

13_The Triumph of the King James Version

How We Got the Bible (2016), Patrick Mead, Fourth Avenue

There are no visuals for today, as I said, because you don't really need them.

What we need to realize is those that treat the King James Bible as if it were especially holy are, and I'm not trying to be unkind, are ignorant of history.

King James did not have the Bible printed so that we could read it for ourselves and work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, as Scripture says.

He printed it so that he would continue to have control over Scripture and the church which he ran, the established church.

In the American Constitution, there is an amendment that says the United States will have no established church.

It will not establish a church or interfere with religion.

You may not be aware that.

That meant at the federal level, until the Civil War, some states had official established churches, like Maryland was Catholic Church, and that was the official state of the church of the state.

Well, in Britain, he wanted to control the church, and the way that he had the Bible printed translated and then controlled was all about control, not about us having freedom in Christ.

That goal had a huge real impact on how the Bible was translated.

The Bishops Bible, remember that one?

That was the model for his version.

In fact, if you remember, one of the rules that we looked at last week was that the Bishops Bible wording was to be kept as much as possible, that if you had to change it, to change it as little as possible.

The reason is his system was already built upon that translation, and we don't react well when our system is changed.

I brought up one illustration recently.

When I grew up, we used, I'm sorry, for God's love of the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish.

And we used the American, or the British actually at this stage, 20th century definition of should to say, you shouldn't, but you might.

That's why you need to be baptized.

Well, then come the newer English versions that say that, you know, for God's love of the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him will not perish.

And we had preachers get mad.

I saw a preacher throw a Bible from the pulpit, calling it damnable and rubbish because of what it had done, because it changed our system.

We thought it meant they had changed to be liberal.

No.

Please remember, people were always learning.

And so we need to always be translating.

That said, some directives were given about how, despite what you found in older texts, to keep the bishops Bible reading.

In fact, some printers, this is where we get, we don't understand history.

We think, all right, they translated it, then they sent it to the printer.

No.

Each group had their own notes, then they collated them, and each group took each collation and made copies of the collation, and then they sent them to the four printers that were authorized to print Bibles by the king.

Only one printer was authorized to do theological works, but four were allowed to do Bibles.

At least one of the printers in his letters left that what he got was a bishops Bible with notes written in it on where to make the changes.

So that's how much it's not a real new translation.

Whenever you can do that that way, did you ever hear that before?

The situation was muddled by politics, because if you haven't noticed, each of the last king and queen in succession liked a different religion, a different printer, and a different Bible.

So people didn't run out and grab the King James Bible and say, this is ours because they assumed it's only going to last as long as he does.

As soon as he's done, we're not going to be allowed to have it.

They're going to print a different one and a different printer.

So it wasn't a big deal to the common people at the date.

Those who claim that the King James Version is the only true translation of Scripture need to be asked some things about history.

They also need to be asked, which printing are you referring to?

Early printings had a host of errors.

They were only corrected with subsequent printing years later, because it was expensive to correct a piece of printing, extremely expensive.

Paper was extremely expensive, ink, but also time.

Printers had to bear their own cost and hope they got reimbursed by selling copies.

Gutenberg, everybody knows the name Gutenberg, right?

The inventor of movable type.

He didn't invent printing.

He invented movable type.

He went bankrupt.

He spent time in debtor's prison.

It was hard to make money as a printer.

By the way, still is.

Still is.

Most books printed don't make their money back, and so it's hard to make money.

I have a friend who is in the printing business, and I look at him and I say, I wouldn't want to be in your shoes today.

He uses business cards.

You know what I mean?

But printers have always struggled.

Proofreaders.

You had to hire proofreaders, and they were hard to find.

Why?

You had to find people who could read.

That's one.

Two, who knew the various spellings of each word, so they knew which ones were acceptable and which ones weren't.

So you had to have highly educated people.

That cost money.

So most printers saved money by not having proofreaders.

That caused a problem.

British papers, by the way, were famous for this.

Their proofreaders union didn't do anything.

And British newspapers were always hilarious misprints until the 80s.

And that's when Robert Murdock fired a bunch of union people, and that's a whole story.

