

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

Why Respond to Gail Riplinger?

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Over the past few months I have been amazed at what has transpired with reference to Mrs. Gail Riplinger and her 1993 book, *New Age Bible Versions*. Ever since I “debated” Mrs. Riplinger in November of 1993 on two, one-half-hour long radio programs, I have been inundated with requests from churches, Christian bookstores, and individuals all across the United States, all seeking the same thing: information on *New Age Bible Versions* (hereafter *NABV*).

It is important to emphasize right from the start that I have no personal animosity toward Mrs. Gail Riplinger. I have only spoken with the lady by phone while on KRDS radio in Phoenix in late 1993. Other than sending her a letter and some materials from our ministry, this is the extent of my personal contact with her. I am sure Mrs. Riplinger believes she is doing the right thing in writing *NABV*. She most probably believes everything she says to be absolutely true. She may well be sincere in her desire to warn the Church about false beliefs. But, sadly, she is also sincerely, and almost completely, wrong.

NABV has disturbed the peace of many churches in the United States and abroad. The allegations the book makes against Christian men of many denominational backgrounds are serious indeed. The back of the book contains this paragraph:

Each page opens a door exposing new version editors—in agreement with Luciferians, occultists, and New Age philosophy—in mental institutions, seance parlors, prison cells, and court rooms for heresy trials—and most shocking of all—denying that salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ. Five have lost their ability to speak.

The following information demonstrates beyond question that Mrs. Riplinger’s information is fatally flawed and utterly untrustworthy. And yet many people are accepting her statements at face value. Critical thinking seems to be “old fashioned” among many Christians today.

This booklet is made up of articles, faxes, and letters that I have written over the past few months since my debate with Mrs. Riplinger in late 1993. It is in no way an exhaustive response to the 690 pages of *NABV*. There simply is no need to take the time to do a page-by-page rebuttal of this book. Why? Because once it is demonstrated that there is a

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consistent pattern of simple error that flows throughout *NABV*, we might as well move on and give our time to more important pursuits.

The first article presented contains the story of my radio “debate” with Mrs. Riplinger. It includes the notes I wrote in preparation for the program, as well as a recounting of the program itself. I have gone through the notes and added charts and further explanations so as to make the material more appropriate for the published domain. The next section includes the body of a fax I sent to the producers of a television program in Florida, written in response to the comments made by Mrs. Riplinger on the *Action 60's* program. This material is followed by responses to various radio appearances by Mrs. Riplinger.

It is truly my hope that many in the body of Christ will be helped by the following information. The KJV Only controversy is, in reality, a non-issue when compared with the serious challenges that face the Christian Church today. That so much time and effort has to be put into debunking the wild allegations of such individuals as Gail Riplinger is more of an indication of how easily American Christianity is distracted from its true purpose than anything else.

GUESS WHAT HAPPENED ON THE WAY HOME . . .

One of our faithful volunteers called one afternoon to let me know about “some lady” who would be on a local radio talk program presenting the KJV Only viewpoint. I was just heading out, so I turned on the radio on the way home. I was utterly amazed at what I heard. Not only was the information I heard badly flawed, but no one was calling in to respond to her position. Everyone was simply buying into it. By the time I arrived home it was impossible to call into the program, but I did wish to speak to the host of the program to see if there would be any possibility of providing a response to what had been said.

This led to two, half-hour programs on a Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon. The host informed me that his guest, Gail Riplinger, author of the book *New Age Bible Versions*, would not debate anyone who had not read her book. Hence, I needed to read her nearly 700 page book prior to doing any programs. As I knew that this teaching had destroyed many churches in the past, I set aside a number of projects and dove into the book in the days immediately prior to the programs.

Below I provide the text of the notes I took with me into the radio studio the first afternoon. Upon completing these notes, I shall review Mrs. Riplinger’s response from the radio program.

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The issues raised by Gail Riplinger are very important, if only for the fact that in this book professing Christian men who lived godly lives are attacked mercilessly and are associated with men who were anything but godly or concerned about Christian truth. Orthodox Christian theologians are indiscriminately associated with heretics without any thought as to the consistency of such an action. Since we have in this book serious allegations of downright Satanic actions on the part of Christian leaders, I feel Mrs. Riplinger should be held to the highest standards of scholarly acumen and accuracy.

Gail Riplinger claims that her book “objectively and methodically documents the hidden alliance between new versions and the New Age Movement’s One World Religion.” However, an even semi-unbiased review of Mrs. Riplinger’s book reveals that this book is neither methodical, nor objective, in any way, shape or form.

Now we need to remember that *New Age Bible Versions* is not a nice book. It plainly and obviously identifies anyone who was involved in the production of modern Bible versions, or who would dare to defend translations such as the *New American Standard Bible* or the *New International Version*, as not just non-Christians, but as anti-Christians who are opposed to God’s work in this world and who actually want everyone to worship Lucifer. Anyone who opposes Gail Riplinger’s unique view of the world and theology is, in fact, a New Ager in sheep’s clothing. A quick review of her book bears this out. She alleges that these new versions prepare the apostate church of these last days to accept the Antichrist, his mark, his image, and religion—Lucifer worship. She describes the historic Reformed doctrine of regeneration, a doctrine taught by Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, Martin Bucer, John Calvin, the crafters of the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Puritans, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, B. B. Warfield, J.I. Packer and R.C. Sproul, as a “scandalous and sacrilegious” belief that “will stun and shock the reader” (*NABV*, p. 231). Riplinger connects Christian men such as Edwin Palmer with everyone from Blavatsky to Hitler to Charlie Manson! All are in one boat according to *New Age Bible Versions*. No opportunity is missed to insult, attack, and degrade those who would dare oppose Mrs. Riplinger’s position. In light of this, I hope no one will take too much offense at my less than sparkling review of Gail’s book.

I note in passing that this book centers on the two most popular *conservative* Bible translations, the *New American Standard Bible* and the *New International Version*. Very little is said about blatantly liberal translations such as the *New Revised Standard Version* or the *New English Bible*, most probably because these translations have had little impact upon the conservative Christian community, comparatively speaking. I would join Gail in critiquing these translations, not as part of some New Age conspiracy, but as less than accurate translations of the Bible. But Gail barely mentions these versions; her target is plainly the NIV and the NASB.

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As an apologist working on the front lines in dealing with the claims of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, and in debating Roman Catholic apologists all across the United States, I have only once or twice encountered a work that contained more misrepresentation of historical facts, of cited sources of documentation, and of the writings of those who are being reviewed. *New Age Bible Versions* shows not the slightest concern for accurately representing its opposition. Context is a term that is utterly lost in the maze of disconnected, disjointed citations thrown at the reader on almost every page. Utterly illogical argumentation carries the day in Gail's attempt to find a New Age conspiracy behind every bush. Even the deity of Christ is undermined so as to maintain the supposed inerrancy of a translation, that being the KJV (see below). And worst of all, Gail Riplinger attacks the memories and characters of good men of God, such as Edwin Palmer, without once differentiating between the beliefs and actions of such men and the likes of New Age wackos and Satanists. She misrepresents their writings and words over and over and over again. Accurate representation of others is one thing that is utterly lacking in *New Age Bible Versions*.

Those are some pretty harsh words, but the documentation of these statements is easily found. All one has to do is take Gail Riplinger's book, *New Age Bible Versions*, and then take the time to find such books as Barker's *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*, Palmer's *The Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit*, and John Kohlenberger's *Words About the Word*, and examine the references provided at the end of the book. The number of complete mis-citations and altered quotations will quickly prove the correctness of my statements. Given the small amount of time we have today, I will only be able to provide a few examples, but I could literally expand the list indefinitely.

First, one simply cannot believe the "facts" that are presented in this book, for quite often, they are not facts at all. There are dozens and dozens of charts throughout the book, allegedly comparing the KJV with the supposed "New Versions," which she calls "mutant versions" (p. 129). Yet, over and over again these charts are simply wrong. On page 22 we are told that the "New Versions" delete the call to take up the cross, when they do not. We are told that while the KJV tells us to bless our enemies, the new versions tell us to call our enemies bastards, which, of course, they do not.

At times the facts are 180 degrees opposite of what is claimed by Gail Riplinger. For example, on page 99 we read, "All new versions, based on a tiny percentage of corrupt Greek manuscripts, make the fatefully frightening addition of three words in Revelation 14:1." She then quotes the passage from the NIV, which reads, "...the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had **his name and** his Father's name written on their foreheads." The phrase "his name and" is not found in the KJV. She continues on

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page 100, “Will the unwary, reading Revelation 14:1 in a recent version, be persuaded that the bible sanctions and encourages the taking of ‘his name’ on their forehead *before* they receive his Father’s name?” Such sounds truly ominous, until one discovers that in point of fact it is the *Textus Receptus*, the Greek Text of the New Testament utilized by the KJV translators, that *alone* does not contain the disputed phrase, “his name.” The *Majority Text* contains it, as do all the Greek texts. We have here merely a mistake on the part, most probably, of Desiderius Erasmus, the Roman Catholic priest who collated what became the *Textus Receptus*. He had major problems in producing the text of Revelation and merely skipped over the phrase referring to the Lamb’s name. Sadly, someone reading *New Age Bible Versions* could be led to attack the NIV on the basis of a basic mistake.

The modern versions are unashamedly misrepresented in place after place by the convenient use of punctuation. While attempting to argue that new versions teach us to believe in monism through the use of the term “one,” the NASB is cited as follows, “True knowledge according to the image of the One...” on page 92. The reference given is Colossians 3:10, which reads in full from the NASB: “And have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him—a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.”

The arguments put forward in this book at times border on the ludicrous. The chart found on page 26 should fascinate anyone seeking logical thinking. On page 232 we are warned against the letter “s.” Riplinger writes, “Watch out for the letter ‘s’—sin, Satan, Sodom, Saul (had to be changed to Paul). The added ‘s’ here is the hiss of the serpent.” Such argumentation would lead us to abandon such terms as salvation, Savior, and sanctification as well! Indeed, on page 174 our author recommends the KJV’s use of the term “sober” over other translations, possibly missing the “hiss” of that “s” on “sober.” I, as a Reformed theologian, was certainly amazed to discover that, according to Mrs. Riplinger, the “Five Points” of Calvinism form a Satanic pentagram (p. 231)! And everyone should surely take heed to Mrs. Riplinger’s use of “acrostic algebra” on page 149. Here, in a passage reminiscent of the identifications of Henry Kissinger as the anti-Christ two decades ago, Mrs. Riplinger demonstrates how the abbreviations for the *New American Standard Version* and the *New International Version* add up to the word “sin” when the *Authorized Version* is taken away. Not only is such argumentation utterly without merit, but it is interesting to note that throughout the rest of the book Mrs. Riplinger abbreviates the *New American Standard Bible* as NASB, but solely for the purpose of this trip into “acrostic algebra,” she changes to the NASV, an abbreviation used nowhere else in the book. Indeed, over and over and over again the arguments that are put forward could easily be turned around and used against the KJV and Mrs.

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Riplinger's position. The use of such argumentation should warn the reader that all is not well in *New Age Bible Versions*.

Double standards are rampant throughout the book. Shortly after attacking all modern versions for daring to use the term "one" in their translations, she fails to attack the KJV for using it in her own citation of it on page 93. When the modern versions do not follow the KJV in rendering the Greek term Artemido" as Diana, she accuses them of being ignorant of classical mythology on page 127; but when they recognize similar gods in Old Testament passages, she accuses them of rejecting the one true God in favor of false gods.

Gail Riplinger's Acrostic Algebra!

- Step 1: (NASV - NIV) - AV = X
- Step 2: (NASV - NIV) - AV = X
- Step 3: (ASI + NV) - AV = X
- Step 4: ASI + NV - AV = X
- Step 5: SIN = X

"Acrostic algebra reveals the ashy residue on which the NIV and NASV rest. When you shake down the 'Lite' (NASV) and the...(NIV), you find some heresies which are common to both (like their common letters 'N' and 'V', as shown in Step 2)"

And in what would probably be one of the most amusing examples of double standards, if it were not so sad, Gail Riplinger attacks all who are Reformed, or "Calvinists," in many places, as I shall discuss and refute later. But in the process she seems to be blissfully unaware of the simple fact that amongst the KJV translators you have the likes of Doctor John Rainolds, a Puritan! And surely Mrs. Riplinger must be aware of the theological beliefs of the Puritans! They were Reformed men, Calvinists, who strongly believed in God's sovereignty and the deadness of man in sin. If Edwin Palmer's Calvinistic beliefs make the NIV one of Satan's tricks, what about the KJV?

It seems that as long as someone had anything at all to do with the production of the NIV, it is fair game to not only impugn their character, but to misrepresent their words. For example, on page 89 of *New Age Bible Versions*, we read the following, "Even NIV translator Larry Walker applauds the rejection of the Hebrew Old Testament for the *Ugaritic* wherein the gods of pantheism preside." The reference given is to Walker's article, again in *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*, specifically pages 101-102. Yet, one will search in vain throughout the article for the slightest reference to a rejection of the Hebrew Old Testament in favor of anything else at all. The citation simply has nothing to do with the allegation that is made.

On page 165 we have another personal attack upon an NIV translator, Herbert Wolf, for his defense of the very logical, scholarly translation of the Hebrew "zedekah" in poetic contexts by the term "prosperity." Ignoring the very solid, reasonable defense given by Wolf, Riplinger chooses instead to play games with the man's name, writing, "Perhaps the armour and breastplate of 'righteousness does not fit' Mr. Wolf and his pack because

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they are puffed up and paunchy, because they have devoured souls (Ezekiel 22:25).” She goes on to say, “Paul said that those, like Wolf, who teach that ‘gain is godliness’ are ‘destitute of the truth.’ Equating financial prosperity with spirituality is a common characteristic of the ‘New’ Christianity and the New Age.” Of course, anyone can see that Wolf said nothing at all about equating prosperity and spirituality; this is mere fantasy on Riplinger’s part. Yet the book is filled from cover to cover with such misrepresentation and wild imagination.

