

The Fickle Nature of Textual Criticism in the Book of Romans Using the So Called "Oldest and Best Manuscripts"

The book of Romans, just as every other New Testament book, is full of examples where the two so called oldest and best manuscripts (Sinaiticus and Vaticanus) are at odds with each other. Most Christians today do NOT believe that ANY Bible in ANY language IS or ever has been the complete, inspired and 100% true preserved words of the living God. The purpose of this textual study in the book of Romans is to show in black and white the true and unsettling nature of what today's "scholars" call the "science" of Textual Criticism. No reading is sure. Everything is unsettled and in a state of constant flux. And the end result is that more and more people end up abandoning the belief in the Inerrancy of Scripture.

To see many more concrete examples of what the allegedly "oldest and best" manuscripts are really like, see this comparative study here -

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

May I also recommend the article called "Is King James Bible Onlyism Scriptural? -

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

Without exception, any modern version promoter who tries to tell you that our King James Bible is based on just a few late manuscripts, and that in the last few years we have made many important textual discoveries, is full of hot air. He himself does not believe that any Bible in any language is now the inspired, complete and 100% true "book of the LORD".

We don't have to look far before we run into the first example of where these two false witnesses, upon which most modern versions are based, disagree with each other. The first example is found in the Romans 1:1. I admit that this particular textual change does not alter the essential meaning of the verse, but it does begin to chip away at the idea of an inspired Bible. God does not inspire two different readings in the same place. Either *one* is what God inspired and *the other* is not, or *neither one* of them is what God caused to be written. Keep going in the study and you will see that the differences become far more pronounced and critical.

Romans 1:1 reads: "Paul, a servant of JESUS CHRIST, called to be an apostle...". Here the majority of all Greek texts read JESUS CHRIST, and so does Sinaiticus. In fact, so too do Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Bishops', the Geneva Bible, the RV of 1881, ASV of 1901, Douay, NKJV, and even the RSV and NRSV. So too does the up and coming ISV (International Standard Version.)

However Vaticanus reverses the order and says: CHRIST JESUS and so too do the NASB, NIV, NET and the ESV. The same is seen among the various Catholic Versions. The earlier Douay-Rheims of 1582 and the Douay of 1950 both read JESUS CHRIST, but the 1970 St. Joseph NAB and the New Jerusalem bible of 1985 now says CHRIST JESUS, following the Vatican mss.

Romans 1:16 "...to the Jew FIRST (prooton) and also to the Greek." Here Vaticanus omits the word FIRST, but it is found in Sinaiticus and in most versions.

Romans 2:16 "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by JESUS CHRIST according to my gospel." Again the reading of JESUS CHRIST is that of the majority of all texts including Sinaiticus correction and A. It is also the reading of Wycliffe, Bishops, Tyndale, Coverdale, Geneva, NKJV, the RV, ASV, NRSV and the NIV. This time the NIV went the other way from what it did in verse One and now goes with the Sinaiticus reading instead of the Vatican.

However Vaticanus again reverses the order and says CHRIST JESUS, and now also do the NASB, RSV, NET and the ESV. Notice that the previous ASV read like the KJB, but then the NASB changed it, and that the RSV and ESV now follow Vaticanus, but the NRSV didn't. Likewise the Catholic Douay 1950 goes with JESUS CHRIST, then the 1970 St. Joseph changed it to CHRIST JESUS, but then the 1985 New Jerusalem went back to JESUS CHRIST. This whole process is very "scientific" don't ya know.

Romans 3:2 "...chiefly, BECAUSE (gar) unto them were committed the oracles of God." Here the little word BECAUSE is found in the majority of all texts as well as Sinaiticus, and is in the Geneva Bible, the Douay-Rheims, the NKJV, NRSV and Youngs but Vaticanus omits it and so do the NASB, NIV, ESV, NET and the newer Catholic versions like the St. Joseph NAB and New Jerusalem bible.

Romans 4:19 "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body NOW (eede) dead...". The little word "now" is found in the majority of all texts including Sinaiticus, A, C, D, and is in Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Bishops, Geneva, KJB, NKJV, RV, ASV, NASB and the NRSV.

