



The Burning Bush

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THE BURNING BUSH

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Edited for the Faculty

Rev Timothy Tow, MDiv, STM, DD
Principal, and Lecturer in Systematic Theology

Mrs Ivy Tow, BTh
Matron, and Lecturer in Greek

Rev Jeffrey Khoo, BTh, MDiv, STM, PhD
Academic Dean, and Lecturer in New Testament

Rev Prabhudas Koshy, BSc, BTh, MDiv, ThM, ThD
Dean of Students, and Lecturer in Hebrew

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Lecturer in Biblical Studies

Mrs Jemima Khoo, BTh, MA, MRE
Lecturer in Christian Education

Miss Carol Lee, BBA, DipEd, MEd, MDiv
Lecturer in Christian Education

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Please direct all correspondence to:



The Editor, *The Burning Bush*
Far Eastern Bible College
9A Gilstead Road, Singapore 309063
Republic of Singapore

TRUTH OR LIES?

Jeffrey Khoo

Accusers and Allegations

A number of publications seek to attack and destroy the verbal and plenary perfection of the Bible. They claim that the Bible is verbally and plenary inspired (VPI) but not verbally and plenary preserved (VPP). Simply put, they want Christians to believe that the Bible was only infallible in the past but no longer infallible today.

In attacking the present infallibility and inerrancy of the Scriptures and the identification of an existing infallible and inerrant Scripture in the original languages in the inspired and preserved Hebrew and Greek words underlying the Reformation Bibles best represented by the KJV, these anti-perfectionists, anti-preservationists, anti-TR/KJV, pro-Westcott-Hort modern-versionists falsely accuse believers of the present perfection of Scriptures as schismatics, heretics and even cultists by linking them to Ruckmanism and Seventh-Day Adventism (SDAism). Their writings imply that it is simply unscholarly and even sinful to suggest that Christians today indeed possess a 100% infallible and inerrant Bible.

Henceforth, I will refer to such propagators of untruth generally as “the accusers,” bearing in mind that not all of them share exactly the same beliefs with regard to the VPP and the KJV, as some among them even inexplicably profess love for the KJV—notwithstanding their readiness to find fault with the KJV and/or the original language texts (words) underlying the KJV. The title of “arch-accuser” goes to Doug Kutilek who contributed a chapter to the faith-denying and doubt-casting book called *One Bible Only?* authored by the faculty of Central Baptist Theological Seminary (with support from Bob Jones University).¹ In that book, Kutilek maliciously and mischievously paints with a broad and contemptuous brush all pro-KJV advocates as Ruckmanites.

If Kutilek had kept his criticisms of Ruckman to Ruckman alone we would not have cared, but he linked sound defenders of the KJV like

Edward F Hills,² David Otis Fuller,³ David Cloud,⁴ D A Waite,⁵ to Ruckman! This is hitting below the belt. He also unjustly accused pro-KJV defenders of SDAism just because D O Fuller quoted from SDA Benjamin Wilkinson who so happened to defend the KJV as well in his book *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated* (1930).⁶ This is a common tactic by detractors to mislead, to paint white as black so that people will not see the white but only the black, and to make people think that the black they see is indeed white. Such sophistry is usually employed by those who have no case or a weak case, who have to resort to such low blows to score their points in order to look credible.

VPP is Not Ruckmanism

It is a well-known fact that authors like Hills, Fuller, Cloud and Waite by no means defend the KJV in the way Ruckman does. It is clear from the writings of Hills, Fuller, Cloud and Waite that they do **NOT** espouse at all the beliefs of Ruckman that:

- (1) the KJV is doubly inspired;
- (2) the KJV is advanced revelation;
- (3) the English KJV is as or more inspired than the original language Scriptures;
- (4) the KJV can be used to correct the original language Scriptures;
- (5) there is no need whatsoever to study the Biblical languages of Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek due to an “inspired” English translation;
- (6) the KJV cannot be improved on (*The Defined King James Bible*⁷ edited by D A Waite and S H Tow and published by Bible For Today is certainly an improvement of the KJV);
- (7) the KJV is the only Bible that has gospel or salvific content;
- (8) those who do not use the KJV are condemned to hell; and
- (9) all non-English speaking believers must learn English to know the Truth.

Hills, Fuller, Cloud and Waite are all essentially speaking of the infallibility and inerrancy of the inspired Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek Scriptures behind the Reformation Bibles best represented by the KJV. The KJV does not stand independently or separately. It is dependent on its original language source texts, and these source texts (words) known by

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various names—Byzantine, Majority, Received—are the infallibly preserved apographs of the inerrant autographs.

As far as non-English translations or versions of the Bible go, all non-English speaking believers are encouraged to use the Bibles they have in their own native tongue, but they ought to use that version which is closest to the inspired and preserved Byzantine, Majority and Received texts, and as far removed as possible from the Alexandrian, Minority, and Westcott-Hort texts. They ought also to use a Bible that is translated by means of the verbal equivalence method (word-for-word) rather than the dynamic equivalence method (thought-for-thought) in keeping with the twin doctrines of VPI and VPP. Biblically and theologically trained pastors and teachers are necessary to teach faithfully the whole counsel of God, expounding from the inerrant Hebrew and Greek Scriptures God has infallibly preserved, namely, the Masoretic Text and the Textus Receptus of the Protestant Reformation, all the truths that God has given using the best version or translation the people have in their hands.

VPP is Not SDAism

Dr Benjamin Wilkinson (an SDA) does not own the King James Bible. The King James Bible was not translated by SDAs but by Reformation and Protestant scholars of the highest calibre during the reign of King James in the early 17th century. The King James Bible is for everyone who loves the Bible and desires to have the best and most faithful English Bible ever produced for their meditation and edification. Neither does Wilkinson own the “copyright” to the Biblical doctrine of VPP which belongs only to the Lord Jesus Christ who said in all three Synoptic Gospels, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matt 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33).

Wilkinson did not pioneer the defence of the KJV. The original defence of the KJV may be traced to the **Trinitarian Bible Society** (TBS)⁸ which was originally founded in 1831 to defend the biblical and fundamental doctrine of the Trinity and the 100% deity of Christ—hence its name “Trinitarian.” The clearest proof-text for the doctrine of the Trinity is 1 John 5:7, “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.” This most excellent verse has been scissored out by Westcott and Hort, and the modern versions. The TBS in its defence of the Trinity found it most necessary also to defend 1 John 5:7 as found in the underlying preserved

Greek text of the KJV. By so defending the KJV and its preserved underlying Greek text, is the TBS now SDA just because Wilkinson at a later time happened to defend the KJV and its underlying Greek text too? Note that the TBS is stoutly against Westcott and Hort, and the modern versions, *and even considers the NKJV untrustworthy.*⁹

The Bible League¹⁰ is another early defender of the KJV. Founded in 1892, the Bible League resisted the “Downgrade” in Great Britain. The modernists were throwing out one doctrine after another including the foundational and indispensable doctrine of the divine inspiration and total inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures. The Bible League was founded to contend earnestly for the historic Christian Faith. Since its inception, the League has endeavored “[t]o promote the Reverent Study of the Holy Scriptures, and to resist the varied attacks made upon their Inspiration, Infallibility and Sole Sufficiency as the Word of God.” Insofar as the Bible versions issue is concerned, the Bible League unashamedly holds to the view that “the Authorised Version is the most accurate and faithful English Bible translation available today.” Its latest publication (2004), a 126-paged book authored by Alan J Macgregor and titled *Three Modern Versions* is a most timely critique of the NIV, ESV and NKJV. It is significant to note that Macgregor quoted Wilkinson’s *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, but in a footnote Macgregor wisely explained his use of Wilkinson’s material thus:

It must be pointed out here that while there is some good material in Dr Wilkinson’s book, there are also a number of inaccuracies. He was a Seventh-day Adventist (a fact that many who quote from him fail to reveal). Some who support the use of modern versions of the Bible allege that one of the reasons for Dr. Wilkinson’s strong opposition to the Revised Version of 1881 was that it altered two verses which Adventists regard as proof-texts in support of their doctrines: Acts 13:42 (which they regard as teaching the necessity of Gentiles keeping the Sabbath or Seventh Day), and Hebrews 9:27 (which Adventists believe teaches soul sleep). I have sought to be selective in the quotes I have used. Some might argue, why quote from him at all, if he was a member of a cult? The answer is that despite his Adventist views ... there is nonetheless some sound evidence in his book that rightly exposes facts concerning the Westcott and Hort Text, and the errors of Vaticanus and Sinaiticus. He also provides solid, factual support for the superiority of the Received Text.¹¹

This allegation that the belief in the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scriptures and the defence of the KJV is a “new doctrine” and a

“new practice” has been very much the tactic of anti-VPPists, anti-TRists, and anti-KJVists to vilify the fundamental doctrine of the infallible preservation of the inspired words of the Holy Scriptures to the last jot and tittle as promised by our Lord Himself in Matthew 5:18, and the goodness of the KJV and its underlying Hebrew and Greek Texts, so that the unknowing populace would automatically shun the good old doctrine of VPP, the good old TR, and the good old KJV without consciously giving them a second thought. Some of the accusers even claim to be “*preserving our godly paths*” (*Jer 6:16*)! Can this be so?

New Attacks, New Terms, Not New Doctrines

David Cloud rightly says that such new attacks against KJV defenders “has increased in intensity in recent years and is finding a home even among those who claim to be Fundamentalists and Bible-believing Baptists.” Cloud quoted from the Rev Denis Gibson (a minister of the gospel who has served in Presbyterian and Baptist churches since 1958, and a regular contributor to the international devotional guide—*Read, Pray and Grow*) who in a letter to him dated April 19, 1995 wrote, “I see a real hostility that has been generated in the minds of some of the *younger pastors*. There does not seem to be, on their part, a serious interest in dealing with this issue ... It is the hostility, however, that is troubling. Sides are forming and deep prejudices are evident. To be ‘a King James man’ is now a term of opprobrium. This opposition is within ‘so-called’ evangelicalism, not as in the past, from the liberal-modernist camp.”¹²

Is it no wonder that the Trinitarian Bible Society, noting a significant change in theological climate in Christendom, felt compelled to issue a comprehensive statement in 2005 defining what it believes to be the Doctrine of Scripture?¹³ D P Rowland, the General Secretary of TBS wrote in the Society’s *Quarterly Record* (April-June 2005), “Today, as has been stated, things are very different. The doctrine of Scripture has been, and is being, assailed on every side; not least from within many branches (including those taking the name of ‘evangelical’ and ‘reformed’ and may I add ‘fundamentalist’) of the so-called ‘Christian Church’ of our day. The Committee, therefore, considers it necessary for the Society clearly and unambiguously to state where it stands on this most fundamental of all doctrines.”¹⁴

New assaults on the foundational and indispensable doctrine of the infallible preservation of the inerrantly inspired words of Holy Scripture require updated statements and more definitive terms to affirm Christianity's fundamental beliefs concerning the *forever* infallible and inerrant Scripture, hence our term—"Verbal Plenary Preservation"—as expressed in the Constitution of the Far Eastern Bible College, and True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church:

(1) We believe in the divine, Verbal Plenary Inspiration (Autographs) and Verbal Plenary Preservation (Apographs) of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and as the perfect Word of God, the Supreme and final authority in faith and life (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:20-21; Ps 12:6-7; Matt 5:18, 24:35);

(2) We believe the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament underlying the Authorised (King James) Version to be the very Word of God, infallible and inerrant;

(3) We uphold the Authorised (King James) Version to be the Word of God—the best, most faithful, most accurate, most beautiful translation of the Bible in the English language, and do employ it alone as our primary scriptural text in the public reading, preaching, and teaching of the English Bible.¹⁵

What is the real problem today? Is it not the unequal yoking of “reformed” and “fundamentalist” theology with the textual-critical method of Westcott and Hort and the “inerrant autographs alone” view of Warfield,¹⁶ their resultant corrupt text and modern perversions? Why are “reformed” people agreeing with certain fundamental Baptists who castigate the doctrine of special providential preservation as a “new doctrine,” non-existent before 1648 and the Westminster Confession? Why are certain Biblical fundamentalists well-known for their Biblical conservatism and separatism speaking favourably of rationalistic methods of Biblical criticism, modernistic critical texts, and the ecumenical and neo-evangelical modern versions? Has there not been a downgrade today within reformed Christianity and historic fundamentalism? If so, is this not a backsliding away from the 16th and 20th century Reformation movements?

Prayer and Plea

Our sincere and earnest prayer is that Bible-believing and Bible-defending Christians would not just believe and defend the Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI) of Scripture, but also the Verbal Plenary Preservation

(VPP) of Scripture. The Bible was not only infallible and inerrant in the past (in the Autographs), but also infallible and inerrant in the present (in the Apographs). These Apographs are the providentially and specially preserved Hebrew and Greek manuscripts and texts underlying the Reformation Bibles best represented by the KJV.

The Texts Underlying the KJV as Identified by the Trinitarian Bible Society

As a defender of the VPP of Scripture and the KJV, I praise the Lord for the Trinitarian Bible Society's latest position statement on the Bible as published in its *Quarterly Record*, April-June 2005. The TBS identifies and describes the underlying texts of the KJV as follows:

“The Trinitarian Bible Society Statement of Doctrine of the Holy Scripture” approved by the General Committee at its meeting held on 17th January 2005, and revised 25th February 2005 declares:

The Constitution of the Trinitarian Bible Society specifies the textual families to be employed in the translations it circulates. The Masoretic Hebrew and the Greek Received Texts are the texts that the Constitution of the Trinitarian Bible Society acknowledges to have been preserved by the *special* providence of God within Judaism and Christianity. Therefore these texts are *definitive* and the *final point* of reference in all the Society's work.

These texts of Scripture reflect the qualities of God-breathed Scripture, including being authentic, holy, pure, true, infallible, trustworthy, excellent, self-authenticating, necessary, sufficient, perspicuous, self-interpreting, authoritative and inerrant (Psalm 19:7-9, Psalm 119). They are consequently to be received as the Word of God (Ezra 7:14; Nehemiah 8:8; Daniel 9:2; 2 Peter 1:19) and the correct reading at any point is to be sought within these texts.

The Society accepts as the best edition of the Hebrew Masoretic text the one prepared in 1524–25 by Jacob ben Chayyim and known, after David Bomberg the publisher, as the Bomberg text. This text underlies the Old Testament in the Authorised Version.

The Greek Received Text is the name given to a group of printed texts, the first of which was published by Desiderius Erasmus in 1516. The Society believes that the latest and best edition is the text reconstructed by F.H.A. Scrivener in 1894. This text was reconstructed from the Greek underlying the New Testament of the Authorised Version.¹⁷

Amen!