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Mrs. Riplinger moves on to attack another NIV translator, Richard Longenecker. On page 345, after saying that the NIV “joins the cults,” she massacres a quote from Longenecker, again from the book, *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*. She introduces Longenecker’s quotation as follows: “To Longenecker (sic), Jesus was ‘chosen’ to receive the title ‘Son of God’ because he earned it through ‘obedience.’ He says, that Jesus, [then quoting] ...exemplified in his life an unparalleled obedience...[H]e has the greatest right to the title...God’s son *par excellence*.” A quick glance at page 125 of the original source reveals yet once again that Gail Riplinger has misrepresented yet another Christian scholar. Longenecker says nothing of the kind, and in fact gives a very solid, orthodox, Biblically based discussion of the Sonship of Jesus Christ. In light of this it is amazing to read again on page 345 that Riplinger says, “Both Longnecker (*sic*) and Carlson (*sic*) are expressing a view similar to that held by the early Adoptionists, Dynamic Monarchists or Ebionites.” Not only is this utterly untrue of what Longenecker said in the cited passage, but it is equally untrue of the other person she mentions, D. A. Carson. Neither are adoptionists.

Now, it is possible that all these misrepresentations are due to horrifically poor research on Gail Riplinger’s part. For example, she misspells the names of both Longenecker and Carson on page 345, even though ostensibly quoting from their books while accusing them of being cultists. On the previous page she misspells the term “Mormon” as well; indeed, every time it appears in the book it is spelled incorrectly. Possibly she simply read other people’s books and then got all her bad information from those secondary sources. Who knows? All I know is that the book is one long misrepresentation from the preface to the index.

Edwin Palmer wrote an article comparing the KJV and the NIV that appears in the book, *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*. On page 153 he addresses 1 Peter 2:9 which, in the KJV refers to a “peculiar people.” He wrote, “Today that means ‘odd people.’ It should be, ‘a people belonging to God.’ (NIV).” Edwin Palmer believed strongly that God’s people are a special people, a people chosen by God Himself and set apart by their holiness. Yet on page 170, Gail Riplinger, under the title “The Country Club or the Cross,” writes, “A lifestyle driven by verses not vogue, will brand one as ‘peculiar’

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(NERD, in the vernacular). Unwilling to bear 'his reproach,' the NIV's Edwin Palmer pushes the 'peculiar people' of Titus 2:14 and 1 Peter 2:9 into the closet—already crowded with the 'righteous' and 'the perfect.' Palmer writes, '...a peculiar people. Today that means odd. It should be...' She goes on to say, "It meant odd when Peter and Paul wrote it and when Moses wrote it 4000 years earlier." In reality, the term has nothing at all to do with "odd" or "peculiar" as we use it today. In point of fact, the Greek term found in 1 Peter 2:9 is also found in Ephesians 1:14, where the KJV translates it as "possession"! That Riplinger can say that a Christian minister was unwilling to bear the reproach of Christ for more accurately understanding the Greek term *peripoihsis* than she does is absolutely amazing.

It is Palmer himself, the editor of the *NIV Study Bible* until his death in 1980, who comes in for the most obvious personal attack on the part of Riplinger. I can see no other conclusions, having examined Riplinger's attacks upon Palmer, than either she is grossly dishonest in her methods or is completely ignorant of the writings of Edwin Palmer and what he actually believed. I can see no other possibilities. For example, on page 344 she attempts to parallel Palmer's quotation, "The Holy Spirit did not beget the Son" with a quotation from Brigham Young from the *Journal of Discourses*. Of course, Palmer, in the context in which he was speaking, was exactly right, since he was speaking of the internal operations of the Trinity. Young, on the other hand, was denying the Christian doctrine of the Virgin Birth. One might conjecture that Riplinger has never read either Palmer's statements, or those of Brigham Young, and hence did not know that she was mixing contexts so badly. In either case, her point is utterly false.

The same is to be said of her citation of Palmer's words with regards to the deity of Christ. On page 2 she quotes Palmer in the following form: "[F]ew clear and decisive texts say that Jesus is God." This is taken as sure evidence of Palmer's supposed heresy. Yet, is this accurate? No, yet once again context has been thrown out the window. Palmer is actually talking about the rendering of John 1:18 in the NIV. His words are, "John 1:18, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, is one of those few and clear and decisive texts that declare that Jesus is God. But, without fault of its own, the KJV, following inferior manuscripts, altered what the Holy Spirit said through John, calling Jesus 'Son.'" "My what a difference context makes! And Palmer is exactly right. There are less than ten places in all the New Testament that could possibly apply the term *Qeov*" to Jesus Christ; if that is not "few" then what is?

In passing, I wish to note that Riplinger even misleads her readers regarding the deity of Christ in an effort to maintain the accuracy of the KJV. I am referring to two important passages, Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1. The NIV translates Titus 2:13, "While we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ." and 2

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Peter 1:1 says, “To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours.” In both cases the KJV interrupts the proper translation, splitting up the terms “God” and “Savior,” resulting in the phraseology, “our God and our Savior, Jesus Christ,” as if two persons, God the Father, and Jesus Christ the Savior, are being referred to, when this is not the case. Now, on page 370, with reference to Titus 2:13, Riplinger says, “All Greek texts have the wording of the KJV, ‘God and our Savior Jesus Christ.’ None render it as the new versions do.” And on page 371 she wrote, “2 Thessalonians 1:12, Titus 2:13, and 2 Peter 1:1 are called *hendiadies*, from the Greek *hen dia dyoin*, ‘one by two.’ Grammatically it is the ‘expression of an idea by two nouns connected by *and*, instead of by a noun and an adjunct. It would be like introducing one’s spouse as ‘my wife and best friend.’” “In reality, the reason that the NIV and NASB (and I might add the NKJV) and others accurately translate these passages as “our God and Savior Jesus Christ” is due to what is known as Granville Sharp’s Rule. Without going into detail, the KJV translators were not aware of this grammatical feature of koine Greek, and hence did not translate these passages accurately. The Jehovah’s Witnesses mistranslate these passages purposefully, of course, for obvious reasons. Now, if I were looking for conspiracies, I’d have to identify Gail as a secret Jehovah’s Witness trying to infiltrate the Church. Of course, I know that is not the case and would never make such an argument, yet this is the kind of argument presented throughout her book.

On at least three different occasions our author attacks Palmer’s belief in the sovereignty of God in saving mankind. Twice she mis-cites his words, first on page 2, then again in the exact same form on page 231. Here is her quote from the very beginning of her book on page 2: “The NIV’s chief editor vaunts his version’s heresy saying: ‘This [his NIV] shows the great error that is so prevalent today in some orthodox Protestant circles, namely the error that regeneration depends upon faith...and that in order to be born again man must first accept Jesus as Savior.’” Now, I agree wholeheartedly with Dr. Palmer. Men must be made new creatures by the Holy Spirit of God before they can have true, saving faith. Romans 8:5-9 teaches this with glaring clarity in *any* translation. And it was, in fact, this belief in salvation by grace—free, unmerited grace—that spawned the Reformation itself. It is Gail Riplinger who here denies the Protestant heritage. But even in doing this she misrepresents Palmer yet once again! Riplinger says that Palmer is talking about the NIV. He is not! The NIV is nowhere mentioned on page 83 of the book being cited. Hence, her whole point is based upon the insertion of the little phrase “his NIV” where it does not belong! Anyone who would read Palmer’s work would shake their head in disbelief at the complete misuse of his words by Riplinger.

Gail’s Pelagianism comes out in yet another misrepresentation of Palmer on page 90. She writes, “His denial of free will is seen in his NIV. He says his change in 1 Thessalonians 1:4 ‘suggests the opposite’ of the KJV.” When you look up the reference, you read the

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following, “1 Thessalonians 1:4: ‘your election of God.’ In the days of the KJV this was a way of saying ‘your election by God.’ As it is today, the KJV suggests the opposite of what the Greek really says. NIV has ‘he has chosen you.’ “Notice that Palmer says nothing like what Riplinger says; and, Palmer happens to be 100% right, as anyone who has examined the passage well knows.

This topic was so important for Riplinger that she addressed it a third time on page 231. Here she says that the same quotation given above is so “scandalous and sacrilegious” that it will “stun and shock the reader.” One has to wonder what Gail would say about the following quotation from Martin Luther:

“If any man ascribe ought of his salvation, even the least part, to the free will of man, he knows nothing of grace, and has not learned Jesus Christ.”

But beyond this, it is obvious that Gail attacks Palmer’s theology, and by extension, the theology of the Protestant Reformation, on the basis of ignorance of its tenets. She asks, “If he denies faith and each individual’s responsibility to accept Jesus as his Savior, what does he offer in its place?” Possibly if Gail would read Dr. Palmer’s book she would discover what he was really saying? I’d be glad to send her a copy of Dr. Palmer’s works, or other books such as R.C. Sproul’s *Chosen by God* or J.I. Packer’s *Sovereignty and Evangelism*, or my own *God’s Sovereign Grace*, if she would like to discover what it is that was taught by the Reformers.

So ended the notes that I brought with me to the radio station. I was able to cover about 25% of the preceding material in the brief time allotted. The vast majority of the information regarding the gross misrepresentation found in Mrs. Riplinger’s book could not be covered on the program. Instead, I had a grand total of five minutes to make comments, and then the rest of the first program, approximately 20 minutes, was dedicated to give and take between Gail and myself. She did not attempt to respond to the documentation of errors on her part that made up my opening statements. I began by asking about the “acrostic algebra” that I mentioned above. I had never heard of “acrostic algebra,” so I asked Gail what it was, and why it was that while she consistently used the abbreviation NASB throughout the book, to make her “algebra” work she switched to the abbreviation NASV. Her response was tremendously revealing. She first indicated that “the Lord gave that to me one night.” Hence, “acrostic algebra” is a revelation given by God to Gail Riplinger. Obviously, then, the validity of such an argument cannot possibly be evaluated. When asked about the switch from the NASB to the NASV, we were told that “the Lord calls it the NASV.”

Mrs. Riplinger then went on to say that the new versions allow for sin because they do not use the term “fornication.” In the process she mentioned that Dr. Virginia Mollencott

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was on the NIV Translation Committee, and that she was a lesbian, and that her beliefs are found right in the NIV. I had never heard of such a charge, so the next morning I called the *International Bible Society* and inquired about this. I discovered that while Virginia Mollencott has indeed confessed to be a lesbian, Mrs. Riplinger again was busy taking things out of context. First, Mollencott was not a translator, but a stylist, and that for a massive five *months*. When she took stands contrary to Biblical standards, she was removed from the project.

Mrs. Riplinger then launched into her attack and misrepresentation of Dr. Edwin Palmer, quoting the passage about faith, and then the passage about the Holy Spirit not begetting the Son. When asked about the context of the statement about the Holy Spirit in Palmer's book, she could not provide an answer. She seemed very confused about the internal operations of the Trinity and could not refute the fact that she was mixing contexts by comparing Palmer's statement

with that of Brigham Young. Instead, she dodged the question and alleged that the NIV "takes out" the phrase "only begotten Son." I explained that she was in error regarding

Bold Misrepresentation Example #1

For some, as long as you are reviewing the words of "the enemy," you can twist, distort, and misrepresent all you jolly well want. And that's what Gail Riplinger does to men like Edwin Palmer.

On the KRDS radio program, Gail Riplinger repeated her charge that Edwin Palmer denied the role of the Holy Spirit in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. While I tried to correct her, I get the feeling that she will continue to tell people this falsehood. She claims to have read his book. Here's the passage she quotes. Note what Palmer is actually taking about:

There is among the three Persons of the Trinity a definite relationship and order. Because the three Persons are equally God, it must not be thought that they are all the same. Each one has distinctive properties and relationships to the others. Between the first and second Persons, for example, there is the relationship of Father and Son. From all eternity the Father begat the Son. The Holy Spirit did not beget the Son, only the Father did.

The context is very plain: he is speaking here of the eternal relationship of the Father and the Son, and in so doing presents the orthodox, historical, Biblical understanding of the relationship of the Father and the Son. Gail is utterly ignoring context to cite this passage in the way she does. What makes the whole situation worse is that if she has really read this book (I personally doubt that she has), she would have read the following from the same work, page 65:

I. The Incarnation

The Holy Spirit was needed at the very start of Jesus' human life, at his incarnation. By the word incarnation we mean that act by which the Second Person of the Trinity, remaining God, "became flesh and lived for a while among us" (John 1:14). This was an act effected by the Holy Spirit....The Holy Spirit is the cause of the conception of Jesus. He is the one, and not the Father nor the Son, let alone Joseph, who planted the seed of life in a mysterious way in Mary's womb.

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the meaning of monogenh and explained the actual meaning of the term. I then addressed her allegations regarding John 1:18, and at that point the 30 minute program ended.

The next day the program began with a brief discussion (3 minutes each) on the subject of Greek manuscripts. While I was explaining the format of modern critical texts, Mrs. Riplinger began to laugh and giggle, why, I can't imagine. Then the phone calls began. The first caller, Judy, launched into an attack upon me, scolding me for supposedly having attacked Mrs. Riplinger personally (something I had carefully avoided the evening before). She was an obvious "ringer," as she had clearly prepared her comments and had contacted Mrs. Riplinger and possibly others involved with the radio program. She was given a tremendous amount of time to "preach." This led to a discussion of Erasmus and his rejection of the *Comma Johanneum*, 1 John 5:7-8. At this point I asked Gail, "Does 1 John 5:7-8 appear in the Majority Text?" She absolutely refused to answer the question (the passage does **not** appear in the Majority Text).

