

Ivan Vrtaric

CROATIAN BIBLE PROJECT, ETC.

During the last few months I have worked extensively on proofreading and doing the layout of the Old Testament text. Since I have to read the text three times, as well as doing the layout by myself, it seems that the Bible might not be published this year as I had initially anticipated. Furthermore, some of the brethren suggested that I add verse references and footnotes necessary to the text. I feel that this will be very beneficial even though it will take additional time to include it. I would appreciate any suggestions that you may have as to which source of verse references would be the best to use. I have the Ryrie Study Bible and intend to use the verse references from it if I don't find something better. I would prefer to have references in a text file so that I can simply convert them into Croatian and paste them into my publication. That would shorten my work tremendously. I also began my last proofreading of the New Testament text and its total harmonizing with the KJB text. In two months I'll have to begin proofreading and doing the layout of the Good Seed Calendar (735 pages tear-off version and 367 pages book version), thus it will be a miracle if I finish the Bible in the early spring of next year. I stay very busy during the whole year, and therefore must apologize for not having the time to write more often.

Lecturers of the Theological Biblical Academy here in Croatia, sent out and supported by MacArthur's Grace Community Church, tried to get permission to use my future translation for the MacArthur's Study Bible which they are translating (just notes, not its NKJV Bible text). Since I refused to give my authorization, they turned to my publisher and asked for permission to use the former Bible translation (based primarily on the Critical Text) which GBV decided to no longer publish. The GBV wanted to show consideration towards them, so they gave their permission. However, after much discussion, I finally persuaded them to rescind their decision based upon my belief that John F. MacArthur is one of the most dangerous neoevangelical teachers of our time, and his Study Bible can do more harm than good if it is published. In Croatia, as well as in Germany, there are not many who know about this particular author and his Freudian psychology-based teaching and ecumenical associations.

I don't know your viewpoints about Dr. MacArthur, but it is clear to me that he is very inconsistent in some areas of his life and teaching. He teaches one thing and yet appears to do exactly the opposite. During a meeting with the GBV and TBA people, I mentioned that MacArthur was co-working with false teacher Greg Laurie of Calvary Chapel. Mr. Heaton and Mr. Horvatek, MacArthur's missionaries, quickly responded that MacArthur was no longer working with Laurie. I'm sorry that I didn't insist at that time to ask them to tell us the reason why they were no longer affiliated since Dr. MacArthur cooperated for so many years in the past with such a well-known charismatic and ecumenist who preferred to teach so-called "Christian psychology", etc, instead of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Another close colleague of Dr. MacArthur's is Max Lucado, renowned writer and minister of the sect called the Church of Christ, an influential group (in Croatia too) that

preaches salvation by baptism, teaches against eternal security of the believer, and some other heresies. Lucado is one of the endorsers mentioned on the back cover of the MacArthur Study Bible. One day somebody will most likely translate some of Lucado's very popular books into Croatian, and readers will find out that this false teacher will have already been authenticated on the back cover of MacArthur's Study Bible that will eventually be published. All other endorsers from the Study Bible are either modernists known for teaching something dangerous, or for their ecumenical involvement. In addition to the false teachings of Dr. MacArthur (notably the Lordship salvation and blood of Christ issue), I believe that his relations with heretical men and religious movements makes him a dangerous model for young, inexperienced, uninformed, and gullible Christians in Croatia. We have already had enough bad influences through books of similar teachers that were published in our country during the past decades, and the results have been disastrous. Needless to say, I was very glad that GBV did not grant permission to MacArthur's missionaries concerning their request to use the GBV out-of-print Bible.

Last week my wife and I had a wonderful time trying to win souls in Hungary. Recently, we had gone to buy some clothing at the open market in the nearby town of Letenye (30 miles away). We realized that salespeople there speak Croatian, and we communicated a little with some of them. Since they are in an economic crisis, they often have no customers, which gives them a lot of free time to chat. Later, when I returned home, I remembered that there was some Hungarian Christian literature left in our attic, and it occurred to me that we could distribute it to the sellers. We took it to the market and gave booklets to as many sellers as we could. They were incredibly open to talk, and one even promised to come visit us when in Croatia. They were much more open to talk about faith than the Croatians, although they are Catholics as well. We realized that this southwestern part of Hungary is not evangelized at all, so we plan to go back with more literature as soon as possible. What we experienced in Letenye made us very happy since Hungarians are so close geographically, yet seem like such a far and exotic people. Their language totally differs from Croatian because it is not Slavic. The Iron Curtain divided our two states for decades while Hungary was under Soviet occupation, thus we were thrilled to be able to preach to this nationality of people.