

# AN ANALYSIS OF SOME CURRENT METHODS OF TEXTUAL CRITICISM

## Introduction: An Overview Of Current Methods

In dealing with the textual variants of the NT, five approaches have come about which will be the subject of our attention and analysis in this paper. They are not mutually exclusive of one another in their methodology, yet each has a particular emphasis which sets it apart from the others.

The first is the approach of those who see textual variants as an aid in pursuing one goal of the historical-critical method of interpretation. They wish to trace the evolution of the various forms which, they say, the story of Jesus took as it was told among the pious but primitive people of the early Christian church. Such unbelieving critics see the variants as clues to the interpretation of the Bible as a piece of literature which has constantly undergone change since the first oral traditions out of which, they say, it evolved. Since this approach to the variants is so far gone that it no longer concerns itself with finding the original reading - it views such a pursuit as an outdated academic abstraction - we will say no more about it.

The second approach is called "Rational Eclecticism." Basically it ignores the external evidence of the manuscripts for the most part, and relies heavily on internal considerations such as which reading fits the author's usage, which reading makes the best sense in the context, etc. This is the method advocated by Keith Elliott, and also to a large degree by J. K. Elliott, et. al.

A third approach goes back basically to Westcott and Hort. For lack of a better name we will refer to it as "Alexandrian Eclecticism." Like Rational Eclecticism, it makes use of the internal evidence, but tempers this by giving equal consideration to the manuscript evidence. Where there is any doubt about the manuscript evidence, the nod will usually be given to the Alexandrian witnesses, especially Aleph and B. This approach predominates in the Nestle text. It also, though perhaps to a lesser degree, characterizes the U.B.S. text. (cf. Example 1, attached)

A fourth approach is simply to use the Textus Receptus, that Greek text which was available to Luther and the translators of the King James Version. In this method, internal evidence is used very little. Instead, one kind of text (the Byzantine) is considered the original unless all the other manuscript evidence unites with all the internal evidence to show that the TR is definitely wrong. This is the approach of some Lutherans and Baptists, some of whom will even go so far as to say that the KJV reading is right no matter what the textual evidence may be. (cf. Example 2, attached)

A fifth approach is what we will call "Simple Eclecticism." It weighs all the manuscript evidence without any preference for one text type per se; it also carefully considers the internal evidence. Various readings are eliminated on the basis of weak MS evidence and/or one or more of the items of internal evidence until the original reading is determined. This is the method espoused by some outside of our church, but also in the past by several men of the Missouri Synod (Fuerbinger, Arndt) and by Prof. Blume of our synod. After discussing types 2, 3, and 4 listed above, we will at the close of this paper attempt to suggest a simple methodology for this fifth approach which we hope to show is preferable to all the others.

## The Variants In Proper Perspective

Before we go any further, it might be well to stop first and put the matter of textual variants into its proper perspective. Variants do not affect any sizeable percentage of the NT text. When we hear of massive numbers of variants we need to remember three things: (here we would like to quote Westcott and Hort because even though they mistakenly say that the transcription of the NT in its earliest years was loose because those first generations of Christians, they said, did not consider it an inspired Holy Scripture, yet they made these 3 points in their introduction):

- a) When trivialities such as misspellings and insignificant changes in word order are eliminated, most of the variants disappear and only 1/1000 of the text can be called in any sense substantial variation.
- b) None of these remaining "substantial variations" involve any passages which in any way will affect any doctrine of Scripture.
- c) The abundance, variety, and comparative excellence of the witnesses to the NT text ( MSS, versions, quotations from the Fathers, lectionaries) assures us that we do not have to resort to conjectural emendations when we are dealing with any of those passages among the 1/1000 of the text which involve variants worth considering.

At the same time it would be a mistake for these reasons to write off the matter of textual variants as of absolutely no importance to the parish pastor. There are some times when he will be asked questions about it and he should be ready to answer. Textual variants will be used more and more by those who embrace the historical-critical method of interpretation to defend themselves and to mount attacks on Scripture. Even more importantly, the two or three<sup>most</sup> usesable modern translations indicate variant readings by footnotes; we should be able to answer the questions of our parishioners with information which does not unsettle them but truly satisfies their legitimate curiosity about these footnotes. Most important of all, the Greek texts we use (Nestle, UBS) do not always agree with KJV or any of the usesable modern translations; in preparing a text for a sermon or in studying a verse for presentation and discussion in Bible Class, when such a variant occurs we should be able to handle it.

## The Witnesses And Text-Types

In this brief portion we wish to briefly review the basic parts of the standard chart for textual criticism; since they will constantly be referred to in the rest of this paper, a quick review for reference may be very helpful for those who have forgotten or are unfamiliar with them.

Four text-types have been suggested. They are listed to the left. The major witnesses for each type are listed to the right of each.

<u>Text-type</u>	<u>Greek witnesses</u>	<u>Version witnesses</u>
Alexandrian	Aleph, B, A (not the Gospels), p 75	Coptic (sa <sup>h</sup> , bo <sup>h</sup> )
Caesarean	Theta, Family 1 and 13 (λ & ϕ)	
Western	D	Latin (it <sup>ha</sup> , it <sup>et</sup> , Syriac (svr <sup>ha</sup> , svr <sup>et</sup> ))

Byzantine

A(Gospels), most  
of the minuscules  
(i.e. the later Greek MSS  
written in small Greek Letters)

Before anyone gets too taken up with this chart, we hasten to add that this chart will not be that important when we get back to our preferred method since it is recognized more and more that text-types are not really that clear and may even be but a passing fancy. But since this is the terminology used by those of the "Alexandrian Eclecticism" and the Textus Receptus supporters, and since we will be spending a good deal of our time on what they have to say, it will be helpful to have this chart in mind to understand what they are talking about.

### The Historical Background

With the invention of the printing press and the printing of the Greek text of the NT, the modern study of textual criticism began. When Erasmus put out the first Greek text, his fame assured this text its immediate wide acceptance in Europe. Erasmus' first edition was based on the few and very late minuscules available to him at the Basel library. He had one minuscule which was of the Western type, but he set it aside in favor of the other Byzantine minuscules. Thus Erasmus printed text was the Byzantine type.

