

7-10-1967

From/To: John W. Murphrees, Jr. (Chalk's reply  
filed first)

John W. Murphrees,

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P.  
July 10, 1967

Mr. John W. Murphrees, Jr.  
800 West Avon Road  
Rochester, Michigan

Dear John:

Your very kind letter of June 20 has been received and deeply appreciated. I always know when people take the time to write as you did that they are interested in more effective proclamation of the gospel by myself and by all other gospel preachers as well.

Your question is a good one. As you already know, I quote from the American Standard Version in my preaching. However, I have more than 20 different translations at arm's reach on my desk here in Abilene. I usually read them very closely as well as try to follow the meaning of the original text, and especially in my radio sermons, use that particular version that seems to present the meaning of the text in the best possible way.

I have never before had the criticism you have leveled against my preaching. I have felt and still believe that the American Standard Version is an excellent translation and, by and large, can be used with clarity in public preaching. Possibly I should be much more careful in my own explanatory remarks about the verses used, so that no one has to leave without understanding what I have been saying in any sermon.

I do take your criticism, and do appreciate your interest and your taking the time to write.

Faternally yours,

John Allen Chalk  
Radio Speaker

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800 West Avon Road  
Rochester, Michigan 48063  
20 June 1967

Dear John Allen,

Because I have deep admiration for you, and deep appreciation for the work you are doing for the Lord, I feel compelled to make the following comments

Knowing that you are as aware of the problems and difficulties of communications as you are, I do not understand you using the archaic-sounding version of the Scriptures which you do. At times while you were speaking at Roseville and Rochester (I enjoyed both sermons and the chapel talk immensely) I strained very hard to hear you use plain, ordinary, everyday English when reading or quoting from the Bible because it would have communicated the real thoughts of the Bible so much more easily and clearly than the version which you were using did, but I strained in vain.

It seems to me that the chief reason for avoiding the King James Version or even the American Standard Version of the Scriptures is that either of them places the word of God and any consideration of religious principles and actions

off in some never-never land where people, and even God himself, do not even talk the same way that we real people do. Sometimes it seems to me that the Bible (God speaking through the Bible) fails to communicate simply because the ideas which can be clearly expressed in modern English are not expressed that way.

I know that you will accept these comments for whatever they are worth, and this is how I present them.

In the Lord's Service,  
John W. Murphree, Jr.