

Sunday, September 13, 2015—Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*—
Course Introduction

Introduction

- Welcome to our new Grace Life School of Theology class *From This Generation For Ever*. As we begin our study this morning of all things related to the King James Bible, I would like to cover the following three points:
 - Why this class?
 - Personal history
 - List of topics to be covered

Why This Class?

- Since the inception of Grace Life Bible Church (GLBC) in the fall of 2007, I have spoken numerous times on the subject of the King James Bible (KJB). In January and February of 2010, I taught a six part study titled [*Final Authority: Locating God's Word in English*](#) (scroll down to access the audio recordings of these studies). 2010 also saw the publication of my first booklet on the Bible issue, [*The Argument for Inerrancy and the King James Bible*](#). That effort was followed by [*The Apocrypha and the King James Bible*](#) in the spring of 2013. In 2011, as part of the festivities commemorating the 400th anniversary of the KJB, I spoke at both the Great Lakes Grace Bible Conference (Ohio) and the Grace School of the Bible (GSB) Summer Family Bible Conference (Chicago) on issues related to the KJB. In the Grace History Project (GHP), I taught a two part study on the history of the doctrine of inerrancy (see Lessons [63](#) and [64](#)). More recently, I spoke this past April (2015) at the GSB Pastor's Conference (also in Chicago) on the subject of [*The Paulicians and the Preserved Text*](#). A month later, at the Great Lakes Grace Bible Conference I delivered a message titled [*The Textual History of the English Bible*](#).
- So, having already taught on the KJB in a variety of formats and settings, I would like to take some time and explain why I chose to do this class.
- First and foremost, the impetus for this class was questions that I have received over the years from you, the saints of Grace Life Bible Church (GLBC). In particular, Mike Erspamer has asked many important questions regarding a host of topics related to the KJB. Many of Mike's questions were involved, complex, and required further study in order to get an answer. In addition, there was never a good time to address them when we were going through the GHP material.
- Second, the board of GLBC has made the training of faithful men within the assembly a top priority. Our most recent thirty part study of Right Division 101 was done with the goal of creating a basic class for dispensational instruction for those interested in being trained to labor in word and doctrine within the assembly. In addition, properly understanding GLBC's stance on

the Bible issue is also a must for those seeking to serve in a teaching capacity. This class will be geared to helping to meet that important need.

- Article I. The Bible

“We believe that the entire Bible is verbally inspired of God and is of plenary authority (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21) and that God has providentially preserved His completed Word for us today (Psalms 12:6-7, Colossians 1:25, Isaiah 40:8). We believe that the Word of God exists in its preserved form in what is commonly called the Textus Receptus (Received Text) and that the King James Version (KJV) is the best English translation of the Received Text available today. We believe the KJV to be without error and disapprove of all attempts to “correct” the text of the KJV with manuscript evidence or supposed understanding of original languages.

We are unashamedly literalist in our method of study and adhere to the principle God has set forth in the scriptures to rightly divide the Bible dispensationally (2 Timothy 2:15). The literal, dispensational approach is the only way to understand the differences in God’s various programs and dealings with mankind since the beginning of time and plays a vital role in establishing the believer and maintaining a distinct, clear gospel message (Romans 16:25-27). While we believe every word of the Bible is inspired and infallible, we recognize that Paul’s writings alone (Romans – Philemon) contain the revelation of the mystery that is God’s purpose during this dispensation of grace.” ([GLBC Statement of Faith](#))

- Third, I have come to believe (especially since the 2011 Bible conferences on the 400th anniversary of the KJB) that a new class on the KJB is in order. For the record, I am not seeking to replace or cast dispersion upon what Brother Richard Jordan taught in the Manuscript Evidence class in GSB. Brother Jordan’s work has grounded many, including myself, with a clear understanding of the need for a final authority in our own language. That being said, the GSB is now more than thirty years old. During the intermittent thirty years, the study of the historical and textual history of the KJB has progressed.
 - When Pastor Jordan began teaching Manuscript Evidence in the fall of 1983 the following resources would have been available for the writing of the curriculum. *Note: This list does not claim to be an exhaustive listing of precisely the resources utilized by Brother Jordan. Rather this list seeks to identify the major works on the subject that would have been available for him to draw from prior to the fall of 1983 when the class began.*
 - L. Gaussen
 - *The Divine Inspiration of the Bible* (1841)
 - Alexander McClure
 - *The Translators Revived* (1858)