However Vaticanus omits the word and so do the NIV, RSV, ESV, NET and Holman. Westcott-Hort used to omit the word entirely, but now the latest UBS critical text puts it back in but within brackets. Notice that the RSV omitted it, then the NRSV put it back in, and then the ESV once again has taken it out. But wait! The new 2007 ISV is out and they have put it back in again!

Romans 5:2 "By whom we have access BY FAITH into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

The words "by faith" are found in the Majority of all texts including Sinaiticus, A and C, and the words are still found in the NASB, NIV, NET and ESV. However Vaticanus omits the words "by faith" and so do the RSV, NRSV and the New English Bible 1970. Again, notice that the previous RSV, NRSV's omitted the words, but now the latest revision of the revision of the revision (ESV) has once again put them back in their text.

Romans 6:11 "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ OUR LORD."

The final words "our Lord" are in the majority of all texts including Sinaiticus and C, as well as some Old Latin copies, the Syriac Peshitta, Palestinian, Coptic Boharic, Georgian, Armenian, Ethiopic and Slavonic ancient versions.

The words are also in Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Bishops, Geneva, KJB, NKJV, Hebrew Names Version, Spanish Reina Valera, and many others. But Vaticanus omits the words "our Lord" and so do the RV, ASV, NASB, NIV, RSV, ESV, NET and Holman versions. Even though the reading is found in Sinaiticus, the modern versionists unite in following the Vatican manuscript here.

Romans 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, WHO WALK NOT AFTER THE FLESH, BUT AFTER THE SPIRIT."

There is tremendous confusion among the Greek texts for the reading of this verse. All the capitalized words are found in the Majority of Greek texts, including Sinaiticus correction, D correction, some Old Latin copies like ar and o, the Syriac Harkelian, Georgian and Slavonic ancient versions.

Agreeing with the full reading found in the Majority of Greek texts and the King James Bible are Tyndale 1525, Coverdale 1535, Bishops' Bible 1568, the Geneva Bible 1599, Luther 1545, Italian Diodati 1649, the Spanish Reina Valera 1602 - 1995, Young's, the NKJV, KJV 21st Century, Green's MKJV, World English Bible, Amplified Bible, and the Modern Greek Bible.

However Sinaiticus original, and Vaticanus omit all these words and so do versions like the ASV, NASB, NIV, RSV, ESV, NET and Holman Standard.

Manuscripts A and D original have part of the words and omit the others. These include "who walk not after the flesh", but omit "but after the Spirit". The Catholic Douay-Rheims of 1582 and the 1950 Douay versions read this way, but the more recent Catholic versions like the St. Joseph NAB and the Jerusalem Bible now read like the NASB, NIV, and ESV and omit all the words - "who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." from the last part of the verse.

So, in other words, it is mainly because of the Vatican manuscript that modern versions like the NASB, NIV, RSV, NET, Holman Standard and the more modern Catholic versions unite in omitting the whole last phrase "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Romans 8:2 "For the law of the Spirit of life hath made ME free from the law of sin and death."

Here again is where the multitude of conflicting modern versions strut their stuff. The reading of "made ME free" is found in the Majority of all texts including A, C, D, the Old Latin copies of d, dem, e, mon, x and z. So too the Syriac Harkelian, Coptic Sahidic, Gothic, Armenian, Georgian and Slavonic ancient versions.

Agreeing with the KJB reading of "made ME free" are Wycliffe, Tyndale, Bishops, Coverdale, Geneva, NKJV, Youngs, Amplified Bible, and Douay.

Not even the early revisions went along with the Sinaitic/Vaticanus reading, nor do all the modern ones either. The Revised Version 1881, American Standard Version 1901, and the RSV of 1952 all kept the reading of "made ME free", and so too do the NIV and the brand new ISV (International Standard Version.)

