

## **And These Three Are One**

1 John 5:7 is the clearest verse in the Bible regarding the Holy Trinity, yet it is missing in many modern versions like the NIV, NASB, RSV, NRSV and Jehovah witness versions.

Those who say this verse is not part of Holy Scripture will often say it is not found in the majority of Greek manuscripts and for this reason it should not be included in the Bible.

It is true that the words "in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth" are not found in the majority of remaining Greek manuscripts that exist today. However there is very much and weighty evidence for its inclusion.

Those who argue that it is not in the majority of texts are being totally inconsistent when they bring up this argument. Most of the people like James White and Daniel B. Wallace who use this majority argument, do not care one bit for the majority of texts and what they might read. They themselves follow the UBS text of Westcott and Hort which itself departs from the majority readings in literally thousands of places.

It should be noted too that Michael Maynard significantly points out that there are only 5 remaining Greek manuscripts that even contain the epistle of 1 John in whole or in part that date from the 7th century or before. That is a whole lot of time to have passed by with only 5 partial Greek witnesses that remain today.

The old commentators on 1 John 5:7 - John Calvin, John Gill, Matthew Henry, John Wesley. JOHN WESLEY commented on 1 John 5:7 saying: " I would insist only on the direct words, unexplained, just as they lie in the text: "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: And these three are one."

"As they lie in the text : " -- but here arises a question: Is that text genuine? Was it originally written by the Apostle, or inserted in later ages? Many have doubted of this; and, in particular, the great light of the Christian church, lately removed to the Church above, Bengelius, -- the most pious, the most judicious, and the most laborious, of all the modern Commentators on the New Testament. For some time he stood in doubt of its authenticity, because it is wanting in many of the ancient copies. But his doubts were removed by three considerations: (1.) That though it is wanting in many copies, yet it is found in more; and those copies of the greatest authority: -- ( 2.) That it is cited by a whole gain of ancient writers, from the time of St. John to that of Constantine. This argument is conclusive: For they could not have cited it, had it not been in the sacred canon: -- (3.) That we can easily account for its being, after that time, wanting in many copies, when we remember that Constantine's successor was a zealous Arian, who used every means to promote his bad cause, to spread Arianism throughout the empire; in particular the erasing this text out of as many copies as fell into his hands. And he so far prevailed, that the age in which he lived is commonly styled, *Seculum Aranium*, -- "the Arian age;" there being

then only one eminent man who opposed him at the peril of his life. So that it was a proverb, Athanasius contra mundum: "Athanasius against the world."

To read their entire quotes in context, see this

site: [http://turretinfan.blogspot.com/2007\\_04\\_22\\_archive.html](http://turretinfan.blogspot.com/2007_04_22_archive.html)

Athanasius appears to have quoted the Comma in *Disputatio Contra Arium*:

"Τί δὲ καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀφέσεως τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν παρεκτικὸν, καὶ ζωοποιὸν, καὶ ἁγιαστικὸν λουτρὸν, οὐ χωρὶς οὐδεὶς ὄψεται τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, οὐκ ἐν τῇ τρισμακαρίᾳ ὀνομασίᾳ δίδοται τοῖς πιστοῖς; Πρὸς δὲ τούτοις πᾶσιν Ἰωάννης φάσκει· «Καὶ οἱ τρεῖς τὸ ἓν εἰσιν.»"

"But also, is not that sin-remitting, life-giving and sanctifying washing [baptism], without which, no one shall see the kingdom of heaven, given to the faithful in the Thrice-Blessed Name? In addition to all these, John affirms, 'and these three are one.'"

#### [ONLINE LINK to Disputatio Contra Arium](#)

The clause "and these three are one", attributed to John, is quoted here explicitly in the context of the Trinity (of Matthew 28:19). If this work is indeed by Athanasius, then the Comma was cited in Greek by the 4th century. There is in fact no reason to doubt the Athanasian authorship, other than the fact that anti-Comma critics in modern times have done so in order to discredit the quotation of the Comma. Even if this work was by someone else, a "Pseudo-Athanasius," the work is still support for a Greek witness to the Comma well before 1000 AD. Thus the often heard claim that the Greek Church was unaware of the Comma for over a millennium is false. In English Francis Cheynell pointed this out as early as 1650; before that, in Latin is Estius (1614). The divine triunity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit ; or the blessed doctrine of the three co-essential substances in the eternal Godhead without any confusion or division of the distinct substances, or multiplication of the most single and entire Godhead (1650)

Francis Cheynell

<http://books.google.com/books?id=gQE3AAAAMAAJ&pg=PA255>

"This Text is cited by the Ancient Fathers, by Athanasius in his dispute with Arrius at the

counsel of Nice, and Arrius never denied it for to be Scripture, which certainly he would have done, if there had been any doubt made of it in the Primitive times."

#### A Defense of the Johannine Comma

#### Setting the Record Straight on I John 5:7-8

<http://www.studytoanswer.net/bibleversions/1john5n7.html>

The next to rely upon I John 5:7 in his work is Athanasius, the great (Greek) defender of the orthodox faith in the first half of the fourth century. Gill observes that Athanasius, around 350 AD, cited the verse in his writing against the Arians. <sup>73</sup> A clear citation of the Comma is also found in the Synopsis, also known as the Dialogue between an Athanasian and an Arian, attributable to Athanasius. Critics have attempted to dismiss the Dialogue as spurious, largely on the basis of stylistic arguments (i.e. the style of the Dialogue is not consistent with Athanasius' other writings). For example, one early critic to make this argument was the 18th century classics scholar Richard Porson. However, Charles Forster <sup>74</sup> refuted this line of argument by showing that the style and type of citation employed in the Dialogue is entirely consistent with that which appear in other works of Athanasius that are accepted as genuine by all. Additionally, David Martin (who believed that one of Athanasius' contemporaries was the author) writing in 1772, observed that the Dialogue itself speaks of the Emperor Constantine in the present tense, as ruling with his son Constantius, which would argue for a date of composition in the first half of the 4th century. <sup>75</sup> Hence, there is no real reason to accept the arguments that the Dialogue is spurious or late - a position which appears to exist for no other reason than to try to get around the evidence testifying to the authenticity of the Comma. Further, as Forster points out, even if the Dialogue were attributable to one Maximus, writing in the 7th century, as some revisionists allege, this would still clearly demonstrate the existence of the Comma in the Greek witness at an extremely early date, which destroys the claims of critics that the Comma only appeared in Greek at a very late date.

(73) - See John Gill's Exposition of the Bible, comments on I John 5:7, where he states that Athanasius cites the verse in his Contr. Arium.

(74) - Forster, op. cit., pp. 48-63

(75) - See D. Martin, The Genuineness of the Text of the First Epistle of Saint John, Chap. v., V. 7, pp. 137-8

JOHN CALVIN - "However, the passage flows better when this clause is added, and as I see that IT IS FOUND IN THE BEST AND MOST APPROVED COPIES, I am inclined to receive it as the true reading."