The rest of the program was taken up with Gail's assertion that when the Bible speaks of God's Word it is actually speaking of the King James Version. She even went so far as to assert that when the Psalmist said, "Thy word have I hid in my heart," that he was talking about the KJV, because "you can't hide Greek in your heart." And all who would study Greek were likened to those Greeks "who seek after wisdom" as Paul said.

It is truly amazing how this kind of material can infiltrate churches. It just seems that Christians in this nation feel that there is some fundamental conflict between logical, rational thinking, and the Christian faith. There isn't. God is true, and His Word is true, and none of this is contradictory to faith. Faith and reason walk hand in hand...to a point. As Pascal said, "Reason's last step is the recognition that there are an infinite number of things which are beyond it. It is merely feeble if it does not go as far as to realize that."

I SAW IT ON TV, SO IT MUST BE TRUE....

In February of 1994 Gail Riplinger appeared on the *Action 60's* television broadcast, which originated in Florida. She made a number of comments that cry out for correction.

First, Mrs. Riplinger observed that her students who used Bibles other than the KJV had emotional and spiritual problems. Personally, I have met people who used the KJV who had emotional and spiritual problems. Does this reflect upon the translation? I think not. I believe it has much more to do with whether someone is actively reading whatever translation they are using and applying God's truth to their lives.

Mrs. Riplinger recounted her desire to show a young lady a verse from the Psalms about keeping her mind stayed on Christ. She is actually referring to Isaiah 26:3, which in the

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KJV reads, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” She indicates that the phrase “on thee” to use her words “had been taken out” of the NASB, and she is correct that the NASB does not translate the Hebrew in the exact same way as the KJV, for it reads, “The steadfast of mind Thou wilt keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in Thee.” However, both the NASB and KJV translations are perfectly acceptable. Nothing has been “taken out” at all. Mrs. Riplinger is not able to read either Greek or Hebrew, and hence could not verify the accuracy of the NASB translation.

She next claimed that the name “Lucifer” had been “removed” from Isaiah 14, and that the NIV was attempting to make Isaiah 14 refer to Jesus Christ. One can certainly see why people would be upset about something like this! The problem is that Mrs. Riplinger is seemingly not aware of the fact that the Hebrew term used here, הַיְלֵל, *does* mean “shining one” or “morning star.” The standard lexicon in the field, Brown Driver and Briggs, states,

אֵיךְ נִפְלְתָּ מִשָּׁמַיִם הַיְלֵל בֶּן־בֹּרַךְ **n.m. appell.** shining one, epith of king of Babylon, שָׁחַר Is 14:12 *how art thou fallen, shining one, son of dawn! i.e. star of the morning.*

Just because the NIV does not follow Jerome, who introduced the term “Lucifer” into the text at this point, does not mean that the NIV is attempting to identify Jesus with Lucifer. Indeed, most scholars believe this passage refers to the king of Babylon, and is used of the Lord in Luke to refer to Satan.

I next note that Mrs. Riplinger, in citing 1 John 2:22, demonstrated one of the inconsistencies of her position. She accurately cited the passage as saying, “Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ.” Yet, if you will look at her book, *New Age Bible Versions*, on page 318 she asserts that the use of the phrase “the Christ” is somehow related to New Age mysticism. If this is so, doesn’t 1 John 2:22 count as well? The fact is that the charts you will find on pages 318 through 319 demonstrate a translational error not in the NASB or NIV, but in the KJV, for in every instance but one listed by Mrs. Riplinger, the word “Christ” (Gr: *Cristov*) in these passages has the definite article, and hence is properly translated “the Christ.” The only exception is 2 Corinthians 13:3, and here many modern translations, such as the NIV and the RSV, do not say “the Christ” at all!

This kind of error is found throughout Mrs. Riplinger’s work. One may well ask, how can someone with the degrees and training listed on the back of Mrs. Riplinger’s book make errors such as this? The answer is to be found in the fact that Mrs. Riplinger is not a Biblical scholar. Her degrees, her teaching, and her writing, are all in one area: interior

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design. Mrs. Riplinger did indeed teach at Kent State, but she did so in the Home Economics department, teaching classes in interior design. This is why she can produce charts like those on pages 318-319: she is unable to verify her assertions by reference to the original sources, in this case, the Greek New Testament. Unfortunately, Mrs. Riplinger has never, to my knowledge, indicated to any host who was interviewing her that her degrees are not in any way relevant to the assertions she makes regarding the Biblical text. *This does not mean that Mrs. Riplinger's statements are to be dismissed simply because she is untrained in the field.* However, it does speak to why she can make the elementary errors that she does throughout her book.

Mrs. Riplinger went on to assert that the NIV is “missing” 64,000 words. Again, no words are “missing.” Mrs. Riplinger assumes the KJV to be the standard, and then accuses all other versions of “error” on the basis of her standard, the KJV. One could easily take the NIV as one’s standard and say “The KJV has 64,000 added words!” Would one wish to allege additions to the Word of God by the KJV on such a basis? Hardly! And yet this is the logic of Mrs. Riplinger’s statements.

Gail then says that the differences between the modern texts and the KJV are very relevant to doctrine. This is simply not the case. I believe any person knowledgeable in the area, and even semi-unbiased, will agree with the following statement: A person properly exegeting the *Textus Receptus* or the *Majority Text* or the *Nestle-Aland 26th Edition* will derive the exact same doctrinal beliefs from any of these texts. There is simply no “conspiracy” on the part of such translations as the NIV or NASB to “hide” the deity of Christ or any other important doctrine of the faith.

Mrs. Riplinger cites Galatians 4:7 as an example of a doctrinally relevant “change.” The KJV reads, “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” The NIV reads, “So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.” The phrase “through Christ” is not found in many of the most ancient witnesses to the text. The proper question then is, “What did Paul write?” Mrs. Riplinger seemingly wishes people to think, given her comments about a Hindu, that the “new versions” deny the centrality of Christ in the role of salvation. Such is obviously untrue. Note Romans 5:1, 11, in the NIV: “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God *through our Lord Jesus Christ*....Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God *through our Lord Jesus Christ*, through whom we have now received reconciliation.” If the NIV wishes to hide the role of Christ, why include these passages? The answer is simple: there is no hidden agenda in the NIV to make it possible for people to be right with God outside of Jesus Christ. The issue is completely textual: the evidence suggests that Paul did not originally write “through Christ” at Galatians 4:7, and hence the modern Greek texts place this reading in the

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textual apparatus at the bottom of the page (one would think if they were trying to “hide” something they would not tell you about the variant reading at all).

This kind of argument, based as it is upon differing texts underlying the English translations, can be used against the KJV just as easily. Note 1 John 3:1 in the NASB:

See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; **and such we are**. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

But compare the KJV:

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

The phrase “and such we are” is missing from the KJV, though its textual basis in the Greek manuscripts is overwhelming. If I were to argue as Mrs. Riplinger, I could say, “See, the KJV is trying to deny that we are in reality the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. This is a New Age conspiracy to prepare us for the Anti-Christ.” But such would be silly, of course. In

point of fact, the reason for the difference has nothing to do with conspiracies. It has to do with copying Greek by hand, and the errors we make when we do this. Quite simply,

Bold Misrepresentation

Example #2

In attempting to turn Edwin Palmer into a heretic, Mrs. Riplinger attempts to bring his belief in the deity of Christ into question. Here are her words:

Under the century old spell of the Westcott and Hort Greek Text, NIV editor Edwin Palmer comes to his chilling theological conclusion:

[There are] few clear and decisive texts that declare Jesus is God.

Palmer should qualify his statement noting, “*In the new versions*, there are few clear and decisive texts that declare Jesus is God.” (p. 305)

Mrs. Riplinger should qualify her statement in light of what Dr. Palmer actually said:

“John 1:18, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, is one of those few and clear and decisive texts that declare that Jesus is God. But, without fault of its own, the KJV, following inferior manuscripts, altered what the Holy Spirit said through John, calling Jesus ‘Son.’ “ (*The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*, p. 143).

Gail claims to have read Palmer’s books. If she has, then she must know Palmer’s strong defense of the deity of Christ. Why then attempt to make her readers think evil of Palmer? It’s easy: guilt by association. If she can make those involved with the “modern versions” look bad, she has won half the battle. This is what motivates her attack upon Westcott and Hort as well. Since the majority of her readers will never take the time to actually read the references she gives, they will be left with an untrue impression of the men who are behind the modern versions which, of course, she is attempting to prove are Satanically inspired and designed to lead everyone into Lucifer worship.

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the phrase was dropped from the manuscripts of the Byzantine textual tradition because of something known as “homoiteuton,” i.e., “similar endings.” You don’t even need to be able to read Greek to see how it happened. I reproduce here the Greek text of the passage:

ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην δέδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ πατὴρ ἵνα τέκνα θεοῦ κληθῶμεν, καὶ ἐσμέν. διὰ τοῦτο ὁ κόσμος οὐ γινώσκει ἡμᾶς ὅτι οὐκ ἔγνω αὐτόν.

16

The phrase that is missing in the KJV comes from the last two words above, kaiV ejsmevni, which is translated, “and we are.” Now you will note that the word that immediately precedes this in the Greek ends with the same three letters as the missing phrase, men. As we so often do, a scribe long ago, upon writing the word translated “we might be called,” the Greek term klhqw'men, when looking back at the original, skipped to the next occurrence of the last three letters he had just written, and in the process dropped the phrase kaiV ejsmevni. No great conspiracies, just human error. Just as it would be wrong to charge the KJV translators with heresy for their translation of this passage, so Mrs. Riplinger is in error in her comments about Galatians 4:7.

Next Mrs. Riplinger accuses the NIV of “taking out” 13 words from 1 John 4:3, going so far as to say that the NIV translators are “denying that Jesus is the Christ.” The KJV reads,

And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that [spirit] of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

The NIV reads,

but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

One can readily see that the only thing “missing” is the phrase “Christ has come in the flesh,” and again, this is because the phrase is disputed and is placed in the textual apparatus of the Greek text utilized by the NIV translators. While a good case can be made for the insertion of the phrase (I personally would favor retaining it), the reasoning for not including it is plain: the phrase appears immediately before verse 3 in verse 2. Hence in the process of copying the text a scribe could have easily repeated the phrase, coming as it did right after the name of Jesus. However one views this, the point is that the NIV immediately before 1 John 4:3 contained the very words Mrs. Riplinger thinks they are trying to hide! Note the NIV’s translation of 1 John 4:2:

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This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that *Jesus Christ has come in the flesh* is from God,

If the NIV were trying to “hide” something, why not delete this reference, too? The answer again is plain: no one is trying to hide anything. No conspiracies, though one is forced to ask why Mrs. Riplinger fails to bring this vital point to the attention of the audience! Surely Mrs. Riplinger owes the NIV translators a great apology for this kind of wild accusation.

Pelagius Lives Again

There seems to be a strong element of anti-Reformed or anti-Calvinistic feeling among adherents to the KJV Only position, and Mrs. Riplinger is no exception to the rule. Her book is sprinkled with attacks aimed at those who are Reformed, though it is painfully obvious that her knowledge of the Reformed position is very, very shallow. We have noted that she identifies the “Five Points of Calvinism” as a “Satanic pentagram” (p. 231), and in the midst of using purposefully insulting and misleading language (“Palmer and his cronies,” “He admits his purposeful switch saying...”, “Palmer’s elite ‘Elect’ and damned ‘depraved’ classes”) she provides us with the following paragraph:

Palmer’s chapter on the ‘Elect’ elite is reflected in his translation of 1 Thessalonians 1:4, “he has chosen you.” He admits his change “suggests the opposite of” the KJV’s “your election of God.” In his system, God elects a few ‘winners’. In Christianity, God calls all sinners, but few elect to respond. Palmer denies that man should respond, and like psychologist B.F. Skinner, author of *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, Palmer believes, “Man is entirely passive.” He points to his alteration of John 1:13 asserting that it ‘proves’ man has no free will.

- 1) Anyone even slightly familiar with Reformed beliefs knows that the use of the term “elite” is utterly ridiculous.
- 2) The translation of the Greek at 1 Thessalonians 1:4, ὑπὸ θεοῦ, τὴν ἐκλογὴν ὑμῶν, as “he has chosen you,” while dynamic, is certainly acceptable and completely accurate, both contextually as well as in the entire spectrum of Paul’s theology.
- 3) What Palmer actually said is that the KJV’s rendering suggests the opposite of what the Greek indicates, and he is correct yet once again.
- 4) In “his system,” which is called historic Reformed belief, the same beliefs that ushered in the Reformation, God elects sinners unto Himself in mercy, not “a few winners.”
- 5) The connection of Palmer’s statement that man is passive (because man is dead in sin: Ephesians 2:1-4) with B.F. Skinner is simply absurd.
- 6) Palmer nowhere says he “altered” John 1:13, because, of course, he didn’t.

Mrs. Riplinger then said that in the new versions the “Father” is there but the Lord Jesus Christ is “gone.” Anyone with a “new version” in their hands can see that this is utterly false. Mrs. Riplinger gives a couple of examples to substantiate her point, but seemingly forgets the many, many places where both the Father and the Son are clearly presented

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in *any* translation. Her first example was Ephesians 3:14, which in the KJV reads, “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” But the NIV and NASB say, “For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father.” Mrs. Riplinger takes this as some indication of heresy on the part of the modern versions, but, again, it goes to the text used in these translations. The phrase “of our Lord Jesus Christ” is not found in P⁴⁶ (one of the earliest papyri copies of the Pauline letters), a* A B C P 0150 6 33 81 365 1175 1573 1739 1962 2127, some lectionaries, 596, manuscripts of the Vulgate, four early translations into other languages, and by ten of the early Fathers who cite this passage. That is a very impressive listing of evidence against the originality of the phrase. But this passage gives us an excellent opportunity of examining Mrs. Riplinger’s arguments for consistency. She wishes us to believe that the “modern versions” are purposefully attempting to make this acceptable to a Hindu or a Muslim. It should follow, then, that we should not be able to find the phrase “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” in the modern versions, correct? And yet, just a quick glance at the very book from which she draws her example, Ephesians, tells us a different story. Here I quote from the NASB:

Blessed be the God and *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3)

And what of Paul’s second epistle to the Corinthians?

