Chapter 15B **– Was 1 John 5:7 Added to the Bible?**

**(**Note: This chapter was copied with permission in November 2017 from the website of Geoff Lohrere: [www.trinitytruth.org/was1john5\_7addedtext.html](http://www.trinitytruth.org/was1john5_7addedtext.html).)

The only verse in the entire Bible that can be genuinely interpreted as saying the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are a 3 in1 being is 1 John 5:7.

1 John 5:7 KJV “For there are three that bear record *in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. 8 And there are three that bear witness in earth*, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one*.*”

This is the clear and decisive type of Scripture that you would expect to find in the Bible if the Godhead was literally a three in one god. However, it is slowly becoming universally recognized that this verse is a later insertion of the Church. So, what does that tell us?

All recent versions of the Bible and most others do not include the underlined text which also includes verse 8 and with very good reason! Here it is from the NIV. 1 John 5:7 “*For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.*”

*Does 1 John 5:7, 8 Have Added Text?*

Some person or persons in centuries past were so zealous to find support for their belief in the trinity that they literally added it. There are numerous Scholars, in fact, that inform us that this passage has a spurious comment which has been added. The textual Scholar Bart Ehrman described this forgery as follows: “*…This represents the most obvious instance of a theologically motivated corruption in the entire manuscript tradition of the New Testament.*”

Thus, the scholarly consensus is that this passage is a Latin corruption that found its way into a Greek manuscript at an early date, while being absent from the THOUSANDS of other manuscripts. This addition is so famous and hence so well known that it has even been given its own name, and is called the “Comma Johanneum.” Comma means a short clause.

Modern Bible translations come from two manuscripts called the Codex Sinaiticus, which has more edits than any other manuscript in Biblical history (14800 edits), and the Codex Vaticanus, which comes from the Vatican. Neither of these two manuscripts contain the Comma Johanneum, and why this added text is not found in modern Bible translations other than the NKJV, where it was added only to match the KJV.

The King James New Testament, on the other hand, was compiled from over 5000 copies of copies of the original manuscripts which have long since perished. Now please take careful note that this added text was found in only ONE of the 5000-plus manuscripts. THAT MEANS ADDED! And so there is not one major theologian that does not acknowledge this fact. And yet considering all the irrefutable facts, it is amazing that there are still some who go into denial rather than acknowledge this well-known corruption that is so famous that it has even been given its own name!

The English King James Bible, translated in 1611 AD, retains this Trinitarian forgery, but none of our modern translations have it except the NKJV, where it was added to match the KJV. The King James Version reads as follows, “*For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. 8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.*” 1 John 5:7-8

Thus. the words [underlined above] are found in the KJV, NKJV, but are missing from almost every other translation. Thomas Nelson and Sons Catholic Commentary, 1951, page 1186 states, “*It is now generally held that this passage, called the Comma Johanneum, is a gloss that crept into the text of the Old Latin and Vulgate at an early date, but found its way into the Greek text only in the 15th and 16th centuries.*”

Here is how 1 John 5:7-8 reads from the NIV and most other Bible translations. “*For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.*”

*How did the Comma Johanneum first get added?*

It began with Desiderius Erasmus and his “Novum Instrumentum omne,” which was the first New Testament in Greek to be published. This Greek text is also referred to as the Textus Receptus. Erasmus did not include the infamous Comma Johanneum of 1 John 5:7-8 in either his 1516 or 1519 editions of his Greek New Testament with very good reason. But it made its way into his third edition in 1522 because of pressure from the Catholic Church. After his first edition appeared in 1516, there arose such a furor over the absence of the *Comma* that Erasmus needed to defend himself. He argued that he did not put in the *Comma* Trinitarian formula because he found no Greek manuscripts that included it. Once one was produced called the Codex 61, that was written by one Roy or Froy at Oxford in c. 1520, he reluctantly agreed to include it in his subsequent editions. Erasmus probably altered the text because of politico-theologico-economic concerns. He did not want his reputation ruined, nor his *Novum Instrumentum* to go unsold. Thus it passed into the Stephanus Greek New Testament in 1551 (first New Testament in verses), which came to be called the Textus Receptus, and became the basis for the Geneva Bible New Testament in 1557 and the Authorized King James Version in 1611.