MATTHEW HENRY on 1 John 5:7 - "We are stopped in our course by the contest there is about the genuineness of v. 7. It is alleged that many old Greek manuscripts have it not. It should seem that the critics are not agreed what manuscripts have it and what not; nor do they sufficiently inform us of the integrity and value of the manuscripts they peruse...There are some rational surmises that seem to support the present text and reading."

"The seventh verse is very agreeable to the style and the theology of our apostle...Facundus acknowledges that Cyprian says that of his three it is written, *Et hi tres unum sunt*—and these three are one. NOW THESE ARE THE WORDS, NOT OF V. 8, BUT OF V. 7. They are not used concerning the three on earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; but the three in heaven, the Father, and the Word, and the Holy Ghost...If all the Greek manuscripts and ancient versions say concerning the Spirit, the water, and the blood, that in *unum sunt*—they agree in one, then it was not of them that Cyprian spoke, whatever variety there might be in the copies in his time, when he said it is written, *unum sunt*—they are one. And THEREFORE CYPRIAN'S WORDS SEEM STILL TO BE A FIRM TESTIMONY TO V. 7."

"It was far more easy for a transcriber, by turning away his eye, or by the obscurity of the copy, it being obliterated or defaced on the top or bottom of a page, or worn away in such materials as the ancients had to write upon, to lose and omit the passage, than for an interpolator to devise and insert it. He must be very bold and impudent who could hope to escape detection and shame; and profane too, who durst venture to make an addition to a supposed sacred book."

"I think, in the book of God,... THE TEXT IS WORTHY OF ALL ACCEPTATION."

As a side note, the entire quote by Cyprian is this: In his *De catholicae ecclesiae unitate* 6, he says, "The Lord says, 'I and the Father are one'; and again it is written of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, 'And these three are one.'" This cannot be said of verse 8 where it says: "the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." That verse is not referring to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Only verse 7 does this.

You can see the quote from Cyprian in context here - [http://www.pennuto.com/bible/1jn5\\_7.htm](http://www.pennuto.com/bible/1jn5_7.htm)

It is sometimes erroneously asserted that this text originated close to the time of Erasmus.

However, even the UBS Greek NT (4th ed.) notes that the "comma" is attested by the Latin church fathers (**Cyprian**) (d. 258), (**Pseudo-Cyprian**) (4th century), (**Priscillian**) (d. 385), the **Speculum** (5th century), **Varimadum** (UBS date "445/480"), **Pseudo-Vigilius** (4th or 5th century), and **Fulgentius** (d. 533), as well as a few manuscripts. And these notes are found in the very Greek editions of those who oppose its inclusion in the New Testament!

The UBS critical text keeps changing both its Greek texts and the footnotes found at the bottom of its pages. In addition to the names found in the UBS 4th edition that supported the inclusion of the Three witnesses in heaven - Cyprian, Priscillian and Fulgentius, the UBS 1st edition also lists **Varimadum**, **Cassian** and Ansbert.

**Varimadum** was an anti-Arian work compiled by an unknown writer in 380 A.D. that states: "And John the Evangelist says, . . . 'And there are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one'." Additionally, **Cassian (435 AD)**, Cassiodorus (580 AD), and a host of other African and Western bishops in subsequent centuries have cited the Comma.

Both UBS texts list **Priscillian (380 AD)** bishop of Avila, in support of the Three heavenly witnesses in 1 John 5:7 and many sites list him as "a Spanish heretic". And What exactly was his heresy? He DIDN'T BELIEVE IN THE TRINITY! Yet he himself writes in Liber Apologeticus: "As John says "and there are three which give testimony on earth, the water, the flesh the blood, and these three are in one, and there are three which give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one in Christ Jesus."

JOHN GILL commenting on 1 John 5:7 - "As to the old Latin interpreter, it is certain it is to be seen in many Latin manuscripts of an early date, and stands in the Vulgate Latin edition of the London Polyglot Bible: and the Latin translation, which bears the name of Jerom[e], has it, and who, in an epistle of his to Eustochium, prefixed to his translation of these canonical epistles, complains of the omission of it by unfaithful interpreters."

"And as to its being wanting in some Greek manuscripts, as the Alexandrian, and others, it need only be said, that it is to be found in many others; it is in an old British copy, and in the Complutensian edition, the compilers of which made use of various copies; and OUT OF SIXTEEN ANCIENT COPIES OF ROBER STEPHEN'S, NINE OF THEM HAD IT."

Speaking of the citations of the early church fathers Mr. Gill continues: "And yet, after all, certain it is, that it is cited by many of them; by Fulgentius, in the beginning of the "sixth" century, against the Arians, without any scruple or hesitation; and Jerome, as before observed, has it in his translation made in the latter end of the "fourth" century; and it is cited by Athanasius about the year 350; and before him by Cyprian, in the middle, of the "third" century, about the year 250; and is referred to by Tertullian about, the year 200; and which was within a "hundred" years, or little more, of the writing of the epistle; WHICH MAY BE ENOUGH TO SATISFY ANYONE OF THE GENUINENESS OF THIS PASSAGE; and besides, there never was any dispute about it till Erasmus left it out in the first edition of his translation of the New Testament; and yet he himself, upon the credit of the old British copy before mentioned, put it into another edition of his translation."

Tim Dunkin, who is far more qualified than I to defend the historical authenticity of this verse, has written a very good defense of 1 John 5:7. He supports the contention, made by John Gill and others, that Athanasius did refer to this verse. Here are some of his quotes and the link to his site. He also demolishes the common claim that no Greek texts before the 16th century

contained 1 John 5:7.

A Defense of the Johannine Comma  
Setting the Record Straight on I John 5:7-8

<http://www.studytoanswer.net/bibleversions/1john5n7.html>

The next to rely upon I John 5:7 in his work is Athanasius, the great (Greek) defender of the orthodox faith in the first half of the fourth century. Gill observes that **Athanasius**, around 350 AD, cited the verse in his writing against the Arians. A clear citation of the Comma is also found in the Synopsis, also known as the Dialogue between an Athanasian and an Arian, attributable to **Athanasius**. Critics have attempted to dismiss the Dialogue as spurious, largely on the basis of stylistic arguments (i.e. the style of the Dialogue is not consistent with Athanasius' other writings). For example, one early critic to make this argument was the 18th century classics scholar Richard Porson. However, Charles Forster refuted this line of argument by showing that the style and type of citation employed in the Dialogue is entirely consistent with that which appear in other works of **Athanasius** that are accepted as genuine by all. Additionally, David Martin (who believed that one of Athanasius' contemporaries was the author) writing in 1772, observed that the Dialogue itself speaks of the Emperor Constantine in the present tense, as ruling with his son Constantius, which would argue for a date of composition in the first half of the 4th century.

Hence, there is no real reason to accept the arguments that the Dialogue is spurious or late - a position which appears to exist for no other reason than to try to get around the evidence testifying to the authenticity of the Comma. Further, as Forster points out, even if the Dialogue were attributable to one Maximus, writing in the 7th century, as some revisionists allege, this would still clearly demonstrate the existence of the Comma in the Greek witness at an extremely early date, which destroys the claims of critics that the Comma only appeared in Greek at a very late date.