But Sinaiticus and Vaticanus have the reading of "made YOU free", and so read the NASB,

NRSV, ESV, NET and Holman Standard. Thus the new versions are not even in agreement with each other. Oh wait! There's more. The NIV editions from 1974, 1978 and 1984 all read: "set ME free from the law of sin", but now in the 2011 New NIV they have changed their underlying Greek text (as they have done in several places from the 1984 edition) and it now reads: "has set YOU free". Among the Catholic Versions we see the same thing. The earlier Douay-Rheims and the Douay 1950 read "set ME free". Then the St. Joseph NAB 1970 and the New Jerusalem bible of 1985 went with "set YOU free", but then again in 2009 the Catholic Public Domain version has once again gone back to "set ME free". This is the true nature of what our scholarly bible agnostics like to call the "science" of textual criticism, and they hope you will fall for it so that you can end up just as confused as they are.

Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

So read the Majority of all texts including Sinaiticus, as well as translations like Tyndale, Coverdale, Bishops, Geneva, NKJV, the Revised Version, American Standard version 1901, and the ESV.

However Vaticanus has an additional reading not even found in Sinaiticus and some modern versions like the NASB follow it instead. The NASB ALONE reads: "And we know that GOD causes all things to work together for good to those who love GOD, to those who are called according to His purpose." This additional word "GOD causes all things to work" was originally left out even by Westcott and Hort. Then it was later added to the Nestle text in brackets, and later on once again removed from their text. The latest Nestle-Aland, UBS text omits this extra word taken from Vaticanus and still found in the NASB's 1963 to 1995 editions.

The NIV follows no known Greek text here and reads like the previous RSV: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love HIM, who have been called according to his purpose." The NIV apparently adopted the first "God" found in Vaticanus, which almost everybody else omits, and then arbitrarily dropped the word **God** from the phrase - "to them that love GOD" in this verse. They just made up a text. Oh, hang on a minute! Guess who else reads like the NIV? The older Catholic Douay-Rheims and the Douay read like the Majority of texts and the KJB, but now the St. Joseph NAB 1970 and the New Jerusalem bible 1985 read just like the NIV. St. Joseph NAB says: "We know that GOD makes all things work together for the good of those who love HIM" and the NIV says: "And we know that GOD works for the good of those who love HIM".

But now the newer NRSV, the latest ESV, and the Holman Standard have all gone back to the reading found in the King James Bible - "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." - ESV. See how the game works, now?

Romans 8:34 "Who is he that condemneth? It is CHRIST that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God..." So read the Majority of all texts, as well as Tyndale,

Coverdale, Bishops, Geneva, NKJV and even Dan Wallace's NET version. However Sinaiticus adds an extra word "Jesus" to the text, though not found in Vaticanus.

Versions like the ASV, NASB, NIV, ESV, RSV and Holman all add the word JESUS based on Sinaiticus. and end up saying "CHRIST JESUS who died". However in this same verse Sinaiticus also adds additional words to the text, that are not found in the Majority nor in Vaticanus. The Sinaiticus mss. goes on to say: "that is risen again FROM THE DEAD". (ek nekroon).

So the continuing confusion is seen in that the RV, ASV and RSV all added both the extra word "Jesus" AND the words "that is risen again FROM THE DEAD", based on the Sinaiticus reading. But wait! Now the revisions of their predecessors have once again "scientifically" decided to omit these extra words from Sinaiticus, (but keep the extra word "Jesus") and so versions like the NASB, NIV, NRSV and ESV now read " it is Christ JESUS ...who was raised" (thus omitting "from the dead") But Dan Wallace's NET version didn't add the extra word "Jesus" like the others did. If you are beginning to think the "science" of textual criticism is a bit complicated, you're right. It is.

The new versions now go back and forth between Sinaiticus and Vaticanus readings in the very same verse. God only knows what will come down the pike next. Daniel Wallace's NET version and the Contemporary English Version 1995 have already done away with the extra word "Jesus". This is the true nature of "the art and science" of textual criticism.

Romans 8:35 "Who shall separate us from the love OF CHRIST?". Again, so read the majority of all texts, and this time even versions like the NASB, NIV, ESV, RSV and Holman say "the love of CHRIST". BUT, the Sinaiticus manuscript says "the love of GOD", while the Vaticanus mss. says "the love of GOD IN CHRIST JESUS". I wonder what would James White have to say about these "expansions of piety". In any event, we see that none of the versions follow the conflicting "oldest and best manuscripts" in this particular verse, though they HAVE omitted THOUSANDS of other words from the New Testament, based on these same two false witnesses, and then have the nerve to call this "science"!!