Scripture translator Benjamin Wilson gave the following explanation in his “*Emphatic Diaglott.*” Mr. Wilson says, “*This text concerning the heavenly witness is not contained in any Greek manuscript which was written earlier than the fifteenth century. It is not cited by any of the ecclesiastical writers; not by any of early Latin fathers even when the subjects upon which they treated would naturally have lead them to appeal to its authority. It is therefore evidently spurious.*”

Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible. Adam Clarke, LL.D., F.S.A., (1715-1832) explains in more detail.

*It is wanting in every MS. of this epistle written before the invention of printing, one excepted, the Codex Montfortii, in Trinity College, Dublin: the others which omit this verse amount to one hundred and twelve.*

*It is wanting in both the Syriac, all the Arabic, Ethiopic, the Coptic, Sahidic, Armenian, Slavonian, etc., in a word, in all the ancient versions but the Vulgate; and even of this version many of the most ancient and correct MSS. have it not. It is wanting also in all the ancient Greek fathers; and in most even of the Latin.*

*The words, as they exist in all the Greek MSS. with the exception of the Codex Montfortii, are the following:*

*“1 John 5:6. This is he that came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness because the Spirit is truth.*

*1 John 5:7. For there are three that bear witness, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one.*

*1 John 5:9. If we receive the witness of man, the witness of God is greater, etc.”*

*The words that are omitted by all the MSS., the above excepted, and all the versions, the Vulgate excepted, are these: -*

*[In heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one, and there are three which bear witness in earth].*

*To make the whole more clear, that every reader may see what has been added, I shall set down these verses, with the inserted words in brackets.*

*“1 John 5:6. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.*

*1 John 5:7. For there are three that bear record* ***[****in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. 1 John 5:8. And there are three that bear witness in earth****]****, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one.*

*1 John 5:9. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater, etc.”*

*Any man may see, on examining the words, that if those included in brackets, which are wanting in the MSS. and versions, be omitted, there is no want of connection; and as to the sense, it is complete and perfect without them; and, indeed much more so than with them. I shall conclude this part of the note by observing, with Dr. Dodd, “that there are some internal and accidental marks which may render the passage suspected; for the sense is complete, and indeed, more clear and better preserved, without it. Besides, the Spirit is mentioned, both as a witness in heaven and on earth; so that the six witnesses are thereby reduced to five, and the equality of number, or antithesis between the witnesses in heaven and on earth, is quite taken away. Besides, what need of witnesses in heaven? No one there doubts that Jesus is the Messiah; and if it be said that Father, Son, and Spirit are witnesses on earth, then there are five witnesses on earth, and none in heaven; not to say that there is a little difficulty in interpreting how the Word or the Son can be a witness to himself.”*

So, Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible makes the issue very clear as to exactly what was added. The square brackets have been bolded to make them clearer and easier to see what was added.

*1 John 5:7 Bible Translation List*

One might ask why this text is missing from almost every single Bible translation apart from the KJV and the NKJV. And why did the NKJV translators use this added text anyway, since it is absent from the manuscripts that they translated from? Does the fact that the translators of the NKJV Bible being Trinitarian have anything to do with that?

(A Conservative Version) “*Because those who testify are three:*”

(Analytical-Literal Translation) “*Because three are the Ones testifying:*”

(An Understandable Version-The New Testament) “*For there are three who give their testimony [about Jesus]:*”

(American Standard Version) “*And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth.*”

(Bible Basic English) “*And the Spirit is the witness, because the Spirit is true.*”

(Contemporary English Version) “*In fact, there are three who tell about it.*”

(The Complete Jewish Bible) “*There are three witnesses -*”

(Common Edition, New Testament) “*And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is the truth.*”

(Darby) “*For they that bear witness are three:*”

(English Majority Text Version) “*For there are three that bear witness:*”

(English Standard Version) “*For there are three that testify:*”

(Good News Bible) “*There are three witnesses:*”

(God's Word) “*There are three witnesses:*”

