

Pastors and the Textual Issue

In Defense of Traditional Bible Texts

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Bible Text: 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21

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It's good to see you and I'm so glad the pulpit is high. Thank goodness. Not only that, but it's good to hide behind. How many pastors are here? Pastors, hold your hands up so that I can see. Good, that's great. How many here are Bible teachers? How about Sunday School teachers? All right, that's good. So good to have you here and to be here with you. I have come this evening to bring a message. I may have to leave as soon as I finish because it will be 11 or 12 tonight before I get back home and I have to get up early. Well, I usually get up early anyway, but I have to get up early in the morning and finish a funeral sermon. Then I have to be prepared to be at the hospital early in the morning with two of my people that I was visiting this morning who went to the hospital--two of the best. We have just lost one of the best that we had. So I've got a lot of things to do tomorrow. It's not that long a drive back, but it's a little uncomfortable for me just now.

But you'll be glad to know that I have redone, again, this message that I'm bringing this evening. I'm writing a book with the same title and I'm very concerned about the fact of "Pastors and the Textual Issue" because I really believe that most pastors, although they may know there's an issue, I don't think they have really looked into the issue without jaundiced eyes. Now, that's not being critical of them, I think that's just busyness and a situation that has arisen with educational institutions and it's just not given a balanced hearing in the schools. It's just not balanced and so I'm not enemies with our brothers. It isn't that but I can't be in agreement with them and so I want to say some things and some of them are listening. I'm so glad they're listening. They may be listening for the wrong reasons but I'm glad they're listening. They will hear some things here that will be helpful to them if they will listen and I hope they will and that they will be open to the truth and realize the deceptiveness of educational indoctrination which is very often what it is. So I'm glad for this great privilege and honor to be here and I hope I can be of some kind of help and blessing to you by being here.

My glasses broke on top of everything else, so I stopped and bought me something that I can kind of see through but I can't see you. Nonetheless, I got here and I found that Dr.

DiVietro who I had rejoiced over because he had recovered from some serious back problems, I found that the wild man has hurt himself again and so he's got back trouble himself. Anyway, it's just such a delight to be able to be with like-minded folks and people who love the Book and love the Lord.

I was accused, maybe some of you have as well, I was accused of making the Bible my God. They say, "You worship the Bible." I said, "No, I don't worship the Bible but I worship the God of the Bible." And so I hope I'll be heard at least fairly, and it will be a help and a blessing to you. I brought my daughter, Bethany, with me. She has been with me all the way through the college and university and seminary and poverty and abuse and unappreciation and all the other things. Have any of you suffered any of that? All right, look at this. Many testimonies. Many testimonies. She's been with me through it all and good back-up now. She's a good strong girl now so she's good back-up.

Hear me, pastor brethren here and wherever, there is no higher calling nor a calling of greater importance than that of a truly God-called pastor. I want you to understand that. There is medicine, engineering, finance, law. No discipline in the world equals the responsibility and high calling of a pastor that the Lord has put His hands upon. It is beyond anything that can be imagined. However, some value a pastor in a very shocking way. Forty years ago while pastor of my second church, a deacon opposed a \$15 a week raise for the pastor. After much heated discussion between the deacons, one deacon asked me if I had anything that I would like to ask or say. I asked the major opponent of the raise if he thought my \$190 a week salary without any car allowance or any other allowance, really seemed sufficient to him? He did, he replied. Well, so much for honesty. I then asked him that since my income was so public, would he mind sharing what his income was? "Glad to," he said. "What?" I said. "\$35,000 a year." Forty years ago. "That's more than three times my salary," I said, "and I don't have money, but I know how to count it quickly. Well," I continued, "in light of our salary difference, why do you feel that you're worth your amount of income and I don't rate a \$15 a week increase?" It was just an honest question. His answer was worse than I supposed. I wish I hadn't asked. "I am," he said, "responsible for purchasing all the electrical material for the building contractor I work for and because the material that I have to be responsible for purchasing is so valuable and the responsibility is so great, I'm well paid." I had only one more question for him. I bet you can guess what it is. "Do you think the man who is in a position that will greatly impact your seven year old daughter's eternal well-being might be worth at least \$15 a week more than he's getting now?" He had no answer.

