

The Prophet's Column

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The Prophet's Column, Inc
9626 Feldbank Drive
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Repeat of Newsletter for May -
1995
Part II

I realize that the natural man will never have the truth about his lost, ruined condition. Satan hates the truth and will do everything in his power to stop a sinner from getting awakened to his lost condition. Satan is the greatest enemy of every awakened sinner. And every awakened sinner knows I am being true to his

soul. If you don't know that, you have never been awakened. It is my prayer that the Lord will awaken sinners here and wherever the truth is going. I see so many who are deceived. And the evidence of your deception is your hateful attitude toward the children of Christ. Yes, your attitude toward the child of God is a revelation of your spiritual condition. You can go on preaching all you want to, but Bud, the very fact that you work against and slander this servant of the Lord is the concrete evidence you are not saved. I have a very religious animal in my family who pastors

a church, but he quickly listens to, gives ear to, and peddles slander against me. Poor thing, he doesn't even know he's lost and needs to be awakened to his lost condition. One day I was there in his condition. But he cannot go on like he is going, if he does he is going to lift up his eyes in Hell. Here in these last days every one is taking sides. And I've heard my late pastor's name taken in vain and I have been cussed at, too. It is so sad because these souls are lost and on the road to Hell. It matters not what they accuse me of, it is their souls at stake, not mine. They cannot tell how God saves a lost, guilty, hell-deserving sinner. I would that

they knew my Lord. The apostle said no suffering is joyous, but grievous, but then on the other hand I rejoice because not only did my Lord count me worthy to believe on Him, but also to suffer for Him. That's shouting ground. When my life's work is ended, and I cross the swelling tide, my Savior will welcome me by His smile. Won't that be glorious? It will for me and that is my hope.

To you who say you are not saved but want to know Christ, follow on to know the Lord and you shall know Him.

Your Gospel Editor and Teacher,

J.M. Little

Gender-Neutral Bible gets mixed reaction from pastors

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EL DORADO, Ark. — A proposal to publish a Bible that uses gender-neutral language is getting mixed reviews from local pastors.

Zondervan Publishing House of Grand Rapids, Mich., plans to have the gender-neutral New International Version in circulation by 2001. The text is avoid use of gender-specific words when translators think it is appropriate.

Rev. Dennis Falasco, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of El Dorado, said such a change could result in a better text if translators convey that much Scripture applies to all humankind.

"My concern, principally, is that they try to frame neutral words in a neutral sense," Falasco said. "I hope they do it honestly to the text and don't try to force the text. That's crucial."

Ron Matheny, president of the Greater El Dorado Ministerial Alliance and former pastor of Community Church of God in Christ, said he was reluctant to be too specific because he had only heard about the new translation.



"But Christianity, of all the major religions in the world, already makes the greatest effort of saying that women and men are equal in the eyes of God," Matheny said.

But Matheny said he worries that "changing the Bible could possibly be watering it down a little bit."

Tommy Robertson, director of missions for the Liberty Baptist Association, says he thinks the new translation is a mistake. He said he worries Zondervan is trying to be politically correct and making a mistake it will have to pay for.

"I think it will wind up with a lot of people not buying that translation anymore," he said. "I've heard people talk about not buying the New International Version anymore, and that's the version I use now."

Rev. Bill Odom, pastor of First Christian Church, thinks the whole matter may be overblown. He said Zondervan may be providing a translation that is part of the changing culture of the 1990s.

"I don't have a problem with this translation of the Bible," Odom said. "I think more has been made of it that should be, and I think much of it is just a misunderstanding."

Gender-neutral Bibles are nothing new. The New Revised Standard Version has been in wide use for more than a decade. Gender neutrality, where applicable, was a primary focus of that translation, and was mentioned

in its introductory notes.

The New International Version is second only to the King James Version in national sales.

Zondervan expects to continue issuing the existing translation when it begins publishing the new version.

Company spokesman Jonathan Peterson said the company has "no social agenda or desire to be politically correct," and said the idea is to maintain specific references that apply to a man or woman, while changing generic uses.

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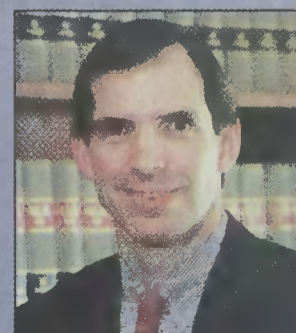
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