(Holman Christian Standard Bible) “*For there are three that testify:*”

(The Hebrew Names Version) “*For there are three who testify:*”

(International Standard Version) “*For there are three witnesses-*”

(Living Oracles New Testament) “*And it is the Spirit who testified; because the Spirit is the truth.*”

(The Message) “*A triple testimony:*”

(New American Standard Bible) “*For there are three that testify:*”

(New Century Version) “*So there are three witnesses that tell us about Jesus:*”

(NET Bible) “*For there are three that testify,*”

(New International Reader's Version) “*There are three that give witness about Jesus.*”

(New International Version) “*For there are three that testify:*”

(New Living Translation) “*So we have these three witnesses -*”

(New Revised Standard Version Bible) “*There are three that testify:*”

(Revised Standard Version) “*And the Spirit is the witness, because the Spirit is the truth.*”

(Revised Version) “*And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth.*”

(The Scriptures 1998) “*Because there are three who bear witness:*”

(Twentieth Century New Testament) “*It is a three-fold testimony--*”

(Updated Bible Version) “*For there are three who bear witness,*”

(World English Bible) “*For there are three who testify:*”

So, we can see in the above list that only the KJV and the NKJV Bible have included the added text.

*What Did Other Experts and Historians Say?*

Martin Luther kept out verse 7 from his German Bible (1545). But in 1574 the printer Feyerabend added it to later editions of Luther's translation.

Note the words of The New Bible Commentary: Revised, *“Notice that AV [the Authorized Version] includes additional material at this point. But the words are clearly a gloss [an added note] and are rightly excluded by RSV [the Revised Standard Version] even from its margins.”* — (1970, p. 1269)

Dr. Neil Lightfoot, a New Testament professor says the textual evidence is against 1 John 5:7. *“Of all the Greek manuscripts, only two contain it. These two manuscripts are of very late dates, one from the fourteenth or fifteenth century and the other from the sixteenth century. Two other manuscripts have this verse written in the margin. All four manuscripts show that this verse was apparently translated from a late form of the Latin Vulgate.”* — (*How We Got the Bible*, 2003, pp. 100, 101)

The Expositor's Bible Commentary also dismisses the King James and New King James Versions' additions as *“obviously a late gloss with no merit.”* — (Glenn Barker, Vol. 12, 1981, p. 353)

The famous Edward Gibbon explains the reason for the discardal of this verse from the Bible with the following words:

*“Of all the manuscripts now extant, above fourscore in number, some of which are more than 1200 years old, the orthodox copies of the Vatican, of the Complutensian editors, of Robert Stephens are becoming invisible; and the two manuscripts of Dublin and Berlin are unworthy to form an exception...In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Bibles were corrected by LanFrank, Archbishop of Canterbury, and by Nicholas, a cardinal and librarian of the Roman church, secundum Ortodoxam fidem. Notwithstanding these corrections, the passage is still wanting in twenty-five Latin manuscripts, the oldest and fairest; two qualities seldom united, except in manuscripts....The three witnesses have been established in our Greek Testaments by the prudence of Erasmus; the honest bigotry of the Complutensian editors; the typographical fraud, or error, of Robert Stephens in the placing of a crotchet and the deliberate falsehood, or strange misapprehension, of Theodore Beza.”* — (*Decline and fall of the Roman Empire*, IV, Gibbon, p. 418)

Gibbon was defended in his findings by his contemporary, the brilliant British scholar Richard Porson, who also proceeded to publish conclusive proof that 1 John 5:7 was first added by the Church in 400 A.D. Regarding Porson's evidence, Gibbon later said, *“His structures are founded in argument, enriched with learning, and enlivened with wit, and his adversary neither deserves nor finds any quarter at his hands. The evidence of the three heavenly witnesses would now be rejected in any court of justice; but prejudice is blind, authority is deaf, and our vulgar Bibles will ever be polluted by this spurious text.”*

No modern Bible now contains the interpolation called the Comma Johanneum. However, just as Gibbon had predicted, the simple fact that the most learned scholars of Christianity now unanimously recognize this verse to be a later interpolation of the Church has not prevented the preservation of this fabricated text in our modern Bibles. To this day, the Bible in the hands of the majority of Christians, such as the KJV, still unhesitantly includes this verse as the inspired word of God without so much as a footnote to inform the reader that all scholars of Christianity of note unanimously recognize it as a later fabrication.

