the New Testament, with the English translation of the King James Bible as given by the providence of God.

(For those who desire to know more about why I believe as I do allow me to supply a partial list of books on this subject. They are as follows:

Two pamphlets by William O. Einwechter: *The Excellence of the Authorized Version and English Bible Translations, by What Standard?*

The Legacy of the King James Bible by Leland Ryken;

The King James Version Defended by Edward F. Hills;

Defending the King James Bible by D. A. Waite;

Translators Revived; Biographical Notes of the KJV Bible Translators, by Alexander McClure;

Three books by David Otis Fuller: *Which Bible?, True or False?*, and *Counterfeit or Genuine: Mark 16? John 8?*

Three writings by John Owen as found in volume 16 of his writings as published by The Banner of Truth Trust: *Of the Divine Original, Authority, Self-Evidencing Light, and Power of the Scriptures ...*, and *A Vindication of the Purity and Integrity of the Hebrew and Greek Texts* (Einwechter quotes from this in his *English Bible Translations* in Appendix I.), and *Some Exercitations About the Nature and Perfection of the Scripture ...*

For more information regarding the Hebrew vowel points see *A Dissertation Concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel Points, and Accents* by John Gill as found on Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church's website. (The supplied link is for the first of sixteen dissertations:
https://mountzionpbc.org/Gill%20John/John%20Gill%20A%20Disseration_1.pdf.)

Since words have meaning, it is important that everyone is on the same page and saying the same thing when discussing anything. To try to define salvation and its related subjects by using different translations that are portraying different words that sets forth different ideologies only creates confusion to say the least. Essentially, all Christian denominations and philosophies claim that salvation is the gift of God and/or it is by God. However, when looking at what is usually proclaimed and or practiced, salvation is presented as something caused by what man does rather than what God does. Just as we saw regarding the word "faith" in Hebrews 11:1 and the different translations, the newer translations presented faith as something that comes forth from and trusts in man. The Lord willing, we will discuss the subject of faith and its relation to salvation in future studies.

We have established the standard by which we believe and it is the standard whereby we will study the doctrine of salvation and all related topics. However, our time is up for today. Farewell.