

New Testament
Greek Manuscripts
and Modern Versions

Why New Testament?

Old Testament Hebrew Ms.

- Scribes Were Extremely Careful
- Preserved by Jewish Nation
- No Independent Copying
- Little Controversy Over Sources
- Mt. 5:18

The Good News

No Major Doctrinal Issues

Reasons:

- Redundancy Within the New Testament
- Variations in Very Small Proportion
 - Most do not alter the meaning
 - All key subjects covered elsewhere
- Jesus Has Kept His Promise (Mt. 24:35)

The Bad News

Questioning of Biblical Authority

- Subtle Weakening of Important Doctrines
- Footnote: "The most ancient manuscripts ..."
- Gross Omissions in Some Versions; Examples:
 - John 8:1-11 "Go and sin no more."
 - Mark 16:9-20 "He that believeth and is ..."
 - Acts 8:37 "I believe that Jesus Christ is ..."

Mt. 4:4 "... but by **every** word ..."

Lesson Approach

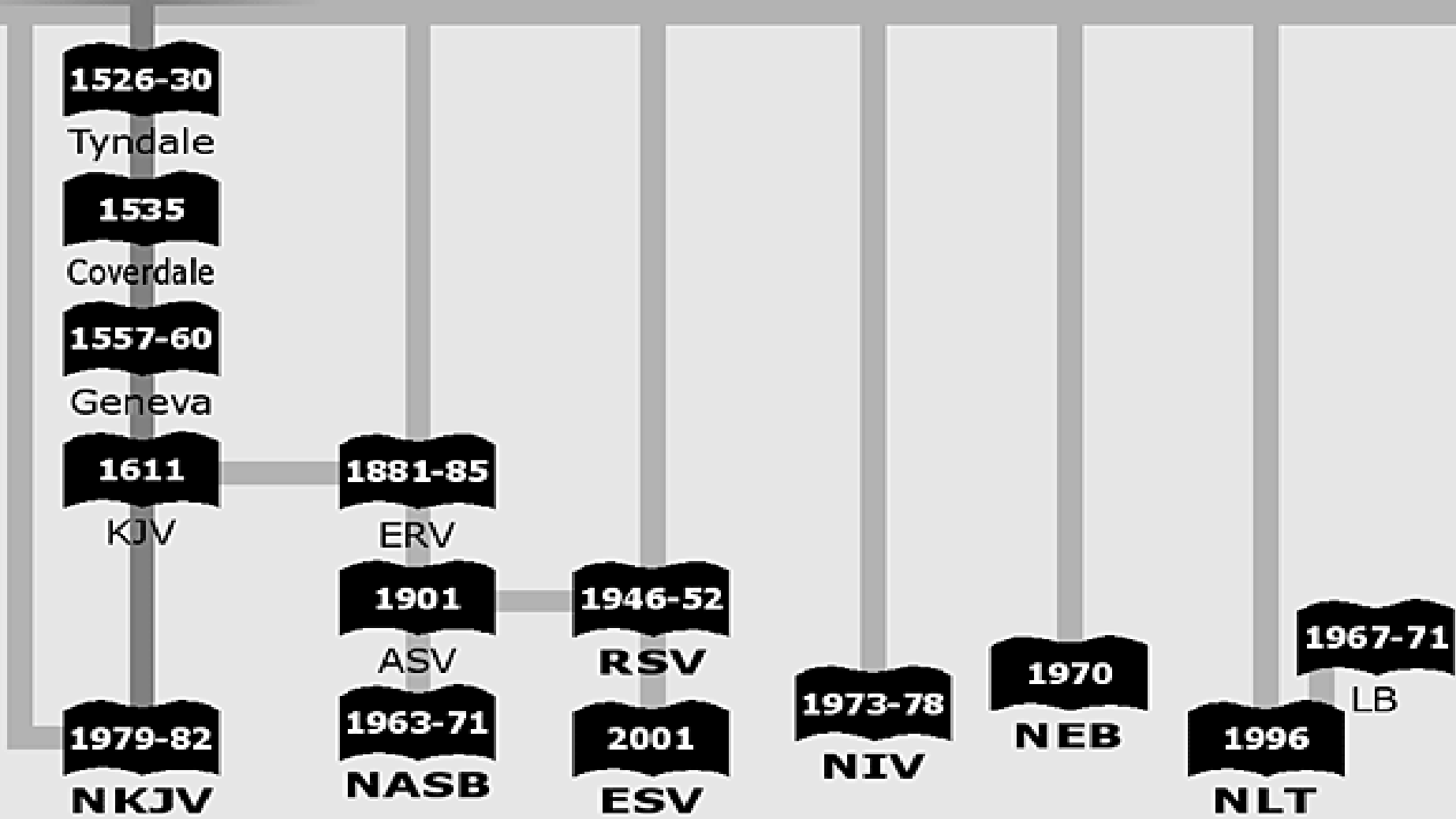
- Presentation of the Issues
- Scriptures that Deal with Subject
- Evaluation of the Alternatives