Printers for the next 100 years (to the middle of the 17 century) continued to print this same basic text although a few other minuscules and <sup>the</sup>uncial (D) of the Western type were known by them. Stephanus' edition of 1550 became the Textus Receptus in England; the Eliziver brothers' edition of 1633 was the TR of continental Europe. Essentially they are the same, that is, the Byzantine text-type. It should be noted, however, that some of the editions of the NT already during this time also printed variants as footnotes or in the margin. So although it was essentially the Byzantine type which was printed, everyone recognized that there were variants worth noting.

As more witnesses of the NT text were uncovered, and thus more variants were noted, the variants printed with the TR in the 1700's grew in number. Some began to use these variants with delight to poke fun at verbal inspiration; others were impelled by a love for the inspired text to learn all they could about the variants in order to uphold the integrity of the text. Among the latter were two Lutherans in Germany who contributed some of the basic tools of modern textual criticism. Benzel first suggested that the manuscripts fell into various text-types and also proposed some of the first rules of thumb for considering the readings according to internal evidence. Tischendorf contributes more to MS evidence than any other one person by spending a lifetime uncovering new witnesses, collating them, and printing the evidence of all the variants for a comprehensive study of textual problems.

In the 19th century, the TR was gradually abandoned and editions of the NT were put out which reflected the editor's choice of variants in the text itself rather than just as footnotes to the TR. Tischendorf, for example, after his discovery of Aleph, printed a text which favored this MS over others. Westcott and Hort in 1881 printed a text which favored B over all others. It should be noted that both the Tischendorf and the W-H text favored the Alexandrian text-type over the Byzantine (or TR). To the present time it is still the basic premise of most of the men working in textual criticism that the Alexandrian text is to be preferred. As we shall also see,

however, there have been those who (with valid and some invalid reasons) continued to uphold the Byzantine; also, most recently there have been some such as Colwell and Finegan who have begun to retrench a bit on the whole matter of text-types and therefore also to back off a little on the preference for the Alexandrian witnesses.

One final point should be added to this brief historical survey; that is the local text-type idea of Streeter in the 1920's. He proposed the idea that the witnesses represented how the NT text was read at various localities (i.e. Alexandria, Antioch, Caesarea, Gaul, and Carthage) in the early Christian church. Both Prof. Arndt and Prof. Blume recognized some value in this approach also.

#### Analysis of the Approach Called Rational Eclecticism

Rational eclecticism insists that the choice of the preferred variant in any given passage should depend almost entirely on internal considerations. Their argument is that the NT MSS have such a mixed textual character that it is impossible to discover the original reading or even separate local texts by lines of descent. Therefore Keith Elliott suggests the use of these criteria to arrive at the original:

- 1) The reading which best follows the author's style.
- 2) The reading which is least likely to have been an alteration to make "good Greek".
- 3) The reading which is most Semitic.
- 4) The reading which is longest (because copyist's errors are more often along the line of dropping rather than adding things).
- 5) The reading which does not show signs of theological tampering.
- 6) The reading which does not show signs of harmonization (such as parallel Gospel accounts or OT quotations).

The major problem with rational eclecticism is that it makes textual criticism too subjective. There are some merits in considering all of the above, but who is in a position (in the face of MS evidence to the contrary) to say definitively that a NT writer never strays from his usual style or can never use good Greek. None can say with any confidence that the NT books were written in Aramaic (in fact an article we recently read said that archaeological evidence showed that Greek was the common language spoken in public in Palestine at the time of Jesus) so the Semitic argument is far from established. Many textual critics argue that the shorter reading is to be preferred to a longer because copyists tended to add rather than omit. This is a favorite axiom of those who hold to a loose-handling-of-the-text theory. (There is, of course, also good reason to argue that variants came into the text in this way as the result of copying errors.) Likewise theological tampering can be argued both ways. For example in Hebrews 2:9 the reading "without God" ( $\text{χωρὶς }\thetaεοῦ$ ) is said to be a change in reading made by the Nestorians to support their doctrine; while others emphatically argue that the reading "by the grace of God" ( $\text{διὰ }\thetaεοῦ$ ) is a change in reading made by the orthodox to remove any support the Nestorians might see in this passage. By the way in this passage the manuscript evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of "by the grace of God."

In the face of such resultant subjectivism, we feel that rational eclecticism is not the route we would like to follow. At the same time, however, we also want to emphasize that the study of internal considerations is a part of good textual criticism and so the six criteria listed above will be used in the method which we will suggest later (but not exclusively as Rational Eclecticism proposes).

### Analysis of The Approach Called Alexandrian Eclecticism

The approach we have called "Alexandrian Eclecticism" is the approach which one finds in such popular texts on textual criticism as Greenlee and Metzger (and recently also Finegan). It adopts the basic premise of Westcott and Hort about the three major text-types:

- 1) The Byzantine text is to be almost totally rejected because it is proven, they say, by the conflate readings and interpolations to be a late recension.
- 2) The Western text is helpful, but it reflects the loose attitude of the early Christians toward the text by its love of paraphrase and interpolations, and so is very suspect.
- 3) The Alexandrian text as a whole (N.B. not just B as W-H said) is the best recension and is closest to the original.

In addition to this view of the evidence of the text-types, the internal considerations such as those proposed by the rational eclectics are also carefully weighed before a preferred reading is chosen. Thus this method includes both internal and external (i.e. manuscript) evidence in its methodology, with the nod going to the Alexandrian text-type whenever one is left in doubt.

