

publication of the King James Version, when a new edition of the Greek New Testament, with a considerable number of text changes from the edition used by those who prepared the King James Version, was published. The Latin preface to that edition contained the unsupported claim that "this is the text received by all," and somehow the Latin phrase *textus receptus*, which means "received text," came to be used to identify the text used by the translators of the King James Version. Personally I see absolutely no warrant for this third approach, particularly since the *textus receptus* contains a few words or phrases that are missing not only from the earliest manuscripts that still exist, but also from nearly all the later ones.

The Bible is not a series of magical words or verses. It is a collection of books that present the truth that God wants His people to have. Men can often find ways of twisting or reinterpreting the words of any one particular verse but when all the verses that relate to a particular subject are carefully examined, a conclusion can be reached that truly presents the mind of God. After this has been done we often find one verse that clearly summarizes the truth that has been gathered from the study of many, and can then present this verse as a wonderful summary of what God wants us to know.

It is probably because of the natural human tendency to take one verse by itself and try to draw from it more than its words will really bear, that God did not cause any of the original Bible manuscripts to be preserved, but had it passed down to us through a series of many copyings and recopyings, in the course of which minor errors came in at a very few places. These errors are comparatively few but enough to show that we should build our knowledge of truth on Scripture as a whole rather than on any one verse taken by itself.

Most of the passages that are marked in the Scofield Bible as not occurring in some of the ancient manuscripts are found in most of the later manuscripts. A few of them occur in no ancient manuscript; others occur in some ancient manuscripts and are missing in others. There is a great difference in the amount of evidence for or against each group of words that is missing in one or more of the early manuscripts, but none of these questions affect any Christian doctrine.

A good illustration of this is Mark 16:9-20. The two earliest