- John William Burgon
 - *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark* (1871)
 - *The Revision Revised* (1883)
 - *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels* (1896)
 - *The Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels* (1896)
- Philip Mauro
 - *Which Version? Authorized or Revised* (1924)
- Benjamin G. Wilkinson
 - *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated* (1930)
- Jasper James Ray
 - *God Only Wrote One Bible* (1955)
- Edward F. Hills
 - *The King James Bible Defended* (1956)
 - *Believing Bible Study* (1967)
- Peter S. Ruckman
 - *The Bible “Babble”* (1964)
 - *Christian Handbook of Manuscript Evidence* (1970)
 - *The Monarch of the Books!* (1973)
 - *Problem Texts* (1980)
 - *The Differences in the King James Version Editions* (1983)
- Ward S. Allen
 - *Translating For King James* (1969)
- David Otis Fuller
 - *Which Bible?* (1970)
 - *True or False?*(1973)
 - *Counterfeit or Genuine?* (1975)
- Harold Lindsell
 - *The Battle for the Bible*
- Wilbur Pickering
 - *The Identity of the New Testament Text* (1977)
- D.A. Carson
 - *The King James Version Debate: A Plea for Realism* (1979)
- Norman L. Geisler

- *Inerrancy* (1980)
 - Zane C. Hodges & Arthur L. Farstad
 - *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text* (1982)
- Brother Jordan taught Manuscript Evidence before any of the significant works by the following King James supporters were authored: Samuel Gipp, D.A. Waite, William P. Grady, Gail Riplinger, Jack A Moorman, Lawrence M. Vance, David W. Cloud, Joey Faust, R.B. Ouellette, Thomas Holland, Jack McElrory, and many others. In addition, the first edition of James R. White's book *The King James Only Controversy: Can You Trust the Modern Translations?* did not appear in print until 1995.
- New discoveries were made in the 1960s and 1970s at libraries in Great Britain. Notable discoveries include MS 98, the notes of John Bois, Bod 1602, a bound copy of a 1602 edition of the Bishops Bible with handwritten notes by the translators in the margin. These discoveries were studied through the 1970s with books explaining their significance first appearing in the late 70s and mid 90s. Published works explaining the significance of these findings were not well known outside academic circles in the early 1980s.
 - Ward S. Allen
 - *Translating the New Testament Epistles 1604-1611* (1977)
 - *The Coming of the King James Gospels: A Collation of the Translators Work-in-Progress* (1995)
- The first half of the last decade (00 decade) saw the publication of two important works on the making of the KJB as well as its linguistic and cultural impact upon the English speaking world. These titles include:
 - Alister McGrath
 - *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (2001)
 - Adam Nicholson
 - *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* (2003)
- In 2004, Professor David Norton's ground breaking book *A Textual History of the King James Bible* was published by Cambridge Press. Moreover, Professor Norton's equally important *The King James Bible: A Short History from Tyndale to Today* was published in 2011 in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the KJB. Both of these works are indispensable to a complete understanding of the history of the King James text. Professor Norton has also written extensively on the subject of the Bible as literature in the following series of books:
 - *A History of the Bible as Literature 2 Volumes* (1993)
 - *A History of the English Bible as Literature* (2000)

- In addition, 2011 saw a flurry of scholarly works published in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible. There is much in these books that needs to be taken into account when considering this subject matter. A sampling of titles includes:
 - Donald L Brake
 - *A Visual History of the King James Bible* (2011)
 - David Crystal
 - *Begat: The King James Bible & the English Language*
 - Leland Ryken
 - *The Legacy of the King James Bible*
 - Jon M. Sweeney
 - *Verily, Verily: The KJV—400 Years of Influence and Beauty*
 - David Teems
 - *Majestie: The King Behind the King James Bible*
- Earlier this year (2015), Lawrence M. Vance published the results of his collation comparing the text of the Bishops Bible New Testament with the King James New Testament in *The Making of the King James New Testament*.
- In short, a class on the KJB that takes into account the latest research on the subject is long overdue.
- Fourth, I have concluded that historically (since the late 1950s) the articulation of the King James position has been dominated by Acts 2 Baptists who not only disapprove of our dispensational position (mid-Acts) but, in some cases, actually believe things about the KJB that are detrimental to the position. Consequently, I have come to believe that it is incumbent upon Pauline Dispensationalists to forge and advance our own position on the KJB that is in line and consistent with both the historical and textual facts as well as our dispensational beliefs regarding God's working in time.
 - I am a King James Bible believer. I believe that the King James Bible is God's word for English speaking people. It has been translated from the preserved and proper text (*Textus Receptus* or *TR*) using the proper method (literal equivalency).
 - I am also a mid-Acts Pauline dispensationalist who believes some very specific things regarding God's working in time during the dispensation of grace. God is at work in the world today in the lives of His saints through His written word. God is not physically intervening like He was in time past with Israel.

- I further maintain, that what I believe about one (the Bible) ought not to conflict with what I believe about the other (God's working in time during the dispensation of grace). Doctrinal consistency is very important and should be sought after diligently.
- Herein lies a unique problem for all those who are King James Bible believers and mid-Acts Pauline dispensationalists. Historically, the King James position has been championed most visibly and vocally by Acts 2 Baptists who vehemently oppose our dispensational position. Consequently, much has been said in pro-King James literature that is not only inconsistent with our dispensational position specifically; but is also detrimental to an accurate enunciation of the King James position in general.
- If asked, I would be hard pressed to think of even one book on the King James position that I could recommend to someone without reservation or equivocation. The available literature on the matter is full of doctrinal problems of a dispensational nature, documentation problems, plagiarism, ad hominem attacks, or tabloid style sensationalism.
- It is my prayer that the time we spend together studying these issues will be productive to these ends; i.e., the forging of a position that is doctrinally and historically accurate but also dispensationally correct.