Blessed be the *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort (2 Corinthians 1:3)

The *God and Father of the Lord Jesus*, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying (2 Corinthians 11:31)

We again see that Mrs. Riplinger’s conspiracy theories fall apart under the most basic examination. There is no denial of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ, nor the uniqueness of the Christian gospel, by the modern versions Mrs. Riplinger attacks. And given her claim to have spent six years exhaustively collating these versions, what excuse can she offer for not taking note of these passages that utterly destroy her arguments?

At this point Mrs. Riplinger engaged the topic of the deity of Christ. It is just here that I have trouble with the KJV Only people in a way unlike any other, for I am actively involved in witnessing to those who deny the deity of Christ on a regular basis. It is a simple fact, known to any person who is active in evangelizing Jehovah’s Witnesses, for example, that the NIV is the single strongest translation with reference to the classical passages that demonstrate the deity of Christ. I would include in the list of these passages the following: John 1:1, 1:18, 8:58, 10:30, and 20:28; Acts 20:28, Romans 9:5, Philippians 2:5-11, Colossians 1:16-17, 2:9, Titus 2:13, and 2 Peter 1:1. It should hardly go without

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saying that if there is a bias against the deity of Christ, these passages should show it. In some modern translations we do find problems here (such as the NRSV). *But Mrs. Riplinger has two main targets in her campaign, the NIV and the NASB, and both outperform the KJV in these passages!* Note especially the inferior translations of the KJV at Romans 9:5, Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1:

Romans 9:5:

Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. (KJV)

Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen. (NIV)

Titus 2:13:

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (KJV)

while we wait for the blessed hope— the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, (NIV)

2 Peter 1:1:

Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: (KJV)

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: (NIV)

You will note how very clear the translation of Romans 9:5 is in the NIV over against the rather ambiguous translation of the KJV; and in both Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1, the KJV mistranslates what is known as a “Granville Sharp Construction.” The KJV translators can hardly be blamed for this, since the construction was not identified until the late eighteenth century. If I were into conspiracies, as Mrs. Riplinger is, I might be tempted to make much of these passages, but such is neither logical nor right.

As those who watched the program will recall, Gail never mentioned these passages. She never brings up any facts that would be contrary to her position. Instead, she focused upon the textual variant at 1 Timothy 3:16, where the KJV reads,

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And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

The NIV reads,

Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

We have already seen that the charge that the NIV or NASB are hiding the deity of Christ is absurd. Why, then, do they not have “God” here? Again, it is due to the many ancient witnesses read “He who” rather than “God.” How could the two terms get mixed up? Rather easily, since in the uncial (all capitals) texts of the New Testament, this passage would have looked like this:

THSEUSEBEIASMUSTHRIONOSEFANERWQHENSARKI

.... when it was reading “He who” and this when it was reading “God”:

THSEUSEBEIASMUSTHRIONQSEFANERWQHENSARKI

The only difference is between OS and QS. One can easily see where the problem arose. Now, personally, I prefer the reading “God,” and can argue for it on textual grounds. But the point is that there again is no “conspiracy,” no attempt to do away with the deity of Christ. Indeed, the NIV indicates the reading “God” in its textual footnotes. Why do this if you are trying to hide something?

Gail continued her attack upon the modern translations by citing Ephesians 3:9, which in the KJV contains the phrase “by Jesus Christ.” The modern translations do not have this phrase, again due to the fact that the phrase is missing from nearly every early witness we have, including P⁴⁶ a A B C D* G P 33 81 365 1175 1739 2464 2495 and most early translations. Again, we must ask Mrs. Riplinger: Are not additions just as important as deletions? Are we to allow indiscriminate additions to the Word? And does she really believe that the modern translations deny that all things were created by Christ Jesus? If she does, she needs to read John 1:3 and Colossians 1:16-17 in the NIV or NASB.

On the same program Mrs. Riplinger asserted that “99 44/100” of all Greek manuscripts agree with one another. Surely she must be aware that this is not a word-for-word agreement. No two handwritten manuscripts of the New Testament agree with each other 100% of the time. Due to the fact that handwriting introduces common errors into the text, we will find spelling errors or missing words due to simple copyist error

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in *every* manuscript. A more accurate statement would be that the majority of Greek manuscripts come from what is called the Byzantine manuscript tradition, and that this tradition differs in some respects from other manuscript traditions represented by smaller numbers of manuscripts, such as the Western or the Alexandrian. These issues lead us into the discussion of textual criticism. The reader will find a large number of works, representing an entire spectrum of viewpoints, available in the library or bookstore. We would recommend the following works for the person who wishes to read a number of different perspectives:

- *The Text of the New Testament* by Bruce Metzger (Oxford, 1968)
- *The Text of the New Testament* by Kurt and Barbara Aland (Eerdmans, 1987).

These two works, aside from proving that textual critics are lousy at thinking up original titles for their works, would represent the “main stream” perspective on textual criticism today. Their viewpoint would be specifically rejected by KJV Only advocates. However, anyone wishing to *truly* understand the thinking behind the textual choices of such modern versions as the NASB or NIV *must* deal with these works. However, both are rather technical. Thankfully, there is a simplified text that presents the same perspective:

- *Scribes, Scrolls, & Scripture* by J. Harold Greenlee (Eerdmans, 1985)

Greenlee’s work is best for those who wish a shorter, less complex introduction to the practice of textual criticism.

- *The Identity of the New Testament Text* by Wilbur Pickering (Thomas Nelson, 1980).

This work is cited often and favorably by Mrs. Riplinger in her book, though I find some inconsistency in this, as Pickering would not defend the *Textus Receptus* as inspired. Be that as it may, this book attempts to provide a completely different alternative to the textual methodology that lies behind the modern Greek texts such as the Nestle-Aland 26th or the UBS 4th. Most scholars have rejected Pickering’s theories, mainly because of the fact that he utilizes a tremendous amount of statistical mathematics. Why is this a problem? Basically, human beings living in a difficult world copying manuscripts under difficult circumstances tend to defy the precise categories of complex statistical analysis. Furthermore, history plays a large role in the transmission of the New Testament text, and Pickering’s theories cannot give the proper place to the realities of the historical situation.

- *The Byzantine Text-Type & New Testament Textual Criticism* by Harry Sturz (Thomas Nelson, 1984).

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The late Dr. Sturz provided an important book, in my opinion, that has been, by and large, ignored by most. He walks a mediating line between the extreme seen in those who utterly ignore the manuscripts of the Byzantine family, and those who present a defense of the “Majority Text” who end up minimizing the importance of the other families, simply due to their smaller numbers. Sturz argues that the Byzantine text type needs to be given equal weight with the other families.

Finally, I wish to address very briefly Mrs. Riplinger’s confident statements about Westcott and Hort. A few points. 1) Modern Greek texts are not mere copies of the Westcott and Hort text of 1881. Modern scholars have recognized various errors in the work of Westcott and Hort, and have modified their views accordingly. 2) Mrs. Riplinger never once mentions the fact that many of her confident statements about Westcott and Hort being “spiritualists” are based upon pure speculation on her part. Note reference 128 on pages 676-677. Here Mrs. Riplinger admits that in point of fact, she is not referring in her statements to B.F. Westcott, the textual critic, but to W.W. Westcott, a London mortician! She asserts that B.F. Westcott was in fact W.W. Westcott, and that based upon the statement of B.F. Westcott’s son that his father wrote his “B’s” like “W’s”! Note the final statement she made: “The connection between B.F. Westcott and the activities attributed to the possible allonym W.W. Westcott are speculation on my part.” Did Mrs. Riplinger ever note this on *Action 60’s*? Did she ever say “Now, what I’m saying about Westcott and Hort is in fact merely speculation on my part”? No, she made her assertions directly and without qualification. What is more amazing is the fact that the very sources Mrs. Riplinger cites indicate that B.F. Westcott was born in January of 1825; W.W. Westcott was born in December of 1848. B.F. Westcott died in July of 1901; W.W. Westcott died in June of 1925. Indeed, the book Mrs. Riplinger cites most often about B.F. Westcott, *The Life of Westcott*, was published 22 years before W.W. Westcott died! Furthermore, W.W. Westcott published his work, *Sepher Yetzirah, the Book of Formation* in 1911, a full decade after B.F. Westcott was dead! How she can maintain that B.F. Westcott is actually W.W. Westcott, I have no idea.

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Beware the Sleight of Hand!

KJV Only advocates love to fill books with charts of how things have been “removed” from the Bible, all the time alleging that some terrible sinister plot it afoot to hide this doctrine or that. Mrs. Riplinger gives us a great example of this on page 109 of NABV:

The title ‘the Virgin’ has been applied to the goddesses of the Canaanites (Astarte and Ashtoreth), the Babylonians (Rhea or Semiramis), the Egyptians (Isis), the Hindus (Isi, Kanyabava, Trigana), the Romans (mother of Romulus and Remus), and the Greco-Roman goddesses Ceres, Hestis, Vesta, Diana, Artemis, Demeter, and Cybele. For this reason, new versions omit Luke 1:28, a phrase which speaks of Mary’s unique position.

We are then given the following chart:

NIV, NASB, et al	KJV
OMIT	Luke 1:28 blessed art thou among women

Note that Mrs. Riplinger claims that the reason the phrase “blessed art thou among women” is specifically because the new versions are trying to push pagan goddesses upon the Christian Church. Is this the case? Only if the new version editors are really witless! Look at [Luke 1:42](#) as found in the NIV:

In a loud voice she exclaimed: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!”

How did THAT get there? Here in all manuscripts, and all modern versions, we find the very phrase in question, “Blessed are you among women.” If the modern versions were trying to degrade Mary’s unique position, why not delete this reference, too? Because there is no such conspiracy, and because decisions about the text are based upon the evidence provided by the manuscripts, not upon conspiracies. Why would the phrase be inserted at a later date at Luke 1:28? Because of its presence at Luke 1:42. In both situations Mary is being greeted, first by the angel and then by Elizabeth. It seemed natural to a scribe long ago to have the words of Elizabeth come from the mouth of the angel as well.

This kind of misrepresentation of the Biblical text is common place in KJV Only writings. Beware the sleight of hand!

Furthermore, Mrs. Riplinger likes to utilize “equivocation” in her arguments; that is, she likes to take one term and use it in a way that suites her position, even if that usage is utterly out of context. For example, she cites Arthur Westcott, B.F. Westcott’s son, as indicating that his father was a “Spiritualist.” Mrs. Riplinger quickly defines “spiritualist” as one who has contact with the dead, that is, a necromancer, and on this basis

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pronounces B.F. Westcott's activities to be an abomination before God. And yet, the honest person must ask, "Did Arthur Westcott actually say that his father was a necromancer?" And the answer, of course, is "no." Here is what Arthur Westcott actually said:

In spite of what he called his "Puritanic temperament," Westcott always delighted in congenial society. He was essentially affectionate and enthusiastic in any cause which invited co-operation and served some useful purpose. He devoted himself with ardour, during his last year at Cambridge, to two new societies. One of these was the "Ghostlie Guild," and the other the "Choral Society." The "Ghostlie Guild," which numbered among its members A. Barry, E.W. Benson, H. Bradshaw, the Hon. A. Gordon, F.J.A. Hort, H. Luard, and C.B. Scott, was established for the investigation of all supernatural appearances and effects. Westcott took a leading part in their proceedings, and their inquiry circular was originally drawn up by him. He also received a number of communications in response. Outsiders, failing to appreciate the fact that these investigations were in earnest and only seeking the truth, called them the "Cock and Bull Club."

Arthur Westcott then provides the concluding section of the "Ghostlie Circular" written up by his father, which explains that the society is interested in determining whether supernatural events are indeed taking place or not. The document concludes,

The first object, then, will be the accumulation of an available body of facts: the use to be made of them must be a subject for future consideration; but, in any case, the mere collection of trustworthy information will be of value. And it is manifest that great help in the inquiry may be derived from accounts of circumstances which have been at any time considered "supernatural," and afterwards proved to be due to delusions of the mind or senses, or to natural causes (such, for instance, as the operation of those strange and subtle forces which have been discovered and imperfectly investigated in recent times); and, in fact, generally, from any particulars which may throw light indirectly, by analogy or otherwise, on the subjects with which the present investigation is more expressly concerned.

If the preceding does not strike one as the words of a full-blown "spiritualist" seeking to get others interested in contacting the dead, you should hardly be surprised. Obviously, Westcott's interest was that of a Cambridge scholar, and one might well criticize him more for being a naturalist than for being a New Ager.

The above paragraph is followed by the comment made by Arthur Westcott that is cited by Gail Riplinger. Here are his words:

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What happened to this Guild in the end I have not discovered. My father ceased to interest himself in these matters, not altogether, I believe, from want of faith in what, for lack of a better name, one must call Spiritualism, but because he was seriously convinced that such investigations led to no good (*Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott*, Abridged Edition (London: 1905) p. 76).

