



The Burning Bush

ISSN 0219-5984

July 2005

Volume 11 Number 2

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THE BURNING BUSH

Theological Journal of the
FAR EASTERN BIBLE COLLEGE

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Editor : Jeffrey Khoo
Publisher : Far Eastern Bible College
Website : www.febc.edu.sg
Permit : MITA (P) 076/03/2005
Printer : Chung Printing

The Burning Bush (ISSN 0219-5984) is published bi-annually in January and July, and contains theological papers, sermons, testimonies, book reviews, College news, and alumni reports. Articles are indexed in the *Christian Periodical Index*. The journal is distributed gratis to the FEBC family and Bible-Presbyterian churches, and available online at www.febc.edu.sg. Local/Foreign subscription rates in Singapore dollars: one year—\$6/\$12; two years—\$10/\$20; back issues—\$3/\$6 per copy. Make cheques payable to “Far Eastern Bible College.”

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Editorial

The Burning Bush is a polemical journal of theology. It reflects the Bible-believing and Bible-defending ethos of the Far Eastern Bible College. It refuses to be neutral, to sit on the fence like the preacher in the poem below:

PREACHER ON THE FENCE

From out the millions of the earth
God often calls a man
To preach the Word
And for the Truth to take a royal stand.
'Tis sad to see him shun the cross,
nor stand in its defence;
Between the fields of right and wrong,
A preacher on the fence.

Before him are the souls of men
Bound for heaven or hell;
An open Bible in his hand,
And yet he will not tell
All the truth that's written there;
To them 'twould be an offense.
The joys of heaven, the woes of hell.
A preacher on the fence.

Now surely God has called a man
To battle for the right;
'Tis his to ferret out the wrong,
And turn on us the light.
And yet he dare not tell the truth;
He fears the consequence;
The most disgusting thing on earth
Is a preacher on the fence.

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If he should stand up for the wrong,
The right he'd not defend.
If he should stand up for the right,
The wrong he would offend.
His mouth is closed; he cannot speak
For freedom or against.
Great God, please deliver us
From a preacher on the fence!

But soon both sides will find him out,
And brand him as a fraud.
A coward who dares not
to please the devil or his God.
Oh Lord, free us from fear of man;
From cowardly pretense;
Cleanse out the dross and fear of loss,
And keep us off the fence!

Faithful and loyal to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, FEBC spares no effort to denounce the compromise and hypocrisy of neo-evangelicalism and neo-fundamentalism today. We make no apology for our faith in God's forever infallible and inerrant Hebrew and Greek words that are perfectly preserved in the Reformation Text underlying the Authorised (King James) Version of the Holy Scriptures. We deeply regret the weak evangelicalism and fundamentalism that is found in so many Christian Universities, Bible Colleges and Theological Seminaries today. The faith of our fathers is being whittled away by these neo-evangelical and neo-fundamental schools when they deny the Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI) and Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP) of the Holy Scriptures. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps 11:3). "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor 10:12).

O Lord, keep us off the fence!

“MY GLORY WILL I NOT GIVE TO ANOTHER” (ISAIAH 42:8)

Timothy Tow

The Lord God Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, declares, “I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another” (Isa 42:8). “Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD” (Jer 9:23-24).

All glory belongs to Him who created us. Let it be said again, “I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another.” Let the creature be humbled to the dust and whatsoever he speaks of the Creator, let Him receive all the power and the glory.

“He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him” (John 7:18). This is what our Lord Jesus, the Son of God, observes in puny man who exalts himself above his Creator, but the Son always glorifies the Father.

David, “a man after His own heart,” was so zealous for God’s glory that he swore to the limit of his strength to fight God’s enemy, “Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies” (Ps 139:21-22). David was “a man after His own heart.” He is one that loved His God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind (Matt 22:37). Are you one who loves his God like King David? You will consequently hate with a holy hatred all that His enemy plots against Him.

There is one hidden hatred of puny man against his Creator when he speaks against His Word that it is not perfect. In so doing, puny man is

asserting himself and seeking glory for himself over his God. That is Jesus' observation in John 7:18 against the scholastic scribes and Pharisees, his sworn enemies. But by faith, yes by faith, for "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is (God), and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (in His Word)" (Heb 11:6). We have upheld the unchanging faith that God's Word is 100% perfect without any mistake from the time it was given to this day.

Does puny man know that:

- (1) "Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name" (Ps 138:2);
- (2) "Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgements endureth for ever" (Ps 119:160);
- (3) "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33);
- (4) "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt 5:18);
- (5) "The scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35);
- (6) "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" (2 Tim 3:16-17);
- (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" (Ps 12:6-7)?

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and pastor of True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church.*

A CHILD OF GOD LOOKS AT THE DOCTRINE OF VERBAL PLENARY PRESERVATION

Carol Lee

Introduction

This paper states my understanding of God's teaching in His Word concerning the Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation and the position I must take with regard to this Doctrine.

I am no linguist or scholar of theology but I am a child of God. And I write with that as my only credential. My heavenly Father's revelation through His Word to me and all His children is clear (John 10:27: "My sheep hear my voice ...," John 18:37: "... Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.") and can be understood with the illumination of the Holy Spirit (John 14:26: "... the Holy Ghost ... shall teach you ...," Ps 119:18: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.")

I therefore write as one child of God to another. It is hoped that this paper will help the God-fearing and God-honouring reader to come to an equally biblical understanding of (and response to) this Doctrine.

Definition

While God has inspired men of old to write His Word in Hebrew and Greek (ie, the divine, Verbal Plenary Inspiration of the autographs), God also has taken it upon Himself to providentially preserve all of His own words in Hebrew and Greek, so that they can never be lost. This is the Doctrine of Verbal (words) Plenary (all, full, complete) Preservation and this Doctrine is taught in the Word of God.

The Bible Teaches the Doctrine of Preservation

Psalm 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.*

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Psalm 33:11 The counsel of the LORD *standeth for ever*, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

Psalm 78:1–7 Give ear, O my people, [to] my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide [them] from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should *make them known to their children*: That the generation to come might know [them, even] the children [which] should be born; [who] should arise and *declare [them] to their children*: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

Psalm 100:5 For the LORD [is] good; his mercy [is] everlasting; and *his truth [endureth] to all generations*.

Psalm 105:8 He hath remembered his covenant *for ever*, the word [which] he commanded to a thousand generations.

Psalm 111:7–8 The works of his hands [are] verity and judgment; all his commandments [are] sure. They *stand fast for ever and ever*, [and are] done in truth and uprightness.

Psalm 117:2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD *[endureth] for ever*. Praise ye the LORD.

Psalm 119:89 *For ever*, O LORD, *thy word is settled* in heaven.

Psalm 119:152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast *founded them for ever*.

Psalm 119:160 Thy word [is] true [from] the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *[endureth] for ever*.

Isaiah 40:8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall *stand for ever*.

Isaiah 59:21 As for me, this [is] my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that [is] upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, *from henceforth and for ever*.

Matthew 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*.

Matthew 5:17–18 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you,

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Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall *in no wise pass* from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words *shall not pass away*.

John 10:35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture *cannot be broken*;

1 Peter 1:23–25 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which *liveth and abideth for ever*. For all flesh [is] as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord *endureth for ever*. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

The Bible Teaches the Preservation of All the Words (Not Just Doctrines) of God

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.*

Psalms 119:89 For ever, O LORD, *thy word is settled* in heaven.

Isaiah 40:8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but *the word of our God shall stand for ever*.

Matthew 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

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Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but *my words* shall not pass away.

1 Peter 1:24–25 For all flesh [is] as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But *the word of the Lord endureth for ever*. And this is *the word* which by the gospel is preached unto you.

The Purpose of Verbal Plenary Preservation is to Sanctify God's Children When They Obey His Word

Deuteronomy 4:2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish [ought] from it, that ye may *keep the commandments* of the LORD your God which I command you.

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Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret [things belong] unto the LORD our God: but those [things which are] revealed [belong] unto us and to our children for ever, that [we] may *do all the words of this law*.

Joshua 1:8 This book of the law shall *not depart out of thy mouth*; but thou shalt *meditate therein* day and night, that thou mayest *observe to do* according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Psalm 78:1–7 Give ear, O my people, [to] my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide [them] from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come *might know [them, even] the children [which] should be born; [who] should arise and declare [them] to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.*

Proverbs 5:7 Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and *depart not from the words* of my mouth.

Matthew 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall *not live by bread alone, but by every word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

John 20:30–31 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye *might believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye *might have life* through his name.

Romans 10:17 So then *faith [cometh]* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

John 17:17 *Sanctify* them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

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*, throughly furnished unto all *good works*.

Revelation 22:7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed [is] he that *keepeth* the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

My Belief on the Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation

Just as I believe by faith that God created out of nothing and that He created over a literal six-day period because the Word of God says so (no

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matter what the scientists or the science text books say!), I believe by faith that God can and has preserved His words for us because the Word of God says so (no matter what the textual critics, scholarly linguists, commentators, etc may say!). (See above for the biblical teaching.)

Just as much have been written against the literal six-day creation (and the other miracles in the Bible), much have also been (and will continue to be) written against the verbal, plenary preservation of the Word of God.

But, finally, it is not what the “experts” or “godly men” say but what God’s Word says. It is not what I can see with my eyes and touch with my hands, it is what is revealed to me (and you) in God’s Word. (“The Word of God says it. That settles it. I believe it.”)

I believe in Jesus. I believe in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. I believe there is a literal heaven and a literal hell. I believe in the rapture of saints (although it defies the law of gravity!). I believe not because I have seen all these with my eyes or that the “experts” or “godly men” confirm that these are possible in reality. I believe because God’s Word tells me so, and I believe by faith. It is enough that God’s Word says so.

Believing in God’s Word may cause me difficulties. For example, it means that I must believe that my unsaved loved ones will be left behind during the rapture. I must believe that my unsaved loved ones will end up suffering in a literal hell. Yet I must believe because God’s Word says so. I cannot twist God’s Word to make it say that my unsaved loved ones can be found in heaven. Let us never twist God’s Word to make our difficulties or problems go away. The criterion for what I believe, or do not believe, is not whether it suits me or not, not whether it is convenient for me or not, not whether I want to believe or not, not whether it will cause me problems or not, not whether my intellectual curiosity is satisfied or not. The criterion is and must be whether God’s Word teaches it or not.

Hebrews 11:3 “*Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*”

Hebrews 11:7–8 “*By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should*

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after receive for an inheritance, *obeyed*; and he went out, *not knowing whither he went.*”

Hebrews 11:13 “These *all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off*, and were persuaded of [them], and embraced [them], and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”

Let us take God at His Word and trust the words He has revealed to us. Proverbs 3:5 says, “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.” God’s Word is rich with the teaching of the Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation. Let us believe God’s clear revelation to us. Let us not lean on our own understanding and start to doubt His Word.

Hebrews 11:7 tells us that “by faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house ...”. While Noah by faith obediently did all that the Lord commanded him (Gen 6:22, 7:5) and preached God’s Word to the people (2 Pet 2:5), the people carried on with their lives as per normal (Matt 24:38–39), ignoring the Word of God. Luke 17:26 says, “And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.” And so we must be ready for God’s Word to be rejected today when we by faith believe and teach what God says in His Word.

Much have been written and spoken against the Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation, but one thing that is glaring in all these is the lack of Bible support for the doctrine of non-verbal, non-plenary preservation. No where in the Bible does it teach that God’s Word will be preserved only in part. Nor does it teach that God’s Word is accurate only in the areas of faith and salvation and not in the areas of geography and history.

Let us not be hoodwinked into believing the lie of the evil one, couched in scholarly words, words that appeal to our intellect and pride. Remember the strategies the evil one used with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:1), and with our Lord Jesus in the wilderness (Luke 4:1–12). Let us learn from the mistake made by Adam and Eve and not repeat it. Let us learn from our Lord how not to fall into the trap of the evil one.

We believe in God, we must also believe in His Word. We must take God at His Word. I cannot explain how God can create over a mere, literal six-day period. But I believe in the literal six-day creation because the Word of God teaches that. I cannot explain how Christ can be born of a

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virgin. But I believe in His virgin birth because God's Word says so. I cannot explain how God can preserve His every word, even to the jot and tittle. But I believe He can because He revealed in His Word that He will. Let us take God at His Word. "But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is..." (Heb 11:6). "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar ..." (Rom 3:3-4). Yes, "let God be true." If He says He will preserve His words to the jot and tittle, let us "let God be true."

You may ask: "What if I cannot reconcile God's verses? What if I discover 'mistakes' or discrepancies in God's Word?" Reader, ask yourself: "Am I smarter than God? Do I detect errors that God has missed? Is my God not capable of keeping His own words intact?"

God says He will preserve. Surely my almighty Lord God, the Creator of heaven and earth, is able to preserve accurately and perfectly the words that He has taken the trouble to inspire men of old to write.

If I cannot reconcile certain verses (and I believe God has promised to providentially preserve His Word Himself), it must then be because of my limited intelligence or understanding. The discrepancies must be *apparent discrepancies*, not real discrepancies. Perhaps, God may use a human teacher to enlighten me. Even if He does not, then I will wait till I see Him face to face and I am confident He will be able to explain those verses to me.

The Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation is Not a New Teaching

It is not a new teaching but a very old doctrine that is being *taught in the Bible* itself (Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35).

In addition, when the *New Testament writers and Jesus* referred to the "scriptures" (eg, 2 Tim 3:16, John 10:35), they were not referring to the autographs but the faithfully copied apographs. They (Jesus included) accepted without question the apographs as scriptures, as the very Word of God. If the apographs are good enough for Jesus, they are good enough for me.

Various confessional statements from the days of old have also revealed their belief in the Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation. The Westminster Confession of Faith (1643-1648) states:

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The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and *by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages*, are therefore authentic; so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them.¹

Note that the Westminster Confession did not use the term “autographs” but spoke of the Scriptures in terms of the original LANGUAGES. What are “by His singular care and providence” being “kept pure in all ages”? The Hebrew words and the Greek words which God has inspired men of old to put down in writing! The Westminster Confession of Faith clearly teaches the 100% preservation of the Hebrew words and Greek words of the Holy Scriptures.

Both the Westminster Confession (1643–48) and the Helvetic Consensus Formula (1675) cite Matthew 5:18 as proof of the divine inspiration *and* special providential preservation of the Holy Scripture.

The Helvetic Consensus Formula (1675) states:

God, the supreme Judge, not only took care to have His Word, which is the ‘power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth’ (Rom 1:16), committed to writing by Moses, the prophets, and the apostles, but has also *watched and cherished it with paternal care ever since it was written up to the present time, so that it could not be corrupted by craft of Satan or fraud of man*. Therefore, the church justly ascribes it to His singular grace and goodness that she *has, and will have to the end of the world, a ‘sure word of prophecy’* (2 Pet 1:19) and ‘holy Scriptures’ (2 Tim 3:15), from which, though heaven and earth perish, ‘*one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass*’ (Matt 5:18).²

Francis Turretin (1623–1687) expounded on the early confessional doctrine of Biblical preservation and understood it to mean “entire preservation”:

Nor can we readily believe that God, who dictated and inspired each and every word to these inspired men, would not *take care of their entire preservation*.³

The Baptist New Hampshire Confession (1833) states:

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is an infallible and inerrant treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter ... and therefore is, and *shall remain to the end of the world*,

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the true centre of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.⁴

More recent statements have also revealed their belief in the Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation. The International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) 16th World Congress in Jerusalem 2000, Statement #2, “On the Word of God Forever Inerrant and Infallible” declares:

The first historic doctrine of the Christian Church presented in the doctrinal statement of this Council of churches is its belief in the inerrancy and infallibility of the entire Bible ... God’s Word has been given to us directly from heaven by the Holy Spirit and Jesus, while He was here, said that the Father had sent Him and had given to Him the words which He had delivered to man. Jesus was explicit when he said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.” ... It is this Bible and its record of past prophecies that have been seen to be fulfilled in the smallest level, and *every Word of God is true* The ICCC reaffirms all the statements carefully and prayerfully worked out ... all of which are based squarely on this *holy and perfect record which came from heaven*, of which God is the Author and that indeed is why it is called the Word of God.⁵

Dr E F Hills (1912–1981) wrote:

If the doctrine of divine inspiration of the Old and New Testament Scriptures is a true doctrine, the doctrine of the providential preservation of these Scriptures must also be a true doctrine. It must be that down through the centuries *God has exercised a special, providential control over the copying of the Scriptures and the preservation and use of the original text have been available to God’s people in every age.*⁶

An Acid Test

Reader, if you are unable to accept God’s teaching concerning the verbal, plenary preservation of God’s Word, may I suggest that you make a list of your objections and examine them one by one. Do you object because of your need to “see” in order to believe? (John 20:25, “... Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.”) Do you object because believing will cause you problems or difficulties, and therefore you decide to twist God’s Word and make it say something else? Do you object because you refuse to admit your limited intellect when you are unable to understand or reconcile certain portions of God’s Word?

Perhaps, in the process, you will discover your lack of biblical support for your objection, that you actually have no real good reason for opposing God's teaching on the Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation except your own lack of faith and trust in Him and the teaching in His Word!

Twelve Possible Dangerous Outcomes if the Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation is Rejected⁷

- (1) No inspired Word of God intact.
- (2) No absolutely infallible, inerrant Word of God.
- (3) God is unfaithful in keeping His repeated promise that He will preserve His Word forever.
- (4) Jesus' promises are unreliable (eg, "My words shall not pass away.")
- (5) Jesus did not mean what He said.
- (6) God is so incapacitated by the errors of man and dark events of history that He is unable to keep His promises.
- (7) Faith of Old Testament prophets and saints that God's Word will be kept intact is a false faith.
- (8) Affirmation of apostles and New Testament writers that God's Word will be kept intact is false.
- (9) Our forefathers' faith that the Word of God "by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages" is not acceptable.
- (10) Any one can question the authenticity and authority of the words in the Bible.
- (11) Believe "scholars" as to which part of Bible is wrong, instead of believing God.
- (12) No more absolutely trustworthy, perfect Word of God.

The Church Response and Responsibility

The Word of God is the authority on which our doctrines are based. It is the authority for all our preaching and teaching. Over the years, the church has found it necessary and important enough (rightly so) to make a stand for all the various doctrines and positions of the church especially when these are being attacked. Now, when the "root" of all our doctrines and positions is being attacked, it is imperative that the church makes a stand for the "root," the very Word of God itself.

A CHILD OF GOD LOOKS AT THE DOCTRINE OF VPP

In our Bible-Presbyterian church history, we see that the church took the stand of biblical separation (against Billy Graham and ecumenism). The church also took the stand that the gift of tongue-speaking has ceased. It was a credit to the church that amidst much controversy and debate, it courageously stood on the Lord's side. There was unhappiness in certain quarters. With much sadness, the church lost some members in the process. But this is a price that the church had to pay (and was willing to pay) for obedience to her Lord and Master. Jesus has set us the example (Phil 2:8: "... he humbled himself, and became obedient ...," Luke 22:42: "... not my will, but thine, be done.") He was obedient to God the Father. He submitted to the will of His Father. So must the church. Such vital issues that pertain to the teachings of God warrant the church making a stand.

The church's recent uncompromising and vocal teaching against the movie "The Passion of the Christ" and against homosexuality shows that our leaders are diligently performing the task of a good "watchman" as required by God (Ezek 3:17; 33:6-7). When the church makes a stand, effectively three things take place:

- (1) The leadership clearly teaches the flock what God's Word says about the issue.
- (2) The leadership leads the flock in obeying God's Word.
- (3) The leadership leads the flock to stand united to speak with one voice for the Lord.

The present issue concerning the Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation is a vital issue that hits at the root of our faith and the root of all our doctrines. It is not enough that in the past the church has courageously made stands that are for the Lord. The Word of God is now under attack. The church must once again make that decision to humbly obey her God and stand on the Lord's side by faithfully teaching what the Bible says about the Doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation (John 21:15-17: "... lovest thou me ...? ... Feed my lambs ... Feed my sheep ... Feed my sheep"). Praise God that a handful of our churches have already made that decision to stand on the Lord's side. The flock needs such watchful leaders to teach them the truth from God's Word and to lead them in obeying the truth. May God help our leaders to continue to be diligent, faithful and courageous watchmen for the Lord. May God

help every child of God to read His Word and to believe by faith all that He has revealed through His Word.

Conclusion

I give all thanks and praise to my Heavenly Father for assuring me in His own Word that He has taken it upon Himself to keep His own words intact and that I have a most sure Word of God today on which I can be rooted firmly and not be “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph 4:14).

“... Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Heb 12:11). Thank God for the “peaceable fruit of righteousness” in our hearts when we humbly submit ourselves to our Lord, and just believe and obey Him.

“But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb 11:6).

May God help me (and every child of God) to believe, to cling on to, and to be rooted in His precious words as revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures.

To God be the glory!

Notes

¹ G I Williamson, *The Westminster Confession of Faith for Study Classes* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co, 1964), 14.

² The Formula Consensus Helvetica (1675), available from http://public.csusm.edu/guests/rsclark/Helvetic_Consensus_Formula.htm. Internet; Accessed on 25 January 2005.

³ Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, trans George Musgrave Giger, ed James T Dennison, Jr (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1992), 1:71.

⁴ Philip Schaff, ed, *The Creeds of Christianity with a History and Critical Notes. Vol III: The Evangelical Protestant Creed* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1931), 742.

⁵ ICCF 16th World Congress Statements, Jerusalem, November 8–14, 2000, Far Eastern Beacon, 23/17 (Christmas 2000): 14.

⁶ Edward F Hills, *The King James Version Defended* (Iowa: The Christian Research Press, 1956), 2.

A CHILD OF GOD LOOKS AT THE DOCTRINE OF VPP

⁷ Prabhudas Koshy, "If We Reject the Doctrine of the Perfect Preservation of the Bible," *Bible Witness*, 2/4 (October–December 2002): 16–17.

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**BOB JONES UNIVERSITY,
NEO-FUNDAMENTALISM, AND
BIBLICAL PRESERVATION**

Jeffrey Khoo

Whither Biblical Fundamentalism?

Without a present, existing, tangible, and identifiable, infallible and inerrant Scriptures in the original languages, Biblical Fundamentalism is as good as dead. If there is no such a truth as an infallible and inerrant Scripture that is pure and perfect in every way today, “then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; ... ye are yet in your sins. ... If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable” (1 Cor 15:14, 15, 17, 19).

But Bible-believing and Bible-defending Christians can praise God that Biblical Fundamentalism is not dead. This is because God has indeed given His people such a perfect Bible not only in the past but also today! He has promised the perfect preservation of His Word in the Old Testament (Ps 12:6-7) as well as in the New Testament (Matt 5:18, 24:35). Biblical Fundamentalists have such a perfect Bible in the original languages which is the sure and certain foundation of their faith and practice. This perfect Bible is none other than the 100% inspired, 100% preserved, 100% sufficient, and 100% authoritative Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament underlying the Reformation Bibles which is best represented today by the Authorised or King James Bible. The biblical doctrine of the special providential preservation of the Scriptures assures us of this. There is a perennial need to contend earnestly for the once-for-all-settled faith that is found in the forever infallible and inerrant Word of God (Ps 119:89, Jude 3).

The biblical doctrine of the 100% preservation of Scripture is the truth, “for we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth” (2 Cor

13:8).¹ Nevertheless, Satan, having lost his battle against the Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI) of Scripture in the last century, in this new century, seeks to attack the Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP) of Scripture in every way he can, even making use of those within the fundamentalist camp.

Neo-Fundamentalism and the Imperfect Preservation of Scripture

The latest book to cast doubt on God's verbally and plenary preserved Word in the God-breathed Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words underlying the Authorised Version is this misnamed book called *God's Word in Our Hands: The Bible Preserved for Us* edited by James B Williams and Randolph Shaylor with various contributors who are associated with Bob Jones University (BJU).² Bob Jones III on the back cover wrote, "Like a clean-edged sword, *God's Word in Our Hands* cuts through the current confused and schismatic clatter on the subject of biblical preservation. These conservative and God-fearing authors do the Church great service by presenting us with soul-thrilling evidence of the reliability and durability of the eternal Word."

The authors of this book might well be "conservative" and "God-fearing," but I fear we might be looking at a case of "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Tim 3:5). In this critique, I will show that Bob Jones III's glowing endorsement of this book is entirely misleading: (1) The book is not a clean-edged sword as claimed because it misinterprets and misapplies the double-edged Sword which is God's Word itself. (2) It creates more confusion and schism on the subject of biblical preservation because it misrepresents the Pro-KJV and Preserved Text position, and promotes the modernistic and ecumenical modern versions that are based on the corrupt Critical Text. (3) The data are not at all soul-thrilling because they are based on man's subjective and fallible interpretation of so-called "evidence." (4) It does not edify the faith of believers in God and His Word because of its deistic view that not every jot and tittle of Scripture is preserved, that some words are already lost and remain lost; and also its agnostic thinking that though God's inspired Word is preserved somewhere out there, no one can be sure of precisely where.

As Biblical fundamentalists, we reject the postmodernistic mindset of uncertainty, and neo-deistic view of the imperfect preservation of

Scripture. Based on God's explicit promise of Biblical preservation (Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35), and the certainty of faith (Heb 11:6) that believes in God's special providential preservation of His very own words to the jot and tittle, we can tell for sure where the inspired words are exactly preserved. God does not play hide and seek with His people (Prov 22:20-21). He desires His people to know the precise location of His inspired and preserved words. Faith in God and His Word is the key to knowing where His very words are and how He has supernaturally worked in history. But it is unfortunate that neo-fundamentalists have chosen rather to follow the pride of human intellectualism that is based on false rules of textual criticism leading to a dead end of unbelief. As much as they hope to have, they really do not have an infallible and inerrant Bible in their hands as claimed. Even with all their clever human reasoning and textual critical prowess, they are still unable to produce a Bible that they can assuredly say, "This is the very Word of God, infallible and inerrant!" Herein we see the weakness of man, but the greatness of God!

