

**Acts 2.47**  
**“And the Lord added to the church daily  
such as should be saved.”**

The modern versions make a number of changes in this verse and agree in the omission of the words “to the church”. The reason offered is that manuscripts which have come to light since the translation of the Authorised Version do not contain these words. It is true that a comparatively small number of ancient but by no means wholly reliable documents omit these words, but it is also true that the great majority of the manuscripts contain them.

There is a constant stream of documentary testimony to the genuineness of these disputed words from the very earliest times. The old Syriac and old Latin versions preserve a form of the text current in the second century – a period earlier than that of the codices Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus and Ephraemi of the 4th and 5th centuries. The Syriac Peshitta and Harkelian Syriac MSS. include the words, and these are supported by the old Latin MSS. known as “e” and “d” of the 4th and 5th centuries.

Codex D (Bezae) of the 6th century does not exhibit exactly the same arrangement of words, but it does include the words “to the church”. So also does Codex E (Laudianus) of the 6th century. P of the 9th century gives support.

The main stream of the very numerous Byzantine manuscripts preserves the disputed words century by century, and these represent a form of the text which was very widely used from the 4th century right down to the time of Stunica, Erasmus, Stephens, the Elzevirs and the 17th century translators.

Among the Byzantine MSS. are some which in many passages exhibit significant variations from the common text. In this case many of these support the disputed words. In this group we find Numbers 181, 436, 451, 945, 104, 88, 326, 330, 1241, 2412, 2127, 614, 2492, 1877, 629, 630, 2495. These do not all correspond exactly, but they all include the reference to “the church”.

To these we may add the uncial MSS. numbered 049, 056, 0142. This summary of the favourable evidence should make it clear that the documentary support is ancient, varied, numerous, continuous, weighty and of considerable geographical extent.

Nineteenth and twentieth century scholars have given undue weight to a small minority of ancient documents which are deficient in many respects. The New Testament Greek Text has been reconstructed by modern editors who have mistakenly regarded the 4th century codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus as the purest representatives of the original text. This was a fundamental error, as these two MSS. represent a mutilated and abbreviated form of the text which was rightly regarded as spurious and rejected by the great majority of discerning Christian scholars for 1500 years.

It is true that Codex A of the 5th century, which in the Gospels often supports the majority text, joins with the opposing minority in the present instance. Apart from these three MSS. the hostile witnesses are few – Uncials C and G, Cursive No. 81 (dated 1044), some manuscripts of the old Latin, the Latin Vulgate, the Egyptian, Armenian and Ethiopic versions, and quotations in the writings of Cyril and Lucifer.

The documentary evidence indicates that there were indeed some ancient copies which were defective in this verse and that the omission of the words “to the church” was reflected in some later copies. This trickle of hostile evidence is opposed by a flood of reliable testimony more than sufficient to assure the reader that the disputed words are genuine.

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