You know, it's surprising how little many value their pastor and it is true that pastors are genuinely called from humble stations in life. There's nothing wrong with that. Paul penned these God-inspired words on the subject of the pastor, "*For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world and things that are despised.*" Are any of you despised? "*Hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.*" If you want to check that out and those listening by our internet, it's 1 Corinthians 1:26-29. These descriptive words are not intended to mean that God doesn't have a high regard for

pastors, no, the contrary. 1 Timothy 3:1 affirms, *“This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop,”* I have to pause there and admit that I’m Baptist and some of you may not be Baptist but I take *“bishop”* to be *“pastor.”* Anyway. *“He desireth a good work.”* From experience, I can truly say that serving the Lord and His people is a joy and honor. It is something that I consider to be one of the greatest callings of the world. He chose a little cross-eyed boy from South Carolina who never gained any notoriety in anything except rudeness and called him to preach, I can't get over it.

A man called to the pastoral ministry is called to be a shepherd. A shepherd in the Biblical sense is one who feeds and cares for sheep. The areas of greatest importance for a pastor are the same as they were for the apostles who said, *“But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word.”* Most of the times, our churches have us so burdened down with every kind of menial task that can be sloughed off on us until, if they could, they'd have us working from daylight to midnight on some of the most foolish things that they're just not willing to do. Now, that's just the truth. Can I get an “Amen” right there? All right. Glad to do it but nonetheless.

Of all the duties a pastor has, feeding the sheep is primary. Jesus put great emphasis upon that fact to Peter in John 21 where three times he said to Peter, *“Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep. Feed my sheep.”* Give the sheep food. Good food. Healthy food. Nutritious, spiritual food is urged by the Lord Jesus. He wouldn't want believers to be fed on inferior spiritual food of the altered texts of many shepherds which they serve up in our day. The arch-enemy of God and man is rejoicing over the pastors today who blithely use and endorse the unspeakably altered Bibles, the substandard food of critical text Bible versions is weakening believers and leading to full apostasy. Satan is called *“the devil and Satan which deceiveth the whole world.”* His greatest effort today appears to be an effort to completely supplant the accurate and God-preserved Received Text and Authorized Version which is an accurate translation of the preserved text. Fragments of the manuscripts, parts of different sizes were treasured, and hidden by early churches at the cost of life and blood. Then those pieces and some larger portions were gathered and finally compiled into an accurate preserved text, which we have now, that God kept hidden. Not totally out of place in the hearts of people, and in the piece fragments that they held, and the parts and the liturgy that they recited in churches, and in the Psalms that they sang. It was gathered and compiled. These did much of it. Erasmus, Beza, and others did much of it. But God is the One Who brought it together. It is compiled. We have it, and we were able to have it translated into the English language. because of that. Because of the opposition to the blessed Authorized Versions of the Bible, many have died and suffered because of that persecution?

“In these last days,” Hebrews 1:2 says, *“God has spoken to us by his Son.”* His Son, the Word incarnate. Any of you understand that? I mean, He is the Word and He has preserved and given us the written Word and to violate the written Wrd is to violate the living Word. I'm just frightened. But Satan is feverishly working to alter, weaken, change, diminish, and cause doubt about the trustworthiness of the Bible, especially the Authorized Version, and in so doing, Satan is bringing about the apostasy of 2 Thessalonians 2:3, *“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come,*

except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." The falling away spoken of here is apostasy. Falling away from truth, the truth of the Bible. God wants all men to know the truth of God and in 1 Timothy 2:4-5 the Bible says, *"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."* Liberal scholars don't believe those verses. They spend their time looking for another way, another word and another version, rather than just rejoicing over the truth they have.