Misinterpretation and Misapplication of God's Word

In BJU's previous book—*From the Mind of God to the Mind of Man*³—its writers undermine the doctrine of the perfect preservation of Scripture,⁴ sharing the same view as their partners-in-crime, namely, the writers of *One Bible Only?*⁵ from Central Baptist Theological Seminary which is again proudly listed in this sequel. In the latter book, Edward Glenny said, (1) "the doctrine of preservation was not a doctrine of the ancient church," (2) "we might have lost a few words through negligence," and (3) "not only is Scripture without a verse to explain how God will preserve His Word, but no statement in Scripture teaches that God did preserve perfectly the original text of Scripture."⁶ What a faith-shattering declamation of God's forever infallible and inerrant Word! Can these words be from the pen of a fundamentalist? These men cannot be acknowledged as true fundamentalists. They give Biblical Fundamentalism a bad name. Until they recant and repent of their error, they deserve to be known as neo-fundamentalists or neo-deists.

Now in this book—*God's Word in Our Hands*—the writers admit that the Scriptures do teach the doctrine of Biblical preservation. One might think they are at last on the right track, but no, they undermine the

doctrine the very next moment when they say that though the doctrine is taught in the Scriptures, it is *not clearly* taught.

Their “bottom line” on Matthew 5:18 is particularly disturbing. One feels like he has come face to face with the old serpent. In the same way the serpent tempted Eve in the Garden (Gen 3:1-4), so do the neo-fundamentalists of this book with their twisted interpretation and application of Matthew 5:18. Satan’s deadly strategy of seduction usually begins with a friendly “Yes!” Then he creates doubt, “Did God really say this?” Finally, he goes for the kill with a deadly “No!”

Such a lethal hissing of the snake is found on page 106. First the Yes! “Is our Lord here guaranteeing the preservation of all the written words of Scripture?” The reply is “an emphatic ‘yes.’” Next, the doubt, “Although ... preservation is not His *main* point, it is nevertheless *the* point ... What He does not do, however, is give even so much as a hint as to how or where preservation will take place.” Finally, the No! “The conclusion one must reach is that this passage does not teach that those words are preserved in one particular manuscript or lineage of manuscripts alone. Neither does this passage guarantee that all the words will be always available at all times.”

Let us analyse the above fallacious interpretation and application of Matthew 5:18. The editorial committee that penned those words began by *agreeing* emphatically that *all* the written words of Scripture are preserved. But know that what was said is not the same as what was meant. This is revealed at the end when they *denied* that “all the words will be always available at all times.” In other words, some of God’s words can be and have been lost. Now, if some of God’s words can be and have been lost, how can the promise of Matthew 5:18 be true, and how can it be so emphatically stated at the outset that God guarantees the preservation of all His written words? Furthermore, the statement that the preservation of Scripture is not the *main* point and yet *the* point is *contradictory* and *confusing*, if not *deceptive*. This “Yes, Yes-No, No” interpretation and application of Matthew 5:18 has the Satanic stamp all over it. What is the real bottom line? It is this: *BJU and the neo-fundamentalists do not believe that God will and is able to preserve perfectly all of His inspired words to the last iota, that all of His inspired words will always remain available and accessible to His people all the time until the end of time.*

The only Christlike response to such an unfaithful treatment of Jesus' words must come from the very words of the Lord Himself who told Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (Matt 16:23).

May these fundamentalist brethren return to the godly path of Christ-honouring and faith-centred exposition and application of God's forever infallible and inerrant Word. "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom 3:4).

Confusion and Schism in Fundamentalism

BJU and the neo-fundamentalists are upset with the confusion and schism that surround the present controversy over the preservation of Scripture and the KJV. They say "it unnecessarily detracts from the main purpose for the church's existence."⁷ How does a clear and bold declaration that the church has a 100% inspired and 100% preserved Scripture detract from the main purpose of the church's existence? On the contrary, it enhances and ensures the witness and testimony of the church, and gives believers the solid and immovable foundation they need to evangelise the lost, and edify the saints. It is those who cannot confess that there is a perfect Bible today, who say that the Bible today is not infallible and inerrant, who say that the Bible today contains mistakes that are destabilising and destroying the church. What is the main purpose of the church's existence? Is it not to glorify God? How does the neo-fundamentalist and neo-deistic position that God has not perfectly preserved His Word and that there is no perfectly preserved Scripture today glorify God? Those who say they do not have God's perfect Word today, or say they cannot tell where the perfect Word is are the ones causing the confusion, not those with a clear and definite position.

The Far Eastern Bible College has a declared position that affirms in no uncertain terms the present perfection of Scripture: "We believe in the divine, Verbal Plenary Inspiration (Autographs) and Verbal Plenary Preservation (Apographs) of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and as the perfect Word of God, the supreme and final authority in faith and life (2 Tim 3:16, 2 Pet 1:20-21, Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35)." As regards the Hebrew OT, Greek NT, and the KJV, "We believe the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament underlying the Authorised (King James) Version to be the very

Word of God, infallible and inerrant. We uphold the Authorised (King James) Version to be the Word of God—the best, most faithful, most accurate, most beautiful translation of the Bible in the English language, and do employ it alone as our primary scriptural text in the public reading, preaching, and teaching of the English Bible.”⁸ How does such a position detract from the main mission of the church? We are simply reaffirming good old Reformed and Reformation doctrine and practice over against the modernistic and postmodernistic views and methods as found in neo-evangelical churches, and now in neo-fundamental churches.

No matter what clarification is made by Biblical fundamentalists, neo-fundamentalists are bent on confusing the issue by repeatedly making false and dishonest claims like these: KJV fundamentalists “advocate the inerrancy of a particular translation;” “Problems arise when we make any translation the exclusive revelation from God;” “It is troubling that so many ... attempt to prove God has promised us a perfect English translation;” “They have overlooked the supreme significance of the original languages and have staked their claim on the King James Version of the Bible as the God-inspired Bible for this present age.”⁹ This may be the position of Peter Ruckman (who ironically received his PhD from BJU), but certainly not the better known and sound defenders of the KJV like E F Hills and D A Waite. The above accusations are both confusing and damaging because the *original language text* is the issue, not the KJV *per se* nor any foreign language translation as alleged.¹⁰

Why do those who believe in the perfect preservation of Scripture believe that the KJV is the English Bible for today? Is it because they feel the KJV is as perfect and as inspired as the original language Scriptures? Of course not! Such misrepresentations do not reflect well on these BJU men and neo-fundamentalists. It does look like their position is so weak that they must resort to such low blows to make themselves look good.

Let it be known once and for all that the KJV of 1611 is the logical choice for faithful English Bible users because they do believe and can see that God has indeed kept His promise to preserve His words perfectly in the *original languages* throughout history and especially during the great Protestant Reformation. The KJV is the best English Bible today precisely because it remains the most accurate and faithful translation of the divinely inspired *Hebrew and Greek Scriptures* that God has supernaturally preserved throughout the ages. All foreign language Bibles

including the English must be judged by this perfect rule of God's totally inspired and fully preserved words in the original languages, and not vice versa. Any foreign language Bible if accurately translated and based on the perfectly preserved text can rightly be held up like the KJV as the Word of God, yea, even the *very* Word of God.

It is neo-fundamentalism's tragic compromise with modernistic, rationalistic, and ecumenical textual critics and their modern perversions of the Bible that is causing the confusion and the schism within Biblical Fundamentalism today. Biblical fundamentalists loyal to their Lord and His Word have no choice but to separate from these neo-fundamentalists, and expose them for their hypocrisy.

Man's Subjective and Fallible Opinions

Many names do not the truth make. No man is perfect save the Lord Jesus Christ, and no book is perfect save the Holy Bible.

Biblical fundamentalists believe that the Holy Scriptures, infallible and inerrant, are the final and supreme authority of Christian faith and practice. It is unfortunate that BJU and company, despite their "conservative and God-fearing" profession, do not practise what they preach. In their vain attempt to bolster their untenable position on Biblical preservation, instead of simply believing what Scripture explicitly teaches about its own preservation, and applying that truth in their ministry, they cite a list of fundamentalists who had likewise thought and taught wrongly concerning the preservation of Scripture. They quote James Brookes, B H Carroll, C I Scofield, James Gray, R A Torrey, John Straton, William Erdman, A T Robertson, W B Riley, Richard Clearwaters, Noel Smith, John R Rice, and speak as though they are the only rightful representatives of fundamentalism, and there is consensus among fundamentalists over the text and translation issue.¹¹

Are we supposed to be impressed by big names? Why do they forget many other fundamentalists like Ian Paisley, Carl McIntire, E F Hills, David Otis Fuller, D A Waite, O Talmadge Spence, Jack Moorman, David Cloud, Arlin Horton, Dell Johnson, Thomas Strouse, M H Reynolds Jr, Dennis Costella, David Sorenson, Arthur E Steele, S H Tow, and Timothy Tow, who have written and spoken strongly in favour of the continued use of the KJV *because of* its faithfulness to the 100% inspired and 100% preserved Hebrew and Greek Texts on which it is based as opposed to the corrupted text and versions? I wonder where Bob Jones Sr and Bob Jones

Jr stood on the KJV issue. Did they not strongly uphold the KJV as the fundamentalist's Bible? Why were they not mentioned in this BJU book? This silence is telling! I do not believe that the late Bob Jones Sr and Bob Jones Jr would have allowed this shift from the KJV towards the modern versions that we see happening in BJU today.¹²

BJU's departure from the KJV today is due to her unequal yoke with Westcott and Hort. For decades, BJU has promoted the false theory and text of Westcott and Hort in the classroom, though not at the pulpit. The new generation of BJU graduates are now asking, "If the Westcott and Hort text is superior to the Textus Receptus, why then should we continue to use the KJV? Since the modern English versions are based on the superior Westcott and Hort text, it only makes sense that we replace the KJV with the modern versions." Is it no wonder that James B Williams and company are so upset with Biblical fundamentalists who continue to promote the KJV and decry this falling away from the KJV that they see in BJU? If BJU does not repent of this wayward trend that she has embarked on, her legacy would be similar to the many Bible-loving and God-fearing institutions that once were but are no more. I personally hate to see this happen, but with this sequel it does look like the writing is already on the wall. Why does history have to repeat itself?

It needs to be reiterated that the issue has to do with the original language Scriptures, not the translations *per se*. We must not put the cart before the horse which only confuses the issue and hinders any progress towards knowing the truth. It must also be pointed out that many a fundamentalist today are seriously in error to think that the infallible and inerrant Scriptures lie *only* in the autographs (which no longer exist)¹³ and not in the apographs (which exist today).¹⁴ Another grave error is the view that there is no such thing as an infallible and inerrant Bible today because the apographs have not been perfectly preserved by God. It is taught that since the disappearance of the perfect autographs, God's people only had imperfect apographs as their Scriptures, which are the imperfect Scriptures we possess today with words added, subtracted, changed, missing or even lost.¹⁵

As already said, *God's Word in Our Hands* is a book that does not live up to its name. The reason: a flawed Bibliology! Their constant appeal to human authority instead of biblical authority keeps telling me, "Let man be true, but God a liar!" (contra Rom 3:4).

Agnostic with Deistic View of Biblical Preservation

On a front page of *God's Word in Our Hands* we find this statement of faith: "*We believe that the Bible teaches that God has providentially preserved His written Word. This preservation exists in the totality of the ancient language manuscripts of that revelation. We are therefore certain that we possess the very Word of God.*"¹⁶ Is this not a wonderful statement? Should we not give it a loud Amen? A superficial and simplistic reading of this statement might lead one to think that BJU and company now believe they have a 100% inspired and 100% preserved Scripture they can hold in their hands and say, "This is the very Word of God!" Upon further investigation, we discover that this is far from true. In the confusing world of theology today, what counts is not what is said but what is meant.

Now, let us analyse the above statement to see what is meant. They say, "We believe that the Bible teaches" But if one were to ask them whether the Bible clearly and directly teaches the doctrine of preservation, they would answer in the negative: The Bible does not give explicit but only "implicit teaching" on preservation.¹⁷ An "implicit teaching?" How can such a vital doctrine as the preservation of Scripture be "implicit?" Is it God's nature to keep His words uncertain and unclear to us? If the teaching on the preservation of the saints is explicit (Matt 10:22, Mark 13:13, John 10:28, Rom 8:30-39, Phil 2:12-13), how can the teaching on the preservation of the Scriptures be implicit? If we cannot be sure of God's perfect preservation of every single one of His inspired words, how can we be sure of God's perfect preservation of every single one of His saints, that none would be lost? Surely, we cannot! By saying that the Bible does not teach clearly the preservation of Scripture, these neo-fundamentalists have not only undermined the perspicuity of Scripture and the preservation of the saints, but even more so the omnipotence of God.