Can the accusers fault the TBS for letting us know which texts have been preserved by the *special providence* of God and used by the TBS as its *final point of reference* in all its work? If they find fault, it may be because they want to paint VPP as merely a theory with no specific texts that can be found or identified in practice (i.e. in the real world). If VPP is destroyed or undermined by them, the immediately underlying original Hebrew and Greek apographs become of no consequence and it would then not matter if Christians use perverted modern versions since such versions can also claim to be ultimately traceable to the unavailable autographs. VPI without VPP can lead to the floodgate being opened for the inclusion of the heretical Gnostic gospels and perverted modern Bible versions.

The above TBS statement, similar to the *Preamble* I wrote in my booklet—*KJV: Questions and Answers*—published by Bible Witness Literature Ministry in 2003, is stricter and more definitive. The *Preamble* is reproduced in full below:

PREAMBLE

A Personal Affirmation of the 100% Inspiration and the 100% Preservation of the Original Language Scriptures Underlying the King James Version

- (1) I do believe in the divine, verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and as the Word of God, the Supreme and final authority in faith and life.
- (2) I do affirm the biblical doctrine of providential preservation that the inspired words of the Hebrew OT Scriptures and the Greek NT Scriptures are “kept pure in all ages” as taught by the Westminster Confession.
- (3) I do believe that the Texts which are *purest and closest* to the autographs of the Bible are the *Traditional Masoretic Hebrew Text of the Old Testament, and the Traditional Greek Text for the New Testament underlying the King James Version*.
- (4) I believe that the purity of God’s words has been *faithfully maintained in the Traditional/Byzantine/Majority/Received Text, and fully represented in the Textus Receptus that underlies the KJV*. Providential preservation is not static but *dynamic*.
- (5) I do believe that God’s providential preservation of the Scriptures concerns *not just the doctrines* but also *the very words* of Scripture to

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the jot and tittle (Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33, Rev 22:18-19).

- (6) I do not deny that other faithful Bible translations, including foreign language ones, that are based on other editions of the Textus Receptus can be deemed the Word of God.
- (7) I do believe that Scripture cannot contradict Scripture, and hence there can be no discrepancies in the Bible. All alleged discrepancies are **only apparent and not actual**. Principles of harmonisation should be employed to offer possible solutions, but calling such discrepancies “scribal errors” is not one.
- (8) ***I do not believe we need to improve on the TR underlying the KJV***. I do not want to play textual critic, and be a judge of God’s Word. I accept God’s ***special hand in His providential work of Bible preservation during the Reformation***.¹⁸

May the Reformation cry that is based on the ***Reformation Bible*** ring loud and clear today—not *Sola Autographa* but ***Sola Scriptura!***

“For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth” (2 Cor 13:8).

Notes

¹ James B Williams, ed, *From the Mind of God to the Mind of Man* (Greenville: Ambassador-Emerald, 1999); James B Williams and Randolph Shaylor, eds, *God’s Word in Our Hands* (Greenville: Ambassador-Emerald, 2003); Roy E Beacham and Kevin T Bauder, eds, *One Bible Only?* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001). For a review or critique of the above books, see Thomas Strouse and Jeffrey Khoo, *Reviews of the Book From the Mind of God to the Mind of Man* (Pensacola: Pensacola Theological Seminary, 2001); Jeffrey Khoo, “Bob Jones University and the KJV,” *The Burning Bush* 7 (2001): 1-34, “The Emergence of Neo-Fundamentalism: *One Bible Only?* or “Yea, Hath God Said?,” *The Burning Bush* 10 (2004): 2-47, “Bob Jones University, Neo-Fundamentalism, and Biblical Preservation,” *The Burning Bush* 11 (2005): 82-97; D A Waite, *Central Seminary Refuted on Bible Versions* (Collingswood: Bible For Today, 1999), *Bob Jones University’s Errors on Bible Preservation* (Collingswood: Bible For Today, 2006).

² Edward F Hills, *Believing Bible Study* (Des Moines: Christian Research Press, 1977), *The King James Version Defended* (Des Moines: Christian Research Press, 1984); Theodore P Letis, *Edward Freer Hills’s Contribution to the Revival of the Ecclesiastical Text* (Philadelphia: Institute for Renaissance and Reformation Biblical Studies, 1987).

³ David Otis Fuller, ed, *Which Bible?* (Grand Rapids: Institute for Biblical Textual Studies, 1975), *True or False?: The Westcott-Hort Textual Theory Examined* (Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids International Publications, 1983).

⁴ David Cloud, *For Love of the Bible* (Oak Harbor: Way of Life Literature, 1995), *Faith versus the Modern Bible Versions* (Port Huron: Way of Life Literature, 2005).

⁵ D A Waite, *Defending the King James Bible: A Four-fold Superiority* (Collingswood: Bible For Today, 1996).

⁶ Fuller, *Which Bible?*, 176-318.

⁷ D A Waite, S H Tow, D A Waite Jr, eds, *The Defined King James Bible* (Collingswood: Bible For Today, 2000).

⁸ See www.trinitarianbiblesociety.org.

⁹ “The NKJV would not be a good choice for use as a primary translation to be used daily ... In private use, numerous users of the AV who have attempted to change to the NKJV found that the NKJV lacked the trustworthiness which they had come to expect from the AV. The NKJV was not found to be a Bible in which they could put their trust.” G W Anderson and D E Anderson, *The New King James Version* (London: Trinitarian Bible Society, 1995).

¹⁰ See www.bibleleaguetrust.org.

¹¹ Alan J Macgregor, *Three Modern Versions: A Critical Assessment of the NIV, ESV and NKJV* (Wiltshire: The Bible League, 2004), 12-13.

¹² See Cloud, *For Love of the Bible*, 8.

¹³ “Statement of Doctrine of Holy Scripture,” *Trinitarian Bible Society Quarterly Record* 571 (April-June 2005): 6-14.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 8 (words in italics are mine).

¹⁵ Articles 4.2.1.1, 2, 3 of the “Constitution of True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church,” *The Burning Bush* 11 (2005): 99.

¹⁶ “Dr. B. B. Warfield was an outstanding defender of the orthodox Christian faith, so much so that one hesitates to criticize him in any way. Certainly no Bible-believing Christian would wish to say anything disrespectful concerning so venerable a Christian scholar. But nevertheless it is a fact that Dr. Warfield’s thinking was not entirely unified. Through his mind ran two separate trains of thought which not even he could join together. The one train of thought was dogmatic, going back to the Protestant Reformation. When following this train of thought Dr. Warfield regarded Christianity as true. The other train of thought was apologetic, going back to the rationalistic viewpoint of the 18th century. When following this train of thought Dr. Warfield regarded Christianity as merely probable. And this same divided outlook was shared by Dr. Warfield’s colleagues at Princeton Seminary and by conservative theologians and scholars generally throughout the 19th and early 20th century. Even today this split-level thinking is still a factor to be reckoned with in conservative circles, although in far too many instances it has passed over into modernism.” American

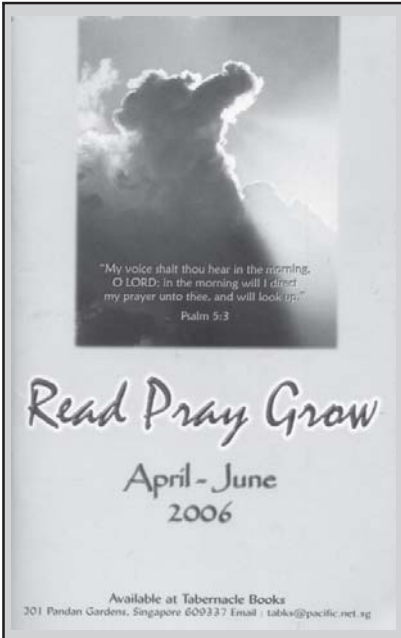
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Presbyterian Church (APC), “B. B. Warfield and the Reformation Doctrine of the Providential Preservation of the Biblical Text,” in www.americanpresbyterianchurch.org/preservation.htm, accessed on February 24, 2006. See also Edward F Hills, “A History of My Defence of the King James Version,” *The Burning Bush* 4 (1998): 99-105, and Theodore P Letis, “B. B. Warfield, Common Sense Philosophy and Biblical Criticism,” in *The Ecclesiastical Text* (Philadelphia: Institute for Renaissance and Reformation Biblical Studies, 1997), 1-29.

¹⁷ “Statement of Doctrine of Holy Scripture,” 10-11 (emphasis mine). For the complete document, go to www.trinitarianbiblesociety.com/site/qr/qr571.pdf.

¹⁸ Jeffrey Khoo, *KJV Questions and Answers* (Singapore: Bible Witness Literature, 2003), 6-7.

Rev Dr Jeffrey Khoo is the Academic Dean of Far Eastern Bible College, and an Elder of True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church.



RPG (Read, Pray & Grow) Daily Bible Reading Guide is published quarterly by the Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church in Singapore. Since 1982, the RPG has been helping Christians around the world to read God's Word regularly and meaningfully. Its writers are conservative Bible-believing pastor-teachers of fundamentalist persuasion, with a "high view" of Holy Scripture. The RPG uses the King James Version of the Holy Bible, the Bible of the Reformation, most loved and trustworthy, and a bulwark in the path of unbiblical ecumenical union.

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IN DEFENCE OF THE FAR EASTERN BIBLE COLLEGE, THE REFORMED FAITH, AND THE REFORMATION BIBLE

Jeffrey Khoo

Preamble

A so-called “Truth” website has launched an incredible offensive against the Far Eastern Bible College with this allegation:

The Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC) has abandoned the historic reformed faith for KJV-onlyism and the verbal plenary preservation (VPP) of scripture. They teach that the Greek and Hebrew texts were miraculously restored by the KJV translators in 1611 to be word-for-word identical with the original manuscripts (autographa). Consequently, the FEBC has inadvertently joined the Charismatic movement in promoting progressive revelation and post-canonical inspiration.

As FEBC’s academic dean, let me rebut this highly ingenious and craftily-worded statement aimed at maligning not just FEBC, but also the Biblical and reformed doctrine of VPP and the faithful defence of the Reformation Bible (the KJV and its underlying inspired words in the original languages) over against the many neo-evangelical and ecumenical modern English versions that are based on the corrupt Westcott-Hort text (with its many missing verses and words).

100% Inspiration and 100% Preservation

God forbid that FEBC should abandon the Biblical Reformed Faith. Rather we reaffirm and call for a return to the Biblical Reformed Faith of *Sola Scriptura* in this 21st century of rampant unbelief and compromise not just in the evangelical but also the fundamentalist world.

FEBC reaffirms the Biblical Reformed Faith by believing that our faith must be based solely and squarely on *the Scriptures and the Scriptures alone*. Our faith and beliefs are not based on church traditions, human opinions, or personal experiences but only on the *forever* infallible

and inerrant Word of God. In Article 4 of the FEBC Constitution, we declare in no uncertain terms, “The Statement of Faith of the College shall be in accordance with that system commonly called ‘the Reformed Faith’ as expressed in the Confession of Faith as set forth by the historic Westminster Assembly together with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.” As regards the Doctrine of Scripture, “*We believe in the divine, Verbal Plenary Inspiration (Autographs) and Verbal Plenary Preservation (Apographs) of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and as the perfect Word of God, the supreme and final authority in faith and life (2 Tim 3:16, 2 Pet 1:20-21, Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35).*”

This is our restatement and reaffirmation of the Westminster Confession of Faith (I:8) which declares, “The Old Testament in Hebrew ... and the New Testament in Greek ... being immediately inspired by God, and, by *His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical; so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them.*” The Reformed Faith believes in the absolute sovereignty and faithfulness of God in keeping His Word to His people, that He is in complete control of the events of history and world affairs, and that He can intervene miraculously at any point in time to fulfil His prophecies and His promises.

It is clear in our writings that when we speak of the special and supernatural preservation of the Scriptures, we are speaking of it in terms of *God’s work*—not man’s. This is in line with the Westminster Confession of Faith which states that the preservation of the Scriptures is by “*His singular care and providence.*” It is therefore utterly misleading to say that we “teach that the Greek and Hebrew texts were *miraculously restored by the KJV translators in 1611.*” If the inspired Greek and Hebrew texts were restored miraculously it was *not by the King James translators but by the singular care and providence of God and God alone during the special period of divine intervention in the Great Protestant Reformation.* God has preserved His words pure throughout the ages and is preserving His words pure today, but there was a high point in His Biblical preservation work in the days of the Reformation. It is God who does miracles, not man, and He still works miracles today according to His sovereign will and time. According to Church historian Philip Schaff, “The Reformation of the 16th Century, is next to the introduction of Christianity, *the greatest event in history.*” Just as the Lord

Jesus Christ came miraculously in “the fulness of the time” (Gal 4:4), so did the Reformation. In light of Biblical precedents and Divine providence (*providentia extraordinaria*), the Protestant Reformation was a “miracle event” from God.

Special Providence and the Reformation

Could God have restored for His Church all of His inspired and preserved words in the days of the Reformation? As the all-powerful God, He certainly could, and by faith we believe He surely did. Just as He restored the Old Covenant words of His Decalogue through His servant Moses (Exod 19:16-21:26, 31:18-32:28, 34:1-4; Deut 5:1-29, 9:20-21, 10:1-5), and all His words in the scroll which Jehoiakim cut up and burned (Jer 36:1-32), so we believe the Lord has similarly done for His New Testament words which have been kept pure in the Traditional and Majority manuscripts and are now found in the Printed Text of the Protestant Reformation—the time-tested and time-honoured Textus Receptus underlying the KJV. FEBC simply does not see the need for any kind of textual critical work today. As far as we are concerned, we have not only a *fixed and firm Canon (books) but also a fixed and firm Text (words)* we can call “the very Word of God,” infallible, inerrant, authentic, and absolutely authoritative. We believe that such a position is most necessary if we are to weather and survive the onslaughts of postmodernism, pop-modernism, open theism, and neo-deism that threaten the church today.

(It is absurd for anti-KJV/VPPists to suggest that FEBC has “joined the Charismatic movement in promoting progressive revelation and post-canonical inspiration,” whether advertently or inadvertently. Again, this is another attempt to caricature our position. We are quite aware of the hermeneutical and theological fallacies of Charismatism. See my book *Charismatism Q&A*.)

FEBC reaffirms the Biblical Reformed Faith by promoting and defending the Reformed doctrine of the *Special Providential Preservation* (also known as the Verbal Plenary Preservation) of the Scriptures, and the *Reformation Text* on which the Authorised King James Bible is based. As a College founded by the Rev Dr Timothy Tow, father of the Bible-Presbyterian (B-P) movement in Southeast Asia, FEBC is committed to defending the King James Bible which has been the official and only English Bible of the B-P denomination in Singapore since its founding in 1950.

