

A Friendly Little Chat with James White on his Dividing Line radio program

“A Reasoned Response to the James White “interview” on his Dividing Line Radio Program”

I would like to respond to the points brought up in the recent discussion James White and I had on his radio program called Dividing Line. This conversation took place on Tuesday August 4th, 2011.

You can see a You Tube video of Mr. White in his studio and listen to the conversation we had using this link -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5H1dWcTGnUQ>

First and foremost I would like to point out the fundamental difference that exists between Mr. White and myself when it comes to what we really believe about The Bible.

We both say we believe The Bible IS the inerrant words of God. The word Bible simply means Book. I am referring to a real and tangible book composed of 66 individual books all contained within the pages of a single volume. You can hold it in your hands and read it for yourself. I am talking about a real Book that exists in print and anyone can get themselves a copy of this inerrant Bible I and thousands of other blood bought Christians believe in. You may disagree with those of us who believe the King James Holy Bible is the complete, inerrant, inspired and 100% historically true and doctrinally pure words of God. But this is what we really believe and we don't have to lie about it and deceive others when we say the Bible IS the inerrant words of God. We actually have such a Book.

The first question I asked Mr. White was “Do you believe the Bible IS the inerrant words of God?”. Mr. White then clearly said that he does believe the Bible is the inerrant words of God. But when I asked Mr. White where I can get a copy of this inerrant Bible he says he believes in, that is when he starts his usual tap dance routine. Instead of giving me the name of this inerrant Bible he says he believes in, he starts telling us about all he has written in his book - The KJV Only Controversy - and refers to “what God gave us when He gave us the Bible.” Please notice the past tense verbs Mr. White uses here. So where exactly IS this Bible that James Whites says IS the inerrant words of God?

Well, according to Mr. White’s point of view God’s “inerrant” words are scattered all over 5000

plus remaining Greek Manuscripts that contain thousands of variant readings and it is up to us to try to figure out which ones are the right ones.

In spite of the fact that modern versions like the NASB, RSV, NIV, ESV omit some 3000 words from the New Testament text of the King James Bible, and either substitute or add another 1000 words, James tells us on page 48 of his book: "their text is NEARLY IDENTICAL to even the most Byzantine manuscript...ONE of those variant readings is indeed the original. We are called to invest our energies in discovering which one it is."

So when Mr. White tells us that he believes "The Bible IS the inerrant words of God" he is not referring to any specific Book in print at all. In fact, he can't tell you where to find this hypothetical inerrant Bible he says he believes in.

If words have any real meaning at all, then James White is lying when he says he believes the Bible IS the inerrant words of God. He has no such Bible in print to give to anyone and can't tell you where to find it.

Mr. White then tries to explain what he means by referring to three textually very different modern versions as "reliable and trustworthy" but telling us that each of them is reliable to the texts they were translated from. Well, this tells us nothing regarding what God actually inspired in His inerrant words. Did God inspire the "extra" 45 entire verses that versions like the RSV omits from its N.T. text or not? Or the hundreds of changed and added words in the Hebrew Scriptures that versions like the NASB, NIV, ESV either add to or omit or change (and not even in the same places) in the Old Testament. Which words did God inspire and place in His Book?

Mr. White can't tell us for sure because he is still investigating which ones might or might not be the right ones. So to tell us that several different conflicting versions are "reliable and trustworthy" means nothing when it comes to knowing what specific words God caused to be written in "the book of the LORD". See Isaiah 34:16.

When I tried to get Mr. White to tell us where we can get a copy of this inerrant Bible he says he believes in, he quickly tried to change the subject and began asking me which King James Bible do I believe is the inerrant words of God, the Cambridge or the Oxford edition, the 1611 or the 1769 edition. This is a common ploy used by the bible agnostics to try to convince us that there is no such thing as an inerrant Bible.

I have written an article about this last ditch effort on the part of those who deny the inerrancy of any Bible in any language on this earth. Mr. White himself cannot give you any Hebrew and

Greek Bible in print that he believes IS the inerrant words of God, let alone an English one.

You can see my article about the Printing Errors Ploy here - <http://brandplucked.webs.com/printingerrors.htm>

In contrast to versions like the NASB, NIV, ESV and even the NKJV that continue to **deliberately** change both their underlying Hebrew and Greek texts as well as their English texts from one edition to the next, the underlying Hebrew and Greek texts of the King James Bible have never changed. We have a “double-check” method the new versions do not have to find out if something was a printing error or not. See the article to find out what it is.

