

Those Pesky Variants!

I. Two Attitudes to Avoid Regarding the Text of the Bible

A. Radical Skepticism

1. Says there is _____ way to get back to the originals
2. The Bible is simply viewed as any other book

B. Absolute Certainty

1. The Bible is the Word of God, but is every word in it the word(s) of God?
2. _____ in every respect

II. What Is a Textual Variant?

- A. Any place among the manuscripts in which there are any variations in _____.

III. Five Kinds of Variants

- A. Omission - Lacking a word, phrase, sentence

- B. Additions - If a word, phrase, sentence is added to a text

1. The smallest is a single word. The largest is as many as 12 verses (John 7:53-8:11; Mark 16:9-20) The next largest is two verses -

- C. Transposition - Change in word order

1. i.e. - "Jesus Christ" vs. "Christ Jesus"

- D. Substitution - Substitution of one word(s) for another word(s).

1. i.e. - "When Jesus knew" - "When the Lord knew"

IV. The Number of Textual Variants in the Greek New Testament

- A. There are 138,162 words in the Greek New Testament
- B. There are between 400,000 - 500,000 textual variants
- C. No two manuscripts match exactly

V. The Nature of Textual Variants

A. Neither Meaningful or Viable

- 1.

B. Neither Meaningful but Viable

- 1. These two constitute over _____% of all textual variations in the New Testament
- 2. They do not affect the meaning of the text whatsoever

C. Meaningful but Not Viable

- 1. About 25%
- 2. 1 Thessalonians 2:7 - "We were gentle . . ."; "We were like young children. . ."
ESV - NIV
- 3. John 8:53-9:11

D. Both Meaningful and Viable

- 1. Less than 1% of _____ textual variants
- 2. Changes the meaning to some degree and may possibly go back to the original
- 3. Revelation 13:8
- 4. Mark 9:29
- 5. Romans 8:1

VI. Do Any Theological Significant Beliefs Depend on Textual Variants?

A. No!!

"The general result of all those discoveries and all this study is to strengthen the proof of the authenticity of the Scriptures and our conviction that what we have in our hands, in substantial integrity, is the veritable word of God."

- Sir Frederic Kenyon

"Essential Christian beliefs are _____ effected by textual variations in the manuscript tradition of the New Testament."

- Burt Erhman