But once errors were found in these Bibles, it was too expensive to reprint them.

You had to scrap the whole page.

That meant you had to scrap the whole Bible.

We often forget how hard it was to get a book.

The version we have today has over 100,000 changes from the first King James Bible printed.

So when somebody tells me, one of the King James always say which one?

Which printing?

And usually that throws them for a loop because they didn't know about this.

Another change that economics brought was a list of books in your Bible.

Remember this summer we talked about the Apocrypha?

And a lot of you really enjoyed that, which thrilled me.

Because frankly, I've taught that at one church before where I had one elder every Sunday complain at me.

I don't know why we're looking at these books.

It's not important.

And by the way, that was a brilliant impression.

No, actually, he was much nicer than that.

You may not have realized this before, so here's history.

Paper is expensive.

King James did not like the Apocrypha.

But the Church of England wanted it in their Bibles.

And now he's in England.

They hollow it.

They say it's not Scripture, but it's very close.

It's very useful and instructive for the Church.

He wasn't that keen on it.

They translated it.

Still, it's cheaper to print Bibles if you don't have to print as many pages.

So over the years, more and more printers left the Apocrypha out.

Because it was cheaper to produce without.

The Puritans, by the way, they loved this because they didn't like the Apocrypha and they thought if you read the Apocrypha, it would make you more sympathetic to Catholics.

I can tell you right now, I have read their books.

I've read the Apocrypha.

I don't see their point.

But they argued against it because they said it's too Catholic.

It took a long time.

1826 was the last time that the King James Version was printed with the Apocrypha by official printers.

Almost 200 years.

It took to fade away.

That led to a host of books.

I don't want to embarrass anybody in this room.

But I've already had several.

Not just one, not just two.

Several come up and ask me what I'm going to talk about the horrors of modern translations.

I read.

I have very few skills.

I really do.

I can't fix a toaster.

If you want me to paint a room, you'd better have low standards and a lot of time.

But I read.

I read between three and eight books a week.

What I read, I remember.

And I can collate and put things together.

That's my only real skill.

I have read almost every book attacking the new versions.

And I smile because I've also read the books that attacked the King James Version when it was printed.

For an example, William Kilburn.

Good Scottish name that.

Kilburn means the church at Bern.

Wrote a book.

Here's the title of the book.

Dangerous Errors and Several Late Printed Bibles to the Great Scandal and Corruption of Sound and True Religion.

That's a great title.

I love that title.

That sounds like it could have been written by any preacher I had growing up.

Oh, I remember when the NIV first came out.

We had a book that thick by Foy E.

Wallace Jr.

Remember Foy E.

Wallace?

Yeah.

On Errors and Modern Translations.

The book on the Errors was twice as big as the Bible.

And that was just one.

And my father loved Foy.

He thought he was the unknown 13th Apostle.

So I had to read that when I was 12 years old.

And that went hard.

And then a report back to him that I agreed with everything in it.

Of course I did because I wasn't allowed to read dissenting literature at that stage when I found the dissents.

Anyway, William Kilburn was just one of dozens of books attacking the modern, liberal translation of the King James and how it was destroying the faith.

Ah, there is nothing new under the sun.

Nothing.

Well, he said there were over 20,000 Errors in the King James.

I won't go over all of them.

All I'm going to say is right now, a lot of them were actually quite entertaining.

There was the adulterers Bible that left out the word not Thou shalt commit adultery.

A very popular addition.

Actually the man that printed that went to prison for it and had to pay for all the printing as well.

He had a miserable life.

I've only seen one copy of it in my life.

That copy is now going to be in a museum if it's not already opened in Washington, DC on the history of the Bible.

The guy that owns Hobby Lobby collects and spent hundreds of millions of dollars collecting this stuff and he used to bring it around to cities in a traveling thing.

Massive.

It would fill a warehouse and he did that to Colorado Springs so I got to see the adulterers Bible there.

It's the first time I've ever seen it but Cammie wasn't impressed.

Most of them are actually funny.

For example, Numbers 25, 17 and 18.

Don't need to turn there, just prepare.

Which said in the King James, vex the Midianites.

