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Frightful Fruits Flow From Faulty Philosophy Fraternization

My personal position on the selection and use of Bible translations has not materially changed in over forty years. Surely, I have matured in how I express myself and, hopefully, I can address the question today with considerable more conviction of heart, more background of study and better understanding of the issues than I could forty years ago. Through these years of ministry, the position that I assumed regarding Scripture more intuitively than intellectually in my early ministry has become more assured and firmly fixed. As clearly as I am able to express myself, the following statement expresses what I believe concerning the choice I have

*"If it was good enough
for the Apostle Paul,
then the old King
James is good enough
for me."*

I believe (1) that God is; (2) that God has spoken; (3) that the words spoken by God are valued by Him and were intended by Him for humanity to have and to hold; (4) that God, therefore,

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Baptists are identified by the particular doctrines that they believe. E. Y. Mullins wrote Axioms of Religion on the premise that the most distinguishing doctrine of Baptists is that of "Soul Liberty" or, as most Baptist Confessions title this doctrine, "The Priesthood Of The Believer." Unlike Protestants, Baptists are not credal in nature, Baptists look to the Bible itself as the sole and final authority

SOUL LIBERTY

in all matters of faith and practice and recognize no one to stand between the individual believer and God except the Lord Jesus Christ, the One Mediator between God and men. It is amazing, as Dr. J.M. Pendleton pointed out a century ago, that without a formal creed, Baptists, through the centuries living in varied cultures and using different languages, without collusion have more agreement on doctrine than any other group of believers have ever shown. Baptists are Baptists because they believe that the Bible is the very word of God and is the only source of doctrine and practice. Nothing is as important to a Baptist as is his/her Bible. x



This and That

Unquestionably, the articles in this edition will please some, bore others, and anger not a few. These two are printed with an earnest prayer to be a peacemaker and with no desire to be a trouble maker. True, I have written candidly and, perhaps, somewhat bluntly; but I hope that I have also written kindly. I trust that my readers will find much with which to agree and very little with which to disagree; however, you may feel liberty to correct my errors. I always try to respond to all legitimate criticisms. However, I also always ignore those letters that call me names. Those writers should save their stamps. x

REQUESTED REPRINTS

To Nut

or not

To Nut

Maintaining proper balance in life is the crucial call, the important item, the essential element for the believer. The great danger to the child of God is to become unbalanced. No task demands greater energy or requires more effort. And perhaps, just perhaps, Satan's prime and most effective strategy in this day is that of "tangentialism" or "extremism": *unbalanced living.*

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would preserve, and, indeed, has preserved His words for humanity to read; and, I believe (5) specifically, that the sole and final authority for the revelation of the will of God to humanity is found in the particular document called the Bible, the Scriptures and the word of God, which is best represented for this generation of English speaking peoples in and by the Old and New Testaments as translated into the English tongue as the Authorized Version of the Bible, commonly called the King James Version, and first printed in 1611.

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or, as Paul wrote, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." 1 Corinthians 15:33

As a boy, I often heard Baptist preachers jokingly say such things as "On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached from a red leather King James Scofield Bible," or "Philip opened his Bible to page 760 of his Scofield Bible and preached Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch," or "If it was good enough for the Apostle Paul, then the old King James is good enough for me." The congregations laughed when those preachers said these things. Humor was intended and humor was understood. Those speaking and those listening knew that the translation known as the King James Version dated from 1611 and the Scofield Reference Edition Bible from 1909, the last year for the

Indian head penny and the year of the first Lincoln penny; everyone knew Peter, Philip and Paul could not have copies of either the Scofield Reference Edition or the King James Version. Over three decades ago, I recall watching with my eyes as the ears on my head listened to a Baptist preacher, holding high a red leather Scofield Reference Edition of the King James Version, as he boldly declared, "You talk about having a Holy Trinity. What we really have is a Holy Quartet--The Father, The Son, The Holy Ghost and The King James Bible." At the time, I considered this comment to have been either

