

# VPP: Kicking Against The Pricks

Joshua Lim and Philip Tang<sup>1</sup>

In 'The Burning Bush, July 2008' Jeffrey Khoo wrote an article "Kicking Against The Pricks: The SCCC Contradicts The ICCC On VPP."

1. Upon reading the ICCC and SCCC Statements, we found that the SCCC and ICCC are consistent in their views regarding the preservation of the Holy Scriptures.

2. The following statements are taken from

(a) the **Bible Resolution<sup>2</sup> made at Amsterdam (1998)**

*...the International Council of Christian Churches, assembled in the historic English Reformed Church in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, observing its 50th Anniversary, August 11-15, 1998, urge all Bible-believing churches worldwide to use only the Authorized KING JAMES VERSION in their services and in their teaching ministry,...*

(b) the **ICCC (Statement No. 11) 2000 "On The Holy Scriptures And The Bible Translations"**

*Believing the Holy Scriptures of the originals to be fully inspired with its words and genders and being complete as God's revelation to man without error;*

*Believing the O.T. has been preserved in the Masoretic text and the N.T. in the Textus Receptus, combined they gave us the complete Word of God. The King James Version in English has been faithfully translated from these God-preserved manuscripts.*

*These manuscripts [minority text] differ widely among themselves and with others amount to less than 5% of the manuscript evidence. **God preserved the Textus Receptus in the majority text with 95%.** This is called the traditional, or majority text. ,... (emphasis by authors)*

(c) the **SCCC Reformation Rally 2005 "Inspiration And Translations Of The Holy Scriptures"**

*The established practice, as far as the Bible in the English language is concerned, of using the King James Version, which the ICCC and all its affiliated bodies believe to have been faithfully translated from the God-preserved manuscripts of the Hebrew-language traditional Masoretic Text for the Old Testament and the Greek language accepted Textus Receptus for the New Testament. (ICCC 16th World Congress Statement "ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES AND BIBLE TRANSLATIONS, November 2000, Jerusalem).*

---

<sup>1</sup> Joshua Lim L.L.B. (Hons) - founding elder and trustee of Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church since 1973. He was a deacon, elder of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church (1958-1972)

Philip Tang—lecturer in Mathematical Sciences and a member of the B-P denomination since 1971.

<sup>2</sup> The Bible Resolution appears to be ignorant of the fact that God made use of the Westcott & Hort based Chinese Bible (和合本) in bringing many millions of Chinese Christians to Christ through great evangelists like Wang Ming Dao (王明道), John Sung Shang Chieh (宋尚节) and many others.

3. The following was what Jeffrey Khoo asserted ICCC believes

*This is what VPP affirms—the Hebrew/Aramaic words of the Masoretic Text, and the Greek words of the **Textus Receptus are the very inspired and preserved words of God**,... (emphasis by authors)*

4. The ICCC and its affiliated body the SCCC favours the use of the KJV over the modern versions.

5. As regards the preservation of the Holy Scriptures, VPP teaches that

(a) **the text underlying the KJV is “an exact 100% copy of the autographs”**<sup>3</sup>. FEBC added into its constitution 4.2.1.1 “*We believe the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament underlying the Authorised (King James) Version to be the very Word of God, infallible and inerrant.*”

Contrast the above statement with the one issued by ICCC, “*God preserved the Textus Receptus in the majority text with 95%.*” The ICCC does not claim that the Textus Receptus (TR) is a perfectly restored copy of the *autographs* for the New Testament (NT) but only emphasises the NT being preserved in the Majority Text.<sup>4</sup>

(b) God used the KJV translators to restore (re-inspire) the autographs. This assertion was made by Jeffrey Khoo in the article “*In Defence Of The Far Eastern Bible College, The Reformed Faith, And The Reformation Bible*”, *Burning Bush*, July 2006.

The position of the ICCC is

*Believing the Holy Scriptures of the **originals** [autographs] to be fully inspired with its words and genders and being complete as God's revelation to man without error;*

Jeffrey Khoo is confused and equates the ‘**originals**’ [autographs] with the Masoretic Text and Textus Receptus, claiming them to be **inspired**. To quote him,

*This is what VPP affirms—the Hebrew/Aramaic words of the Masoretic Text, and the Greek words of the Textus Receptus **are the very inspired and preserved words of God**,... (emphasis by authors)*

## 6. Conclusion.

VPP is not really about the preservation of God's Word, but rather, the **restoring of the Originals by the KJV translators through God's special guidance much like the prophets and apostles of old**. The truth is that the KJV translators used a variety of Greek texts, the Latin Vulgate and earlier translations of English Bibles to translate the KJV. F.H.A. Scrivener who was an expert in ancient texts and the KJV in its various editions estimated that well over 100 words or verses followed closely the Latin Vulgate rather than the Greek text. **VPP is really about the KJV underlying the Greek TR.** (refer to paper compiled by

---

<sup>3</sup> Paul Ferguson in critiquing the article ‘Mark Them Which Cause Divisions’, *Burning Bush*, July 2008, p.101

<sup>4</sup> VPP effectively identified Scrivener's TR (non-existent at the time of the KJV translators) as the *autograph* and therefore limits the preservation to the single TR text.