They say, "God has providentially preserved His written Word." Although they say that God has "providentially preserved His written Word," they do not believe that He did it *supernaturally*. According to them, the Bible "does not support supernatural preservation."¹⁸ In their mind, only the inspiration of Scripture was supernatural, not its preservation; God was careful in inspiration, but somehow careless in preservation. Does this make sense? Is it not contradictory to speak of

God in such a way? Why would God want to inspire His words supernaturally without wanting to preserve them in the same way? They oppose my citing of Psalm 12:6-7 to prove the VPP of God's inspired words, but fail to interact with the faithful exegesis of the divine intent in the infallible and inerrant Hebrew text offered by Biblical preservationists.¹⁹ Instead they cite commentator after commentator, commentary after commentary as though these commentators and commentaries are infallible and inerrant.²⁰

It has to be pointed out that when these neo-fundamentalists say that God has "providentially preserved" His written Word, they mean His general providence and not special providence. There is a significant distinction between the two. General providence refers to God's *indirect* intervention in the maintenance and sustenance of all things through the *laws of nature* (Ps 104:10-30). Special providence, on the other hand, speaks of God's *direct* intervention in the protection and preservation of certain things through *extraordinary acts of miracles* (Ps 91:1-16). The providential preservation of the Scriptures falls under the latter category. The Westminster Confession of Faith speaks of God's preservation of Scripture in terms of "His singular care and providence."²¹ In other words, God Himself, in His very own inscrutable ways without the limitations inherent in secondary causality, guarantees that every iota of His written words would be "kept pure in all ages." E F Hills wrote, "If we believe that the New Testament Scriptures are the infallibly inspired Word of God, then it is logical for us to believe that God has preserved this written Word by His *special* providence."²²

The rejection of the *special* providential preservation of Scripture has led neo-fundamentalists to conclude that preservation "exists in the totality of the ancient language manuscripts of that revelation." Ask them precisely where in the sea of over 3,000 Hebrew manuscripts, and over 5,000 Greek manuscripts is the "very Word of God" that we possess today, and they would shrug their shoulders and say, "I don't know and I can't tell." But they are sure of one thing, that some of the inspired words of God could be lost at any given period of time. They say, "God's promises for the preservation of His words do not apparently necessitate the availability of that written Word at every moment in history. It is therefore possible for a portion of His words to be unavailable [or lost] at a point in time."²³

Since the inspired Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words could be lost, it is no wonder they think in terms of the “ancient language manuscripts of that revelation.” Who are they trying to fool? Note the words “ancient language” instead of “original language,” and “revelation,” instead of “words.” This is not by accident. By “revelation” they mean *only doctrines* are preserved, *not words*. And when they say “ancient language” they mean to include the *ancient translations* like the Septuagint (Greek version of the Hebrew OT).²⁴ This surely contradicts what Jesus said in Matthew 5:18. Just as heaven and earth have been continually existing and never at any moment “unavailable,” so also the divinely inspired words (not just “that revelation”) of the original Hebrew and Greek Scriptures even to their jots and tittles, *not the translated words in any version ancient or modern*.

Having such a faulty view of biblical preservation, it is no wonder that neo-fundamentalists are ever ready to correct the Hebrew text on the basis of a translation like the Septuagint²⁵ even when there is absolutely no evidence of a scribal error in the original text.²⁶ For instance, in 1 Samuel 13:1, every single Hebrew manuscript reads “a year” (*shannah*) which the KJV correctly translates as “Saul reigned *one year*.”²⁷ But neo-fundamentalists insist that “one year” is a scribal error even though all the preserved Hebrew apographs since the time of the inspired autographs read precisely so, “one year.” The logic of faith would lead a sincere Bible believer to stick to the inspired and preserved Hebrew text, but not Harding who says, “On account of my theological conviction regarding the inerrancy of the autographa, I believe the original Hebrew text also reads ‘thirty,’ even though we *do not* currently possess a Hebrew manuscript with that reading.”²⁸ This is amazing! Harding is prepared to believe that “thirty” is the “inspired reading” even when there is absolutely no such “inspired reading” to begin with! It is like saying, “I believe in the resurrection of Christ even when no such resurrection ever took place.” Is this not foolish faith?

If the Bible contains such scribal errors as they say when there is absolutely none in the Hebrew Scriptures past and present, then these must be errors committed not by the copyist or scribe, but by the *writer of the inspired words himself!* Unwittingly, these neo-fundamentalists have denied the verbal inspiration of Scripture, and might as well throw out their doctrine of “inerrant autographs.” It goes without saying that the problem with these neo-fundamentalists is in their rejection of the plain

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words of Scripture that teach not only its 100% inspiration but also *100% preservation*. It is no wonder that based on their flawed belief of an imperfect Scripture which they hold in their hands, they are prepared to use a corrupt translation to correct the inspired and preserved Hebrew text in places like 1 Samuel 13:1. In so doing, are they not like the Ruckmanites whom they accuse as heretics?

Although these neo-fundamentalists do not believe they truly have a perfect Bible today, they try to reassure themselves and their readers that they actually do: “We are therefore certain that we possess the very Word of God.” Taking into account that what they say is not what they mean, this is but an empty and vain affirmation. It is a delusion. It must be underscored that *they do not believe in the 100% perpetual, permanent, and perfect preservation of the divinely inspired Hebrew/Aramaic Old Testament and Greek New Testament words of the Holy Scriptures*. They do not believe that “soon after the invention of printing this written Word was placed in print and became the Textus Receptus, being immediately received by believers everywhere and made the basis of faithful translations such as the King James Version.” Why this unbelief? It is because “conservative scholars, by and large, have been so brain-washed by naturalistic propaganda that they hesitate to follow this logic of faith. Some of them go to the extreme of denying that the Bible teaches the special, providential preservation of the Scriptures. According to them, apparently, it is theoretically possible that the true New Testament text has been lost.”²⁹

Hills’s words continue to ring true and accurately describe the neo-fundamentalists of the BJU mould, “there is a growing number of conservative Bible teachers who go around saying that all New Testament texts and versions are good enough and that controversy concerning them is much ado about nothing, a tempest in a teapot. They justify this position by maintaining that the object of God’s providential preservation of the Scriptures was not to preserve the precise words of the original Scriptures but merely the substance of their doctrine, their essential teaching. According to these teachers, the substance of doctrine, the essential teaching, is found in all the New Testament manuscripts, even the worst, and in all translations, even the most inaccurate. Hence, they conclude happily, there’s nothing to worry about. Choose any version you please.”³⁰ This is precisely the tragedy we see in BJU and other fundamentalist colleges and churches today.

Achilles' Heel of Neo-Fundamentalism

The neo-fundamentalists say they are sure that the Bible is preserved for us. However, their very own words incriminate them. The Bible to them is only 99.9% preserved, not 100%. They believe that some of the inspired, original language words have been lost and still nowhere to be found.

These neo-fundamentalist writers want their readers to believe that they do believe in Biblical preservation when they in fact do not. Their past denial of Biblical preservation as a fundamental doctrine taught in the Scriptures and their present affirmation of the same without recanting and repenting of their error are deceptive and create confusion all the more. It is important to realise that it was the Textus Receptus KJVists and not the Critical Text modern versionists who first championed the sorely neglected doctrine of the VPP of Scripture of true Fundamental Protestantism as expressed in the Presbyterian Westminster Confession (1645) and Baptist New Hampshire Confession (1833).

What kind of Bible do we have in our hands? *According to BJU and neo-fundamentalists, what we have in our hands is a once-upon-a-time inspired, but not happily-ever-after preserved Bible.* Since the Bible today is not without spot and blemish, it may no longer be deemed infallible and inerrant, or perfect in every way, not in any manuscript, family of manuscripts, text or translation. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps 11:3).

This is the Achilles' heel of neo-fundamentalism: (1) The Bible though 100% inspired is not 100% preserved. Therefore, there is no such thing as a 100% perfect Bible today, not in any text, not in any translation. (2) The 19th-20th century Westcott-Hort and Critical Text is superior to the 16th-17th century Traditional Text or Textus Receptus. Therefore, the Reformers and the Reformation saints have all used the wrong Bible. (3) The KJV is good, but the modern versions are better. Therefore, replace the KJV with the modern versions.

The above neo-deism spells the death knell for BJU. We can see the neo-evangelicals cheering the neo-fundamentalists on to the finish line. If they do not stop their undermining of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures underlying the KJV, they will sooner or later deny not only the VPP but also the VPI of Scripture. *What a fellowship, what a view so blind, leaning on the ever-lethal arms of liberal scholarship!*

Unless Biblical fundamentalists are fully committed to the twin doctrines of the VPI and VPP of Scripture, and wholeheartedly defend the traditional and preserved text on which the KJV is based, they will gradually melt and blend into the neo-evangelical and liberal crowd. The backsliding and downgrading is already taking place. The warning is hereby sounded. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt 11:15).

Notes

¹ See Jeffrey Khoo, *Kept Pure in All Ages: Recapturing the Authorised Version and the Doctrine of Providential Preservation* (Singapore: Far Eastern Bible College Press, 2001); "A Plea for a Perfect Bible," *The Burning Bush* 9 (2003):1-15; *KJV Q&A* (Singapore: Bible Witness Literature Ministry, 2003).

² James B Williams and Randolph Shaylor, eds, *God's Word in Our Hands: The Bible Preserved for Us* (Greenville: Ambassador Emerald International, 2003). Besides Bob Jones University, other schools that contributed to this book include Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Calvary Baptist Theological Seminary, Pillsbury Baptist Bible College, Northland Baptist Bible College, Faith Baptist Bible College, Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, Maranatha Baptist Bible College, and Temple Baptist Seminary. All the above schools bear a pro-Westcott and Hort or Critical Text, and pro-modern versions disposition that undermines the Textus Receptus and the King James Version. Thankfully, there is an antidote for the above poison, and ironically from the same publisher, which is Ian R K Paisley's, *My Plea for the Old Sword* (Greenville: Ambassador Emerald International, 1997).

³ James B Williams, ed, *From the Mind of God to the Mind of Man* (Greenville: Ambassador Emerald International, 1999). See my critique, "Bob Jones University and the KJV: A Critique of *From the Mind of God to the Mind of Man*," *The Burning Bush* 7 (2001): 1-33.

⁴ Randolph Shaylor, who has become the managing editor of *God's Word in Our Hands*, on page 22 of the prequel, *From the Mind of God to the Mind of Man*, said that the Bible nowhere teaches nor implies that the copies of Scripture are inerrantly and infallibly inspired. On page 25 of the same book, he quoted errant Warfield for support saying that only the autographs are inspired, not the apographs.

⁵ Roy E Beacham and Kevin T Bauder, eds, *One Bible Only?* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001). See my critique, "The Emergence of Neo-Fundamentalism: *One Bible Only?* or 'Yea Hath God Said?'," *The Burning Bush* 10 (2004): 2-47.

⁶ Beacham and Bauder, *One Bible Only?*, 116, 121, 123.

⁷ Williams and Shaylor, *God's Word in Our Hands*, xiv.

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⁸ Hutcheson rightly observed, “The orthodox Christians in the nineteenth century used that greatly revered translation which had been handed down to them. Since its appearance in 1611, the King James Version had gained prominence as the primary English translation and had been blessed of God over the previous two hundred and fifty years.” *God’s Word in Our Hands*, 4. Pro-KJV advocates are saying that we should continue in this good and faithful tradition, and should reject the modern English versions today because they are significantly different from the good old KJV. If the modern English translations are also based on the preserved instead of the corrupted text, and are translated literally rather than loosely, then there would be no problem, but this is simply and truly not the case. See “A Survey of English Bible Translations,” in *Kept Pure in All Ages*, 69-100.

⁹ Williams and Shaylor, *God’s Word in Our Hands*, xv, 27, 111, 195.

¹⁰ See David H Sorenson, *Touch Not the Unclean Thing: The Text Issue and Separation*, 3rd ed (Duluth: Northstar Baptist Ministries, 2001).

¹¹ Although it is regrettable that the VPP of Scripture was not discussed in *The Fundamentals* (1910-1915) edited by Dixon, Meyer and Torrey, it is heartening to note that L W Munhall did allude to it in his chapter on “Inspiration” when he wrote, “The attitude of Jesus toward the Old Testament and his utterances confirm beyond question our contention. He had *the very same Old Testament we have today*” (*The Fundamentals* [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1990 reprint], 168, emphasis mine).

¹² One proud BJU graduate that I know of had assured me personally that the BJU alumni had pledged to protest in unison the day they see their alma mater abandoning the KJV. If this is true, then I really hope it would come soon for the sake of their school.

¹³ John Hutcheson wrote, “The pioneers of the [fundamentalist] movement argued for the inerrancy of the autographs alone” (Williams and Shaylor, *God’s Word in Our Hands*, 27).

¹⁴ See my paper, “*Sola Autographa* or *Sola Apographa*?: A Case for the Present Perfection and Authority of the Holy Scriptures,” *The Burning Bush* 11 (2005): 3-19.

¹⁵ Williams and Shaylor, *God’s Word in Our Hands*, 94, 106, 110, say that Biblical preservation does not mean “a perpetual activity of sustenance,” “that all the words will be always available at all times,” “that an absolutely perfect copy would be produced.”

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, iii.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 83.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Khoo, “The Emergence of Neo-Fundamentalism,” 29-31; Suan-Yew Quek, “Did God Promise to Preserve His Words? Interpreting Psalm 12:6-7,” *The Burning Bush* 10 (2004): 96-99; Thomas Strouse, “The Permanent

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Preservation of God's Words, Psalm 12:6,7," in *Thou Shalt Keep Them*, ed Kent Brandenburg (El Sobrante: Pillar & Ground, 2003), 29-34.

²⁰ Williams and Shaylor, *God's Word in Our Hands*, 86.