- See John Gill's Exposition of the Bible, comments on I John 5:7, where he states that Athanasius cites the verse in his Contr. Arium.

In addition to the ones listed above, D.A. Waite is reported to have identified manuscripts #634 and Omega 110 as containing the Comma, and Holland notes that the Comma appears in the margin of #635. Finally, there are at least two Greek lectionaries (early didactic texts usually containing copious scriptural citations) in which the Comma appears (Lectionaries #60, dated to

1021 AD, and #173, dated to the 10th century).

Go to this site to actually see for yourself the Facsimile of a portion of I John containing the Comma, as it appears in Codex Montfortianus, a 13th century miniscule (reproduced from T.H. Horne, An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, Vol. 1, p. 241, Robert Carter and Bros.:NY, 1854).

Even more to the point is the testimony of Jerome (347 - 420 A.D.) on this matter. Jerome was commissioned by Damasus, the bishop of Rome, to prepare a standard Latin translation of the Holy Scriptures to replace the former Latin translations which had grown in multiplicity by the late 4th century. Jerome did this, utilizing the Greek as his source for revision of the Latin New Testament for his Vulgate. At one point in his work, Jerome noted that the trinitarian reading of I John 5:7 was being removed from Greek manuscripts which he had come across, a point which he specifically mentions. Speaking of the testimony of these verses he writes,

"Just as these are properly understood and so translated faithfully by interpreters into Latin without leaving ambiguity for the readers nor [allowing] the variety of genres to conflict, especially in that text where we read the unity of the trinity is placed in the first letter of John, where much error has occurred at the hands of unfaithful translators contrary to the truth of faith, who have kept just the three words water, blood and spirit in this edition omitting mention of Father, Word and Spirit in which especially the catholic faith is strengthened and the unity of substance of Father, Son and Holy Spirit is attested." - Jerome, Prologue to the Canonical Epistles, from the text of the prologue appended to Codex Fuldensis, Trans. T. Caldwell.

For some very good documentation and arguments about these quotes from Jerome and how others attempt to discredit this testimony, see Tim Dunkin's article here. Go to the section labeled 'The Evidence From Other Versions'

<http://www.studytoanswer.net/bibleversions/1john5n7.html>

Thus, we see that Jerome specifically mentioned that this verse was being removed from Greek manuscripts in his day. Logically, we can suppose that for him to recognize the absence of this verse as an omission from the Greek texts, he must have been aware of Greek manuscripts which contained the Comma in the time of his preparation of the Vulgate for the general epistles (395-400 AD), a time much earlier than is suggested by the dating of currently known Comma-containing Greek mss. (end of selected portions from Setting the Record Straight on 1 John 5:7)  
Another witness to the **Athanasius** witness

The Antijacobin review and true churchman's magazine (1816) William Hale

<http://books.google.com/books?id=Ni4ZAAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA584>

But further, is not that quickening and sanctifying baptism, productive of remission of sins, without which, no one shall see the kingdom of heaven, given to the faithful, by the thrice blessed appellation ? [of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.] **And beside all these [texts,] John affirms, "and these three are one."** - Athanasius. op. Paris, 1698, Vol. II. p. 229, or Travis, p. 143.

"This admirable collection and condensation of texts relative to Baptism and the Trinity, concluding with an express appeal to the disputed clause; namely, Mark i. 3; Matt. iii. 11; John iii. 3 - 5; Tit. iii. 5; Matt, xxviii. 19; 1 John V. 7 ; is so conformable to the spirit of the Synopsis, and so worthy of Athanasius himself, that I can scarcely be persuaded that it was written by any other."

Please notice that the quote from **Athanasius** is not just "and these three are one" but he prefaces this quote with "**John affirms** "and these three are one." It was written in the first epistle of the apostle John!

"Majority text" or "minority readings"

It is also fallacious and hypocritical to suggest that just because the reading found in 1 John 5:7 is not "in the majority of texts" that it therefore cannot be legitimate, when the very men who are behind the ever-changing modern critical text admit that the true reading may be found in a few or even one manuscript.

Westcott and Hort, the very men who introduced the Critical Text methods found in the RV, ASV, NASB, NIV, themselves said: "A few documents are not, by reason of their paucity, appreciably less likely to be right than a multitude opposed to them" (Introduction to the Westcott-Hort Greek New Testament, 1881, p. 45)

J. K. Elliott, a modern textual critic comments on transcriptional probabilities: "By using criteria such as the above the critic may reach a conclusion in discussing textual variants and be able to say which variant is the original reading. However, it is legitimate to ask: can a reading be accepted as genuine if it is supported by only one ms.? There is no reason why an original reading should not have been preserved in only one ms. but obviously a reading can be accepted with greater confidence, when it has stronger support" Even Kurt Aland says: "Theoretically, the original readings can be hidden in a single ms. thus standing alone against the rest of tradition," and Tasker has a similar comment: "The possibility must be left open that in some cases the true reading may have been preserved in only a few witnesses or even in a single relatively late witness." - The Effect of Recent Textual Criticism upon New Testament Studies," The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1956)

Sure, there are a few minority readings in the King James Bible, but for every one in the KJB there are at least 20 minority readings found in the NASB, NIV, RSV, and that is no



exaggeration.

Another very common objection to 1 John 5:7 is the allegation that Erasmus said he would include the verse if he found a Greek manuscript that contained it. Then almost made to order, hot off the presses, one appeared.

Bruce Metzger who was partly responsible for propagating this urban myth at least had the integrity to retract this false accusation in the 3rd edition of his book. Here is the exact quote from Mr. Metzger himself.

"What is said on p. 101 above about Erasmus' promise to include the Comma Johanneum if one Greek manuscript were found that contained it, and his subsequent suspicion that MS 61 was written expressly to force him to do so, needs to be corrected in the light of the research of H. J. DeJonge, a specialist in Erasmian studies who finds no explicit evidence that supports this frequently made assertion." Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of The New Testament*, 3rd Edition, p 291 fn 2.

You can see the article by DeJonge in the pdf format at this site here -

<http://www.thescripturealone.com/De%20Jonge%20-%20Erasmus%20and%20the%20Comma%20Johanneum.pdf>

What then is the evidence for 1 John 5:7? It is found in several Greek texts; it is quoted by several church fathers and is found in many ancient versions of the Bible. Although not found in most Greek manuscripts, the Johannine Comma is found in several. It is contained in 629 (fourteenth century), 61 (sixteenth century), 918 (sixteenth century), 2473 (seventeenth century), and 2318 (eighteenth century). It is also in the margins of 221 (tenth century), 635 (eleventh century), 88 (twelfth century), 429 (fourteenth century), and 636 (fifteenth century). It was part of the text of the Old Latin Bible that was translated in the second century, as it witnessed by some remaining copies that we have today. It is found in "r", a 5th century Old Latin manuscript, "q", a 5th to 7th century O.L. mss, and "l" another 5th century O.L. mss. and in a confession of faith drawn up by Eusebius, Bishop of Carthage, in 415."