Personal History

- I grew up reading and using the KJB. As a child, all the verses I memorized in AWANA were from the KJB (At the time all AWANA books used the KJB.).
- Very early after his salvation, my father (Steve Ross) came to understand and appreciate that there were more differences between the KJB and modern versions than just an updating of wording. For a time in the 1970s, my father contemplated attending Peter Ruckman's Pensacola Bible Institute in Pensacola, FL. After traveling to the school and meeting Dr. Ruckman he decided against attending there on account of the vicious/radical spirit he saw in Ruckman's followers.
- In the mid-1980s my father attended GSB where he took Brother Jordan's Manuscript Evidence class. This class served to buttress his long held preference and affinity for the KJB, thereby turning it into a personal conviction.
- While I grew up using the KJB throughout my formative years in the 1990s, I had no real understating of the reasons why my father advocated for its exclusive use. I knew that the NIV and other modern versions took out the "blood" in Colossians 1:14 (I know that I had been exposed to more teaching on the subject but either did not pay attention, did not understand, or did not retain it) and saw Gail Riplinger's *New Age Bible Versions* on his bookshelf but, beyond that, I really never questioned anything.
- It was not until I arrived at Grace Bible College (GBC) in the fall of 1996 that I really began to have questions regarding the KJB versus modern versions debate. In the summer of 1997, I

picked up a copy of Gail Riplinger's *New Age Bible Versions* at the GSB Summer Family Bible Conference and read it before going back to school for my sophomore year. In the summer of 1997, I also enrolled in GSB while at the same time being a student at GBC. During my second year of college I also picked up a few other titles, *The King James Bible Defended* by Dr. Edward F. Hills and *Which Bible?* by David Otis Fuller.

- That fall (1997) I began receiving videos from GSB and watching them in the basement of GBC's library. It was then that I began inhaling the Manuscript Evidence and Fundamentals of Dispensationalism classes. At the same time, in my second year theology class we were learning about Westcott and Hort's theory of textual criticism and the alleged superiority of the Critical Text and its resultant modern versions over the Traditional Text of the *Textus Receptus* (TR) and the King James. It was a very exciting time for me to be able to study both theories at virtually the same time.
- By the end of my sophomore year (spring 1998), after a lengthy study of the issues I became convinced that the KJB was God's Word for English speaking people. My acceptance and advocacy of the King James position was not popular at school and caused many problems throughout the duration of my stay at GBC. While I was never threatened with expulsion over the issue, I was called before the President of the college on more than one occasion to answer various false allegations that had been made against me by members of the student body.
- Since embracing the King James position, I have taught and preached from it exclusively and promoted its superiority over all modern versions. Over the years, further study of the position has revealed that tweaking my thinking on the matter was in order (Most notably the inerrancy issue that I addressed in 2011 at the GSB Summer Family Conference in Chicago.).
- More recently, my commitment to the KJB has been called into question by some on account of the fact that I dared to consider the underlying Greek in addressing the joint-heir controversy of Romans 8:17. Some have accused me of having an indecent agenda of seeking to infect GSB with the Greek games and modern version leaven of GBC. Not only are ad hominem attacks such as these ignorant of the facts of my personal history, they also highlight a growing trend in some Grace circles of calling into question one's commitment to the KJB in the face of doctrinal disagreement (many are labeled Bible Greekers).

List of Topics to be Covered

- Given my experience with the GHP, I hesitate to even publish any type of course outline. I know that what I think the class will be now at the outset will change as we move through the material.
- That being said, I also know that not everyone will find all the material I plan on covering of equal benefit or interest. Consequently, I plan on doing shorter terms devoted to specific topics. This will allow students on the internet to only study through those terms (or information) that they deem important or interesting.
- Topics I plan on covering include:

- Inspiration
 - Preservation
 - Canonicity
 - Transmission
 - Formation of the *Textus Receptus*
 - Pre-1611 English translations as rough drafts of the King James
 - Political climate leading up to the decision to translate
 - State of the English language at the time of the translation
 - Translation process
 - Textual history of the King James Bible
 - Reception and political implications of the translation
 - Cultural and linguistic impact
 - Westcott and Hort and the formation of the Critical Text
 - The Critical Text and modern versions
 - Dean Burgon's objection to the Critical Text
 - The formation of the doctrine of inerrancy
 - History and historiography of the King James only movement
- Logistically, things have changed for me somewhat at work. I have taken on some new responsibilities. Consequently, I am giving myself the freedom to take a week off from class here or there as the demands of my schedule dictate.
 - I have also created a website that will serve as an online extension the class. As I did with the GHP, I plan on uploading all the video, audio, PDF notes, and PowerPoint files to the From This Generation For Ever website. The website can be found at:
 - fromthisgenerationforever.blogspot.com