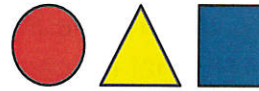


# God's Word Preserved – the beloved English Bible

## REVIEW



- Things that are **different** are **NOT** the **same**.
- God promised to **preserve** His **WORDS** – and God **cannot** lie. Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:17-18
- **1 perfect Book** has **more authority** than **many** books that do not say the same thing.



Every Word

VS



Different Words



- The *living* Word and the *written* Word **cannot** be separated!
- The Bible issue really comes down to a tale of two cities – **Antioch** vs. Alexandria, Egypt.
- The Bible is very clear that Jesus hates the deeds and doctrine of the **Nicolaitans**.

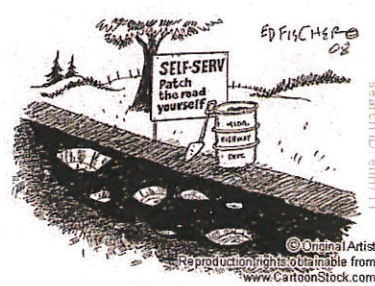
## WEEK 6: COPIES vs. ORIGINALS

Consider this – Is it easier to build a new highway spanning across the wilderness, tunneling through mountains, constructing bridges over rivers and arriving at the correct destination or is it easier to maintain that highway once it is built?



Build the first highway

OR



Maintain the highway

### 1. An Overview of God's divine **plan** for His Book.

- God has a message for man (revelation) Rom 1:20; Gen 37:5-10; Dan 8:1; 1 Sam 3:10
- God had His message recorded (inspiration) Ex 17:14; 2 Pet 1:21; 2 Tim 3:16
- God **preserved** forever His message in a book (preservation) Ps 12:6-7, 119:89
- God commanded His message to be sent to the entire planet (propagation) Matt 28:19-20

KEY -

The key to understanding the whole subject of copies (a.k.a. manuscripts) vs. originals is **preservation**. While many **claim** to believe in God's divine ability and power, \_\_\_\_\_ believe in the preservation of His Word.

Preservation defined: to keep or defend from corruption. To keep alive or in existence.

- Remember the Bible testifies of its own preservation: Ps 12:6-7, 119:89,160; Ecc 3:14; Is 40:8, 59:21; Matt 5:17-18, 24:35; 1 Peter 1:24-25.

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Throughout this study, we have clearly seen God's promise to preserve His Word **AND** that He keeps His promises **AND** that He cannot lie.

**KEY** Therefore, if someone does not believe that God's Word is perfectly preserved in this present time, they are in reality calling God a liar!

• The Bible testifies it is preserved as a \_\_\_\_\_:

Exodus 31:18, 32:19, 34:1, 28	John 5:39-47
Deut 17:14-20	Acts 8:26-28
Jeremiah 36	Acts 17:1-3, 11
Matt 21:42	Acts 18:24-28
Luke 4:16-21	2 Tim 3:15-17

## 2. An Overview of God's divine **process** for His Book.

### • The OLD TESTAMENT

- Preserved by the Levitical priests; later the scribes.
- **Masorates** – ultimately the keepers of the OT Hebrew texts
- Some of their rules for copying God's Word:

- An authorized copy must be the exemplar.
- No word, not even a letter, can be written from memory.
- The copyist must pronounce aloud each word before writing it.
- Every word and every letter were counted and compared to the exemplar.
- The middle letter of the Pentateuch, the middle clause and letter of each book, and how many times each letter of the alphabet occurs in all the Hebrew scriptures was known and recorded as a guide to reprove all subsequent copies and to ensure their unity and accuracy.
- The final new copy was immediately checked against the exemplar (*the Authorized Version*). If one incorrect letter was found in the entire work, the whole manuscript was discarded.

### • The NEW TESTAMENT

- The Holy Spirit revealed and inspired truth to the **Apostles** who wrote it down. (1 Cor 5:9, 2 Cor 2:3-4, 7:12; Eph 3:3)
- These \_\_\_\_\_ (a.k.a. epistles) were sent to churches as the Holy Spirit leads. (**Acts 15:31**; Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, etc.)
- The receiving churches and believers made copies for distribution to other believers. (Col 4:16; 1 Thess 5:27)
- These copies were received and copied by other believers and used in churches. (Came to be known as the "Received Text")
- These copies were checked against "authorized copies" as **Satan** had already begun to work his deception. (2 Cor 2:17; 2 Thess 2:2)

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## GOD WAS NOT SURPRISED

God knew long before the English language existed that English was going to be the universal language of the world when His Son Jesus Christ returned the 2<sup>nd</sup> time. When we approach the history of the Bible – and specifically the history of the English Bible – with this understanding, we see things differently – in clear view.

We must remember that God is **omnipotent** (all-powerful), **omniscient** (all-knowing), and **omnipresent** (all-present). God can do whatever He wants. God knows everything. God knows the end of the story before it happens because He is not bound by time. He created time and space for *us* to dwell in – not Him. He exists outside of time.

God knew that His perfect Word was going to need to be preserved in the hands of mortal, imperfect men. God knew that His name and the name of His Son was going to be at stake when He chose to entrust His perfect Word into the hands of mortal, imperfect men.

**Matthew 24:35** – Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

God knew that at this time in history, there would be a great falling away from His truth.

**2 Timothy 3:1** – This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

## THE SOLUTION – THE AUTHOR OF THE WORD GOES “INSIDE THE CHURCH”

God chose to put His Holy Spirit inside of those who by faith trusted in His Son Jesus Christ for salvation – the church. By choosing to do this, He forever changed the rules of His story – history.

**2 Timothy 2:9** – Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

God knew that if saved men and women would yield to the Holy Spirit's lead, He could use them to build His church and preserve His Word – and the gates of hell could not prevail against it!

