

2 Corinthians 2:17 Corrupt or Peddle the word of God?

"For we are not as many, which CORRUPT the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." King James Bible

NKJV, NIV, NASB, ESV "For we are not, as so many, PEDDLING the word of God..." There is an obvious difference between to corrupt the word of God and to peddle it. To corrupt God's words is to pervert or change the meaning, while to peddle is does not involve changing or corrupting it, but it to hawk or sell it for profit.

Like most words, the word used here can have different meanings depending on the context. The Greek word used here is kapeleuo. It can have the meaning of to sell or peddle, but it also can have the meaning of to corrupt or to adulterate.

The Baer, Arndt and Gingrich Greek lexicon says on page 404: "the word comes to mean almost adulterate." Liddell & Scott's Abridged Lexicon 7th edition 1887 lists on page 348 the meanings of "to adulterate, to give out as genuine, to palm off".

Thayer's lexicon says on page 325 "it is also used as synonymous with to corrupt, to adulterate." And Kittle's massive work tells us in Volume III on page 604 that the adjective kapelos means "deceitful, false" and that the verb can mean "to misrepresent a thing".

Let's compare several versions to see how they have translated it.

CORRUPT the word of God - King James Bible 1611, Whiston's Primitive N.T. 1745, the Revised Version 1885, the American Standard Version 1901, The New Testament Translated from the Sinaitic Manuscript 1918 Henry Anderson, Lamsa's 1936 translation of the Syriac Peshitta, Webster's 1833 translation, KJV 21st Century Version 1994, the Third Millennium Bible 1998, the English Majority Text Version 2002 by Paul Esposito, and the Resurrection Life N.T. 2005 by Vince Garcia.

ADULTERATE the word of God --Mace 1729, Wesley 1755, Worsely N.T. 1770, Living Oracles 1835, Young's, Douay 1950, the New Jerusalem Bible 1985, the Catholic Public Domain Version 2009, and the 2010 English Revised Version.

The 1989 Revised English Bible has: "not adulterating the word of God for profit." DO ADULTERY BY the word of God - Wycliffe 1395, WHICH CHOP AND CHANGE the word of God - Tyndale 1525, Coverdale 1535, the Great Bible 1540 and the Bishop's Bible 1568.

The Latin Vulgate agrees with the sense found in the KJB saying: "non enim sumus sicut plurimi **adulterantes** verbum Dei"

FALSIFY the word of God - Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, German -

The French Martin 1744, French Louis Segond 1910 and French Ostervald 1996. All three of these French translation bibles have to "not falsifying the word of God". "Car nous **NE FALSIFIONS** pas la parole de Dieu"

Luther's German bible 1545 and the 2000 Schlachter Bible also read "not falsifying the word of God" - "Denn wir sind nicht wie etliche viele, die das Wort Gottes **VERFALSCHEN**." So does the Norwegian Det Norsk Bibelselskap - "slike at vi **forfalsker** Guds ord." and the Russian Synodal Bible.

Italian Diodati 1649, and the New Diodati 1991 both have "not falsifying the word of God" - "Noi **non falsifichiamo** infatti la parola di Dio" and the Italian Riveduta 1927 has "not adulterating the word of God" - "Poich noi non siamo come quei molti che **ADULTERANO** la parola di Dio.

Likewise the 1997 La Parola é Vita and La Nuova Riveduta of 2006 read: "non siamo come tanti **che falsificano** la parola di Dio."

The Portuguese Almeida has "we are not falsifiers of the word of God" as does the Portuguese A Biblia Sagrada em Portugues - "Porque no somos **FALSIFICADORES** da palavra de Deus"

Spanish Reina Valera 1960, 1995 - "that go about falsifying the word of God" - "Pues no somos como muchos, que medran **FALSIFICANDO** la palabra de Dios"

However, many modern versions, including the NKJV have changed the meaning of the verse by translating it as "PEDDLE the word of God". These include the RSV, NRSV, ESV, NKJV, NIV and the NASB. "For we are not, as so many, **PEDDLING** the word of God" - NKJV 1982.

The Holman Standard has: "For we are not like the many who **MAKE A TRADE** in God's message **FOR PROFIT**".

NET version - "For we are not like so many others, **HUCKSTERS WHO PEDDLE** the word of God **FOR PROFIT**."