The word vex was vex the Midianites and smite them for they vex you with their wives.

Well the real word was they vex you with their wiles.

I kind of like the first one.

Far more entertaining and accurate but entertaining.

By 1675 most of those errors had been removed.

Still there remained the issue above all issues.

Is this an accurate version of the ancient text?

Well the big elephant in the room right now is they didn't have the ancient text.

They had medieval text at best.

We have thousands and thousands of texts now that are older than they had because they were British.

The world was British.

You might have heard of Turkey, you might have heard of Macedon, you might have heard of Egypt but nobody went there and those people weren't British.

They didn't know anything.

Why read their books?

And so they didn't have them.

That's the elephant in the room.

Still is it accurate of the text they have?

The problem is that they were using late text, earlier translations and it might have been the most accurate translation to date.

I would argue you could make that case.

While it might have been the most accurate translation to date there is no way you can find an accurate translation or the most accurate translation since then.

There were many issues.

Some of which are caused by them being British.

That's not an insult.

I'm British.

If you hadn't noticed.

Somebody this morning.

Dear lady, is she in the class?

Yes, you were talking about your friend who's a carver.

Remember I asked you to repeat it?

I don't understand you either.

I thought she was mentioning somebody named Carl and I was hard to me to understand carver after all and I felt stupid but again accents differ and when we say things, you know, for example when I met

my wife and arranged our first date I meant to say that I meant for her to understand that I would be at her house at 7.

30 on Friday so I said it in normal British.

I will knock you up Friday 7.

30.

I said that in front of her father.

This was not popular.

Language matters.

How can the complexities of one language be expressed in another?

That is every translator's fight.

I'm going to say this.

This is a French translator who made this observation.

I believe it is crude.

I believe it is sexist but I think you need to hear it to help us introduce this.

He said translations are like women.

If they are beautiful, they are not faithful and if they are faithful, they are not beautiful.

Okay, Henri, I have no idea what your life has been like but I get the point.

If we try word-for-word translations, they are awful.

They are.

Go to translate.

google.

com If you didn't know it, you can do that.

One language to another.

You have to know both languages.

That's the only thing to understand how this works.

Let's say English to French.

You type in three or four sentences.

If you can read French, go over to that second panel where they translate it.

They don't do it well because word-for-word doesn't work.

And even the best computers with algorithms to set up to catch idioms struggle.

I would fly back and forth to Scotland frequently on Air Canada which I highly recommend.

I always had good experience with them.

You open up the Air Canada magazine in case you don't have enough germs.

You want to pick up something that's been handled by every international traveler.

You open it up.

On one side, the article is in English.

On the other side, it's in French.

Well, I speak French.

I actually read it a lot better than I speak it.

So I would like to go back and forth and go on.

That's not even close.

Well, translation is tough.

For example, the New American Standard Version.

The New American Standard Version is very accurate.

It is also very unpopular.

Why?

Because it's hard to read.

Think of the keys to the kingdom passage.

Whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.

Well, they love verbs in the New American Standard Version.

And they go to the nth detail to get it.

So whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

And whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven.

Technically accurate.

But when do you use that tense in your language?

When do you use the word shall?

And when you use the word shall, do you understand that it doesn't mean will?

We've lost that in the last 100 years.

The word shall, up to about 60, 70 years ago, was understood as an imperative.

For example, thou shalt not commit adultery.

It didn't mean you will not commit adultery.

It said adultery will not happen.

That is not a possibility.

You shall be saved.

You should be saved.

Didn't mean maybe.

It meant without a doubt.

Absolutely.

Yet we used our version of the word shall and should and came up with a whole different doctrine.

We've lost it in 100 years.

Think of how tough this is.

One way to translate scripture is not word for word.

That's always a lousy way.

But the other side of the equation is, how can we make sure the message my reader receives is the same message the first readers received?

Even if I have to change the words to get it there.

Where your Bible lies on that continuum between word for word and concept for concept is where the battles are.

We're going to talk more about that next week.

To make the call, however, you've got to know the language well.

And you have to know the idioms well.

Have you ever had an awkward silence?

The Dutch have an expression for that.

I used to know it in Dutch.