This method underlies both the Nestle and the UBS texts. The Nestle text most often prints the reading which the majority of three other texts has (i.e. Tischendorf's, Westcott-Hort's and Weiss'). Since these three all favor the Alexandrian text the Nestle text also does. A reading of Metzger's companion volume for the UBS text will quickly reveal that when in doubt the "best texts" (i.e. the Alexandrian) are given the nod in the UBS text also. (of Example 1, attached)

While "Alexandrian eclecticism" is a less subjective approach than "rational eclecticism" because it does give weight to the evidence of the witnesses, yet its approach to the witnesses themselves (based on its view of the various text-types as recensions) leaves something to be desired. We should be aware that these men who call these text-types "recensions" do not have any shred of real evidence for such an event as a recension taking place in the third or fourth century as they claim. A recension is the idea that one man took all the many different texts which existed in his area at the time (and were confusing people) and pulled them all together into one text which then was used by all thereafter in that area. The postulating of such recensions is based on their mistaken idea (primarily resulting from their denial of verbal inspiration) that the NT text was the result of an evolution characterized by a free handling of the text for about two centuries in the early Christian community. This is the root out of which the theory comes by which the Byzantine text is summarily dismissed, the Western text (though it is acknowledged as the earliest) is made very suspect, and the Alexandrian text for very subjective reasons (based again mostly on internal considerations) is declared closest to the original. We need to remember that though the Alexandrian texts are usually promoted by those who hold to this "recension theory", we ought not therefore reject these texts as though they are the product of a recension. If we reject the recension theory, as we must on the basis of Scripture and the lack of historical evidence, we would be less than honest if we then still said that the Alexandrian texts were the product of a recension and therefore untrustworthy. The Alexandrian texts are valuable since they are the oldest uncials we have, and thus deserve our attention in considering most variants.

It is interesting to see that one of the chief critics of "Alexandrian Eclecticism" is J. R. Elliott who we noticed earlier leans toward rational eclecticism. In a number of articles we read (one of which is an evaluation of the UBS text) he shows how the same internal evidence, which is used to reject some of the readings of the Byzantine and Western texts, just as often supports these two types over against the Alexandrian. G. D. Kilpatrick likewise in several articles faults the Greek texts being printed today (Nestle, UBS) with the failure to give due attention to the Western and Byzantine texts. He feels that the most of the deliberate changes made in the text are stylistic (either away from Semitisms or inferior Koine to better Greek) and that these are most prevalent in the Alexandrian text which makes it very suspect also.

It should not be surprising in view of such conflicting conclusions among these men that a whole new approach to the witnesses should be forthcoming. At the present time a committee chaired by E. C. Colwell is at work producing an apparatus criticus for one of the Gospels based on a different collation of the variants (the International Greek NT. Project). This retrenching has been prompted by the discovery of the NT papyri texts which date back to the 2nd century (Beatty and Bodmer papyri= p45, p46, p47, p66; p75). A study of these papyri has shown that Byzantine readings, which according to the recension theory weren't supposed to exist until the late 3rd century, were already in existence in the early 2nd century. Several men flatly state that all the variants of any substance (the 1/1000) were in existence in the 2nd century and that the fact that every early witness of the NT text has a "mixed text" (i.e. of the 3 types) means the text-type touchstone and its companion the genealogical method must be abandoned or at least greatly modified.

Modification seems to be the approach of Colwell since he advocates a new grouping of witnesses based on two criteria especially: MSS which agree in at least 70% of the cases where variants occur, and which support each other consistently in readings not found in other groups. On this basis he suggests a preliminary or sampling grouping which consists of 28 members. A list of these is attached.

We hasten to add that our scoring of the "Alexandrian Eclecticism" does not throw a large shadow over the Nestle and UBS texts which are basically its products. Remember again we are talking about 1/1000 of the text where there are "variations of substance" and that only a minority of the readings in the 1/1000 are such where Nestle and UBS perhaps gave undue preference to the Alexandrian MSS.

#### Analysis Of The Textus Receptus Approach

When "Alexandrian Eclecticism" was popularized by T-H's book in 1881, there was a reaction which went too far in defending the Byzantine text. This we call the TR approach because its purpose was to prevent the TR(which had been printed in the 16th-18th centuries) from being dropped in the 19th and now the 20th century. The arguments for the TR are these:

- 1) The Byzantine text can be traced back to the 2nd century through the Syriac Peshitto (the Syriac vulgate).
- 2) The proof of the Byzantine text being a recension from the Western and Alexandrian texts is not historical but only the product of the imagination of those who deny verbal inspiration.
- 3) It seems unlikely that God would permit the church to use the Greek NT according the Byzantine text from the 4th to the 19th centuries only then to abandon it on the basis of a few Alexandrian MSS and the theories of men who deny verbal inspiration.

- 4) The MSS of the Byzantine type from the early church were used so much that they were worn out, while the Alexandrian and Western type MSS survived in such good shape because they were corrupt texts and so were unused.
- 5) The vast majority of the MSS we have today are of the Byzantine type which shows that it was the preferred text and so was copied a lot, while the few Alexandrian and Western copies show that they weren't copied much and so were most likely unacceptable text types.
- 6) The text from "conservative" Antioch is to be preferred to a text from the hand of the "liberal scholars" of Alexandria.
- 7) The Alexandrian text-type is a shorter text which leaves out important parts of Scripture because of unbelief.

While one might at first be tempted to line up with these men who proclaim that they are the defenders of verbal inspiration, a second and closer look reveals that too many of their arguments either beg the question or are an argument from silence. The charge that portions of Scripture were dropped because of unbelief just doesn't stand up under careful study. The Peshitto (Syriac vulgate) does not seem to be a second century witness but rather a 4th or 5th century witness. There are no Byzantine witnesses before Chrysostom (4th century), but all the witnesses, as has been noted earlier several times, are mixed texts. The work done on variants in the 19th century was not done only by those who deny verbal inspiration, but just as often by those who were seeking to defend the integrity of the NT text. The massive evidence which God has permitted to be uncovered in the last two centuries is also as much the contribution of the Greek speaking church of the East as the Byzantine text was. The labeling of the recensions as a myth of the naturalistic theologians is a valid point, and that the Byzantine text of the Eastern church can be traced to Antioch is a point in its favor though hardly automatically decisive. Nor was its use for so many centuries as exclusive as the TR people claim. There were also numerous non-Byzantine minuscules and versions in use. When the TR was printed, as was noted earlier, many of the printers also called attention to significant variants. A study of the Byzantine text indicates that it did not escape the common copying errors any more than other texts. Nevertheless, it is a very good text and also deserves our attention in the consideration of most variants.