It's hard to understand how someone can take this and say that Arthur Westcott called his father a "spiritualist," let alone how one can then jump from this use of the term "Spiritualism" to "necromancy," but this is indeed what Gail Riplinger has done. She asserts that the New Agers themselves trace the channeling movement back to Westcott and Hort. While one might well question the integrity of quoting New Agers for historical facts, I find it fascinating that a quick trip to the library lends no support for Gail's theories. For example, *The Encyclopedia of Parapsychology and Psychical Research* by Arthur and Joyce Berger (Paragon House: New York) contains no references to either B.F. Westcott or F.J.A. Hort, though it has extensive information on topics relating to the occult, channeling, etc. How could they have missed the "fathers" of the channeling movement? *The Encyclopedia of the Unexplained* (edited by Richard Cavendish, McGraw-Hill) manages to discuss the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (a topic Riplinger mentions a number of times in *NABV*) with no mention of B.F. Westcott or F.J.A. Hort, either, though it speaks often of W.W. Westcott, the London mortician that Gail attempts to turn into B.F. Westcott. Again the "fathers" of the modern channeling movement are left out of this entire work. How can this be? Possibly the same strange reason explains why *Harper's Encyclopedia of Mystical & Paranormal Experience* manages to miss Westcott and Hort as well? Indeed, the *Encyclopedia of Occultism & Parapsychology*, in two volumes, described as "A Compendium of Information on the Occult Sciences, Magic, Demonology, Superstitions, Spiritism, Mysticism, Metaphysics, Psychical Science, and Parapsychology," while giving full information on the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (volume 1, pages 677 through 678) and on W.W. Westcott (volume 2, page 1803) somehow manages to avoid mentioning the "fathers" of the channeling movement, Westcott and Hort! Hopefully the reader will forgive the slight amount of sarcasm, but the wild claims of Mrs. Riplinger make it difficult to resist responding in such a manner.

Gail Riplinger appeared with Dr. Joe Chambers on June 4, 1994 on a radio program in Charlotte, North Carolina. Again Mrs. Riplinger allowed the interviewer to make reference to her academic credentials without once mentioning the fact that her field of study is not at all related to the Bible, history, or any type of linguistic or textual study. Again Mrs. Riplinger brought up Virginia Mollencott, but then, when a caller brought up the charge of homosexuality that history places against King James I of England, she was vociferous in her defense of King James. The interviewer rightly pointed out that James

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had nothing to do with the translation itself: of course, Virginia Mollencott's unannounced lesbianism had no impact upon the NIV, either, though Mrs. Riplinger would inconsistently deny this.

A caller challenged Mrs. Riplinger's statement that all the modern translations deny the deity of Christ at Philippians 2:5-11, the famous *Carmen Christi*. It was truly amazing to listen to both the host and Mrs. Riplinger attempt, in vain, to argue that the KJV's translation affirms the deity of Christ while the NIV and NKJV deny it. Note the passages for yourself:

Phil 2:5-6 (NKJV) Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

Phil 2:5-6 (NIV) Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,

It was painfully clear that neither Mrs. Riplinger, nor the interviewer, were familiar with the many discussions of this passage. Having utilized this text in sharing Christ with many Jehovah's Witnesses, I am quite familiar with the superiority of the rendering of the NIV at this point. The ambiguous translation of the KJV is a stumbling block in sharing with the JW's; the NIV is crystal clear. Mrs. Riplinger completely misunderstood both the underlying Greek text as well as the NIV translation. It was truly a shame, for anyone believing Mrs. Riplinger is thereby deprived of one of the clearest, best translations of the passage, and is in fact led astray as to the true meaning of the apostle at this point. This is not the only place where, in the mad drive to make the KJV "inspired," Mrs. Riplinger and her fellow agitators actually end up undermining the very belief she is attempting to uphold. Another clear example of this is seen in Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1 (already mentioned)

A number of people who have attempted to get Mrs. Riplinger to "debate" them have reported that she is declining these offers. However, she did a program with Al Kresta on WMUZ early in 1994, and Mr. Kresta did a fine job in asking her direct questions (every single one of which she managed to avoid answering). When my name was mentioned, Mrs. Riplinger rather angrily informed the audience that I am "rude and crude" and that I am a "heretic."

NABV does not seem to be going away too quickly, despite its being denounced by many. Even those who originally showed some support for the book have backed away from it, with the notable exceptions of such scholarly sources as Texe Marrs and Jack Chick. Dave

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Hunt, himself an advocate of the KJV, has written a strong review of the book in his newsletter, *The Berean Call* (May, 1994). In the article we find such statements as,

If New Age Bible Versions (NABV) had both accomplished its goal and fulfilled it in the way the author stated, NABV would be of great value to the church. The book, however, not only misses the author's professed marks, it seriously undermines her credibility and brings her integrity into question.

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We've received a half dozen evaluations of NABV from individuals whose research we respect. Their work, much of it checked against the difficult-to-obtain sources quoted by Riplinger, has complemented our own scrutiny of Riplinger's book.

Those who have a preference for the KJV, as we do, will find no encouragement in Riplinger's endeavor. Her writing is driven by a misleading style and loaded with contrived "evidence." She starts off misrepresenting people and continues to do so throughout the book.

That is, of course, exactly what I said in my opening remarks on the KRDS radio program in November of 1993. Anyone taking even the slightest time to review this book is forced to the same conclusion. Hunt echoes my own sentiments when he writes,

Time and space will not allow for more than a sampling of the hundreds of mistakes in Riplinger's 690-page book. Most of the errors can be chalked up to incompetence, but there are far too many that seem to be designed to convince the reader of the author's viewpoint regardless of how lacking the proof might be, or of even how much evidence exists to the contrary.

And yet Mrs. Riplinger's book continues to sell. One of our volunteers sent us a copy of an advertisement that appeared in *Practical Homeschooling* (Vol. 2, No. 1). One part of the add reads,

*The result of former university professor G. A. Riplinger's six-year collation of new Bible versions and their underlying Greek editions.

We have noted that Mrs. Riplinger does not seem to want people to know she is a woman (we have yet to see her identify herself in advertising situations as Gail Riplinger: it is always "G.A. Riplinger.") But beyond this, there is the continued attempt to foster the *appearance* of scholarship on her part. She is very careful not to say anything that is absolutely untrue about her credentials. She is indeed a former university professor. However, as I noted above, her expertise is in interior design, not history or Biblical studies. She is unable to read Hebrew or Greek, and hence the claim that she has "collated" the "Greek editions" is almost laughable.

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With reference to her use of “G.A. Riplinger,” the January/February 1994 *The End Times and Victorious Living* newsletter contains an article by Gail about why she wrote NABV. Keeping in mind her claim that God “gave” her “acrostic algebra,” note her own words:

Daily during the six years needed for this investigation, the Lord miraculously brought the needed materials and resources—much like the ravens fed Elijah. Each discovery was not the result of effort on my part, but of the directed hand of God—so much so that I hesitated to even put my name on the book. Consequently, I used G.A. Riplinger, which signifies to me, God and Riplinger—God as author and Riplinger as secretary.

The significance of this statement should not be overlooked. When I first began studying NABV, I was continually faced with making a decision about Mrs. Riplinger. In the light of the fact that she misrepresents the facts literally hundreds of times, utilizing grossly dishonest methods of research and citation, what am I to think of her? Is she purposefully dishonest, or merely so tremendously deceived that she is willing to lay aside honesty so as to obtain a “higher” goal (the ends justifying the means)? I came to the conclusion early on that most probably Mrs. Riplinger is so convinced of the “conspiracy” theories she presents that this drives her to the lengths of dishonest reporting that we have documented in this response. The preceding quotation only verifies this conclusion. Mrs. Riplinger, seemingly, cannot accept correction, since God, in her opinion, is the author of her book, and she is merely the secretary. This makes the book revelatory in nature, and hence uncorrectable. Things like acrostic algebra may be silly, but when you think God gave it to you, you don’t see it in the same way as others who would critically examine your statements.

— SIDEBAR —

On page 22 of NABV, Mrs. Riplinger attempts to contrast the KJV with “New Version/New Christianity.” In this chart she alleges that while the KJV calls believers to “take up the cross” the new versions “OMIT” this call. When I posted this material on a national computer echo dedicated to the discussion of the KJV Only controversy, a defender of Mrs. Riplinger’s attempted to support her statement. This led to my writing the following information:

KJV	NIV
Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have	Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.

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treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

Many believers are troubled by charts such as the one above. At first glance, it would appear that the NIV is somehow “deleting” or “removing” the phrase “take up the cross” from Mark 10:21. But is this the case? Is there reason for not including the phrase in Mark 10:21? And is there some bias *against* the call to take up the cross in the modern translations, as some KJV Only advocates would have us to believe?

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We begin by pointing out that the NIV and other modern translations do not include this phrase because the Greek texts they utilized in their work do not contain the words “take up the cross.” The text utilized by the NIV translation committee was the Nestle-Aland text. It is the judgment of the scholars who compiled this text that the phrase was not a part of the original Gospel of Mark. We will discuss their reasoning below.

Next, it is important to note that the phrase “take up the cross” appears four times in the King James Version of the Bible: Matthew 16:24, Luke 9:23, Mark 8:34 and the disputed passage at Mark 10:21. The first three all recount the same incident in the teaching ministry of the Lord Jesus. If there is indeed some “conspiracy” on the part of the modern translations to get rid of the call to take up the cross, surely they will delete this phrase in these passages as well, will they not? And yet the modern translations have all three occurrences in their translations. Note, as an example, Mark 8:34 in the NIV (emphasis added):

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and **take up his cross** and follow me.”

It is difficult to see how a charge of “conspiracy” can be made against the modern translations, unless one believes that theology is based upon how often the Bible repeats a command. That is, if the Bible says “take up the cross” only three times, rather than four, this somehow makes the command less important or binding than if it were said four or five times. But surely we all can see that this kind of thinking is muddled. God’s truth is not decided by counting how many times He says the same thing. When God says “Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me” ([Isaiah 43:10](#), NIV), we do not ask that He repeat Himself three or four more times before we will accept the great truth of monotheism, that there is but one true God. In the same way, Scripture records Jesus’ call to take up the cross in three places, and this is sufficient.

Why, then, does the KJV contain the phrase at Mark 10:21? Again, we note that it is because the Greek text used by the KJV translators, later called the Textus Receptus, contains the phrase in the Greek. In point of fact, the majority of Greek texts contain the phrase. So why omit it? Here are the reasons.

First, and foremost, the oldest manuscripts of the New Testament do not contain the phrase. This includes not only the two manuscripts, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, that are so often vilified by KJV Only advocates, but many others. Not only this, but entire translations into other languages lack the phrase.

When Biblical scholars encounter a situation like this, they look for a reason as to why a phrase like this would be inserted into the text. Most often, insertions are made due to the presence of the phrase in a similar context elsewhere in Scripture, which causes a scribe to place the material in the copy he is writing due to familiarity with the other passage. For example, in Ephesians 1:2 in the NIV we read,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

This phrase found a place early on in the regular vocabulary of Christians. It was used in the worship of the Church, and everyone was familiar with it. That familiarity led to a problem with Paul’s greeting in his letter to the Colossians. Here is how the KJV reads at Colossians 1:2:

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To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yet the NIV reads,

To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

The final phrase “and the Lord Jesus Christ” is not found in many of the early manuscripts, but it is found in others. Why not include it? Because we recognize that this passage has been influenced by Ephesians 1:2. We find no reason why the phrase would be deleted, but familiarity with the phraseology of Ephesians 1:2 gives us a good reason why the phrase would be included here. It is not a matter of trying to slight the Lord Jesus Christ, but one of again asking that question, “What did the Apostle originally write?”

The same is true in Mark 10:21. Remember how Mark records the one time the Lord Jesus spoke of taking up the cross in chapter 8, verse 34:

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and **take up his cross** and follow me.”

Notice that Jesus says that those who would come after Him must deny themselves and “follow me.” When we come to Mark 10:21, we again find that phrase “follow me.” Seemingly an early scribe, familiar with the phraseology of Mark 8:34 and its use of “follow me,” upon encountering the same thing in Mark 10:21, either mistakenly or even on purpose, inserted the phrase “take up the cross.”

But this is not the only fact that points to the correctness of not including “take up the cross” at Mark 10:21. There is another good reason. Mark 10:21 is part of a story that is found in both Matthew and Luke as well, specifically, in Matthew 19:21 and Luke 18:22. Note that neither Matthew nor Luke record the phrase “take up the cross” in their gospels at this point:

Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me (Matthew 19:21).

Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me (Luke 18:22).

The fact that the parallel passages in Matthew and Luke omit the phrase in *all* manuscripts further verifies the propriety of not including it in Mark 10:21. Indeed, those who would charge the modern texts with “heresy” for not including the later insertion at Mark 10:21 are hard pressed to explain why they do not make the same charge against both Matthew and Luke! Nearly all the charts produced by KJV Only advocates suffer from the same kind of “double standards” seen in this example from Mrs. Riplinger.

— END SIDEBAR —

IN CONCLUSION . . .

It is not joyous to have to engage in the kind of task that requires you to dwell upon mistakes, errant conclusions, and mis-citations. I would much rather take my time to speak of the wonders of God’s providence in preserving His Word through the centuries,

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New Age Conspiracy or More Accurate Translation?

On page 184 of *NABV* Mrs. Riplinger notes that while the KJV has the phrase “the Godhead” at Romans 1:20, the NIV and NASB have “divine nature.” She objects to the “modern” rendering found at Romans 1:20 with the words, “Now ‘Christian’ and cultic blasphemies bear a strong resemblance.”