It was only the horrors of the great inquisitions which held back Sir Isaac Newton from openly revealing these facts to all. According to Newton, this verse first appeared for in the *third* edition of Erasmus's (1466-1536) New Testament.

Peake's Commentary on the Bible is very incisive as well, *“The famous interpolation after 'three witnesses' is not printed in RSV and rightly [so] . . . No respectable Greek [manuscript] contains it. Appearing first in a late 4th century Latin text, it entered the Vulgate [the 5th-century Latin version, which became the common medieval translation] and finally NT [New Testament] of Erasmus [who produced newly collated Greek texts and a new Latin version in the 16th century].”* — (p. 1038)

The Big Book of Bible Difficulties tells us, *“This verse has virtually no support among the early Greek manuscripts . . . Its appearance in late Greek manuscripts is based on the fact that Erasmus was placed under ecclesiastical pressure to include it in his Greek NT of 1522, having omitted it in his two earlier editions of 1516 and 1519 because he could not find any Greek manuscripts which contained it.”* — (Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, 2008, pp. 540, 541)

Theology professors Anthony and Richard Hanson, in their book *Reasonable Belief: A Survey of the Christian Faith*, explain the unwarranted addition to the text this way, *“It was added by some enterprising person or persons in the ancient Church who felt that the New Testament was sadly deficient in direct witness to the kind of doctrine of the Trinity which he favoured and who determined to remedy that defect . . . It is a waste of time to attempt to read Trinitarian doctrine directly off the pages of the New Testament.”* — (1980, p. 171)

Thomas Nelson and Sons Catholic Commentary, 1951, page 1186, explains, *“It is now generally held that this passage, called the Gomma Johanneum, is a gloss that crept into the text of the Old Latin and Vulgate at an early date, but found its way into the Greek text only in the 15th and 16th centuries.”*

A Commentary by Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown says, *“The only Greek manuscripts in any form which support the words, “in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness in earth,” are the Montfortianus of Dublin, copied evidently from the modern Latin Vulgate; the Ravianus, copied from the Complutensian Polyglot; a manuscript at Naples, with the words added in the Margin by a recent hand; Ottobonianus, 298, of the fifteenth century, the Greek of which is a mere translation of the accompanying Latin. All the old versions omit the words. The oldest manuscripts of the Vulgate omit them: the earliest Vulgate manuscript which has them being Wizanburgensis, 99, of the eighth century. ... Vigilius, at the end of the fifth century, is the first who quotes the disputed words as in the text; but no Greek manuscript earlier than the fifteenth is extant with them. The term “Trinity” occurs first in the third century in Tertullian.”*

*“Erasmus omitted the passage from the first printed Greek Testament of 1516, but undertook to introduce the words if a Greek manuscript containing them could be produced. He was faced with a late manuscript which did in fact contain the passage, and against his judgment kept his promise. So, by way of Erasmus' 1522 edition the interpolation invaded the text of the Greek New Testament. The action of the RV in cutting out the spurious words was tardy justice. We should treasure every word of the inspired record, but we want no invasion of that record by the addition of men, however sound the theology expressed.”* — (F. M. Blaiklock, *Commentary on the New Testament*, p. 246)

*“The Comma Johanneum (or Johannine Comma or Heavenly Witnesses) is a comma (a short clause) in the First Epistle of John, 1 John 5:7–8. The scholarly consensus is that that passage is a Latin corruption that entered the Greek manuscript tradition in subsequent copies.”* — (Wikipedia, Comma Johanneum)