One man whom the defenders of the TR love to quote is Burdon who was one of the first to oppose W-H in England. However, we found it interesting that Burdon proposed seven tests for textual variants (antiquity, number, catholicity, respectability of witnesses, continuity, context, reasonableness) which come very close to what we will propose as the best method. Though Burdon leaned heavily in the direction of the TR, he does say, "I persistently advocate in every case of a supposed doubtful reading that an appeal should be unreservedly made to catholic antiquity, and that the combined verdict of MSS, versions, Fathers shall be regarded as decisive." This is hardly the blind following of the TR which is proposed by Hills (KJV Defended) and Fuller (Which Bible?) who love to quote Burdon.

Again it should be noted that anyone who does follow the TR is not going to end up with any different doctrine than one who follows the "Alexandrian Eclecticism" since that 1/1000 of the text involved with variants has no real doctrinal consequences. Those who on one side brand the Byzantine text as "untrustworthy", and those on the other side who insist that to abandon the TR shows the influence of "Darwinism", higher criticism, and incipient modern religious liberalism

are name callers of whom we might well say, "A plague on both your houses."

### The Approach Called Simple Eclecticism

We believe the best method is a simple eclecticism which starts with no preferences either for internal evidence over external evidence or vice versa, nor any preference for any one witness or group of witnesses over against others. Rather the decision will be made by eliminating variants either on the basis of internal or external considerations until the original reading is left. In some cases one will still be left with two readings between which it is hard to choose, but one will find that those two readings are so close or so complementary in meaning that either one can be used with no real difference in the final sense of the passage.

Perhaps the witnesses to each variant should be considered first in arriving at a decision. If the witnesses which support one reading:

- 1) Are not widespread since they do not represent more than one locality (cf. Streeter's chart of local texts and Colwell's groups, which are attached), and
- 2) Are not early (cf. the dates given for each witness in the introduction or enclosed charts in the Nestle and UBS texts, a portion attached),

then that reading can be safely eliminated, unless internal considerations give some very great weight to it. (N.B. Very simply: Is the reading both ancient and widespread?)

The two internal considerations to weigh are:

- 1) the variant which best fits the context and/or the author's usage (this would require a good exegesis of the text and a knowledge of the author's style and vocabulary)
- 2) the variant which is least likely to be explained by a copyist's error or deliberate change (cf. the six criteria of Rational Eclecticism mentioned earlier; suggestions of this sort may also be gleaned from Metzger's companion volume to the UBS, cf. Example 3)

But what if one ends up with two readings which are both ancient and widespread, both fit the context and the author's usage, and neither can be explained by a copying error (cf. Example 4 attached)?

In such an instance Prof. Blume was very taken up by Bless' and Zahn's suggestion that at least in Luke and Acts (where a good percentage of the "variants of substance" occur) there is the possibility that two very similar forms of the text were in circulation in the church, both from the inspired pen of Luke. Very early in the transmission of the text these two forms became mixed since copyists could rightfully use either of the readings or even combine them. At first this suggestion jars a person, but when we remember that God inspired several of the Gospel writers to speak about the same event in Jesus' life with different choices of words which are always complementary and never contradictory, - and when we remember that Paul by inspiration often spoke about the same concept in several letters with slightly different yet complementary words, it is clear that two slightly different yet complementary forms of Luke and Acts by the same writer does not militate against the way the Bible leads us to understand verbal inspiration. Though only a conjecture, it is an attempt to solve the major puzzle facing textual critics, namely, that of a mixed

text already in the very earliest witnesses of the 2nd century. As we noted at the outset of this paper and in connection with "Alexandrian Eclecticism", those who embrace the historical-critical method of interpretation, or just deny verbal inspiration, simply use the mixed text as a proof of the evolution of the text; but this really doesn't completely solve the problem for them either because they are still puzzled why the variants always seem to point to only two sources. Since we do not have either Scriptural or absolute historical proof for this idea of two inspired writings of Luke and Acts, we should speak of it only as a possible solution to the puzzle of the early mixed witnesses (not as a defence of verbal inspiration, the certainty of which rests on God-given faith not historical props) and perhaps to caution ourselves that a final decision between two well-attested and very complementary readings may not always be necessary.

### Conclusion

I close with the reminder once more not to make too much of the importance of variants. A paper such as this might tend to blow the whole matter out of proportion. My call to the Seminary asked me to make this a part of my NT studies and teaching. The year which the Lord permitted me to study with Prof. Blume was enough to give me a keen interest in this somewhat technical area of NT studies; it was not enough for me to begin to assimilate even a small portion of the acquaintance in this field which Prof. Blume had. I say this only to caution you that what is presented here today is only the result of some study with Prof. Blume and a modicum amount of reading by a novice in these matters. However, if a few things which have been said, and the simple suggestions made, will be of some benefit to you in the matter of variants, our purpose will have been fulfilled.

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	ALEXANDRIA.	ANTIOCH.	CAESAREA.	ITALY AND GAUL.	CARTHAGE.
Primary Authority	B	Syr. S.	Θ 505 <sup>MS.</sup>	D	B <sup>MS.</sup> A
Secondary do.	W L Sah. Bob.	Syr. C.	2 &c. 28 &c. 28 700 (Wien.) Old Choragic	δ σ	(W <sup>MS.</sup> ) δ
Tertiary do.	C, SS. W <sup>MS.</sup> Δ <sup>MS.</sup> Σ <sup>MS.</sup> Frag. P. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15.	Syr. Pesh. (Armen.)	1424 &c. 524 M. E. O. Φ 157	ff <sup>MS.</sup> N <sup>MS.</sup> I <sup>MS.</sup> r <sup>MS.</sup> c <sup>MS.</sup> M <sup>MS.</sup> Frag. n (I. o)	σ <sup>MS.</sup> τ <sup>MS.</sup>
Supplementary	679 <sup>MS.</sup> L. J. 632 12A1 X	Syr. Hcl. Syr. Hier.	U A 1071 1804 Old Arm.	f, q, l, q (?) f	m
Patristic	Origen A.D. 230 Cyril Alex. 430		Origen A.D. 240 Eusebius 325	Tatian 170 Irenaeus 185	Cyprian 250

2 &c. = 1—22—123—123—200—872<sup>MS.</sup>—1378—1582—4128. 23 &c. = 12—62—326—230—368—343—788—820—630—802—1582—1703.  
1424 &c. = 28 MSS., including W, cited by Routh as 10. Ryzation Text: δ V (I); E V G H; (A, K II, Y); (P); (W<sup>MS.</sup>).  
Mixed Frag. P Q R S. N. B.—2 &c. r frag. 3 = Bod. I<sup>o</sup>; 15 &c. r frag. 10 = Bod. II, Cod. I<sup>o</sup> misleadingly includes II with II. 29. 324. EKA, 760.