The problem here is that not only is Mrs. Riplinger making connections where none logically exist (the single most common error she makes in her book and in her speaking), but she is attacking the modern translations for being more accurate than the King James! The KJV uses the phrase “Godhead” three times, once at Acts 17:29, once at Romans 1:20, and once at Colossians 2:9. In each case the KJV is translating a different Greek word by the same English word! This leads to a real problem when comparing Romans 1:20 and Colossians 2:9. The term at Romans 1:20, *qeioth*, means “divinity” or “divine nature” just as the NASB renders it. However, the term at Colossians 2:9 is *qeoth*, which means “deity,” i.e., the state of being God. Colossians 2:9 is one of the plainest affirmations of the deity of Christ, yet the KJV obscures this by rendering different Greek terms with one English term that itself communicates poorly. Rather than applauding the modern translations for their accurate rendering, Mrs. Riplinger, because of her tunnel vision, has to attack them for being “different” than the KJV!

not in the way the KJV Only folks demand, but in the way He sovereignly decreed. I would rather speak of the glories of Christ and the wonders of His grace. But Gail Riplinger, purposefully or not, has disturbed the peace of Christ’s Church, and that for no reason. Her errors must be exposed, and she must be called to cease her troubling of the saints.

It is my sincere belief that the preceding information is sufficient to establish, beyond doubt, the unreliability of Gail Riplinger as a researcher, writer, theologian, and textual critic. While one could literally fill another hundred pages with the errors she makes, there simply is no reason to do so. If the preceding does not establish the point, no amount of information will suffice.

If you see someone in your church with *New Age Bible Versions*, do not ignore them. Give them this booklet. Warn them of the problems in the book. *Do something*, or before long you will have problems. Sadly, we hear of people attacking everyone who does not carry the KJV with them into the service, and often, this includes the Pastor, who does not need that kind of grief at all.

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An Open Letter to Mrs. Gail Riplinger

Dear Mrs. Riplinger:

Over the past month I have made a number of efforts to contact you, including two letters, which have gone unanswered. Individuals involved with the “Defending the Faith” radio program on KIXL in Austin, Texas, have attempted to invite you to appear on their radio program to debate your claims in *New Age Bible Versions*, but they report that you have not returned any of their phone calls. As you seem unwilling to engage in open discussion of your book or your claims, I felt an open letter would be appropriate. I will be enclosing copies of this letter as part of the information we will be sending to people who request information on your book, along with my booklet, *New Age Bible Versions Refuted*.

Over the past few weeks I have been doing research in preparation for the writing of my new book, *The King James Only Controversy*. Part of that research has taken me deeply into your own book (as well as many others), as I wish to collate as many of the common passages cited by KJV Only advocates as I can, and your book is surely filled with such passages. As I have checked your citations, however, I have been *appalled* by the errors upon errors that I have encountered. Up until this moment, I was simply marking them in my copy, knowing that someday I will have opportunity of sharing these things on various radio and television programs. However, the error I just encountered, coupled with the tremendous misrepresentation I encountered yesterday with reference to a couple of NIV translators, has caused me to put aside my writing project for a few moments and write to you to ask you to *please do something* about all the falsehoods that fill your book and that are misleading many across the nation.

I am referring specifically to the chart at the bottom of page 289 of *NABV*. I reproduce your own statements:

NIV, NASB, et al.		KJV
My kingdom is not of this realm. (The NASB concordance pretends the word is <i>enteuthen</i> ; all Greek MS say <i>kosma</i> , even Nestle’s.) NASB	John 18:36	My kingdom is not of this world.

Mrs. Riplinger, even a brief glance at the Greek text shows your error. The NASB Concordance is not “pretending” anything, but surely, Ma’am, you are “pretending” scholarship in your writing. Note the Greek text of John 18:36:

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ἀπεκριθη Ἰησοῦς· Ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου· εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἦν ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ, οἱ ὑπηρέται οἱ ἐμοὶ ἠγωνίζοντο ἄν, ἵνα μὴ παραδοθῶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· νῦν δὲ ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐντεῦθεν.

Obviously, you looked only at the beginning of the verse where the NASB has, “My kingdom is not of this world,” just as the KJV. Here the term is definitely “κόσμου (*kosmos*)” (not “*kosma*” as you erroneously put it). However, you attack the NASB for the translation of the final phrase, “My kingdom is not of this realm.” Yet the KJV has “my kingdom is not from hence.” The Greek term is indeed ἔστιν ἐντεῦθεν, just as the NASB Concordance said, and it is the very same term that is found in the TR and translated by the KJV as “from hence”!

If this kind of error was an isolated instance, one might forgive the unwarranted attack upon the NASB. *But it is the norm, not the exception!* Your inability to check your assertions against the actual text (you may be able to “make out” a word or two here or there, but there is a vast difference between being able to read the language and merely recognizing a term once in a while) lead you to error after error after error, and, most sadly, since you have put your errors in print, you are leading others to follow you in your mistakes! Note your words on page 145:

The Sacrament of Penance

NEW VERSIONS		KJV
confess your sins	James 5:16	confess your faults (All Greek texts have the word for faults here, —not sins.)

Mrs. Riplinger, what is the term translated “sin” or “sins” in the KJV? Is it not the term ἁμαρτίας? You say that “all Greek texts have the word for faults here.” Really? Why, then, do I note the following in the Nestle-Aland text?

ta paraptwmata 049 | *txt* a A B P Y 048^{vid} 33. 81. 614. 630. 1241. 1739. 2495 al

The text reads “ἁμαρτίας”, and that is the reading of all the manuscripts cited above. How can you say “All Greek texts have the word for faults here” when that is simply not the case? Is this not very much like your assertion that all Greek texts read as the KJV at Revelation 14:1, when in fact the exact opposite is the case? Are you able to understand the information presented in the textual footnote, Mrs. Riplinger? Or are you dependent solely upon secondary sources?

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I note in passing that often your generic “New Versions” heading is inaccurate. For example, you say the “New Versions” have “For the bread of God is **that** which comes down out of heaven” at John 6:33 (page 146), while the NIV has “he” just as the KJV. On the same chart you cite the “New Versions” as saying “after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, **forever sat** down on the right hand of God” while neither of your two main targets, the NIV and the NASB, give such a reading. The same is true on page 170; you lump “New Version” into one group reading “respectable” at Luke 5:32, when the only translation I can find that so poorly renders the passage is the TEV: the NIV, NASB, etc., all translated the passage as “righteous.”

On page 172 we find this chart:

NIV, NASB et al.		KJV
Nobody should seek his own good.	1 Cor. 10:24	Let no man seek his own...wealth.
the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil	1 Tim. 6:10	For the love of money is the root of all evil

Here, amazingly, we find you misrepresenting the KJV itself! Here is the actual, unedited rendering: “Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s *wealth*.” The way you have presented it differs from the reality; besides this, the term “wealth” is not only in italics, it doesn’t even fit, and is in fact an error in the KJV translation (we are not to seek after other people’s “wealth” but are to look to their welfare, that is, their good). And I might add that the modern rendering of [1 Timothy 6:10](#) is perfectly accurate; rizw in the Greek is anarthrous, and pantwn twn kakwn is plural, hence, “all kinds of evil.” Think about it, Mrs. Riplinger: is the love of money the root cause of rape? If not, then obviously the KJV rendering cannot be defended as absolute.

On pages 175 through 176 you claim the NIV does not translate bzk. Again you are in error. The NIV translates it as “false gods,” and you might wish to think about how appropriate that translation is.

On page 182 you attempt to make the NASB’s translation of the Greek term qrovnoi (*thronoi*) relevant to the psychology of self-esteem. The translation of qrovnoi by the term “thrones” can hardly be faulted; indeed, it is the KJV’s “seats” that is less direct.

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On page 184 you address the quite accurate modern translation of a group of terms translated by “the Godhead” in the KJV. I provide you with the following chart of my own making:

NASB		KJV
the divine being	Acts 17:29 (qeio")	the Godhead
divine nature	Rom 1:20 (qeioth")	the Godhead
deity	Col 2:9 (qeoth")	the Godhead

Would you care to explain, Mrs. Riplinger, why the KJV translates three different terms by one English term, when those three terms do not, in fact, mean the same thing?

Your penchant for “hacking up” quotations is plainly seen on page 188. Here are the first two entries in your chart on that page:

NEW VERSIONS		KJV
as he hath prospered	1 Cor 16:2	as God hath prospered him
we might become the righteousness of God	2 Cor 5:21	we might be made the righteousness of God in him

First, the term “God” is nowhere to be found in the TR at [1 Corinthians 16:2](#); this is a “paraphrastic” translation on the part of the KJV. You then emphasize “in him” in your chart at [2 Corinthians 5:21](#), and cite the “New Versions” as if they don’t contain this phrase. Yet, the NASB says,

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He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God *in Him*.

And the NIV has,

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that *in him* we might become the righteousness of God.

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By quoting the NIV from the point immediately after “in him” appears, you create an illusion to fit your scheme. How can you do this kind of thing?

On page 191 you indicate that the NIV and the NASB “OMIT” the phrase “that they might accuse him” at [Matthew 12:10](#). Yet, when we check out your accuracy we find the following:

And behold, there was a man with a withered hand. And they questioned Him, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” — in order *that they might accuse Him*. (NASB)

and a man with a shriveled hand was there. *Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus*, they asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” (NIV)

On page 246 you seem to be unaware that the KJV translators anticipated the phrase “and you he has made alive” in [Ephesians 2](#), translating it as part of verse 1 when in fact it is in verse 5. As a result, you falsely accuse the NIV/NASB of not having a phrase that they properly translate, in its place.

In your chart on page 260 you contrast the KJV’s “**the** words of eternal life” against the NASB’s “words of eternal life,” not mentioning that the NIV, RSV and ASV all have “**the** words of eternal life.” Besides this, the Greek construction is anarthrous, making the NASB an acceptable translation. Further on down the list you have “**a** common faith” under the NIV/NASB column, contrasted with “**the** common faith” of the KJV at [Titus 1:4](#). Again you ignore the NIV’s “our common faith.” And again, the construction is anarthrous.

As I have mentioned, it is the consistency of your misrepresentations that is so striking. The examples pile up as anyone takes the time to work through your book. More of your seemingly purposeful misrepresentation is found in these three examples taken from your chart on page 269. First I give your representation, and then in the second chart I contrast your deceptive citations with the real words of the translations you are attempting to malign:

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NIV, NASB, et al.	KJV
whosoever believes	whosoever believeth in him John 3:15
in Him	In whom ye also trusted Eph 1:13
also have obtained an inheritance	in whom also we have obtained an inheritance Eph. 1:11

But in reality:

Mrs. Riplinger's Citation	What It ACTUALLY Says
whosoever believes	that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life. (John 3:15 , NASB)
in Him	In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, (Eph 1:13 , NASB)
also have obtained an inheritance	In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will (Eph 1:10-11 , NASB)

I thought the last one was really great, given that all you had to do was not tell folks that the “missing” term is found in verse 10. One could write a book just on how often you mislead your readers. On page 270 you do the same thing all over again to the NASB with reference to [Romans 3:25](#). You cite the KJV, “through faith **in his blood**,” and put the “NIV, NASB” rendering as “faith” as if the modern translations do not have “in his blood.” But, again, a quick glance at the texts demonstrates your error:

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whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation *in His blood* through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; (NASB)

God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith *in his blood*. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—(NIV)

Did you assume, Mrs. Riplinger, that no one would look at the texts? On the same page you cite the NIV/NASB as “that which is lacking in Christ’s afflictions” and attempt to contrast it with the KJV by citing [Colossians 1:24](#) in this manner: “the afflictions of Christ in my flesh.” If anyone looks up the passage, they find that you are comparing apples to oranges:

Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, *and fill up that which is behind of the* afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church: (KJV)

The emphasized portion is that which corresponds to what you cited from the NASB; you conveniently neglect to quote it, and instead quote a later portion, misleading the reader yet once again.

The inconsistency of your arguments is overwhelming at times as well, Mrs. Riplinger. On page 303 you point out through the use of a chart that the KJV follows a “fuller” text, especially when it comes to titles. Expansion of titles in the Byzantine manuscript tradition is a well known fact, and is indeed one of the very things that leads scholars to recognize secondary elements in that tradition. However, can you not see that your chart actually disproves your conspiracy theory? You note, for example, [2 Corinthians 4:10](#), where the modern texts have “Jesus” and the KJV has “the Lord Jesus.” Yet, you also cite [Matthew 12:25](#), where the KJV has only “Jesus.” Why is it acceptable for the KJV to have just “Jesus” at [Matthew 12:25](#) and not “Lord Jesus”? If the KJV is not denying the Lordship of Christ by using the single name “Jesus” at [Matthew 12:25](#), then how can you assert the NIV/NASB is doing this at [2 Corinthians 4:10](#)? And looking down the chart, you note that at [2 Corinthians 11:31](#) the modern texts have “Lord Jesus.” Well, if they were trying to attack Jesus at [2 Corinthians 4:10](#) by *not* having “Lord Jesus,” why did they allow that title just a little over seven chapters later? The argumentation makes no sense at all.

Your ignorance of the Biblical languages leads you to more serious errors in your section on the deity of Christ. It is here, indeed, Mrs. Riplinger, that you should surely be ashamed of your activities, for there is no more important doctrine than the deity of Christ, and yet you sacrifice many of the most important references to it in your struggle

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to make a 17th century Anglican translation the “inerrant word of God.” You do this in a number of ways. First, as I have already demonstrated (in my booklet), you sacrifice the great passages at [Titus 2:13](#) and [2 Peter 1:1](#), preferring the inferior translation of the KJV over the plain and proper translations found in the NIV/NASB. You do the same thing on page 305, where you prefer the errant reading, and translation, of [Jude 1:4](#) over the proper translation, again giving us a Granville Sharp Construction, “our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.” If you were familiar with defending the deity of Christ against those who deny it, you would know that this is a very significant passage, for the term in the Greek here, *despovth*, “Master,” is used of God alone in [Acts 4:24](#) (though poorly rendered in the KJV—note the NIV’s bringing out of the fuller meaning). Once again your zeal for the KJV has caused you to lead believers astray from yet another passage that demonstrates the deity of Christ.

