

Should the Reina Valera Gomez Bible be called Reina Valera Gomez? **by Dr. Phil Stringer**

I have become aware of several criticisms of my friend Humberto Gomez because the Spanish Bible translation that he organized and edited bears his name. It has been suggested that this is unethical, arrogant and egotistical. I would suggest that his critics are not very good students of the history of Bible translation.

Received text-type Bible believers promote the Ostervold French Bible. Ostervold organized the revision of the Olivetan Bible believer who originally made the French translation. Because he was the primary, though not the only translator, this translation appropriately bears his name.

Fundamental Bible believers use the Smith-Van Dyke Bible in Arabic. The names of the two primary translators immediately tell you what kind of translation it is.

William Tyndale had a number of helpers when he made the first translation into modern English possible. However, he was the one who brought it all together. So the translation carries his name to this day.

Many people helped Luther with his translation of the Old Testament. But everyone knows he was the prime force in this work so it became the Luther Bible.

The Matthews (a code name taken for fear of persecution) Bible, the Coverdale Bible and the Taverner Bible all bear the name of the primary organizer of the translation effort.

The Italian Diodati Bible bears the name of the primary translator.

Reina and Valera were the primary organizers and collators of the Reformation era Spanish text. Their names became forever attached to the Spanish Bible as a result.

The King James Bible was officially known as and the Authorized Version. That is what it said on the title page. It quickly became known as the King James Bible. Even though King James had no direct role in translation, his sponsorship made both the translation and its wide distribution possible. Everyone knew this! The people called this translation the King James Version no matter what the title page said and the name stuck.

Actually a translation that carries the name of its primary organizer, sponsor or translator has an honest name. You can quickly identify the textual basis and doctrinal basis for a translation if you identify the primary organizer.

The current confusion over the Reina Valera 1960 would not exist if it had such an honest name. It is really the Reina Valera Nida. The translation was organized by Eugene Nida of the American Bible

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Society. It often (though not always) followed his translation principles. Where it didn't, according to his own statement, it was because he and his translation committee didn't believe the Spanish people were ready. Nida was the most influential opponent of the Received Text and sound translation principles in the Twentieth Century. A translation bearing his name would have immediately been rejected by evangelicals in 1960.

Critical text translations rarely have meaningful names. The identity of the primary translators and sponsors are not emphasized. Names are chosen for their nice sounding promotional value: New King James, Living Bible, New America Standard Version, etc.

Thank God for an honest name for the Reina Valera Gomez. It immediately tells you that the organizer of the translation is a Received Text man. That he is a believer in the Verbal Inspiration of the Scripture. That he is committed to the proper literal meaning system of translations. The name tells you that this project has nothing to hide. Thank God!

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