KJV Versus Modern Versions

While a small number of B-P churches have replaced the KJV with the NIV or the NKJV, a good number still hold firmly onto the good old KJV and welcome no attempts to replace it with the newer and modern versions. Although FEBC had in the past used the Westcott/Hort-based United Bible Societies' corrupt and critical Greek text, it is now using the traditional and preserved Greek New Testament underlying the KJV (Scrivener's Textus Receptus) as published by the Dean Burgon Society and the Trinitarian Bible Society. This switch from the Westcott-Hort Text to the Textus Receptus was a result of an intensive and systematic study of the writings of J W Burgon (Anglican), E F Hills (Presbyterian), D A Waite (Baptist), and the Trinitarian Bible Society since 1992. We were saved from ignorance, and are now fully committed to the Biblical doctrine of the divine, verbal and plenary preservation of the God-breathed Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words of Scripture underlying the Reformation Bibles best represented by the KJV. Articles 4.2.1.1, 2, and 3 of the FEBC Constitution state:

We believe the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament underlying the Authorised (King James) Version to be the very Word of God, infallible and inerrant.

We uphold the Authorised (King James) Version to be the Word of God—the best, most faithful, most accurate, most beautiful translation of the Bible in the English language, and do employ it alone as our primary scriptural text in the public reading, preaching, and teaching of the English Bible. [Note that although we use only the KJV, we are *not* “KJV-only” in the *Ruckmanite* sense, which is clearly seen in our writings.]

The Board of Directors and Faculty shall affirm their allegiance to the Word of God by taking the Dean Burgon Oath at every annual convocation: “I swear in the Name of the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit that I believe ‘the Bible is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth upon the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, every syllable of it, every letter of it, is the direct utterance of the Most High. The Bible is none other than the Word of God, not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike the utterance of Him that sitteth upon the throne, faultless, unerring, supreme.’”

FEBC reaffirms the Biblical Reformed Faith by encouraging the accurate translation of foreign language Bibles according to the Reformation Text underlying the KJV. Although FEBC, as an English-

speaking school, believes that the KJV is the only Bible it should use in the public preaching and teaching of the English Bible, it does not despise nor prohibit the use of Bibles in other languages. At FEBC, we have students from 16 countries, and we do not at all discourage them from reading their Bibles in their own native tongues. We only advise them to use the best, most accurate, most reliable version they have in their native language, and to go back to the inspired and preserved original language Scriptures which we identify to be those behind the faithful KJV and not the corrupt modern versions to check for accuracy and fulness of meaning. As far as English Bibles go, we believe the KJV to be the best English version of the Bible today, and for very good reasons.

We believe, as the Westminster divines did, that the Holy Scriptures “are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, that, the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship Him in an acceptable manner; and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.” Divinity and theology students of FEBC are required to study the original languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek) so that they might be faithful and careful expositors and translators of the whole counsel of God. A number of our degree graduates have completed their thesis projects involving work on their native language Bibles so as to make them closer and more accurate to the Reformation Text. Thus far, work has been done on the following foreign language Bibles by our students: Chinese, Falam Chin (Myanmar), Bahasa Indonesia, Kiswahili (Kenya), Kalenjin (Kenya), and Vietnamese.

Non-Issues

FEBC is aware that there are certain VPP and KJV defenders who differ with FEBC over the absolute certainty as regards the underlying texts or words. But as long as they (1) maintain VPP in the lineage of Byzantine/Majority manuscripts and the Textus Receptus, and (2) reject the corrupt Alexandrian/Minority manuscripts or Westcott-Hort Text, and (3) deny that there are scribal errors in places where there are absolutely none in the verbally preserved texts/words in the original languages, these slight differences of opinion over the verbally preserved texts/words among KJV defenders should remain as non-issues as we focus on our common goal to promote the best Text and the best Version for the Church today based on the Biblical doctrine of the special providential preservation of Scripture (or VPP).

Using FEBC and its location as an analogy, all VPP and KJV defenders would say that FEBC exists (ie, we have an infallible and inerrant Bible in the original languages today). But if the question is asked, “Where is FEBC?” We at FEBC would answer, “FEBC is at 9A Gilstead Road” (ie, the infallible and inerrant Scripture is in the KJV edition of the Textus Receptus). Others might answer, “FEBC is in the Newton area” (ie, in the Byzantine/Majority/Received family of texts). If such be the case, then I believe there should be mutual respect and cooperation between the two slightly differing but agreeable positions.

Autographs, Apographs, and Authority

Another unfortunate statement cleverly phrased to put the doctrine of VPP, and the defence of the KJV and its underlying texts in a bad light, is one produced by a group of eleven Bible-Presbyterian (B-P) pastors as published in the Life B-P Church Weekly on September 25, 2005, which states,

We, the undersigned Bible-Presbyterian ministers, wholeheartedly believe and affirm that the inspired Word of God has absolutely no error in the Original Autographs. However, we reject the theory of Verbal Plenary Preservation propounded by some, who dogmatically claim that the Greek and Hebrew copies immediately underlying the King James Version are an exact replica of the Original Autographs. This insistent promotion of this theory has resulted in schism among brethren.

If the above statement is true that *only* the Autographs are absolutely without error, would it then be correct to say that the eleven pastors *do not believe that they do have* in their possession a 100% infallible and inerrant Bible today without any mistake, seeing that they believe only the *non-existent* and *intangible* “Original Autographs” to be the absolutely inerrant Word of God? If this be so, may we ask them, by what existing infallible and inerrant authority do they base their faith and practice, when they reject and do not embrace our belief in an existing infallible Scripture that is without any mistake?

It must be added that the words used by our detractors like “theory,” “dogmatically,” “exact replica,” and “schism” are attempts to give a distorted perception of VPP and its adherents. Without the context, and the necessary qualifications and clarifications, the above words make those who believe in VPP, who are committed to the Hebrew Masoretic Text and Greek Textus Receptus and the preserved Hebrew and Greek

words underlying the KJV, look like extreme and unreasonable people. It must be underscored that we at FEBC have no issue with those who affirm the present infallibility and inerrancy of the Scriptures in the *family of uncorrupted Traditional, Byzantine, Majority, and Received Hebrew and Greek apographs* God has providentially and specially preserved, but, without denying inerrancy, are uncertain about *some of the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words immediately underlying* the KJV.

A minister in the group of eleven who resigned from the FEBC was in fact asked on September 23, 2003, in the presence of Rev Dr Timothy Tow and certain elders at the Parsonage, to confirm or harmonise his belief in a Perfect Bible existing within the family of uncorrupted texts by denying that scribal errors exist in certain passages of the KJV, as all extant Hebrew manuscripts—and not only the Hebrew manuscripts/texts “immediately” underlying the KJV—point to the KJV translators translating the original language texts in 2 Kings 8:26 and 2 Chronicles 22:2 correctly. Pointing to attempts at emending what he regards as scribal errors to be contrary to all Hebrew manuscript evidence and to be positing that God has failed to preserve all of His inspired, inerrant and infallible words within the family of texts, the minister kept mum. I had invited him back to the FEBC faculty if he would agree to change his view and affirm the present perfection of Scripture. It was no surprise that he did not take to my offer as he had joined others in attacking the use of key Scripture verses such as Matthew 5:18, 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33 and Psalm 12:6-7 cited by VPPists to support special providential preservation or VPP.

The real issue seems to lie with detractors who claim to be preserving godly paths when they do not even believe in all the inspired words of God being verbally and plenary preserved, either within the family of Traditional and Preserved Texts or in the Hebrew OT and Greek NT words immediately underlying the KJV. Even worse, such detractors appear to be vacillating or changing in their beliefs so that VPPists are unsure where they actually stand on the issues.

Theory or Doctrine?

Anti-VPPists say that VPP is a “theory.” How is it a “theory” if it is taught explicitly in the Scriptures? A theory has no biblical basis, but the VPP of Scripture is hardly a “theory,” for it is clearly taught in the following biblical passages:

IN DEFENCE OF THE FAR EASTERN BIBLE COLLEGE

Psalm 12:6-7—The words of the LORD [are] pure words: [as] silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. ***Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.***

Psalm 33:11—***The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever***, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

Psalm 78:1-7—Give ear, O my people, [to] my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide [them] from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should ***make them known to their children***: That the generation to come might know [them, even] the children [which] should be born; [who] should arise and ***declare [them] to their children***: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

Psalm 100:5—For the LORD [is] good; his mercy [is] everlasting; and ***his truth [endureth] to all generations.***

Psalm 105:8—He hath remembered his covenant ***for ever***, the word [which] he commanded ***to a thousand generations.***

Psalm 111:7-8—The works of his hands [are] verity and judgment; ***all his commandments [are] sure. They stand fast for ever and ever***, [and are] done in truth and uprightness.

Psalm 117:2—For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and ***the truth of the LORD [endureth] for ever.*** Praise ye the LORD.

Psalm 119:89—***For ever***, O LORD, ***thy word is settled*** in heaven.

Psalm 119:152—Concerning ***thy testimonies***, I have known of old that thou hast ***founded them for ever.***

Psalm 119:160—Thy word [is] true [from] the beginning: and every one of ***thy righteous judgments [endureth] for ever.***

Isaiah 40:8—The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but ***the word of our God shall stand for ever.***

Isaiah 59:21—As for me, this [is] ***my covenant*** with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that [is] upon thee, and ***my words*** which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, ***from henceforth and for ever.***

Matthew 4:4—But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

Matthew 5:17-18—Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, *one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass* from the law, till all be fulfilled.

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

John 10:35—If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and *the scripture cannot be broken;*

1 Peter 1:23-25—Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of *incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* For all flesh [is] as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But *the word of the Lord endureth for ever.* And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

Is not VPP a biblical doctrine? Surely it is! Every believer—young or old, man or woman, rich or poor, unlearned or educated, Jew or Gentile—by *simple, childlike faith* in God’s forever infallible and inerrant words written above—can say “Amen” to the truth that God has indeed preserved His inspired words, and every one of them to the last iota!

Where are the Inspired and Preserved Words?

Now if we have all of God’s inspired words preserved for us today, then the question is where precisely? *The logic of faith based on the Biblical doctrine of VPP would lead us to the inspired Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words that God has specially and providentially preserved in the traditional and majority manuscripts, and in the printed received texts underlying the Reformation Bibles which God has continuously and supernaturally kept pure throughout the ages without any loss of any of the inspired words and always available to His people even up till the present, which are today fully represented by the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures underlying the KJV which we have in our hands today.*

Are these Hebrew and Greek Scriptures underlying the KJV an “exact replica” of the autographs? If by “exact replica” is meant the

miraculous reproduction of the exact tablets of stone of the Ten Commandments, or the very first or original papyri or parchments the prophets and apostles wrote on, the answer would of course be no. It is absurd and ridiculous to even suggest this. The original autographs have perished, but the inspired *words* of God remain and continue to exist. VPP is speaking of the *preservation of the words* that God had originally breathed out and inscripturated in the Biblical Canon, and *not the preservation of the materials*—the clay tables, or papyri, or parchments. As I had explained in my first paper, *A Plea for a Perfect Bible*, “The *paper* may be different, but the *contents* [or *words*] are the same.” These inspired *words* are preserved in *all ages*, and not only from 1611. Let me remind VPP detractors that my book is entitled *Kept Pure in All Ages*, and not *Kept Pure Since 1611*.

Faith or Criticism?

We do believe that the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words “immediately” underlying the KJV are the *fully* inspired and *fully* preserved words of God. As such we do not believe there is a need for any kind of textual criticism today. The so-called “science” of textual criticism is intrinsically *subjective and speculative* (since the autographs which no true evangelical or fundamentalist doubts are “absolute and perfect in every way” have long perished and are no longer existing). As such, we feel that modern textual criticism that employs rationalistic rules of human intellect and imagination feeds on the pride and vanity of sinful beings who wish to place themselves above the almighty and infinite God and His infallible and inerrant promises, who presumptuously arrogate themselves as critics and correctors of His Word or words, and by their “conjectural emendations” are conceited enough to think they are doing God and His Church a service.

If textual critics are so certain there is no perfect Bible today (and even castigate those that do), and are so sure of their ability and prowess to correct God’s words, then why cannot they produce one for us by now? Yea, we demand such a Bible from the high and mighty scholars of our modern age. Why cannot they produce it? We want to be absolutely certain about our Book on which we defend our faith and preach the good news of Jesus Christ. When can we have it? Are they conscientiously working towards the perfection of their Bible? Yet they castigate the saints who believe they already have a 100% infallible and inerrant Bible

in their hands today, and call them “fools,” “schismatics,” even “heretics!”

Distortions and Misrepresentations

Is the statement against the VPP of Scriptures produced by the group of eleven a fair representation of FEBC’s VPP position? By no means! Misrepresentation of the VPP position has been the consistent *modus operandi* of anti-VPP advocates. Instead of defending their non-VPP position from the Bible (until now, they have not quoted any scripture to support their position), they have resorted always to caricaturing, distorting and misrepresenting FEBC’s position in various ways, including saying or alluding to it as Ruckmanism, SDAism, and even Charismaticism! It seems that they have to resort to such tactics in order to make their case against those who believe in the present perfection of the Bible. We do not know who among the group of eleven crafted or was instrumental in the crafting of the anti-VPP statement issued by the group. However, we know that one of the chief opponents of VPP had taught and published that a lie of necessity may be told in times of war.

If the group of eleven would rephrase their statement in the manner below, it would be a more accurate representation of what we believe and what they reject,

We, the undersigned Bible-Presbyterian ministers, wholeheartedly believe and affirm that the inspired Word of God has absolutely no error in the Original Autographs which the VPP fundamentalists also believe without equivocation. However, we reject their belief in the Verbal Plenary Preservation (as taught in Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33, 1 Pet 1:23-25), and that all the inspired Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words of the original apographs (ie, copies) underlying the King James Version are precisely the preserved words of the original autographs.

Now we do not consider as enemies those who might not hold to our position exactly as regards the words in the uncorrupted and preserved Traditional/Majority/Byzantine/Received family of manuscripts or texts but nevertheless *deny any discrepancy, contradiction or mistake in the Bible*, and are *against Westcott and Hort and the modern versions*. We are not as “dogmatic” as our detractors paint us out to be; there is definitely *charity* in our defence of the KJV and its underlying texts, *not at the expense of truth but on the basis of truth*. Charity was indeed displayed in a proposed but unpublished statement, “A Plea for a Perfect Bible Again

so as to Preserve Our Godly Path,” that sought peace and reconciliation, but was spurned by the powers that be on April 16, 2003.

Textual Issue and Separation

The group of eleven is a mixed group with differing views on the versions issue, who appear to see no need to defend the KJV or its underlying texts, or to warn against writers who deny the present infallibility and inerrancy of the original language Scriptures, who are decidedly anti-TR and anti-KJV, pro-Westcott/Hort and pro-modern-versions. They have been quick to find fault with FEBC’s defence of the KJV and its underlying texts, but not quick to refute the public attacks made by Bob Jones University (BJU) and Central Baptist Theological Seminary (CBTS) against the biblical doctrine of the special providential preservation (or VPP) of Scripture, the KJV and its underlying texts.