Two Major Alternative Texts

- Textus Receptus (**Received Text**)
 - Compiled in early 1500s (Erasmus)
 - Basis of the KJV of 1611
- Sinaiticus & Vaticanus (**Critical Greek Text**)
 - Compiled in late 1800s (Hort and Wescott)
 - Basis for Most "Modern" Versions

*Textus
Receptus*

Critical Greek & Hebrew Text



*Revised Standard Version • English Standard Version • New
International Version • New English Bible • New Living Translation*

Justification for the Critical Greek Text

- Inconsistency Among Received Text Mss.
 - Erasmus had relatively few
 - Copyist errors among them
- Sinaiticus and Vaticanus Older Mss.
 - ... so what's the problem?

Critical Greek Text Issues

- Variations:
 - Between the Vatican and the Sinai
 - Between the CGT and the Received Text
- Example Omissions:
 - Reference to Virgin Birth: Luke 2:33
 - Reference to Deity of Christ: 1 Tim. 3:16
 - Reference to Deity of Christ: Rom. 14:10, 12
 - Reference to Blood of Christ: Col. 1:14

Critical Greek Text Issues

Alleged Doctrinal "Weakening"

- Deity of Christ
- Virgin Birth
- Christ's Atonement
- Christ's Ascension

The Issue

RT and CGT Are Different

Therefore:

- One Must be Better than the Other
- Versions Derived will Also be Better

Can we resolve by scriptural principles?

Heb. 11:6 "... seek after Him."

Consider some passages ...

Revelation 22:18

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this **book**, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:"

Revelation 22:19

“And if any man shall take away from the words of the **book** of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17

“All **scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Ephesians 3:3-5

“How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, **when ye read**, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;”

2 Peter 1:19-21

“And we have the word of prophecy (made) more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of **scripture** is of private interpretation. For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit.

Psalms 12:6-7

"The **words of the Lord** are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever."

1 Peter 1:22-25

“...having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth. For, All flesh is as grass, And all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth: But the **word of the Lord** abideth for ever. And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you.”

