

The Doctrine of Scripture (2)

Lesson Seven: *Transmission of Scripture* (part 3)

Transmission of Scripture

Review: History of Transmission

- Second Century – evidence of two text-types:
 - 1) Western Text – characterized by paraphrasing
 - 2) Alexandrian Text – high quality; best text-type
- Fourth Century – emergence of a secondary text type known as the “Byzantine text”
- the almost exclusive perpetuation of the Byzantine text-type by the Greek-speaking church



Transmission of Scripture

History of Transmission of NT (cont.)

C. The “Received Text” (1516-1633)

- 1516 – Erasmus published the first Greek NT; it was based on six Greek MMS (12 cent.; Byzantine-type)
 - 2nd edition was the basis of Luther’s German translation
 - 3rd edition (1522) was the primary basis of the King James Version (1611)

Transmission of Scripture

Comma Johanneum (1 John 5:7-8)

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” (KJV)

“For there are three that bear witness, the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.” (NASB)

Transmission of Scripture

History of Transmission of NT (cont.)

C. The “Received Text” (1516-1633)

- 1550 – Stephanus published four editions; used Erasmus and 15 MMS (verse numeration)
- 1624-1678 – Elzevir brothers published seven editions; used the phrase “*the text now received by all*” – “Textus Receptus” (TR)

Transmission of Scripture

History of Transmission of NT (cont.)

D. The Age of the Critical Text

- Johann Griesbach (1775-1806) – first scholar to abandoned the TR; divided MMS into text-types
- Karl Lachmann (1831) – first to publish a Greek NT based entirely on text-critical principles
- Tischendorf – discovered and published 21 uncial MMS (Sinaiticus-1859); eight editions of the Greek NT (1841-1872)

Transmission of Scripture

History of Transmission of NT (cont.)

D. The Age of the Critical Text

- Westcott & Hort – published their critical edition of the Greek NT in 1881 after 28 yrs. of work; included a volume detailing their textual principles

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All modern English versions of the NT are based on subsequent versions of the Greek critical text

Transmission of Scripture

Types of Transmission Errors

A. Unintentional

- haplography/dittography – writing a letter once or twice
- metathesis – transpose letters or words
- wrong word division – no spaces, all capitals, no accents
- confusion of similar letters
- homoioteleuton (“similar endings”) – omission of words
- errors of hearing – words and letters that sound alike
- errors of judgment – marginal notes

Examples

evgenhqhmen nh,pioi // evgenhqhmen hp;ioi (1 Thess 2:7)

Os // qs (“who” // “God”) (1 Tim. 3:16)

paj o` a,rnoumeno*j* ton ui`on oude ton patera ecei
o` o`mologwn ton ui`on kai ton patera ecei (1 John 2:23)

ecomen // ecwmen (“we have” // “let us have”) (Rom. 5:1)

ISAWABUNDANCEONTHETABLE

Transmission of Scripture

Types of Transmission Errors

B. Intentional

- correcting supposed spelling, grammar, syntax errors
- elimination of apparent discrepancies
- harmonization of parallel passages
- conflation – combining two or more variants
- attempts to correct a perceived error
- doctrinal or liturgical changes

Transmission of Scripture

Canons of Textual Criticism

A. Internal Evidence

- *“the reading which best explains the origin of the others is most likely original”*

Transmission of Scripture

Colossians 2:2: 15 variant readings!

“a true knowledge of the mystery...”

- *of God, Christ (tou qeou Cristou)*
- *of God*
- *of Christ*
- *of God and Christ*
- *of God, which is Christ*
- *of God in Christ*
- *of God the Father of Christ*
- *of God the Father and of Christ*
- *of God and of the Father and of Christ*

Transmission of Scripture

Canons of Textual Criticism

A. Internal Evidence

1. the harder reading is often preferable
2. the shorter reading is generally preferable
3. in parallel texts, differing readings are often preferable
4. the reading that most closely conforms to the author's style is generally preferable

Transmission of Scripture

Canons of Textual Criticism

B. External Evidence (manuscripts)

➤ *“Manuscripts must be weighed not counted”*

1. The reading that is older (the type of text it embodies) is generally preferable
2. The reading with the widest geographical distribution of witnesses is more preferable