In fact, they have been actively promoting those books and cultivating the friendship of such institutions, and quoting them against FEBC. Why? Does this not contradict the biblical injunction of 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 to separate from disobedient brethren? For enlightenment, see Charles Seet’s excellent paper on “The Principle of Secondary Separation,” in *The Burning Bush* (January 1996). The Rev Charles Seet, now the pastor of Life B-P Church, had also written an excellent expose of Westcott and Hort entitled, “The Inside Story of Westcott and Hort,” published in *The Burning Bush* (January 1998). Is the group of eleven B-P pastors now calling Westcott and Hort “friends,” and KJV/TR defenders “enemies?” Why are they attacking their very own school—FEBC—which stoutly defends the KJV and its underlying texts, and the doctrine of VPP which undergirds and safeguards the KJV and its underlying texts? Why are they taking sides with institutions like BJU and CBTS which promote Westcott and Hort and the modern perversions?

Charity or Schism?

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3). When differences arise, a splitting of ways may be inevitable. In a split, should one applaud the party who is more charitable? Or should one accuse one of the parties of schism when it takes two parties to disagree in order to split?

The statement by the group of eleven accuses VPP believers of causing schism. Can such an accusation be fair when these have chosen to follow our God-appointed, faithful and elderly pastor in the Rev Dr Timothy Tow who had given over to his detractors the very Life B-P Church the Lord had used him to found, build and pastor for over 50 years, to start a new church from scratch?

In the August 1, 2004 Weekly of True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, the Rev Dr Timothy Tow wrote in his "Pastoral Chat" page:

**The Truth How We Are Now Become True Life
Bible-Presbyterian Church**

In Vol. I No. 43 of our Weekly dated 25 July 2004 last week it was reported "The new name of our Church is gazetted True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church." How have we now become True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church began like this.

At a Faculty Meeting [29 October 02] of Far Eastern Bible College Rev Colin Wong and Rev Charles Seet my two Assistant Pastors at Life B-P Church declared they could no longer take the Dean Burgon Oath of swearing allegiance to the Bible to be without mistake to the last syllable and letter. They said they had discovered some mistakes but these did not affect doctrine and were not serious.

Since this College has required absolute allegiance to the Bible since the seventies I gladly let them resign.

In order to protect the good name of FEBC I declared the Bible to be 100% perfect without any mistake.

As the Session of Life B-P Church took their side it turned out I had to resign from the Church to stand for a 100% Perfect Bible without mistake.

In the first week of October 03 the Lord provided us an Auditorium of RELC, situated near to Shangri-La Hotel, and under the name of FEBC we launched out as FEBC Lord's Day Service at RELC. We took time to apply for registration as Word of Life or alternative True Life.

Since there is a Christian organisation already registered, the authorities let us use True Life and gazetted it as reported 25 July 04 last week.

Doctrine in the belief of a 100% Perfect Bible without any mistake and doctrine of belief in a Bible with some mistakes but not serious since they don't touch doctrine resulted in our leaving Life B-P Church to start this service since first week of October 03. Now there are 300 worshipping at RELC and we have booked with RELC for another year.

This is the truth how it all started.



Dean Burgon Oath

I swear in the Name of the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit that I believe “the Bible is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth upon the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, every syllable of it, every letter of it, is the direct utterance of the Most High. The Bible is none other than the Word of God, not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike the utterance of Him that sitteth upon the throne, faultless, unerring, supreme.” So help me God, AMEN.

Was not Jesus treated in the same way by His hometown Nazareth? “For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country” (John 4:44). Pastor Tow did not desert his flock as some maliciously accuse him of. On the contrary, it was his session that had rejected him in favour of his two assistant pastors who had resigned from FEBC because they could no longer take the Dean Burgon Oath. Humbly and meekly, in the face of many unjust accusations (see “Summary of Facts” in the Life B-P Church Weekly, September 24, 2003) hurled at him non-stop, he departed to found a new church to take a stand for the present infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture he was forbidden to take at the old church. As far as FEBC is concerned, we the current faculty and students do appreciate our principal and teacher—Timothy Tow—very much, and are thankful to God that he remains ever fervent and faithful to His Master even in such difficult and oppressive moments.

To the Glory of God Alone

In the spirit of its founder—the Rev Dr Timothy Tow—we at FEBC want to train God’s people to become faithful saints and servants, not

puffed-up scholars and usurpers. Why so? The infallible and inerrant words written by the Apostle Paul 2,000 years ago ring true even today,

Because *the foolishness of God is wiser than men*; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise*; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, ***He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord*** (1 Cor 1:25-31).

In his defence of VPP and the KJV, the Rev Dr Timothy Tow has always reminded us of this infallible principle of faith and ministry which is ***the glory of God***, quoting the Lord's forever infallible and inerrant words in Isaiah 42:8 and Jeremiah 9:23-24:

Isaiah 42:8—I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another.

Jeremiah 9:23-24—Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgement, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

We are quite happy to sing the words of Martin Luther,

*Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still—
His kingdom is forever.*

Sola Scriptura! Soli Deo Gloria!

Rev Dr Jeffrey Khoo is the Academic Dean of the Far Eastern Bible College, and an Elder of True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church.

THE BATTLE FOR THE KING JAMES BIBLE IN THE BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

S H Tow

History Teaches Vital Lessons

For 56 years, ever since the founding of the Bible-Presbyterian Church, I have grown with the Church, and observed (as well as played a part in) the unrelenting and mounting conflict over the use of Bible Versions.

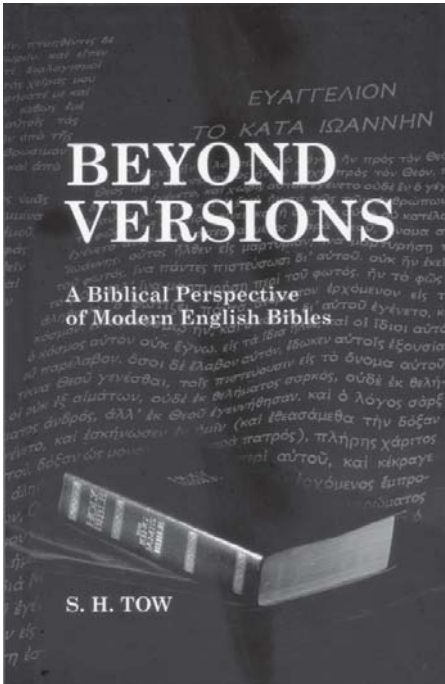
From the day of its founding in 1950, the King James Bible (KJB) has been our Bible, the one Bible which we held to be the Word of God. To me, this was a crucial issue, to be able to substantiate our Doctrine (Constitution 4.2.1) that “We believe in the divine, verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and, as the Word of God, the Supreme and final authority in faith and life,” with a tangible BOOK.

By the 1970s, our Presbytery and Synod meetings had become the battleground of Bible Versions. We began to witness a rising chorus of voices from certain of the younger members, calling for the introduction of Modern English Versions. For the first time the KJB’s unchallenged supremacy in our B-P Church came under attack.

I witnessed the attempts to dislodge the KJB from year to year, gathering support in numbers and strength. By 1988, this and other contentious issues, came to “breaking point.” While not the only issue, the conflict over the KJB was an important factor leading to the disintegration of the B-P Synod in 1988.

From that time, several B-P Churches abandoned the KJB to adopt Modern English Versions. This was a crucial turning point, signaling their slide into the Ecumenical stream. Calvary held fast, unmoved and faithful to our first love for the beloved KJB.

Beyond Versions—Why I Wrote It



While I led our Calvary group of churches, steadfastly holding to the KJB as the answer to our Constitution 4.2.1, the Lord laid on my heart to investigate the grounds for our belief that it was only the KJB which could be held up as God’s Word in English.

After years of study, prayer, and research, the Spirit led me to write *Beyond Versions*. At that time the attack on “Bible Preservation” had not erupted openly, so the thrust of my book was merely to demonstrate, beyond reasonable doubt, that only one English version, the KJB fulfilled all the criteria of a BOOK that could be regarded as

GOD’S WORD, and without mistake since it is a very accurate and faithful translation of God’s inspired and preserved words in the “original languages.”

In the process I have demonstrated beyond doubt, that the KJB is what it is, because its source texts, the OT Masoretic Text and the NT Textus Receptus, have been divinely preserved through the ages. This is VPP implied.

Readers are urged to read *Beyond Versions*. Here I shall merely present some excerpts which are fully in support of the much discussed VPP doctrine and the KJB (both of which are under fierce attack at this time).

Excerpts from *Beyond Versions* (BV)

Quote: “This Gospel offer is revealed to us, complete and perfect, through one Bible, the King James Bible (KJB) or Authorised Version” (BV, 21). The King James Bible is God’s greatest gift, the Crowning Gem

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of the Sixteenth Century Reformation; the Light which shattered a thousand years of a dark system; the Bulwark of “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3); the Rock of Defence against counterfeit Christianity; the mighty Sword of the Spirit which spells doom to the Father of lies. For over three centuries, this Book reigned supreme, the one faithful, authoritative, unique and accurate translation into English of the wholly and verbally inspired and preserved, inerrant, infallible, Hebrew and Greek words of God.

“Satan hates the King James Bible” (BV, 22). His diabolical genius conceived a dark scheme: the King James Bible must be replaced! False teachers will bring forth corrupted Modern English Versions harbouring another message, “preaching another Jesus ... another spirit ... another gospel ...” (2 Cor 11:4), “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light ... his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness” (2 Cor 11:14-15).

The Texts: These were the best manuscripts—the Masoretic Hebrew Old Testament Text and the Received Greek New Testament Text (Textus Receptus). These were accurate and preserved copies of the inspired, inerrant, infallible Scriptures handed down by the Jews of the Old Testament and by the saints of the New Testament. They were carefully copied by their custodians. “These accurate copies (apographs) were in the possession of the faithful church up to the time of the Reformation and accepted by Protestant scholars as the most accurate and closest to the originals (autographs)” (BV, 46).

What need we say more? God’s greatest gift of the Sixteenth Century Reformation has lost none of its light and truth. Preserving perfectly each and every doctrine of Scripture, it stands unrivalled—the greatest translation of all time (BV, 47). God’s people may find complete safety and security in the Hebrew Masoretic Text, the Greek Textus Receptus and “the KJB, God’s Preserved Prescription—inerrant, infallible, authoritative” (BV, 130).

Both *Beyond Versions* and the “VPP doctrine” tell one story: that God has perfectly preserved all the words in the “MSS” (manuscripts or apographs) from which comes the KJB, the only English translation that reflects the perfectly inspired and preserved Word of God in the original languages, “inerrant, infallible, and without mistake.”

Beyond Versions supports VPP.

Gospel Safeguard: VPP

Reader, pray as you ponder on this “12-point Statement,” a statement which will lead us into “green pastures and still waters.”

1. All true sons of the Reformation believe: “The just shall live by faith and faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom 1:17; 10:17). Stated another way, “We are born again of the incorruptible word of God, which word endureth for ever and by it the gospel is preached” (1 Pet 1:23, 25).
2. As true sons of the Reformation we believe that God’s Word which is incorruptible and endureth for ever is equally “inerrant” (without mistake) and “infallible” (incapable of making mistake).
3. Since its founding the Bible-Presbyterian Church has written into its Constitution belief in the inerrant and infallible Word of God (Article 4.2.1): “We believe in the divine, verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and, as the Word of God, the Supreme and final authority in faith and life.”
4. In this “article of faith” the “Scriptures in the original languages” refer to the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words in the autographs (which over time and with “wear and tear” are no longer in existence) and the apographs (which are the continuously preserved and uncorrupted copies of the autographs, presently existing, accessible, and identifiable).
5. The Scriptures we use today are the King James Version (KJV, KJB), the time-honoured and beloved Bible of the Reformation. Whenever we refer to our Constitution 4.2.1, we hold up the KJV or KJB as God’s Word, “inerrant and infallible” precisely because it is *derived* from the original language Scriptures that God has verbally and plenary inspired.
6. By the fruit we know the tree: the KJB is the “fruit” derived from the “tree” the “source texts” or “MSS” (manuscripts). We believe that God’s inerrant and infallible Word, as represented by the KJB had been *derived* from totally inerrant and infallible source texts or “MSS” or “Apographs” (copies of the Autographs).
7. Question: Can we identify these texts?
8. Answer: Absolutely. Our great God did not leave Himself without witness, but preserved perfectly a body of MSS: the Masoretic

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Hebrew Old Testament Text and the Received Greek New Testament Text (Textus Receptus). From these perfectly preserved copies of God's inspired, inerrant, infallible Scriptures, is *derived* our KJB.

9. What is "VPP"? "V" is "Verbal," meaning "word for word" (Websters Dictionary). "P" is "Plenary," meaning "complete or absolute" (Websters Dictionary). "P" is "Preservation" meaning "kept from corruption or error."
10. "VPP of Scripture" refers to the supernatural and special providential care of God over the ages (Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter I, VIII; see also Ps 12:6,7; Matt 5:18, 24:35; 1 Pet 1:25), safeguarding the transmission of the MSS by scribes or copyists, so that the body of texts (Masoretic Hebrew OT and Received Greek NT) has been kept pure as the "good tree" giving us the "good fruit," the KJB.
11. As the attacks on God's Word increase in intensity, God's faithful remnant people also increase and intensify in their loyalty to God's Word without which the Gospel's entire foundation would collapse.
12. The inspired and preserved Word of God for the Bible-Presbyterian Church is upheld by a "threefold cord" which cannot be broken, namely: (i) Constitution 4.2.1, (ii) the VPP of God's Word, (iii) the KJB, the Reformation Bible.

Mark these words: The present attack on the VPP will lead ultimately to a denial and betrayal of the KJB. This is a prediction worth watching. God bless all readers with spiritual discernment.

Dr S H Tow is the author of Beyond Versions and the contributing editor of the Defined King James Bible. He serves as Senior Pastor of the Calvary group of Bible-Presbyterian Churches (Jurong, Pandan, Tengah) and Truth Bible-Presbyterian Church; and is advisory/supervisory pastor of Ebenezer Bible-Presbyterian Church (Melbourne), Sydney Bible-Presbyterian Church, Vancouver Bible-Presbyterian Church, Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church (Toronto), New Life Bible-Presbyterian Church (London), Chinese Christian Church of Saipan, and Calvary Reformed Presbyterian Church (Colombo, Sri Lanka).

IS THE PRESERVATION OF SCRIPTURE A DOCTRINE WORTH DYING FOR?

Michael Koech

Faith and the Bible

Jesus said, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev 2:10).¹

The Christian Faith is founded upon the Holy Scriptures. God gave the Church a library of 66 books as His Sacred Word. The Holy Bible comprising the Old and New Testaments was written by more than 40 authors over a period of 1,500 years in three different languages. Christ is the preeminent person in the Bible. His name occurs no less than 770 times. Christians live by this Book. When believers are baptised and are received into church membership, they are expected to believe that the Bible is the very Word of God and the words therein are perfect and true.