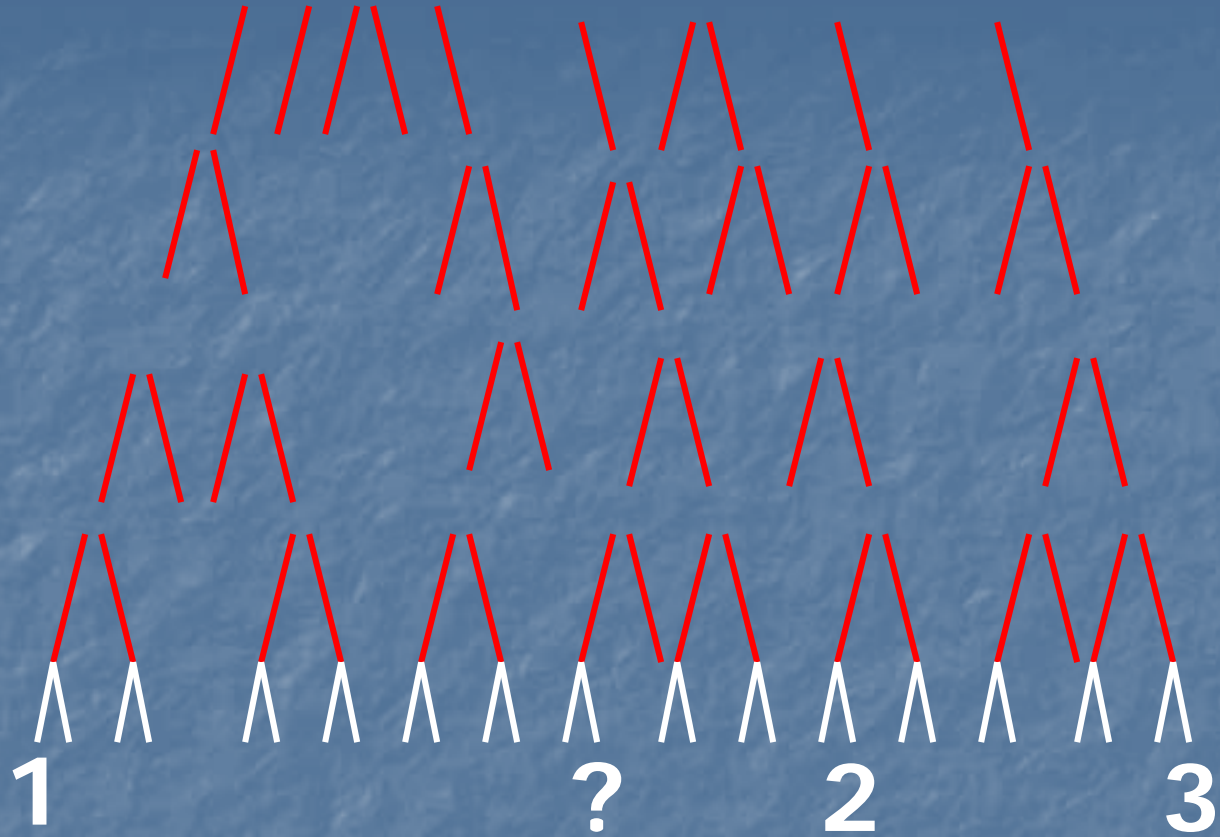
2 Peter 3:15-16

"...even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other **scriptures**, unto their own destruction."

