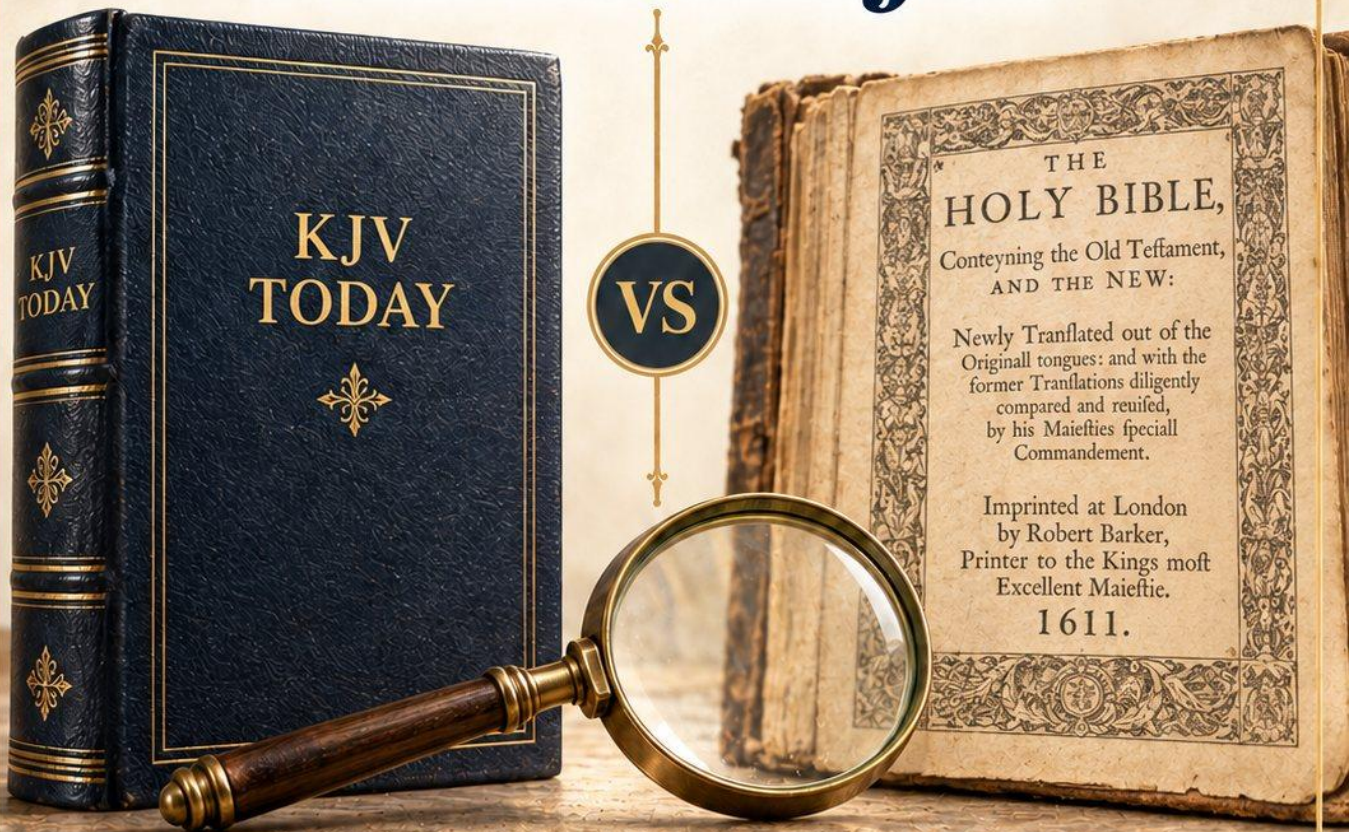


REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

# THE BIBLE TRANSLATION QUESTION

A TEN-PART SERIES | PART TWO OF TEN

## IS THE KJV WE READ TODAY THE SAME AS THE 1611 KJV?



DR. THOMAS W. HAWKSLEY

TRUSTING GOD'S WORD THROUGH CAREFUL EXAMINATION

**REASON TOGETHER CHURCH**

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**SERMON TRANSCRIPT**

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Aloha, church family.

Welcome to Reason Together Church.

Whether you are here in the room, joining us online or listening later, I am grateful that we can open the Scriptures together.

This is a church where honest questions are welcome because truth does not fear careful examination.

Bring your questions. Open your Bible. Let us Reason Together the Word of God.

If you are our honored guest today, thank you for trusting us with part of your weekend.

There is a guest card available for you. We ask only for your first name and email address. We simply want to thank you for being with us and help you take a next step if you desire one.

Our Keiki Kids Center is ready to serve your family with a safe, thoughtful and age-appropriate setting while we study.

After the service, please stay for a cup of coffee in the cafe.

Around here, COFFEE means Christ Offers Forgiveness For Everyone Everywhere.

The coffee is real, the welcome is sincere and the refills on conversations are always free.

We do not pass an offering plate at Reason Together Church.