The ISV has -"At least we are not commercializing God's word like so many others."

As you can see, the first popular modernized English version to change the meaning from "to corrupt" the word of God to the idea of peddling it, was the liberal Revised Standard Version. Two modern paraphrases try to combine both ideas from this single Greek word.

The Amplified version - "peddling God's word, shortchanging and adulterating the divine message"

The Message - "but at least we don't take God's Word, water it down, and then take it to the streets to sell it cheap." (Oh, No? That is exactly what they do with the Message)

The Catholic Versions are in their usual disarray. The older Douay-Rheims of 1582 as well as the 1950 Douay read: "For we are not as many, **ADULTERATING** the word of God; but with sincerity, but as from God, before God, in Christ we speak." However in 1968 the Jerusalem bible changed this to "we do not go around **OFFERING THE WORD OF GOD FOR SALE**, as many other people do." The 1970 St. Joseph New American Bible says: "We at least are not like so many **WHO TRADE OF THE WORD OF GOD**." But then again in 1985 the New Jerusalem bible has gone back to "At least we do not **ADULTERATE** the word of God."

John Gill comments on this verse: "which corrupt the word of God; by "the word of God", may be meant the Scriptures in general, which are from God, contain his will, and which he uses for the good of men, and his own glory, and **MAY BE CORRUPTED BY FALSE GLOSSES AND HUMAN MIXTURES, AND BY ADDING TO THEM, OR TAKING FROM THEM;** or the Gospel in particular, which is the word of truth, of faith, righteousness, reconciliation, and salvation, and which **WAS CORRUPTED BY THESE FALSE TEACHERS** by making merchandise of it; they huckstered the word of God, made gain of it, sought merely their own worldly interest and advantage in it, and **SO MIXED IT WITH THEIR OWN VAIN PHILOSOPHY**, to please the carnal ears and hearts of men;... they did, as peddling merchants do, mix good and bad commodities together, and then vend them for sound ware... so did these men mix, and hereby **CORRUPT** the Gospel, the word of God; now the apostle says, they did not do so; they delivered out the word pure and unmixed, **WITHOUT ANY CORRUPTION OR ADULTERATION**."

John Calvin translated the word as "adulterate the word of God" and then commented: "It is, indeed, certain from the corresponding clause, that Paul intended to express here **CORRUPTION** of doctrine not as though they had revolted from the truth, but because they

presented it under disguise, and **NOT IN ITS GENUINE PURITY**. For **THE DOCTRINE OF GOD IS CORRUPTED** in a direct way, when it is **MIXED UP WITH FALSEHOOD AND LIES**, so as to be no longer the pure and genuine doctrine of God, but is falsely commended under that title." (Caps are mine throughout).

John Wesley comments: " For we are not as many, who **ADULTERATE** the word of God - Like those vintners who mix their wines with baser liquors."

Matthew Poole commentary - "we translate it, corrupt the word; the Greek word signifies, to sell wine or victuals for money; and because such kind of people make no conscience to deceive, cheat, and deal fraudulently with their customers, it is sometimes used to signify **CORRUPTING OR DECEIVING**."

Barne's Notes on the New Testament - "Which corrupt the word of God. Margin, "deal deceitfully with." The word signifies, properly, a huckster, or a retailer of wine who buys up articles for the purpose of selling them again. The proper idea is that of a small dealer, and especially in wine. Such persons were notorious, as they are now, for diluting their wines with water and for compounding wines of other substances than the juice of the grape, for purposes of gain. Wine, of all substances in trade, perhaps, affords the greatest facilities for such dishonest tricks; and accordingly the dealers in that article have generally been most distinguished for fraudulent practices and corrupt and diluted mixtures, hence **THE WORD COMES TO DENOTE TO ADULTERATE, TO CORRUPT. IT IS HERE APPLIED TO THOSE WHO ADULTERATED OR CORRUPTED THE PURE WORD OF GOD in any way, and for any purpose.**"

It is very clear to me and many others that the King James Bible is correct with its reading of "not as many which corrupt the word of God". The KJB is the pure, inerrant, uncorrupted words of God. The NKJV rendering of "peddling the word of God" joins with the modern versions like the RSV, NASB, NIV, ESV, and removes the idea that God's words are being corrupted by many, and instead has us focus on merely peddling the word of God, which is exactly what all these modern versions are doing.