What was humorous in my youth is no longer a laughing matter. That which was once a playful jest is today the foundation of a serious belief. The cute remark has birthed a cult.

preacher cuteness, a case of a preacher simply saying more than was intended, or perhaps where the preacher did not realize exactly what he was saying. I have heard that same preacher many times since and he has never repeated his "Holy Quartet" remark or anything similar. In fact, several years after the event, I mentioned to him that I had once heard a preacher make that statement and he expressed amazement

that any preacher could be so foolish. I believe that I was right to assume that he was simply carried away on that particular day, and, much as did Peter, he said, "not knowing what he said." Preaching is an emotional activity and, sometimes, a preacher is more emotional than intellectual in what slips from his mouth. I have found that it is charitable not to be too hasty to condemn a man for a random faulty utterance. However, were that inane remark not only repeatedly repeated but were it also placed in print time after time, those repetitive actions would be more than circumstantial evidence of what the preacher actually does believe; those actions should be considered a deliberate declaration of his doctrine, even if stated in ignorance.

In the passage of the years, it has come to pass that what those long-ago preachers teased about and what that one good brother mistakenly said has taken on a life all of its own. What was humorous in my youth is no longer a laughing matter. That which was once a playful jest is today the foundation of a serious belief. What once was intended as nothing more than a cute remark has birthed a cult.

Several years ago, I made a study of the

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distinguishing marks that identify a cult and preached a series of sermons on the theme. When one sets the doctrines and practices of the various cults alongside each other and examines them looking for patterns, certain distinctive "trademarks" appear. Among those identifiers, but certainly not limited to just these, are a self-proclaimed leader with insight denied others, a pattern of secret discoveries of new, special or advanced revelation, a consistently wrong manner of dividing the word of truth--always leading to a distortion of the means of salvation, a blind loyalty to the leader, a deep bitterness toward those who disagree that first vilifies the opponents and then demonizes them, and a growth that is characterized by the infiltration of professing believers and by spiritual seduction through selective or inventive use of common terminology. Most often, cults, as did Amalek, seek out nominal Christians in the hindermost of the company, those who are the feeble, faint and weary, as targets for their persuasive techniques. With dedication and zeal that usually exceeds those who have the truth, the fervent cultist sows the tares of false doctrine, accepting all rejection, rebuke or persecution as prophesied vindication of the rightness of his/her belief.

Foolish Preaching Produces Foolish Doctrine

Dr. Peter S. Ruckman is a high-energy man with multiple talents. He is a prolific author, a gifted artist, a talented apologist, and an able advocate. Dr. Ruckman and I have lived within mere miles of each other for over twenty years. I have met him on fewer than a handful of times. Each meeting was brief though cordial. In person, Dr. Ruckman impressed me as brilliant, though somewhat brusque. I probably did not impress him at all. We exchanged one set of letters in the early 1970's concerning an invitation I extended to him to preach for a pastor's fellowship in Chicago, an invitation his schedule compelled him to decline. That is the registry of my personal contacts with Dr. Ruckman. ***There is nothing in any of those contacts that would influence***

me in a negative way toward the man himself.

I have likely listened to as many, if not more, hours of his preaching (by tape) than I have those of any other individual preacher. I own and have read much of what he has placed in print. Certainly, this includes every book and major pamphlet and many articles that have appeared with his signature. He is a captivating speaker and a gifted writer. I marvel at his command of the English language, his knowledge of foreign languages including biblical languages and at his obvious familiarity with the text of the English Bible. He has read widely and seems at home in many disciplines of study. He is intelligent far beyond average and would seem to possess nearly total recall of what he reads. While he has several earned degrees, those letters after his name do not fully reflect his personal knowledge. Dr. Ruckman has been a pastor, an evangelist, and a Bible institute president for many years. He is not a lazy man intellectually or physically; I believe him to be a man of intelligence and industry. From all apparent indications he has never been one who elected to do anything half-heartedly, and he is most assuredly not one to ask for terms or to wave a white flag.

