

## To Be or Not to Be: Only KJV

by Steve Bates

Primarily I am writing this essay for the purpose of clarity on the subject of the King James Only position that I take as an English speaking pastor of an English speaking assembly. I do believe that the matter of Bible translations is of utmost importance in this day of great confusion from both sides. This essay assumes that those reading are somewhat familiar with terms and discussion over the matter of English translations. Bible Baptist Church is the assembly that God has graciously allowed me to pastor in Nashua, NH, and it is my prayer that this essay will give clarity in regards what her pastor believes about the KJV. A more complete and biblically defended position on the great doctrine of bibliology is given on our church website ([www.bbcn.org](http://www.bbcn.org)), this essay is only intended to speak of the English translation of the Word of God.

At the outset, I affirm that *every* word of the Scriptures has been *breathed out* by God. The Scriptures are then the product of God's Divine breath; therefore, every word of the Scriptures is absolutely *inerrant*. I stand firm upon the position that God not only *breathed out* His words, but that "holy men of God" were then "moved by the Holy Ghost" to record *perfectly* those *breathed out* words of God in the *autographs* (originals). With great conviction that is born out of the testimony of Scripture, I believe that God has *perfectly preserved* those breathed out words of God, down to the very jot's and tittles, providentially in the *Masoretic Text* (MT) of the Old Testament (OT) and the *Textus Receptus* (TR or the *Received Text*) of the New Testament (NT). Now, more to the point of this essay, I believe that the only modern English translation of the Bible that is entirely translated from the *MT* and *TR* is the KJV.

I believe the Scriptures plainly teach that it is the responsibility of believers (*assumed in the NT to be immersed into a local body of Christ*) to *receive* and *obey* the words of Scripture. Furthermore, it is the teaching of the NT that the Lord's *candlesticks* (local churches) are to *guard* the words of the Bible Canon (*the sixty-six books ~ Genesis through Revelation*); and, in truth, the Bible predicts that the Lord's churches would indeed do so.

Therefore, because the KJV is the English translation of those breathed out words that the Lord's English speaking churches have *received, preached, taught, and guarded* for over 400

years (*prior to 1611 the Lord's English speaking churches received other English translations faithfully translated from the text which underlies the KJV: ie: Wycliffe's NT, Tyndale's NT, Coverdale's Bible, Matthew's Bible, Great Bible, Geneva Bible, Bishop's Bible*), I will only use and promote the King James Bible for I believe with conviction that the KJV is God's Word for English speaking people today.

However, there is certainly a lot of confusion and even deceit surrounding the *man-made* term "King James Onlyism." In an effort to clarify *my* position on this subject, I will attempt to explain clearly what I believe about the English translation of the Scriptures:

- If "King James Version Only" (KJVO) defines one who believes that God gave men words that were breathed out by Himself in Greek and Hebrew (portions Aramaic) and that He has perfectly preserved those words in the Hebrew Masoretic and Greek Received Text underlying the KJV, then I am "KJVO."
- If "KJVO" defines one who believes that the Lord's churches have a faithful translation of those God-breathed words in the English language in the KJV, then I am "KJVO."
- If "KJVO" defines one who believes modern textual criticism has been used by Satan to attack the pure words of God and create multiplied confusion and uncertainty surrounding what are God's words, call me "KJVO."
- If "KJVO" defines one who believes it is important to have one biblical standard in a language as important as English, call me "KJVO."
- If "KJVO" defines one who believes that God has singularly blessed the KJV as no other modern translation of the Scripture in English and that the KJV has had the unique blessing of God now in excess of 400 years, then I am "KJVO."
- If "KJVO" defines one who believes that and English speaking churches can hold the KJV in their hands and say with complete confidence that "This is the Word of God in English" then I am "KJVO."

### **HOWEVER...**

- If "KJVO" defines one who believes that the English words of the KJV are breathed-out by God as those original language words that were breathed-out by God to "holy men of God" that were "moved by the Holy Ghost" then I am not "KJVO." Things that are different are

not the same. I believe the word “inspiration” is a term reserved for the actual words God-breathed out.

- If “KJVO” defines one who believes the English KJV is superior to the Hebrew and Greek texts upon which it was based, I am not “KJVO.”
- If “KJVO” defines one who believes the KJV is advanced revelation over the Hebrew and Greek text that God breathed out to holy men of old, I am not “KJVO.”
- If “KJVO” defines one who believes we should never study Greek or Hebrew in any way or that it is not proper to use lexicons and dictionaries, I am not “KJVO.” (*I do not believe that it is necessary for an English speaking, believer indwelt by the Holy Spirit to know the original languages in order to know or understand the English Word of God in their hands*).
- If “KJVO” defines one who believes that translations in other languages should be based on English rather than (when possible) Greek and Hebrew, I am not “KJVO.”

I conclude by stating the purpose of this essay is to *distinguish* between two groups *within* the term of “KJVO.” Many who hold to a “Multiple Translations Only” view carelessly or, in many cases, intentionally lump all “KJVO” churches/believers under the one *man-made* term “KJVO.” For them, the term is a pejorative! However, I embrace the term “KJVO,” but I will define “KJVO” as I have above!