

The Faith OF Christ: Why I Reject the NKJV

By Ben Webb

It is common knowledge that most modern Bible versions delete passages such as 1 John 5:7; Mark 9:44; Mark 9:46; Matthew 17:21; Matthew 23:14; Matthew 27:35; John 7:55-8:11; Acts 8:37; etc. This occurs because these versions are based upon certain Greek manuscripts, which also omit these passages. Although every modern version does not necessarily delete every one of these passages, most of these versions still delete most of these passages.

In addition, most of these versions also change (or eliminate) several important words in certain other passages, such as Ro.8:1; Acts 20:28; 1Tim.3:16; Revelation 1:11; Revelation 5:10; etc. Again, this is because these versions are based upon a Greek Text that is different from the one that was used for the King James Bible. The N.I.V., N.A.S., New World Translation (the version translated by the Jehovah's Witnesses); R.S.V., A.S.V., etc.; all delete or change various combinations of the above passages.

However, since the New King James is based upon the same Greek Text (the "Textus Receptus") as the "original" King James Bible, the New King James Version actually contains every one of the above-mentioned passages.

The question therefore arises as to why anyone would continue to use the OLD King James Bible, if the New King James still contains these passages.

One of our main reasons for rejecting the New King James is because it still contains certain questionable traits, which are prevalent in the other modern versions, as well. For example, just like the other modern versions, the New King James also changes the faith "OF" Christ to our faith "IN" Christ. This is an important principle, too; because in the "Old" King James, the faith "of" Christ indicates that Christ Himself is the Originator of this faith. The faith "of" Christ is a reference to His faithfulness, while faith "in" Christ refers to our faith.

Moreover, since the New King James does not consistently make this change in every case, we can easily compare the passages that have been changed with those that weren't. For example, the New King James actually retains the meaning of the "Old" King James in Romans 3:3, which refers to the faith "of" God. In the New King James, Ro.3:3 refers to the "faithfulness of" God. Please notice how the entire meaning of the passage would change, if the faith "of" God was changed to faith "in" God:

"Old" King James, Romans 3:3 -

"For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?"

New King James, Romans 3:3 -

"For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?"

As a result, even though the New King James changes the word "faith" to "faithfulness" in the above passage, the same thought is still being conveyed. It does not change the faithfulness "of" God to faith "in" God.

The same cannot be said, though, of other passages in the New King James that concern the "faith of" Christ. For example, please notice the following passages (for comparison, we have also included these passages as they appear in the N.I.V., as well as the New King James):

Scripture: Romans 3:22

OLD King James

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference

NEW King James

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

New International

This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

Scripture: Galatians 2:16

OLD King James

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

NEW King James

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh will be justified.

New International

Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

Scripture: Galatians 2:20

OLD King James

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

NEW King James

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

New International

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and have himself for me.

Scripture: Galatians 3:22

OLD King James

But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

NEW King James

But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

New International

But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

Scripture: Ephesians 3:12

OLD King James

In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

NEW King James

In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by faith in Him.

New International

In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Scripture: Philippians 3:9

OLD King James

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

NEW King James

And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

New International

And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ - the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

Scripture: Colossians 2:12

OLD King James

Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

NEW King James

Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who has raised Him from the dead.

New International

Having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

So, in view of the above comparison, we must reject the New King James Bible. Even though it accurately states in Ro. 3:3 that a non-believer's lack of faith will never make the faithfulness of God without effect, it still claims that a believer must maintain his own faith, in order to remain righteous and justified. But this would make the righteousness of God dependent upon the believer's own faith (Ro.3:22; see below). If, for any reason, a believer loses his faith "in" Jesus Christ (and this happens to almost every believer, at some point in his life), the New King James states that he will no longer have the righteousness of God (compare the N.I.V., A.S.V., New World Translation; etc.). At the same time, though, an unbeliever's lack of faith can never cancel out the faith of God (Ro. 3:3).

But if, as the "Old" King James Bible states, the righteousness of God is by faith of Jesus Christ; and believers are justified by the faith of Christ; this means that His righteousness remains with us, even if we happen to temporarily lose our own faith. And this only makes sense. After all, the righteousness of God is still "unto all" (i.e., even available unto non-believers, if they would only believe); as well as upon "all them that believe", as the Old King James states in Ro.3:22-23 -

"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

Consequently, since the righteousness of God is unto all, it is also available to unbelievers, as well as believers. And this could not be, if the righteousness of God was only through faith in Christ, as the New King James states.