*“5:7 tc Before τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ τὸ αἷμα (to pneuma kai to {udwr kai to |aima), the Textus Receptus (TR) reads ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ πατήρ, ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσι. 5:8 καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ (“in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. 5:8 And there are three that testify on earth”). This reading, the infamous Comma Johanneum, has been known in the English-speaking world through the King James translation. However, the evidence – both external and internal – is decidedly against its authenticity. For a detailed discussion, see TCGNT 647-49. Our discussion will briefly address the external evidence. This longer reading is found only in nine late mss, four of which have the words in a marginal note. Most of these mss (221 2318 [18th century] {2473 [dated 1634]} and [with minor variations] 61 88 429 629 636 918) originate from the 16th century; the earliest ms, codex 221 (10th century) includes the reading in a marginal note, added sometime after the original composition. The oldest ms with the Comma in its text is from the 14th century (629), but the wording here departs from all the other mss in several places. The next oldest mss on behalf of the Comma, 88 (12th century) 429 (14th) 636 (15th), also have the reading only as a marginal note (v.l.). The remaining mss are from the 16th to 18th centuries. Thus, there is no sure evidence of this reading in any Greek ms until the 14th century (629), and that ms deviates from all others in its wording; the wording that matches what is found in the TR was apparently composed after Erasmus’ Greek NT was published in 1516. Indeed, the Comma appears in no Greek witness of any kind (either ms, patristic, or Greek translation of some other version) until a.d. 1215 (in a Greek translation of the Acts of the Lateran Council, a work originally written in Latin). This is all the more significant since many a Greek Father would have loved such a reading, for it so succinctly affirms the doctrine of the Trinity. The reading seems to have arisen in a 4th century Latin homily in which the text was allegorized to refer to members of the Trinity. From there, it made its way into copies of the Latin Vulgate, the text used by the Roman Catholic Church. The Trinitarian formula (known as the Comma Johanneum) made its way into the third edition of Erasmus’ Greek NT (1522) because of pressure from the Catholic Church. After his first edition appeared, there arose such a furor over the absence of the Comma that Erasmus needed to defend himself. He argued that he did not put in the Comma because he found no Greek mss that included it. Once one was produced (codex 61, written in ca. 1520), Erasmus apparently felt obliged to include the reading. He became aware of this ms sometime between May of 1520 and September of 1521. In his annotations to his third edition he does not protest the rendering now in his text, as though it were made to order; but he does defend himself from the charge of indolence, noting that he had taken care to find whatever mss he could for the production of his text. In the final analysis, Erasmus probably altered the text because of politico-theologico-economic concerns: He did not want his reputation ruined, nor his Novum Instrumentum to go unsold. Modern advocates of the TR and KJV generally argue for the inclusion of the Comma Johanneum on the basis of heretical motivation by scribes who did not include it. But these same scribes elsewhere include thoroughly orthodox readings – even in places where the TR/Byzantine mss lack them. Further, these advocates argue theologically from the position of divine preservation: Since this verse is in the TR, it must be original. (Of course, this approach is circular, presupposing as it does that the TR = the original text.) In reality, the issue is history, not heresy: How can one argue that the Comma Johanneum goes back to the original text yet does not appear until the 14th century in any Greek mss (and that form is significantly different from what is printed in the TR; the wording of the TR is not found in any Greek mss until the 16th century)? Such a stance does not do justice to the gospel: Faith must be rooted in history. Significantly, the German translation of Luther was based on Erasmus’ second edition (1519) and lacked the Comma. But the KJV translators, basing their work principally on Theodore Beza’s 10th edition of the Greek NT (1598), a work which itself was fundamentally based on Erasmus’ third and later editions (and Stephanus’ editions), popularized the Comma for the English-speaking world. Thus, the Comma Johanneum has been a battleground for English-speaking Christians more than for others.”* — (NET Bible Commentary on 1 John 5:7-8)

Dr. Bruce M. Metzger wrote, *“After μαρτυροῦντες the Textus Receptus adds the following: ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ Πατήρ, ὁ Λόγος, καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα· καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἔν εἰσι. 8 καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ. That these words are spurious and have no right to stand in the New Testament is certain in the light of the following considerations.*

***(A) External Evidence***

*(1)The passage is absent from every known Greek manuscript except eight, and these contain the passage in what appears to be a translation from a late recension of the Latin Vulgate. Four of the eight manuscripts contain the passage as a variant reading written in the margin as a later addition to the manuscript. The eight manuscripts are as follows:*