While his alleged eccentric behavior, reported by friend and foe, and his having been twice divorced and thrice married raises some ministerial eyebrows, he has never, to my knowledge, been charged with committing any personal impropriety. Every preacher is a little peculiar (*if not outright eccentric*); and, though, I might cringe at his marital confusion, I believe that that issue is the prerogative of the church he pastors to adjudicate.

This article is not a personal attack upon the man. I do not criticize his character or his personal life. Instead this discussion is a brief examination of the fruits of the singular teaching that has been so closely identified with Dr. Ruckman that it has come to bear his name.

Namely, I propose to explore the singular persuasion of Dr. Ruckman that the Authorized Version of 1611, commonly called the King James Version, is ***THE***

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What was once the erratic proposition of an eccentric preacher has become the repetitive mantra of many who have never thought through the ramifications of what they claim to believe.

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inspired word of God. The word **"THE"** is used by Dr. Ruckman with the intended meaning of *"to the exclusion of everything else."*

Dr. Ruckman boldly preaches that the sole repository for the word of God at the present time is The Authorized Version. He is convinced, and has devoted his

ministry to persuading others, that the King James Bible not only *"corrects the original"* but that it also offers *"advanced revelation."*

This unique approach that Dr. Ruckman espouses seems to have originated with him. Clearly, it is not the classical or historical position of Bible believers. From his writings, Dr. Ruckman seems to have been strongly influenced by Martin Luther. Luther, as described by Lutheran Darrell Jacoak, (Professor of Religion and Chair of the Religion Department at Muhlenberg College) *"read the Scriptures coram Deo, that is, in terms of what they said to the individual or the community face to face with God. The Bible for him was not simply the archival source of doctrines, it was a living communication that was not properly Word until it was effectively communicated and internalized by human beings."*

Such a concept could perhaps be understood as some sort of continuing or progressive revelation. The astute reader will grasp that such a philosophy is also the foundational premise of neo-orthodoxy. Dr. John Gill, writing in 1769, reports that such a belief as that of Dr. Ruckman was advocated by contemporary Roman Catholic theologians in the defense of the Latin Vulgate, and then dismisses the claim as being both *"absurd"* and *"ridiculous"* in nature. These are the closest historical parallels that I have discovered to the doctrinal philosophy of Dr. Ruckman. I have yet to find the record of anyone prior to the ministry of Dr. Ruckman who advocated, as does he, that the Authorized King James translation is, in fact, *"superior"* to the very *"original"* Hebrew and Greek texts from which the Authorized King James Version was translated, that it contains corrections to the original texts or

that it possesses advanced revelation over the original texts. If such an assertion were ever made by anyone else, it has eluded my attempts to find it. However, even if he is not the first to teach such an aberration, by adopting this peculiar proposition, Dr. Ruckman is advocating a doctrine of biblical inspiration that

To me, there is a definite issue as to whether or not, the word of God was lost centuries ago and now needs to be found and returned to the people of God. Simply stated, I prefer to place my faith in the ability of the God of Heaven to superintend the watch-care of His word rather than to trust in the ability of learned men, however sincere and honest, to recover the lost word of God.

must, by definition, move inspiration beyond the original writers to include the labors of both Erasmus, who first collected and collated the Greek manuscripts into one volume, and the translators of the King James Version as well as those who, coming years later, have revised the spelling and grammar of the Authorized Version since 1611. As strange as this weirdness is, he seems not to hesitate to proceed further still. Dr. Ruckman appears to advocate that the chapter and verse divisions were a similar product of this continued or progressive inspiration, in that their selection and arrangement is beyond any level of coincidence.