²¹ *Westminster Confession of Faith*, I:VIII.

²² Edward F Hills, *Believing Bible Study* (Des Moines: Christian Research Press, 1977), 36-7. Emphasis mine.

²³ Williams and Shaylor, *God's Word in Our Hands*, 124 (parenthesis mine). For instance, on page 375, Downey says that a Hebrew word has been lost in Deuteronomy 8:3 and recovered in the Greek translation.

²⁴ Williams in his prequel (*From the Mind of God to the Mind of Man*, 4, 7), castigated those who defend the KJV as God's preserved Word in the English language, calling them "unqualified," "immature," and "a cancerous sore." He says the KJV ought not to be exalted, but in this sequel of his, he exalts the ancient translations and puts them on par with the original language Scriptures! What hypocrisy!

²⁵ See Prabhudas Koshy, "Did Jesus and the Apostles Rely on the Corrupt Septuagint?," *The Burning Bush* 10 (2004): 93-5.

²⁶ According to Harding and Shaylor, the Septuagint can be used to correct the Hebrew text "even though we do not currently possess a Hebrew text with that reading" (*God's Word in Our Hands*, 26, 414).

²⁷ The year is calculated not from the time of Saul's birth but his appointment as king. Matthew Poole commented, "[Saul] had now reigned one year, from his first election at Mizpeh, in which time these things were done, which are recorded in chap. xi., xii., to wit, peaceably, or righteously. Compare 2 Sam. ii.10" (*A Commentary on the Holy Bible*, vol 1 [McLean: MacDonald Publishing Company, nd], 542).

²⁸ Williams and Shaylor, *God's Word in Our Hands*, 361, emphasis mine.

²⁹ Hills, *Believing Bible Study*, 37.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

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CONSTITUTION OF TRUE LIFE BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Article 1: Name

The name of the Church shall be True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church (hereinafter referred to as the “Church”).

Article 2: Place of Business

The place of business and address of the Church shall be 9A Gilstead Road, Singapore 309063 or such address as may be decided by the Church and approved by the Registrar of Societies. The Church shall carry out its activities only in places and venues that have the prior written approval of the relevant authorities.

Article 3: Objects

The objects for which the Church is established are:

- 3.1 The salvation of souls;
- 3.2 The edification of Christians through the teaching of God’s Word;
- 3.3 The promotion of godly worship;
- 3.4 The defence of “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”;
- 3.5 The establishment and extension of Christian missions and institutions for the furtherance of God’s Kingdom on earth;
- 3.6 The promotion of Christian relief for the poor and needy;
- 3.7 The strengthening of mutual fellowship, encouragement and unity among individual Bible-Presbyterian Churches and other Bible-believing churches of similar stand “for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 1:9).

Article 4: Doctrine

- 4.1 The doctrine of the Church shall be in accordance with that system commonly called “the Reformed Faith” as expressed in the

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Confession of Faith as set forth by the historic Westminster Assembly together with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

- 4.2 In abbreviated form, the chief tenets of the doctrine of the Church, apart from the Apostles' Creed, shall be as follows:
 - 4.2.1.1 We believe in the divine, Verbal Plenary Inspiration (Autographs) and Verbal Plenary Preservation of the Scriptures (Apographs) in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and as the perfect Word of God, the Supreme and final authority in faith and life (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:20-21; Ps 12:6-7; Matt 5:18, 24:35);
 - 4.2.1.2 We believe the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament underlying the Authorised (King James) Version to be the very Word of God, infallible and inerrant;
 - 4.2.1.3 We uphold the Authorised (King James) Version to be the Word of God — the best, most faithful, most accurate, most beautiful translation of the Bible in the English language, and do employ it alone as our primary scriptural text in the public reading, preaching, and teaching of the English Bible;
 - 4.2.2 We believe in one God existing in three co-equal and co-eternal Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Deut 6:4; 1 John 5:7);
 - 4.2.3 We believe that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is true God and true man in complete and direct fulfilment of Isaiah 7:14 (Matt 1:20-23; John 1:1,14; Col 2:9);
 - 4.2.4 We believe God created the whole universe ex nihilo (out of nothing) by the Word of His mouth, and all very good, in the space of six literal or natural days (Gen 1:1; Exod 20:11; Ps 148:5; John 1:3; Col 1:16; Heb 11:3);
 - 4.2.5 We believe that man was created in the image of God, but sinned through the fall of Adam, thereby incurring not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature and become sinners in thought, word and deed (Gen 1:26-27; Rom 3:19-20, 5:12, 6:23);

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- 4.2.6 We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died a propitiatory and expiatory death as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who repent of their sins and believe in Him are justified before God on the grounds of His shed blood (Rom 5:8-11; 1 John 2:2; 1 Pet 1:18-19);
- 4.2.7 We believe in the bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His ascension into Heaven, and in His exaltation at the right hand of God, where He intercedes for us as our High Priest and Advocate (1 Cor 15:1-4, 15-19; Phil 2:9-11; Heb 3:1, 4:14-16);
- 4.2.8 We believe in the personal, visible and premillennial return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to judge this world, restore His nation Israel to greatness, and bring peace to the nations as King of kings and Lord of lords (Jer 3:17; Zech 14:9; Acts 1:6; Rev 20:1-7);
- 4.2.9 We believe that salvation is by grace through faith alone, not by works, and that all who repent and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour are born again by the Holy Spirit and thereby become the children of God (Rom 5:1, 8:14-16; Eph 2:8-10; 1 Tim 2:5; Tit 3:5);
- 4.2.10 We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and to convict and regenerate the sinner, and indwell, guide, instruct and empower the believer for godly living and service (John 16:7-14; Rom 8:1-2);
- 4.2.11 We believe that Christ instituted the Sacrament of Baptism for believers and their children and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which sacraments shall be observed by His Church till He comes (Matt 28:19; 1 Cor 11:23-26);
- 4.2.12 We believe in the eternal security, bodily resurrection and eternal blessedness of the saved, and in the bodily resurrection and eternal conscious punishment of the lost (1 Cor 15:51-53; 1 Thess 4:13-18; Rev 20:11-15);
- 4.2.13 We believe in the real, spiritual unity in Christ of all redeemed by His precious blood and the necessity of faithfully maintaining the purity of the Church in doctrine and life according to the Word of God, and the principle and practice of biblical separation from the apostasy of the day

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being spearheaded by the Ecumenical Movement and other false movements that contradict the Holy Scriptures and the Historic Christian Faith (2 Cor 6:14-7:1; Jude 3; Rev 18:4).

Article 5: Principles of Government

The Church, in setting forth the form of government on which it maintains to be founded upon and agreeable to the Word of God, reiterates, by way of introduction, several cardinal principles that are basic to and regulative of its form of church government.

- 5.1 “God alone is Lord of the conscience” and “hath left it free from the doctrine and commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary to His Word, or beside it in matters of faith or worship.” Therefore, we consider the rights of private judgment, in all matters that respect religion, as universal and inalienable. We do not even wish to see any religious institution aided by the civil power further than may be necessary for protection and security, and at the same time, be equal and common to all others.
- 5.2 In perfect consistency with the above principle of common right, every Christian Church, or union, or association of Christian churches is entitled to declare the terms of admission into its communion and the qualifications of its ministers and members, as well as the whole system of its internal government which Christ has appointed. In the exercise of this right it may, notwithstanding, err in making the terms of communion either too lax or too narrow; yet, even in this case, it does not infringe upon the liberty or the rights of others, but only makes an improper use of its own liberty and rights.
- 5.3 Our blessed Saviour, for the edification of the visible Church, which is His body, appointed officers not only to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments but also to exercise discipline for the preservation both of truth and duty; it is incumbent upon these officers and upon the whole Church, in whose name they act, to censure or cast out the erroneous and scandalous, observing in all cases the rules contained in the Word of God.
- 5.4 Truth leads to goodness. The great touchstone of truth is its tendency to promote holiness; according to our Saviour’s rule, “by their fruits ye shall know them.” No opinion can be either more pernicious or more absurd than that which brings truth and falsehood upon a level

and represents it as of no consequence as to what a man's opinions are. On the contrary, we are persuaded that there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice, truth and duty; otherwise it would be of no consequence either to discover truth or to embrace it.

- 5.5 Under the conviction of the above principle, we think it necessary to make effectual provision that all who are admitted as teachers be sound in the faith. We also believe that there are truths and forms with respect to which men of good character and principles may differ. And in all these, we think it the duty both of private Christians and societies to exercise mutual forbearance toward each other.
- 5.6 Though the character, qualifications and authority of church officers are laid down in the Holy Scriptures, as well as the proper method of their investiture and institution, yet the election of persons to the exercise of this authority, in any particular society, is in that society.
- 5.7 All church power, whether exercised by the body in general or in the way of representation by delegated authority, is only ministerial and declarative; that is to say, the Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and conduct. No church court ought to pretend to make laws to bind the conscience in virtue of its own authority; all its decisions should be founded upon the revealed will of God. Now though it will be easily admitted, that all synods and councils may err through the frailty inseparable from humanity, yet, there is much greater danger from the usurped claim of making laws than from the right of judging upon laws already made and common to all who profess the gospel, although this right, as necessity requires in the present state, be lodged with fallible men.
- 5.8 If the preceding Scriptural and rational principles are steadfastly adhered to, the vigour and strictness of its discipline will continue to the glory and happiness of any church. Since ecclesiastical discipline must be purely moral or spiritual in its object and not accompanied by any civil effects, it can derive no force whatever but from its own justice, the approbation of an impartial public, and the countenance and blessing of the great Head of the Church Universal.

Article 6: Principle and Practice of Biblical Separation

- 6.1 The doctrine of separation from sin unto God is a fundamental principle of the Bible, one grievously ignored in the church today.

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- 6.2 This doctrine arises out of the holiness of God. Both the purity and righteousness of God (Luke 1:75) are involved. “Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (1 Pet 1:16, also 3:11; Exod 15:11; Isa 6:3; 2 Cor 7:1)
- 6.3 The Bible does speak of cooperation (“be of one mind,” “that they may all be one,” “labourers together,” “keep the unity of the Spirit,” “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord,” also 1 Cor 12:25). However, biblical cooperation is based upon TRUTH. It involves the united effort of God’s people. This is not a cooperation borne of a spirit of undiscerning pluralism, or that of seeking “truth” in all religions.
- 6.4 We maintain that Scripture teaches a separation that is based on the holiness of God, producing purity in all of life, personal and ecclesiastical.
- 6.5 It is the duty of all true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ to make a clear testimony to their faith in Him, especially in these darkening days of apostasy in many professing churches, by which apostasy whole denominations in their official capacity, as well as individual churches, have been swept into a paganising stream of modernism under various names and in varying degrees.
- 6.6 There has been a notable growth of autocratic domination on the part especially of modernistic leaders by whom the rightful powers of true churches are often usurped and are now being usurped.
- 6.7 The commands of God to His people to be separate from all unbelief and corruption are clear and positive: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers” (2 Cor 6:14; see also Matt 6:24; Rom 16:17; Gal 1; Eph 5:11; 2 Thess 3:6, 14; 2 Tim 3:1-7; Tit 3:10; 2 Pet 2:1-3; 1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 7-11; Jude 3, 20-24; Rev 18:4). We reach out to those who are part of any human system which involves compromise with error, and who thus ought to “come out from among them” (2 Cor 6:17), separate themselves unto the “Father ... the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor 6:18), thus “cleansing themselves” and perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor 7:1).
- 6.8 In loyalty to the revealed Word, we, as an organised portion of the people of God, are obliged to oppose all forms of modernism, cultism, Romanism and false religions. Dialogue for the purpose of reaching a compromise between all true Bible believers and representatives of such beliefs is impious, unbiblical, treasonous and

unfaithful to the holy God, as He has revealed Himself to us in His infallible, inerrant Word.

- 6.9 We are opposed to all efforts to obscure or wipe out the clear line of separation between these absolutes: truth and error, light and darkness (See Isa 5:20; 2 Cor 6:14-18). We refer to such efforts by New Evangelicals, Charismatic Christians, promoters of ecumenical cooperative evangelism and of the social gospel, and all churches and other movements and organisations that are aligned with or sympathetic to the Ecumenical Movement.

Article 7: Main Practices of the Church

The main practices of the Church are as follows:

- 7.1 **BAPTISM:** The observance of the Baptism of believers is by sprinkling on personal confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Infants of one or both the believing parents are to be baptised (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 2:38-42, 8:35-38, 10:44-48; 1 Cor 7:14).
- 7.2 **REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH:** Baptised infants upon coming of age in that they can satisfy the Board of Elders as to their faith shall be received into communicant membership by reaffirmation of faith.
- 7.3 **THE LORD'S SUPPER:** The remembrance of the Lord's death through the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly, and normally all baptised believers (except baptised children of constituent members who have not reaffirmed their faith) whose conduct is consistent with their confession of their faith shall be received at the Lord's Table (Luke 22:14-29; Acts 2:42, 46, 20:7; Rom 14:19, 15:7; 1 Cor 5:6-8, 11:23-26).
- 7.4 **FELLOWSHIP AND DISCIPLESHIP:** Every member shall participate in fellowship, prayer and instruction with other believers and the exercise of spiritual gifts for the edification of the Church (Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12; Eph 4:1-16; Heb 10:23-25; 1 Pet 4:7-11).
- 7.5 **EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS:** The local Church in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, both as individual and collective witnesses, shall proclaim the Gospel to their families, neighbours, colleagues, friends, the nation as well as the regions beyond (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:44-48; Acts 1:8; 1 Pet 2:9, 3:15).
- 7.6 **STEWARDSHIP:** Every member shall have the responsibility and privilege to contribute his gifts, talents, time and resources to the

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work of God and the extension of His kingdom. It shall also be the responsibility and privilege of each member to tithe and contribute willingly, regularly and generously according to his ability as God enables (Rom 12:1-13; 1 Cor 6:19-20, 16:1-2; 2 Cor 8, 9).