Even the American Bible Society, no friend to the King James Bible, had this to say about the "revisions" of the King James Bible. The American Bible Society wrote, "The English Bible, as left by the translators (of 1611), has come down to us unaltered in respect to its text..." They further stated, "With the exception of typographical errors and changes required by the progress of orthography in the English language, the text of our present Bibles remains unchanged, and without variation from the original copy as left by the translators" (Committee on Versions to the Board of Managers, American Bible Society, 1852).

This whole “printing errors” objection is a non-factor. If every single copy of the King James Bible ever printed were exactly the same, the bible agnostics like James White STILL would not believe it is the complete and inerrant words of God. So the various minor printing errors that have occurred from time to time over the long history of the King James Bible, like the printing errors that still occur today even with high tech printing methods, is not something that should even enter into the equation.

The next major concern of Mr. White was my criticism of him for telling lies in his book when he made mention of the specific verse in Revelation 15:3 where he lists for us three different versions which contain three different textual readings. Mr. White recommends all three of these versions - the NKJV, NIV and NASB - as being “reliable and trustworthy”. Yet each one differs textually from the other two.

The NKJV reads “king of saints” the NASB reads “king of the nations” and the 1984 NIV edition read “king of the ages”. Then he says on page 66 “the TR’s reading **fails to have Greek manuscript support.**” I asked him if this was a true statement or not. It is what he clearly wrote in his book. He said it was true. However in his same book he has a footnote on page 87 that says: “Again we find 57 and 141 being the only ones to SUPPORT the TR reading.”

A truthful statement would have initially been something like “The reading of “king of saints” in the TR at Revelation 15:3 has little extant Greek support”, not that “it fails to have Greek manuscript support” and then to contradict himself in his own book by then telling us of Greek manuscripts that DO support the TR reading.

Mr. White also fails to mention the fact that not only is this reading found in 3 known Greek manuscripts, but according to the UBS first edition textual apparatus the reading of “king of saints” is also attested by 4 early church fathers. It is also in the Greek New Testament editions of Erasmus, Stephanus, Beza and Scriviner. Mr. White then went into a hissy fit about the TBS Scriviner Greek text noting (and correctly so) that it is basically a back translation of the underlying texts of the King James Bible. He then emphatically stated that there is not a Greek text anywhere in existence that matches the Scriviner text. Well, he is correct here. But Mr. White utterly failed to mention anything about the independent Greek N.T. texts of Erasmus, Stephanus and Beza, and in order to speak honestly on the subject Mr. White should also have mentioned that there is not a single Greek text anywhere on this earth that matches his ever changing United Bible Society/Nestle-Aland texts either. So why single out the Scriviner text and make a big stink about it when to be consistent he should also have pointed out that the same thing applies to the very Greek texts he himself is using and really prefers. He was just throwing dust into the air in an attempt to make me look like an ignorant hick who didn't know what he was talking about.

Mr. White then provides us with additional information NOT found in his book whereby he tries to explain his apparent contradiction by telling us that these 3 manuscripts were written after Erasmus composed his text and therefore do not support the KJB reading. But none of this information is in Mr. White's book that I read from.

He then asks me to provide any proof of the reading of “king of saints” that existed prior to the Greek texts of Erasmus. Well, it is a simple fact that literally thousands of Greek manuscripts have been lost to the ravages of time over the centuries and even the ones that were used in compiling the various Greek text publications made since the days of Erasmus, Stephanus, Beza, Elzivier brothers and others were never documented with specific numbers like they are today.

Where did Erasmus, Stephans, Beza and Elziever brothers get their Greek readings? They must have had Greek manuscripts in their possession at the time they made up their N.T. Greek texts. Erasmus didn't use the Latin Vulgate texts because the Latin Vulgate does not read “king of saints” but “king of the ages”.

Of these four early church fathers who also quoted Revelation 15:3 as the KJB has it - “king of

saints” we have Victorinus-Pettau who around the year 270 A.D. wrote commentaries on the book of Revelation as well as Genesis, Exodus, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Matthew and other books of the Bible. His works were later anathematized by Pope Gelasius 1. The only surviving work of his is this commentary on Revelation and according to the UBS’s own notes he quoted the verse as it stands in the TR that underlies the KJB and all other Reformation bibles.

