

APOSTOLICS & THE KJV

A Historical Look

EXTRA! OFFICIAL POSITION OF EXTRA!
THE UNITED PENTECOSTAL
CHURCH

...So, it is emblazoned with dark, bold letters on page 2 (Front Page) of the November 1953 issue of the *Pentecostal Herald*. What is it referring to? Bible translations. At the 1953 General Conference, the UPCI had made a stand against the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, and for the King James Version of the Bible. Let's read the position paper that is the official position of the UPCI that was voted on and approved at Conference that year. It reads as found on page 8 of the same *Herald*: STATEMENT OF OUR POSITION IN REGARDS TO THE NEW TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE, THE REVISED STANDARD VERSION.

INASMUCH as the United Pentecostal Church believes in the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, given to us by holy men of God, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and we believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, given to us by divine authority; we hereby declare our position regarding the new translation of the Bible, copyrighted by the National Council of Churches in America, as follows;

WHEREAS, upon examining the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, we find many of the fundamentals of our Christian faith and doctrine have been changed and are very misleading, for example: "The virgin birth of Christ," and other truths, and,

WHEREAS, the majority of the committee of translators themselves, according to their associations, connections, and records are proven to be modernist and liberal scholars, who do not believe nor embrace the revealed truths of God's Holy Word, neither the plan of God's salvation, and,

WHEREAS, the list of translators of the Revised Standard Version shows unmistakably that theologically they are liberal scholars, with liberal bias that no orthodox or fundamental scholar is included among them that their position on the Bible is not that of the historic faith of the Apostolic or reformation days, and that there is no evidence that they hold to the literal complete inspiration of the scriptures.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the United Pentecostal Church declares its disapproval of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S., and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we continue to accept the King James Version of the Bible as the most accurate translation of the Scriptures to be used in our churches and among our people.

How Did This Come About?

The entire process is recounted in the same issue of the *Pentecostal Herald*. We find, again on page 2, that this Resolution originated at the Illinois District Conference on May 15, 1953. General Superintendent A.T. Morgan then appointed a committee of seven very highly esteemed ministers to make a report and recommendations on this subject for the next General Board meeting at General Conference. The seven ministers were: O.F. Fauss; V.A. Guidroz; M.J. Wolff; L.R. Thompson; C.H. Yadon; E.L. Jacques, and S.G. Norris. The committee then gave it to the Resolution Committee. It was then presented to the General conference and adopted to become our official position, where it is today.

We will see that among Apostolic churches in the U.S., this has been a very consistent position transcending organizational lines. But before we go there, here are a few more observations concerning the passage of this Position.

First, it is interesting to note that a play was given by the UPC Bible colleges on Saturday morning of that General Conference, "...exposing the deceptiveness of the so-called new Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible."

Second, Bro. M.J. Wolff wrote an extensive article in that edition of the *Herald* entitled, "The New Bible." He gives eight reasons why the RSV shouldn't be accepted among Bible-believing Christians. Among them he says, "The drastic changes made in certain passages of 'this book' are unacceptable to true Christianity!" He then goes on to list some of these changes, and many of them are still being changed in modern versions today. He also goes on to say, "The elimination of vital words and phrases and entire verses from the Bible prove beyond doubt that 'this book' is dangerous to the Christian Faith." (Bold in the original).

Bro. Wolff then goes on to say: They "(a) Strike out passages. (b) Leave out words. (c) Eliminate italics..." He even attacks their usage of quotation marks. He goes on to conclude; (bold in original) "The real danger of the usage of 'this book' is to the younger generation, the uninformed and the unconverted."

The UPCI's Continued Position of Favor of the KJV

The September 1980 edition of the *Pentecostal Herald* contains an article entitled, "Why I Use The King James Version." The author lists many reasons the UPCI uses the KJV, including this statement in bold – "One of the most dangerous things about the newer versions of the Holy Bible is the attack upon the divinity of Jesus." He lists the following reasons for using the KJV as opposed to other versions of the Bible:

1. It is based upon the finest ancient manuscripts.
2. It was translated by the most capable scholars, who believed in the integrity of God's Word.
3. It gives full credit to the divinity of Christ.

He then says, "I regret that the brevity of this article demands we pass quickly over so many important matters." He then gives recommendations of books to read that defend the King James Version.

The UPCI also publishes the Word Aflame Elective Series. In "The Bible Its Origin & Use" [2014], it dedicates an entire chapter detailing why the UPCI uses the King James Version. One of the subheadings in this chapter (6) is "Why We Prefer the King James." It then has headers underneath this subheading, such as: "Nearly every new translation takes from the Scriptures"; "Nearly every new translation makes subtle changes which affect important doctrines"; "Nearly every translation adds to the scriptures." It then adds as a separate paragraph the following, "The King James Version is the accepted Bible for use in the United Pentecostal Church." ^{1& 2}

It then relates. "Although there has been no official statement on the many new translations rendered since the RSV, the same faults which caused us to reject the RSV cause us to reject all the modern speech versions which follow essentially the same Greek text in the New Testament as that followed by the RSV...many of the fundamentals of our Christian faith and doctrine have been changed are very misleading..."

It goes on to say, "God continues to honor the King James Bible wherever it is believed and preached...in the King James Version we actually have the Scriptures. We believe we can hold the Book in our hand and say, 'Here is the Word of God'"

So in 1953 the UPC made a definite stand against the RSV and for the KJV, and since then has continued to hold that stance by and large.

The Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Apostolic Witness, which is the monthly periodical for the ALJC, printed an expansive article entitled “The Danger of Modern Bible Translations” with a subtitle “An Argument for the King James Version” [2004]. In this article, the author follows the history of the Bible from ancient times until our present day. He compares and contrasts certain differences with modern versions and the KJV. He says, “...the King James Version is closer to the original than anything that has been offered to the public in our generation.”

The ALJC also sponsors a Bible college. On their Bible college Facebook page it says, “This school uses the 1611 King James translation of the Bible...”

The Pentecostal Assemblies of the World

In the 13th edition of the Handbook of Denominations in America [Abingdon Press 2010], it is stated of the PAW, “Only the King James Version of the Bible is accepted as the true Word of God.”

While the PAW has issued no definitive statement, I think this is an accurate assessment of their organization as a whole.

Other Apostolics

Almost all other holiness Apostolic organizations and churches would be very strongly in favor of the King James Version of the Bible. The World Wide Pentecostal Fellowship just strongly endorsed the KJV in a seminar at one of their gatherings. I have personally spoken at their churches on this subject, and they would be very much for the KJV.

Closing Thoughts

I feel it would be wise to see some thoughts concerning the KJV from Harvard University Press. *The Literary Guide to The Bible* edited by Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, published in 1987, has this to say, “At its best, which means often, the Authorized Version (KJV) has the kind of transparency which makes it possible for the reader to see the original clearly.” This is found on page 664. Beginning on page 647 thru 665, the superiority of the KJV to modern versions is shown.

It continues, “It (KJV) lacks the narrow interpretive bias of the modern versions, and is the stronger for it...Through its transparency the reader of the Authorized Version not only sees the original but also learns how to read it.”

“Patterns of repetition, the way one clause is linked to another, the effect of unexpected inversions of word order, the readiness of biblical writers to vary tone and register from the highly formal to the scatological, and the different kinds and uses of imagery are all, like so much else, open to any readers of the Renaissance versions³, and best open to them in the Authorized Version (KJV),” Selah

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Footnotes:

1 all underlines added for emphasis.

2 [date] all bracketed dates added.

3 Renaissance versions: English Bibles from the period of John Wycliffe through the KJV.

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