



IN THE CHURCHES

By Bob Ollivier

In search of the 'unrevised' Word of God

In a recent column, I indicated I would endeavor to discuss the various translations of the Bible. It is, of course a major task, and so far only one person has come forward to help me with it.

As mentioned previously, Christians are often advised to read a specific translation by those who enjoy it themselves. This is often the basis for "adopting" that particular translation.

Some translations are actually commentaries or a paraphrase, and others are taken from an older version without recourse to the "most ancient copies" of the Word of God.

The "Textus Receptus" is often referred to, but the Rylands Papyrus number 52 of A.D. 125 came only about 35 years after the apostle John wrote his Gospel. The "Alexandrian Text" is an old work referred to by translators Wescott and Hurt, and some feel that these men came closest to the actual meaning of the original writers.

The King James or "Authorized" version is not the same today as it was when written in 1611. Printers' errors and revisions have produced changes. Dr. Paris of Cambridge (1762) and Dr. Blayney of Oxford (1769) revised the spelling and grammar of the King James version, resulting in some 70,000 details of difference.

The Revised Standard version of 1946 and 1952 was written by theological liberals and watered-down Messianic passages relating especially to the virgin birth of Christ. Another, the Living Bible is, according to the editors, a paraphrase, but according to K.E. Keat Jr., it is actually "an opinionated commentary".

A quote from Mr. Keat may be humorous, but may also point out a reason for not using that particular version or paraphrase: "Dr. Kenneth Taylor and Tyndale House follow the example of the auto industry and recall all the Living Bibles because of major defects."

If readers can offer sound advice on the various translations, I would appreciate it. The New World translation and various others are written to promote certain sects and cults by dropping or adding words or whole passages.

The Halton Christian Womens' Fellowship meets at Maple Avenue Baptist Church this month, rather than the Anglican Church Hall (space conflict, I think, but note the changes). It's next Tuesday, April 28, 1:15 to 3:15 and the speaker will be Evelyn Michelle, whose son was one of 13 drowned on Lake Temiscaming.

Feature will be a spring fashion show and music by Gerri Kunicia. Call 877-4158 or 877-7257 for further details, but it would be a nice day out for mother, as they can arrange babysitting.

Alexander Vashenko, a relative of one of the pentecostal families refusing to leave the U.S. embassy in Moscow, was released from a Russian labor camp. He had spent several years there as a penalty for engaging in Christian activities.

Mountainview Baptist Church will present Maybeth Grey at 11 a.m. service Sunday. Ms. Grey has been a missionary in China for over 15 years.

Four young people from the church were baptised Easter Sunday. They are Paul Kettlewell, Cathy Barton, Keith Peck and Melanie Harris.

An apology

In my April 3 column, I responded to a Toronto Star commentary on "Crusader" comic books by calling the newspaper's religion editor an "agnostic". That writer — Tom Harper — has taken offence. The Bible, I must acknowledge, tells us not to judge other souls; I must apologize for doing so.

Expensive audit?

Part of Halton region's \$451,000 deficit in the general levy account stems from the need to budget for anticipated increases in the cost of conducting the yearly audit. Originally, the deficit was expected to amount to about \$346,000 but regional treasurer Gerry Lawson explained in a report submitted to council that it may cost \$25,000 to complete the 1980 financial statements. Another \$75,000 was added to the deficit to pay for hourly wages accumulated by staff last year. Commenting on the possibility that the audit might cost the region an extra \$25,000 this year, regional chairman Jack Raftis said the amount was only a ceiling.

LOCAL CLERGYMEN DISCUSS MYSTIC'S PRAYER 'He was no Christian'

By DR. JOHN M. DRICKAMER
Immanuel Lutheran Church

There was a mystic in the Middle Ages who prayed, "I pray God, rid me of God." He was able to pray that way because he was not a true Christian. He did not believe in the true God. His prayer reveals instead that his beliefs were pantheistic (denying that God exists as a Being separate from the created world). He would have made a real Hindu. But he was no Christian.

There is only one true God. He is the God who has revealed Himself by inspiring holy men to write the Bible. The true God is one God but three Persons (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, Matthew 28:19). God also revealed Himself by the Son becoming incarnate, but we know Jesus only through the Word. Any other god is a false god. Any other worship is idolatry.

Unbelievers have often asked Christians why the one true God did not reveal Himself in a way that was immediately clear to everyone on earth but only through the events recorded in the Bible and through the inspiration of the Bible itself. Of course, God's existence and power are revealed to all men through the existence of creation. But the knowledge of the Trilune God and His grace is only in and through the Word. Why? The only answer is that God chose to do it that way. We can only trust His wisdom and love in this matter.

God has also commanded that His Word be proclaimed throughout the world (Matthew 28:19-20). The very fact that God commanded this to be done shows that Christianity is the one true religion. It is the only religion

'Rid us of the false idols'

By The Rev. Graham W. Hland
St. Alban's Anglican Church, Glen Williams

A medieval Christian mystic had a prayer which shocked me when I first read it: "I pray God, rid me of God." Perhaps you are shocked by it too? But then I came to see that it is an excellent prayer for us to pray.

