



GOD'S WORD IN OUR

Hands

SUNDAY EVENING SERIES



**IF GOD'S WORD IS NOT
TRUSTWORTHY WE DO NOT AND
CANNOT KNOW GOD.**

THE BIBLE & TRANSMISSION

Lesson #11

#1: STARTING AT THE BEGINNING



“

When thou comest bring with thee
(Troas), and the books, but especially
the parchments.

- 2 Timothy 4:13

#1: STARTING AT THE BEGINNING

How do we know how old the parchment or papyrus is?

1. Carbon Dating
2. Orthography



#1: STARTING AT THE BEGINNING

Why didn't God just preserve an original copy for us?

Answer: We would be tempted to worship the original



THE BIBLE & TRANSMISSION

Lesson #11

#2: MAKING COPIES OF SCRIPTURE

There is nothing in anything the Bible teaches or anything about God or theology that says anyone copying the Bible has to be preserved from error.



#2: MAKING COPIES OF SCRIPTURE

Ancient Writings

Extant Manuscripts

Homer's *Iliad*

643

Sophocles (combined writings)

100-193

Aristotle (combined writings)

49

Tacitus

20

Caesar's *Gallic Wars*

10

Euripedes

9

Plato

7

NT Greek MSS

5,752 (as of Dec. 2008)

#2: MAKING COPIES OF SCRIPTURE

NT Latin MSS

10,000

Quotes from Church Fathers before
AD 325

32,000 quotations

Quotes from Church Fathers in all
MSS

Over 1 million quotations

#2: MAKING COPIES OF SCRIPTURE

The Bible is the best attributed ancient document ever.



THE BIBLE & TRANSMISSION

Lesson #11

#3: DEALING WITH VARIANTS

Three most famous variants:

1. The account of the woman taken in adultery doesn't occur in some very old manuscripts
2. The last few verses of the Gospel of Mark
3. 1 John 5:7 doesn't appear in any Greek manuscripts until the reformation



#3: DEALING WITH VARIANTS

Making sense of the numbers:

- There are 8,000 verses in the Greek NT
- There are 152 verses that could be considered variant words
- That means just 1.9% of the text has some form of variant
- Over the 500 pages of a Greek NT the argument over variants covers only half a page



#3: DEALING WITH VARIANTS

There are no variants that affect our theology.



THE BIBLE & TRANSMISSION

Lesson #11

#4: TRANSLATING THE MANUSCRIPTS





To relieve your mind of any possible misgivings, I will briefly explain the principles on which I have been working. After comparing copies of the Greek and following the one which seemed the most accurate ... I have endeavored to see that passages which previously puzzled the reader by their ambiguity or the obscurity of their expression or by faults and awkwardness of language should now be rendered smooth and lucid, diverging most sparingly from the form of words and never from the sense.

- Erasmus (1518)



The reading of the Greek is the basis of my version everywhere, but I do not everywhere accept it; in other places I prefer our own ... Besides which, variant readings are not merely an obstacle to the study of Holy Scripture, they are a great help, as St. Augustine himself avers. But nowhere is the degree of variation great enough to imperil the orthodox faith.

- Erasmus (1518)

#4: TRANSLATING THE MANUSCRIPTS

Erasmus' Compilation of a New Greek Manuscript:

1. His new manuscript was called the "Textus Receptus" or "Received Text"
2. It was "received" from 18 manuscripts
3. Note that Erasmus had only 18 manuscripts to look at and not the 5,700+ we have available to us today
4. Erasmus didn't even guarantee that all 18 were the best so sometimes he went to the Latin text for aid
5. Sometimes Erasmus went to his Latin and then brought out a Greek word that is in no other Greek manuscripts

#4: TRANSLATING THE MANUSCRIPTS

The Textual Families:

1. Caesarean Text
2. Alexandrian Text
3. Byzantine (or Syrian or Majority) Text
4. Western (or Roman) Text

#4: TRANSLATING THE MANUSCRIPTS

Greek Manuscripts Available Today:

1. Textus Receptus
2. Majority Text
3. Eclectic Text

#4: TRANSLATING THE MANUSCRIPTS

Greek Manuscripts Available Today:

1. Textus Receptus: King James Version, Modern English Version
2. Majority Text: New King James Version
3. Eclectic Text: English Standard Version, New American Standard Bible, Christian Standard Bible, etc.

#4: TRANSLATING THE MANUSCRIPTS



THE BIBLE & TRANSMISSION

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IMPORTANT CONCLUDING POINTS

1. The conversation about which Bible is actually an extra-biblical debate about the Bible
2. The conversation about which Bible is actually wage logically which puts in in the category of doubtful things



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