Inspiration and Preservation

Since the Lord has given us these Scriptures by divine inspiration (2 Tim 3:16), it follows that they must be divinely preserved if they are to accomplish their intended purpose throughout the ages. The Lord Jesus Christ made a promise to this effect, “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Matt 5:18). This is the classic text on the preservation of the Bible for it extends to the minute details of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. He also said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matt 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33). These and other references show us that the doctrine of preservation has been there since the Bible was written. Unfortunately it is absent in modern theological books. Nevertheless, there are sufficient evidences to show that Protestant and Reformed theology has always believed in the special providential preservation of the Bible.

Thomas Watson in his book—*A Body of Divinity*—first published in 1672, said this about Biblical preservation:

We may know the Scripture to be the Word of God by its miraculous preservation in all ages. The holy Scriptures are the richest jewel that Christ has left us; and the church of God has so kept these public records of heaven, that they have not been lost. The Word of God has never wanted enemies to oppose, and, if possible, to extirpate it. They have given out a law concerning Scripture, as Pharaoh did the midwives, concerning the Hebrew women's children, to strangle it in the birth; but God has preserved this blessed Book inviolable to this day. The devil and his agents have been blowing at Scripture light, but could never blow it out; a clear sign that it was lighted from heaven. Nor has the church of God, in all revolutions and changes, kept the Scripture that it should not be lost only, but that it should not be depraved. The letter of Scripture has been preserved, without any corruption, in the original tongue. The Scriptures were not corrupted before Christ's time, for then Christ would not have sent the Jews to them. He said, 'Search the Scriptures.' He knew these sacred springs were not muddied with human fancies.²

It is noted that in this paragraph, Watson used the word “preserve” or “preservation” three times. The inerrancy of the Bible is commonly held by true believers, and it must be added that the Bible is inerrant precisely because it has been preserved. As it exists today in many human languages it was divinely inspired in the original autographs, and then divinely preserved in the apographs or copies in the original languages. For centuries these were copied by hand until the invention of the printing press, which coincided with the global movement of the Protestant Reformation. By God's special providence the Scriptures have been supernaturally preserved and passed down from generation to generation in the copies.

Translations

When the church was revived after the darkness of the Middle Ages, Christians began to see the need for translating the Bible into different languages so that all could read the Bible for themselves. This was the position taken by the Westminster Confession of Faith. So while the drafters of the Confession believed in divine inspiration and God's particular care and providence to keep the inspired words pure, they also believed that translations could convey the truth of the original. When they penned the statement they did not foresee the controversy that would

arise many years later. But as truth does not change, their words are relevant today as they were when they were first written. A modern author has added his voice to this doctrine with these words,

God gave His word ... in Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic. God preserved the Bible down through the centuries through dedicated copyists who meticulously copied it by hand. God's Word was preserved both in manuscript form and in the early commentaries on the Bible. Further, the Bible was preserved through its translation into the languages of the common people. Thus today people over much of the globe have the wonderful privilege of reading with understanding God's Word to mankind.³

Declaring and Defending Preservation

As the controversy over the doctrine of special providential preservation of the Scriptures has resurfaced in theological circles, it is worth noting the latest developments, and where necessary, make adjustments and corrections to past shortcomings and oversights. It has also been observed that the voluminous works of many recent theological heavyweights say little or nothing at all about the doctrine of Bible preservation. It is therefore a task for the present generation to state with clarity the biblical position of this doctrine and defend it for the benefit of the Church present and future. Taking the lead, the principal of the Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC) has made this statement of faith,

We believe the preservation of Holy Scripture and its Divine inspiration stand in the same position as providence and creation. If Deism teaches a Creator who goes to sleep after creating the world is absurd, to hold to the doctrine of inspiration without preservation is equally illogical. ... Without preservation, all inspiration, God-breathing into scripture would be lost. But we have a Bible so pure and powerful in every word and it is so because God preserved it down through the ages.⁴

FEBC's stand on the 100% perfect preservation of Scripture is beginning to yield fruits.

This discovery is a challenge to the present generation as the discovery of the doctrine of justification by faith alone was to Luther and his contemporaries. The doctrine has always been there but has been kept on the shelves. It has to be publicised and taught to everyone. When Hilkiah the priest found the book of the Law in the Lord's house he gave it to Shaphan the scribe who in turn took it and read it before King Josiah (2 Chron 34:15-18). This marked the beginning of Josiah's reforms that

brought great spiritual revival to Judah in days of apostasy. In the same manner, proclaiming and publishing the doctrine of the preservation of the Bible may be the beginning of greater things for the church in the days to come.

Truth Determines Scholarship

The doctrine of Bible preservation may not go down well with many scholars who deny that there is such a doctrine. There is also a tendency of citing big names in theological circles, and making them the final authority instead of the Bible. But if the Bible teaches the special providential preservation of the Scriptures, no human being can destroy it. Biblical truth does not depend on historical treatment by men but by what God says about it in His forever infallible and inerrant Word. Defenders of God's Truth may suffer persecution, but there must be no surrender by way of compromise or retraction of what is biblically true. Since the doctrine of biblical preservation has much to do with faith, it may be ridiculed as unscholarly especially by those who wish to indulge in textual criticism. But it must be remembered that it is not scholarship that determines Truth, but Truth determines scholarship.

Opposition and Persecution

Christian doctrines or dogma are those principles of faith that constitute what is believed and practised by the Christian Church. They come from an authoritative source, namely, the Bible. There is much we can learn about a Christian's commitment to dogma from the Apostle Paul who was persecuted for preaching Christ as the Son of God and the Messiah, and the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead (Acts 23:6). He is an example in the believer's commitment to doctrine. He went through great suffering and was subsequently martyred for the defence of the faith. Tradition tells us that the rest of the Apostles likewise died a martyr's death. They stood firm in their faith in Christ despite great opposition and persecution.

In Church history we have the example of Polycarp who stood firm for his Lord. When he was compelled to deny Christ and to worship Caesar as God, he refused and paid for it with his life. Here is his story:

The usual test applied to Christians was that they must call Caesar, the emperor, 'Lord', as if he were a divine person. Refusal to do so meant the death sentence. Taken before the Roman consul, Polycarp was required to

say, on oath, that he venerated Caesar in this way. But he was firm in his refusal. 'I have wild beasts' said the consul; 'if you refuse I will throw you to them'. 'Send for them' replied Polycarp. 'If you despise the wild beasts I will send you to the fire', said the consul; 'swear and I will release you: curse the Christ'. 'Eighty and six years have I served Christ' replied Polycarp, 'and he has done me no wrong; how then can I blaspheme my King who has saved me? You threaten the fire that burns for an hour and then is quenched; but you know not of the fire of the judgment to come, and the fire of the eternal punishment. Bring what you will'. The consul was astonished and sent a herald to announce to the people that Polycarp had confessed himself to be a Christian. When the torch was applied to the wood, and smoke and flames encircled him, again he prayed: 'Lord God, Father of our blessed Saviour, I thank thee that I have been deemed worthy to receive the crown of martyrdom, and that I may die for thee and for thy cause'. It is recorded that all the multitude 'marvelled at the great difference between the unbelievers and the elect'. They saw what Christian obedience meant, for Jesus had said, 'Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life' (Rev 2:10).⁵

Polycarp was a disciple of the Apostle John, and was a pastor of the church in Smyrna. He believed that his faith in Christ was worth dying for even when all people were against it. He had the determination to stand alone for Christ. He met his death in AD 150. Countless other Christians through history have suffered the same fate, but they knew that what they believed was worth dying for. This is illustrated by the above testimony of Polycarp when he showed that the fire he was about to face was nothing compared to eternal fire of God's punishment that all unbelievers would one day face.

No Compromise

As the early Christians stood and died for what they believed, such a stand is still needful today. Today, there are Christian martyrs in countries that are antagonistic to Christianity. Christians are holding on to their faith despite the persecution they face for it is a faith worth dying for. A believer's commitment to His Lord and His Word cannot be compromised for anything. The doctrine of Bible preservation is a fundamental doctrine of the Bible, a foundational truth that we cannot deny. It is a doctrine worth dying for!

Notes

¹ Not in the sense of terrorism, for terrorism is evil and criminal, and must be condemned.

² Thomas Watson, *A Body of Divinity* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth and Trust, reprint 1965), 27.

³ Michael C Bere, *Bible Doctrines for Today* (Pensacola: A Beka Book, 1996), 75.

⁴ Timothy Tow and Jeffrey Khoo, *A Theology for Every Christian: Knowing God and His Word* (Singapore: Far Eastern Bible College Press, 1998), 47.

⁵ S M Houghton, *Sketches from Church History* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1980), 18.

The Rev Michael Koech is Principal of Bomet Bible Institute in Kenya.

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TO MAGNIFY HIS PERFECT WORD

Gia-Hien Nguyen

I thank and praise the Lord for His grace and mercy upon me in guiding me to study His Word at the Far Eastern Bible College, a sound and fundamental college in Singapore. I thank the Lord for helping me complete my studies and then opening a way for me to serve Him in Brisbane as a missionary preacher of True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church.

Having received much encouragement from God's servants, it is a great privilege for me, an unworthy sinner saved by God's grace, to write this testimony to glorify my Lord and my Saviour and to magnify His Perfect Word.

My dear brethren, although I do not know your stand or view on the Bible in the sight of God, seeing that many Christians nowadays are confused by the arguments and views of some high-minded "scholars" on God's Perfect Word, I pray that this testimony will, by God's grace, strengthen your faith in the Lord and His Perfect Word, and bring you to full submission to the authority of the Lord as well as to the authority of His Perfect Word.

The issue of the Perfect Bible, the very Word of God, verbally-plenarily inspired (VPI), verbally-plenarily preserved (VPP), inerrant, and infallible in the Hebrew and Greek texts underlying the King James Bible, has become one of the major concerns of true and serious Bible-believing Christians, especially in these last days. It is not surprising because the Bible is not only the very foundation of the Christian faith, beliefs, doctrines, practices, spiritual life and warfare but also the target of Satan's attack. A serious Bible-believing Christian cannot ignore this issue or sit quietly while his Lord's Word is being questioned or attacked.

For the sake of God's glory and His Perfect Word, and constrained by Christ's love, I am writing this testimony with much prayer. We know that only God is true, the Lord Jesus is the truth, and His Word is truth

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(John 14:6, 17:17; Rom 3:4). Human beings with their sinful nature, not to mention the attack and deception of Satan, are naturally rebellious against God and His Word, “because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom 8:7-8). Truly, it is through the Holy Spirit alone, the Spirit of Truth who guides us into all truth (John 16:13). It is the Spirit that bears witness with our spirit so that we as born-again Christians (Rom 8:16) may know the truth and accept the truth with a strong personal conviction. Such a conviction makes us to stand alone with God and His Perfect Word rather than with the majority of so-called “scholars” who reject the Perfect Word. It is very dangerous for a man who thinks that he is following the truth when he is not really doing so.

Knowing that only the Spirit of Truth can help you and that without His work of illumination, conviction and witness, no arguments or even this testimony can persuade you, I pray that you will, by God’s grace, be edified and strengthened in His Truth, even by His Perfect Word, the Holy Scripture.

Trusting in the Lord and His Perfect Word, we are to apply Biblical principles to what we do, say and write: (1) Does it glorify God? (1 Cor 10:31); (2) Does it magnify God’s Perfect Word? (Ps 138:2); (3) Is it God’s will? (1 John 2:17); (4) Is it done in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ? (Col 3:17); (5) Does it help contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints? (Jude 3); (6) Does it edify believers? (1 Cor 10:23); and (7) Is it constrained by Christ’s love? (1 Cor 16:14; 2 Cor 5:14).

Does it Glorify God?

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, *do all to the glory of God*” (1 Cor 10:31).

We give thanks and praise to our God for it is by His grace alone that we have come to know, worship and serve Him, the living and true God (Jer 10:10; 1 Thess 1:9), eternal (Ps 90:2; Rev 4:8-10), omnipotent (Gen 17:1; Rev 19:6), omniscient (Ps 139:1-6; Rom 11:33-36), omnipresent (Ps 139:7; Acts 17:24-28), immutable (Ps 102:26-27; Jas 1:17), Most High (Ps 83:18; Acts 7:48), sovereign (Dan 4:32-37; Matt 10:29-30), holy (Lev 19:2; Rev 4:8), loving, gracious and merciful (Exod 34:6-7; 1 Tim 1:2; 1 John 4:7-8), perfect (Deut 32:4; Ps 18:30, 19:7; Matt

5:48), and so forth. How do we have such glorious knowledge of God? It is through the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit.

However, by the views of those who deny the verbal and plenary preservation (VPP) of the Scriptures, our God is not glorified at all! It seems that our God is not living, loving, perfect, all-powerful, or all-knowing because if He is living, loving, perfect, all-powerful and all-knowing, He must have surely preserved His every perfect Word for His dear children who have been purchased by His only begotten Son's blood. Praise the Lord! Our Risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is living now and forever. He pleads for us and we are sure that His words will never pass away!

My dear brethren, if you were an emperor or a king and you had asked your servants to write your decree to be sent to every part of your empire or kingdom in the days when the printing machine was not yet invented, your decree would have been copied and copied very carefully and accordingly for sending. If you knew that some copies had mistakes, would you ignore them? If you were still living and powerful, I am sure you would not. How about our living and true God, perfect, almighty and all-knowing? Surely He did preserve His every perfect word as He promised (Ps 12:6-7; Matt 5:18), and by His sovereignty, providence and timing, through His faithful, godly, and highly qualified servants, His inspired and preserved words in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek were confirmed in the Traditional Hebrew Text of the Old Testament and in the Traditional Greek Text of the New Testament underlying the KJV, just on time to be printed and used by His people during the great Protestant Reformation. This is the logic of common faith of the Church for nearly four centuries!

Sadly, many so-called Christians nowadays just follow the arguments and views of high-minded "scholars," claiming that God's Perfect Word is somewhere in the over 5,000 manuscripts, or just in the Byzantine text-type as a whole (an intangible text) rather than the Textus Receptus (a tangible text) alone.

Is God the author of confusion? Actually, you and I have never seen any of the 5,000 Greek manuscripts, and even if we have, how can we determine which word is God's Word? What are the presuppositions, criteria, and qualifications for such a holy work? Can we trust in non-Bible-believing and non-God-fearing textual critical scholars who deny

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the VPP of Scripture to give us God's Word? For me, I will never trust them no matter who they are and what they may claim. How can we believe, preach and teach God's Word with full authority and conviction if God's perfect words are not in our hands? How can we speak "as the oracles of God" (1 Pet 4:11) if we do not know which word is God's Word? "God forbid: yea, *let God be true, but every man a liar*" (Rom 3:4). "*For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints*" (1 Cor 14:33).