Philip Tang <http://www.truth.sg/response/scrivener.htm> and also the article by Bunning <http://mysite.verizon.net/bunning/SGNTI/Texts/SCR/SCR.htm> )

Affiliated bodies to the ICCC such as the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (founded by fundamentalists Carl McIntire and J. Gresham Machen) categorically rejected VPP in their *Resolution of Bible Inspiration*<sup>5</sup>.

**For reasons aforesaid and the SCCC and ICCC Statements exhibited, it is obvious that Jeffrey Khoo has misrepresented the ICCC and SCCC on their position on “The Preservation of Holy Scriptures”.**

Annexure:

- A. Bible Resolution made at Amsterdam (1998)
- B. ICCC Statement “On The Holy Scriptures and the Bible Translation” Jerusalem Nov. 2000.
- C. ICCC Statement “On the Scriptures” Korea June 8-24, 2005
- D. SCCC Statement on “Inspiration and Translation of the Holy Scriptures” 29 Oct 2005
- E. SCCC Statement on “Verbal Plenary Preservation” 27 Oct 2007
- F. IBPFM “Bible Resolution on Inspiration”, Oct 2005

---

<sup>5</sup> See Annexure F. The IBPFM writes “We believe in the acceptance, propagation, and militant defence of all of historic fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith...This Mission Board belongs to The Associated Missions of the International Council of Christian Churches (TAM- ICCC)...”.

<http://www.ibpfm.org/purpose.php#Our%20Faith>

## **Annexure A.**

### **Bible Resolution made at Amsterdam (1998)**

WHEREAS despite the fact that there are over 150 so-called “versions” of the Bible extant around the world today, there have been no new discoveries of ancient texts to legitimize this plethora of modern “versions” pouring off the presses and being sold as the “latest” Bible, and

WHEREAS a single exception to this has been the discovery of the now-famous Dead Sea Scrolls in the 1940’s in caves on the Judean mountain range and contained in clay jars with the texts written on leather and papyrus, and

WHEREAS fragments of all the books of the Hebrew Bible (except Esther) confirm almost to the letter the accuracy of the Authorized King James Version of the Old Testament, and

WHEREAS most of the modern versions are based upon the discredited and perverted Westcott and Hort transcription and not on the Textus Receptus (The Received Text) attested to by scholars for over 300 years, from which the Authorized King James Version was translated by the greatest theologians and textual critics of 17th Century England, who were academic experts, indeed, in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic, and

WHEREAS self-styled theologians who reject the inerrancy and inspiration of the Scriptures have gone so far as to make a looseleaf notebook and tear out those passages they do not accept, even organizing what they designate as “Jesus Seminars” across the United States in which they declare that Jesus never did and said the things recorded in the four Gospels; and that the Gospel of John is the worst and is 90 percent fiction, and the obedient secular press quotes them from coast-to-coast, and

WHEREAS this same KING JAMES VERSION has been used around the world by an overwhelming majority of Christian Clergymen, Evangelists, Bible Teachers, Missionaries and Youth Leaders to bring millions of people to have a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ for more than three centuries,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the International Council of Christian Churches, assembled in the historic English Reformed Church in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, observing its 50th Anniversary, August 11-15, 1998, urge all Bible-believing churches worldwide to use only the Authorized KING JAMES VERSION in their services and in their teaching ministry, and warn the followers of Christ against these innumerable “new” bibles which are not translations at all, but revisions conforming to the personal bias and views of those who have originated them and who are profiting by commercial sales of such.

