

Introduction to the Greek New Testament

The most striking differences between modern translations of the New Testament are not the result of differences between manuscripts but of differences in translation philosophy. Still, scholars are working hard combining all the knowledge gained from old and new manuscript discoveries to produce the best possible text of the Greek New Testament that underlies our translations. 2017 marks the year in which Tyndale House in Cambridge launches their edition of the Greek New Testament. In this workshop we will introduce the Greek text of the New Testament and also talk a little about this new edition of the text at the hand of easy-to-understand examples. As part of this we will also address some of the tougher questions such as 'Why not use the Textus Receptus?' and 'Why did God not preserve the original manuscripts?' *In order to participate no detailed knowledge of Greek is necessary, though it helps if you know the Greek alphabet.*

Dirk Jongkind is a Dutch biblical scholar who finished his PhD at Cambridge University. His main scholarly interest is in the Greek text of the Bible and the Graeco-Roman backdrop of Acts and the letters. Currently, he is the Research Fellow in New Testament Text and Language at Tyndale House, Deputy Senior Tutor at St Edmund's College, Cambridge, and affiliated lecturer at Cambridge University. He has done much work on Greek manuscripts and other remains from the ancient world.

I. Setting the Scene: Luther and the Languages

- A. 1516: First Greek New Testament published by Erasmus; 1517: Luther, Wittenberg
- B. 1519: Erasmus publishes the Second Edition of the Greek New Testament
- C. 1521-22: Luther translates the New Testament into common German
- D. 1524: *To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools*

"All right," you say again, "suppose we do have to have schools; what is the use of teaching Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and the other liberal arts? We could just as well use German for teaching the Bible and God's word, which is enough for our salvation." (...)

(T)he devil smelled a rat, and perceived that if the languages were revived, a hole would be knocked in his kingdom which he could not easily stop up again. ... In proportion then as we value the gospel, let us zealously hold to the languages. ... And let us be sure of this: we will not long preserve the gospel without the languages. ... Now there must always be such prophets in the Christian church who can dig into Scripture, expound it, and carry on disputations. A saintly life and right doctrine are not enough. (...)

Therefore, although faith and the gospel may indeed be proclaimed by simple preachers without a knowledge of languages, such preaching is flat and tame; people finally become weary and bored with it, and it falls to the ground.

II. Getting Close to the Very Words of God

- A. Doctrine of Scripture: The Bible is God's Speaking

B. Approximation / Getting closer:

1. in translation
2. in understanding how the language works (e.g. metaphor)
3. in the wording of the text

III. Why Do We Need an Edition of the Greek New Testament?

- A. We cannot simply print *the* New Testament in Greek
- B. The effect of manual copying
- C. The effect of use in the church
- D. Manuscript differences: textual variants

IV. The Beauty of Greek

- A. [Not talking about word studies!]
- B. The Details:
 1. Spelling: Jn 20:16, Mary
 2. Creating links: Acts 8:32, 35
- C. Sentences:
 1. Jn 6:31, 49
- D. Structure:
 1. 'Paragraphs': Jn 1:1-20

V. Final Reflections

- A. Our Doctrine of Scripture in Practice
- B. The Word of God and Wisdom
- C. Trustworthiness and Knowing the Details