Dear brethren, I do not think you dare come to the Lord and sincerely and repeatedly confess in your prayer, "O my living and true God, almighty and all-knowing, I don't believe that I have all Thy Perfect Words in my hand today because Thou hast not preserved every word of Thy Holy Scriptures." For me, I dare not pray such a prayer! Thus, those who deny the VPP of Scriptures are not glorifying God and pleasing Him at all!

Does it Magnify God's Perfect Word?

David sings to the Lord, "I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for *thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name*" (Ps 138:2). It is God who has magnified His Word above all His Name. What about our attitude toward His Word? Surely we know that it is a serious sin to criticise or cast doubt on God's Holy Name, but many "scholars" nowadays handle God's Word, the Scripture, without any holy reverence or humble submission! All our beliefs, doctrines, worship, preaching, teaching, and practices must be based on God's Word, the Holy Scripture, but that is not enough, ours must be to magnify God's Word, and glorify His Name, for "holy and reverend is His Name" (Ps 111:9).

God has inspired His Word, all of Scripture (2 Tim 3:16), and has preserved His Word, all the Scripture (Ps 12:6-7; Matt 5:18, 24:35; John 10:35; et al). No one is to add any words to or subtract any words from God's perfect and complete Scripture (Prov 30:5-6; Rev 22:18-19). Many Christians may confess that God's Word is perfect, but what they mean is not truly what they say. They think that God's Word is perfect in doctrines but they are not humble enough to believe God's Word is perfect in its very words without any mistake, not only in doctrines but also in science, history and geography. You can see that many so-called scholars and critics do not use the term "inerrant" which means "not erring," or

“making no mistakes,” when they speak of the Holy Scriptures we have in our hands.

My dear brethren, you must agree with me that a chain is not stronger than its link (ring). If a link is not perfect, how can the chain be perfect? If every word is not perfect, how can the whole Scripture be perfect? If every word is not holy, how can the whole Scripture be holy, and called “Holy Scripture” (2 Tim 3:15)? Holiness cannot be mixed with sin or error. How can a holy God allow mistakes or errors in His holy Word? May it never be! “Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for Thou only art holy” (Rev 15:4).

If God has magnified His Word above all His name, you and I are to bow down and humbly submit ourselves to His Word and to use the best terms, the most honourable terms, and the most reverent terms like “perfect,” “infallible,” “inerrant,” “holy,” “VPI,” “VPP,” and many more to magnify His Word. Truly, God expects us to tremble at His Word (Isa 66:2).

Why do many people, including religious leaders and scholars, nowadays not honour or magnify God’s Word? This is not strange since the Bible tells us that “many *corrupt* the word of God” (2 Cor 2:17). Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and scribes, “Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, ... *Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition* which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye” (Mark 7:7-8, 13). Nevertheless, Paul is determined not to handle the Word of God deceitfully (2 Cor 4:2). Our conduct must be good and blameless so that the Word of God might not be blasphemed (Tit 2:5). Thus, by a denial of the VPP of Scripture, many Christians fail to magnify God’s Word.

Is it God’s Will?

It is important for us to “understand what the will of the Lord is” (Eph 5:17), and to do the will of God (1 John 2:17) because only he who does the will of the Father in heaven will enter into heaven (Matt 7:21) and is Jesus’ brother (Matt 12:50). Our Lord Jesus taught us to pray to our Father, “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matt 6:10). He set a good example for us to follow when He sought not to do his own will but the will of His Father (John 5:30, 6:38). And when He prayed to His

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Father in Gethsemane, He did so with full submission in uttering, “Thy will be done” (Matt 26:42).

Dear brethren, do you think that those who deny VPP are seeking and doing God’s will when they do not glorify God or magnify His Word or edify the saints through their non-VPP stand? Surely they do not!

Is it Done in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ?

The Bible teaches us, “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Col 3:17). Doing all in the Name of the Lord Jesus means doing even as He did (1 John 2:6), doing as His ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20) would do, doing as for His Name’s sake (3 John 7), and doing in the merits and authority of His Name (Matt 28:19; John 14:13-14).

It should be noticed that in Jesus’ days on earth, there were no original scripts of the Old Testament (autographs) except copies (apographa), but Jesus, the all-knowing and perfect God, did not see any “discrepancies” in the Old Testament concerning the dates, the numbers, the names and so forth, nor did He question or criticise or cast doubt on the Scripture like many modern “scholars” now do. On the contrary, our Lord Jesus was assured of the verbal and plenary preservation of His verbally and plenary inspired Word. He confirmed that “*the scripture cannot be broken*” (John 10:35), and that “*till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled*” (Matt 5:17-18), and that “*heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*” (Matt 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33). Furthermore, our Lord Jesus took the preserved Word of God seriously by living, quoting, teaching and expounding it (Matt 4:4, 7, 10; 19:4-8; 21:42; Mark 2:25-26; 7:10; Luke 4:17-21; 11:29-32, 49-51; 24:44; John 3:14; 10:34-35).

John the Baptist testified that Jesus is the Son of God who speaks the words of God (John 1:34; 3:34). Jesus also declared that He is the Son of God and His words are spirit and life, and they are His Father’s words (John 6:63; 10:36; 11:4; 12:49-50; 17:8). Truly, Jesus is the living Word of God speaking to man. His Name is called The Word of God (John 1:1; Heb 1:2; Rev 19:13), but many have rejected Him and His words! It is not surprising when Jesus said to the Jews, “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings (only copies), how shall ye believe my words” (John 5:46-47).

The Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, who were taught, guided and reminded of whatever Jesus said to them by the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 16:13), also preached and wrote the very word of God under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 2:13; 2 Pet 3:15-16). They also had no doubt when they quoted the Old Testament and regarded it as the very Word of God with full authority although there were no extant autographs in their days (Acts 2:16-21; 15:15-17; Rom 1:17; 11:2-4, 26-29; 1 Cor 2:9; 3:20; 2 Cor 6:16-18; 9:9; Gal 3:8, 11; 4:22, 29, 30; Eph 4:8; 5:31; Phil 2:7; 3:2; Col 2:15; 1 Thess 5:8; 2 Thess 2:3, 5; 3:3; 1 Tim 2:8, 13; 5:18; 2 Tim 3:8-9; Tit 1:2; 2:14; Heb 1:8-13; 8:10-12; Jas 2:21, 22, 25; 5:11, 17; 1 Pet 2:6-8; 3:10-12; 2 Pet 2:5, 6, 22; 3:8; 1 John 1:9; 3:12; 3 John 11; Jude 9, 11, 14, 15; Rev 1:7; 2:14, 20). Furthermore, even a word in singular or plural is carefully discerned and expounded. For example, Paul emphasised the fact that Christ alone fulfilled the Old Testament promise of a *Seed* by arguing that the word “seed” was written and stands written in the singular and not plural, and this refers to none else but Christ (Gal 3:16).

Sadly, many modern believers and scholars think God’s Word is only perfect in the original autographs! They are not humble enough to acknowledge that the holy, true, almighty and perfect God has been able to preserve His perfect Word intact down through the ages for His people. Then, if you and I (our old *self*, our arrogant and corrupt nature) have been crucified with Christ and Christ is living in us (Gal 2:20), how can we remain in opposition to our Lord on the issue of the VPP of Scripture? Our Lord Jesus Christ found no fault with the Perfect Word of His Father, the Holy Scripture, and if *we have the mind of Christ* (1 Cor 2:16), our belief and stand cannot be different from our Lord’s. Those who oppose the VPP of Scripture cannot claim to be doing so in His Name!

Does it Defend the Historic Christian Faith?

“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should *earnestly contend for the faith* which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

Satan has deceived human beings by attacking and casting doubt on God’s Word since the days of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:1, 4-5) because he knows that “*faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*” (Rom 10:17) and that the foundation of the Christian faith is God’s

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Perfect Word (Eph 2:20). If we have no perfect Word of God today, then how can we earnestly contend for the faith against Satan and his followers such as the false prophets, false Christs (Matt 24:24), false teachers (2 Pet 2:1), false apostles (2 Cor 11:13), false brethren (2 Cor 11:26; Gal 2:4), false witnesses (Matt 26:60; Acts 6:13), and false accusers (2 Tim 3:3)? Most of the spiritual weapons in the armour of God are for defence, and the weapons of offence are the sword of the Holy Spirit, which is the word of God, and prayer (Eph 6:17-18; 1 John 2:14; Ps 56:9; Matt 26:41). How can we fight a good fight and gain victory if we are not sure that we have a perfect sword in our hand? And how can we pray for God's help if we have doubts about His sovereign power to preserve His every perfect word and promise?

True Bible-believing Christians have faced heresies since the first century (1 Cor 11:19; Gal 5:20; Tit 3:10; 2 Pet 2:1; et al) and down through Church history, there have been a lot of heresies, unbiblical "isms" and movements such as Ebionism, Gnosticism, Montanism, Manichaeism, Monarchianism, Sabellianism (Modalism), Arianism, Semi-arianism, Macedonianism (Pneumatomachism), Apollinarianism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, Monophysitism, Monothelitism, Pelagianism, Catholicism, Ecumenism, Liberalism, Modernism, Neo-Evangelicalism, Charismaticism, Open Theism, Neo-Fundamentalism, and so forth, not to mention the many cults and occult practices.

How can the Church earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints? We should give thanks to the Lord our God for having preserved His Perfect Word. By God's sovereignty and providence, at the Council of Carthage in AD 397, 27 books were accepted by the churches to form the New Testament of canonical Scripture (the Old Testament had been accepted by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Apostles and believers as mentioned above). The good work of the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century, which led to the translation of the KJV from the traditional Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Greek Textus Receptus in the 17th century, is continued in the 20th century Reformation movement of Dr Carl McIntire, who founded the International Council of Christian Churches, and the Bible Presbyterian movement. If the sons of the Reformation today do not have God's Perfect Word in their hands, minds and hearts, can they continue to contend for God's truth and the faith?

For me, I thank the Lord for His sovereignty and providence in leading me to the Rev Dr Timothy Tow and the Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC), after I had left Trinity Theological College (Singapore) because of its unsound doctrines and compromise. For four years in the FEBC, I treasured each day studying God's Word with good training and sound doctrines, including the doctrines of Biblical separation and of the VPI and VPP of Scripture. By God's grace, I realise that God has raised up the Rev Dr Timothy Tow and the FEBC to contend for His truth and for the faith of His saints in these last days of apostasy and compromise. I also thank God for the strong stand on God's Perfect Word taken by Rev Dr Timothy Tow, Rev Dr Jeffrey Khoo, Rev Dr Quek Suan Yew, and Rev Dr Prabhudas Koshy. It is disheartening to know that instead of supporting the FEBC, many are fighting against God's work in and through the FEBC.

Does it Edify Believers?

“All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not” (1 Cor 10:23).

Several years after being born again by the Holy Spirit and God's Word, the Holy Scripture, I read a book on textual criticism, stating that the New Testament was compiled from about 5,000 Greek manuscripts, among which no two manuscripts are exactly the same, and all these extant manuscripts are only copies. This book shook my faith in God's Perfect Word. When I read the Scripture, I no longer had as strong a conviction as I had before. Then in my heart, I desired that one day I might study Greek, and God would help me discover more Greek manuscripts to make the Bible more complete. What a dangerous and wrong concept! Anyway, I did not share this with other brethren, but kept this to myself as this might shake their faith too. I thank God very much that through the sound teachings at the FEBC, my faith in God's Perfect Word has been restored and now I am so angry with those so-called “scholars” and books that confuse believers, cast doubt on God's Perfect Word, and overthrow the faith of some (2 Tim 2:13).

My dear brethren, men, by their sinful and corrupt nature, naturally doubt God. It is very difficult to share with them God's salvation if they say that the Bible is written by fallible men and is not God's pure Word. That is what I have experienced since I came to Australia. It is already enough for Satan to attack God's Perfect Word and cast it down, but we

have also those who call themselves Christians attacking God's Word by denying that they have God's Perfect Word today. Those who cast doubt on God's Word help Satan, even though they think of themselves as "scholarly" believers. I would prefer them to keep quiet and learn to fear the Lord and honour His Perfect Word. They do not edify their loved ones and other brethren by sharing views which do not magnify God's Perfect Word nor glorify Him.

Is it Constrained by Christ's Love?

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead" (2 Cor 5:14). "Let all your things be done with charity" (1 Cor 16:14).

Christ showed His love towards sinners like us. He came into the world, taught His Father's Word, died for us, rose again to plead for us, and will come again soon for our full redemption. Jesus says, "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 12:49-50), and "thy word is truth" (John 17:17), and "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). If we are constrained by Christ's love for us, we will share God's Perfect Word with others and be willing to die for them for the sake of God's Word. This is divine love, holy love, and not human love. God's holy love requires His children to separate themselves from sins, unbelievers and unbiblical teachings and beliefs (2 Cor 6:14-7:1). Love that rejoices in the truth (1 Cor 13:6) will rejoice in God's Perfect Word which is truth (John 17:17), and in the Lord Jesus who is the truth, and in the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of truth (John 14:6, 17).

Out of love, our Father in heaven chastises His children so that they might be partakers of His holiness (Heb 12:6, 10). The Bible says, "Open rebuke is better than secret love" (Prov 27:5). Our Lord Jesus Christ rebuked the scribes and the Pharisees severely (Matt 23) because they were religious leaders who went against Him and God's Truth and led the common people astray from God's Word. On the other hand, the Lord was very kind with sinners and people who were teachable and repentant. Did our Lord love all types of people? Surely He did, but due to His holy love, some needed to be rebuked while others needed to be encouraged

and comforted. But today many Christians compromise the Christian Faith and God's Perfect Word in the name of love and unity!

The Apostle Paul regards his epistle as God's Word with full authority: "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (2 Thess 3:14-15). Why did Paul have such a stern attitude towards that brother? Did Paul not love him? Surely he did, as he said Christ's love constrained him. Paul applied the principle of separation with the hope of bringing that brother back to the truth when he repents. If a brother is doing something wrong against the Lord and His Word publicly and if you and I welcome him and shake hands with him, then he may think that he is right or alright and will continue in his erroneous views and ways. If we allow him to continue in his sin and error, can we say we love him with divine love? Nowadays, for the sake of love (not divine love or holy love) and unity (not biblical but ecumenical unity), or for the sake of being accepted, recognised, accredited, or popular, many Christians are compromising their pure faith in the Lord and His Perfect Word!