## **Annexure B**

### **ICCC STATEMENT (NO. 11) passed at Jerusalem, 2000 ON “THE HOLY SCRIPTURES AND THE BIBLE TRANSLATIONS”**

Believing the Holy Scriptures of the originals to be fully inspired with its words and genders and being complete as God's revelation to man without error;

Believing that God not only inspired the Bible without errors in fact, doctrine and judgment but preserved the Scriptures in all ages for all eternity as the Westminster Confession of Faith standard says - "the O.T. in Hebrew and the N.T. in Greek"..."being immediately inspired by God and by His singular care an providence kept pure in all ages are therefore kept authentical...." they are to be translated into vulgar language of every nation unto which they come;"

Believing the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, gave us a supernatural gift, and both inspired and preserved it. By inspired we mean that the Holy Spirit moved in the hearts of its human authors that they recorded the very words that God wanted written in the Bible using the personality and background of its writers but without error. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." II Peter 1:21.

Believing God safeguarded the Bible in times past and will continue to do so in the future and all eternity. He preserved one Holy Scripture, the Bible. "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away;" Matthew 24:35

Believing the O.T. has been preserved in the Masoretic text and the N.T. in the Textus Receptus, combined they gave us the complete Word of God. The King James Version in English has been faithfully translated from these God-preserved manuscripts. Other good Protestants versions have been translated around the world in many languages based on the Masoretic and Textus Receptus until 1881 when Drs. Westcott and Hort used a shorter text removing many words, phrases and sections by following the eclectic watered down polluted Vaticanus and Siniaticus manuscripts;

These manuscripts differ widely among themselves and with others amount to less than 5% of the manuscript evidence. God preserved the Textus Receptus in the majority text with 95%. This is called the traditional, or majority text. It is also called Eastern Byzantine text and also the manuscripts that have the longer and fuller texts;

Believing that these longer texts are corroborated by the early century versions from the Greek that were closer in the time of the original Greek manuscripts that have been lost usage in the providence of God. Some of these are the Armenian, Old Latin, the Sirciac Pershita and the Latin Vulgate; these date much before or close to the Vaticanus short version and Siniaticus;

Believing the letters that the early church fathers wrote to the churches and to their colleagues corroborate that the 1000's of quotes from the Scriptures they used, are from the traditional longer texts of the Textus Receptus;

Believing the manuscript evidence is on the side of Textus Receptus and with the many new books that explained this better than in times past and give more documentary manuscript evidence, We the International Council of Christian Churches meeting in Jerusalem, 8-14 November 2000 strongly urge the churches in their pulpits and people at large, to continue to use the time honored and faithful longer translations and not the new shorter versions that follow in too many places the short eclectic-texts. These are very similar to the shorter Westcott and Hort texts that remove or cast doubt on so many passages and words. Furthermore we are not against new versions as such but believe all true and faithful versions must be based on the traditional longer texts that the Holy Spirit preserved through the early century versions, the early church fathers and the faithful Textus Receptus.

## Annexure C.

### ICCC STATEMENT “ON THE SCRIPTURES” Korea June 8-14, 2005”

#### **ON THE SCRIPTURES (ICCC17th World Congress 2005 Statement No. 1)**

We, the International Council of Christian Churches, meeting in our 17<sup>th</sup> World Congress in Korea, June 8 – 14, 2005 deplore the widespread tendency to separate Christ from the Scriptures. A Christ who is not the Christ of the Bible is simply a product of human imagination. There is no way to know about Christ except to read and study the Bible.

The Lord Jesus Christ set the seal of His approval upon the Bible. He recognized it as inspired by God and altogether free from error. He gave His approval clearly and plainly to the Old Testament, as God’s Word, and He authenticated the New Testament in advance.

We do not worship the Bible, but we recognize the Bible as the only dependable source of knowledge regarding the God whom we worship. It is only through knowledge regarding the God whom we worship. It is only through knowledge of the facts contained in the Bible that man can learn how to be saved through all eternity through faith in the salvation accomplished by our Saviour Jesus Christ. Therefore we call upon all professing Christians to recognize the Bible as the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We admonish God’s people to study the Bible daily, prayerfully seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit to meditate upon it, to memorize whole sections of it, and to follow its clear teachings in every aspect of life.

It is the duty of all Christians to do everything possible to lead people to accept Christ as Saviour, and to spread knowledge of the Bible as widely as they can. We are grateful to those who labor to produce translations that will present the Word of God as accurately as possible.

We view with sorrow that in recent years there have been translations produced by men who do not believe in the inerrancy of the Scripture, or by committees that have included individuals who even deny such basic doctrines as the deity of Christ, His miraculous birth, and His bodily resurrection and the Messianic Prophecies.