I don't anymore.

But the expression literally translated is, and a minister walked by.

Because it's like you were talking about something.

Oh, minister.

Hello.

By the way, people have said, they've seen my t-shirt and it looks like I'm a priest today.

I'm a priest every day.

Get over it.

And be blessed.

We know Hebrew so much better now than they did in 1600 for several reasons.

One, we know Jews.

England had banned Jews.

They took their property.

They killed them.

They drove them out of the country.

They lost connection with Hebrew.

In fact, to Jew someone was to steal.

Some of you have used that expression or heard it as a kid.

Jewed out of something.

Martin Luther used the word Jew to mean any criminal.

And whenever he referred to liars, thieves, villains, scoundrels, he used to catch all word Jews.

You don't know them.

You don't know the language.

You only learn it out of books.

Any of you ever learned a language out of books and then gone to that country?

I did.

I had four years of French before I went to France.

I did not know French.

I thought I did.

First time on the street, I walked up and confidently used my sentences.

Somebody turned to me and spoke a lot faster than I was ready for.

And I was reduced quickly to memorized expressions like my aunt has already the pencil box.

I had nothing I could not communicate until I learned the people.

You don't know the people.

You don't know the language.

So they didn't get the idioms right in the King James.

Here's an expression.

What would I think about just our phones?

40 years ago, if you were writing a book saying, so looked it up on my phone.

I pulled my phone out of my pocket.

I watched a movie on my phone.

I wish the kids wouldn't quit just staring at the phones.

What is it?

20 years ago, does that mean anything?

No.

How you explain to somebody before the age of the car what it meant to run a yellow light.

That means nothing without context.

In English, there's an expression to get hot under the collar.

The French don't have that.

So if you translate that to French, it means nothing.

The French equivalent is to have mustard up one's nose.

That's very good.

You got that.

The French got that one.

You know, snails, they missed.

That one, they got.

They only hunt snails because it's the only animal they're brave enough to hunt.

Anyway, I'll know already.

We must flee.

We have only wounded it.

My wife always says I got to quit making fun of the French, and I keep saying, what are the consequences?

Anyway, the King James translators did not know the idioms if he grew, so they translated them literally making them indecipherable.

For example, in Jeremiah, we'll just do one.

In Jeremiah, the expression to rise up early is used 11 times.

But to rise up early doesn't mean to get up early.

In Hebrew, to rise up early means to do something continually.

So it makes 11 passages indecipherable.

I could do this all day, people.

The King James did not understand idioms.

We already talked about the name of God.

They didn't know how to handle it.

We now know because we have many more manuscripts, and we've met Jews that God's name was probably pronounced something like Yahweh.

They did not.

Therefore, they capitalized the word Lord to mean Jehovah, or they would write Jehovah, which is a made-up word, to indicate that they'd come across the word for God that they didn't know how to pronounce.

By the way, they used a lot of J's.

There's no J sound in Hebrew.

At all.

It is Jerusalem.

It is Jesus.

It is Hesheva.

It is Haqib.

There's no J.

King James, throw J's at him.

So we have a lot of J's.

Another issue was the kind of Greek they were translating.

This is really big, but I'm wondering if it's boring, so I'm going to do this fast.

Greek changes, just like every other language.

They knew classical Greek.

The Greek of the Forum.

The Greek one might use in discussions in Oxford and Cambridge.

The higher scholarly Greek of Homer and the Iliad, perhaps.

But the Bible was written in Koine Greek.

The common, everyday people's speech of the marketplace.

Have you ever had anybody say, oh, I love the beauty of the King James?

What you don't understand is the reason it's beautiful is they took the common language and they made it sound like the academic language that they knew.

That's why we've got some problems.

That's why we make Jesus more holy.

And the Bible more holy than.

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How they're going to put this?

We're more Victorian than we are Christians sometimes.

Paul refers to a bunch of people's works as rubbish, but he uses the word for fecal matter that starts with S.

They didn't want to rubbish.

Today we might say manure, refuse.

The claws women used during menstruation, they don't translate that either.

They say, my righteousness will be as filthy rags.

See what I mean?

They made it posh.