Our guests are never expected to give. If you are a member of another church, we encourage you to support your home church faithfully. For those who call this church home, there is a giving station available and online giving is available as well.

We want the attention today to remain where it belongs, on the Word of God and the God of the Word.

Let us pray.

Our Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us the holy Scriptures. Thank You that Your truth does not fade with the passing of centuries. Give us honest minds, humble hearts and patient spirits. Help us distinguish what You inspired from the human work of copying, printing and editing. Guard us from careless accusations and from careless denials. Teach us to love truth more than slogans. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Today we continue our ten-part series called The Bible Translation Question.

The first study asked, Can the King James Version of the Bible be fully trusted?

Our answer was yes, when fully trusted means that the KJV reliably communicates the saving message, doctrine and moral instruction of the inspired Scriptures.

We also said that trust does not require us to pretend that translators or printers were inspired apostles.

Today our question is narrower and historical.

Is the KJV we read today the same as the 1611 KJV?

Some people answer with a simple yes.

They say that nothing has changed except spelling and typeface.

Other people answer with a dramatic no.

They point to thousands of differences and speak as if the KJV has been repeatedly rewritten.

Neither statement is careful enough.

The answer depends on what we mean by the word same.

If I ask whether the house where you grew up is the same house today, you may say yes even if it has new paint, a replaced roof and a repaired window.

If I ask whether every board, nail and pane of glass is identical, the answer may be no.

The word same can describe continuing identity.

It can also describe exact sameness in every detail.

The KJV commonly printed today is substantially the same translation as the Bible published in 1611.

It is not the same edition in every printed detail.

That is the thesis of this study.

Please hear Isaiah 40:8.

“The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.”

That verse promises the endurance of God’s Word.

It does not promise that every printer will set every letter correctly.

It does not say that spelling will never change.

It does not say that punctuation marks are inspired in English.

God's enduring Word has come to us through real history, real languages and real human labor.

That should not frighten us.

It should make us grateful and careful.

We begin by separating three things.

A translation is the work of representing Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek meaning in another language.

An edition is a particular prepared form of that translation.

A printing is a physical production of an edition, and any printing can contain mistakes.

Those categories overlap, but they are not identical.

Suppose a printer accidentally leaves the word not out of a commandment.

That is not a new theory of Hebrew.

It is not a new translation philosophy.

It is a printing error.

Suppose an editor changes sonnes to sons.

That is a spelling modernization.

Suppose an editor changes a plural noun to a singular noun because the context requires it.

That affects wording and may affect the immediate sense.

All three changes are changes, but they are not the same kind of change.

Let us make the distinction practical.

Imagine three KJV Bibles on a table.

The first is a photographed reproduction of a 1611 folio.

The second is a modern printing with Roman type, modern spelling and no Apocrypha.

The third is another modern printing that differs from the second at five or ten small readings.

They are not the same physical book.

They are not identical editions.

Yet a person could read the creation account, the Psalms, the Gospel of John and the book of Romans from all three and recognize the same English translation.

That is not wordplay.

It is how textual identity normally works.

We do not call a hymnal a new collection every time a misspelled word is corrected.

We do not call a sermon a different sermon because the printed transcript adds a missing comma.

At the same time, if an editor replaces a word, honesty requires us to say that the wording changed.

Our goal is not to protect a slogan.

Our goal is to describe the evidence at the right scale.

The KJV project began after the Hampton Court Conference in 1604.

King James authorized a new English Bible for use in the Church of England.

The work was divided among companies of learned men who worked at Westminster, Oxford and Cambridge.

The translators were instructed to use the Bishops' Bible as their working base while consulting earlier English Bibles and the Biblical languages.

They compared their work, reviewed one another and prepared a translation intended for public reading in the churches.

Robert Barker, the King's Printer, published the large folio Bible in 1611.

When we say "the 1611 KJV," we need to recognize an immediate complication.

There were two principal settings of the type during that first year.

They are often called the "He Bible" and the "She Bible" because Ruth 3:15 reads differently.

One setting says, "and he went into the city."

The other says, “and she went into the city.”

That is not a modern revision imposed centuries later.

The variation existed among printings dated 1611.

Even the phrase “the exact 1611 text” therefore requires us to ask which setting and which surviving copy.

The first printing also looked very different from the KJV on most church pews today.

The main text was printed largely in blackletter, sometimes called Gothic type.

Its appearance is unfamiliar to many present readers.

The letters i and j were not always used as we use them now.

The letters u and v followed older printing customs.

The long s can look like an f to a modern eye.

Spelling was not standardized as it is today.

The same word could appear in more than one form.

Punctuation and capitalization also followed older habits and were not applied with complete uniformity.

Those facts explain a very large share of the visible differences between a 1611 page and a present KJV page.

Consider John 3:16.

The 1611 page may look strange at first because of type and spelling.

Yet when the old forms are read correctly, the sentence is recognizably the verse cherished today.

Typography can make a familiar translation look foreign without changing its message.

That is worth remembering when someone shows a dramatic photograph of a 1611 page.

