

Biblical Textual Criticism

What is Textual Criticism:

Textual Criticism is the process of ascertaining the original wording of a text.

Why is textual criticism so important:

1. We need to know what God actually said
2. We need to know what God meant by what He said.
3. It affects how the Bible is translated.
4. It proves the reliability of the Bible.

Textual Variants:

A Textual Variant is a difference in the text between two or more manuscripts.

1. Spelling:
 - a. Moveable Nu
 - b. Names
2. Punctuation:
3. Manuscript Tradition:
 - a. Different Greek Translations – affected by time, region, and dialect.
4. Simple mistakes:
 - a. In the KJV read 2 Kings 8:26 vs 2 Chronicles 22:2 – how old was Ahaziah?
5. Omission: Removing from the Text
6. Interpolating – adding to the text:
 - a. I know what comes next: grace and peace to you.
 - b. 1 John 5:7-8
 - c. John 7:53-8:11
 - d. Mark 16:9-20

How Textual Criticism Affects Bible Translation:

Verses that are commonly omitted in modern translations – Partial or Whole (Read in KJV)

1. Matthew 12:47, 17:21, 18:11, 20:16, and 23:14
2. Mark 6:11, 7:16, 9:44, 9:46, 11:26, and 15:28.
3. Luke 4:8, 9:55-56, 17:36, and 23:17
4. John 5:3-4
5. Acts 8:37, 9:5-6, 13:42, 15:34, 23:9, 24:6-8, and 28:29.
6. Romans: 16:24.

Translation Philosophy:

1. Formal Equivalency vs Dynamic Equivalency (Word for Word vs Thought for Thought)
 - a. Translation vs commentating
 - b. Supposed “Optimal Equivalency”
2. Critical Text vs Majority Text

3. Greek Septuagint vs Masoretic Text – 1 Samuel 9:25
4. Political and Theological reasons for translating a certain way.
 - a. “Brothers and sisters”

Bad Translations:

1. NWT
2. Readers Digest Bible
3. The Message Bible
4. The Passion Translation
5. The Good News Translation
6. The Living Bible