The modern versions not only corrupt the word of God but they also peddle it. They corrupt it by following the wrong Greek texts, by rejecting the Hebrew Masoretic texts in scores of places, by changing the meaning in hundreds of verses and by corrupting sound doctrines of the Faith.

They peddle the word of God by making many unnecessary changes in the wording so they can get their copyrights to make money, and then they "revise" them again and again, and then ply

their wares with Madison Avenue advertising techniques so you will go out and buy their Late\$ Scholarly Finding\$.

They hide the fact that God's words are being corrupted by many, and they are guilty of peddling their adulterated wares to unsuspecting and misinformed Christians, who now read and believe these corrupted bible versions less and less every day.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, no a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD." Amos 8:11

"Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8

Will Kinney

Post Script - After I posted this article at a couple of internet clubs and some brothers sent it out to others via email, I got responses from 3 different people who disagreed (though many others did agree). Each of these three people basically said the same thing - that they disagreed and thought the word should be translated as "peddle" or "commercialize", and one or two of them listed Vine's or some other guy who liked "peddle" instead of "corrupt". Here is my response:

Hi brother. One can argue for different texts, different readings, and different translations till the Lord comes back. What has happened in the last 100 years particularly is that the majority of present day Christians no longer believe in the existence of a complete, inspired and infallible Bible in any language, including the elusive and never identified "the Greek" and "the Hebrew" (no such animal exists)

So what we have today is the "every man is a textual critic" and "Every Man For Himself Bible Versionism", but very few Bible believers.

Everybody has their own opinion about what texts should be used and then how they should be translated once you have decided on your underlying texts, but nobody agrees with anybody else 100% of the time. So what you essentially have is that each person becomes his own final authority.

What one scholar adamantly affirms to be true, another one categorically denies.

I have written about this "Every Man for Himself Bible Versionism" and related it to the new

Holman Standard version that just came out a few years ago.

You may find it of interest.

<http://brandplucked.webs.com/everymanforhimself.htm>

The very real attack against the truth of God has always been by those who would corrupt and pervert God's words of truth and sound doctrine.

Deuteronomy 4:2 "Ye shall NOT ADD UNTO THE WORD which I command you, NEITHER SHALL YE DIMINISH OUGHT FROM IT, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."

Jeremiah 5:31 "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

Jeremiah 23:30 "Therefore, behold, I AM AGAINST THE PROPHETS, saith the LORD, THAT STEAL MY WORDS every one from his neighbour."

Jeremiah 23:36 "for YE HAVE PERVERTED THE WORDS OF THE LIVING GOD, of the LORD of hosts our God."

Matthew 15:3,9 "But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?...But in vain they do worship me, TEACHING FOR DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN."

2 Corinthians 2:17 "For we are not as many, which CORRUPT THE WORD OF GOD: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."

2 Corinthians 4:2 "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, NOR HANDLING THE WORD OF GOD DECEITFULLY; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

2 Corinthians 11:13-14 "For such are FALSE apostles, DECEITFUL workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

1 Timothy 4:1 "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall DEPART

FROM THE FAITH, giving heed to seducing spirits, and DOCTRINES OF DEVILS.”

2 Timothy 2:17-18 "And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."

2 Timothy 4:2-4 “PREACH THE WORD; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when THEY WILL NOT ENDURE SOUND DOCTRINE; but after their own lusts shall they HEAP TO THEMSELVES TEACHERS, having itching ears; And they SHALL TURN AWAY THEIR EARS FROM THE TRUTH, and shall be turned unto fables.”

Titus 3:10 "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject"

2 Peter 2:1-2 “But there were FALSE PROPHETS also among the people, even as there shall be FALSE TEACHERS among you, who privily shall bring in DAMNABLE HERESIES, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom THE WAY OF TRUTH SHALL BE EVIL SPOKEN OF.”

1 John 4:1 ”Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because MANY FALSE PROPHETS ARE GONE OUT INTO THE WORLD.”

By His grace, believing The Book - a tangible, hold it in your hands and believe every word Bible called the King James Holy Bible.

Will Kinney