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John Allen Chalk: Personal Correspondence

John Allen Chalk

8-23-1967

From/To: John Murphree (Chalk's reply filed first)

John Murphree

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August 23, 1967

Mr. John Murphree
800 W. Avon Road
Rochester, Michigan 48063

Dear John:

You did not need to explain the meaning of your first letter. I received it with openness and was happy that you wanted to write.

I think you are right in saying that we must use language that is readily understood by our hearers. There is no question in my mind that if the Bible were to be written today it would be written in the very language the most men of our time are speaking.

I always encourage young preachers to memorize from the RSV or some other well done modern translation. Thank you for your thoughts; they were extremely helpful.

Fraternally yours,

John Allen Chalk
Radio Speaker

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800 West Avon Road
Rochester, Michigan 48063
26 July 1967

Dear John Allen,

I fear from reading your letter of July 10 that I failed to make my main point clear enough in my letter to you on June 20. I certainly did not mean to convey the idea that you are not clear in your preaching or that you fail to overcome what I feel to be the deficiencies of the ASV of 1901. What I did mean to convey is that you are being forced, when you use that version, to use unnecessary explanatory remarks and at times to even "translate" the archaic- sounding passages of that version.

If I correctly understand what happened when the ASV committee was preparing its text (this information came from Lightfoot's booklet on Bible translations) the committee strove consciously for archaic-sounding language in order to be in line with KJV usage. This seems to me to be an unnecessary thing to do in our modern world.

If God were speaking to me right now, which in a sense He is doing when I read the Bible or hear it read) I do not believe that He would use many of the words or the word order of either the KJV or the ASV. I do not believe that He would say things like the following: (objectionable words and phrases are underlined)

"The neighbors therefore, and they that saw him aforetime that he was a beggar, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?"

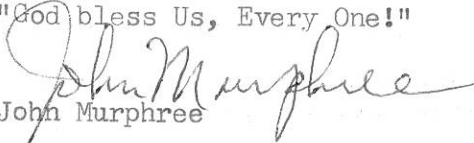
"mine eyes, he saith, him that aforetime was blind", etc., etc.

Of course these examples could be multiplied almost without end, especially in the matter of the second person pronoun and verb endings.

My prayers will continue on your behalf as I realize the tremendous opportunities and responsibilities which are yours. May the Lord's blessings always be upon you.

As Tiny Tim observed,

"God bless Us, Every One!"


John Murphree