<http://www.avdefense.webs.com/wallace.html>

The church Council of Carthage in A.D. 415 is highly significant. Prior to this council, a conflict had arisen between the Arians and a group of bishops from North Africa. An assembly was called at Carthage where 1 John 5:7-8 was insisted upon by Eugenius, the spokesman for the African bishops. The bishops included the Johannine Comma as a first line of defense for their confession of Christ's deity. Acting as spokesman for some 350 church bishops Eusebius confessed his faith and the faith of his brethren with these words: "...and in order that we may teach until now, more clearly than light, that the Holy Spirit is now one divinity with the Father and the Son. It is proved by the evangelist John, for he says, 'there are three which bear testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one.'" Victor

of Vitensis, *Historia persecutionis Africanae Prov*, Translated by Michael Maynard in *A History of the Debate Over 1 John 5:7-8*.

### **The Council of Carthage of 484 AD -**

In English one of the interesting summaries is given in the

Irish Ecclesiastical Record "Victor Vitensis on the Vandal Persecution".

<http://books.google.com/books?id=fZYvAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA24>

Part II is in the 1898 edition, p. 24-37 by Philip Burton.

And the basics are that there was a confession of faith presented, and that confession of faith included and emphasized the heavenly witnesses. Summaries are given, e.g. William Aldis Wright (1831-1914):

"It is also cited by a contemporary African writer, Victor Vitensis, in his history of the Vandal persecution, written about the year 484, who, in his third book, thus represents the clause as contained in the Confession of Faith, drawn up by Eugenius, bishop of Carthage, and signed by 400 bishops. " Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in ccelo, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus; et hi tres unum sunt."

Victor Vitensis

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victor\\_Vitensis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victor_Vitensis)

Victor Vitensis (b. circa 430) was an African bishop of the Province of Byzacena (called Vitensis from his See of Vita). His importance rests on his *Historia persecutionis Africanae Provinciae, temporibus Geiserici et Hunirici regum Wandalorum*. This is mainly a contemporary narrative of the cruelties practised against the orthodox Christians of Northern Africa by the Arian Vandals.

Victor throws much light on social and religious conditions in Carthage and on the African liturgy of the period. His history contains many documents not otherwise accessible, e.g. the Confession of Faith drawn up for the orthodox bishops by Eugenius of Carthage and presented to Huneric at the conference of Catholic and Arian bishops in 484.

Victor of Vita: history of the Vandal persecution (1992)

[http://books.google.com/books?id=N\\_usIGzI5SwC](http://books.google.com/books?id=N_usIGzI5SwC)

Council of Carthage 484 - confession of faith, with heavenly witnesses, English translation(emphasis added):

And so, no occasion for uncertainty is left. It is clear that the Holy Spirit is also God and the author of his own will, he who is most clearly shown to be at work in all things and to bestow the gifts of the divine dispensation according to the judgment of his own will, because where it is proclaimed that he distributes graces where he wills, servile condition cannot exist, for servitude is to be understood in what is created, but power and freedom in the Trinity. And so that we may teach the Holy Spirit to be of one divinity with the Father and the Son still more clearly than the light, here is proof from the testimony of John the evangelist. For he says: 'There are three who bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one.' Surely he does not say 'three separated by a difference in quality' or 'divided by grades which differentiate, so that there is a great distance between them?' No, he says that the 'three are one.' But so that the single divinity which the Holy Spirit has with the Father and the Son might be demonstrated still more in the creation of all things, you have in the book of Job the Holy Spirit as a creator: 'It is the divine Spirit ... (p. 56)

It is also important to note that most of the Greek copies that have existed throughout history are no longer with us today. Several well known Christians mention Greek texts that contained 1 John 5:7 that existed in their days centuries ago. Among these are Theodore Beza, John Calvin and Stephanus. Beza remarks that the reading of 1 John 5:7 is found in many of their manuscripts; Calvin likewise says it is found in "the most approved copies"; and Stephanus, who in 1550 printed the Greek text that bears his name, mentioned that of the 16 copies he had 9 of them contained 1 John 5:7. John Gill, who also believed in the inspiration of this verse, likewise mentions in his commentary that nine of Stephanus' sixteen manuscripts contained this verse. When Cardinal Ximenes planned to print his Polyglot in 1502 he included 1 John 5:7-8. He stated that he had taken care to secure a number of Greek manuscripts; and he described some of these as very "ancient codices" sent to Spain from Rome. Why haven't the manuscript detectives given us a complete list of these "ancient codices"? They must have contained 1 John 5:7 because Ximenes included the verse.

#### A Trail of Evidence

We find mention of 1 John 5:7, from about 200 AD through the 1500s. Here is a useful timeline of references to this verse:

Scholars often disagree with each other, but John Gill, in his well known commentary on the entire Bible, remarks concerning 1 John 5:7: "It is cited by Athanasius about the year 350 (Contra Arium p. 109); and before him by Cyprian in the middle of the "third" century, about the year 250 (De Unitate Eccles. p. 255. & in Ep. 73. ad Jubajan, p. 184.) and is referred to by Tertullian about, the year 200 (Contr. Praxeam, c. 25 ) and which was within a hundred years, or little more, of the writing of the epistle; which may be enough to satisfy anyone of the genuineness of this passage."

200 AD - Tertullian's quote is debated, but he may well be referring to the phrase found only in 1

John 5:7 when he says: "And so the connection of the Father, and the Son, and of the Paraclete (Holy Ghost) makes three cohering entities, one cohering from the other, WHICH THREE ARE ONE entity, not one person. Just as it is said "I and the Father are one entity" refers to the unity of their substance, not to oneness of their number."

250 AD - Cyprian of Carthage, wrote, "And again, of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost it is written: "And the three are One" in his *On The Lapsed, On the Novatians*. Note that Cyprian is quoting and says "IT IS WRITTEN, And the three are One." He lived from 180 to 250 A.D. and the scriptures he had at that time contained the verse in question. This is at least 100 years before anything we have today in the Greek copies. If it wasn't part of Holy Scripture, then where did he see it WRITTEN?

350 AD - Priscillian referred to it [*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, Academia Litterarum Vindobonensis, vol. xviii, p. 6.*]

350 AD - Idacius Clarus referred to it [*Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina by Migne, vol. 62, col. 359.*]

380 AD - Priscillian in *Liber Apologeticus* quotes "and there are three which give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one in Christ Jesus."

In his book *A History of The Debate Over 1 John 5:7*, Michael Maynard, M.L.S, has at least two references to this quote. On page 39 he writes: 380 Priscillian. *Liber Apologeticus*. (This quote as given by A.E. Brooke from Schepps. *Vienna Corpus, xviii*) As John says "and there are three which give testimony on earth, the water, the flesh, the blood, and these three are in one, and there are three which give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are on in Christ Jesus."