As I mentioned briefly in *New Age Bible Versions Refuted*, your comments on the great Carmen Christi at [Philippians 2:5-11](#) are completely out of line. You do not seem to have any idea what the passage is saying, nor how the NIV translation of this passage is the best available. You speak of sharing with Jehovah’s Witnesses, but I can assure you I have shared with far more JW’s than you have, and this passage, as it is found in the NIV, is one of the best single passages in the New Testament for explaining how Jesus Christ was eternally God, and yet became man to die as the sacrifice for the sins of God’s people. Please at least attempt to understand that when the modern translations have “did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,” they are *not* saying that He did not *already* have this equality, but did not consider it *something to be held on to*. The NIV makes it very plain that He was “in very nature God” *prior* to the incarnation. The torturous KJV rendering only hides this marvelous fact.

But I tire of demonstrating error after error. I mentioned at the beginning that the second thing that prompted me to write this letter was your gross misrepresentation of NIV translators. I am specifically referring to pages 261 and 262 where you misrepresent the words of Calvin Linton and Ronald Youngblood. I begin by giving your own words:

NEW VERSION EDITORS

CHRISTIANITY

Calvin Linton: NIV

The bible is “God’s message” and not his words, contends Linton. He believes the bible is “the wrong side of a beautiful embroidery. The picture is still there, but knotted, blurry —

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law.” [Matthew 5:18](#)

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not perfect.” He calls Christians “amusingly uninformed,” who “presume the Holy Spirit dictated the actual words of the text of the original writers.”

(A ‘jot’ is the smallest letter and a tittle is the smallest ornament placed on a letter.)

Your reference footnote is number 76, found on page 665. It cites *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*, 1986 edition, pp. 17-19. Here we find an article by Calvin D. Linton entitled, “The Importance of Literary Style in Bible Translation Today.” I provide Dr. Linton’s actual words so that the depth of your misrepresentation can be easily seen:

I recently received a lengthy letter from a devout reader of the Bible who asked why there needed to be any modern translations of the Bible at all. Why cannot we simply put down God’s exact words in English form? Why dress them up in so many styles? (These questions remind one of the famous mot: “If the King James Version was good enough for Saint Paul, it is good enough for me.”)

Such questions, though amusingly uninformed, do actually touch on a profound consideration, one suggested by the great seventeenth-century poet and preacher John Donne, whose sermons as dean of Saint Paul’s (in his later life) drew throngs. Speaking of the style of the Bible, he said, “The Holy Ghost is an eloquent author, a vehement and abundant author, but yet not luxuriant.” This presumes that the Holy Spirit dictated the actual words of the text to the original writers, thereby (it is further presumed) investing the entire Bible with his own literary style. The style of the Bible, however, is not homogeneous. Rather, each writer has his own style, reflective of his personality, which a faithful translation must reflect in ways perceptible to the modern reader. “When the original is beautiful,” says *The Story of the New International Version*, “its beauty must shine through the translation; when it is stylistically ordinary, this must be apparent.”

The Holy Spirit, while preserving the inspired writers from error, used the individuality of each writer as colors on his palette to paint a unified picture—or, to use another image, to weave a seamless garment. Such exploitation of the differing characteristics of the original writers—their learning, personality, environment, literary style, etc.—in no way impugns the inerrancy of the original autographs. It merely means that God did not expunge all individuality from the inspired writers, using them only as automata or as “word processors.” The written Word comes to us through the “dust” of our earthly nature, but it is uniquely breathed into (animated) by God. It foreshadows and testifies to the ultimate revelation of God in his Son, when “the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us” ([John 1:14](#)). He, too, like the Bible, partook of our earthly condition

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(yet without sin, as the Bible in its original autographs is without error), possessing a human body, a certain physical appearance and manner of speech, and reaching us on our level, that God's message may be made wholly ours.

I pause briefly to note the propriety of Dr. Linton's remarks. Anyone who has read Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, or the epistle to the Hebrews, and also 1 John, knows beyond a shadow of a doubt that the style differs markedly between these three books. Belief in plenary verbal inspiration does not require one to hold to a dictation theory. Dr. Linton is exactly correct when he points out that each of the writers used by God had their own style, their own mannerisms. The style of 1 John is not the style of Luke, that is for certain. This in no way vitiates the reality of the work of the Holy Spirit in "carrying along" these men as they spoke "from God" ([2 Peter 1:21](#), NIV).

Dr. Linton then goes into a discussion of literary style, and gives us these words, which you badly misquote in your work:

If, therefore, style is a fusion of the idea to be expressed and the individuality expressing it, it follows that, since no two individualities are identical, no two styles are identical. And it further follows that no translation can be a perfect reproduction of the original style, for it is not possible to alter the original words without altering the original style. The goal, therefore, is to create (and it *is* a creative act) a style in modern English as closely reflective of the original style as possible. The translator must, among other things, strive to eradicate all characteristics of his own personal style, becoming a sounding chamber without strings. At best we probably must agree with the seventeenth-century writer James Howell when he says that a translator can do no more than reveal the "wrong side of a Persian rug." Fortunately the Bible is so gorgeously woven a tapestry that even the "wrong side" is wonderful!

Mrs. Riplinger, I was so shocked at the depth of the purposeful misrepresentation here that my naturally generous nature forced me to stop writing this letter and contact individuals who could help me to verify that the above material, taken as it was from the 1991 edition of *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*, matches what is found in the edition you cite, that being the 1986 edition. I had to make certain that there was not some mistake, some reason for your complete misrepresentation of Dr. Linton. But there is no such reason. The 1986 edition reads the same as the 1991. You made up the entirety of your chart entry for only one purpose: to malign the character of Dr. Linton, and to misrepresent his statements so that you could further the goal of your book. *This kind of action is ungodly, for it is nothing more than lying, and lying is a sin against God.*

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Sadly, the exact same thing happens on the very next page of your book, page 262. Here the target of your attack is Dr. Ronald Youngblood, and his article, “Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament,” found on pages 111 through 118 of *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*. Here is your statement, allegedly quoting from pages 111 and 117:

NEW VERSION EDITORS

The bible is the “words of men,” a “literary production.”

Ronald Youngblood: NIV

CHRISTIANITY

The word of the Lord endureth forever. [1 Peter 1:25](#)

We see that you are attempting to *contrast* a belief in the “word of the Lord” with Dr. Youngblood’s statement. Since you are also *contrasting* “New Version Editors” with “Christianity,” we can only assume you do not believe Dr. Youngblood or Dr. Linton, “New Version Editors,” to be representative of Christian belief. Therefore, we must understand your citation of his saying the Bible is a “literary production” is meant to deny a belief that the Bible is inspired or is the “word of the Lord.” And yet, is this was Dr. Youngblood said on page 111 of *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*? Of course not:

The Bible is the most dramatic literary production of all time. The preparation and promise of the Old Testament find their completion and fulfillment in the New Testament. Each half of Scripture needs the other for its fullest understanding. As Augustine put it: “The New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed, the Old Testament is in the New Testament revealed.” Such a close relationship between the two Testaments is reason enough to warrant frequent examination of the ever-fascinating and always-important topic, “Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament.” Each of the major elements in that title, however, is fraught with its own dangers.

There is the source of your citation, “literary production.” And what, may I ask, is there to object to in this statement? Setting up a dichotomy between Dr. Youngblood’s statement and a belief in the inspiration of Scripture is not only illogical, *it goes against everything Dr. Youngblood said in his article, and hence is, again, dishonest to the core*. But you were not through. You also alleged that Dr. Youngblood taught that the Bible is “the words of men.” You specifically set up a contrast between this and a belief in the “word

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of the Lord.” Here you are drawing from page 117 (I can’t say “citing,” since you are not quoting but *misquoting*):

Jean Levie gave to his book on biblical criticism and exegesis the perceptive title *The Bible: Word of God in Words of Men*. The subtle symbiosis between divine and human authorship in Scripture is present in such a way as to give us divine truth without admixture of human error. This fact is none the less true with respect to Old Testament quotations in the New Testament than with respect to any other biblical phenomenon.

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I can certainly see how quoting what he actually said would destroy your argument, Mrs. Riplinger. You wouldn’t want people learning that there were NIV translators who believed in inerrancy or inspiration! Such would cause people to actually think of them as Christians, and then ask why you would be so willing to attack Christians via misrepresentation! We can’t have that, so we hack up the quotation, all again in the cause to defend the “true Bible.”

Mrs. Riplinger, you made a frightening statement in your article on why you wrote *NABV*. You said,

Daily during the six years needed for this investigation, the Lord miraculously brought the needed materials and resources—much like the ravens fed Elijah. Each discovery was not the result of effort on my part, but of the directed hand of God—so much so that I hesitated to even put my name on the book. Consequently, I used G.A. Riplinger, which signifies to me, God and Riplinger—God as author and Riplinger as secretary.

Mrs. Riplinger, God does not lie. God does not hack up quotations. God does not misrepresent people. God does not make basic, fundamental errors on every page of his works. Saying God “directed” you to misrepresent Dr. Palmer and Dr. Barker and Dr. Linton and Dr. Youngblood is, quite simply, blasphemous, is it not? Saying God’s “directed hand” led you to accuse the NASB Concordance of “pretending” when in fact you were simply in error is dangerous, is it not?

The only honorable thing for you to do, Mrs. Riplinger, is to withdraw this book from publication and issue a letter of retraction, apologizing to all those you have misrepresented, and all those you have misled. I pray that God will give you the courage to do just that.

In the original booklet, at this point we reproduced a hand-written note from Texe Marrs, dated July 28, 1994. We provide the text here, retaining original spelling and punctuation:

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Texe Marrs
Living Truth Publishers
1708 Patterson Road
Austin, Texas 78733-6507
(512) 263-9780 FAX (512) 263-9793

July 28, 1994

Mr. White:

Don't write me again unless in sincere repentance. You are a devil, plain + simple. And I understand well why Mrs Riplinger does not respond to your ridiculous assertions. Why dignify the lying claims of a servant of Satan!

TWM

P.S. Dr. Waite will make you look exactly like what you are: a sinner in need of redemption, so arrogant + uninformed you do not even know that the new versions take out the "Alpha + Omega"—the very name of your Fake "ministry" in one passage of Revelation I also notice that you corrected your incorrect spelling of Gail's name in your unscholarly, pitiful article. As I recall, that's one of the things you falsely accused her of—spelling words incorrectly. Exactly the error in the first version of your ever changing treatise God doesn't lie, true. But Satan + his people do, of which you are one.

Amazingly, Mr. Marrs is not the only person who has focused upon only two issues in responding to what I have written about *New Age Bible Versions*. It seems all the critics can think about is how to spell Gail's first name, and the fact that [Revelation 1:11](#) in the KJV has the phrase "Alpha and Omega" while the modern texts do not. I answered these concerns in my response letter to Texe Marrs:

July 30, 1994

Texe Marrs
Living Truth Publications
1708 Patterson Road
Austin, TX 78733

Dear Mr. Marrs:

Long ago, sir, the Scripture writer recorded the following words:

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“He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him.” ([Proverbs 18:13](#)).

These are indeed words of wisdom, and your letter of July 28 shows clearly that you do not find these words relevant to your reactions to those who would seek to be of assistance to you in your ministry.

Over the years I have received “nasty” letters from all sorts of people. Working as I do with Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, atheists, Roman Catholics, and others, I take my share of “heat” from irate people. One does not stand outside the LDS temple in Salt Lake during every General Conference for the past ten years and pass out tracts without getting some people a little upset. And one does not pass out literature to the thousands gathered to see the Pope in Denver, or debate Roman Catholic apologists on the Papacy at Denver Seminary, without encountering opposition and angry feelings. And I certainly heard my share of foul language as I held a sign outside the convention of the American Atheists here in Phoenix a few years ago. But I never imagined that the single meanest, nastiest letter I would receive would come from a “Christian leader.” Just so that you are clear on what you said, I quote your brief letter verbatim:

[See above for text]

The fact, sir, that you can respond to the materials I have provided to you, which do nothing more than plainly and clearly document the errors and mistakes in Mrs. Riplinger’s work, and that in a fashion that can only be called “kind and gentle” in comparison with your own demeanor, is truly amazing.

With reference to “sincere repentance,” I can only repent of thinking that you, a Christian leader, would be open to correction and instruction. Obviously, I was quite incorrect in thinking in such a manner.

I am not a devil, sir. I am, in point of fact, your brother in Christ (if in fact you know Him), a redeemed sinner saved by the grace of Jesus Christ. I have known the Lord for more than 25 years, and have served him as a minister most of my adult life. That you are willing to call a Christian minister a “devil” simply because I have the temerity to disagree with you, and to demonstrate the errors of your statements, is beyond comprehension. And to then identify such a person as a “servant of Satan” — are you willing to answer for such absurd and reckless accusations before the judgment seat of the Lord Jesus Christ, Mr. Marrs? You will surely have to answer for such things, I can assure you.

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It is telling indeed to note that upon receipt of nearly 30 pages of double-column small print you have only two things to say by way of substance (ignoring the ridiculous insults). First you take me to task for having spelled Mrs. Riplinger's name as "Gayle" in my initial draft of the paper, calling me a "liar" for having done so! Such is, of course, so utterly irrational as to boggle the mind. Perhaps you have not noticed that Mrs. Riplinger did not put her first name in her book, Mr. Marrs? Look for yourself. She always has "G.A. Riplinger." No first name given. The only reason I knew her first name was Gail was because the host of the radio program I listened to (and later participated in) called her by her first name. I had to guess what spelling she used, and I chose Gayle. Later someone mentioned that they had received a letter from her and she had spelled her name "Gail." So, I changed the spelling in my paper. You consider this obviously understandable situation as grounds for calling me a liar, sir? Do you not remember the words of Jesus, wherein He warned us about condemning our brothers? His warning is in the KJV as well as all other versions. Why do you ignore His teachings on this matter, sir?