## Annexure D

### SINGAPORE COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

### 新加坡基督教联合会

Registered Address : 5 Tavistock Avenue, Singapore 555108  
R of S 259/56 Charity Reg No. 48-000293311  
Tel: 62884786/62841987/62875466 Fax: 62834864/62883664/62843567  
E-mail: [khsc@iccc.org.sg](mailto:khsc@iccc.org.sg)

#### INSPIRATION AND TRANSLATIONS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

The Singapore Council of Christian Churches (SCCC), at its Reformation Rally 2005 and 49<sup>th</sup> AGM on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2005, reiterates its stand "On the Scriptures".

2 As the national affiliate in Singapore of the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC), SCCC identifies itself with ICCC on the stand on the Scriptures in the following three broad ways:

- i) **The inerrancy and infallibility of the Scriptures in the original languages**, as stated at ICCC Constitution, Article 2a and SCCC Constitution, Article 4(1) which reads in full as follows: "Among other equally biblical truths, we believe and maintain the plenary Divine inspiration of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and as the Word of God, the supreme and final authority in faith and life"
- ii) **The established practice, as far as the Bible in the English language is concerned, of using the King James Version**, which the ICCC and all its affiliated bodies believe to have been faithfully translated from the God-preserved manuscripts of the Hebrew-language traditional Masoretic Text for the Old Testament and the Greek language accepted Textus Receptus for the New Testament. (ICCC 16<sup>th</sup> World Congress Statement "ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES AND BIBLE TRANSLATIONS, November 2000, Jerusalem).
- iii) **On other translations of the Bible** : SCCC and ICCC are grateful to those who have laboured or are labouring to produce other translations that present the Word of God as accurately as possible, but view with sorrow that in recent years there have been translations produced by men who do not believe in the inerrancy of the Scriptures, or by committees that have included individuals who even deny such basic doctrines as the deity of Christ, His miraculous birth and bodily resurrection, and the Messianic Prophecies (ICCC 17<sup>th</sup> World Congress Statement No. 1 "ON THE SCRIPTURES", Korea, June 8 – 14, 2005)).

3 Recently some brethren in Singapore have been advocating that apart from the verbal plenary inspiration (VPI) and consequent inerrancy and infallibility of The Scriptures in the original languages, the Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Greek Textus Receptus manuscripts immediately underlying the King James Version are also verbally and plenary preserved being an exact replica of the Original Autographs. This Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP) theory for the KJV's underlying texts thus claiming "100% perfection" for the KJV, is without Biblical foundation. This has not been, and is not the position of the ICCC or SCCC or other ICCC-affiliated organizations. The SCCC therefore calls upon its members and all other Bible-believing brethren not to subscribe to this new, Biblically unfounded and unproven theory.

The national body in Singapore of the International Council  
of Christian Churches "for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ"

## **Annexure E.**

### **SCCC Statement on “Verbal Plenary Preservation” 27 Oct 2007**

#### **VERBAL PLENARY PRESERVATION**

The Singapore Council of Christian Churches (SCCC), at its 51<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting and Reformation Rally 2007 on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2007, hereby reiterates its stand taken on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2005, against the position of the Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP) of the Holy Scriptures.

Sadly the debate on VPP has thrown both its adherents and dissenters into much confusion. This will need to be clarified so that both sides of the debate will be fairly presented. We recognize that in the past, because of the changing face of VPP, this position has not been clearly understood or refuted. We prayerfully, lovingly and firmly deal with VPP, which we understand from the Scriptures as an incursion into the doctrine of Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI).

We maintain, as we did in 2005, that the constitutional position of the SCCC and the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) remains as our unalterable position, namely, that "Among other equally biblical truths, we believe and maintain the plenary Divine inspiration of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and as the Word, of God, the supreme and final authority in faith and life" (ICCC Constitution, Article 2a and SCCC Constitution, Article 4.1).

This statement herein declares clearly that VPP is an aberrant position incompatible with the high view of Scripture we have taken from the beginning, namely, in which we affirm both the infallibility and inerrancy of the 66 books of the canonical Scriptures.

SCCC Reformation Rally & 51<sup>st</sup> AGM Statement No. 3  
Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> October 2007



**Annexure F.**

**IBPFM RESOLUTION ON BIBLE INSPIRATION**

**(First published in Nov/Dec 2005 issue of FEBEACON)**

*"We, the members of the Board of Directors of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, wholeheartedly believe and affirm that the inspired Word of God has absolutely no error in the Original Autographs. However, we reject the theory of Verbal Plenary Preservation propounded by some, who dogmatically claim that the Greek and Hebrew copies immediately underlying the King James Version are an exact replica of the Original Autographs. The insistent promotion of this theory has resulted in schism among brethren."*