The unfamiliar page may be offered as proof that your KJV is completely different.

But unfamiliar appearance is not the same as different content.

If we silently modernize the letter shapes and spelling, much of the drama disappears.

The words become readable again.

The sentences sound like the KJV we know.

There are genuine verbal differences, and we will face them.

But first we must remove differences created only by the eye.

This is why a photograph is evidence but not yet an argument.

We have to read what is actually on the page.

We have to distinguish a letter form from a word form.

We have to distinguish a spelling form from a different word.

The 1611 printers also distinguished words supplied for English sense by printing them in a different style of type.

Later editions generally used italics for that purpose.

An italic word in the KJV does not mean that the word is doubtful or less true.

It normally signals that English grammar requires an expressed word that is not represented by a separate word in the source text.

Later editors adjusted italics many times because the 1611 practice was inconsistent.

Now consider the older pronouns.

Thee, thou, thy and thine were not invented by the KJV translators to create a special religious language.

They were living English forms.

In broad terms, thou was singular subject, thee was singular object, thy and thine were singular possessives, ye was plural subject and you commonly served as a plural object.

English usage was already changing, so the system is not mechanically perfect in every line.

Still, those forms sometimes preserve a distinction that modern English hides.

Listen to Luke 22:31-32.

“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.”

In the Greek, the first “you” is plural.

Satan desired to sift all of them.

Then Jesus turns personally to Peter: “I have prayed for thee.”

The older English helps us hear the movement from the group to the individual.

The pronouns are not later revisions that changed the 1611 translation.

They are part of the translation’s historical English and most present KJV editions retain them.

The original publishing package also contained material that many present KJV printings omit.

It included the dedication to King James.

It included the long preface titled “The Translators to the Reader.”

It included chapter summaries, cross-references and many marginal notes.

The marginal notes sometimes gave alternative translations or acknowledged uncertainty.

The 1611 folio also printed the books commonly called the Apocrypha in a separate section between the Old and New Testaments.

That historical fact should neither be hidden nor exaggerated.

Printing the Apocrypha did not mean that the translators or the Church of England treated those books as equal in authority to the canonical Scriptures.

Article VI of the Church of England distinguished the canonical books from other books read for example of life and instruction of manners, but not used to establish doctrine.

Many Protestant Bibles of that era included the Apocrypha in a separate section.

Its presence tells us about the publishing practice of the time.

Its absence from many modern KJV printings tells us about later publishing practice.

Neither fact proves that the Biblical translation itself was replaced.

The preface and marginal notes also teach us something about the translators.

They were confident enough to translate and humble enough to acknowledge difficulty.

At some places they placed another possible rendering in the margin.

At some places they supplied a more literal expression.

That does not make the KJV uncertain as a whole.

It shows responsible scholarship.

A faithful translator sometimes knows that a Hebrew or Greek expression can be represented in more than one responsible way.

The 1611 readers were allowed to see that fact.

Many modern readers never see those notes because their edition does not print them.

We should not blame the translators for claims they did not make and for notes a later publisher omitted.

Then there were printing errors.

Printing a folio Bible by hand-set type was a massive undertaking.

Letters could be reversed.

Words could be repeated.

Lines could be omitted.

A compositor could set a familiar word in place of the intended word.

The 1611 settings contain such errors.

In Matthew 26:36, one early setting printed “Then cometh Judas with them” where the passage plainly requires Jesus.

In Exodus 14:10, lines were accidentally repeated in one setting.

In Psalm 69:32, one setting printed “seek good” where the intended reading was “seek God.”

Correcting those errors did not corrupt the KJV.

It repaired the printing so that it expressed the translation more accurately.

The most famous defective edition came in 1631.

In Exodus 20:14, the word not was omitted.

The page therefore read, “Thou shalt commit adultery.”

That printing became known as the Wicked Bible.

No serious Christian argues that the seventh commandment changed in 1631.

The Hebrew did not change.

The translators' decision did not change.

A printer dropped a word.

The error was condemned and corrected.

This example is useful because it shows why we must not call every printed difference a translation revision.

During the seventeenth century, Cambridge editions of 1629 and 1638 performed important corrective work.

They removed many obvious printing errors.

They regularized parts of the text.

They also introduced a limited number of editorial changes that went beyond spelling.

We should not say that every change was merely mechanical.

We also should not describe those editions as fresh translations.

The 1629 and 1638 editors worked within the inherited KJV and tried to establish a cleaner text.

The surviving evidence does not allow us to identify every editor or motive with equal certainty.

That is an important sentence.

Where the record is incomplete, honesty requires the words we know and we do not know.

Sometimes advocates tell the story as if several original translators returned to the press and personally certified every correction.

There are historical connections between the revision work and men associated with the translation era.

There is also incomplete documentation.

We should not turn a possibility into a certainty simply because it supports our position.

The KJV does not need an embellished history in order to be respected.

Truth is strong enough to stand with the footnotes attached.

The eighteenth century brought further standardization.

