



BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH

Fayetteville, NC 28314

Pastoral Staff Position Paper on the Bible

Article of Faith Number One

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be verbally inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life (I Cor. 2:13; 10:11; II Tim. 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:21). The King James Version shall be the official Bible used by the church.

In so much as Baptists are divided over their positions on the value and use of Bible translations, the pastors¹ of BBC wish to provide its members further clarification on their understanding of Article One of the church's Articles of Faith.

I. Verbal Inspiration

- By verbal inspiration, we believe that the Spirit gave the writers of each of the sixty-six books of the Bible the exact words they penned on the original autographs; we reject any suggestion that the Bible only contains the Word of God based on a belief in partial inspiration.
- We believe God sovereignly used the authors' unique education, personality, culture background, etc. in order to give them words that were their very own while inspiring them and thus creating parallel accounts of the same event or statement which do not contradict one another.

II. Inerrant in Original Writings

- We believe in the historical, fundamental position that inerrancy and infallibility is limited to the original autographs.
- We further affirm that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original writings which can be ascertained with tremendous accuracy from the thousands of manuscripts God has preserved.
- We deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.²
- We agree with Fundamentalists like John R. Rice³ and R.A. Torrey⁴ who rejected the suggestion that any one translation was without error.
- We respect the soul liberty Baptists have to disagree with one another in the rare incidences where there is not complete unanimity among the preserved Hebrew and Greek manuscripts.
- *Furthermore*, we believe it is the responsibility of the individual believer to form his own opinion concerning those passages where there are differences between families of manuscripts by diligently using all resources God has preserved to know the truth.
- We recognize that believers in the 21st century have more resources available to them now more than any other group of Christians in the past, and we must follow the example of the believers in the church of Berea in Acts 17 who were diligent to search out the truth.

III. Supreme Authority in Faith and Life

- We believe the Word of God is unlimited in its application to all areas of the church and of the life of the Christian.
- Moreover, we believe the Bible is the sole authority for the church in both doctrine and practice.

IV. The King James Bible

- BBC uses the KJV Bible as the official Bible in corporate worship, Bible studies, and preaching but this standard should not diminish the value of studying original language tools in order to gain the best sense of text.
- We respect the value some Christians find in reading and studying from other translations to gain a greater understanding of the meaning of the text in a similar manner that students use commentaries and other tools.
- We reject any suggestion that any English Bible is supreme to the original languages.
- Furthermore, we reject as fallacious any theory of double or secondary inspiration.
- We do not believe God has revealed a preference for one translation over another in His Word.
- We affirm that the **primary value** of the KJV Bible is the great degree to which its translators were committed to an essentially literal word for word translation. Additionally, the KJV emphasizes the supremacy of Jesus Christ, preserves the importance of unique theological words like “propitiation,” and maintains God-ordained gender distinctions. These are the standards for which the believer must measure all translations; members of BBC should be cautious about the use of translations which are not committed to the same thing.
- We affirm that the Bible makes no claim to the specific manner by which it would be preserved or to further inspiration or perfection through any translators in any language.
- We reject as heretical the doctrine that one must use the KJV Bible to lead someone to salvation.

¹ The pastors of Berean Baptist Church affirmed their collective commitment to this further clarification of their understanding of Article of Faith Number One on March 16, 2009.

² “Article 13.” *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*. 1978 <<http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/creeds/chicago.htm>>

³Rice, John R. “Some Questions for King James Fans.” *The Sword of the Lord*. (30 March 1979).

⁴Ed., RA Torrey, “The Inspiration of the Bible-Definition, Extent and Proof.” *The Fundamentals Volume II*. (1917), 12-13.