Thank God that I was born into a Christian family in Vietnam. My grandparents and parents are Christians. I went to church regularly and was baptised when I was 14. Then in 1975 when the North defeated the South, I had to study Darwin's theory of evolution, Leninism, Marxism and communism at high school. Although I did not believe those human philosophies and theories, I was influenced by them and began to question if God did exist, where He was and so forth. One day, I had a terrible headache and was tired from such doubts and questions. I knelt down and prayed, "O God, may Thou manifest Thyself to me so that I may believe in Thee and follow Thee because I know Thee in person, not because of my parents, not because of the church, not because of other Christians nor anyone else." I even challenged myself, "If all Christians do not follow Jesus Christ any more, and if nobody in this world believes in Him, would I still believe and follow Him by myself?"

Thank God so much that He was merciful unto me and moved me to pray and to read the Holy Bible (Vietnamese Bible and English KJV) fervently and earnestly. My spiritual eyes were opened to see wonderful things in God's Word. My life was changed and I realised that I was born again by the Holy Spirit and by God's Word (John 3:5; Tit 3:5; Jas 1:18; 1 Pet 1:23). I committed my life to the Lord and only wanted to live for

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Him. Then God guided me to be trained at the FEBC and to serve Him as I do today.

My dear brethren, men and their views will pass away, and even you and I will pass away some day. Only God's Perfect Word, the Holy Bible will not pass away and can help men know about God and about themselves, and about God's salvation for them. Only the Bible is able to change their lives through the work of the Holy Spirit. Only the Bible is the foundation of their faith and salvation. If we do not believe in the Perfect Bible, the Word of God, we do harm to ourselves! How then can we lay a firm foundation for our loved ones, especially for our younger generation, our children? By denying the present perfection of the Scriptures, we are destroying the very foundation of our faith by our very own unbelief and arrogance! It is disturbing that many Christians cannot foresee the dangerous consequences of such a denial! Is there still hope for the Church when many Bible colleges and seminaries today are falling away from God's Perfect Word?

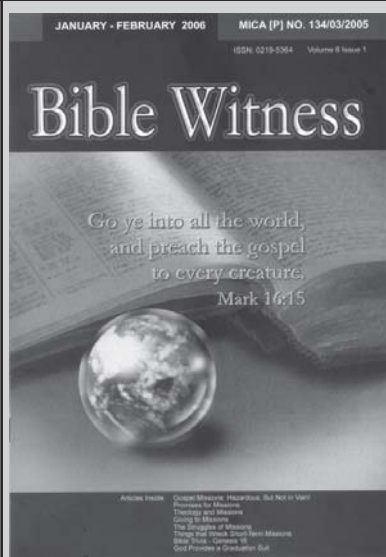
My dear brethren, we need to adopt the proper attitude of the Bereans who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and search the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). Sadly, many Christians nowadays blindly believe and follow the unbiblical arguments or views of Bible-denying scholars and ungodly leaders! It is vital that we search God's Perfect Word, the Holy Scripture, and be very careful and discerning to check whether the preachers whom we hear and the books that we read glorify God, magnify His Perfect Word, increase our faith in and our love for the Lord and for His Perfect Word, encourage us to do God's will, and help us contend for God's truth and the faith. Like Peter, we put our trust in our Lord and in His Perfect Word and say to Him, "*Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life*" (John 6:68).

My dear brethren, I pray that you will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and follow Him because you know Him and His Perfect Word and disregard the so-called "scholars" who cast doubt on God's Word with their worldly wisdom and ungodly arguments and criticisms. Only the Lord Jesus truly loves you and me, died for you and me, and is able to save you and me; no one else can, no, not one. Do you agree with me? Surely you do! The Lord Jesus says, "*He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day*" (John 12:48) and "*If a man love me,*

he will keep my words” (John 14:23). Then you and I better wholeheartedly and sincerely receive the Lord Jesus Christ and His Perfect words so that when He comes we will not be judged. I will be very happy and will praise the Lord when you can say to me like the Samaritans, “Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world” (John 4:42) and like the psalmist saying to the Lord, “Thou art my portion, O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words” (Ps 119:57), and “*Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it*” (Ps 119:140).

May God strengthen you and bless you through His Perfect Word.

Gia-Hien Nguyen is a ThM (summa cum laude) graduate of Far Eastern Bible College. His ThM thesis entitled, “The Vietnamese New Testament Examined under the Textus Receptus and the King James Bible,” was highly commended by Huu-Tri Pham—a John Sung convert who served in the Bible Society of Vietnam.



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Bible Witness Literature Ministry
510 Geylang Road #02-06, Singapore 389466
Email: editor@biblewitness.com
Website: www.biblewitness.com

BEWARE THE SIN OF PRIDE (1 CHRONICLES 21:1-17)

Nee-Keng Tan

Introduction

We often mention about David's sin of adultery. Very rarely do we talk about his sin as recorded in 1 Chronicles 21 and the parallel account in 2 Samuel 24. This morning, we will look at this account to learn about the sin of pride which is the topic of my sermon.

A Sin That So Easily Besets Us

What was David's sin? It was to count the number of people in Israel. In verse 3 we read of Joab sounding out to David not to be "a cause of trespass to Israel" by counting the people. It appears that David wanted to see how great his nation was by finding out the number of people he had. It was David and not God who wanted to know this. From the figures that were given to him after the count, we see that it was not just the number of people he was interested in, he wanted to know the number of "men that drew the sword". In modern days, when a newspaper or magazine wants to compare the military strength of two countries, they will list the number of soldiers each country has, as well as the number of fighter planes and tanks. Yes, David wanted to know his military might, to boast of his superiority over the nations around him. It reminds us of how Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon boasted that it was he who made Babylon great. However, he was made to behave like an animal until he acknowledged that God was the One who made his kingdom what it was. This is the sin of pride. The person simply thinks too highly of himself. David was a great man of God, one after God's own heart, yet he fell into this sin.

What about us? It is indeed a warning for us. God willing, we will be pastoring churches, heading Bible colleges or taking care of various church ministries. When the groups we oversee grow in number and in

spiritual maturity, it is very easy for us to fall into a similar sin. Will we start comparing with other pastors on the number of members we have or the number of churches that we have established? It is not wrong to take stock of how much our ministry has grown, to give thanks to the Lord, to praise Him for the work He has done for us, but how easy it is for us to translate such knowledge into proud boasting. Let us beware.

Yield Not to Temptation

How did David fall into this sin? Satan was at work, for we read in verse 1 that "... Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." But he did not force David to sin. He might have put thoughts into David's mind that caused him to want to number the people. Was his nation truly great? He may have wanted the population figures to confirm it. Although Satan tempted him, David did not have to yield to it. It's just like if someone comes to you and tries to provoke you to a fight, you can choose not to do so. Being tempted is not sin, but yielding to temptation is sin, as the hymn we sang tells us, "Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin." 1 Cor 10:13 says, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." There was a warning given to David to tell him that what he was doing was sinful. Joab saw that David was falling into sin and tried to make David realise it, as we have seen in verse 3. But then, the next verse tells us that "the king's word prevailed against Joab." David would not listen to Joab. This truly shows David's proud heart at that time. Proverbs 21:4 says "An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked are sin." It was a double sin of pride for David. The capital "I" prevailed. Notice that the middle letter of the word "SIN" is "I" and the middle letter of "PRIDE" is also "I." Be careful of "I", "me" and "myself". When we focus too much on ourselves, the sin of pride enters easily. How we need to always focus on God instead of self.

When I started studying full-time at FEBC last semester, I remember enjoying the lectures because there was so much that I learnt, especially as it was presented in such a systematic way. But soon I started having that superiority complex in terms of Biblical knowledge when I talked to brethren in the church and elsewhere. Isn't 1 Corinthians 8:1-2 true when it says "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think

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that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.” Thank God for the reminders that we receive from our lecturers, I quickly threw such thoughts out of my mind. Furthermore, I realised that that knowledge was just a small part of what we should equip ourselves with during our studies here. I was also humbled when I found myself struggling with writing papers and critiques.

I know that was not the end of all my struggles against pride, for our “adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet 5:8). This semester, the lectures on the Asian Awakening by our principal have been very interesting, especially as he has been leading us in singing many songs. However, it did not seem very challenging intellectually. We learnt how John Sung took out a loaf of bread or a miniature Chinese coffin to illustrate or make vivid his sermon. We learnt a number of the songs he used in his revival meetings. It can make us think we are ready to hold evangelistic meetings like John Sung! However, when we sang the songs and choruses again and again, I realised that which was so lacking in me. It is the power of the Holy Spirit, and this is the most important! The things we have learnt are like the parts of a motor car engine, and the Holy Spirit’s power is like the petrol that flows to the engine. Without any petrol flowing into the engine, all the parts cannot move. They may be the most precise parts made according to the best design, without petrol flowing in, the engine is dead. Similarly, all the techniques that we have learnt are of no use without the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

Consequences of Pride

What are the consequences of pride? Dr Jeffrey Khoo, in his book *Fundamentals of the Christian Faith*, quotes Dr Chia Yu Ming of Spiritual Training Theological Seminary, Nanking, China, as saying “The sins of the spirit are ten times worse than the sins of the flesh.” Pride is one of the sins of the spirit.

Proverbs 16:5 says, “Every one who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.” Proverbs 16:18 says, “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” God hates the proud and so there are serious consequences for one who falls into the sin of pride. Lucifer is doomed to be “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone” (Rev 20:10) because of his pride. David was not spared either. Although he repented

(verse 8) he still had to face the consequences of his sin. God gave David three choices. David chose that which did not put him into the hands of man but into the hands of God. God then sent pestilence and 70,000 men died. It was also an appropriate lesson for David. He wanted to glory in the number of people he had in his kingdom. Now this figure was much reduced.

Conclusion

The sin of pride can be committed, even by those who have been close to God. God hates this sin. Pride brings about serious consequences. As we get equipped for our future ministries, we will gain much knowledge, understanding and skills. We become very fertile ground for Satan to plant the seed of pride in us. God gives us opportunities to cast it out of our lives (the way of escape mentioned in 1 Cor 10:13). Let us do so.

Elder Nee-Keng Tan is an MDiv student at the Far Eastern Bible College, and serves in Berean Bible-Presbyterian Church. The above was a sermon he preached at the Homiletics Class on October 5, 2005.

Class Notes

Rev Pang Kok Hiong (BTh 92) has relocated to Guam on January 2, 2006 to pastor Christ is Lord Chinese Church. He continues to supervise the gospel work in Saipan. Rev Pang has baptised over 1600 Chinese converts who have since returned to mainland China. Pray for these believers to remain strong in faith.

Rev Lee Kim Shong (DipTh 90) and the session of Calvary Jaya B-P Church publicly affirmed their stand for the Verbal Plenary Preservation of the Holy Scriptures and the King James Bible on December 18, 2005.

Janet Lim Hwee Noi (DipTh 94) is a full-time staff of Far Eastern Bible College (wef March 1, 2006). She worships at True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church.

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SETTING OUR SIGHTS

Carol Lee

The title of my message this morning is “Setting our Sights.” The text is taken from Hebrews 11:8 to 10, and Hebrews 13:14:

Hebrews 11:8-10: “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as [in] a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God.”

Hebrews 13:14: “For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.”

First, a word of welcome: Welcome back to FEBC for yet another semester of learning, training and growing. How was your school holiday? I trust that many of you have many thanksgiving items to share. I thank God for the month of December when I went on two mission trips.

I attended the Borneo Church Camp in Pontianak (Indonesia) where I ministered to the young people and also visited the church newly established by Brother Peter Yoksan and his wife Pipit, upon their graduation from FEBC.

The Lord also led me to serve Him in Kenya for two weeks. I was at the Bomet Bible Institute and the Africa Gospel Unity Church serving with Rev Michael Koech and Pastor Jonathan Langat who are both alumni of FEBC. It was a most blessed first visit for me to the so-called dark continent of Africa. I thank God for the opportunities to speak at two Youth Camps, taught a one-week course at the Bible Institute, did teacher training, and also spoke to the Young Teens at a DVBS.

As I fellowshiped with and served among our Indonesian brethren and later our African brethren in environments that are not so familiar to me, the Lord impressed upon me one very important reminder: That it does not matter where we are born. It does not matter what the colour of

our skin is. It does not matter what we have, or what we do not have, on earth. We, as believers of Christ, are all going to end up in Heaven, to be in God's presence. We will all walk the same streets of gold, eat of the fruits of the same tree of life.

And, as we have read in this morning's text, we see that Abraham knows this very well. Hebrews 11:10 says, "*For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God.*" Abraham's life is based on that correct perspective of life. He has set his sights on the city of God. The decisions he makes in his life are guided by that attitude.

Hebrews 11:8 says, "*By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place ... obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*" Who in his right mind would make such a move? Abraham is able to do that because his life destination is not on this earth. The home he is looking for is not a place that he built (or can build) himself here on earth. Instead, it is a home "*whose builder and maker [is] God*" Himself.

After Abraham has made the move to leave his prosperous and comfortable life in Ur of the Chaldees, Hebrews 11:9 tells us, "*By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as [in] a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles.*" Abraham arrived in the land of promise, but he treated it as "*a strange country,*" not as home-sweet-home. He stayed in tabernacles showing His readiness to move on should the Lord instruct him to. Even in the promised land, Abraham "*looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God.*" His sights are always set on the "*city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God.*"

How about you brethren? What are you setting your sights on? Maybe some of you who are here in FEBC, training to serve God full-time, may say, "I have set my sights on saving souls and building the church of God." Sounds very good. But what happens when God calls you to leave the comfort of your own ministry, the comfort of your own church? Would you like Abraham be loyal to God, obey Him and leave, even though you may not know where you are supposed to go?

Your answer, brethren, will depend on what you have set your sights on. Are your sights set on your church and your ministry on earth? Or are your sights, like Abraham's, set on a "*city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God.*" Hebrews 13:14 says, "*For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*" Are we building our heaven on earth? Or are we seeking the heavenly city that is to come? When we

SETTING OUR SIGHTS

have our sights set on heaven (and not on earth) we will respond like Abraham, we will *“obey; and go, not knowing whither we went.”*

I thank God for the example set by our Principal, who although having served God in Life Bible-Presbyterian Church for more than 50 years, like Abraham, when *“called to go out ... obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.”* We may not have known then but we know now that God’s will was that True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church be set up.

No one in a similar situation and with eyes set on the things of earth will do this.

It was not long after that that we in my home church were equally tested. The situation challenged us: Will we remain loyal to God and His Word, obey Him and leave our beloved home church, not knowing where we should go?

If prosperous Abraham obeyed God and left his comfortable home in Ur of the Chaldees, if the founding Pastor of Life B-P Church obeyed God and left the church he spent more than 50 years building up, why can’t I too obey God and steadfastly hold on to His perfect Word?

Are my sights set on my church and my ministry on earth? Or are my sights set on the city of God?

Thank God that He opened our eyes to the *“... city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God ... For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.”*

Praise God that the decision to obey Him and to go not knowing whither we went was met with blessing upon blessing from God. Within a space of less than three months (between October and December last year), the Lord has wrought a great work amongst us who have decided to leave our home church: He Himself established the Truth Bible-Presbyterian Church. And, two days ago, on January 1, 2006, we rejoiced and praised God at the Inaugural Worship Service of Truth.