Dr. Ruckman has made this specific teaching the dominant focus of his ministry for well over thirty years. To propagate this doctrine seems to be Dr. Ruckman's understanding of his purpose in life. The issue to him is a matter of absolute importance. It seems clear from

his writings that to Dr. Ruckman, the word of God cannot be found anywhere except in the 1611 translation. Therefore, true Bible believers, in his viewpoint, are those who not only use the King James Version exclusively, but those who believe that **ONLY** the King James Version is the word of God. In Dr. Ruckman's eyes, all others are apostates, a term he freely applies to all who disagree with him. To him this single doctrine is the fundamental of the faith, the only cardinal doctrine, the only test of fellowship. Even to say, *"I believe that the King James Version is the word of God"* is inadequate as judged by his belief system. The only acceptable *"shibboleth"* to Dr. Ruckman is *"I believe that the word of God is ONLY found in the King James Version."* All those who do not believe this doctrine are apostate members, by his ascription, of *"the Alexandrian cult."* In joking fashion (*at least one hopes one*

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may assume he is joking) Dr. Ruckman has stated that he does not actually "worship the King James," but that, in his next words, it "comes mighty close." Such flippancy, in my view, "comes mighty close" to blasphemy.

For many years, most Baptist preachers generally looked upon Dr. Ruckman and his strange doctrine as simply the case of a preacher with an eccentricity. He might be a little peculiar in his delivery, a bit odd in his beliefs and rather unusual in his personal life, but, they would suggest, there have always been preachers who became extreme in the teaching of some doctrine. It is true that some preachers have an uncanny ability to find a "truth" oblivious to every other child of God and who then devote their entire ministry to sounding that one note. However, this special doctrine of Dr. Ruckman has received a life and has achieved an influence far beyond that any mere pet theme of a "hobby-horse riding" preacher ever attained. Through his school, his books and his newspaper, Dr. Ruckman has attained an effect that reaches far beyond those who have personally heard him preach. His disciples have, if possible, even more zeal than does he to spread the Ruckman doctrine. Like the crusaders of old, these "warriors" have no

interest in taking prisoners; their message is convert or die. They are convinced that no issue or doctrine is worthy of discussion until this one has been established. Those who choose to disagree with this special teaching are categorized as (1) ignorant, needing to be taught, (2) dupes, needing to be delivered, or (3) apostates, needing to be exposed; there seemingly is no number four.

I firmly believe that there is a legitimate basis of argument for using the Authorized King James Version rather than using the other current translations. I have placed that position in print several times and am preparing a booklet entitled, *God Is and God Has Spoken* explaining how I arrived at my belief. Since the publication of the English Revision of 1885, no mass marketed translation has been based upon the same Greek and Hebrew manuscripts as was the King James. The source of the English text for all these translations is acknowledged by these works to be different than the source used to produce the Authorized Version—check the title page for yourself. The translations since 1885 have been based upon a revised (and an ever being revised) eclectic text; that is, a text compiled from within all the available manuscripts and

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Examples abound and are all around us. Swerving Christians are plentiful. I am speaking only of fundamentalists. The new-evangelical, the neo-orthodox, the liberal, the neo-fundamentalist, the pseudo-fundamentalist, and the evangelicals, all have their squabbles and blood-lettings just as we do; however, let one of their number offer counsel to them. Personally, I would let them fight on.

There are those within our ranks who maintain that spirituality is evidenced by largeness and activity. Others of us insist that spirituality is

The issues involved are valid. Legitimate basis does exist for discussion and debate. The danger lies not in investigation of the families of manuscripts, the philosophy of Westcott and Hort, the strengths or weaknesses of the Received Text, or the differences in the Greek texts. The insidious danger is not even in debating these areas. The very real threat is swerving onto a tangent and becoming an unbalanced extremist.

evolved only through smallness and studying. An over emphasis upon the sovereignty of God created Calvinism, while a de-emphasis caused Arminianism. To neglect the doctrine of repentance produces "easy-believism," while over emphasis promotes "lordship salvation." Denial of emotions develops formalism; its emphasis produces pentecostalism. Separation is an essential doctrine; but both the aesthetic monk and the "Jesus freak" are unbalanced. Extremism is not a Christian virtue.

American believers are fadists. Whatever produces "results" or whoever has the charisma to produce "disciples" becomes the

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adjudicated "best" by textual scholars. With every discovery of "new" manuscripts, this text is "updated." It is, therefore, never a stable text.