Then on page 239 of his book, Mr. Maynard quotes from a Mr. Claude Jenkins' 1942 article titled *A Newly Discovered Reference to the Heavenly Witnesses (1 John 5:7)*. From this book Mr. Maynard says: Jenkins made an especially valuable comment here: "Since the days of Porson, the most important contribution on the Latin side has been the discovery of the tractates of Priscillian in the Wurzburg MS. which throws the evidence back to the fourth century and quotes the passage (Priscillian Tractate i.4)."

Likewise, the anti-Arian work compiled by an unknown writer, the *Varimadum* (380 AD) states: "And John the Evangelist says, . . . "And there are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one". (*Varimadum* 90:20-21).

415 AD - Council of Carthage. The contested verse (1 John 5:7) is quoted at the Council of Carthage (415 A. D.) by Eusebius, who drew up the confession of faith for the "orthodox." It reads with the King James. How did 350 prelates in 415 A.D. take a verse to be orthodox that wasn't in the Bible? It had to exist there from the beginning. It was quoted as "Pater, VERBUM, et Spiritus Sanctus".

450-530 AD. Several orthodox African writers quoted the verse when defending the doctrine of the Trinity against the gainsaying of the Vandals. These writers are:

A) Vigilus Tapensis in "Three Witnesses in Heaven"

B) Victor Vitensis in his *Historia persecutionis* [*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, Academia Litterarum Vindobonensis, vol. vii, p. 60.]

C) Fulgentius in "The Three Heavenly Witnesses" [*Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina* by Migne, vol. 65, col. 500.]

500 AD - Cassiodorus cited it [*Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina* by Migne, vol. 70, col. 1373.]

527 AD - Fulgentius in *Contra Arianos* stated: "Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in caelo. Pater, Verbum et Spiritus, et tres unum sunt."

550 AD - The "Speculum" has it [The *Speculum* is a treatise that contains some good Old Latin scriptures.]

636 AD - Isidor of Seville quotes the verse as it stands in the KJB.

750 AD - Wizanburgensis, a Latin mss., contains the reference.

800 AD - Jerome's Vulgate has it [It was not in Jerome's original Vulgate, but was brought in about 800 AD from good Old Latin manuscripts.] It is also in the Clementine Vulgate today.

157-1400 AD. Waldensian (that is, Vaudois) Bibles have the verse.

Now the "Waldensian," or "Vaudois" Bibles stretch from about 157 to the 1400s A.D. The fact is, according to John Calvin's successor Theodore Beza, that the Vaudois received the Scriptures from missionaries of Antioch of Syria in the 120s A.D. and finished translating it into their Latin language by 157 AD. This Bible was passed down from generation, until the Reformation of the 1500s, when the Protestants translated the Vaudois Bible into French, Italian, etc. This Bible carries heavy weight when finding out what God really said. Theodore Beza, John Wesley and Johnathan Edwards believed, as most of the Reformers, that the Vaudois were the descendants of the true Christians, and that they preserved the Christian faith for the Bible-believing Christians today.

Many critics of this passage like to say that 1 John 5:7 occurs in no ancient language version except the Latin. Well, not only is the passage found in **the Latin Vulgate**, but it is also in some **Old Latin** manuscripts, and the Old Latin translation dates from around 200 A.D. As far as I know we do not have any specific manuscript from this date, but we do have some later copies of this ancient translation. The known Old Latin affirmations of the Comma (some with variations from the "canonical" version) are:

m -- around the 5th century in the Catholic Epistles

p -- 13th century

c -- 12th -13th centuries

dem -- 13th century

div -- 13th century

q -- 7th century

The Old Latin translation was first made 150 years before anything we have in the remaining Greek copies. In addition to this, the newest UBS critical text has now admitted that it is found in some **Armenian** manuscripts.

The first printed edition of **the Armenian Bible** was published in 1666 by Bishop Uscan. It contains 1 John 5:7. Also Giles Guthier, using **two Syriac manuscripts** published an edition at Hamburg in 1664. This edition places the passage in the text. There are two fairly modern translations of the Syriac that include the verse; one of them was done by James Murdock in 1851 and the other by George Lamsa in 1936; both contain 1 John 5:7 in full. And the first printed **Georgian Bible**, published at Moscow in 1743 contains 1 John 5:7.

Dr. Schrivener mentions a "few recent" **Slavonic** manuscripts as having the passage. (Jack Moorman, "When the KJV departs from the majority text" 2nd. edition.)

Internal Evidence

Dr. Thomas Holland, who recently wrote "Crowned with Glory", a very good book which defends the King James Bible, states: "The strongest evidence, however, is found in the Greek text itself. Looking at 1 John 5:8, there are three nouns which, in Greek, stand in the neuter (Spirit, water, and blood). However, they are [preceeded] by a participle that is masculine. The Greek phrase here is oi marturountes (who bare witness). Those who know the Greek language understand this to be poor grammar if left to stand on its own. Even more noticeably, verse six has the same participle but stands in the neuter (Gk.: to marturoun). Why are three neuter nouns supported with a masculine participle? The answer is found if we include verse seven. There we have two masculine nouns (Father and Son) followed by a neuter noun (Spirit). The verse also has the Greek masculine participle oi marturountes. With this clause introducing verse eight, it is very proper for the participle in verse eight to be masculine, because of the masculine nouns in verse seven. But if verse seven were not there it would become improper Greek grammar."

Michael Maynard, M.L.S. in his 382 page book "A History of the Debate over 1 John 5:7-8" quotes from Gregory of Nazianzus (390 AD) who remarks concerning this verse in his Theological Orations: . . . "he has not been consistent in the way he has happened upon his terms; for after using Three in the masculine gender he adds three words which are neuter, contrary to the definitions and laws which you and your grammarians have laid down. For what is the difference between putting a masculine Three first, and then adding One and One and One in the neuter, or after a masculine One and One and One to use the Three not in the masculine but in the neuter, which you yourselves disclaim in the case of Deity?"

Mr. Maynard concludes: "Thus Gregory of Nazianzus objected to the omission of 1 John 5:7."

It is clear that Gregory recognized the inconsistency with Greek grammar if all we have are verses six and eight without verse seven.

Other scholars have recognized the same thing. This was the argument of Robert Dabney of Union Theological Seminary in his book, "The Doctrinal Various Readings of the New Testament Greek" (1891).

Bishop Middleton in his book, "Doctrine of the Greek Article," argues that verse seven must be a part of the text according to the Greek structure of the passage.

Even in the famous commentary by Matthew Henry, there is a note stating that we must have verse seven if we are to have proper Greek in verse eight.

Dr. Edward F. Hills argues the same grammatical points in defending the legitimacy of 1 John 5:7 in his book "The King James Version Defended" on pages 211-212.

