

An Extra S Brings Ruin

It was a 124-year-old Welsh family business that took five generations to build up, according to *The Daily Telegraph*, a British newspaper, and yet a blunder over a single letter was all that was needed to cause its collapse, leaving the government with a multimillion-dollar legal bill.



In 2015, a British high court found that Companies House (an executive agency of the United Kingdom Department of Business, Innovation and Skills) was liable for damages associated with the collapse of the company.

At issue was an erroneous report published by Companies House stating that the prestigious engineering firm Taylor & Sons was “all wound up” (i.e., in liquidation). By the time Taylor & Sons caught the error just three days later, Companies House had already sold the information to the various credit bureaus.



In an effort to protect their own assets, both clients and suppliers of the engineering firm began canceling orders and contracts immediately. Within just three weeks, the company, said owner Phillip Davison-Serby, was rendered “so as to become of no real value. We lost all our credibility as all our suppliers thought we were in liquidation. It was like a snowball effect.”

All the while, the real credit problem was never with Taylor & Sons at all, but rather with a completely unrelated company called Taylor & Son (no “s”).

A simple, careless typographical error resulted in the demise of a landmark company and the loss of livelihood for all its 250 employees.

“The administrative slipup was the only one of its kind ever recorded in Companies House history,” the newspaper reported.

“That can only be,” said the judge, “because it was easy to avoid.”



All because of the failure in proofreading to catch one single extra letter.

(more)

God calls us to faithfulness in both little things and great. Yet while we're on our guard, paying such close attention to the details of the "great" things, we can all too easily fail in the "small" things. We become careless and unconcerned about those "little" sins because they seem, as the judge described, "so easy to avoid."

Don't let the "snowball effect" of easy slipups render your great efforts to be of no value.

Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much (Matthew 25:23 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter