

# King James Only Controversy and Refute

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# King James Only Controversy and Refute

## Introduction

*I want to begin by thanking Mark Nigro, a Calvary Chapel Old Bridge pastor for providing me with much of his insight and research into this controversy. Most of the information in this article is the information he provided me to give a young woman deeply troubled by the King James only extremist groups who stated she is not saved, nor could be without a 1611 King James translation..*

There are groups, factions, some church and Para-church organizations that would have us believe that the 1611 King James Version is the only reliable translation of the bible and the next best thing is the 1769 Authorized Version. We believe they have become extreme in their view of what we call the Authorized King James Version of the bible. I can understand, appreciate and greatly respect the desires of people want to have, use and trust a translation that is as accurate to the original Biblical language as possible. That is our desire at The Lord's Children as well.

Let's begin with this statement, "in every translation you'll find favorable and unfavorable characteristics." Some translations will be better than others and some not very good at all. They vary in style and fluidity of reading. The leading translations that encompass accuracy with readability are NKJV, NAS, NASB95, and NIV. They are all very good and express the *thought* of the original language.

Let's clarify what is meant by *thought* of the original language. In any translation of any text of antiquity, there is room for variance in *style*, and still remain *literal* in its translation. For example, I may approach you and say; "Hello, how are you?" or I may say; "Hi, how's it going?" or I may say; "How are things?" All are an appropriate greeting and communicate my intention which is to ascertain whether or not you are doing well. Here in lies what I refer to as the styles which may vary in different translations of the Bible, yet do not lose the intended meaning. Words are used to communicate meaning. When translating words from one language to another the first important rule is to literally translate each word into the new language. However, this creates a myriad of problems, especially when attempting to translate a text into English. There are times when there is no one English word to translate the original word to. A direct English counterpart simply does not exist. In that case a phrase must be used to translate the thought or intent of the writer. Another example is when a direct word for word translation will not convey the original or intended meaning of the writer. In cases like this it is a gross miscarriage of justice to translate a text in a manner that does not accurately and reliably convey the authors intended meaning. It is of far greater import to translate the meaning of the author in terms of what is being communicated.

The problem with having a Bible translation that is word for word to the original Hebrew, Greek or Aramaic is that you could rarely make sense of the text. This is why variances in "translations" exist, to clarify the ancient cultural and literary style that is so foreign, and in some instances "archaic" to us today. The bible was originally written in three ancient languages; Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. The language style is ancient, and culture was so different with varying dialects, words, idioms and expressions that to

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translate literally would render the bible, with its richness and depth, as a useless piece of literature sitting on some library shelf. The bible is more relevant to us today because it was inspired by God to be His instruction book to all humanity, regardless of cultural nuances and differences. It's a living book and a true testament to the Divinely inspired origin and nature of our God. The bible is written to and for *living humans* wherever they may live, and whatever their culture may be. God wants us to understand the things He inspired to be written. Literal translations are those that translate the literal words *and* literal meanings of the ancient texts. Our culture today must not be deprived of the mind of our living God. Overly strict word for word translations would simply have no meaning to us today without some latitude in communicating intent.

The job of the translators is a challenging one indeed. Translators must study the contemporary language of Biblical times, their various cultures and lifestyles and then communicate as literally as possible the "thought" in not only our language (English) but in our culture and time as well.

### **Response to a statement that the NIV is a twisted and perverted translation.**

I in no way believe the New International Version to be a twisted perversion, nor is the New King James or NAS. This opinion is based on facts and I will explain those facts in the list of reasoning below.

Before I begin to explain why the New King James Version is used as our pew bible, let me say that it grieves me to see such a web-site as the one you came across and forwarded to me in your email. It claims to be Christian when clearly there is no concern for confusion, fear and division spread throughout churches as a result of these false accusations. God is using many Bible translations to change lives in spite of the alleged problems made by the "KJV 1611-only" group. Oh that these extremist groups would unite instead on reaching people for Christ with the truth they claim to defend, putting down the ax they have to grind and picking up their Bible to see the MESSAGE of God's love for a lost and dying world. Then they would be living the *essence* of Christianity as delivered through the 1611 King James bible, the 1769 authorized King James version, the 1982 New King James version, 1984 New International version, the 1977 New American Standard, the 1995 New American Standard Bible or the many, many other translations that are sound means for bringing the truth of God to a fallen humanity. The Word of God contained in the above mentioned translation will transform lives and restore our relationship with God by the gospel message it contains.

### **Arguments For King James Only**

Let's begin by looking at some of the arguments they use against the NKJV that I pulled up from the web page you sent me. I haven't the time to go into all the accusations, but let me show you the errors of their major arguments. The numbered sentences are

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taken from the web-site you gave me, whereas my commentary is between the numbered sentences in bold and italicized.

1. The text of the NKJV is copyrighted by Thomas Nelson Publishers, while there is no copyright today on the text of the KJV. If your KJV has maps or notes, then it may have a copyright, but the text itself does not.