Dr. Hills says: "...the omission of the Johannine comma involves a grammatical difficulty. The words spirit, water, and blood are neuter in gender, but in I John 5:8 they are treated as masculine. If the Johannine comma is rejected, it is hard to explain this irregularity. It is usually said that in I John 5:8 the spirit, the water, and the blood are personalized and that this is the reason for the adoption of the masculine gender. But it is hard to see how such personalization would involve the change from the neuter to the masculine. FOR IN VERSE 6 THE WORD SPIRIT PLAINLY REFERS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE THIRD PERSON OF THE TRINITY. SURELY IN THIS VERSE THE WORD SPIRIT IS "PERSONALIZED," AND YET THE NEUTER GENDER IS USED. Therefore, since personalization DID NOT bring about a change of gender in verse 6, it cannot fairly be pleaded as the reason for such a change in verse 8. If, however, the Johannine Comma is retained, as reason for placing the neuter nouns spirit, water, and blood in the masculine gender becomes readily apparent. IT WAS DUE TO THE INFLUENCE OF THE NOUNS FATHER AND WORD, WHICH ARE MASCULINE. Thus the hypothesis that the Johannine comma is an interpolation is full of difficulties." (Emphasis mine.)

Dr. Gaussen in his famous book "The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures" uses the same grammatical argument and concludes: "Remove it, and the grammar becomes incoherent."

Regarding the grammatical argument in favor of the inclusion of 1 John 5:7, King James Bible critic Gary Hudson made this erroneous comment: "As far as we have been able to discover, this argument was first suggested by Robert L. Dabney in 1871. Aware of the fact that the manuscript (external) evidence for the verse is extremely scant, Dabney introduced a new argument in its favor based upon what he believed to be an important internal consideration:" (I John 5:7 Grammatical Argument Refuted, Gary Hudson)

Mr. Nolan employed usage of this "grammatical argument" in 1815, that is, 56 years prior to Hudson pinning it on Robert Dabney. Nolan discusses it on pages 259-261, 294, and 304 of his work.

Gregory Nazianzus in "Oration XXXII: Fifth Theological Oration: On the Holy Spirit, c.XIX acknowledges such a grammatical difficulty as well.

Another King James Bible critic, Doug Kutilek, says: "No Greek-speaking Christian writer

before the year 1215 A.D. shows any knowledge of the disputed words."

On the contrary, Mr. Kutilek is refuted by Ben David in his work, "Three Letters Addressed to The Editor of The Quarterly Review, In Which is Demonstrated The Genuineness of The Three Heavenly Witnesses- I John v.7."

Mr. David informs us, "If we turn to the Greek fathers, we shall find them equally well acquainted with the verse, and equally reluctant to quote it. I will notice a few of those who have been brought forward as vouchers for its genuineness:

"Basil paraphrases the text, but is afraid to quote it: "Oi pisteuontes eis Theon, kai Logon, Kai Pneuma, mian ousan theoteta. WHO BELIEVE IN GOD, AND THE WORD, AND THE SPIRIT, BEING ONE GODHEAD." (Ben David, pg. 57)

Continuing with Ben David: "Theodorus, the master of Chrysostom and a contemporary of the emperor Julian, wrote in "A treatise on one God in the Trinity, from the Epistle of John the Evangelist" ( Eis ten Epistolēn Ioannou tou Euaggelistou peri tou eis Theos en Triadi.) This is a remarkable testimony, as it implies the existence and notoriety of the verse about the middle of the fourth century."

"Cyril, in his Thesaurus, attempts to prove that the Holy Spirit is God. With this view he extracts the 6th and 8th verse, and omits the 7th: yet he inserts an argument which demonstrates that this verse lay before him, though he was too much afraid directly to use it. Cyril's words are these: Eirekos gar oti to pneuma esti tou Theou to marturoun mikron ti proelthon, epipherei, a marturia tou Theou meizon esti. Pos oun esti poiema to ton olon Patri suntheologoumenon kai tes agias triados sumplerotikon - "For having said that it is the Spirit of God that witnesses, a little forward he adds, the witness of God is greater: How then is he a creature WHO IS SAID TO BE GOD WITH THE UNIVERSAL FATHER, AND COMPLETES THE NUMBER OF THE HOLY TRIAD." The words in capitals form the substance of the seventh verse which Cyril wished to quote, as being direct to his purpose; yet through fear he declined to produce it in express terms. This was in the fifth century.

Mr. Frederick Nolan stated in 1815: "instead of "the Father, Word, and Spirit," the remaining passage would have been direct concessions to the Gnostics and Sabellians, who, in denying the personal difference of the Father and the Son, were equally obnoxious to those avowed adversaries, the Catholics and the Arians. Nor did the orthodox require these verses for the support of their cause; they had other passages which would accomplish all that they could effect; and without their aid, they maintained and established their tenents." (An Inquiry Into The Integrity of the Greek Vulgate or Received Text of the New Testament, Rev. Frederick Nolan, 1815, pg. 278-279)

Mr. Nolan gives two reasons why I John 5:7 is seemingly scanty in reference to quotations from the church fathers:

One - The passage in I John 5:7 is among those like I Timothy 3:16 and Acts 20:28 that have all been tampered with in the manuscript tradition, all three having to do with the deity of Christ as



"God."

Two - That the major reason for NOT QUOTING I John 5:7 was based on its wording, chiefly, purporting Jesus Christ as the "WORD" instead of the "SON." Hence, with the Sabellian heresy being debated that Jesus Christ is the Father with no distinction, I John 5:7 would further propagate that notion. Therefore it wasn't quoted.

Jesse Boyd also suggests the following reasons why the passage may have "dropped out" of 1 John 5:7. He says: "The heresy of Gnosticism is also of notable importance with regard to the historical context surrounding the *Johannine Comma*. This "unethical intellectualism" had begun to make inroads among churches in John's day; its influence would continue to grow up until the second century when it gave pure Christianity a giant struggle. The seeds of the Gnostic heresy seem to be before John's mind in his first epistle; the *Johannine Comma* would have constituted an integral component of the case the Apostle made against the false teachings of the Gnostics, especially with regard to the nature of Christ. The Gnostics would have completely disregarded the truth promulgated in the *Johannine Comma*. In fact, they may have excised it from the text in the same way that Marcion took a butcher knife to the New Testament in the second century. Also, the Arian heresy, which taught that Jesus was not God but a created being, grew out of Gnosticism. In fact, it was widespread in the Church during the third and fourth centuries. Not long after the Council of Nicea (A.D. 325), an ecumenical council that denounced Arianism, "the whole world woke from a deep slumber and discovered that it had become Arian." Perhaps the prevalent influences of these heresies were responsible for the text falling out of many manuscripts and versions of the New Testament. This hypothesis is at least as plausible as competing theories which suppose that someone added the verses to combat heretical teaching."

There is another argument based on internal evidence that anyone can clearly see just by reading the Holy Bible in English. This has to do with the spiritual significance of numbers. We all know how significant the number 7 is, representing the spiritual perfections of the Godhead.

