

THE CHURCH IS A SANCTUARY

Copyright Matthew Verschuur. Originally published in *The Protector*, 6/3/2006.

The major role of the Church is to receive, preserve and convey the Word of God.

There was, in Old Testament times, a Sanctuary. It was the tabernacle, and afterwards the temple. That word “sanctuary” is important, because it speaks of a holy place that was designed to preserve and keep whatever was committed into it. In the New Testament, the people of God, that is, the Church, is the sanctuary. God has set up the Church to be a holy dwelling place for Himself. Jesus is building the Church, and this is on the foundation of the Word, to have the Word preserved within it and to uphold the Word. Therefore, the Church is the sanctuary for the Word.

Edward Hills (1912–1981) wrote a book, *The King James Bible Defended*, in which he spoke of the priesthood of believers, that is, that every Christian has a role to play in the Church’s operation of keeping the Word. God has preserved the entire Word in the last days “by means of something inward and spiritual, namely, the universal priesthood of believers,” stated Hills, and he explained that it is through the leading of the Spirit in the hearts of individual Christians.

The implication of this doctrine is that Traditional Pentecostals should be able to discern what God’s pure Word is, and to keep it in the Church, which is now the earthly sanctuary.

And what are believers supposed to be doing? “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name.” (Hebrews 13:15). That fruit of the lips, those words of praise, are to be praises of the Word in the Church. “In God will I praise *his* word: in the LORD will I praise *his* word.” (Psalm 56:10). It is impossible to praise an imperfect and contradictory group of modern books claiming to be “the Word”. In fact, God holds one truth to be supreme, “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.” (Psalm 138:2).

It is important to understand the wisdom of God, “Every word of God *is* pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” (Proverbs 30:5, 6). Christians must know that there is a pure Word, and that Word must be at the basis of their faith. The Word of God to the English speaking people is that one providentially provided Word, the King James Bible. And the nature of protection is evident in all factors, both internal and external, in the provision of the King James Bible.

Biblical Hebrew and Greek are no longer of any use. (There is no shielding there now.) In fact, for Gospel preaching, even modern languages like French really have no more use. This is because English is growing as the global language. Therefore, mankind is arriving to a time (i.e. now) where there is only one Bible (i.e. the King James Bible) which is God’s Word for all (i.e. every nation).

This being the case, it is important that Christians keep and maintain the King James Bible. Therefore, the last days Church is (and must be set up for) a sanctuary for the

King James Bible. Jesus said, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations” (Matthew 28:19a). The nations are to be taught “to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20a). How well can Christians speak to nations when the Church uses the King James Bible to speak to an English-using planet. And how well can the Church give Christ’s commandments if the King James Bible is a preserved book, accurately and perfectly conveying the words of Christ Himself. And how well can the nations do Christ’s commandments, if the Church is a faithful witness to the world.