We also have Tyconius who around 370 A.D. also wrote a commentary on the book of Revelation and he quotes the verse as it stands in the KJB.

Then there is Apringius who himself wrote another commentary on the book of Revelation in the 6th century and it says the same thing as the Textus Receptus - “king of saints”.

And lastly we have the Roman statesman and writer Cassiodorus who around 460 to 485 established a library of Greek and Latin texts and himself wrote a commentary on the book of Psalms, and he makes reference to Revelation 15:3 and quotes it as it stands in the Textus Receptus.

So it should be obvious that there have existed throughout the centuries Greek manuscripts that did contain this reading long before Erasmus and all the others included it in their Greek textual editions for the complete New Testament.

In addition to this we have the comments made by several well known Bible commentators about this verse.

John Gill (1697-1771) comments on this passage saying: "*thou King of saints*: the Alexandrian copy, one of Stephens's, the Complutensian edition, and Arabic version, read, "King of nations", the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, "King of ages" **but the generality of copies read as we have it.**"

The Alexandrian copy probably refers to Alexandrinus (A) - it reads "nations"; Vaticanus does not contain the book of Revelation. Sinaiticus hadn't yet been discovered, but it first read "king of ages". Then some scribe changed it to read "king of nations" and then another scribe changed it back to "ages" again! The other so called Alexandrian mss. are divided among themselves. Manuscript A reads "nations" while manuscript C reads "ages". John Gill mentions "one of Stephens's" but it is well known that Stephens had at least 16 Greek manuscripts. What did these others read? They must have read "king of saints" because that is precisely what he put in his Greek text.

Barnes' Notes on the New Testament Commentary says: "*Thou King of saints*. King of those who are holy; of all who are redeemed and sanctified. **The more approved reading here**, however, is *King of nations*--\~o basileuv tw n eywn\~--instead of *King of saints*--\~tw n agiwn\~. So it is read in the critical editions of Griesbach, Tittmann, and Hahn."

Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament notes: "Some MSS. have "the king of the saints" and some "the king of the nations."

Another point in my discussion with James White I would like to address is when he started talking about the word "godhead" and the various Greek words that are used in three different passages.

In his book Mr. White says: "Yet, the KJV rendering of this verse is probably the least clear of almost all currently available translations. How does one explain what "Godhead" means? Who really uses this term any longer? And what about the fact that the KJV uses "godhead" in other places when it is translating a completely different Greek term?"

Then Mr. White has a chart which shows the NASB rendering of the three passages where the KJB has Godhead in all three. Here are the NASB renderings: Acts 17:29 the Divine Nature (Theios); Romans 1:20 divine nature (theiotes), and Colossians 2:9 Deity (theotes).

The NIV gives us "the divine being" in Acts 17:29; "divine nature" in Romans 1:20 and "Deity" in Colossians 2:9. The ESV has "divine being" in Acts 17:29; "divine nature" in Romans 1:20 and "deity" in Colossians 2:9, while the NKJV has "Divine Nature" in Acts 17:29, "Godhead" in Romans 1:20 and "Godhead" in Colossians 2:9.

Mr. White then raises the objection about how I had said that all three words had to do with the Greek word for God which is Theos, and he said I was totally inaccurate, and that if I look in a lexicon I have to look at three different words. I am not writing for the academics but for the common Bible believing Christian. All three Greek words are related in that all three are very similar and all three have to do with the nature of God and Who He is. Godhead is the better English translation for all three instances.

If we take Mr. White's own examples of "divine nature", "deity", "divine being" the NKJVs "Godhead" or even the word "God" itself, and look them up in any good English dictionary we are obviously looking at different words but they all have the same basic meaning. In fact, the English dictionaries use the other words to define what each one means.

Webster's English Dictionary defines "godhead" as 1. divine nature or essence: Divinity. 2. the nature of God especially existing in three persons.

It defines "divine" as "being deity", "Godlike"

And "Deity" as "God" or "Divinity".

I believe Mr. White is seeing a tempest in a teapot and is once again setting up his own over technical mind as being his final authority and he wants his own personal opinions and preferences to be yours too, in spite of the fact that numerous other highly trained scholars disagree with his conclusions, as is abundantly evidenced by the English translations they made over the centuries.