The question of which ancient texts were used to produce the English text is a justifiable, honest reason to accept or to reject any translation. Additionally, since the introduction of the Living Bible, most modern Bibles actually have not been attempts at a word for word translation of the Greek or Hebrew words, rather they are efforts to convey the ideas contained by the Greek or Hebrew words. This concept of translation is termed "dynamic equivalency" and may be highly flavored by the theology of the translators. In other words, when one reads a Bible such as Good News for Modern Man or the New International Version, in reality, he or she is reading something more akin to a commentary than a Bible translation.

To me, there is a definite issue as to whether or not, the word of God was lost centuries ago and now needs to be found and returned to the people of God. Simply stated, I prefer to place my faith in the ability of the God of Heaven to superintend the watch-care of His word rather than to trust in the ability

of learned men, however sincere and honest, to recover the lost word of God. That is my position and the underlying reason why I use the King James Version. However, it is clear to me that Dr. Ruckman long ago moved well beyond that position, if he ever held it. I write again that to Dr. Ruckman, ONLY the King James is the word of God today. To him, nowhere else can the word of God be found, not even in those Greek and Hebrew texts from which the King James was itself translated. His unique, curious reasoning permits him to claim that the "superior" King James translation "corrects" the original texts from which the King James Version was translated and that the King James Translation ALSO provides "advanced revelation" beyond those original texts. If one pauses to consider the full implications of that philosophy, one cannot but conclude that it is a false premise and conveys new doctrine rather than truth. This should surprise no one because cults arise around strange, new doctrine and heresy.

Today, the faulty philosophy of Dr. Ruckman is producing a steady flow of frightful fruit. What was once the erratic proposition of an eccentric preacher has become the repetitive mantra of many who have never thought

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current shibboleth of orthodoxy. For years the first question asked of a preacher was "How's your bus ministry?" If a church did not have a bus ministry, that church was thought by some surely to be compromising. Many bus ministries resulted from that very reason---it was the "fundamentalist" thing to do. No genuine basis was laid for the effort in Biblical conviction.

Observant observers of churches must surely take note of the current fad of "marriage and sex" counseling. Walk into any "Christian" bookstore and count such volumes on the shelves and check the copyright dates. Financial seminars are also currently "in." What the older generation of Christians

called stewardship now is termed "money management."

Perhaps the most crucial fad appearing in very recent times is the "King James Version" syndrome. The issues involved are valid. Legitimate basis does exist for discussion and debate. The danger lies not in investigation of the families of manuscripts, the philosophy of Westcott and Hort, the strengths or weaknesses of the Received Text, or the differences in the Greek texts. The insidious danger is not even in debating these areas. The very real threat is swerving onto a tangent and becoming an unbalanced extremist.

I believe believers ought to have firm personal convictions (gained through personal study) and ought to defend strongly those beliefs and to contend for them wholeheartedly. But, I must plead for sanity and common cour-

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through the ramifications of what they claim to believe. As the typical cult members that they are, they have only the ability to parrot what they have heard, not what they have reasoned. These deluded followers have a four-fold zeal that would be a precious commodity if it were devoted to a godly cause but that has perilous consequences as it is dedicated to false beliefs. And, make no mistake, we are talking about exactly that. To contend that ONLY the King James Version is the word of God for today is strange; to advocate that the King James Version has the ability to correct the originals is new; to declare that the King James Version has revelation from God beyond the originals is both strange and new. The King James that Dr. Ruckman claims to have is not the King James that I have. My King James does not correct the originals and does not contain advanced revelation. Bluntly written, the Lord God did it right the first time. To suggest otherwise is either arrogance or ignorance. As stated before, I cannot find anyone before Dr. Ruckman's ministry that believed as does he concerning the King James. Once more, I repeat that the statement that seemed harmless humor in my youth is no longer a laughing matter. That which was once a playful jest forms today the serious doctrinal foundation of a cult—a cult that has infiltrated the ranks of Baptist fundamentalism.