One of the curses of religion throughout the ages has been that different religious groups and denominations have insisted that their God is the God. And some thinking people have said: "That's crazy! If there is only one God, how can he appear so differently to these people?" So they have shunned organized religion as a stumbling-block. They have rejected the various "Gods" presented by the churches.

I urge you today to examine the way you think about the divine. If you reject religion, are you really rejecting God, or just a religious idea which you can't stomach? Perhaps you object to the "little Jesus, meek and mild" kind of idea; or maybe the idea of a Resident Policeman in the sky just doesn't turn you on; or it could be that to talk about some great Heavenly Parent is far too romantic for you. As an adult though, it is right for you to question such child-like concepts.

When Moses' child-like curiosity brought him to the burning bush, he asked God who he was, what God should be called. The answer came back: "I AM, that is who I am." Moses must have torn at his hair in frustration. "I only asked a simple question! But the lesson of this is that, when we in the churches presume to say, "God is . . ." followed by a string of adjectives and nouns, we say too much and too little. We ought never to have begun the list, because no list of words will ever be enough to exhaust all the possibilities in God.

All we can really say is that "God is who he is," period; and that he came to this world in Jesus Christ to show us who we are, to bring us to life. Our words will always be insufficient but the Word of God, Jesus Christ . . . him we must proclaim. He it is who may bring us to our senses and rid us of childish fantasies.

Let us pray God to rid us of all the idols to which we give the name "God" and replace them with his truth.

About the Hills

and that the auditors would have to do "a hell of a lot of talking" to get all of it.

Schooled in Chatham?

Next year is the 50th anniversary of the present St. Michael's school in Chatham, N.B. Since there were many close ties with St. Thomas through the years, a giant reunion is in the organizational stage for both these schools. The date has been set for June 30 to July 4, 1982. Kindly write us

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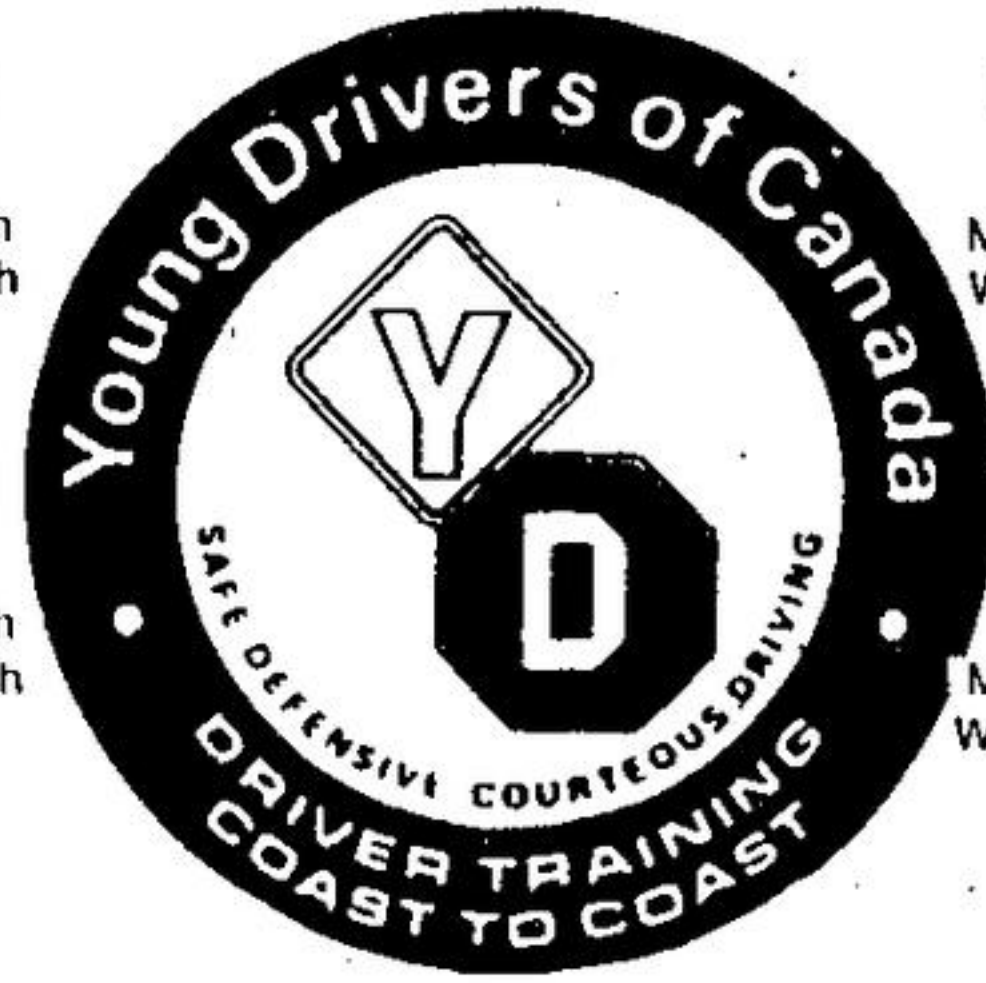
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