FIG. 4. Chart of Witnesses and the Local Texts  
(from R. H. Stretton, *The Four Gospels*, p. 706)

### Collins' preliminary or sampling groups:

F	28	K' (SVR)
A	33	K' (EF GH)
B	565	K
C	700	
D	792	bohairic
L	2427	sahidic
W	Fam I	african
4	Fam II	italian
G	Fam III	syriac S
T	Fam IV	syriac C

# Example 1

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congruous. In view of the balance of probabilities, as well as the strong witnesses that support each reading, a majority of the Committee preferred to retain the words, but to enclose them within square brackets.

## 7.6 *τηρεῖ* {B}

The reading *ἀγαπᾷ* in several early witnesses (D<sup>o</sup> W it<sup>a,b,c</sup> Clement Tertullian) may reflect an otherwise lost variant reading of the Septuagint text of Is 20:13, or it may be merely a typical Western deviation of the text of Mark. In neither case, however, is it to be preferred to the reading supported by p<sup>46</sup> N A B L Δ Θ f<sup>10</sup> 33 505 700 892 it<sup>d,f,g,i,l,n</sup> vg syr<sup>e,h</sup> cop<sup>m,p</sup> goth arm geo Diatessaron<sup>n</sup>.

## 7.7-8 *ἀνθρώπων, ἀφέτε . . . ἀνθρώπων.* {A}

The Greek text which lies behind the AV, "as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do," which is absent from the oldest and best witnesses, is doubtless a scribal addition, derived from ver. 4. The fact that the longer reading is found at two different places—at the beginning of ver. 8 (D Θ al) and at the end of ver. 8 (K X II f<sup>10</sup> 33 700 892 al)—likewise indicates its secondary nature.

## 7.9 *στήσομε* {D}

It is most difficult to decide whether scribes deliberately substituted *στήσομε* ("establish") for *τηρήσομε* ("keep"), as being the more appropriate verb in the context, or whether, through inadvertence in copying and perhaps influenced subconsciously by the preceding phrase *τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ*, they replaced *στήσομε* with *τηρήσομε*. The Committee judged that, on the whole, the latter possibility was slightly more probable.

## 7.10 omit verse {B}

This verse, though present in the majority of witnesses, is absent from important African Fathers (N B L Δ<sup>o</sup> al).

<sup>7.9</sup> {C} στήσομε D<sup>o</sup> W Θ f<sup>10</sup> 28 505 it<sup>a,b,c,d,f,g,i,l,n</sup> vg syr<sup>e,h</sup> arm geo Diatessaron<sup>n</sup> Cyprian Zeno Jerome Augustine // τηρήσομε N A K L X Δ II f<sup>10</sup> 33 700 892 1000 1010 1071 1079 1195 1216 1230 1241 1242 1253 1344 1346 1348 2148 2174 Byz Lect it<sup>d,f,g,i,l,n</sup> vg syr<sup>b</sup> cop<sup>m,p</sup> goth eth // τηρητε  
V 10<sup>a</sup>

<sup>7.10</sup> {B} omit verse 10 N B L Δ<sup>o</sup> 28 Lect f<sup>10,a,b,c,d,f,g,i,l,n</sup> cop<sup>m,p</sup> geo<sup>1</sup> // include verse 10 εἰ τις ἔχει ὄντα ἀκάπεψ, ἀκουέτω, (see 4.9, 23) A D K W X Δ<sup>o</sup> Θ II f<sup>10</sup> 33 505 700 892 1000 1010 (1071 δ ἔχειν ὄντα) 1079 1195 1216 1230 1241 1242 1253 1344 1346 1348 2148 2174 Byz Pe, 1st ma, aspt. cop<sup>m,p</sup> it<sup>d,f,g,i,l,n</sup> vg syr<sup>b</sup> cop<sup>m,p</sup> goth arm eth geo<sup>2</sup> Diatessaron<sup>n</sup> Augustine

<sup>1</sup> to Τίποι...πτύχαις οὐει Ex 20:12; Dt 5:18 (Mt 19:19; Eph 6:2) Ο...τελευτῶν Εs 21:17  
Lv 20:9 <sup>2</sup> Ιτε...πτύχαις οὐει Mat 17:26; Mat 4:19; Lk 6:3

Note the statement "the oldest + best witnesses". These are really only the Alexandrian witnesses; the Byzantine + the oldest Western both include this reading.

Note again the preference given the Alexandrian witnesses. The actual lineage of witnesses (given below) shows the weighty evidence for inclusion