Romans 10:3 "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own RIGHTEOUSNESS, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."

The word "righteousness" is found three times in this verse in the majority of all texts, including Sinaiticus and in all previous English Bibles like Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Bishops', Geneva. It is also found in the NKJV, and more recently in the Holman Standard, the 2011 Common English Bible (a critical text version) and even Wallace's NET version.

However Vaticanus omits the middle word "righteousness" and the NASB, RSV, NIV, ESV and ISV omit the word saying "seeking to establish their own". Westcott and Hort originally included the word, then later Nestle's took it out, but then the latest Nestle-Aland Critical text has once again put the word back in their texts. ALL the Catholic versions follow the Vatican manuscript here and omit one of the three words translated as "righteousness" or "justice".

Romans 11:6 "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. BUT IF IT BE OF WORKS, THEN IT IS NO MORE GRACE; OTHERWISE WORK IS NO MORE WORK."

So read Tyndale, Coverdale, Bishops bible, the Geneva Bible, Wesley's translation, Youngs, the NKJV, Lamsa's translation of the Syriac Peshitta, the Third Millennium Bible 1998, the Spanish Reina Valera 1995, Italian Diodati 1991, French Ostervald 1996, German Schlachter 2000 and many other translations throughout the world.

The absurdity of calling Sinaiticus and Vaticanus the "best" manuscripts is fully revealed in this great verse. All the capitalized words are found in the majority of all Greek texts, and even in the Sinaiticus correction. When we examine the Vaticanus manuscript we find an amazing blunder right on the surface. Vaticanus turns things on its head saying: "But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no longer GRACE."!!!

Primarily on the basis of A, C and D (which also constantly disagree not only with the majority of texts, but also among themselves) versions like the NASB, NIV, RSV, ESV, ISV, NET and Holman have omitted all these words "BUT IF IT BE OF WORKS, THEN IT IS NO MORE GRACE; OTHERWISE WORK IS NO MORE WORK." So too do ALL Catholic versions like the Douay-Rheims, St. Joseph NAB and the New Jerusalem bible 1985.

Romans 13:9 "...Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, Thou shalt not covet..." The words "Thou shalt not bear false witness" are found in multiple manuscripts and ancient versions like the Old Latin, the Syriac Harkelian, Coptic Boharic, Armenian and Ethiopic. **They are also in Sinaiticus.** They are included in all English Bibles from Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Bishops', the Geneva Bible, Wesley's translation, Youngs, New Life Version, the NKJV 1982, and the Third Millennium Bible 1998. However Vaticanus omits these words and so do the versions from the Revised Version, to the NASB, RSV, ESV, NIV, ISV, NET and Holman Standard.

Once again, the Catholic versions continue to change among themselves. The previous Douay-Rheims of 1582 contained all these words, saying: "For Thou shalt not commit adultery: Thou shalt not kill: Thou shalt not steal, **Thou shalt not bear false witness:** Thou shalt not covet:"; BUT then the 1950 Douay omitted them followed by the St. Joseph NAB and the New Jerusalem bible. But now the 2009 Sacred Bible Catholic Public Domain Version has put them back in the text.

Romans 14:21 - "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, OR IS OFFENDED, OR IS MADE WEAK." The capitalized words are again found in the Majority of all Greek texts and **even in Vaticanus**, plus the Sinaiticus correction, P46 and D. They are found in Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Bishops, Geneva, Douay-Rheims, Darby, Youngs, Green's, the NKJV and the Third Millennium Bible. Even some modern Critical Text versions that usually follow the Westcott-Hort text include the words. Among these are the Amplified Bible (put out by the same people who give us the NASB), the brand new ISV