Brethren, while the Lord gives us life and breath, and wills that we sojourn on this earth, let us not build our own kingdoms on earth, but let us set our sights on the city of God. Let us obey Him, staying loyal to our Lord and His perfect Word, and be willing to go even when we do not know where.

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place ..., obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as [in] a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles ... For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God ... For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come” (Hebrews 11:8-10; 13:14).

May God help us.

Carol Lee is a lecturer in Christian Education at Far Eastern Bible College, and serves full-time at Truth Bible-Presbyterian Church. The above message was delivered on FEBC’s opening Day of Prayer on January 3, 2006.

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Dennis Kwok (BTh 01) formerly assistant pastor of Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church (Jurong), having taken a declared position for the Verbal and Plenary Preservation of the Holy Scriptures and the King James Bible, is now serving as a full-time preacher overseeing a new church aptly named Truth Bible-Presbyterian Church. The inaugural service was held on the Lord’s Day, January 1, 2006, at Calvary Pandan Bible-Presbyterian Church. Over 300 people gathered to support this new gospel work “that stands for the perfect Word of God in our hands today.”

Srun Chivan (BTh 04) was ordained a minister of the gospel by Life Bible-Presbyterian Church (Cambodia) on January 22, 2006. He is the first ordained local pastor of the Bible-Presbyterian denomination in Cambodia.

Richard Murcia Tiu (BTh 05) of the Philippines was sent as a missionary of Gethsemane Bible-Presbyterian Church to teach at the Bible College of East Africa, Nairobi, Kenya for six months.

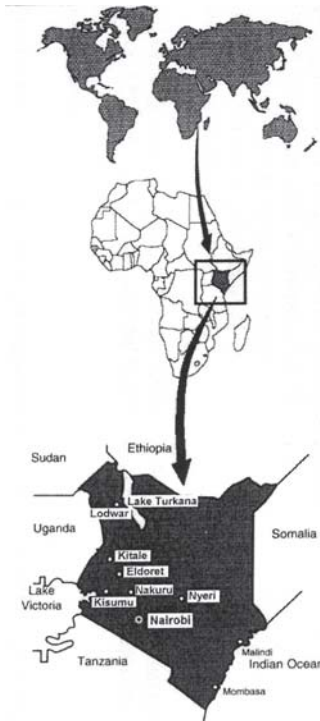
Peter Yoksan (MDiv 05) serves as preacher and teacher at Calvary Hanura Permai and Bible School in Pontianak, Borneo. This new gospel station is a missions outreach of Calvary Pandan Bible-Presbyterian Church, Singapore.

BOMET BIBLE INSTITUTE AND AFRICA GOSPEL UNITY CHURCH: A MISSIONS REPORT

Carol Lee

Introduction

On the invitation of Rev Michael Koech, I made my first visit to the so-called dark continent of Africa in December 2005. It turned out to be a most blessed two weeks in Bomet (Kenya), where I ministered with Rev Koech and Pastor Jonathan Langat who are both alumni of FEBC. (Bomet is a town about 3 hours' drive from the capital, Nairobi.)



Having graduated from FEBC with his BTh (1987), Rev Koech founded the Bomet Bible Institute (BBI) and is one of the leaders in his denomination: the Africa Gospel Unity Church (AGUC) which has 125 churches with about 3,000 members and 10 pastors in 8 districts. Congregation size ranges from 15 to 250 members. He returned to FEBC in 2003 and completed his MDiv in May 2005.

Pastor Jonathan who graduated from FEBC with his MDiv in 2003 is Pastor of Bomet AGUC and Vice-Principal of BBI (which holds to the verbal, plenary preservation of the words of God). He also has a weekly ministry in a nearby prison and lectures at the Faith College of the Bible (FCB) in Nairobi a week per month.

My Teaching Ministry

During the short two weeks there, I spoke at two youth camps, taught a one-week course at the BBI, spoke to the Young Teens at the Bomet DVBS, and conducted impromptu teacher training.

The two youth camps shared the same theme “Exposing False Teachings.” At Bomet, it was attended by some 300 participants, including a contingent from Sengerema (Tanzania) led by their pastor, Rev Martin. I spoke on the topics “Error of Charismatic Prophecy, Visions and Dreams,” “Error of Faith Healing” and “Foundations of Christian Living.” At Chepalungu, there were about 60 participants perched on benches, many without Bibles but diligently noting Bible references in their little notebooks. (I found out later, that many can afford to have only one Bible per family.) Here I spoke on the topic “Error of Charismatic Prophecy, Visions and Dreams.” The taxi ride from Bomet to Chepalungu was a 10-minute smooth drive on the highway followed by a one-hour, bumpy and dusty drive, with the taxi swerving ever so often from one side of the dirt track to the other as the driver tries to find the least bumpy way, at times slowing down to a crawl as the taxi dips in and out of “holes” on the dirt track!

The 20-hour course (“Adult Christian Education”) at the BBI was conducted over four days and was attended by 35 participants: 14 full-time BBI students and 21 pastors and church leaders, all of whom sat for the two-hour examination on the fifth day. The participants’ positive attitude, eagerness to learn and attentiveness remained unabated throughout the four days, making the class a pleasure to teach. At the suggestion of Pastor Jonathan, the pastors will give progress reports during their Pastors’ Conference in April 2006 on how they have been putting into practice what they had learnt during this one-week course.

The DVBS at Bomet was attended by about 80 children. I taught three lessons to the Teens. After the children had left for the day, at the request of the teachers, I conducted two Bible knowledge classes for the six teachers.

A Lord’s Day at a Village Church

Rev Koech usually walks half an hour on a dirt track (on a dry day, it is hot and dusty; on a wet day, it is cold and the track muddy) to minister to the AGUC at Kabisoge. But this Lord’s Day, we had the

Bomet Bible Institute



From top, left to right (zig-zag): Rev Michael Koech and family; Pastor Jonathan Langat and family; Red zinc roof of BBI; Parsonage; Adult Christian Education Class.

honour of taking a taxi there. After a bumpy drive, as we walked towards the church building, the sound of joyful chorus singing by four sisters (three of whom were born blind) seated on a wooden bench outside the church building greeted every worshipper. The church building is a wooden shack on a field surrounded by other fields of farm land. The building is no bigger than a HDB bedroom, with a lectern-like wooden structure serving as the pulpit. Behind the pulpit, beams of sunlight come through the gaps of the upright wooden planks that form the back wall.

The young worship leader invited the congregation members to present praise items. One went up to sing praises to God. Another joined her. Followed by another, and another. Almost automatically, a small choir was formed behind the pulpit and the sanctuary was filled with their melodious, heartfelt singing accompanied by a drum and a kayumba (a flat box-like instrument, held by both hands at waist-level, which rattles as it is shaken horizontally). Holding yellowed, dog-eared song books, they sang lifting the hearts of the 42 congregation members heavenward in preparation for the preaching of the Word of God. Although not understanding a word of Swahili, the songs under the control of the Spirit ministered to my spirit. At the end of the service, the young worship leader, adjusted his backpack and was ready for his 20-km-trek under the blazing hot sun to go to another church to serve in their DVBS!

Life at Bomet

Although December is a time of rain and sowing of seeds, there was not a drop of rain during my two weeks' stay in Bomet, and many fields, although ploughed, were left waiting for the rain to come before seeds could be sown. Now I know what "a dry and thirsty land" really means! And by the end of my stay, I almost forgot what a flushing toilet sounds like. Water is really precious! The normal diet includes ugali (their staple food, prepared by stirring corn flour into boiling water), potatoes, carrots, and a variety of beans. Occasionally, meat (beef or chicken) is served.

While we busied ourselves in the day, evening time saw us coming together for family worship led by Pastor Jonathan. Even Pastor Jonathan's one-year-old son, Kibett, is not left out of family worship. Such is the blessing of a Christian home where young and old, "red and yellow, black and white, all are precious in His sight," can gather at the feet of Jesus at the end of each day.

The Needs of the Ministry at Bomet

The following are prayer requests for the work at Bomet under the leadership of Rev Koech and Pastor Jonathan:

- (1) The possibility of acquiring a 10-acre piece of land for the expansion of the work.
- (2) The needs at BBI: (i) to increase its library book collection (ii) to help students to acquire books to build up a basic book collection of their own.
- (3) Pray for the pastors and church leaders that they may be able to receive the minimum basic training they need so as to minister to their flocks.
- (4) There is a great shortage of published materials. Pray for the possibility of establishing 8 district libraries for the pastors' own continuing education/training.
- (5) Missions plan of Bomet: Pray for Rev Koech, Pastor Jonathan and Rev Martin as they look into possibility of establishing a Bible institute at Sengerema (Tanzania).

My Thanksgiving

I thank God for FEBC's financial support of this trip, for God's safe keeping during my time in Kenya, for the avenues of service, and for the warm fellowship experienced. Thank God for Rev and Mrs Koech and their daughter Martha, for their kind hospitality, for Pastor Jonathan and his wife Demaris for including me in their family, and especially for Demaris who took such good care of me. Thank God also for the opportunity to visit the Bible College of East Africa (BCEA) in Nairobi on my way to the airport.

“And the gospel must first be published among all nations” (Mark 13:10). “Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people” (Ps 96:3).

Carol Lee is a lecturer in Christian Education at Far Eastern Bible College, and serves full-time at Truth Bible-Presbyterian Church.

College News

FEBC reopened with a **Day of Prayer** on January 3, 2006. We welcome the following **new students**: (1) Rev Dohar Siregar (BTh 81) from Medan, Indonesia, who has returned to study for his Master of Divinity degree [his wife Glorya (BTh 81) is enrolled in the external Master of Ministry programme]; (2) Bong Hae Nam, (3) Kim Jong Hyun, (4) Kim Seung Hun, (5) Kim Sol Bin, (6) Park Seong Eun from Korea; (7) Albert Kainesie our first from Sierra Leone, West Africa; and (8) Jeremy Mark Ferreira from Gethsemane Bible-Presbyterian Church, Singapore.

Total enrolment of full-time/daytime students stands at **110 from 16 countries**—Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, and Vietnam. A total of **203 lay students** registered for the “**Basic Theology for Everyone**” night classes on “The Prophecy of Zechariah” by Dr Das Koshy, and “The Life of Christ” by Dr Jeffrey Khoo.

Dr Quek Suan Yew and Dr Jeffrey Khoo lectured at the **Bible College of East Africa**, Nairobi, Kenya, in the year 2005, offering two courses, “Biblical Polemics” (June 27-July 8, 2005) and “Fundamentals of the Christian Faith” (November 14-25, 2005) respectively.

The “**In-Ministry**” programme leading to the Bachelor of Ministry (BMin), Master of Ministry (MMin), or Doctor of Education (EdD) degree was officially launched at the Gethsemane Missionary Conference, November 28-December 2, 2005. This pilot programme is currently offered only to FEBC alumni. The doctoral programme is by invitation only. Details of the programme can be found at www.febc.edu.sg (see under “Academic Programmes”).

FEBC’s principal and matron, Dr and Mrs Timothy Tow, led a group of 47 pilgrims (FEBC students and B-P church members) to the Holy Land for a study tour, March 9-23, 2006. The submission of a research project earns two credits.



Far Eastern Bible College

"Holding forth the Word of Life" Phil 2:16
 "Holding fast the Faithful Word" Titus 1:9

9A Gilstead Road Singapore 309063
 Tel (65)6256 9256 Fax (65)6250 6955

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COLLEGE

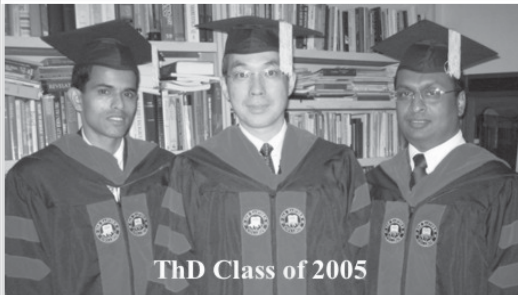
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LORD'S DAY SERVICE

- [Programmes](#)
- [Audio Sermons](#)
- [Weekly](#)
- [Location & Map](#)

WEBLINKS

FEEDBACK



- Semester Timetable
- Basic Theology for Everyone
- News & Announcements

WORSHIP SERVICE

True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church
 Worship Service at
 RELC, Auditorium, 10.30am

30 Orange Grove Road,
 down Shangri-La Hotel,
 Singapore 258352

FOUNDING ETHOS OF THE FAR EASTERN BIBLE COLLEGE

Theological training is vital for church growth. In his book *Forty Years on the Road to Church Growth*, FEBC's founding principal Dr Timothy Tow wrote: 'Without proper Bible training, the church that relies on self-taught evangelists or missionaries will be stilted in growth, inasmuch as the tether of their theological knowledge is short and the ability of their preaching skills is limited'.

Many a self-made pastor has lost his way due to a lack of intensive, systematic training in the Word. Even the theologically trained can succumb to error. So, in obedience to the Pauline mandate, 'And the things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also' (2 Timothy 2:2), FEBC was instituted in Singapore.

On 28 April 1962 the late Dr Paul Contento laid the foundation stone of FEBC and prayed to the Lord that he would raise up great Christian leaders and preachers from the college's ranks.

In those days, theology in the seminaries was taught exclusively by modernist professors. There was a crying need for a Bible-believing institute in the Far East for the propagation of the true gospel and the defence of the biblical faith. The stranglehold of modernism and ecumenism needed to be broken.

These needs remain today, made more acute by the emergence of new and virulent 'isms', like postmodernism, neo-evangelicalism, charismaticism, hyper-Calvinism and neo-Pharisaism.

Moreover, counseling methods, which syncretise Christian truth with heresy, and unscriptural church-growth methods, have added to the deluge of unbelief and apostasy that is drowning many a seminary today. The need for theologically sound Bible colleges has never been so great.

FEBC was constituted to propagate the Reformed faith and is affiliated to the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC). It has a pre-millennial view of the end-times. It endeavours to carry the Reformation torch into this new century by setting high biblical standards and training both men and women to become effective servant-leaders for the church militant.

As published by the *Evangelical Times*, March 2001.

A 21st Century Reformation Paper: Truth or Lies?



The Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP) of the Sacred Scriptures

Articles on the Defense of the Biblical Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation of the Bible

About True Life
 Bible-Presbyterian Church

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Declaration of Commitment

Student Life

PROFILE

For the Word of God, and for the Testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev 19)

www.febc.edu.sg

MY LIFE IN FEBC
 2002 - 2005

**Pilgrims at Baraka Bible-Presbyterian Church (Shepherd's Field), Bethlehem
FEBC-True Life 12th Holy Land Pilgrimage, March 9-23, 2006**