- 7.7 **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:** The Church shall conduct a Christian Education programme to build up the members on the most holy faith (Jude 20) through Sunday School, Bible study classes, Bible study groups, Catechism classes, Christian publications, Gospel tracts and such other similar measures as the Board of Elders or the Church Session (subject to approval by the Board of Elders) may decide.
- 7.8 **WORSHIP:** All members shall meet regularly for the public worship of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and shall maintain family and personal devotions (Ps 27:4; Heb 10:24, 25; Song of Sol 1:6; Ps 122:1; Ps 1:1-3). Believing parents shall endeavour to bring up their children in the fear of the Lord and to lead them into a saving knowledge of the Lord by regular instruction of the Word of God (Prov 2:6; Deut 6:4-9; Eph 6:4).
- 7.9 **WEDDINGS:** The solemnisation of marriages between born-again believers. The groom must be a baptised believer and the bride either a baptised believer or a catechumen (2 Cor 6:14; Eph 5:21-33).
- 7.10 **FUNERALS:** The normal practice of the Bible-Presbyterian Church is to bury the dead. A Christian funeral is to be conducted only for born-again believers.

Article 8: Membership

- 8.1 Membership of the Church shall be of two categories:
 - 8.1.1 **Communicant Members** — Persons who can satisfy the Board of Elders as to their Christian faith, knowledge and manner of life, and who have been baptised or have reaffirmed their Christian faith or transferred from another Bible-Presbyterian Church or another Bible-believing Church shall be Communicant Members. They shall be eligible to vote at congregational meetings provided that they are 16 years old and above. No member under the age of 21 shall be eligible to stand for election to the Church Session. No Communicant Member shall be a member of another church.

- 8.1.2 Non-Communicant Members — Baptised children of Communicant Members or of Christians who have not yet acquired Communicant Membership in the Church shall be Non-Communicant Members. Non-Communicant Members shall not have any right to vote and hold office in the Church.
- 8.2 A person wishing to join the Church should submit his particulars to the Clerk of Session on a prescribed form.
- 8.3 The Board of Elders will decide on the application for membership.
- 8.4 A copy of the Constitution shall be furnished to every approved member.
- 8.5 If any member is found by the Board of Elders to have acted in a manner unbecoming of a member or by his act or omission is likely to hinder the witness of the Church or render it of ill repute, the Board of Elders shall request him to appear before the Board. The Board of Elders shall have the power to admonish, rebuke, suspend, depose or excommunicate the member either in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Bible-Presbyterian Book of Discipline or other procedure as modified or adapted by the Board.
- 8.6 The member being excommunicated shall be entitled to appeal to a Congregational Meeting against the decision of the Board of Elders made pursuant to Article 8.5 within two (2) weeks of the receipt of the decision of the Board. A Congregational Meeting shall be convened by the Pastor or Board of Elders within two (2) months from receiving the appeal. The decision of the Congregational Meeting shall be by way of a simple majority vote which shall be final and binding on the said member. If no such notice is given within the prescribed time period, the decision of the Board shall be final and binding on the said member.
- 8.7 A Communicant Member shall remain a member of the Church until he dies or is transferred to another church or excommunicated.
- 8.8 Members are expected to strive conscientiously to live according to the light given to them by the Holy Spirit through God's Word, and to support wholeheartedly the services and activities of the Church.
- 8.9 Those below 21 years of age shall not be accepted as members without the written consent of any of their parents.

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Article 9: Branches

- 9.1 The Church may establish branches subject to the approval of the Registrar of Societies.
- 9.2 Such branches shall be under the control of the Church and shall function in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and the rules made thereunder.

Article 10: The Church Government

- 10.1 The government, administration, and discipline of the Church shall be carried out in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
- 10.2 The spiritual oversight of the Church in matters of doctrine, principles of government, church elections, admission and discipline of members, and the administrative oversight of the Church shall be the responsibilities specifically of the Board of Elders. Unless expressly provided for in this Constitution, the Church Session shall not decide on any matters reserved to the Board of Elders in this Constitution, including but not limited to this Article.
- 10.3 The general spiritual and administrative oversight of the Church may be delegated by the Board of Elders to the Deacons and Deaconesses.
- 10.4 A Board of Elders meeting is not constituted even when all members of the Board are present at a Church Session meeting.

Article 11: The Church Session

- 11.1 The Church Session shall consist of the Pastor, who shall also be the Chairman of the Church Session, the Associate Pastor(s) and/or the Assistant Pastor(s), if any, and/or an Advisory Pastor or a Supervisory Pastor, when necessary, the Elder(s), the Deacon(s), and the Deaconess(es), if any. Unless with the prior approval in writing of the Registrar or an Assistant Registrar of Societies, majority of the Church Session members shall be Singapore Citizens.
- 11.2 The office bearers of the Church shall consist of:

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A Chairman
A Clerk of Session
A Treasurer

- 11.3 The Church, which has no Pastor and/or an Elder of its own, may co-opt from another Bible-Presbyterian church an Honorary Pastor and/or an Elder. He/They shall have all the rights and powers in the affairs of the Church.
- 11.4 The Church Session shall appoint from among its members a Clerk of Session, who shall be the Secretary, and define his duties. The Church Session may also appoint from amongst its members such other office bearers as it thinks fit.
- 11.5 The Church Session may delegate specific powers to any one of its members, appoint such committees as it deems fit, and make such rules and standing orders to regulate the duties and powers of such persons or committees.
- 11.6 The Church Session may co-opt members of the Church or such other persons as it deems fit to serve on any committee.
- 11.7 The Church Session shall meet once a month or once in two months at such place and time as the Pastor or the Board of Elders may determine. Emergency meetings may be convened by any of the following persons in the order specified: (i) Pastor; (ii) Associate Pastor (if any, and if more than one, the more/most senior in age); (iii) Assistant Pastor (if any, and if more than one, the more/most senior in age); or (iv) the Elder appointed by the Board of Elders, in the absence of (i), (ii) and (iii). Such meetings shall be also convened, following a joint request of any two Elders, by any of the foregoing persons in the same order specified.
- 11.8 A simple majority of the Church Session members shall constitute a quorum for the Church Session meeting.
- 11.9 The Church Session shall act by consensus or by a simple majority vote when deemed necessary by the Moderator or Chairman. The Moderator or Chairman shall have only the casting vote.
- 11.10 The Church Session, with the prior approval of the Board of Elders, shall at the Annual Congregational Meeting of the Church present a budget for the next fiscal year or period and the previous year's financial accounts, duly audited internally and/or externally.

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- 11.11 The Church Session, through the Clerk of Session, shall be responsible for keeping the following registers:
- 11.11.1 An up-to-date Register of Members with full particulars of name, address, date and place of birth, baptism, reaffirmation of faith, transfer, marriage, death or dismissal.
 - 11.11.2 A Minute Book to enter the minutes written or recorded by the appropriate appointee(s) of Church Session, Board of Elders and Congregational Meetings.

Article 12: Elections

- 12.1 A general election shall be held once in every three years at an Annual Congregational Meeting to elect the Pastor, Associate Pastor(s), Assistant Pastor(s), Elder(s), Deacon(s), and Deaconess(es) to form the Board of Elders and the Church Session.
- 12.2 By-elections may be held between general elections at an Extraordinary Congregational Meeting, if necessary, to fill vacancies that may arise from the resignation, incapacity or demise of office-bearers. Candidates elected at a by-election shall hold office until the next general election.
- 12.3 Candidates shall satisfy the requirements listed in 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1 and 1 Peter 5. Additionally, and to ensure better objectivity in selection, they shall fulfill the following conditions:
- 12.3.1 Demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt, and over a sufficient length of time, that they are faithful and mature members of the Body of Christ and faithfully devote themselves to personal prayer and study of the Word.
 - 12.3.2 Attend public worship and prayer meetings of the Church regularly, unless prevented from doing so by valid reasons.
 - 12.3.3 Make a careful study of the Constitution, in particular the Principle and Practice of Biblical Separation, and fully accept it.
 - 12.3.4 Be willing to participate wholeheartedly in the ministry of the Church with the Pastor, and to devote time, talents and resources in such ministry, including serving in various departments of the Church.

- 12.4 The Board of Elders shall nominate candidates for election. Nominations for deacons/deaconesses may also be submitted by any member of the congregation to the Board of Elders.
- 12.5 Proposals for election to any of the offices of the Church shall be carefully screened by the Board of Elders to ensure that only those with the essential qualifications and who are in full agreement with the doctrinal stand of the Church, in particular its Principle and Practice of Biblical Separation, are considered for nomination and election.
- 12.6 Elected Elders/Deacons/Deaconesses shall be formally installed into office at a Service of Consecration to be held on an appropriate Lord's Day soon after election. They shall affirm their allegiance to the Word of God by taking this solemn oath at the Consecration: "I swear in the Name of the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit that I believe 'the Bible is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth upon the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, every syllable of it, every letter of it, is direct utterance of the Most High. The Bible is none other than the Word of God, not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike the utterance of Him that sitteth upon the throne, faultless, unerring, supreme.'"

Article 13: Pastors

- 13.1 The Pastor and Associate Pastor(s)/Assistant Pastor(s), if any, shall be elected by the members of the Church at an Annual Congregational Meeting by a simple majority of the votes cast and shall hold offices for a term of three years, if elected at a general election. Each of these officers shall be eligible for re-election.
- 13.2 No Minister shall receive the call to be the Pastor, Associate Pastor or Assistant Pastor of the Church save through the hands of the Board of Elders (1 Tim 4:14).
- 13.3 The Pastor, Associate Pastor, Assistant Pastor, Supervisory Pastor and Advisory Pastor shall possess the spiritual, educational and other qualifications deemed necessary by the Board of Elders.
- 13.4 The Pastor, Associate Pastor, Assistant Pastor, Supervisory Pastor and Advisory Pastor shall be subject to the discipline of the Board

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of Elders in accordance with the procedures in the Bible-Presbyterian Book of Discipline.

- 13.5 The Pastor shall have the general oversight of the spiritual life, regular service, ministration of the Sacraments of the Church and the ordination of Elders.
- 13.6 The Pastor shall be the ex-officio member and advisor of all committees connected with the Church.
- 13.7 The Pastor shall be the Moderator of the Church Session, except for prudential reasons when the Associate Pastor (if any, and if more than one, the more/most senior in age), the Assistant Pastor (if any, and if more than one, the more/most senior in age), or the Elder appointed by the Board of Elders, in the order specified here, shall act as Chairman of a particular meeting.
- 13.8 The Pastor, upon receipt of the appropriate request and with the approval of his Board of Elders, may serve in another Bible-Presbyterian Church as Supervisory Pastor, where the requesting church is without a Pastor, or as Advisory Pastor, where the requesting church has a Pastor and still wishes to have the services of an additional Pastor as advisor. Both positions are honorary.

Article 14: Elders

- 14.1 The number of Elders in the Board of Elders shall not be more than one to every 50 communicant members. Where there are less than 50 communicant members, the Board of Elders shall have only one Elder.
- 14.2 A candidate for election to the office of an Elder shall be a Deacon of not less than six years' standing, duly nominated by the Board of Elders and elected by a simple majority vote of the members of the Church at the Annual Congregational Meeting, save that the Board of Elders may in its absolute discretion shorten the qualifying period.
- 14.3 An Elder shall hold office for a term of three years if elected at a general election and he shall be eligible for re-election.
- 14.4 An Elder may be elected in absentia, with his written consent.
- 14.5 An Elder, once elected and ordained, shall not be divested of his status as Elder when he is not re-elected or when he declines re-

election. In either case, he shall not be a member of the Church Session or the Board of Elders. He may attend meetings of the Board or the Church Session on invitation without voting rights.

- 14.6 An Elder, with the approval of his Board of Elders, may serve in another Bible-Presbyterian Church for such duration of time as may be determined.
- 14.7 An Elder shall endeavour by God's grace to serve in full conformity with the standards set forth in the Word of God (1 Tim 3:2-7 and Tit 1:6-9), joining with the Pastor in the government, administration and discipline of the Church, visiting sick and sorrowing members, investigating delinquents and endeavouring to remedy any spiritual weakness in the lives of members.
- 14.8 Elders shall be subject to the discipline of the Board of Elders in the same manner as applied to pastors, but with a right of appeal to a special meeting of the congregation called for the purpose of hearing his appeal.