There are many highly significant words or titles that are found either 7 times or in combinations of 7 only in the King James Bible. Words like Son of man (49x4) Son of God (49 or 7x7 in the New Testament), Most High (49), Jesus Christ (196 or 49x4 - different numbers in Critical Texts), Word of God (49 - different numbers in Critical Texts), My Beloved Son (7 times), It is written (63 or 7 times 9 in N.T.), Firstborn (7), Kingdom of God (70), Holy Spirit (7 in the KJB), Church (77 - different numbers in Critical Texts), Worshippers (7), Jerusalem (144 times in Textus Receptus, 21 times 7, different numbers in Critical Texts since they omit Jerusalem in Luke 2:42; 24:49 and Acts 18:21) and only when 1 John 5:7 is included does the title referring to Jesus Christ as the Word occur 7 times.

It is found in John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

John 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us..."

1 John 1:1 "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life."

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."

Revelation 19:13 "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."

Not only does the expression "The Word", referring to the Lord Jesus Christ occur 7 times with the inclusion of 1 John 5:7, but also in the epistle of 1 John itself, the word "ho logos" (the word) occurs exactly 7 times when including this verse. See 1 John 1:1,10; 2:5,7,14; 3:18; and 5:7. Just another coincidence - huh?

If you are looking to scholars to settle the issue for you, there will never be any certainty at all. Those who criticize the King James Bible as being just another fallible book, riddled with errors, have nothing sure and certain to give you in its place. They set themselves up as the final authority but they constantly differ among themselves. It is like playing "scholar poker". "Well, my scholars can beat your scholars." No, they can't. I'll see your scholars and raise you two more."

They may say that Dr. So and So went to Dallas Theological Whatever and he doesn't believe 1 John 5:7 should be in the bible. Well, on the other hand, there are many learned men with just as much knowledge who absolutely believe 1 John 5:7 belongs in the Holy Bible.

Here is just a partial list of those who contended for the authenticity of this verse.

Cyprian - 250 AD, Priscillian -385 AD, Jerome 420 AD, Fulgentius, Cassiodorus, Isidore of Seville, Jaqub of Edessa, Thomas Aquinas, John Wycliffe, Desiderus Erasmus, Lopez de Zuniga, John Calvin, Theodore Beza, Cipriano de Valera, John Owen, Francis Turretin, John Wesley, John Gill, Matthew Henry, Andrew Fuller, Thomas F. Middleton, Luis Gaussen, Frederick Nolan, Robert L. Dabney, Thomas Strouse, Floyd Jones, Peter Ruckman, George Ricker Berry, Edward F. Hills, David Otis Fuller, Thomas Holland, Michael Maynard and Donald A. Waite.

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one" is found in 10 remaining Greek manuscripts, at least 7 Old Latin manuscripts, is quoted or referred to by at least 8 church fathers, is in some ancient versions like the Syriac, Armenian and Slavic versions, in the Waldensian Bibles from 157 AD till the time of the Reformation, is in thousands of Vulgate Latin manuscripts, is in the Spanish Reina Valera used throughout the entire Spanish speaking world today, the Italian Diodati, the French Martin and Ostervald bibles, the Russian Synodal, the Portuguese de Almeida and Bíblia Sagrada, pre and post Lutheran German bibles, and all English versions till 1881.

1 John 5:7 was in the first English Bible by John Wycliffe in 1380, in Tyndale's New Testament of 1525, the Coverdale Bible of 1535, the Taverner Bible of 1539, Matthew's Bible 1549, the Geneva New Testament of 1557, the Bishop's Bible of 1568, the Douay-Rheims of 1582 and the

Authorized Version of 1611. You can see the Catholic Rheims Bible of 1582 for yourself along with Wycliffe, Tyndale, Cranmer and the Geneva Bible at this site here -

<http://bible.zoxt.net/hex/hex.htm>

The whole passage was included in the Douay-Rheims of 1582 and in 1610, and in the Catholic Douay-Rheims of 1899 and the Douay of 1950. It wasn't till the St. Joseph New American Bible of 1970 that the Catholic bibles began to remove it. The "new" Catholic bibles based on the UBS Greek text, a united effort between Evangelicals and the Catholic church to produce an interconfessional common text for the New Testament, (ESV, NIV, NASB and the New Jerusalem bible of 1985) all unite in omitting the Trinitarian phrase from 1 John 5:7. It is also in Mace's New Testament of 1729, and John Wesley strongly believed it was genuine Scripture and included it in his own translation in 1755. It was included in Webster's 1833 translation, Murdock translation 1851, Calvin Bible of 1855. It is still found in the NKJV 1982 Young's, the New Life Bible 1969, Green's 'literal' translation of 2000, the Amplified Bible of 1987, the 2009 Sacred Bible - Catholic Public Domain Version, the Easter/Greek Orthodox Bible 2008, the Heritage Bible 2003, the 2006 Apostolic Bible, the 2006 English Jubilee Bible, the 1994 KJV 21st Century Version, and the 1998 Third Millennium Bible. It was included in the earlier Catholic bibles like the 1582 Douay-Rheims and as late as the Douay version of 1950, but removed from later Catholic versions (St. Joseph NAB 1969, New Jerusalem bible 1985), but now once again the 2009 The Sacred Bible Public Domain Version has gone back to include it!

<http://www.sacredbible.org/catholic/index.htm>

It did not disappear from a standard English Bible until the English Revised Version of 1885, based on the Westcott-Hort Greek texts, omitted it.

It is important to note that the Greek Orthodox Church's New Testament contains 1 John 5:7 both in the ancient and in the Modern Greek versions. The first printed text of the entire Greek New Testament was the Complutensian Polyglot Bible of 1520. It included all of 1 John 5:7 and it continues to be found in the Greek New Testaments used by the Greek Orthodox Churches today. The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

<http://www.goarch.org/en/chapel/biblegreek/>

ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ Πατήρ, ὁ Λόγος καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα, καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἐν εἰσι·

Pre-Lutheran German Bibles that include 1 John 5:7

Martin Luther omitted the reference to the Three Heavenly Witnesses in his German Bible of 1545. However there were many Pre Lutheran German Bibles that contain the verse in full, as

well as many others printed after Luther.

1466 A.D. Strassburg: Johann Mentel  
1470 A.D. Strassburg: H. Eggestein  
1475 A.D. Augsburg: Gunther Zainer  
1476 A.D. Augsburg: Gunther Zainer  
1476 A.D. Nuremberg: Johannes Sensenschmidt & Andreas Frisner  
1477 A.D. Augsburg: Gunther Zainer  
1478 A.D. Kolner Bible, Die Neiderdeutschen Bibelfruhdrucke  
1483 A.D. Nuremberg: Anton Koberger  
1485 A.D. Strassburg: Johann Reinhard de Gruningen  
1490 A.D. Augsburg: Johann Schonsperger:

“wann drey sind, die da geben gezeugknub auff der erde, der geyst, das wasser, onnd auch de blutt, onnd dise drey sind eyns. **Und drey sind die da geben gezeugknub im hymmel. Der vater, das wortt, onnd der heylige geyst, on dise drey sind eins.** Ob wir auffnemen.”