God didn't come to save just the posh.

The English of the King James translation reflects the translators, not so much the translated.

Now here's where we'll be for the last 10 minutes or so.

Because James was interested in doing the status quo, and we mentioned this last week, and keeping his supreme position and keeping peace.

Some words were not translated, or they were mistranslated on purpose.

One of the greatest damages he did to us was the word church.

I want to stress, he didn't start it.

He just maintained it, and he brought it into the English world.

And the years after Constantine, let's say around 400 and 500 AD, they were already in the Latin, putting the word church, meaning a place, a chapel one must go to, and not assembly congregation, those called out.

Just meaning a group of believers.

This was done on purpose in the 400s and 500s to centralize and control the faith.

You could only get to God if you went to the right church at the right time with the right people in front doing the right rituals in the right way.

That is not what the word means.

When we gather, we are the church, wherever we are.

You, by yourself or not, every so often I hear people say, if you were the only person on earth, Christ would have died for you.

Maybe.

He never says that, by the way, so let's not put words in his mouth.

If there were two, he would.

He's always worked with the group.

Even when he calls individuals, what does he do with them?

Put them in a group and make them work within a group.

King James already knew they'd already had one civil war, and they're going to have another one after he dies, over religion.

He doesn't want people thinking they have the right to worship anywhere they want to.

So every time the word congregation came to him, he had them change it back to the Catholic word, church.

How much damage is that done to us?

That we go to church rather than being the church?

I would tell you that that has been a tragedy for the faith.

And if you want to be faithful, what do you got to do?

Start a church.

What does that mean?

Put more money in the ground.

And by the way, I love money in the ground.

I love that we have heat in here.

I even love more in the summer you have air conditioner.

That sometimes works.

I love padded pews.

I love all of this, so don't get me wrong.

What I am saying is this, while this is good, this is not our job.

Our job is to be reflectors of the light of Jesus, the church.

And we do better in a group.

What about another one?

Oh, this one's hurt us.

He changed the word minister or servant to deacon.

Now why?

Well, the Catholics already had that order, and when the Church of England got started, they brought them over.

Deacons were assistants to the top clergy, to the priest.

What did we do in a protest or affirmation?

We brought it right over.

Deacons are the farm team for the shepherds.

So whenever we want a new shepherds, where do we look?

Deacons.

I'm going to tell you right now, that's a bad idea.

Because to be a deacon is an entirely different skill set than to be a shepherd.

Deacons are really good with material matters.

Shepherds are to be focused on spiritual matters.

Can you be both?

I've met a couple, but only a couple.

I've talked to quite a few elders in my life telling them, you really are a brilliant deacon.

And that's what you need to be.

You need to step out of this room.

And you know what?

Because of King James, many of them think that's a demotion.

People, if God calls you to dig ditches, it is a demotion to become president.

You have got to get out of your head systems of human hierarchy.

But King James made sure that was in there.

To where he calls the presbyters of the church.

Remember what a presbyter means.

If you don't know what it means.

It means the people among you who you look up to spiritually.

He changed that word to bishops.

So that they would be, the order would be established.

The King James version was beautiful and did a lot of good things.

It also hurt us badly.

And we're still recovering.

Because if you print a Bible today that doesn't have those words in it, what do people think?

You're changing scripture.

I told you this.

I think in a sermon a month or so ago, wonderful lady, Christian lady.

I have no complaints with this lady.

Please understand.

She and her husband took me out to dinner to ask me a couple of questions.

And it was about the issue of gay rights and such in the church.

And she had read a couple of things where the word homosexual was made up by Paul.

And that we still didn't know exactly why he used that word and what he meant by it.

And before she even asked me what I thought about that, she said, the way I look at it, if we can't know what that word means, we can't know what any word means.

I looked at her and I went, I'm not there.

I can be very comfortable knowing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and argue about what does the word singing mean?

I can be very comfortable believing that there is a God and he created heavens and earth while still discussing how was that creation manifested?

We can talk about these words.

By the way, he did make up that word and there are lots of strong opinions on all sides of it.

My point is this, when research and study finds, for example, people, Joseph was almost undoubtedly not a carpenter.