Article 15: Deacons and Deaconesses

- 15.1 The number of Deacons shall not be more than six or one to every 40 communicant members, whichever is the greater number.
- 15.2 The number of Deaconesses shall not be more than four or one to every 100 communicant members, whichever is the greater number.
- 15.3 A Deacon or Deaconess shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the members of the Church at the Annual Congregational Meeting, provided the candidate shall have attained 21 years of age at the time of nomination.
- 15.4 A Deacon or Deaconess shall hold office for a term of three years if elected at a general election and he/she may be eligible for re-election.
- 15.5 A Deacon or Deaconess may be elected in absentia, with his/her written consent.
- 15.6 Deacons and Deaconesses shall endeavour by God's grace to serve in full conformity with the standards set forth in the Word of God (1 Tim 3:8-13).
- 15.7 Deacons but not Deaconesses may be requested by the Pastor or Elders to assist in the ministration of the Holy Communion.

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- 15.8 Deacons and Deaconesses shall be subject to the discipline of the Board of Elders, as provided under Article 17.

Article 16: Board of Elders

- 16.1 The Board of Elders shall consist of the Pastor and Elders and, if any, the Associate Pastor, Assistant Pastor, Supervisory Pastor or Advisory Pastor.
- 16.2 The Pastor shall be the Chairman of the Board of Elders. In his absence or when deemed prudent, (i) the Associate Pastor (if any), (ii) the Assistant Pastor (if any) or (iii) an Elder appointed by the Board of Elders, in the order specified here, shall act as Chairman. Where there are two or more persons for each of (i) or (ii), the more/most senior in age in (i) or (ii), whichever is applicable, shall act as Chairman.
- 16.3 The Board of Elders shall appoint from among its members a Clerk of the Board who shall issue notices of meetings and write minutes of the Board Meetings. Such minutes, when confirmed by the Chairman of the meeting, shall be handed to the Clerk of Session to file in the Minute Book of the Church.
- 16.4 The Board of Elders may appoint or invite Deacons/Deaconesses to take part in any meeting of the Board of Elders without voting rights.
- 16.5 The Board of Elders shall meet when necessary at a time and place to be decided by the Chairman or Acting Chairman, as appropriate. The quorum shall be a simple majority of the members of the Board.
- 16.6 The Board of Elders shall act by consensus or by a simple majority vote when deemed necessary by the Moderator or Chairman, unless it is acting in a disciplinary capacity pursuant to Article 17.5 when the provisions in the Bible-Presbyterian Book of Discipline shall apply.

Article 17: Powers and Responsibilities of the Board of Elders

Subject to Article 10 of this Constitution, the Board of Elders shall:

- 17.1 be responsible for the spiritual welfare and ministry of the Church;
- 17.2 supervise all public worship and preaching services, the ministration of the Sacraments, Bible classes, prayer meetings,

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- special meetings, and all similar efforts aimed at reaching the lost for Christ and building up Christians in the faith;
- 17.3 receive members into the Church by confession and reaffirmation of faith, and by transfer from other churches;
 - 17.4 appoint Staff Workers and other office staff as it deems necessary;
 - 17.5 exercise discipline in the Church according to the Word of God and the Bible-Presbyterian Book of Discipline (the word “Session” in the Bible-Presbyterian Book of Discipline shall be replaced by the “Board of Elders” as the Session in the U.S. Bible-Presbyterian Church is made up of elders only);
 - 17.6 enquire into the knowledge and Christian conduct of members of the Church;
 - 17.7 call before them offenders with witness or witnesses from within or without their congregation;
 - 17.8 admonish and rebuke those who are found to deserve censure, suspend or exclude offenders from the Holy Sacrament;
 - 17.9 determine by itself or, when it deems necessary, in consultation with the Deacons and Deaconesses all matters concerning the religious services and spiritual life of the Church, and the suitability of candidates for election to the Church Session.

Article 18: Congregational Meetings

- 18.1 The supreme authority of the Church in all administrative matters is vested in a general meeting of the members presided over by the Chairman. Any Congregational Meeting of the Church may be constituted as a general meeting for the transaction of business, provided announcement of the said meeting has been given from the pulpit at two regular worship services on the two preceding Lord’s Days or by two weeks’ written notice to members. In any administrative matter, the Board of Elders and the Church Session may not act contrary to the expressed wishes of the Congregational Meeting without prior reference to it and shall always remain subordinate to the Congregational Meeting.
- 18.2 Congregational Meetings shall be opened with Scripture reading and prayer and closed with prayer.

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- 18.3 Congregational Meetings shall be of two kinds, namely, Annual Congregational Meeting and Extraordinary Congregational Meeting.
- 18.3.1 The Annual Congregational Meeting for the transaction of business pertaining to the Church shall be held in the month of April.
- 18.3.2 At such Meeting, the Church Session shall report on the spiritual and temporal conditions of the congregation and announce plans for the coming year.
- 18.3.3 Items of business shall include the Clerk of Session's Report, the Treasurer's Report, the Budget, election of internal Auditors, and any other matters on the agenda.
- 18.3.4 An Extraordinary Congregational Meeting for the transaction of particular business pertaining to the Church may be held at any time upon due notice being given by the Pastor or the Board of Elders.
- 18.3.5 Only such business as is specifically mentioned in the call may be considered at such a meeting.
- 18.3.6 The Pastor or the Board of Elders shall call an Extraordinary Congregational Meeting upon the request of one-tenth of the Communicant Members. The meeting shall be convened within two months from receiving this request.
- 18.3.7 If the Pastor or the Board of Elders does not within two months after the date of receipt of the written request made under Article 18.3.6 proceed to convene an Extraordinary Congregational Meeting, the members who requested for the Extraordinary Congregational Meeting shall convene the Extraordinary Congregational Meeting by giving ten days' notice to voting members setting forth the business to be transacted and simultaneously posting the agenda on the Church's notice board.
- 18.3.8 Any voting member who wishes to place an item on the agenda of a Congregational Meeting may do so provided he gives written notice to the Clerk of Session ten (10) days before the meeting is due to be held.

- 18.4 The quorum of Congregational Meetings in the election of the Pastor, Associate Pastor(s), Assistant Pastor(s), Elder(s), Deacon(s) and Deaconess(es) and in the amendments of the Constitution shall be a simple majority of all resident voting Communicant Members in good standing. All Communicant Members are deemed to be in good standing unless decided otherwise by the Board of Elders in the exercise of its powers under Article 8.5.
- 18.5 The quorum of Congregational Meetings for the transaction of all other business shall be one-third of all such resident voting Communicant Members.
- 18.6 Proxies shall not be constituted as part of the quorum.
- 18.7 In the event of a lack of quorum for the Congregational Meetings, the Chairman of the Meeting shall adjourn the meeting for half an hour and should the number then present be insufficient to form a quorum, those present shall constitute the quorum but they shall have no power to alter, amend or make addition to any existing rules.
- 18.8 The election of the Pastor, Associate Pastor(s), Assistant Pastor(s), Elder(s), Deacon(s) and Deaconess(es) shall be by secret ballot.
- 18.9 Except for amendments to the Constitution which shall require a two-thirds majority vote of those present, the election of Church Session members and decisions on all other businesses of the Church shall be adopted by a simple majority vote of those present.
- 18.10 The Pastor shall be the Chairman of the Meeting except for prudential reasons when the Board of Elders or the Congregational Meeting shall appoint an Elder (who may be an Associate Pastor or an Assistant Pastor) as Chairman of the Meeting.
- 18.11 Unless otherwise stated in this Constitution, voting by proxy shall not be allowed at all Congregational Meetings.

Article 19: Trustees

- 19.1 The Church shall have the power to acquire immovable property and such other property as the relevant authorities shall permit in its name and, subject to a declaration of trust, vest it in trustees not less than two but not exceeding four in number appointed by the members at a Congregational Meeting convened for such a purpose.

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- 19.2 The trustees shall not effect any sale or mortgage such property without the prior approval of the Congregational Meeting of the Communicant Members.
- 19.3 Any trustee may resign his trusteeship.
- 19.4 When a trustee dies, or is found to be of unsound mind, or becomes a bankrupt, or emigrates from Singapore, or ceases membership of the Church, or is incapacitated for any reason, his trusteeship is deemed to have ceased.
- 19.5 When a trustee is found guilty of misconduct of such a kind as to make it undesirable for him to continue to be a trustee, the Congregational Meeting may remove him from his trusteeship.
- 19.6 Notice of any proposal to remove a trustee from his trusteeship or appoint a new trustee to fill a vacancy shall be given in the Church Bulletin or announced at the regular worship service two weeks preceding the Congregational Meeting to be convened for the purpose. The address of immovable properties, names of trustees and any subsequent changes must be notified to the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities and any other authority as required by law.

Article 20: Finance and Audit

- 20.1 The work and programme of the Church shall be supported by freewill offerings and tithes of members, gifts and donations of friends, and by such other income as may be derived by the Church according to the Holy Scriptures.
- 20.2 The funds of the Church shall be used in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
- 20.3 The Church Session shall elect one of its members as Treasurer and another member as Assistant Treasurer, if necessary. The Treasurer and/or the Assistant Treasurer shall not hold office for the same or a related post for a consecutive term. The Church Session may appoint a Finance Committee from among its members to take charge of the financial affairs of the Church. The Treasurer shall keep a cash balance of not more than \$1,000/- at any one time. All monies exceeding this amount shall be deposited with a bank designated by the Church Session. All cheques shall be signed by

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- the Treasurer or, in his absence, the Assistant Treasurer, and one other Church Session member appointed by the Church Session.
- 20.4 The Church Session may appoint a firm of Certified Public Accountants as external auditors to audit the accounts of the Church and shall do so, if required by law. The term of such appointment is one year and the firm shall be eligible for re-appointment.
- 20.5 Alternatively or in addition to the external auditors, the Church may elect two internal auditors from amongst the voting Communicant Members, who are not members of the Church Session, at the Annual Congregational Meeting of the Church.
- 20.6 The internal auditors shall hold office for one year and shall not be eligible for re-election for a consecutive term.
- 20.7 The internal auditors and/or the auditing firm shall certify the correctness of the accounts for each financial year, which shall end on 31st December, for presentation to the Annual Congregational Meeting.
- 20.8 The internal auditors and/or the external auditors may be required by the Pastor to audit the Church's accounts for any period within their tenure of office at any date and make a report to the Church Session.
- 20.9 The Board of Elders, or the Church Session with the prior approval of the Board of Elders, has power to authorize the monthly expenditure of a sum not exceeding the amount (specified at a Congregational Meeting of members) from the Church's funds for the Church's purposes. Expenditure beyond this monthly limit will have to be authorized by a Congregational Meeting of members for the purpose specified.

Article 21: By-Laws

- 21.1 The Board of Elders or the Church Session may make by-laws not inconsistent with this constitution for giving effect to the provisions of this constitution for, but not limited to, the following matters:
- 21.1.1 The way and manner the activities of the Church business shall be administered.

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21.1.2 The appointment of staff workers, paid secretaries, clerks and other personnel for the proper functioning of the Church.

Article 22: Amendments

- 22.1 No amendments to this Constitution shall be made except at a Congregational Meeting of the Church.
- 22.2 No amendments to the Constitution shall be adopted without at least a two-thirds majority votes cast by those present.
- 22.3 No amendments to the Constitution shall come into force without the prior approval of the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities.

Article 23: Interpretation and Disputes

- 23.1 In the event of any question or matter arising out of any point which is not expressly provided for in the Constitution, the Board of Elders shall decide on the matter or the necessary steps to be taken.
- 23.2 In the event of any dispute arising amongst members, they shall attempt to resolve the matter at an Extraordinary Congregational Meeting in accordance with this Constitution.

Article 24: Prohibitions

- 24.1 Gambling of any kind is forbidden on the Church's premises. The introduction of materials for gambling or drug taking, and the admission of bad characters into the premises is prohibited.
- 24.2 The funds of the Church shall not be used to pay the fines of members who have been convicted in Court.
- 24.3 The Church shall not engage in any trade union activity as defined in any written law relating to trade unions for the time being in force in Singapore.
- 24.4 The Church shall not attempt to restrict or interfere with trade or make directly or indirectly any recommendation to, or any arrangement with, its members which has the purpose or is likely to have the effect of fixing or controlling the price or any discount, allowance or rebate relating to any goods or services to be supplied by them, and thereby adversely affecting consumer interests.

- 24.5 The Church shall not hold any lottery, whether confined to its members or not, in the name of the Church, the Board of Elders, the Church Session, any office-bearer(s) or any member(s).
- 24.6 The Church shall not indulge in any political activity or allow its fund and/or premises to be used for political purposes.
- 24.7 The Church shall not raise funds from the public for whatever purpose without the prior approval in writing of the Head, Licensing Division, Singapore Police Force and any other relevant authorities.

Article 25: Dissolution

- 25.1 The Church shall not be dissolved, except with the consent of not less than three-fourths of the voting members of the Church for the time being resident in Singapore expressed either in person or by proxy at a Congregational Meeting convened for the purpose.
- 25.2 In the event of the Church being dissolved as provided above, all debts and liabilities legally incurred on behalf of the Church shall be fully discharged. The remaining funds shall be given to such charitable organisations registered under the Charities Act (Cap 37), as the members of the Church may determine at a Congregational Meeting, to carry out objects similar to those hereinbefore set out.
- 25.3 A Certificate of Dissolution shall be given to the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities within seven days of the dissolution. Notice shall also be given to other authorities, as required by law.