### Example 3

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μαὶ σου, περὶ τίνος δὲ προφήτης λέγει τοῦτο;<sup>1</sup> περὶ  
ἕαυτοῦ οὐδὲ περὶ ἔτερου τινός;<sup>2</sup> Ζεῦ σωτῆρας δὲ ὁ Φίλιππος  
τὸ στόχια αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀρβάμενος ἀπὸ τῆς γραφῆς ταύτης  
εὐηγγελίσατο αὐτῷ τὸν Ἰησοῦν. Ζεῦ ὡς δὲ ἐπορεύοντο  
κατὰ τὴν ὄδον, ἥθεν ἐπὶ τὸ ὄδωρ, καὶ φησιν ὁ εὐνοῦχος,  
Ἴδοὺ ὄδωρ τί κωλύει με βαπτισθῆναι;<sup>3</sup> Ζεῦ καὶ ἐκέλευσεν  
οτίηνα τὸ ἄρμα, καὶ κατέβησαν ἀμφότεροι εἰς τὸ ὄδωρ  
ὅ τε Φίλιππος καὶ ὁ εὐνοῦχος, καὶ ἐβάπτισεν αὐτόν.  
Ζεῦ ὅτε δὲ ἀνέβησαν ἐκ τοῦ ὄδατος, πνεῦμα κυρίου ἤρπασεν  
τὸν Φίλιππον, καὶ οὐκ εἶδεν αὐτὸν οὐκέτι ὁ εὐνοῦχος·  
ἐπορεύετο γάρ τὴν ὄδον αὐτοῦ χαίρων. Ήτο Φίλιππος δὲ  
εἰρέθη εἰς Ἀζωτον, καὶ διερχόμενος εὐηγγελίζετο τὰς  
πόλεις πάσσας ἔως τοῦ ἐλθεῖν αὐτὸν εἰς Καισάρειαν.

## The Conversion of Saul

(Ac 22 6-10; 26.23-28)

**9** Ὁ δὲ Σαῦλος, ἐπὶ ἀμπνέων ἀπειλῆσ καὶ φόνου εἰς τοὺς μαθητὰς τοῦ κυρίου, προσελθὼν τῷ ἄρχετει

<sup>136</sup> ΛΑΙ απιτ την 37 γρ<sup>η</sup> Μ Α Β Ε Ρ Φ 049 056 0142 337 μ ΝΚ<sup>η</sup> 104  
181 326 339 436 451 634 1241 1505 2127 2412 2492 2495 (Byz) ειτε νγα<sup>η</sup> κυρι<sup>η</sup>  
ειρ<sup>η</sup> ετι Χρυσοτον Θεοφιλετ<sup>η</sup> // αιτι την 37 ειπε δε ο Φιλικτος,  
Ει πιστειας εξ ολης της καρδιας, ζεστιν<sup>η</sup> αποκριθεις δε είπε, Πιστειω<sup>η</sup>  
την ειον τοι θεον ειναι τοι ιησου<sup>η</sup> Χριστού. Σε απιτ ο Φιλικτος...αιδ<sup>η</sup>  
ο εινοιχος αιτη second δε...αιδ<sup>η</sup> αιτη αιτη second είπεν...απιτ second τον<sup>η</sup> 104  
1630 943 1739 1857 αιτω<sup>η</sup> for ο Φιλικτος...αιδ<sup>η</sup> συναρτη<sup>η</sup> καρδιας...απιτ  
τον<sup>η</sup> ιησου<sup>η</sup> ιησου<sup>η</sup>, 1877 και αποκριθεις for αποκριθεις δε η ιησου<sup>η</sup>  
ιησου<sup>η</sup> απιτ Χριστον<sup>η</sup>, ιησου<sup>η</sup> ζεστιν<sup>η</sup> νγα<sup>η</sup> κυρι<sup>η</sup> ειτε απιτ γεω<sup>η</sup> Ηρακλει<sup>η</sup>  
Τερτιλιον<sup>η</sup> εγριαν<sup>η</sup> Ambrosiaster Pascian Ambrosius Augustinus Theophili<sup>η</sup>  
τε<sup>η</sup> // αιτι την 37 ειπε δε αιτω<sup>η</sup> ο Φιλικτος. Εάν πιστειας εξ ολης της  
καρδιας αυτον<sup>η</sup> αποκριθεις δι ειπε, Πιστειω εις τον Χριστον<sup>η</sup> τον<sup>η</sup>  
ειον τοι θεον. Ε ιτ<sup>η</sup> Greek no<sup>η</sup> ειπεν<sup>η</sup> αιδ<sup>η</sup> την 37 ειπεν δε Φιλικτος,  
Εάν πιστεισης εξ ολης καρδιας<sup>η</sup> και αποκριθη<sup>η</sup> ο εινοιχος αιτω<sup>η</sup>. Πιστειω<sup>η</sup>  
τον<sup>η</sup> θεον ειναι ιησου<sup>η</sup> Χριστον<sup>η</sup>, ειπε

The earliest quotation of 8:36 was by Jerome. The earliest Greek MS in which it occurs is the 6th century uncial E. Note particularly that the Byzantine texts do not include it. Erasmus found it in the margin of only one of the MSS he used, but chose to include it. Thus it appears in the TR.

Acts 9

18 [A] διώκεις (συν *σωτηρία*) 2) παραδίδειν Η Α Β Σ Ρ Ψ 040 056  
0142 33 81 ΣΚ 104 161 326 330 436 451 614 620 630 948 1241 1303 1739 1877  
2127 2412 2492 2495 *Βητ Λεοντίου* εγκόπεδη αριθ // διώκεις.  
ελληνόρ στι τρόπο κέντρα λαττίφεις (συν 26.16) Ε ιταλ. παράγραφος //  
Augustine

<sup>2</sup> 6 ΙΑΙ διώκεστ<sup>η</sup> ἀλλά (see footnote 1) <sup>η</sup> η Α Β Σ Ε Ρ Ψ 048  
656 0142 33 81 89 104 181 326 330 436 451 614 630 945 1241 1505 1739 1877 2127  
2432 2492 2495 *Hyz Lect* <sup>η</sup> ἀλλά; <sup>η</sup> υρπ<sup>η</sup> αγρικ<sup>η</sup> σορπ<sup>η</sup> αρι<sup>η</sup> γεο  
Τηρεματοι Θεοφιλετ<sup>η</sup> // διώκεστ<sup>η</sup> σκληρό<sup>η</sup> σοι τρό<sup>η</sup> κέντρα λαστίχαι.  
Ουρα<sup>η</sup> ιππ<sup>η</sup> // περαγγειρις, durum est tibi contra ultimum calcitrare. 6 Ει  
τρεμενα ne stuprus dixit: Domine, quid me sis facere! Et dominus ad ium:  
6291st περαγγειρις <sup>η</sup> γρη<sup>η</sup> αγρι<sup>η</sup> (teth) Lucifer Ephraem Ambrose Theo-  
phylact<sup>η</sup>

So far as is known, no Greek MS includes the reading indicated to the left in Acts 9:5-6. Euanus translated it into Greek and inserted in his first edition. See its appearance in the TR.