***First, copyright laws are in place here in America to protect translators (and publishers) against lawsuits and it entitles them to the fruit of their labors for the translation work done. The Bible says the laborer is worthy of his wages. Copyrights ensure that those wages will be given for their labor. Second, a copyright has nothing to do with truth, accuracy or the inspiration of a piece of literature, in this case the translation itself. Having a Copyright law and not having a copyright law does not make any translation worse or better. If that were the case then a Muslim could say the Qur'an of Islam is good because it doesn't have a copyright. Third, copyright laws did not exist in this fashion in the US in the year 1611, nor was the KJV written in the US, so it is irrelevant to both the KJV and the NKJV translation.***

2. There's nothing "new" about the NKJV logo. It is a "666" symbol of the pagan trinity which was used in the ancient Egyptian mysteries. It was also used by satanist Aleister Crowley around the turn of this century. The symbol can be seen on the New King James Bible, on certain rock albums (like Led Zeppelin's), or you can see it on the cover of such New Age books as The Aquarian Conspiracy. (See Riplinger's tract on the NKJV.)

***This is a stretch of the symbol's intended meaning. The three circles are to represent the trinity of orthodox Christianity. The intention of the symbol is important here, not the similarities between the pagan symbol and the NKJV symbol. The danger in arguing that the symbol is evil because Pagans used it, is that if we are consistent in our reasoning we would have to conclude that the idea of the Trinity is evil because Pagan's had their own trinity too.***

3. It is estimated that the NKJV makes over 100,000 translation changes, which comes to over eighty changes per page and about three changes per verse! A great number of these changes bring the NKJV in line with the readings of such Alexandrian perversions as the NIV and the RSV. Where changes are not made in the text, subtle footnotes often give credence to the Westcott and Hort Greek Text.

***Here it is said that it is estimated as to the "changes" made. We must note that first of all anything other than the original Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic language is a "Change." The KJV is itself a translation and is not the original language of the Bible, although many behave as though it were. Second, we need to ask where are those changes and what constitutes a "Change." Third, if they are legitimate "changes" it does not necessarily follow that the change is wrong***

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***simply because it is a change. Change is sometimes necessary to clarify meaning in keeping with our current language style.***

4. While passing off as being true to the Textus Receptus, the NKJV IGNORES the Receptus over 1,200 times.

***Again, what does this mean "Ignore." If it refers to the paraphrasing of words to convey the intended meaning of the writer, then we must find fault with every translation, including the "Authorized Version" which has to take the liberty to paraphrase where idioms and forms of expression can not be translated word for word lest they lose there perspicuity and meaning.***

5. In the NKJV, there are 22 omissions of "hell", 23 omissions of "blood", 44 omissions of "repent", 50 omissions of "heaven", 51 omissions of "God", and 66 omissions of "Lord". The terms "devils", "damnation", "JEHOVAH", and "new testament" are completely omitted.

***What this does not tell you is which words replaced those that were omitted and why. There is good reason for changes. Also, "Jehovah" is nowhere in the original Greek or Hebrew, so it is a non-issue that it is omitted and is actually more accurate because of the omission. In fact, the word "Jehova" is simply our version of what we think to be the name of God which is taken from the Old Testament where we find the letters YHWH referring to God. The Old Testament writers (all Jews actually) felt it improper to even say the name of God, so only the consonants were given without the vowels so it could not be pronounced. When we add vowels that seem to fit the letters YHWH we come up with YAHWEH. Jehova is our rendering of this idea.***

6. The NKJV demotes the Lord Jesus Christ. In John 1:3, the KJV says that all things were made "by" Jesus Christ, but in the NKJV, all things were just made "through" Him. The word "Servant" replaces "Son" in Acts 3:13 and 3:26. "Servant" replaces "child" in Acts 4:27 and 4:30. The word "Jesus" is omitted from Mark 2:15, Hebrews 4:8, and Acts 7:45.

***The word in the Greek "dia" is used for both "through" and "by". It mainly means the channel of an act, in which case "through" is a more accurate translation. Also, the word in the Greek for both Servant and son is "huios" and is synonymously used, so there should be no problem with the rendering of servant here. Next, the Greek word "pais" is used for both Servant and Child and is used mainly for servant. This should not trouble anyone since Jesus called Himself a servant. God the Father called Jesus His servant the branch in Zechariah. More importantly, Jesus made it clear that He came to serve, not be served. We must conclude that it is true that Jesus is a servant, and that the greatest of servants. If calling Jesus a servant is a demotion, then Jesus demoted Himself by calling Himself a servant, and God the Father demoted Him in Zechariah by calling Him His servant the branch in Zechariah 3:8. At first glance this argument makes it***

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***seem as though the NKJV does not call Jesus "Son" anywhere. However this is not the case, it simply renders the word Son, or Servant where it best fits the context.***

7. The NKJV confuses people about salvation. In Hebrews 10:14 it replaces "are sanctified" with "are being sanctified", and it replaces "are saved" with "are being saved" in I Corinthians 1:18 and II Corinthians 2:15. The words "may believe" have been replaced with "may continue to believe" in I John 5:13. The old straight and "narrow" way of Matthew 7:14 has become the "difficult" way in the NKJV.