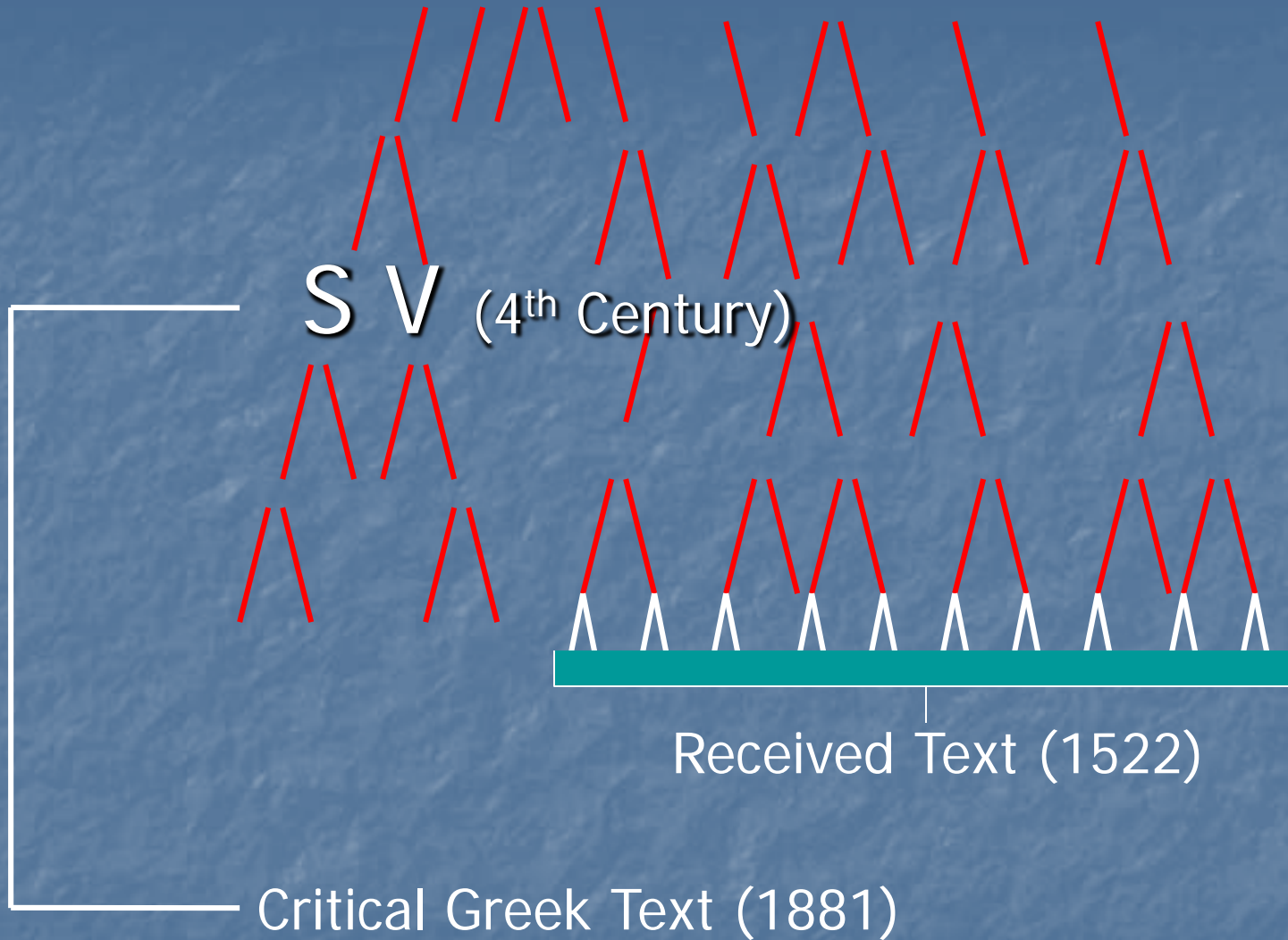
Colossians 4:16

“And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea”

ORIGINAL AUTOGRAPH



ORIGINAL AUTOGRAPHS



Are Inconsistencies Fatal?

Is Older Better?

Original Will



Four Sons

Oldest Son

Keeps Original

Byzantine Majority Text

Basis for New King James Version

- Adopted by Greek Orthodox Church
 - Not new – dates back to pre 1500
 - Used in Greek Byzantine Empire
- Accepted Majority of All Available Mss.

There are approximately 300,000 textual variants among New Testament manuscripts. The **Majority Text** differs from the **Textus Receptus** in almost 2,000 places. So the agreement is better than 99 percent. But the **Majority Text** differs from the modern critical text **[CGT]** in only about 6,500 places. In other words the two texts agree almost 98 percent of the time. Not only that, but the vast majority of these differences are *so minor that they neither show up in translation nor affect exegesis*. Consequently the majority text and modern critical texts are very much alike, in both quality and quantity.

Daniel B. Wallace (http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=677)

Conclusions

Jesus Example: Commonly Accepted

- Not an Issue to Create Contention
- We Should be Aware of this Issue
 - We will be asked about it
 - 1 Pet. 3:15
- Strive to Use Best Versions (Heb. 11:6)
- Be Aware of Subtle Influences
- Recognize the Providence of God