1.21 *ἀνὸς θεοῦ* {B}

The reading that best accounts for the origin of the others is *ἀνὸς θεοῦ*, which is read by p<sup>71</sup> B P 614 1730 syr<sup>b</sup> cop<sup>b</sup> arm al. The reading *ἄγιοι θεοῦ* (K Ψ 33 Byz al) seems to have been suggested by the presence of *ἄγιον* earlier in the sentence; there may also have been palaeographical confusion, if *ἌΝΩΓΥ* was taken for *ἌΓΙΟΓΥ*. The two readings are combined in differing conflations in C 81 l<sup>69</sup> al.

2.4 *σεπαῖς* {D}

The textual evidence is singularly evenly balanced between *σεπαῖς* and *σεπός*. The latter reading, despite its being supported by K A B C 81<sup>nd</sup> cop<sup>2a</sup> al, was regarded by the Committee as a correction (made, perhaps, in Egypt where *σεπός* was current) of the original reading *σεπαῖς*. If, as is generally supposed, 2 Peter depends in part upon Jude, the author of

*These are two examples of the kind of information on internal considerations supplied by the UBS textual commentary by Mittei (cf. also Example 1)*

*The UBS (left) and Mittei charts which supply information regarding the MSS. The dating is indicated in the column with Roman numerals.*

## THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

Principal Manuscripts and Versions  
cited in the Textual Apparatus

Abbreviations: e—Gospels; a—Acts; p—Pauline Epistles; c—General Epistles;  
r—Revelation. Roman numerals indicate approximate date of writing.

Papyrus			Papyri			Uncials		
No.	Content	Date	No.	Content	Date	No.	Content	Date
p <sup>1</sup>	e	III	p <sup>48</sup>	ea	III	A	separ	V
p <sup>2</sup>	e	VI	p <sup>49</sup>	p	II/III	B	sepc	IV
p <sup>3</sup>	e	VI/VII	p <sup>50</sup>	r	III	C	seper	V
p <sup>4</sup>	e	III	p <sup>51</sup>	a	III	D	seac	VI
p <sup>5</sup>	e	III	p <sup>52</sup>	p	III	D	p	VI
p <sup>6</sup>	e	IV	p <sup>53</sup>	a	IV/V	E	se	VI
p <sup>7</sup>	e	IV	p <sup>54</sup>	p	IV/V	G	p	IX
p <sup>10</sup>	p	IV	p <sup>55</sup>	a	VI	H	p	VI
p <sup>11</sup>	p	VII	p <sup>56</sup>	e	VII	I	p	V
p <sup>13</sup>	p	III/IV	p <sup>57</sup>	e	VII	K	e	IX
p <sup>15</sup>	p	III	p <sup>58</sup>	p	VII/VIII	L	sepr	IX
p <sup>16</sup>	p	III/IV	p <sup>59</sup>	e	V/VI	L	e	VIII
p <sup>18</sup>	p	III/IV	p <sup>60</sup>	e	II/III	P	sepr	IX
p <sup>19</sup>	e	IV/V	p <sup>61</sup>	e	II/III	T	sepr	IX
p <sup>21</sup>	e	IV/V	p <sup>62</sup>	p	II/III	T	e	V
p <sup>22</sup>	e	III	p <sup>63</sup>	e	II/III	W	e	V
p <sup>23</sup>	e	III	p <sup>64</sup>	e	II/III	X	e	X
p <sup>26</sup>	r	IV	p <sup>65</sup>	p	VII?	A	e	IX
p <sup>27</sup>	e	IV	p <sup>66</sup>	e	III	G	e	IX
p <sup>28</sup>	p	VI/VII	p <sup>67</sup>	c	III/IV	H	e	IX
p <sup>29</sup>	p	III	p <sup>68</sup>	ac	VII	Ψ	sepc	VIII/IX
p <sup>30</sup>	p	III	p <sup>69</sup>	r	III	Θ	r	X
p <sup>32</sup>	a	VI	p <sup>70</sup>	e	VI	Θ	e	VIII
p <sup>37</sup>	e	VI				Θ	sepc	V
p <sup>38</sup>	e	III/IV				Θ	sepc	IX
p <sup>39</sup>	p	III/IV				Θ	sepc	VIII/IX
p <sup>40</sup>	e	III				Θ	sepc	X
p <sup>41</sup>	a	VIII	No.	Content	Date	Θ	sepc	IX

## Explanatio signorum

quae in

NOVO TESTAMENTO GRAECO  
a D. ER NESTLE curato occurrunt  
(Winterbergensis Bibelanstalt)