END OF CONSTITUTION

Notes

Approved by the Registrar of Societies, June 21, 2004 and gazetted in the Government *Gazette*, Friday, July 23, 2004.

1st amendment approved by the Registrar of Societies on January 4, 2005 to include “and the Commissioner of Charities” in articles 19.6, 22.3, 25.3.

Class Notes

Eddy Ho Pitt Lup (BTh 75) was conferred the Doctor of Ministry degree by Asia Graduate School of Theology at the 23rd Graduation Service of the Malaysia Bible Seminary, November 6, 2004.

Kim Won Hyo (BTh 99) studied the Chinese language in Shenzhen University, and later served in the Korean Church in Hong Kong as a pastor for two years. Married on September 18, 2004, he is now serving among the youths of Cho-Dae Korean Church in New Jersey, USA. He is preparing to further his theological studies at Alliance Theological Seminary in Nyack, New York.

Tan Kian Sing (MDiv 01), preacher of Berean Bible-Presbyterian Church, was ordained a minister of the gospel at Calvary Pandan Bible-Presbyterian Church on April 24, 2005. The following ministers laid hands: Rev Dr Timothy Tow (moderator), Rev Dr S H Tow, Rev Koa Keng Woo, Rev Quek Suan Yew, Rev Prabhudas Koshy, Rev Ronny Khoo, Rev Wee Eng Moh, and Rev Dr Jeffrey Khoo.

Bai Eun Young (BRE 02, MRE 04) is teaching at the Kompongsom Bible School in Cambodia.

June Tan Mei Lan (MRE 02) is a primary school teacher in Bomet, Kenya. She also teaches Christian Education and Computer Appreciation at Bomet Bible Institute.

Sachen Shrestha (BRE 03) is serving in the Singapore Nepalese ministry of Asia Evangelistic Fellowship (AEF). In a Bible camp in Malaysia, December 2004, attended by 247 Nepalese, 12 committed their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Kim Young Min (BTh 04) is a Master of Divinity student at Biblical Theological Seminary, Hatfield, Pennsylvania.

Rasmalem Raya Sembiring (MDiv 03, ThM 04), a missionary of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, has been sent to Libo in Sumatra to build up the congregation, and prepare for the opening of a kindergarten there.

Salai Tha Luai (MRE 04) has been appointed Vice-Principal of Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology (FEFST), Yangon, Myanmar.

Charlene Tan Hwee Phio (MRE 04) is assistant professor at the National Institute of Education (NIE) of Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore.

Lim Seo Young (BRE 05) married Sean Sebastian Fong, a member of Gethsemane Bible-Presbyterian Church, on January 15, 2005.

College News

FEBC reopened with a **day of prayer and registration** on January 3, 2005. **Dr S H Tow**—former President of the Board of Directors of the College—was the guest preacher who exhorted the students from selected verses from the pastoral epistles. We have 9 new full-time students from 5 countries: (1) **Indonesia**: Timbangan Tarigan; (2) **Korea**: Kim Mi Kyung, Lee Haneul, Shin Bo Mi, Song Sun Taek; (3) **Nepal**: Rajan Shrestha; (4) **Singapore**: Tan Nee Keng, Wong Chee Leong; and (5) **Thailand**: Arpornthip Chaita. The total number of day-time students (full and part-time) is 113 from 15 countries.

The **Basic Theology for Everyone** evening courses this semester are (1) Minor Prophets taught by the Principal—Rev Dr Timothy Tow, and (2) Joshua, Judges and Ruth by Rev Quek Suan Yew. We have a combined total of 277 students attending the evening classes.

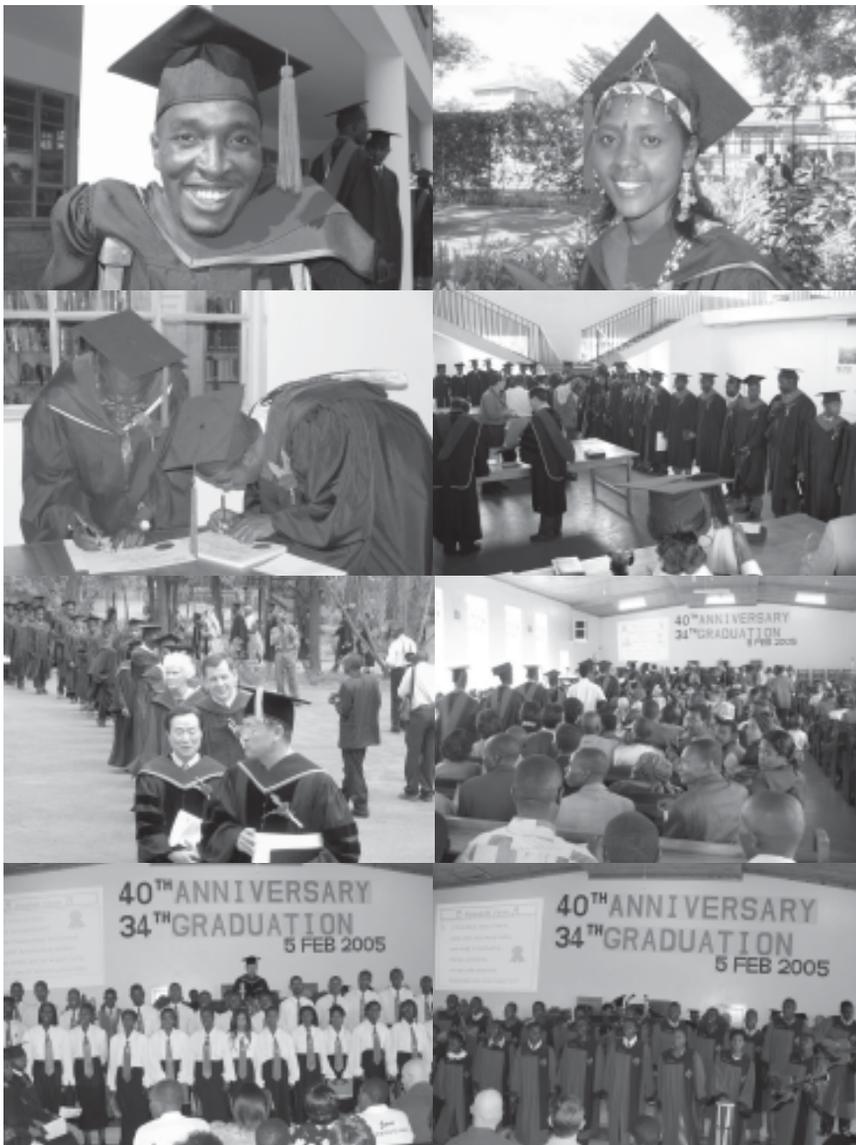
FEBC polo shirts with the college logo embroidered are available for sale at the FEBC Bookroom. They come in 5 colours (white, black, royal blue, maroon, ash grey), and 5 sizes (XS, S, M, L, XL). Price: \$12-15. Get yours while stocks last!

During the **mid-semester break**, March 16-19, 2005, the college students ministered to the brethren at Tangkak Bible-Presbyterian Fellowship before taking time off to enjoy the clear waters of Pulau Tioman, Malaysia.

The **Bible College of East Africa** (BCEA), Nairobi, Kenya, celebrated her 40th Anniversary in conjunction with her 34th Graduation Exercises on February 5, 2005. We thank the Lord for BCEA's partnership with FEBC in the 21st Century Bible College movement for the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ.

The college students enjoyed a **fellowship outing to Changi beach** on February 23, 2005.

**BCEA 40th Anniversary & 34th Graduation Service
(February 5, 2005)**



From top, L-R, zig-zag: Happy faces of graduands; Signing of certificates & diplomas; Preparing for the processional; Processional led by Rev Dr Mark Kim (principal); College and Church choirs.

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From top, L-R, zig-zag: Rev Dr Mark Kim (principal); Rev Dr Choi Kwang Jae (graduation speaker); Rev Keith Coleman (Director, IBPFM); Rev Bumiji M'Shana, BCEA (Tanzania); Ephrem Chiracho (BCEA lecturer & FEBC alumnus); Bishop Richard Kivai of Africa Church & FEBC alumnus; What a gathering!

BCEA 40th Anniversary & 34th Graduation Service



From top, L-R, zig-zag: Graduates; Presentation of gifts; Congratulations from Principal; Mrs Hannah Kim; Dr Choi, Rev Coleman, and Dr Mark Kim; Reformation Hall; College Chapel.

FEBC Fellowship Outing (February 23, 2005)



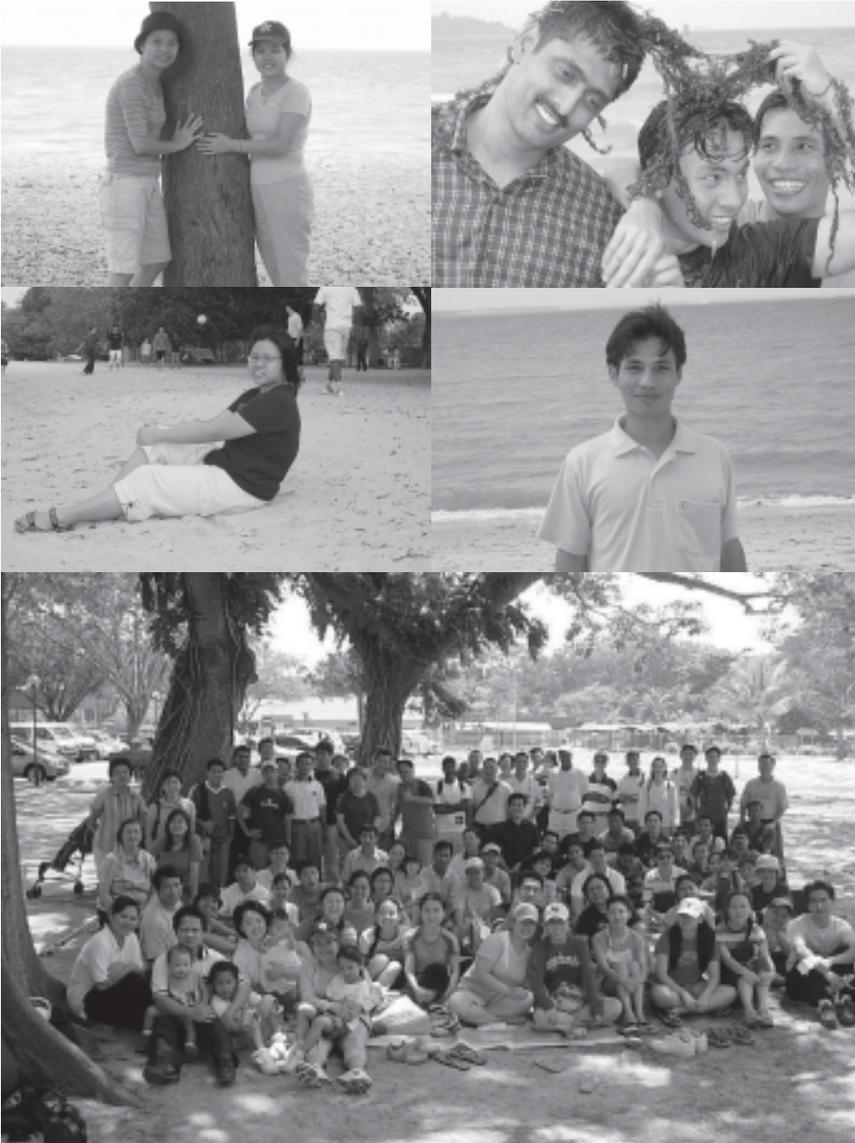
Changi beach; Bus fellowship; Warunee & May Lynn; Singspiration led by Yap Kim Chuan and Eben Yoon; Games for both old and young.

FEBC Fellowship Outing



From top, L-R, zig-zag: "This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps 118:24); Rev Kiantoro Lie leading in prayer; Dominino, Jeremy, Bao An; Warunee, Theresa, Maritess & Rio (sunglasses); "Baptising" Phillip; Emerging immersionists; Justin & Rio.

The Burning Bush 11/2 (July 2005)



From top, L-R, zig-zag: Doan Hau & Min Dieu (Vietnam); Philip, Weerapong, Lal Lian Uk; Theresa Yip (Singapore); Lal Lian Uk (Myanmar); FEBC family.



TRUE LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

"HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE" PHIL 2:16



Pastor:
Rev (Dr) Timothy
Tow Siang Hui

Worship Service:
10.30 am every Lord's Day at RELC
Auditorium
Regional Language Centre (RELC)
30 Orange Grove Road
Singapore 258352

Ministries:
Sunday School
Children's Ministry
Church Choir
Evangelism/Missions
Various Fellowship Groups

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Fellowship Groups:



Ladies Fellowship



Young People's Fellowship



*Family Bible Study
Fellowship*



BIBLE COLLEGE OF EAST AFRICA
40TH ANNIVERSARY & 34TH GRADUATION
FEBRUARY 5, 2005