

because they found ancient translations in Latin and other languages which seemed to follow best rather than texts like the Textus Receptus

So W & H advanced the idea we should follow the earlier MSS but in so doing they went to an unfortunate extreme in taking these two MSS, against all other MSS. So now there are those who wanting to stick to the KJV will insist that W & H were not men who were thoroughly evangelical.

Whether they were or not, I think they were more evangelical than any of our modernists~~s~~ today. Both of them. Whether there were particular points at which their terminology differed from ours, or even whether they had some points of departure, I don't know. But I was convinced when I was in seminary when their theory was taught as the fact. Dr. Machen taught the W & H theory. I was convinced then that they were going to an extreme in giving so much attention to these two particular MSS!

I don't think there are any scholars today who would follow W & H in believing these two MSS are to be supported against all the rest of the MSS. But I think all scholars agree that these two MSS are worthy of very great consideration.

Then there are other early MSS which differ considerably. But the differences are all so minor. Like one of these MSS says when Peter came out of prison he went down 10 steps. Most of our MSS don't mention any of the steps of the prison. Maybe there were; maybe there weren't. I don't think it's tremendously important.

People have tried to get out a W & H text. Then somebody tried to get out a text based on other MSS. The translators of the NIV studied the earliest and studied the latest, and they tried to decide what was the correct ones. So they used exactly the method Erasmus used in making the textus receptus, except they had more MSS.

But to say we're going to make a translation that's not eclectic would mean to take one MS ~~that~~ and use it as your sole authority. There is no MS that doesn't have mistakes. When you find 100 MSS saying one thing and ~~2000~~ saying another, it's a good guess the 2 are wrong, unless the 2 are very early! And if they were early that is still not saying whether they were right or ~~w~~ wrong.

Question: Do you think the text used with the NIV NT is the best we have?

Answer: I would say this, personally I am convinced that if you take any sizeable group of ~~MS~~ MSS you will get God's thoughts from it. A man has been writing me, and he has been going through the NT, and he has gotten evidence, gotten hundreds of MSS, and he ~~has~~ has, I think, 500 cases where the ~~R~~ Textus Receptus does follow the majority of the MSS and he thinks we should get a new text based on the majority of the MSS.

Now most scholars think we should try to get earliest MSS than to get the majority. My feeling is that any group of MSS, you get the things they agree on, and you've got ~~x~~ God's thoughts.