Francis Sawyer Parris worked on Cambridge editions that culminated in influential printings of 1760 and 1762.

Benjamin Blayney prepared the great Oxford folio of 1769.

Blayney reported that he spent nearly four years on the work.

He collated earlier KJV editions.

He attended to punctuation, spelling, italics, summaries, cross-references and chronology.

He consulted the Hebrew and Greek where necessary.

That is real editorial work.

It should not be minimized.

Yet it was not a commission to make a new English translation.

Blayney was standardizing and correcting the Authorized Version.

The 1769 edition became enormously influential, but even it was not a flawless final form that every later printer copied identically.

Blayney's work also helps us understand why a modern KJV is easier to read than a facsimile.

The spelling is more consistent.

The punctuation is more regular.

Names are presented more uniformly.

The system of italics is fuller.

Cross-references and chapter summaries were revised.

These changes involved judgment and labor.

They were not magic.

Blayney could correct earlier printers and still make mistakes himself.

Later editors could preserve his standard and still differ from him in a few places.

That is what we expect when human beings care for a text across centuries.

It contained errors of its own.

Later Oxford, Cambridge and commercial editions continued to differ in small places.

When someone holds up a modern KJV and calls it “the 1769,” that is understandable as a shorthand description.

Most present editions stand in the 1769 editorial tradition.

But the label should not be taken to mean that every letter, punctuation mark and reading is an exact reproduction of Blayney’s folio.

Let us examine some genuine wording changes.

In Ezra 2:22, the 1611 reading “the children of Netophah” became “the men of Netophah.”

In 2 Corinthians 11:32, “the city of the Damascenes” replaced the shorter wording “the city.”

In 1 Timothy 1:4, editions changed “rather than edifying which is in faith” to “rather than godly edifying which is in faith.”

These are not merely changes from old spelling to new spelling.

They affect the words on the page and may clarify the immediate sense.

That is why the claim “only spelling changed” is too strong.

Yet what do these examples show?

They show editorial correction and adjustment within the same translation.

They do not show a new gospel.

They do not remove the deity of Christ.

They do not change salvation by grace through faith.

They do not change the resurrection.

They do not change the Trinity.

They do not change any essential Biblical doctrine.

Present-day KJV editions can also differ among themselves.

One edition may print “and Sheba” in Joshua 19:2 while another prints “or Sheba.”

One may print “vapour” in Psalm 148:8 while another prints “vapours.”

One may read “ye had polluted” in Jeremiah 34:16 while another has “he had polluted.”

At Matthew 26:39, editions may differ between farther and further.

At Nahum 3:16, one may print fleeth and another flieth.

Those differences deserve documentation.

They do not justify pretending that every book labeled KJV is typographically identical.

They also do not justify saying that Oxford and Cambridge print different Bibles.

Now we can evaluate the slogans.

The first slogan says, “There have been no changes.”

That is demonstrably false if it means no change in letters, spelling, punctuation, italics or wording.

The second slogan says, “There were changes, but every one was only spelling or punctuation.”

That is also too strong because a limited set of changes affects wording.

The third slogan says, “There are tens of thousands of revisions.”

That statement can mislead even when it begins with a real collation number.

Scholars have counted roughly twenty-four thousand differences when spelling, punctuation, capitalization, typography and other details are included.

That is a count of differences under a broad method.

It is not a count of twenty-four thousand new translation decisions.

If one person counts every changed punctuation mark and another counts only changes in words, their totals will be radically different.

The total does not interpret itself.

We must always ask what was counted.

Suppose I compare two paragraphs and count every changed letter.

Changing honour to honor gives me one word difference and one letter difference.

Suppose I count the removal of one comma as another difference.

Suppose the same spelling appears fifty times and is modernized fifty times.

My number grows quickly even though the thought of the paragraph remains the same.

Now suppose I replace the word grace with debt.

That may count as only one difference, but it has far greater meaning.

Counting cannot replace classification.

Ten thousand small mechanical differences can be less significant than one changed doctrinal word.

The responsible historian tells us both how many and what kind.

Another claim speaks of about four hundred changes.

That smaller figure usually comes from a more restrictive category of textual or wording differences.

It is not the total of every visible difference.

Again, the category matters more than the drama of the number.

The fairest conclusion is neither “nothing changed” nor “the KJV was rewritten thousands of times.”

The fair conclusion is that thousands of mechanical and editorial details changed, while the number of substantive wording changes is much smaller.

Some wording changes affect the immediate sense.

None turns the KJV into a different translation or destroys essential Biblical doctrine.

So is the KJV we read today the same as the 1611 KJV?

If same means the identical physical edition with the same type, spelling, punctuation, marginal material and every reading, no.

If same means substantially the same English translation with the same textual identity, message and doctrinal substance, yes.

That qualified answer is not evasive.

It is more precise than either slogan.

It also helps us distinguish preservation from printing perfection.

God preserved His Word through manuscripts, translations, editors, proofreaders and printers who were all capable of ordinary human error.