As for Mr. White's puzzlement about how one explains what Godhead means, he might try looking at any number of current English dictionaries. As for his question - "Who really uses this term any longer?" maybe Mr. Scholar White might try reading the NIV introduction in the 1984 edition where it says on page xviii "Neither Hebrew, Aramaic nor Greek uses special pronouns for the persons of **the Godhead.**" Actually the word Godhead is much stronger and more accurate than the "deity" of the NASB, NIV and ESV. I have also heard radio preachers today who use the modern versions talking about the Godhead, little realizing that this word no longer appears in the bible versions they use.

The Greek lexicons of both Trench and Thayer's also show Godhead as being one of the primary meanings of this Greek word used in Colossians 2:9. Scholars often disagree with each other; what one affirms another denies. But of the three words used, there are some who affirm that each of the Greek words used has the meaning of "godhead".

Concerning the first example of Acts 17:29 "the Godhead" KJB and many others - theion - Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament 1957 list this word on page 354 and reference Acts 17:29. They define it as: 1. of **the godhead** and everything that belongs to it.

Concerning the Greek word used in Romans 1:20 theiotes, on page 285 of Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon he tells us that this word means divinity or divine nature and is a synonym of theotes used in Colossians 2:9 which he defines as "absolute Godhead". Vine's also says on page 330 that theiotes of Romans 1:20 "is derived from theios" which is the word used in Acts 17:29.

Concerning Colossians 2:9 theotes Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words page 330 references Colossians 2:9 and says: "Paul is declaring that in the Son there dwells all the fulness of absolute Godhead; the apostle uses theotes to express this essential and personal Godhead of the Son." Then he references Trench's Synonyms. When we look at Trench Synonyms of the New Testament on pages 24-25 he says that theotes as found in Colossians 2:9 means exactly the same thing Vine told us - the essential and personal Godhead of the Son.

And this Greek New Testament site - <http://www.laparola.net/greco/> Gives the following quotes concerning Colossians 2:9:

Hippolytus Refutation of All Heresies Book X: that this is what has been declared, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the **Godhead** bodily." [12]

Irenaeus Against Heresies Book I: and further, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the **Godhead**;" [46]

Origen de Principiis Book II: And when it is said "above thy fellows," it is meant that the grace of the Spirit was not given to it as to the prophets, but that the essential fulness of the Word of God Himself was in it, according to the saying of the apostle, "In whom dwelt all the fulness of the **Godhead** bodily." [88]

The word Godhead implies the Three Persons of the Trinity, whereas the simple word Deity does not. There are many deities but only one Godhead. It is more than just coincidence that the KJB has the word Godhead three times in the New Testament.

As for Mr. White's charge that all three Greek words are "completely different", please note that all three have the base word Theos, which by itself means God. Not only does the KJB translate all three instances of these related words as Godhead, but so also do Tyndale 1525, Miles Coverdale 1535, the Great Bible (Cranmer) of 1540, Matthew's Bible (John Rogers) of 1549, the Bishop's Bible 1568, the Geneva Bible 1599, John Wesley's 1755 translation, Webster's 1833 translation, Young's "literal" translation, the KJV 21st Century Version 1994, and the Third Millennium Version of 1998.

The last point I would like to address is Mr. White's offence at my referring in my writings to things like Mr. White's "silly book" or his "blunders" See James White's Word Follies - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9x6eHga6Ig&feature=BFa&list=PL16B2149EE5E54979&index=14>

or how he is a phony and when I liken him to a used car salesman. Well, this is honestly what I believe about a man who would stand in the pulpit and tell us that he believes the Bible IS the

inerrant words of God and lie when he says it. Mr. White simply has no inerrant Bible to give to anyone and he knows it. Then he writes a poorly thought out book criticizing many words and texts found in what I and thousands of other Christians honestly believe are the 100% true and inerrant words of God, and in its place has nothing to offer us but conflicting and contradictory “reliable and trustworthy versions” that not even Mr. White believes ARE the inerrant words of God.

He takes great offence at my calling him a liar and yet apparently it is OK for him to characterize us Bible believers as “incapable of rational thought”, “your abject incapacity to understand simple human reasoning”, “irrational” and “thoroughly cultic”.

Whether one is truly irrational or not is a bit hard to prove and very subjective, but to prove that someone is a liar is much easier. Just ask Mr. White the next time you see him where you can get a copy of that Book he says he believes in that “IS the inerrant words of God.”

Will Kinney