Secondly, you assert that I am "arrogant and uninformed" with reference to the phrase "Alpha and Omega" in the book of Revelation, and the fact that there is one place where the modern texts do not include the phrase. I can assure you, sir, that I am not in the least ignorant of the textual variation found at [Revelation 1:11](#). We chose the name **Alpha and Omega Ministries** on the basis of [Revelation 1:8](#) and 22:13, not 1:11. The phrase is found in that passage only in the ^A text type; it is not found in a A C 1006. 1841. 2050. 2329. 2351. ^K lat sy sa. Hence, the Nestle-Aland, UBS 4th, and Majority texts do not place this reading in the text, and rightfully so. Of course, this in no way, shape, or form does damage to the plain identification of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. As I have shared this precious truth with many, many Jehovah's Witnesses over the years, I can assure you that they are hard pressed to explain this clear teaching of Scripture. And I am just as hard pressed to understand both the harsh, mean-spiritedness in your letter, and your unwillingness to defend what is plainly a later addition to God's Holy Word. I despair of your providing a meaningful answer to this question, but why do you invest infallibility in Desiderius Erasmus, a Roman Catholic priest, who made the choice of including this passage in his text? The inconsistency of this action, given your other statements, is exceptionally plain.

You identified my article as "unscholarly and pitiful." I will gladly allow any and all to examine my article, and your retort, and judge for themselves who is unscholarly, sir. The simple fact is that neither you nor Mrs. Riplinger can respond to the plain documentation of error after error in her work. And, you cannot defend your statements made on KXEG radio, either, for again, the facts are not on your side.

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Christian are people who love the truth, Mr. Marrs. They do not love traditions more than truth. KJV Onlyism is a man-made tradition, and it is very plain, given the tone of your reply to being corrected on the issues, that you love this tradition quite deeply: so deeply that you will identify Christian men who try to share the truth with you as “devils” and “servants of Satan.” Such charges are quite serious, but given the irrationality of your words, they carry little weight.

If you love the truth, Mr. Marrs, you will take the time to seriously and rationally consider the stance you have taken. If you fear the face of men more than the face of God, you will continue with your tirades against modern translations such as the NASB and NIV. The choice is indeed yours. I would hope that you would take the time to examine what I have sent you. You say it is unscholarly. Prove it. Document it. Don't hide behind blustery words of condemnation. Come out and show my errors, if there are any. I will be glad to meet you in the public arena.

How did Mr. Marrs respond to this letter? He sent it back with red writing written in large letters across the first page, read:

MR MARRS DOES NOT WANT YOUR EVIL TRASH. DON'T WRITE AGAIN EXCEPT IN REPENTANCE.

Most people find it hard to believe that men can act in such a manner, yet this is very common amongst the hard-core KJV Only believers. Another such individual, Dr. Peter Ruckman, concluded a short article about me and **Alpha and Omega Ministries** with these words:

Blow it out your nose, kid. Out here in the traffic you're liable to get run over. Stick to fairy tales.

This kind of behavior is directly contradictory to the teaching of Paul found in [2 Timothy 2:24-26](#) in *any* translation. We pray for those who speak evil of us and who spread lies about us. We leave it in God's hands to judge the motives of their hearts, and the truth of the issues at hand.

Another Book by Mrs. Riplinger?

The middle of 1994 saw another book published under Mrs. Riplinger's name, *Which Bible is God's Word?* When I first saw the book I failed to notice that Mrs. Riplinger attempted to make some reply to my earliest criticism of her first book. Her responses demonstrate yet once again that honesty and integrity is the farthest thing from her mind when she sits down to write her works. We note her words:

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The NIV Translation Center directs queries about the version controversy, not to a scholarly detailed defense of their word choices, but to two copied pages written by a self-proclaimed, “*apologist working in the front lines in dealing with the claims of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [Mormon] (sic). ...*” NIV champion Jim White spent all of several “days,” at his own admission, researching the topic. Three examples of his careless and unlearned comments follow: (p. 61).

I note that 1) my initial review was much more than two pages in length. 2) Mrs. Riplinger failed to provide even the beginning of a meaningful response to the first review of her most unscholarly work. 3) I am an apologist who has worked for years on the front-lines of evangelizing LDS people. She conveniently ignored the rest of my sentence (found in its original form earlier in this text). 4) I have never “admitted” to having spent “several days” studying textual critical issues (the context in which she places her words); such is a simple lie. She may be thinking of the several days I spent reading *her book*, but that is not what she says. Anyone who has read the previous pages of this booklet, has listened to my debate with Mrs. Riplinger, or has read *The King James Only Controversy*, well knows that I have spent more than a few “days” studying the issue of the King James Only controversy. 5) How “careless” and “unlearned” I am can be seen by looking at the four (she said three, but must have added another later and forgot to go back and edit her words) items she chooses to include in her review.

The first item she chose to address, by God’s providence, happens to be the “take up the cross” issue that is so thoroughly discussed earlier in this text. Obviously Mrs. Riplinger had not seen my comments on this issue before she fired her broadside, for all she says in response to my statement, “We are told that new versions delete the call to take up the cross, when in fact they do not” is this: “They *do* delete it. See [Mark 10:21](#), NIV, NASB, et al.” Please note that our initial comments on this topic earlier in this work are borne out completely: Mrs. Riplinger *does* want people to think that this phrase is deleted from the Bible on the basis of [Mark 10:21](#), and she *still* does not deal honestly with the presence of the phrase in three other places in the modern versions.

Her next statement should astound all Christian readers. Mrs. Riplinger caught me in an error. Yes, earlier in this work I indicated that “all” Greek texts contain the disputed phrase at [Revelation 14:1](#), a phrase that Mrs. Riplinger said was based upon a “tiny percentage of corrupt Greek manuscripts.” I was technically wrong in my statement. While none of the popularly available Greek texts cite any variants here (including the Nestle-Aland 27th edition, the UBS 4th, and even the Majority Text, which cites the TR as standing alone), there are a “tiny percentage of corrupt Greek manuscripts” that read as the KJV does. The vast majority of the manuscripts join *against* the KJV reading. But my use of the word “all” was incorrect. But please note that Mrs. Riplinger, while correcting

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my “all,” somehow, incredibly, forgets to apologize to her readers for having been *completely in error in her original statement!* In fact, she does not even mention her own statement in her second book! And why not? It’s simple: to prove me “wrong” in having overlooked a small handful of late manuscripts she has to admit that the reading is found in just a few, while she had *originally* said in *NABV* that it was the reading of the vast majority! Instead of doing what any honest person would do and admit she made the mistake, she chooses to cover her error and use it as a cloak to attack the person who pointed out her mistake in the first place! Such reprehensible actions are simply shameful.

How does she respond to the demonstration that she completely misrepresented Dr. Edwin Palmer in her quotation of him (see above)? See if you can make heads or tails out of her attempted response:

Neither I nor my quote from Edwin Palmer mention the incarnation at all. Palmer does not believe the word *beget* ([John 1:14](#) et al) refers to the incarnation. In spite of the fact that the verse is talking about his “flesh.” Palmer’s “*begotten God*” ([John 1:18](#), *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*, p. 143) is no more accurate theologically than the Mormon notion, “*The head of the gods appointed a God for us*” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 370, 372).

She is here citing from my article that made mention of our radio interview. Any person who has listened to that interview well knows that Mrs. Riplinger *did* make reference to the incarnation, and misrepresented Palmer on that topic. [Note: one can hear this very section of the discussion by dialing (602) 973-0318 and going to the appropriate area in the Christian Information System]. What is more a quick glance at *NABV* p. 344 will demonstrate that Mrs. Riplinger *was* talking about the incarnation! Furthermore, there is no word “beget” at [John 1:14](#); Mrs. Riplinger is again misunderstanding the term monogenhv” as I explained to her in our radio discussion long ago. And finally, we must note that here *Mrs. Riplinger even misquotes Joseph Smith!* It is almost as if she cannot quote anyone she disagrees with correctly. If one thinks that is an unfair conclusion note her fourth and final point. She points out my assertion that she misspelled the names of Longenecker and Carson on page 343. Here is her response:

He is really grasping at straws. The early printings of the 700-page *New Age Bible Versions* did accidentally drop the “e” from the name Longenecker and add an “l” to Carson. I only *reluctantly* fixed it, since these men advocate removing the name of deity from the bible about two hundred times. Misspelled names exemplify “*horribly poor research*” according to Jim. (He misspells my name thirty times in his four-page critique).

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I refer the reader to my response about Gail's name in my letter to Texe Marrs, quoted earlier. I also note that here she says my critique was four pages: immediately before she said it was two. Her confusion is almost beyond comprehension. But I wish to emphasize the attitude and mind-set that is revealed by Mrs. Riplinger at this point. She only "reluctantly" (emphasis hers!) changed the spelling of these names. Why? Because she dislikes the textual choices of D.A. Carson and Richard Longenecker! This surely fits with her blatant campaign to misrepresent all those with whom she disagrees—one does not even need to spell their names correctly! Let the reader beware of this kind of polemic literature.

And so the booklet, *New Age Bible Versions Refuted*, concluded as of October of 1994. At that time was I working hard on *The King James Only Controversy*. I completed the work, and the editing and publication process began. Since I mentioned Mrs. Riplinger in the fifth chapter of that book, which came out in April of 1995, I sent sections of chapters to her, offering her the opportunity of commenting upon or correcting anything she felt was in error. I have often sent articles I was working on to individuals who were being reviewed, or refuted, asking them for their comments (an action that has almost *never* been reciprocated).

As anyone knows who has attempted to contact Mrs. Riplinger, it's next to impossible, especially if you are "the enemy" from her perspective. At one point, when I was faxing a letter to her, the fax machine on her end hung up half-way through the transmission! Obviously she feels that she does not owe "rude, crude heretics" much in the way of manners. Be that as it may, Mrs. Riplinger never once responded to my attempts to get her replies to what I was writing. But, I did hear from her. Right as my book was about to come out, Mrs. Riplinger began writing to Bethany House Publishers *and threatening to sue if they published the book!* She made repeated threats, though she never provided any meaningful documentation of the alleged "errors." Instead, she sent pages from a future publication in which she makes many more of the same kind of wild-eyed, conspiratorially-driven accusations that we have already reviewed in her first two efforts. In fact, as time goes on, she becomes more and more removed from the realm of reality, retreating, it seems, into a world of her own fanciful creation.

Of course, no lawsuits resulted from the release of *The King James Only Controversy*. Indeed, many have commented on how *fairly* Riplinger is treated, especially in light of the fact that if someone *wanted to*, her own writings provide a massive storehouse of "legally actionable material" (to use her own phraseology), wherein she has grossly misrepresented and mercilessly attacked a wide variety of Christian leaders, living and dead. The double-standard she lives by is most amazing.

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Later in 1995 her 64 page magazine/booklet, *King James Version Ditches Blind Guides* came out. Nearly half of the book is dedicated to attacking me, but others who come under Gail's wrath include Dave Hunt, and even David Cloud, a strong KJV Only advocate who had the temerity and honesty to point out some of the ridiculous and absurd conclusions found in *NABV*. As normal, Gail's only means of responding is to play games with a person's name (if one took out all the name-calling there would be a cover and about half a page of text). For Cloud, we get these words:

Clouds constantly change their shape depending on how much 'heat' comes their way. Pilots know that Clouds are dense and full of hot air; consequently, they detour around them when they can. I'd recommend the same course (pp. 33-34).

My name seemed to delight Gail as well. Some of the sub-titles in this cartoon-filled booklet include "White-out," "James Games: James White Meets Vanna White," and "White's Whopper." Indeed, the book begins with a little rhyme, printed over a picture of three blind mice:

Blind mice and "scribes" will never see
their names in [Matthew 23](#)
—The word slips from their NIV!
To get it back, they will not flee,
but sit and search for *gnats* on me.
Blind guides would rather *strain* for lice
than search within for their *own* vice
They'll swallow some unsavory story,
cooked-up by White, McMahan, or Morey,
their caravan of camels served
with humps and truth severely curved.
Woe to these scribes, who having swerved,
have turned aside from God's pure words.

According to my computer, we just began page 39. If after this amount of time anyone still thinks Gail Riplinger has anything of substance to say regarding the Bible, history, the biblical languages, or textual criticism, there is nothing more I can say that would be of benefit. The facts are plain. But those dedicated to Riplinger's theories and speculations are rarely impacted by any kind of factual rebuttal.

Gail Riplinger's works have been reviewed, and rejected, by numerous Christian leaders and scholars. For most, it's a waste of time to even discuss the issue, since it's so obvious that she is a troubler of the brethren, a woman who is out of control, setting herself up as an expert on topics about which she knows nothing at all. Her inability to function as a

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scholar is plain to anyone who wishes to see. The impact she has had in disrupting churches, damaging missions work, and in generally causing trouble, is hers to answer for.

In closing, though, we should actually be more troubled about what Gail Riplinger's work says about *the church as a whole*. Where has discernment gone? Why didn't someone sit her down a long time ago and try to straighten her out? And what is worse, why are men to this day letting her go on her merry way, spreading falsehoods, and even *encouraging her* in such activities? I have been informed (but have not taken the time to verify) that Mrs. Riplinger was recently granted an *honorary doctorate* by Jack Hyles for her work, *New Age Bible Versions*. Can someone explain how a person who doesn't even have the first bit of undergraduate training in any of the fields relating to Bible translation can be given an honorary doctorate for having produced the most error-filled volume on the topic ever to grace the planet? Is "acrostic algebra" the stuff of doctorates? One may well forgive Gail, for she is obviously deceived; but what of the many others who encourage her to continue on in her path of disturbing the work of the Church? Might not *they* be even more liable? It would seem so.

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<https://bible.org/article/why-respond-gail-riplinger>. Accessed: October 3, 2020.