*• 61: codex Montfortianus, dating from the early sixteenth century.*

*• 88: a variant reading in a sixteenth century hand, added to the fourteenth-century codex Regius of Naples.*

*• 221: a variant reading added to a tenth-century manuscript in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.*

*• 429: a variant reading added to a sixteenth-century manuscript at Wolfenbüttel.*

*• 629: a fourteenth or fifteenth century manuscript in the Vatican.*

*• 636: a variant reading added to a sixteenth-century manuscript at Naples.*

*• 918: a sixteenth-century manuscript at the Escorial, Spain.*

*• 2318: an eighteenth-century manuscript, influenced by the Clementine Vulgate, at Bucharest, Rumania.*

*(2) The passage is quoted by none of the Greek Fathers, who, had they known it, would most certainly have employed it in the Trinitarian controversies (Sabellian and Arian). Its first appearance in Greek is in a Greek version of the (Latin) Acts of the Lateran Council in 1215.*

*(3) The passage is absent from the manuscripts of all ancient versions (Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Arabic, Slavonic), except the Latin; and it is not found (a) in the Old Latin in its early form (Tertullian Cyprian Augustine), or in the Vulgate (b) as issued by Jerome (codex Fuldensis [copied a.d. 541-46] and codex Amiatinus [copied before a.d. 716]) or (c) as revised by Alcuin (first hand of codex Vallicellianus [ninth century]).*

*The earliest instance of the passage being quoted as a part of the actual text of the Epistle is in a fourth century Latin treatise entitled Liber Apologeticus (chap. 4), attributed either to the Spanish heretic Priscillian (died about 385) or to his follower Bishop Instantius. Apparently the gloss arose when the original passage was understood to symbolize the Trinity (through the mention of three witnesses: the Spirit, the water, and the blood), an interpretation that may have been written first as a marginal note that afterwards found its way into the text. In the fifth century the gloss was quoted by Latin Fathers in North Africa and Italy as part of the text of the Epistle, and from the sixth century onwards it is found more and more frequently in manuscripts of the Old Latin and of the Vulgate. In these various witnesses the wording of the passage differs in several particulars. (For examples of other intrusions into the Latin text of 1 John, see 2.17; 4.3; 5.6, and 20.)*

***(B) Internal Probabilities.***

*(1) As regards transcriptional probability, if the passage were original, no good reason can be found to account for its omission, either accidentally or intentionally, by copyists of hundreds of Greek manuscripts, and by translators of ancient versions.*

*(2) As regards intrinsic probability, the passage makes an awkward break in the sense.*

*For the story of how the spurious words came to be included in the Textus Receptus, see any critical commentary on 1 John, or Metzger, The Text of the New Testament, pp. 101 f.; cf. also Ezra Abbot, “I. John v. 7 and Luther's German Bible,” in The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel and Other Critical Essays (Boston, 1888), pp. 458-463.”* — (Dr. Bruce M. Metzger on 1 John 5:7-8, from his book, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart, 1993)

One more for Seventh day Adventists.

*“The passage as given in the KJV is in no Greek MS earlier than the 15th and 16th centuries. The disputed words found their way into the KJV by way of the Greek text of Erasmus (see Vol. V, p. 141). It is said that Erasmus offered to include the disputed words in his Greek Testament if he were shown even one Greek MS that contained them. A library in Dublin produced such a MS (known as 34), and Erasmus included the passage in his text. It is now believed that the later editions of the Vulgate acquired the passage by the mistake of a scribe who included an exegetical marginal comment in the Bible text that he was copying. The disputed words have been widely used in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, but, in view of such overwhelming evidence against their authenticity, their support is valueless and should not be used. In spite of their appearance in the Vulgate A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture freely admits regarding these words: “It is now generally held that this passage, called the Comma Johanneum, is a gloss that crept into the text of the Old Latin and Vulgate at an early date, but found its way into the Greek text only in the 15th and 16th centuries” (Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1951, p. 1186).” — (The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 675)*

The Seventh day Adventist Biblical Research Institute also admits this text in 1 John 5:7 is added. So their final conclusion and advice to Seventh day Adventists was *“...you should not use this text.”* So, the SDA BRI and the SDA Bible Commentary both acknowledge this text is added and say it should not be used, and yet you constantly see Adventists and their key organizations using this verse anyway. So, Seventh-day Adventists are not following their own advice.