I try so hard, but I so seldom am ever able to win someone to the Lord. They don't respect the Bible like they one time did. They doubt it. They just take it lightly but I knock on doors and I go to people. I catch them anywhere I can. You know, a guy pumping gas on the other side of the island where you're pumping gas, run around over there while he's pumping gas and say, *"Hi. I'm Ken Rainey. I'm pumping gas around on the other side."* Right away he thinks you're wanting to borrow money and I say, *"I've got something I want to give you. I wrote this. It took me a lifetime. I wrote this. I designed it and I paid for it and I'd be honored if you'd read it."* *"Really? Boy, it looks nice."* I say, *"Now, if you're not going to read it, give it back to me because like I said, I paid for it and if you're not going to read it, I'll take it back. But if you'll read it, I think it will be a blessing to you."* We need to be doing that, trying to win people to the Lord.

You know, I'll tell you the truth: it's hard to win people to Christ. They are indoctrinated in a wrong way and they're not only indoctrinated in a wrong way but they are vaccinated against the real thing because they have some kind of religion that they're trusting in instead of Jesus. Baptists, *"Oh, I'm saved because I'm Baptist. My membership is at Such-and-such Baptist Church."* Usually, it'll be New Hope, Little Hope or No Hope Baptist Church. *"And I was baptized and I'm a member there."* That's what they're trusting in, you see. You can't tell them that unless they've trusted in Jesus, repented of their sins and believe that He rose from the dead...how many Baptists really believe that Jesus rose from the dead? Anyway, it's hard to lead someone to the Lord.

Four weeks ago now, I guess, a dear Catholic lady I was visiting in a home, she said, *"You're a pastor?"* I said, *"Yes, ma'am."* *"And you're a Baptist pastor? Are you these folks' pastor?"* I said, *"Yes, ma'am."* She said, *"Well, you know, I've been wondering about something."* She said, *"I'm Catholic."* I said, *"Yes, ma'am."* So she asked me some questions about baptism and communion and just different things and I said, *"Ma'am, are you interested in knowing the truth?"* She said, *"Very much."* I said, *"Well, listen, if I could just take a minute,"* and about an hour later I said, *"Would you like to just ask Jesus in faith to save you? Religion aside, just Jesus coming into your heart and saving you? Would you like to do that right now?"* *"Can I do that?"* I said, *"You sure can."* We bowed and she asked the Lord to save her. Tears running down those nearly blind eyes. I'm going to tell you something: that will get you going and keep you going for years. She comes to our church. We're up to nine now. We're up to nine, or down to nine. She comes. She's in bad health and has to have some assistance in getting around with her eyes. She is going to have to have surgery so I haven't asked her to be baptized yet because of her eyes. If she gets into the water, the doctor is concerned about her eyes. I

won't get into all that but it's a dangerous thing. I told her, *“Well, you're saved anyway and don't worry about getting in that water back there. That'll come but that's not what's going to save you. You need to put that away.”* Anyway, she wasn't able to come one Sunday but then she came back this past Sunday. To be honest now, I just wasn't able after I preached, I just had to feel my way away from the pulpit and step down off the pulpit. I wasn't able to give an invitation and so she came up to me after church and she had a little clipboard in her hand with a card on it and she said, *“When can I fill this out?”* I said, *“Fill it out right now. You know the answers to all the questions.”* She wrote her name and her address and her phone number and her birth date and all that down on there and she said, *“Now, when can I join the church?”* I said, *“I'll keep this card and Sunday coming, if the Lord hasn't come Sunday morning, you can join the church.”*

Now, how many times have you had one to come up after and say, *“Listen, when can I get this thing done. I want to get on the road here.”* I'll tell you right now: that's a joy, friends. It's slow to see but when we do, we can rejoice. The devil doesn't like it but we are feverishly working and the devil is working against us. The falling away is here. *“Who will have all men to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”* And when you see somebody come to the knowledge of truth and the light comes in their face, oh, what a joy.

