

# The Facts

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## Read this poster and ye shall believe

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WEST COLUMBIA — In type so small it can't be read without a magnifying glass, the entire King James Version of the Bible forms a gray background to images of Jesus and a cross, all displayed together on "The Amazing Bible Poster."

"People don't quite understand what it is until the magnifying glass comes up," says Dr. Alfred Ricks of West Columbia, the man who came up with the idea for the poster. He and his brother, Ed Mohan, also of West Columbia, now market the posters through their company, Starr Vision Productions Inc.

Browsing through a bookstore three years ago, Ricks saw posters featuring entire plays by Shakespeare, set in very small type still large enough to read with the naked eye. He remembered seeing similar prints featuring parts of the Bible.

"And then I wondered if anyone ever tried putting the entire Bible on a poster, so you could see all of it at once," he says.

The Bible's King James Version is in the public domain and free for reprinting without paying royalty fees to a copyright holder, and Ricks soon found he could buy inexpensive CDs that had the KJV already typed in, although he still had to format the text — adding italics, boldface and other details.

For a year, he struggled with the task, frequently

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crashing his computer under the workload. "I started out trying to have it all in one document, then ended up splitting it into two parts," he says.

Dividing at the natural break between the Old and New Testaments didn't work, either. The Old Testament was too long, while the New Testament was too short.

But the computer glitches were finally resolved, and Ricks and Mohan set about trying to find a print shop. Like two souls on a heavenly mission, they knocked on doors and made telephone calls without results, and for a while it seemed as if their efforts would be in vain.

"We went to at least 10 printers before we found one who would even try to do it," Ricks says. "Most of them said there's no way it could work, or that it would take specialized equipment."

Western Lithograph in Houston finally agreed to try to print the entire KJV in black, 1-point type with book and verse names in blue. When the first copies came off the press, Ricks got an immediate call from the excited printers.

"Everyone in there was on the phone saying, 'It worked! It worked!'" Ricks recalls.

"'Amazing' was the word everyone was saying, so that's why we named it the 'Amazing Bible Poster.'"

Since then, Ricks and Mohan got permission to print the Bible's New International Version (NIV) on a poster. On the flip side is a Spanish Bible translation, based on La Biblia de las Americas. The art is different from that on the KJV, but the posters are the same 24-by-36-inch size and they sell for the same price, \$29.95 each. A magnifying glass comes with each poster.

They can be ordered from the company's Web site, [www.bibleposter.com](http://www.bibleposter.com), or purchased at several retail outlets in Houston.

Ricks says he and Mohan only started marketing the posters this year, and so far sales have been

good, especially when customers get a chance to see how the magnifying glass and the posters relate.

“Without that, people don’t quite understand what it is until we hold up the magnifying glass,” Ricks says. “Kids seem to like it best.”

The brothers plan to go national with their product, and Ricks says they’ve been approached by a distributor who wants to represent the company in Europe. “But we’re not sure whether to go that way,” he adds.

As for the accuracy of his Bible posters, Ricks says the CDs are authorized and feature the same database used in printing the book-size KJV, NIV and Spanish-language Bibles, so the words should be exactly the same.

In the end, though, the accuracy of the proofreading may be a matter of faith.

Should anyone read the entire 1-point document with a magnifying glass and find an error, Ricks is open to making corrections to the 46-megabyte document.

“If anyone finds any typos, I’d appreciate it if they’d let me know,” he says, grinning.