For Adventists: *“I saw that God had especially guarded the Bible; yet when copies of it were few, learned men had in some instances changed the words, thinking that they were making it more plain, when in reality they were mystifying that which was plain, by causing it to lean to their established views, which were governed by tradition. But I saw that the Word of God, as a whole, is a perfect chain, one portion linking into and explaining another. True seekers for truth need not err; for not only is the Word of God plain and simple in declaring the way of life, but the Holy Spirit is given as a guide in understanding the way to life therein revealed.”* — (E.G. White, *EW*, 220.2, 1882)

*SDA PIONEERS:*

D.W. HULL

*“The objector contends that Christ and his Father are one person, and in proof of his position quotes 1 John 5:7. “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.” This is claimed as very strong proof in support of the trinity. The three persons are spoken of as God, the Father, God, the Son, and God, the Holy Ghost. I believe I may safely say that, aside from scripture, no such license would be allowable. Men have been so used to perverting scripture, and taking advantage of terms, and pressing them into their service, that they do not realize the magnitude of the crime as they otherwise would. The same expression is frequently used about man and wife; yet no person doubts that a man and his wife are two separate persons, inasmuch as they may be separated by hundreds of miles. Dr. A. Clarke expressly says that this passage[1 John 5:7] is an interpolation. See his Commentary in loco.”* — (D. W. Hull, Review and Herald November 10, 1859)

J.N. LOUGHBOROUGH

“The word Trinity nowhere occurs in the Scriptures. The principal text supposed to teach it is 1 John i, 7, which is an interpolation” — (J. N. Loughborough, Review and Herald November 5, 1861)

SDA SABBATH SCHOOL QUARTERLY 2009

*“In some versions of the Bible the words “in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit’ and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth” appear in 1 John 5:7, 8 (NKJV). The only problem is they are a later addition, not found in the original manuscripts.*

*“Among biblical scholars there is agreement that this statement is not genuine and has been added, probably to support the doctrine of the Trinity…”* — (Sabbath School Bible Study Guide: July – Sept 2009 pg 108)

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE: Question about 1 John 5:7

**Question:** *“Some years ago I had read some of your publications. At the time I seem to remember a discussion of the devinity of Christ. A refference to 1 John 5:7 was quoated but I can not find it...can you please tell me where this strong scriptual argument is used?*

*Thanking you in advance, dws”*

**Answer**: *“Thank you for contacting the Ellen G. White Estate. In answer to your question, though I have to tell you that I have not found any place in the published writings of Ellen G. White where she quotes this passage.*

*Perhaps that is just as well, because it may not be such a “strong scriptural argument” after all. The verse appears in no ancient Greek manuscript earlier than about the 13th century A.D. That is, despite its inclusion in the 1611 original of the King James Version translation into English, it is highly unlikely that it was in the \*original\* version of 1 John as John wrote it. No modern Bible translation that I am aware of includes it in the text except the New King James Version, and even this version carries a footnote about the text's absence from Greek manuscripts until relatively recent times. Apparently, it is some scribe's note to himself about the trinity, originally written in the margin of the manuscript he was copying, and later incorporated into the text by another scribe who may have been uncertain about whether or not it was a correction that belonged in the text; in any case, he opted to include it there.”* — (http://ellenwhite.org/content/file/did-ellen-g-white-believed-doctrine-trinity#document)

MINISTRY MAGAZINE: R. M. Johnston

*“The term ‘Trinity’ is nowhere to be found in the Bible. But the doctrine is there— this conclusion is inescapable. Nor need we be disturbed by the knowledge that certain words in 1 John 5:7, 8 are spurious additions that found their way into our King James Version from certain manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate, where they originated. For while it is true that no formal statement of the doctrine can be found in the most reliable Biblical manuscripts, nevertheless a comparison of Scripture with Scripture makes any contrary teaching untenable.”* — (R. M. Johnston, Ministry, November 1964, *What can we know about the Holy Trinity?*)