2 Timothy 3:7-8 makes the altering scholars clearly understood in their real purpose. *“Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”* Had someone from Furman University. Oops, didn't mean to say that. Furman University, I didn't mean to say that. It's in Greenville, South Carolina just off Highway 25. If you know anybody going there, call them.

“Come to the knowledge of truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.” Bible altering which leads to apostasy comes by degrees. Every new Bible version by subtraction, substitution and omission. Altered Bibles are produced by liberal modernist scholars enabled by deceived pastors. If pastors wouldn't use and promote the altered texts, it would prevent its widespread use and acceptance by churches. When the 1901 American Standard Version came out which was based on Westcott and Hort critical text, it was soundly rejected by pastors in churches. Only some of the major seminaries accepted the American Standard Bible. The 1901 American Standard Bible never gained enough acceptance to sell but few copies. That would be true today if pastors understood the text issue and reversed the landslide acceptance of the new versions. Pastors are the problem. I'm sorry and you may have a different opinion of that and if you do, that's your prerogative but pastors are the problem. They are responsible for the sheep. I don't know if any of you know what it is to let hay mold, get wet and mold and then feed it to the animals you are responsible for. It will make them sick. It will kill them.

However, with the passing of time, more pastors began receiving college, university and seminary degrees. Churches were using the more educated pastors. Oh boy. They always ask, *“Where did you go to school?”* I can tell them,

“Well, the first seven years I went to Reed Elementary. It was a four room

school and had seven grades in four rooms. It didn't have indoor plumbing, it had a girl's double-decker outhouse on that side of the playground and boy's double-decker outhouse on that side. No lunches. Red dirt for a playground. One ball. One bat. One jump rope. Seven years.”

But you know, when I got out of school, I could add, subtract, multiply and divide. I knew how to write a check even though I didn't have a check. They told us how to answer the telephone and we didn't have a telephone. No one in our community had a telephone. When they came, there were eight party lines. “*Miss Vaughn, we've got an emergency. I've come and asked if we can use the phone. Can we get on?*” “*Why yes.*” Then waited about 3-4 minutes and everybody was listening. That's where I came from and God called me to preach. Then he sent me to college. He told me, “*Ken, I want you to go to North Greenville Junior College and preach.*” I went to North Greenville College and I went to Furman and I went to Charleston Southern University and I went to Souther Seminary and God only told me to go to North Greenville Junior College. I'd have been better off if I had stopped. But the church is sad. “*A call to preach is a call to prepare.*” I think I was prepared when God called me.

At any rate, they were required to use the critical text version in all those schools and they were told that the oldest manuscripts were the best and they believed it. I sat there and heard it. They made fun of me because I argued with them about the King James Bible . The professors told the young pastors, and me too, and made fun of me because of what I stood for. “*The Authorized King James Bible pastors back home are just behind in the times and they mean well but they're just uneducated.*” Well, I'm going to tell you right now. I may be uneducated but I've got some sense, and when somebody tells me that the Bible which glorifies God in every respect, holds up Jesus in all things and preaches the truth even though they don't believe Daniel is true and all the rest of the good prophetic books, though they don't believe it's true and though they're arguing against it, I delight to read it. It's just as true as it can be. And I have something to look forward to because it tells me there is coming a rapture one day and I believe it.

Because the student pastors usually do not investigate the textual issue, they've been deceived. The path of least resistance is where they walk and they do so in churches and when they go to the churches, a lot of them say, “*What version do you folks prefer?*” That's what they often ask. “*Well, that will be all right. It's a perfectly good version.*” I'm serious when I say this: if I were starting out again at 27 years of age, I'd never be called to be pastor of the first church at all. I don't mean the first Baptist church, I mean the first church I ever pastored would never have called me. I went back there to the first church that called me as pastor and preached a little homecoming sermon and they wouldn't even let me eat. Some of them got up and walked out. What did Jesus say in Luke? “*Woe be unto you when all men speak well of you.*” Wouldn't let me preach now if I didn't know things on them.

Although the Bible schools claim to be conservative, they love their good old King James Bible and, “*The King James is our standard,*” they're being deceptive. The short spelling of deceptive is lying. They are lying when they say that and I gladly tell them. Lying. Not

truthing, lying. They are just absolutely misrepresenting everything from, "*We're glad to see you,*" right on. They're not glad to see you. Lying. As proof, numbers of schools of higher learning require Bible students to use the English Standard Version or the latest, greatest versions at the time and these versions are promoted and endorsed by the faculty else the Authorized Version would be used. And those supporting critical text schools in any way, bear the guilt of apostasy.

School loyalty. God, help us. They send me things all the time, 3-4 times a year from all the schools I graduated from, even Reed School, I guess, wanting me to send them money. Wanting me to come their dinners and all the things and promote the school. Listen: if you have school loyalty instead of loyalty to Christ, it's the main reason the support continues in these God-dishonoring schools. If you cut the money off and you quit sending students to those schools, I'd rather send a student to a secular school than a compromised Bible school. They at least know that the secular school is not standing for anything and the Bible schools are leading them down the garden path. Do you remember that word I told you a while ago, lying? Jot that down somewhere.

I only have one more page. The administration and faculty are now free to indoctrinate their students and in turn, the students indoctrinate the churches, because these versions have been so accepted. Anyone who cares can find out if a school is liberal or modernist by a few simple investigative techniques. Parents and grandparents, I'm telling you the truth. All over the country and world, I hope you hear this. Rather than say, "*Oh, it's such a lovely campus. Oh, they're so nice. And this dining hall and all of this. Look at what a beautiful auditorium and the teachers are so nice.*" Some of the best teachers I ever had were the roughest, gruffest old things I ever saw in my life, and they were about the only ones who had anything truthful to say. Here's the way that you can find out if the school where you're going to send your children or grandchildren and those that you care about from your church, here's a way you can know if it's a modernist school or not. First of all, when you go there, don't let them tell you, "*We're so glad to have you on campus.*" That's just like a used car salesman. If you are, I'm glad to know a good Christian used car salesman. But when you walk on the lot, you're just the grandest fellow that ever was. When you walk on campus as a supporting person or somebody bringing a student, you're great.

But here's the way that you can know if that school is leading them wrong or not: if one isn't fooled, it's going to take investigative techniques. Alert investigators, mothers, dads, grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles, can easily spot liberal indoctrination that is forced upon young people by their modernist Bible professors. If one isn't fooled by platitudes and will simply sit in some Bible classes, inquire as to the Hebrew and Greek text used in the language classes, go to the bookstore and see what major Bible version is most shelved and promoted, buy a book or two by the leading Bible teacher of that school and read it. Don't just say, "*I've got this nice book.*" An accurate assessment of a school can be formed. Honesty requires that it be acknowledged that young Bible students have all of their highly educated instructors to be off balance and sure of themselves in class. Because of this fact, he's likely to lean to the teacher's point of view out of deference to the teacher's advanced degree and position. I had one ask me one time, "*What is it that*

you're wanting to ask?" I said, *"You know what James says, don't you? If you ask the Lord, he'll give you liberally and upbraid you not. I just ask you to do the same thing and have respect for me when I ask the question."* *"Well, what is it!"* So ask him. He's dead now and he knows the answer.

Honesty requires that that's the problem so many young people have is they give deference to their professors. The situation is made worse if the young pastor desires endorsement by his former teachers in school in the candidate process of a pastoral position or teaching opportunity. Now you think about that. Am I right or am I right? If he won't stand on his own two feet and trust God and let the Lord open doors and let the Lord move him and let the Lord guide him and let the Lord lead people to calling and let them come together in the spirit of God and work, what do they do? *"Do you have the name of the university? Let's call the university and get some names from them."* They spend more time going to lunch meetings and buffet meetings and things and sitting around a dinner table somewhere eating and talking and laughing and carrying on than getting down on their hands and knees and praying and asking God for leadership in calling a pastor. And pastors know that and so they just cow-tow to the professors and to the schools.

When a pastor is influenced to maintain a critical text version of the Scripture for a positive endorsement, he becomes like the man in Jude and I'm going to say chapter 1 because there may be some of you in here that don't know this, there is only one chapter. Jude 1:16, a youngster who is cow-towing and trying to placate some professors, is one having one's person in admiration because of advantage. Now, that's exactly the truth. There are many schools and teachers who have blacklists. I know one of the greatest preachers there is anywhere around. He's about 72 years old. He was at my church the other day working on my computer. Incidentally, it was a fruitless and futile effort. My computer, they say, is too old and is worthless. I've heard people say their pastor was. He was working on my computer and he said, "Do you know what I found out? Did you ever know Dr. Dollar?" Dr. Dollar and he were great friends and Dr. Dollar told this friend of mine years ago, he said, *"Did you know Bob Jones University has had you on a blacklist for years because of what you say?"* He said, *"No, I didn't know that."* He said, *"Well, it's the truth."* Dr. Dollar is dead or I wouldn't have mentioned it. Blacklists. Schools put you on a blacklist. If you don't go by what they say you ought to go by, a lot of schools put you on a blacklist. They also have an endorse list and that's what people are trying to get on and you've really got to stay on your p's and q's to be on that list.

Listen, I want to tell you something: churches ought to consult the Spirit in calling a pastor. After all, the Bible says the church is the pillar and ground of the truth, not some stinking educational institution. You say, *"Well, are you anti-education?"* Well, I try not to let it go to my head. I'm going to tell you: people have gone nuts over education. Some of the best preachers I ever heard never went past sixth or seventh grade and I'm talking about preachers that were soul winners and worth listening to.

Weak and ambitious pastors keep close ties with their schools for professional advantage. The Apostle Paul warned of controlling men such as found in educational institutions.

Acts 20:30, when he warned, *“Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”* And they do so often at these schools. Pastors often have a biased view of a textual issue which they developed in schools where a balanced text discussion isn't allowed and horribly altered modernist Bible versions have led to a lack of trust that we have the very Word of God. As a result, the already carnal religious community – carnal religious community, did you hear that? Church folks. Carnal religious community which makes up large numbers of church members, has little regard for their ever-changing Bible because with little submission to Bible authority and for their life because the Bible is largely doubted.

The university and seminary presidents openly use the ESV Bible and are brazen about it. On a recent televised town hall meeting conducted by Dr. Steven Petit, I want to be sure that this gets out, Dr. Steve Petit, new President of Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina, a mile and a half from my church, which also uses the ESV Bible. They say they don't but they do. He said that the King James Bible is a non-issue. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky where I graduated, President Albert Mohler said in a Seminary Magazine article. *“Where Truth Is Declared,”* is the name of the article, Fall 2011, volume 79, #4, page 1. He said, *“Feeding them,”* students, *“always the truth of God's word.”* That was while Dr. Mohler was standing there using the ESV Bible and requires his students to do the same thing.

Again in Seminary Magazine, an article from the President, same President, same school, Summer 2014, volume 82, #3, page 1, speaking of the Lord Jesus' address to Peter saying, I'm going to use the King James' saying, *“Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep. Feed my sheep.”* Dr. Mohler, using the ESV version of John 21:15-17 goes on to say, *“These utterly simple commands are a job description for ministry. Feeding them always the truth of God's word.”* The most altered and horrific mistreatment of Scripture and I've talked to numbers of those young men and they say, *“Well, Dr. Carson says such-and such.”* I said, *“God said it was true.”*

Well, I've probably gone over but my heart is in this. This isn't something that is passing with me because I know that as soon as some of us who are my age and older, as soon as we're no longer able, it's just going to go over the edge unless God does something. But he's already said that the apostasy is coming. It's the end time, folks. All you have to do is look around. Read Daniel. Read Isaiah. What does Isaiah say? Damascus will be completely done away with, obliterated. People used to say, *“How in the world can that happen?”* Some of those people over in Iran are going to shoot at Israel and probably blow up Damascus.