**Matthew 16:18** – And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

## PERFECT ORIGINALS

Most everyone agrees that God \_\_\_\_\_ inspired His Word **perfectly** through chosen men in the **original** letters and writings. That is why most so-called Bible believing churches will freely admit that part...the following was taken from John MacArthur's website...

### Holy Scriptures

We teach that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (**1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13**), verbally inspired in every word (**2 Timothy 3:16**), **absolutely inerrant in the original documents**, infallible, and God breathed. We teach the literal, grammatical historical interpretation of Scripture which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days (**Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17**).

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Just to make sure you are clear regarding what most pastors of so-called Bible believing churches have been taught and firmly believe, the following was taken from John MacArthur's website...

Properly understood, the doctrine of inerrancy--the teaching that the Bible contains no errors--applies only to the original copies of the biblical documents. The original writings came directly from God through human authors.

**KEY** It should be crystal clear - they believe that **only** the "originals" had **no** errors.

### THE REAL ISSUE

The problem comes **after** the originals are gone. In case you were wondering, there are **NO** originals in existence today - only copies. So, now that we know that, there are really only 3 options for what happened with the copies of the copies:

OPTION #1



OPTION #2



OPTION #3



God was not all-powerful enough to keep His promise. Men did the best they could but at the end of the day, the copies all have human errors... Bummer huh? Sorry...you will have to rely on your heart and emotions...

God was not all-powerful enough to keep His promise. So, He decided to entrust His Word to only "a few" people who would be able to go to Bible college and learn Greek and Hebrew...repeat after me, "I need the Nicolaitans" ...

God was all-powerful enough to keep His promise. The Holy Spirit empowered and led His church who so loved and cherished His words that they made thousands of copies... from the authorized Antioch copies...

### THE BOTTOM LINE

If Option #1 is true, then the common people are out of luck. God is not nearly as big as He said He was in Psalm 12, 19, and 33. They are without hope because God cannot be trusted and they will have to do the best they can in this life. They will be easily duped.

**KEY** Unfortunately, **their faith will have to stand in the wisdom of men.**

To help us understand how this works out, here is another portion of John MacArthur's website which quotes the "Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy" to confirm His position...

...a singular providence of God in this matter and in declaring that the authority of Scripture is in no way jeopardized by the fact that the copies we possess are not entirely error-free...Similarly, no translation is or can be perfect, and all translations are an additional step away from the autograph.

In order to understand the magnitude of this teaching, let me ask you a question:

**QUESTION** How does it make you feel when they say that God only preserved His words in the "originals" and that **all** English Bibles have errors in them?

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If Option #2 is true, then the common people are out of luck. They are going to have to rely on Greek and Hebrew scholars to decide which parts of the Bible are without error and which have major issues. They will be easily duped.

**KEY** Unfortunately, **their faith will have to stand in the wisdom of men.**

To help us understand how this works out, here is another portion of John MacArthur's website which again quotes the "Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy" to confirm His position.....

Since God has nowhere promised an inerrant transmission of Scripture, it is necessary to affirm that only the autographic text of the original documents was inspired and to **maintain the need of textual criticism as a means of detecting any slips that may have crept into the text in the course of its transmission**...Yet the verdict of linguistic science is that English-speaking Christians, at least, are exceedingly well served in these days with a host of excellent translations and have no cause for hesitating to conclude that the true Word of God is within their reach...While you can't handle the original documents today, you can have confidence that **most English Bibles faithfully represent what was contained in those documents**. God has providentially preserved His Word for subsequent generations despite the best efforts of many of His enemies to eliminate it.

In order to understand the magnitude of this teaching, let me ask you another question:

**QUESTION** How does it make you feel when they say that God only preserved His words in the "originals" and that we \_\_\_\_\_ "textual criticism"(and therefore scholarly men) as a means of knowing what God really said?

If Option #3 is true, then the common people have reason to rejoice all the days of their life. God is everything that He said and His Word is all that He promised! They will never need to trust men alone without searching the Scriptures to prove whether their words align with God's Word. They will be able to hold fast to a beloved Holy Bible in their own language and trust every word.

**KEY** The best news is that **their faith will not stand in the wisdom of men**, but in the power of God and His perfect Word!!

**1 Corinthians 2:5** – That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

**Psalms 33:9** – For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

## BIBLE STUDY KEYS FOR TODAY

- God recorded (inspiration) and preserved (preservation) His message in a book to reach the entire planet. (propagation)
- God promised to preserve His Word.
- The Bible testifies it is preserved as a **copy**.
- God preserved the OT through the **Masoretes**.
- God preserved the NT through the "**priesthood**" of believers – common people.
- Don't be fooled by the "intellectual smokescreen"!! Isaiah 30:8-13

**TIME TO THINK**

Things that are *different* are **NOT** the *same*.

**Revelation 2:15**

<b>KJV</b>	So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, <b>which thing I hate</b> .
<b>NIV</b>	Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.
<b>NASB</b>	'So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.
<b>RSV</b>	So you also have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.
<b>NKJV</b>	"Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.  Footnote: * NU-Text and M-Text read <b>likewise for which thing I hate</b> .

**YOU MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER:**

- You do **NOT** need to know Greek and Hebrew.
- You do **NOT** have to be a scholar.
- You need to simply **BELIEVE THE BOOK!**

**1 Thessalonians 5:21** – Prove all things; **hold fast** that which is good.

**2 Timothy 1:13** – **Hold fast** the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

**Hebrews 4:14** – Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us **hold fast** our profession.

**Hebrews 10:23** - Let us **hold fast** the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

**Revelation 2:25** – But that which ye have already **hold fast** till I come.