DENNIS FORTIN: Professor of Historical Theology

*“The New Testament does not have any explicit statement on the Trinity—apart from 1 John 5:7, which has been rejected as a medieval addition to the text…”* — (Dennis Fortin, *“God, the Trinity and Adventism”*)

When thirty-two Biblical scholars backed by fifty collaborating Christian denominations work together to compile the Revised Standard Version of the Bible based upon the most ancient Biblical manuscripts available to them today, there were some very extensive changes made. Among these was the unceremonious discardal of the verse of 1 John 5:7 as the fabricated insertion that it is, which never belonged in the inspired Word of God.

Even the added wording does not by itself proclaim the Trinity doctrine. The addition, illegitimate as it is, merely presents the Father, Word and Holy Spirit as witnesses. This says nothing about the personhood of all three since verse 7 shows inanimate water and blood serving as such.

And as seen on earlier pages, the word trinity did not come into common use as a religious term until after the Council of Nicea on May 20, 325 A.D. several centuries after the last books of the New Testament were complete, and is not a Biblical concept, but one that has been proven to originate from pagan sun worship. See [the link/key words] the pagan origins of the trinity doctrine.

*Deception at its worst?*

For every truth, Satan always has a lie. But I could not believe that someone would actually try and claim that this text in 1 John 5:7-8 was removed from all the translations instead of it being added.

This person needs to understand the simple fact that if it was not in any of the original early manuscripts, but only appeared in the later manuscripts, then it has it be added. It does not take a genius to realize this, and yet someone who is trying to defend his belief in the trinity doctrine has gone down this path. You would think he would realize that a false teaching like this can be easily exposed as a lie by this simple fact. So it makes me wonder if this is deception at its worst or just a deliberate lie, but it is not for me to judge this persons heart from the remnantofgod website.

This person, while addressing Seventh day Adventists, also claimed that the early Adventist pioneers recanted their stand as non-Trinitarians and the Holy Spirit not being a separate person. And yet there is no doubt that they did no such thing. Once again, it is easily proven from what they wrote, and many even to the year they died. Here is one example.

James White (husband of Ellen G. White) made numerous anti-Trinitarian statements and never changed his anti-Trinitarian stance, even in the year of his death in 1881, when he said, “*The Father was greater than the Son in that he was first.”* — (James White, *Review and Herald*, January 4, 1881, found in *EGW Review and Herald Articles*, vol. 1, p. 244)

Those who do the research will easily discover that what their web page and video states is incorrect, and will no doubt only make others realize that the trinity doctrine is not Biblical if dishonest techniques are needed to defend it. Sadly, this has also been done by deliberately trying to discredit others who are honestly teaching what history and the Bible reveals.

The web page from this person starts by discussing Melchizedek and claims that a letter they have an image of says that Ellen G. White when asked, *'Who then is Melchizedek?'* She replied, *'I will tell you who Melchizedek was. He was the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, who took the form of humanity and represented the Lord Jesus to that generation.'*

I searched the internet for this phrase, and only two sites came up. One was his and the other was one that said that it is not *“accepted as an authentic statement from Sister White.”* There are many web sites on Ellen White that contain all of her books and writings and this phrase does not appear on any of them, which also reveals it is not authentic.

A Seventh-day Adventist called LeRoy Froom was the man that searched the writings of Ellen White for anything that sounded Trinitarian, to try and change the Adventist Church to Trinitarian. Sadly, the quotes he used from Ellen White were successful. LeRoy Froom would have made this quote regarding Melchizedek one of his number one quotes if it were genuine, and yet no one has ever used it, as they all obviously know it is *“fake”* and cannot quote a legitimate source.

He also argued that since blasphemy against the Holy Spirit could not be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Son of God could, then the Holy Spirit must be a separate person. But by his own logic he has to exclude Jesus as being a person and fully divine. He concluded by saying, may God have mercy on the souls of anyone who did not agree with him. I have to say, may God have mercy on his soul if he is not genuinely deceived and knows he is teaching a lie!