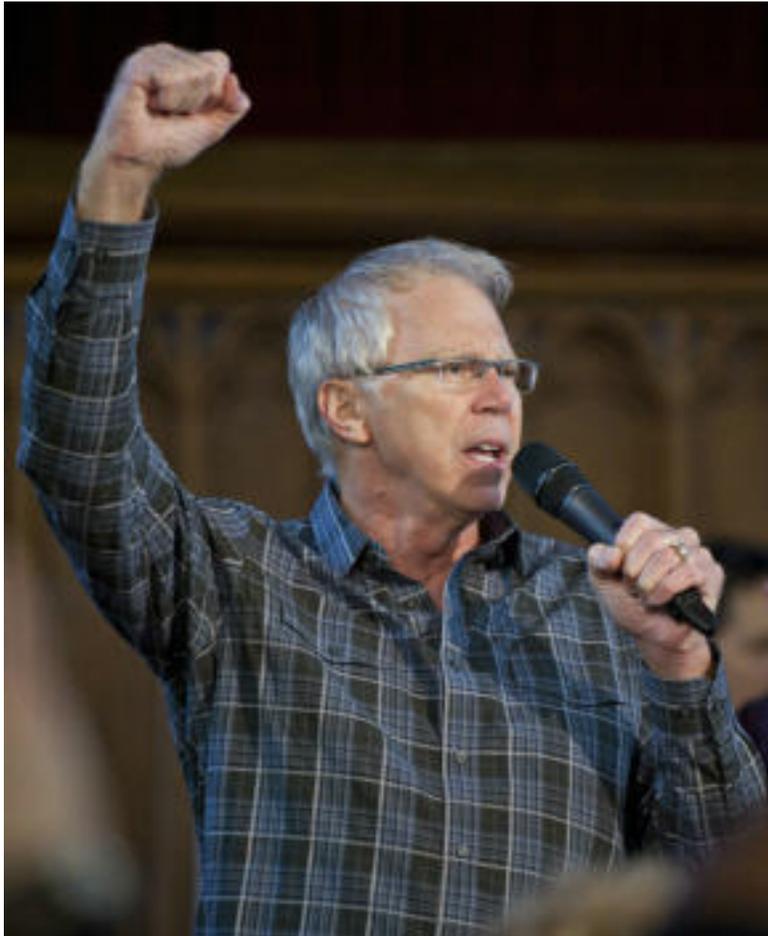


Apostle Brian Simmons: Name Dropping and Name Dodging

Posted By [Holly](#) On June 25, 2013 @ 3:40 pm In [Brian Simmons,C. Peter Wagner,Miscellaneous,The Passion Translation,Twisted Scriptures](#) | [4 Comments](#)

Background: The following post features the third part of an exchange between me and Apostle Brian Simmons, the translator of a “[Part 1](#)^[1] and [Part 2](#)^[2], [Part 4](#)^[3] and [Part 5](#)^[4].

The exchange occurred after I wrote a critical review of his translation at Amazon.com (see the discussion thread [here](#)^[5] and notice that he has since deleted his response to me). I feature our exchange here because it shows the types of illogical argumentation, deception, and poor scholarship that characterize many of the written works produced by leaders of the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) movement.



[6]

Apostle Brian Simmons

I want to highlight another NAR tactic used by Brian Simmons in our exchange. I call this tactic “Name Dropping.”

Name dropping is used by many NAR leaders in an attempt to gain credibility by associating themselves with historical giants of the Christian faith. The purpose is to make their NAR teachings appear like they represent orthodox Christianity rather than being seen for the aberrant doctrines they really are. For example, in his books, apostle C. Peter Wagner compares himself and other leaders of the NAR movement

to the leaders of the Protestant Reformation, such as Martin Luther. Wagner does this because he actually wants you to believe that he and his colleagues are modern-day Luthers.

And you can see how this same Name Dropping tactic is used by Simmons in his response to me. Notice how he compares his own work to the translations produced by two of the most respected Bible translators of church history: John Wycliffe and William Tyndale. But in my response to him, I show why he can't legitimately compare himself to these two great church leaders.

Yet, before I show you the text of our exchange, I want to point out an irony in Simmons' response to me. Notice how he is very willing to drop names when he is comparing his work to that of great translators. Yet, for some reason, he is unwilling to drop any names when it comes to identifying the five editors who are allegedly conducting a scholarly review of his work.

Why won't he identify their names? I suspect it is because the so-called "scholars" he is working with are not true scholars with credentials that would qualify them to translate the Bible.

Now let's look at our exchange.

First, here's what I said.

Simmons is the lone translator of his Passion Translation. This is a big red flag. In contrast to his translation, the standard English translations (such as the NIV, NASB, and ESV) were produced by large teams of translators. The ESV, for example, had over 100 scholars on its translation team!