The passage is also included in the following foreign language Bibles today: Lamsa's 1936 translation of the Syriac Peshitta, the Afrikaans 1957, the Basque N.T.; Czech Kralicka Bible, Dutch Staten Vertaling, Finnish 1776, the French La Bible de Geneva 1669, the French Martin 1744, the French Ostervald 1996 and La Bible de l'Épée 2005, the **Italian Diodati of 1603** and 1649 and the New Diodati of 1991, the Portuguese de Almeida of 1681 and the recent *Bíblia Sagrada* - "Porque três são os que testificam no céu: o Pai, a Palavra, e o Espírito Santo; e estes três são um.", the Hungarian Karoli, Icelandic 1981, Latvian N.T.; Maori, Lithuanian, Romanian Cornilescu, Russian Synodal 1876, Russian Victor Zhuromski, **the Spanish Sagradas Escrituras 1569**, the Spanish Reina Valera 1909, 1960 and 1995 editions used throughout Mexico, Central and South America. It is also in the Spanish Versión Moderna 1929, La Biblia de las Américas 1997 (put out by the Lockman Foundation, the same people who give us the NASB that omits it) and the 2004 Spanish Reina Valera Gomez bible, the Thai Bible, Tagalog bible, Ukrainian Kulish 1871, the Vietnamese bible, and the Xhosa language Bible, the Modern Greek and the Modern Hebrew bibles.

The full text of 1 John 5:7 is found in several of the surviving Old Latin copies. The Clementine Vulgate of 1592 includes the verse. In the Clementine Vulgate it reads just like the King James Bible: "Quoniam tres sunt, qui testimonium dant in caelo : Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus : et hi tres unum sunt."

The Clementine Vulgate can be seen here: <http://vulsearch.sourceforge.net/html/index.html>  
Either God has been faithful to preserve His pure words with nothing added or He has failed and the scholars of today who do not believe any Bible on this earth is the perfect word of God are

right. You decide.

Will Kinney

For further study and documentation about the authenticity of 1 John 5:7, may I recommend two well done articles by my Christian brother and friend, Marty Shue. He has written a response to Daniel Wallace's criticism of this verse found here: <http://www.avdefense.webs.com/1John5-7.html>

Another good site is KJV Today. It has a lot of historical references to 1 John 5:7 and other evidence proving that 1 John 5:7 is inspired Scripture and belongs in our Bible

<http://www.kjvtoday.com/home/the-father-the-word-and-the-holy-ghost-in-1-john-57#TOC-Origen-or-Pseudo-Origen->

Additional comments: At our Which Version club -

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/whichversion/> - we were discussing the textual and historic evidence for 1 John 5:7 and one of the members wrote in with these questions:

"I know there are other reasons why ya'll claim the comma (1 John 5:7) should be included, but doesn't it make sense to just admit that the KJV is assumed to be right, and where evidence supports it, that evidence reigns supreme, and if the same type or even the same exact evidence does not support it, that evidence is lacking in that case?"

I then replied: Hi Kevin, these are good questions. I think basically what you are asking is Why do we sometimes uphold a particular reading (1 John 5:7 for example) that does not share the same textual evidence as do many other verses that are in dispute?

Kevin, this is the problem faced by ALL translations and all Bible versions. Modern versions like the NASB, NIV, ESV, ISV, Holman, NKJV etc. ALL often will adopt or include a reading or omit an entire verse or several whole verses, even when the vast majority of texts and other Bible versions do not agree with them, and none of these modern versions agree all the way through with any other.

Sometimes the evidence is overwhelmingly on the side of a whole verse, but the NASB, NIV, RSV, Holman etc. will omit it all because it is not found in one or two mss. The KJB will also, though not nearly as often nor to the same extent, sometimes adopt a "minority" reading.

Very often, particularly in the book of Revelation, the textual evidence for certain readings is equally divided. If one takes a purely humanistic view of Scripture, then the only conclusion we can come to is that there is no complete and inerrant Bible in any language and that God has basically left the scene as far as preserving His words is concerned. This also means that God actually lied to us when He said that heaven and earth shall pass away, but His WORDS (NOT just the general, ballpark message) shall not pass away.

It is my belief that Textual Criticism or Textual Studies alone will never solve the problem or answer the question of "Do we have an inerrant Bible?" Generally speaking, the textual evidence is far and away in favor of the King James Bible readings, but there are a few notable exceptions. What I believe we need to do to come to a final decision on the issue of an inerrant Bible is to

look elsewhere than mere Textual Criticism (which is a totally confused mess, and I can prove it). We need to look at the internal evidence and the spiritual fruit produced by the two different approaches to God's pure words.

The true Holy Bible will be internally consistent and always true (even if there are some "apparent" contradictions). I have found through my comparative studies that ONLY the King James Bible is internally consistent and doctrinally sound 100% of the time.

ALL other versions, especially the more modern ones like the NASB, NIV, RSV, ESV, Holman and the NKJV break down at several points and teach false doctrines, thus proving themselves to be false witnesses.

Here is one study you might like to look at called "No Doctrines are Changed?"

<http://brandplucked.webs.com/nodoctrinechanged.htm>

ALL modern versions like the NASB, NIV, RSV, ESV, Holman and the NKJV frequently (or sometimes as in the NKJV), reject the clear Hebrew texts, and God only gave His inspired words in the O.T. to the Jews - not to the Latins, Syrians or the Greeks.

Another huge difference is the spiritual fruit produced by the various bible versions. God has used the King James Bible like no other in history. It has replaced all other previous English Bible versions, and was the one God used in bringing about the worldwide modern missionary movement. People who use and still believe the King James Bible are the only ones who actually believe The Bible IS (NOT "WAS in the non-existent originals") the inspired and inerrant words of God.

The fruit of the modern, multiple-choice and contradictory bible versions is the open denial of the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture in any language. Unbelief in the inerrancy of Scripture is increasing more and more every day, and it will only get worse, not better. The Bible itself tells us that there will be a falling away from the faith in the last days, and this is happening now at an alarming rate.

For more information on this growing unbelief in the inerrancy of Scripture, may I suggest you read this article I have put together called "There is NO inerrant Bible"

<http://brandplucked.webs.com/thebiblenotinspired.htm>

The Battle for the Bible is a spiritual battle and only God can open the eyes of the blind, and He does this by His grace and mercy alone; not because we are more holy, or smarter, or pray and study more than others do. It is all by His grace and He often chooses the weak and the babes to reveal these things to.

"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." 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Matthew 11:25-26

You either believe that the King James Bible is the inspired and inerrant words of God, or you become your own final authority and make up your own peculiar "bible version" as you go along and your version will differ from everybody else's. You won't even believe that "yours" is the 100% true and inerrant words of God Almighty.

Will K

Return to Articles - <http://brandplucked.webs.com/articles.htm>

Another site called King James Version has some useful information on how even among the so called "oldest and best manuscripts" like Sinaiticus, Vaticanus and Alexandrinus, we see textual differences and corruptions in 1 John 5:6 (the previous verse) and Why as well as How the words in verse 7 would have "dropped out" of the inspired text. You can see that article here:

<http://sites.google.com/site/kjvtoday/home/translation-issues/the-father-the-word-and-the-holy-ghost-in-1-john-57>