Providence does not require us to deny the humanity of the process.

Providence means that human weakness did not defeat God's purpose.

We possess abundant evidence by which errors can be identified and corrected.

The printing history is not a secret that destroys confidence.

It is part of the evidence that allows confidence to be informed.

Think about what had to happen for us to know these facts.

Copies survived.

Libraries preserved them.

Scholars compared them.

Printers' errors could be seen because other copies, other editions and the source texts supplied checks.

The very evidence used to criticize the KJV also demonstrates how openly its history can be examined.

We are not being asked to trust a hidden chain that cannot be tested.

We can look at 1611 pages.

We can read Scrivener's collations.

We can inspect Blayney's report.

We can compare a present Oxford or Cambridge printing.

Historical confidence grows through inspection, not through refusal to inspect.

What should we do with this information?

First, read the KJV with gratitude.

Its long service to the English-speaking church deserves respect.

Second, speak precisely.

Do not claim that nothing has changed when surviving books can be compared.

Do not claim that every difference is a doctrinal alteration when the evidence shows mostly spelling, punctuation and printing.

Third, be charitable.

A Christian who learns about editions has not abandoned the Word of God.

A Christian who loves the KJV is not therefore ignorant of history.

Fourth, let the history direct attention back to the message.

There is also a fifth response.

Teach the next generation without fear.

If a young Christian discovers the Wicked Bible on the internet after being told that no KJV printing ever changed, the discovery may feel like betrayal.

The problem is not the historical fact.

The problem is the unnecessary claim.

We can prepare believers better.

We can say that God inspired the prophets and apostles.

We can say that translators performed faithful but human work.

We can say that printers sometimes erred and editors sometimes corrected them.

We can say that the KJV remained substantially stable through that process.

That account is honest enough for the classroom and strong enough for the church.

The editors did not labor so that we could win arguments about commas.

They labored so that people could read the Scriptures.

The Scriptures lead us to Jesus Christ.

The Bible's saving message did not change between the He Bible and the She Bible.

It did not change in 1629.

It did not change in 1638.

It did not change in 1762 or 1769.

It has not changed in the Oxford or Cambridge edition you may hold today.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

That message is clear.

Christ died for our sins.

He was buried.

He rose again.

He calls us to repent and believe.

No printing history can save us.

No favorite edition can save us.

Jesus saves.

If you have never trusted Him, you can call upon Him today.

You do not need to master the history of 1611 before coming to Christ.

You need to recognize your sin, trust the crucified and risen Savior and receive the gift of eternal life.

Let us pray.

Our Heavenly Father, thank You for the men who translated, edited, printed and preserved access to the Scriptures. Forgive us when loyalty becomes exaggeration or criticism becomes contempt. Give us courage to tell the truth, patience to examine evidence and love for brothers and sisters who reach different conclusions. Most of all, draw every hearer to Your Son. May those who do not know Christ trust Him today. May believers become more faithful readers and doers of Your Word. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Church family, the history we examined today does not leave us with a weaker Bible.

It leaves us with a more honest understanding of how the Bible in our hands came through history.

You may keep reading your KJV with confidence.

Read it thoughtfully.

Use its helps.

Learn its older forms.

When an edition question arises, examine the evidence before repeating a number or slogan.

The grass withereth.

The flower fadeth.

Printers make mistakes.

Spelling changes.

Editions differ.

“But the word of our God shall stand for ever.”

Aloha Nui Loa.

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**PASTOR'S COMMENTARY**

**Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley**

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## Introduction

RTS-101 asks an edition-history question rather than a general translation-comparison question. The sermon's qualified answer is deliberate. Today's commonly printed KJV preserves the identity and substance of the 1611 translation, but it does not reproduce every physical, typographical or editorial feature of a 1611 folio.

The commentary follows the sermon's progression. It supplies definitions, evidential cautions and source direction for claims that must be expressed more simply in oral teaching.

### 1 What Does Same Mean?

Same can refer to identity through time or exact identity in every detail. Historical objects routinely retain a name through maintenance and correction. The analogy must not do more work than the evidence, but it helps listeners recognize why an unqualified yes or no is inadequate.

The central formula is substantial translation identity without exact edition identity. Substantial does not mean vague. It means that the English translation, its message and its doctrinal content remain recognizably continuous even though printed forms and a limited number of readings changed.

Isaiah 40:8 is used devotionally, not as a technical prediction of edition history. The verse affirms the endurance of God's Word. It does not specify that every act of typesetting will be error-free. That distinction prevents a providential doctrine of preservation from becoming a claim of printer inspiration.

### 2 Translation, Edition and Printing

A translation is a linguistic work. An edition is an editorially prepared presentation of that work. A printing is a physical production of an edition. The categories help classify evidence before drawing theological conclusions.

The same edition can have a defective impression. Two editions can contain the same translation while differing in spelling or punctuation. An editor can also change wording without creating a completely new translation. Classification is therefore a matter of degree and function, not merely whether ink differs on two pages.

The Wicked Bible illustrates the distinction. The omitted "not" at Exodus 20:14 radically reverses the sentence, but it is demonstrably a printing error. Its magnitude of meaning does not turn it into a translator's doctrinal decision.

### 3 The 1611 Production

The Hampton Court Conference took place in 1604, and the new translation emerged from a structured corporate process. Companies worked at Westminster, Oxford and Cambridge. The rules directed use of the Bishops' Bible as the base while allowing consultation of earlier English translations and the source languages.

Robert Barker published the folio in 1611. Large hand-set books were vulnerable to compositorial and press errors. The material history should be stated without contempt. Printing technology was remarkably productive, but it was not mechanically infallible.

The translators' preface remains essential. It demonstrates that the translators understood their task as learned revision and translation, not as a new apostolic act. The preface also explains marginal alternatives, which matter when evaluating later claims of one uniquely possible English wording.

## 4 He Bible and She Bible

The labels come from Ruth 3:15. One principal 1611 setting reads "he went into the city," while the other reads "she went into the city." The variation may reflect compositorial correction or differing textual judgment, but the sermon does not need to settle the production sequence.

The pastoral point is modest. "The 1611 KJV" is already a bibliographically complex expression. If two books dated 1611 differ, exact sameness cannot be established merely by appealing to a year on a title page.

Avoid suggesting that only one verse differs between the settings. Ruth 3:15 supplies the nickname, not the entire collation. Scrivener's appendix documents many setting variations, most of which are minor.

## 5 Reading a 1611 Page

Blackletter is a family of type styles, not a different language. The 1611 main text also used Roman type for contrastive purposes. Modern readers often call blackletter Gothic. Either label is serviceable if the sermon makes clear that the issue is typeface.

Older letter conventions can mislead the eye. Long s resembles f, u and v may appear according to position rather than modern identity and i and j were not fully differentiated by current custom. Spelling could vary within the same book.

Punctuation and capitalization deserve their own category because they can guide interpretation. Most changes are not doctrinally significant, but saying punctuation never affects sense would be false. The responsible claim is that extensive punctuation standardization occurred and must not be counted as though each mark were a fresh translation of Hebrew or Greek.

Supplied words were often distinguished by contrasting type in 1611. Italics became the normal convention in Roman-type editions. Later editors regularized italics, sometimes imperfectly. The marks are editorial aids and should not be treated as indicators that the supplied English thought is optional.

## 6 Thee, Thou, Ye and You

The sermon says "in broad terms" because Early Modern English usage was not frozen. Thou and thee usually mark singular number, while ye and you usually mark plural number, but social usage and grammatical transition complicate a rigid chart.

Luke 22:31-32 is unusually clear because the Greek changes from plural humas to singular sou. The KJV's "you" followed by "thee" and "thy" preserves this movement. This is a genuine strength of the historical forms.

The example should not be used to claim that every KJV pronoun mechanically maps number and case without exception. Its value is exegetical and pastoral: Satan's demand concerned the group, while Christ's stated intercession addresses Peter personally.

## 7 Front Matter, Notes and Apocrypha

Modern KJV owners may never have seen The Translators to the Reader because many publishers omit it. Omission changes the edition package and can impoverish historical understanding, but it does not alter the canonical text printed from Genesis through Revelation.

Original marginal notes include cross-references, literal renderings and alternatives. They show that the translators sometimes judged more than one English expression possible. This is direct evidence from the 1611 publication itself.

The Apocrypha was printed between the Testaments. Article VI gives the governing Anglican distinction: these other books were read for life and manners but not applied to establish doctrine. The sermon must report presence and status separately. Presence is a bibliographical fact. Canonical equality is a theological inference that the Church of England's own article does not support.

Calendars, genealogies and maps should be qualified because copies and issue packages can differ. Avoid a universal claim that every 1611 copy contained every auxiliary item now associated with a complete folio.

## 8 Printing Errors

Matthew 26:36 “Judas” for “Jesus” is a transparent error because the narrative identifies Jesus as the speaker who comes with the disciples to Gethsemane. Exodus 14:10 illustrates accidental repetition. Psalm 69:32 “seek good” for “seek God” illustrates a one-letter substitution with meaningful effect.

The 1631 Wicked Bible provides the most memorable case, but humor should be restrained. The point is not to ridicule early printers. It is to show that a meaningful printed error can be identified without concluding that Scripture or the KJV translation changed.

When possible, identify the setting and edition attached to an error. Popular lists often merge errors from different years into a single imagined 1611 text. The research vault retains the larger distinction even when the sermon uses only a few examples.

## 9 The 1629 and 1638 Cambridge Revisions

These editions corrected many errors and helped stabilize the printed text. They also introduced editorial readings that later became standard. Therefore the sermon avoids two extremes: calling them only reprints and calling them new translations.

The identity of the revisers is not equally documented. Scrivener's historical reconstruction and a manuscript note provide valuable evidence, but claims about direct participation by original translators should be framed cautiously. The language “has been associated with” is safer than “was revised by the original translators.”