(International Standard Version), the Lexham English Bible of 2012 and, in this instance, all the Catholic bible translations like the Douay, St. Joseph NAB, New Jerusalem bible 1985 and the 2009 Catholic Public Domain Version of 2009. The words are also included in the German Schlachter of 2000, the New Diodati 1991 and New Riveduta of 2008, the Portuguese A Biblia Sagrada, the French Ostervald of 1996 and the French Louis Segond 21 of 2007 and the Spanish Reina Valera of 1995 and the RV Contemporánea of 2011. In spite of all this evidence, versions like the RV, NASB, RSV, ESV, NIV, NET and Holman follow mainly two manuscripts (A and C) and omit the words "**or is offended, or is made weak**" - all done on a strict "scientific method" don't ya know ;-)

Dan Wallace's NET version also omits all these words and then has one of the goofiest justifications for tampering with the text that you will find. He says: "A large number of mss, some of them quite important (Ì46vid æ2 B D F G Ψ 0209 33 1881 Ì lat sa), read "or to be offended or to be made weak" after "to stumble." The shorter reading "to stumble" is found only in Alexandrian mss (æ* A C 048 81 945 1506 1739 pc bo). Although external evidence favors inclusion, internal evidence points to a scribal expansion, perhaps reminiscent of 1 Cor 8:11-13. The shorter reading is therefore preferred." In other words, in spite of massive and widespread and ancient evidence for this reading, on the basis of a couple of manuscripts and some very creative speculation on Wallace's part, he deletes these words from the Bible text.

Romans 15:7 "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received **US** to the glory of God." "received US" is the reading of the majority of Greek texts **including Vaticanus** and D. It is also the reading of the previous Westcott-Hort, and the Nestle Critical texts. I have a Nestle 4th edition 1934 copy, and it clearly says US in the text. This is also the reading of the Geneva Bible, Tyndale, Wesley's translation, Youngs, NKJV AND the NASB.

However Sinaiticus, A and C read "received **YOU**" and now the newer Nestle critical texts have "scientifically" changed their previous reading and decided to now follow Sinaiticus and so versions like the RSV, ESV, NIV, NET, ISV, Holman Standard and all Catholic versions say "received **YOU**".

The final reading we will consider in the book of Romans reveals the blatant absurdity of this so called "art and science of textual criticism". This is a mind blower. You may not even believe it, but it is true and is well documented. The so called Critical Text has actually changed **FOUR** times over the last hundred years, and the multiple choice "Bible of the Month Club" versions make this confusion very clear.

Romans 15:19 "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the **SPIRIT OF GOD**..." The reading of "the **SPIRIT OF GOD**" is that of the Majority of all texts including P46 and **Sinaiticus**. Westcott and Hort originally had "power of Spirit [holy]" with "holy" in brackets. However just a few years later (4th edition, 1934) they changed their critical text to read "the power **OF THE HOLY** Spirit" with no brackets, all based on the reading of Alexandrinus, and the Revised Version 1881, American Standard Versions of 1901 and the RSV 1952 read this way

- "the HOLY Spirit". **The Vaticanus** copy differs from the others in that it only says "the power of the SPIRIT", omitting both "God" or "holy".

Then the Nestle-Aland again changed their text to omit the word "holy" and it merely read "power of the Spirit" (thus following the Vaticanus mss.) and so read the NIV 1973, 1978 and 1984 editions and the NASB. But wait. There's more. Now the Nestle-Aland scholars have once again changed their minds and have now gone back to reading like the KJB had it all the time. The UBS 4th edition now reads "power of the SPIRIT OF GOD", and now so do the NRSV, ESV, ISV, Holman Standard, the NET version AND the "new" New International Version of 2011 has once again changed its underlying Greek text and now reads like the KJB has always had it - "the power of the Spirit OF GOD".

These are the FACTS and anyone can verify them for themselves. The next time you hear somebody who does not believe that ANY Bible in ANY language IS NOW the inspired and 100% true Holy Bible try to talk you into abandoning your King James Bible in favor of "the latest findings of the art and science of Textual Criticism", tell him to go fly a kite.

My website is found here where you will find numerous articles defending the King James Bible as the only true Book of the Lord, and revealing many of the errors in the multiple-choice, modern versions around today, none of which anyone believes are the inspired and 100% true words of God.

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