And this was Simmons' response.

3. The Church of Jesus Christ has been blessed with "lone translators" throughout our history. Please google William Tyndale, John Wycliffe, James Moffatt, William Carey, and many contemporary "lone translators" that are bringing fresh understanding to the Scriptures. As mentioned above I have 5 editors and subject my work to scholarly review.

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But I countered his response by challenging the legitimacy of comparing himself to respected Bible translators. I also asked him a direct question, which he still has not answered. Here's what I said.

Simmons' response to this critique falls short for a couple of reasons. First, he cannot reasonably compare his translation work to the names he mentioned, and I will show why. ...

Both Tyndale and Wycliffe produced some of the earliest English translations of the Bible. Both men undertook their translation work under conditions of intense persecution by the religious authorities, and Tyndale was even burned at the stake. Given their historical context and the atmosphere of persecution, it makes sense why they would have to work as lone translators. (It should be pointed out, however, that it is now believed that Wycliffe did not work alone, but that the work attributed to him was done by multiple translators.) Also, it should be noted that, unlike Simmons, both men were scholars of the languages they

worked from. Wycliffe translated from the Latin Vulgate, and Tyndale translated from Hebrew and Greek manuscripts.

In contrast to the work of Wycliffe and Tyndale, Simmons' translation has been produced in a much different historical context—when English-speaking Bible scholars abound and in an atmosphere free from persecution by a state church. Thus, there is no need for Simmons to work alone.

Simmons also compares himself to other contemporary lone translators who “are bringing fresh understanding to the Scriptures.” But it is important to understand that Simmons does not describe his translation as merely a “paraphrase” of the Bible, as do some other contemporary lone translators, such as Eugene Peterson with his work, *The Message*. Rather, Simmons claims much more for his *Passion Translation*—that is, he claims it is a “dynamic equivalent” translation (a thought-for-thought translation of Scripture from the original languages).

Also, in contrast to Peterson's translation, Simmons seems to claim that his own translation is based on new revelation he has received from God into the Scriptures. For example, see this [advertisement](#)^[8] for the *Passion Translation*, where apostle Ché Ahn claims that Simmons “has been given fresh revelation and insight into the deeper meaning of the Scriptures.” Yet, we don't need translators to bring “fresh revelation”—we need them to faithfully translate the revelation that has already been given.

Second, after defending lone translation work, Simmons goes on to state that he has five editors and subjects his work to scholarly review. In response, I ask him directly, Mr. Simmons, who are these five editors, and who is conducting the scholarly review? As you should know, the standard English translations—such as the English Standard Version (ESV)—make public lists of the names of the translators, editors, and reviewers who worked on their projects. So, will you show a similar transparency and make public the names of the editors and scholars behind your work?

My response to Simmons had to be cut short because of a word count limitation imposed by Amazon. So, I did not have enough space to explain why he also should not compare his translation to those of James Moffatt and William Carey. But Moffatt—unlike Simmons—was a scholar of the original languages. Also, Moffatt's translation reflects his theologically liberal biases, which does not support lone translation work but, on the contrary, shows the need for a team of translators.

And William Carey's translations are not good comparisons because they were among the first translations of the Bible into Indian languages and dialects. Thus, the reason Carey worked as a lone translator was because he was undertaking a pioneering work of translating the Bible into new languages for unreached people groups. That is to say, he did not even have the option of being helped by hundreds of Indian-speaking scholars who had command of the original biblical languages. In contrast to Carey, Simmons does not need to work alone on a new English translation of the Scripture when, today, there are hundreds of English-speaking scholars who have a command of the original biblical languages.

What other examples of Name Dropping have you heard in NAR circles?

– By Holly Pivec

URL to article: <http://www.SpiritOfError.org/2013/06/apostle-brian-simmons-name-dropping-and-name-dodging/3477>

URLs in this post:

- [1] Part 1: <http://www.spiritoferror.org/2013/06/so-brian-simmons-are-you-an-apostle-or-not/3326>
- [2] Part 2: <http://www.spiritoferror.org/2013/06/apostle-brian-simmons-the-purple-haze-tactic/3354>
- [3] Part 4: <http://www.spiritoferror.org/2013/06/apostle-brian-simmons-lovehate-relationship-with-scholarship-and-academic-degrees/3513>
- [4] Part 5: <http://www.spiritoferror.org/2013/06/apostle-brian-simmons-and-the-secret-knowledge-tactic/3560>
- [5] here: <http://www.amazon.com/review/R2M5CLW27ENVNE>
- [6] Image: <http://www.SpiritOfError.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Brian-Simmons-hand-raised-larger.jpg>
- [7] Image: <http://www.SpiritOfError.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Brian-Simmons-Response-3.jpg>
- [8] advertisement: http://www.elijahlist.com/words/display_word.html?ID=12057