The frightful fruits of that infiltration flow freely through multiplied Baptist churches and institutions. One does not have to use a microscope to find the evidence of that penetration. Sermons, articles, books, and more, filled with the hateful, slanderous, judgmental attacks and producing a harvest of suspicion, division and confusion are all too available, providing ample witness of pulpitation. Across the land, multitudes of sincere, concerned believers hearing only "King James" and either not realizing or not discerning that what was said was really "ONLY King James" have been deceived into thinking that they are standing for the word of God, when in reality, they are promoting heresy. With fanatical zeal, these church members attack pastors who, standing precisely where our Baptist forefathers stood, refuse to accept the teachings of this cult. The

doctrine of this cult has divided churches and separated friendships. It has become the enforced basis of fellowship. Well over ten years ago, I wrote *"To Nut Or Not To Nut"* [re-printed in this issue]. In that article I pled for reason, balance and biblical discernment; I do so once again. This time, I add the warning that "to nut" has become "to cult."

My King James does not correct the originals and does not contain advanced revelation. Bluntly written, the Lord God did it right the first time. To suggest otherwise is either arrogance or ignorance.

Someone once wrote that "it is no mystery that the Bible has survived its enemies: the mystery is that it has survived its friends." Dr. Peter S. Ruckman believes, and no doubt sincerely, that he is a friend of the King James Version; his actions, however, belie his words.

Rather than defend the King James, he has devised an entirely new book and preaches new, and, I believe, strange (in the biblical sense of this word), new doctrines. Instead of contending for the inspiration, the infallibility, the inerrancy, the eternity, the authority or the preservation of the Authorized Version, he has concocted the doctrines of superiority and of advanced revelation and thereby conveys to his creation the ability to correct the originals. These beliefs are doctrines that no previous Baptist preacher ever seems to have preached. He has constructed, in effect, a book that does not exist and has endowed it with qualities that no book could have.

It is tragic that an issue that has a legitimate basis for presentation has been so attached to such deviant concepts that an honest discussion is today nearly impossible. Too many seem determined only to make any consideration of the validity of manuscript families an attack upon the integrity of the individuals participating or a denial of the very existence of the word of God. It seems that the rule has become, "If they cannot be defeated with truth, then call them names."

I must reject the new translations, but I also must reject the strange, new, false doctrines of Dr. Ruckman. Let others question, if they desire to do so, his motive, I do not pretend to know his heart, I can only evaluate the quite evident exposed fruit of his teaching. From his words, a new, strange cult has grown. ☐

Pastor Manley

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tesy. Name calling and diatribes are not only bad manners and improper conduct; they are contrary to the clear teachings of both families of Greek texts! Fleshly devices always turn saintly "sinners" into "sinful" saints. It is unscriptural and therefore un-Christian to engage in personal brawls.

I have personally examined the philosophy that prompts the rejection of the traditional text and have found it wanting. I reject the basic premises undergirding that concept. I believe the King James is the best available and most reliable English translation of the texts that have descended from the original autographs. The King James is indeed an accurate reflection of the preserved word of God. Yet, I refuse to be an extremist.

I do not believe that the translators of the King James Version were inspired. I would not even wish to defend every individual translator. After all, Anglican baby-sprinklers are not my "buddies." To claim inspiration for the translators of the King James Version or the translation itself is to propagate the doctrine of continuing inspiration. Such illogical doctrine illogically demands the potential of inspiration in every age--including today! That gives evidence of a cultic mentality and propagates the same doctrine as those Charismatics who expect new revelations daily. That doctrine is assuredly strange ("not coming from God"). To insist that God used the English translation of 1611 to correct the Greek or Hebrew used by the "originals" is absolutely beyond rational comprehension. That allegation is an attack upon the veracity of the God of Heaven!

Just as strange, however, is the teaching that the "real" word of God was somehow lost in antiquity and only rediscovered in the late 1800's with continuing post scripts still being discovered. This doctrine is also a direct attack upon the God of the word. And, to suggest that only language scholars can have

access to the genuine word of God is teaching the very same doctrine as the Roman Catholic church.