Revision is not a hostile word. An editor can revise the presentation of a translation to restore intended readings and improve consistency. The theological question is what was revised and with what effect.

## 10 Parris, Blayney and Standardization

Francis Sawyer Parris was the leading Cambridge standardizer in the middle eighteenth century. References to “the 1762 Cambridge” should not erase his 1760 octavo or the broader sequence of Cambridge work. For public teaching, 1762 is a useful landmark because it represents the influential folio tradition requested in the study.

Benjamin Blayney's 1769 Oxford folio is often treated as the source of the modern KJV. That is broadly true as an editorial lineage, but not as exact facsimile identity. Blayney relied substantially on the Cambridge work and undertook his own collation and standardization.

His report, reproduced by Scrivener, is primary evidence for his method. Nearly four years of work addressed punctuation, italics, proper names, chapter summaries, cross-references and chronology. Consultation of Hebrew and Greek does not by itself make the result a new translation. It shows responsible editorial recourse to the sources when resolving questions.

Blayney's folio retained the Apocrypha and the major prefaces. Later publishers often removed this material for cost, market or denominational reasons. Modern shorthand that calls a Bible "1769" generally refers to its text family, not every feature of the actual Oxford folio.

## 11 Mechanical and Substantive Examples

Mechanical examples include *sonnes* to *sons*, *euery* to *every* and the modernization of *u* and *v*. Typographical corrections include *Judas* to *Jesus* at Matthew 26:36 and *good* to *God* at Psalm 69:32. These categories are usually uncontroversial once the pages are compared.

Wording examples such as *children* to *men* in Ezra 2:22, the addition of "of the Damascenes" in 2 Corinthians 11:32 and the addition of "godly" in 1 Timothy 1:4 deserve the label substantive in a limited sense. They change lexical content and may affect the immediate sense.

Substantive does not automatically mean doctrinally destructive. It means more than typography or spelling. Preserving that distinction lets the teacher acknowledge real evidence without inflating its theological consequence.

Ruth 3:15 belongs in both the printing-history and wording categories. The variation changes the grammatical subject. It does not change the moral or theological point of Ruth.

## 12 Present-Day Oxford and Cambridge Differences

It is tempting to speak of "the Oxford text" and "the Cambridge text" as two immutable entities. In reality, presses have issued different settings across time and commercial publishers may borrow or modify them. A claim should therefore identify an actual edition whenever precision matters.

Joshua 19:2, Psalm 148:8, Jeremiah 34:16, Matthew 26:39 and Nahum 3:16 provide manageable examples. They show continuing minor variation without requiring an exhaustive collation in the sermon.

No essential doctrine depends on whether a modern KJV prints *vapour* or *vapours*, *farther* or *further* or *fleeth* or *flieth*. Jeremiah 34:16 has a more noticeable grammatical difference, but its context still identifies the people who profaned God's name by reversing the release of servants.

## 13 Understanding the Counts

A difference count is meaningful only after the comparison units are defined. A character-level collation can produce a very large number. A word-level collation produces another. A list restricted to editorial readings produces a much smaller total.

The often repeated figure of roughly 24,000 reflects a broad comparison that includes spelling and punctuation. It must not be translated rhetorically into 24,000 meaningful revisions. The approximately

400 figure comes from narrower classifications and should not be presented as the count of every visible change.

The safest sermon language is “roughly” and “about,” followed immediately by what the number includes. Do not attach false precision to a count drawn from different base copies or editorial categories.

The burden of proof belongs to anyone using a number polemically. Ask: Which 1611 setting? Which later edition? Were punctuation and capitalization counted? Were repeated changes counted separately? Were corrected misprints classified as revisions?

## **14 Doctrinal Continuity**

RTS-101 does not argue that every change is trivial. It argues that the documented changes do not replace the KJV’s doctrinal system. The identity of Christ, the gospel and the Bible’s major doctrines remain abundantly attested across the translation.

This is consistent with RTS-100. Trustworthiness does not depend on treating editors as inspired apostles. The KJV can be reliable while its edition history remains human, recoverable and open to examination.

The doctrine of preservation should be stated positively. God’s providence worked through the survival of manuscripts, multiple copies, public use, editorial comparison and correction. The abundance of evidence is what makes many printing errors detectable.

## **15 Pastoral Application and Gospel Invitation**

The sermon moves from evidence to four responses: gratitude, precision, charity and renewed reading. This sequence prevents the historical material from becoming an end in itself.

The invitation uses Romans 3:23, Romans 5:8, Romans 6:23 and Romans 10:9 in the KJV. These texts demonstrate the continuity that matters most pastorally. Edition history does not obscure the call to trust the crucified and risen Christ.

The closing returns to Isaiah 40:8. The contrast between changing flowers and God’s enduring Word gives the congregation a memorable final frame. “Printers make mistakes. Spelling changes. Editions differ” acknowledges history. “The word of our God shall stand for ever” affirms confidence.

