

**Matthew 6:13:** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen

**Intro:** The last sentence of Matthew 6:13 is not printed in many of your Bibles. It's in brackets in the NASB's in the pew Bibles. It is there in the KJV and NKJV. And when we pray the Lord's Prayer every week, we pray it.

How should we understand this? This is one of the points of this sermon: to help you understand this; to strengthen your confidence in the Word of God; to give you answers to critics of God's Word; And to understand these words.

## **1. The Reliability Of The New Testament**

**Chicago Statement On Biblical Inerrancy:** We affirm that inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. We further affirm that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original. We deny that any essential element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs.

We do not have the original written text of the New Testament. But we have numerous copies. There is no other book in ancient literature that can even compare with number of Greek New Testament manuscript copies and NT copies in other languages. We have around 5,500 Greek manuscript copies of the NT.

We have 20,000 to 25,000 handwritten copies of the NT in other languages.

**Dan Wallace:** Yet if all of these were destroyed, the NT text could be reproduced almost in its entirety by quotations of it in sermons, tracts, and commentaries written by ancient teachers of the church (known as church fathers or Patristic writers). To date, over a million quotations from the NT by the church fathers have been cataloged. How does this compare with the average classical author? The copies of the average ancient Greek or Latin author's writings number fewer than 20 manuscripts! Thus, the NT has well over 1,000 times as many manuscripts as the works of the average classical author. When it comes to the temporal distance of the earliest copies of the NT from the original, NT textual critics again enjoy an abundance of materials. From 10 to 15 NT manuscripts were written within the first 100 years of the completion of the NT. To be sure, they are all fragmentary, but some of them are fairly sizable fragments, covering large portions of the Gospels or Paul's letters, for example. Within two centuries, the numbers increase to at least four dozen manuscripts. Of manuscripts produced before A.D. 400, an astounding 99 still exist—including the oldest complete NT, Codex Sinaiticus. The gap, then, between the originals and the early manuscripts is relatively slim. By comparison, the average classical author has no copies for more than half a millennium.

With all of these manuscript copies, we are able to have in our hands exactly what God wants us to have concerning His perfect revelation to us so that we might know Him, trust Him, delight in Him, and follow Him in obedience!

## **2. The Variants In The New Testament**

**Bart Ehrman (Misquoting Jesus):** What good is it to say that the autographs (i.e., the originals) were inspired? We don't have the originals! We have only error-ridden copies, and the vast majority of these are centuries removed from the originals and different from them, evidently, in thousands of ways . . . There are more variations among our manuscripts than there are words in the New Testament.

**Tim Barnett (Stand To Reason):** places where the manuscripts differ from one another are called variants. A textual variant is any place among the manuscripts in which there is variation in wording, including word order, omission or addition of words, even spelling differences. Most scholars put the number of variants for the New Testament at around 400,000. When it comes to the New Testament, it's not the number of variants that's important, it's the nature of the variants. It's not the quantity of the differences; it's the quality of the differences.

There are four kinds of textual variants. Variants are categorized by whether or not they are viable, and whether or not they are meaningful. A variant is viable only if the variant has a good possibility of being part of the original wording. A variant is meaningful only if it changes the meaning of the text.

**1) Neither Viable nor Meaningful:** Most of the variants fall into this category. For example, differences in spelling make up 70% of all textual variants. These are very easy for Greek scholars to detect. These variants have no hope of being in the original, and they don't alter the meaning of the text.

**2) Viable, but Not Meaningful:** These are variants that could be part of the original text. However, they ultimately make no meaningful change to the text. For example, New Testament manuscripts spell John's name two different ways in Greek: Ἰωάννης and Ἰωάνης [2 nu's or 1]. Both are viable options. We just don't know if John's name was spelled with one "v" or two. Of course, this trivial detail does not change the meaning of any particular passage.

**3) Meaningful, but Not Viable:** These are variants that do change the meaning of the text, but they could not possibly be in the original. For example, the earliest and most important manuscripts of Luke 6:22 say, "Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man." However, we have a single eleventh century manuscript, Codex 2882, which says, "Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil." Notice this ancient document does not include the phrase "on account of the Son of Man." This is a meaningful variant. In the first case, Jesus is offering a blessing on those who are hated and mistreated because of their allegiance to Christ. In the second case, Jesus is blessing anyone who is hated and mistreated for any reason. Since this aberrant reading only occurs in one late manuscript, it is not viable.

**4) Viable and Meaningful:** Meaningful and viable is the smallest and most significant group of variants. These have a good chance of being authentic and they change the meaning of the text. This group accounts for less than 1% of all textual variants. If you do the math, less than 4,000 variants of the 400,000 total variants are both viable and meaningful. Let me give you an example from 1 John 1:4. New Testament scholars debate over whether this text should say, "And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete" or "And we are writing these things so that your joy may be complete." There are important manuscripts that record the word 'your' (?μ?ν), and there are important manuscripts that record the word 'our' (?μ?ν). In the original language, these two words differ by only one letter. The meaning of 1 John 1:4 is clearly altered depending on which rendering is used.