Whether the proponents of these opposing concepts will admit it or not, the evidence is quite clear that all three deny any Biblical doctrine of preservation. Each is an unbalanced approach to truth.

I am not convinced that the use of the King James is THE valid test of fellowship. That statement is not made lightly; but it is made deliberately. Whether or not

***Fleshly devices
always turn
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into
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one uses the King James Version is not THE valid test for fellowship. A cultist or a heretic may be, and very often is, a King James quoter.

Joseph Smith certainly was! Let me find fellowship with the B. H. Carroll's and Charles Spurgeon's--both of whom did indeed quote from, and use, other versions. Spurgeon even preached at least one sermon from the marginal notes *and at least one from a phrase not even found in the King James.* (see Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, volume 32, page 625, and volume 19, page 253. In spite of the texts chosen, both are great sermons.) I will be able to have much more fellowship with a Spurgeon and a Carroll than with a Joseph Smith! The extent of fellowship must always be based upon the extent of doctrinal agreement.

I am a Baptist. There is legitimate ground of fellowship with non-Baptists on a personal basis. Yet, I can not and do not have church fellowship with them. To attempt the latter would produce a broken fellowship and a divided church. One can and one should be able to differ with others and even to debate those differences and yet remain friends with one another. The present era of slander and smear is no more and no less than fleshly pride.

I will not surrender my King James for any NASV or NKJV or NIV or whatever else happens to come off the press tomorrow. But I repudiate the vicious, nauseating revilement and abuse coming from some alleged King

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James supporters. And, I resent just as strongly being classified with those radicals by the name calling supporters of the philosophy of Wescott and Hort. Both sides ought to stick to the issues and stop the carnal attacks. Especially, there ought to be better conduct coming from pastors who are to be examples of the believer.

Brethren, we are losing our balance in this fleshly presentation of positions. Do not surrender your convictions. Stand up and defend them. Defend them, if need be, unto death. But let us stop attacking blood-bought brethren as if they were blood-stained heathen. Paul withstood Peter to his face and did it without bitterness and name calling and slanderous smears.

Reading certain publications today is much the same as reading the old writings of the Jesuits in their hatred of the anabaptists. Extremism in position leads to extreme emotions and extreme conduct. Hatred is not a fruit of the spirit. Neither is vilification of believers a proper conversation choice for believers. If the only defense of a position is to belittle the opposition with personal attacks, the position is not a conviction but a cause! And, causes attract radicals and nuts.

Hobby riding extremists, swerving off on fleshly tangents, do not bring glory to God . . . nor, frankly, are they even seeking to do so. They have found a "cause" which they now seek to glorify ("*The nut,*" as they say, "*has become connected with the right bolt.*"); and, their course will end up deifing the cause. The cause becomes all important. All other believers must be made to bow before the shrine. Those who do not, in their view, are to be considered enemies and are to be treated as such.

The "Cause" is used to keep the minds of the followers off the lifestyle, the abnormal behaviour, the shallow teaching, the strange doctrine of the Leader. The amazing thing is that it works. Preachers are fellowshipping with some mighty strange practices and doc-

trine in the name of "King James only".

Brethren, blood-bought children of God ought not to be treated likes dogs and swine. And, leaders who resort to brethern bashing ought to be rebuked. They do nothing to promote good. The tatics of the flesh are wrong regardless of where they are used, by whom or for what purpose they are used.

As for me, I choose not to be a "nut"; and, I will not associate with the "nuts." I will read and believe my King James Version. And, I will preach the preserved word of God. But, I will not attack brethren who choose otherwise. I will discuss it with them; I will even debate them . . . but, I will not ridicule them nor will I call them names. I have determined, by the grace of God, to maintain my balance—even if I have to do so while standing alone.

Extremism in position leads to extreme emotions and extreme conduct.

Pastor Manley

First published in The Baptist Heritage in the mid-1980's this material was, even then, a rewrite of an article from the 1970's. Other than the reference to the "Jesus freaks," a hold-over term from the first article, the material is, in my view, amazingly (and sadly) still current.

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Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? Galatians 4:16

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