The phrase Aloha Nui Loa preserves the established Reason Together Church closing and completes the movement from welcome to blessing.

## **16 Language for Difficult Conversations**

When speaking with a Christian who says “nothing changed,” begin with shared confidence in Scripture. Ask what the speaker means by changed. A person may be defending the continuity of the translation rather than making a bibliographical claim. Once categories are defined, agreement is often closer than the slogans suggest.

When speaking with a critic who cites tens of thousands of revisions, ask for the base editions and counting method. Do not dismiss the count before understanding it. Then separate orthographic occurrences from distinct wording decisions.

Useful pastoral language includes: “That is a real printed difference,” “That example corrects an obvious error,” “That wording change affects the immediate sense,” and “That evidence does not

establish a different translation.” Each sentence concedes what the evidence supports without conceding what it does not.

Avoid saying “It is only a typo” when the changed wording matters to the listener. Better language is: “The error is meaningful on the page, but its historical cause is printing and the correct reading is recoverable.”

## 17 Why This History Can Strengthen Confidence

Confidence based on ignorance is fragile. Confidence based on accessible evidence can absorb new facts. RTS-101 deliberately includes the strongest examples rather than waiting for an opponent to introduce them.

The survival of multiple copies is not an embarrassment. It is part of the checking system. A unique damaged copy could conceal an error. Multiple copies and editions expose it. Comparison with the Hebrew and Greek adds another level of control.

The KJV’s stability is best measured across whole books and doctrines, not by pretending that no comma moved. Readers of a present KJV encounter the same characteristic translation, literary language and doctrinal witness recognized in the 1611 folios.

The historical record therefore supports mature confidence: God’s Word is enduring, translation and printing are human stewardships and honest correction serves rather than threatens fidelity.

## Reference Table for Spoken Examples

| Passage or item     | Earlier or variant form    | Common later form or significance                   |
|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Ruth 3:15           | he went into the city      | she went into the city; names the two 1611 settings |
| Matthew 26:36       | Judas                      | Jesus; obvious 1611 setting error                   |
| Psalms 69:32        | seek good                  | seek God; typographical correction                  |
| Exodus 20:14, 1631  | Thou shalt commit adultery | omitted not; Wicked Bible                           |
| Ezra 2:22           | children of Netophah       | men of Netophah; wording change                     |
| 2 Corinthians 11:32 | the city                   | the city of the Damascenes; wording addition        |
| 1 Timothy 1:4       | edifying which is in faith | godly edifying which is in faith                    |
| Joshua 19:2         | and Sheba                  | or Sheba in some present settings                   |
| Psalms 148:8        | vapour                     | vapours in some present settings                    |
| Jeremiah 34:16      | ye had polluted            | he had polluted in some settings                    |

## Selected Sources

**1611 King James Bible, Bodleian Libraries digitized copy.**

<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/6ede2a21-47fb-4a04-bbcc-75390051607e/> Primary scan for title matter, typography, marginalia, Apocrypha and printed readings.

**F. H. A. Scrivener, The Authorized Edition of the English Bible (1611), 1884.**

[https://books.google.com/books/about/The\\_Authorized\\_Edition\\_of\\_the\\_English\\_Bi.html?id=JJDAuGExAVgC](https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Authorized_Edition_of_the_English_Bi.html?id=JJDAuGExAVgC) Foundational historical collation, including 1611 errors, setting variants and Blayney’s report.

**F. H. A. Scrivener, accessible Internet Archive scan.** <https://archive.org/details/cu31924029268708> Full scan suitable for checking appendices and documentary material.

**David Norton, A Textual History of the King James Bible.**

[https://books.google.com/books/about/A\\_Textual\\_History\\_of\\_the\\_King\\_James\\_Bibl.html?id=W3oVRK4I7UsC](https://books.google.com/books/about/A_Textual_History_of_the_King_James_Bibl.html?id=W3oVRK4I7UsC) Modern scholarly history of the KJV text and its editorial development.

**Benjamin Blayney's 1769 Oxford edition.** <https://archive.org/details/kjv-1769-oxford-edition-full-bible> Primary scan for the influential Oxford standardization.

**Church of England, Article VI of the Thirty-nine Articles.** <https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-life/what-we-believe/articles-religion> Primary doctrinal context for the status of canonical books and other books.

**Cambridge Paragraph Bible, edited by F. H. A. Scrivener, 1873.**

<https://archive.org/details/cambridgeparagra00scri> Important later critical edition and historical introduction.

**Pure Cambridge Text, Concerning the 1769 Blayney Bible.**

<https://www.purecambridgetext.com/post/concerning-the-1769-blayney-bible> KJV-preferred presentation. Useful for viewpoint and present-edition claims, subject to primary-source verification.

## **Final Pastoral Summary**

A congregation does not need a myth of perfect printing in order to possess a trustworthy Bible. It needs a truthful account of inspiration, providence and human stewardship. The KJV's edition history displays ordinary errors, diligent correction and remarkable continuity. That history permits gratitude without exaggeration and investigation without fear.