

names contained in the earlier copy. When the preservation of secular works is examined, it is easy to see that God providentially worked a near miracle in the wonderful preservation of the New Testament manuscripts.

Yet these manuscripts do contain hundreds of differences. These differences consist mostly of places where a scribe remembered a phrase from another passage and thoughtlessly inserted it again in a place where it had not been in the original, or where a title that was written in a short form was copied in a longer form. I would not urge anyone to turn away from the King James Version. It was wonderful for its day.

I believe that it is extremely important that people have a translation in the language of our own day. Many words in the King James Version convey no meaning to us. Still more serious is the fact that there are many words that have so changed their meaning that they give a false impression to a present reader.

Consecrated Christian scholars prepared the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version. Each of these is an accurate presentation of the original. No translation can be precise. There are places at which I would differ from either of these, but on the whole I would say that they are excellent translations. The text that they have used tries to follow early manuscripts rather than the late manuscripts used by Erasmus. These late manuscripts differ greatly among themselves. There is no such thing as one unified text that can be called the *Textus Receptus*. There is no manuscript that exactly agrees with the *Textus Receptus*. God allowed variations to come into the manuscripts as early as the first two centuries A.D., but none of these affect any important doctrine.

You mention the last few verses of Mark. The earliest manuscripts are broken at the end of Mark so it seems likely that the original conclusion of Mark was lost. What we now have is a summary of the end of Luke. It contains only one statement that is not already contained in Luke. That is the statement that Christians will pick up snakes and not be injured. This verse gives no authorization for being foolhardy or careless. It points to God's providential care which was displayed when He delivered Paul from the bite of a snake in Melita (Acts 28:3-6) and has protected other Christians ever since in various situations. It certainly does not mean that there will not be cases in which He allows a