He was a mason, a stone carver.

But we've only learned that in the last 60, 70 years.

You try to change that now.

That is not popular.

He's a carpenter son.

I don't usually bring it up.

Why?

I'm not going to die on that mountain.

Doesn't matter that much to me.

Might to him, but he didn't bring it up.

He would have said, and do not say, I worked with wood.

In other words, they translated the word baptized correctly.

Immerse, dip, or plunge.

He had them put it right back.

Why?

Because they didn't immerse, dip, or plunge.

He wanted control.

He didn't want you thinking you could go out there and be baptized by just anybody, and his church didn't do it that way.

Other transliterated words, amen.

Do you know what the modern English way of expressing amen is?

That is exactly what amen means.

I agree.

I approve.

We have churches where they say amen, but you're not allowed to clap, and I'm going, wait a minute.

It's the same language.

In fact, I've had people look at, oh, what was it?

There's a line, Night with Ebb and Penyan, and there are songs like this that use different languages.

In our church, we weren't allowed to sing them.

When I asked the preacher, he was my father, why not?

He said, because we can't speak in tongues, we're not going to sing in tongues either.

And then we sang hallelujah, praise Jehovah.

I'm seven, and I'm sitting there going, what?

And at the very end, we all sang the amen, and I'm going, what?

That, too.

But I said it inside, that's why I'm alive.

Oh, my.

The word apostle means one sent.

I have no problem with the word apostle, because it's a big concept, but a special one commission to be sent, apostle.

How about angel?

You know this, what's the word angel mean?

Messenger, that's all it means.

When you come across the word angel, you don't know if it's from heaven or earth until you get the context.

You don't even know if it's bad or good.

Most passages that are translated demons, there's not a word demon in the text.

They're just in the text, getting the context, oh, that was a bad one.

So they don't put bad angel.

They put demon or evil spirit.

Jehovah's Witnesses always cracking up on that one.

They don't believe in a soul or spirit like we do.

And they say that the word spirit only means breath.

And I always say, does evil spirit mean bad breath?

They're not consistent.

Humans aren't consistent.

We're just not.

Anyway, blaspheme.

Well, blasphemy was already against the law, but it wasn't what the scripture said.

The word in Greek means to revile, to speak and discuss of, to talk it down, but really major down.

And I'm trying to think, in all the words I know are British, to slag it.

But you get the concept.

But in British law, by that time, blasphemy was saying the name of God when you weren't allowed to.

But to say, oh my God, you're guilty of blasphemy.

That's not what blasphemy means.

You still shouldn't say it, by the way, unless you're really talking to it.

But again, because law in Britain was such that it was, they decided to not let that word be translated.

Or Satan.

Satan means adversary, spy, or prosecutor.

Accuser is another good word.

But they'd already named him, so they weren't going to unname him.

They gave Satan.

If you ever met Satan one day, which you won't, he's not going to have a little thing.

Hi, my name is Satan, because that's not his name.

He is just the accuser.

Also, James was getting, and I'll do this in my last one, because it's 11.

45.

James was getting a lot of criticism for keeping holy days, because no, we're Protestants now.

We ought to be dropping that.

So he inserted in Acts 12 and verse 4 the word Easter.

Every other time in Scripture that word shows up, it's Passover.

But he needed Easter in the Bible, so they put it there.

When I was a boy, most King James versions still have it.

I don't know that they do today.

You can check yours at home.

We're online if you've got U version, which is a brilliant app, by the way, free.

It has all the different versions that you'd want and more.

But again, you understand what I mean when I say it was printed, but don't treat it as an idol.

Don't treat it as the one true translation.

I've had people say, don't we have enough Bible translations?

No.

No.

Because the language you and I are using will one day be out to date.

It's going to need to be updated again.

And when it's done, you and I are going to be sitting in a nursing home under our day blanket, going booze liberals.

So remember that now.

Write it down now in a fly leaf of your Bible.

But if you don't believe in adding to the word, put a note and put it into the Bible so you can go chill.

They need to be able to read it in their language.

Does that help?

All right.

One last lesson next week, the triumph of the King James Version.

Cheerio.