## 1. Codices

## a) Evangelia

Gregory	v. Soden	seculum	nomen	biblioteca
p <sup>1</sup>	-	I/II	III, IV	Oxyrhynch. 2 Philadelphia
p <sup>2</sup>	-	I/II	III	Os. 209 London
p <sup>3</sup>	-	-	III	Os. 1228 Glasgow
p <sup>4</sup>	-	-	V, VI	P. 16398 Berlin
p <sup>5</sup>	-	-	III	Michigan 570 Ann Arbor
p <sup>6</sup>	-	-	III	Ch. Beatty Dublin, Wien
p <sup>7</sup>	-	-	II	Ireland 45 Manchester
p <sup>8</sup>	-	-	II	Michigan 6652 Ann Arbor
p <sup>9</sup>	-	-	II	Magdala Oxford
p <sup>10</sup>	-	-	II, III	Bodmer 2 Genua
p <sup>11</sup>	-	-	II	Oxyrh. 2923 London
p <sup>12</sup>	R	61	II, III	Bodmer 14, 15 Genua
p <sup>13</sup>	A	63	IV	Siehestr. London
p <sup>14</sup>	B	63	IV	Alexandrinus London
p <sup>15</sup>	C	63	V	Vatic. gr. 4269 Rom
p <sup>16</sup>	D	63	V	Ephraemi Paris
p <sup>17</sup>	E	63	VII	Bezae Cantab. Cambridge
p <sup>18</sup>	F	63	VIII	Borelli Baso
p <sup>19</sup>	G	63	X	Siedlmanns Utrecht
p <sup>20</sup>	H	63	IX, X	Borgerius Bonn
p <sup>21</sup>	I	63	IX, XI	Cyprian Paris
p <sup>22</sup>	J	63	XII	Paris
p <sup>23</sup>	M	63	X	Companius Leiden
p <sup>24</sup>	N	63	XI	potterianus Leiden
p <sup>25</sup>	P	63	XII	Wolfenbüttel
p <sup>26</sup>	N	63	1025	Mattei gr. 54 Reg.
p <sup>27</sup>	Y	63	5	Borghesius Reg.
p <sup>28</sup>	U	63	50	Natalis Reg.
p <sup>29</sup>	V	63	55	Wattie Reg.
p <sup>30</sup>	W	63	1014	Freeman Reg.
p <sup>31</sup>	X	63	A 2	Wattie Reg.
p <sup>32</sup>	Y	63	1031	IX Reg.
p <sup>33</sup>	Z	63	26	V, VI Reg.
p <sup>34</sup>	Z'	63	79	IX, X Reg.
p <sup>35</sup>	I	63	76	Reg. Oxford
p <sup>36</sup>	M	63	1040	Karp. Othm. Reg.
p <sup>37</sup>	4	63	77	Reg. Oxford
p <sup>38</sup>	Z'	63	1012	Zacynthas Reg.
p <sup>39</sup>	II	63	1	Reg. Oxford

Example 4

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## 16.36 δημοσίᾳ ἐπιδεικνύειν

The Western text (p<sup>43</sup> D 383 614 it<sup>4</sup>) expands the account so as to read δημοσίᾳ διαλέγομενος καὶ (p<sup>43</sup> om. καὶ) ἐπιδεικνύειν ("discouraging publicly and showing").

## 19.1 Ἐγένετο . . . εἰς Ἔφεσον

Omitting the clause Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ τὸν Ἀπολλὼν εἰς Κορίνθῳ, the Western text (p<sup>43</sup> D syr<sup>43</sup><sup>52</sup>, with partial support from it<sup>43</sup> and Ephrem) substitutes the following: Θέλοντος δὲ τοῦ Παύλου καὶ τὴν ἴδιαν βουλὴν πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱερασόλυμα εἴπειν αὐτῷ τὸ πνεῦμα ὃ ποστέρεψαν εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν, διελθὼν δὲ τὰ ἀνωτέρα μέρη ἔρχεται εἰς Ἔφεσον ("And although Paul wished, according to his own plan, to go to Jerusalem, the Spirit told him to return to Asia. And having passed through the upper country he comes to Ephesus . . .").

## 16.35-40

The Western reviser has introduced into these verses a variety of circumstantial details and other modifications. In order to explain the sudden change of attitude on the part of the magistrates, who now entreat the apostles to leave, D syr<sup>43</sup><sup>52</sup> Cypriodorus and Ephraem read, (35) ἡμέρας δὲ γενέντης συνηλδον οἱ στρατηγοὶ ἦστον εἰς τὴν ἀγοράν καὶ ἀναμηνθέντες τὸν σταύρον τὸν γεγονότα ἐφοβήθησαν, καὶ ἀπέσταλαν τοὺς φαῦδούχους λέγοντας . . . ("But when it was day the magistrates assembled together in the market place, and recollecting the earthquake that had taken place, they were afraid; and sent the police, saying . . ."). At the close of the same verse D 614 1799 2412 syr<sup>43</sup> add the rather superfluous clause οὓς ἔχθες παρέλαβες ("whom you took into custody yesterday").

Leaving nothing to the imagination of the reader, in ver. 36 codex Bezae reads καὶ εἰσελθὼν ὁ δεσμοφύλακτος ἀπήγγειλεν, while syr<sup>43</sup>, still more circumstantial, reads καὶ ἀκούσας ὁ δεσμοφύλακτος εἰσελθὼν ἀπήγγειλεν. Similarly in ver. 38 codex Bezae is extremely péculiar in reading ἀπήγγειλαν δὲ αὐτοῖσοι [sic] στρατηγοῖς οἱ φαῦδούχοι τὰ ρῆματα ταῦτα τὰ φητέντα πρὸς τοὺς στρατηγούς . . . ("And the police reported to the magistrates themselves these words which were spoken for the magistrates . . .").

In order to emphasize the innocence of Paul and Silas, and the desire of the magistrates to avoid an unpleasant case, in ver. 37 the Western reviser (D syr<sup>43</sup>) substitutes ἀνείρεις ("innocent") for the unusual word ἀκατακρίτους ("uncondemned"), found only here and in 22.23.

These are several samples (from among many) of the textual problem in Acts.

The sample at the bottom of the page from Acts 28:16 is one sample of the divided line of witnesses which shows both readings with slightly evidence. No copying error is evident; nor does the consideration of context or author's style decide anything.

\* 16.13: ἐπετράπη τῷ Παύλῳ ΚΑΠΙΤΩΝ ΒΙΒΛΟΥ 049 81 101 229<sup>o</sup> 1629<sup>o</sup> πολι 61. 1503 1739 2493 <sup>101</sup> it<sup>43</sup> vg syr<sup>43</sup> cop<sup>43</sup> arm gen Chrysostom // ὁ ἐκατόνταρχος παρέσων τοῖς δεσμοῖς τῷ στρατοπέδαρχῷ τῷ δὲ Παύλῳ ἐπετράπη 1241 056 0142 ΚΠ 049 326 1330 451 στρατοπέδαρχῷ Παύλῳ ἐπετράπη 1241 056 0142 ΚΠ 104 416 614 630 945 1377 2412 2493 ΚΠ 104 στρατοπέδαρχῷ 104 ἐκατοντάρχῳ δεσμώτας... ἐπετράπη 104 it<sup>43</sup> syr<sup>43</sup> cop<sup>43</sup> eth Theophylact<sup>43</sup>

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