It is this small subset of variants that is a legitimate cause for concern. However, no major doctrines depend on any meaningful and viable variants. In fact, Bart Ehrman was once asked if these variants put the core tenets of Christian orthodoxy in jeopardy. Ehrman responded, "Essential Christian beliefs are not affected by textual variants in the manuscript tradition of the New Testament."

[In conclusion] it's not the number of variants that's important, it's the nature of the variants. Most variants are trivial, affecting nothing. In fact, more than 99% fall into this category. There are only a small number of meaningful variants that are viable. But even these affect no cardinal doctrine. The New Testament has an impressive transmission history that should give Christians confidence that we have the words written by the apostles.

**Greg Koukl:** This means that our New Testament is over 99% pure. In the entire text of 20,000 lines, only 40 lines are in doubt (about 400 words), and none affects any significant doctrine. Scholar D.A. Carson sums it up this way: "What is at stake is a purity of text of such a substantial nature that nothing we believe to be doctrinally true, and nothing we are commanded to do, is in any way jeopardized by the variants." (We have what God wants us to have!)

### **3. God Perfectly Preserves His Word Just As He Pleases**

**-Psalm 119:89:** Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.

**-Isaiah 40:8:** The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

-**Matt 4:4:** It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

-**Matthew 24:35:** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

-**1 Peter 1:23:** having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever

-**2 Timothy 3:16-17:** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

-**John 16:13:** When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth

**Of The Scriptures:** We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.

**Billy Graham:** So I went back and I got my Bible, and I went out in the moonlight. And I got to a stump and put the Bible on the stump, and I knelt down, and I said, "Oh, God; I cannot prove certain things. I cannot answer some of the questions Chuck is raising and some of the other people are raising, but I accept this book by faith as the Word of God."

**Spurgeon:** The Word of God is like a lion. You don't have to defend a lion. All you have to do is let the lion loose, and the lion will defend itself.

#### **4. What Are We Going To Do With This Last Part Of Matthew 6:13?**

"For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen" The reason these verses are not included in most modern translations is because most scholars do not believe these verses were in the original book of Matthew. They believe this because some of the most reliable, ancient manuscripts of the NT do not contain these words. (Meaningful, but Not Viable)

Yet, all of these words are perfectly true, and their truth is stated in other parts of Scripture.

##### **a. The kingdom belongs to God the Father: Matthew 6:10:** Your kingdom come

- **Matthew 13:43:** Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

- **Matthew 26:29:** I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

##### **b. The power belongs to God the Father: Revelation 4:11:** Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.

**1 Corinthians 15:24-28:** Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death. <sup>27</sup> For "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. <sup>28</sup> When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

##### **c. The glory belongs to God the Father: Phil. 4:20:** To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

**Isaiah 48:11:** For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another.

**d. All this is forever – Amen: Phil. 4:20:** To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

**Amen: Commentator:** "Amen" is a transliteration of the Hebrew noun "amen" and then into Latin and into English and many other languages, so that it is practically a universal word. "Amen" has been called the best-known word in human speech. "Amen" is a response to something that has just been said, except in Jesus' teachings. Jesus, Who is Himself the ultimate "Amen", is the supreme authority and so it is clearly apropos that His teachings be introduced by "amen." John's Gospel has 25 uses of "amen" and every use is a double amen (or double "truly"). It is also notable that in the four Gospels, "amen" is used only by our Lord Jesus Christ, almost always "to introduce new revelations of the mind of God." Every use of "amen" or "truly" by Jesus serves to affirm what follows and by extension to cause us to pay close attention to the teaching. The Pauline uses of "amen" occur primarily at the close of his prayers or doxologies, and as such serve to confirm them as "it is firm" or "so let it be".

### **5. The Kingdom, The Power, And The Glory Also Belong To Jesus Christ, Who Is God The Son**

**a. The Kingdom belongs to Jesus: Luke 22:28-30:** You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom  
**John 18:36:** Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world . . ."

**Col. 1:13:** He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son

**b. The Power belongs to Jesus: 1 Corinthians 1:24:** Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

**Revelation 5:12:** Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!

**c. The Glory belongs to Jesus: John 17:5:** And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

**2 Thessalonians 1:7-10:** when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God & on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord & from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, & to be marveled at among all who have believed

**d. Amen: Jesus is God's Amen! 2 Corinthians 1:20:** For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.

**Revelation 3:14:** And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: "The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness . . . ." **GOSPEL!**

**S. M. Lockridge:** "Thine is the kingdom!" Who ever heard of a kingdom without a King? That's My King!

Jesus Is The King And The Power And The Glory  
His All Majestic Beauty's In A Whole New Category  
He Spoke Like No Other With Greatest Oratory  
Yet Bore God's Wrath And Died A Death So Grim And Gory  
That He Wasn't Recognized As Man But It's Only Transitory  
Because He Rose Up From The Dead Making New Life Celebratory  
He Rules And Reigns Forever Over Every Territory  
By Faith Alone We're Just There Is No Purgatory  
And Obedience To The King By The Spirit's Mandatory  
For This Is How God Wrote Our Everlasting Love Story  
So He Would Always Get All The Praise And All The Glory!