***The reason for "are being sanctified" is because the Greek demands it. If you read and understand the Greek, it is in the present and continuous tense (Imperfect). The reference to Matt 7:14 for Narrow is the Greek word "thlibo" which means troublesome and difficult. Therefore difficult would be just as accurate and true to the original. It is more "difficult" to stay on a "narrow" path.***

8. In II Corinthians 10:5 the KJV reads "casting down imaginations", but the NKJV reads "casting down arguments". The word "thought", which occurs later in the verse, matches "imaginations", not "arguments". This change weakens the verse.

***Here Paul's entire reason for writing 2 Corinthians was to defend himself against the arguments of false teachers and those who were denying his Apostleship. The Greek word for "Imagination" is "logismos" which means a reckoning or judgment, not the way we understand "imagination" to be today. In its proper context we conclude that it refers to the arguments of these false teachers. This translation does not weaken the verse at all, rather clarifies what is taking place in the Corinthian church and shows the reason for Paul's writing.***

9. The KJV tells us to reject a "heretick" after the second admonition in Titus 3:10. The NKJV tells us to reject a "divisive man". How nice! Now the Alexandrians and Ecumenicals have justification for rejecting anyone they wish to label as "divisive men".

***Here, the word in the Greek for Heretick is "hairesikos" which means schismatic or factious. Without looking at the Greek one would not even know what a heretick is. However, the translation "divisive man" better communicates the meaning of schismatic or factious and clearly communicates the meaning, which is most important. If meaning were not important and only the "KJV" words in English, then any translation in other languages could be said to be "Twisted perversions".***

10. According to the NKJV, no one would stoop so low as to "corrupt" God's word. No, they just "peddle" it (II Cor. 2:17). The reading matches the Alexandrian versions.

***Here the Greek word for corrupt is "kapeleuo" which means to be a retailer, or to peddle something not to corrupt something. Paul's words in this verse defend his own sincerity for preaching the Gospel, not doing it for gain (as a retailer seeks to***

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***make profit). Corrupt is what one must "BE" in order to "retail" the Word of God, but "Peddle" is what they "DO" when misusing the Gospel. Here, peddle gets thumbs up as the best translation.***

11. Since the NKJV has "changed the truth of God into a lie", it has also changed Romans 1:25 to read "exchanged the truth of God for the lie". This reading matches the readings of the new perversions, so how say ye it's a King James Bible?

***Here the Greek word "metallasso" is translated as "changed" in the KJV, but "exchanged" in the NKJV. This word is usually used to communicate an "exchange" between two or more things, one for another. Paul in this verse is talking about choosing one thing over another, more specifically choosing to worship the creation over of the creator, and choosing the improper use of the body over the proper use of the body, i.e. homosexuality. This is the "exchange" that is taking place and is better translated as "exchange". Again, meaning is the issue, not the choice of wording.***

12. The NKJV gives us no command to "study" God's word in II Timothy 2:15.

***Here, there is no Greek word used for "study," rather the word in its place is "spoudazo" which means to make haste, give diligence. Study is not anywhere in the original Greek text of this verse, however, the idea of study is there. So, it is not errorrious for saying "Study" in the KJV, since the verse refers to being "diligent" in God's Word. As far as literacy is concerned, the NKJV renders it correctly by saying "be diligent," since study is no where in the original language.***

13. The word "science" is replaced with "knowledge" in I Timothy 6:20, although "science" has occurred in every edition of the KJV since 1611! How say ye it's a King James Bible?

***First, are we to be concerned with defending the KJV or the accuracy of God's Word? I do not understand the purpose of this argument. Second, the KJV used today is not the 1611, but the 1769 Oxford edition. You can not find a 1611 version in circulation today. Those who propagate the 1611 version today are not even using it. Third, the spelling used in the 1611 is completely different then our spelling today, and would be very difficult to read, which is why Oxford released a newer edition. Fourth, with regard to this verse and the word "science," the Greek word here is "gnosis" and is translated as science in the KJV, but "gnosis" in the Greek means "knowledge" and is so translated as knowledge throughout all the NT by demand of our contemporary language. The use of the word science in contemporary society does not mean the same thing used during the culture of the King James translators. Today, our culture understands science to mean a field of study that takes place in a classroom or "science" laboratory, not simply as "knowledge." Translating gnosis as science would probably lead one to an exaggerated understanding of the word "gnosis" which simply means "knowledge" or "to know" in the Greek. The better and clearer translation is***

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***"knowledge" because Paul was telling Timothy to oppose Gnosticism, a cult that was gaining ancient prominence by falsely accusing the Apostles and what was inspired by God as New Covenant Scripture.***

***A good, no better translation than the 1611 version for gnosis is indeed knowledge. Gnosticism is making a resurgence again since the alleged "gnostic gospel of Thomas" was translated into English in 1977. The gnostic gospels also referred to as the Nag Hammadi gospels and are named after their 1945 excavation site in Nag Hammadi, Egypt.***

I hope this helps you. Should you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at The Lord's Children Fellowship.