
(continued from inside flap)

I highly recommend taking the time to read the preface of your Bible. The translation team will tell you about their approach to translation and let you know how they handled things such as, poetry, weights and measures, names for God, etc. It's worthwhile to take the time to read the preface. Just don't forget to keep on reading.

Remember

While study notes and application notes can be helpful, remember that they are not inspired by God. The study and application notes are just someone's opinion. Sometimes these study notes represent significant doctrinal biases. The text of Scripture is what is inspired by God. (Even the chapter and verse designations were decided upon by human beings to help us find things more easily.) Study notes are not bad, but read the preface and the information about who is writing the study notes. Understand where they are coming from. And take the text of Scripture more seriously than you do the notes.

Most important, remember that the same Holy Spirit who guided the original writers of the Bible is still at work today, in the work of translators and our work as students of Scripture. If we give our best efforts to the reading, memorizing, and applying of Scripture, the Holy Spirit will work in our lives to transform us into the image of Christ.

Blessings,

Ron Kastens
Lead Pastor

Pastors:

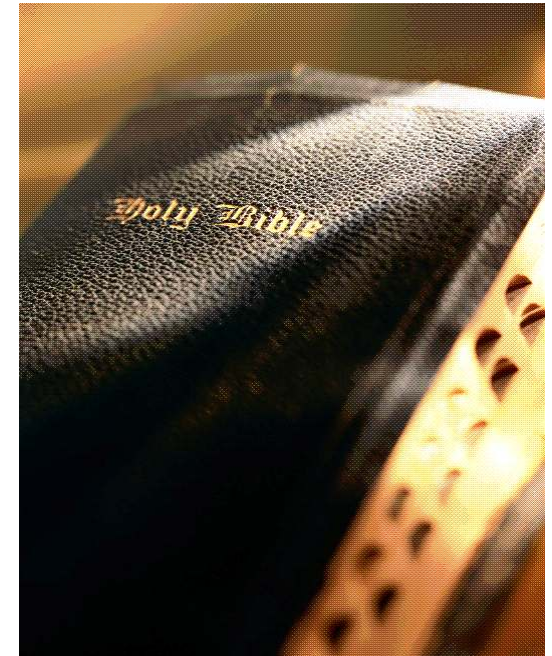
Andrea Andris, Family Ministry: Elementary
Maurice Eastwick, Associate Pastor
Dave Fordyce, Worship/Creative Arts
Jenna Hardy, Family Ministry: Preschool
Ron Kastens, Leading/Teaching
Tim Lafferty, Community Life
Jim Wagner, Family Ministry: Student

Elders:

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Bible Translations



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Basic Information on Bible Translations

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament was written in Greek (with a smattering of Aramaic in both). Therefore, the Bible must be translated for anyone who does not read Hebrew and Greek. The good news is that some very good linguistic work has been done and is being done today in the field of Bible translation.

That being said, it is important to understand that translation work is not easy. It is not an exact science. Written translation involves a message from one language (the sender language) being communicated in another language (the receiver language). Translation is so difficult that it is safe to say there is no perfect translation of any document.

Any time translation is done, the translator must make choices. Sometimes the choices simply involve the nuances of a particular word. These nuances can be impacted by the context, the grammar, and even the word placement in the text. The point is, for every word in the Greek New Testament, there is not necessarily one specific corollary English word that fits perfectly in that spot.

The Approach

Probably the first choice translators must make is their approach to or style of translation. Should a translator aim for a word-for-word translation (also known “formal equivalence”) or should they aim for a thought-for-thought translation (also known as “dynamic equivalence”)? Be careful before you answer too quickly.

If you opt for a thought-for-thought (dynamic equivalence) translation, understand that the translators are trying to communicate the original author’s thoughts with equivalent thoughts in

English. Of course the problem is that who is to say that their interpretation of the author’s original thought is the correct one? The more a translation team leans toward the thought-for-thought style, the more of their interpretations (choices) will be in the translation.

Before you jump to the word-for-word (formal equivalence) bandwagon, understand that even these translations contain the translation team’s interpretations. Word-for-word translations are not exact word-for-word translations. An exact word-for-word translation would be unreadable in English.

For example, consider, “¿Como se llama?” This Spanish question literally says, “How do you call yourself?” While that may be accurate, it is not good English. Even though it is accurate, comprehension is going to be limited due to the poor English. This question is best translated, “What is your name?” That makes sense to those of us who speak English. Even though it is not word-for-word, in English we might say it is more accurate than the word-for-word translation.

Word-for-word translations still must make accommodations to English (or other receiver language). Word-for-word translations must make interpretations (choices) in order to produce a readable translation, even if that means simply choosing the nuance of a word.

The point is if you want to know what the translation should literally say, you’ll have to learn Hebrew and Greek. But then you will be the one who is making choices as the translator.

The Goal

Translations should help us - in our day, time, and language - understand what the original Biblical writers wanted to communicate. Translators help us understand in English, what the original readers of the New Testament would

have understood from the Greek. The translators of the versions mentioned below are committed to accurately communicating the message of the original authors in contemporary English.

The best Bible translation for you is the one that you will actually read and study. If you think a particular translation is the way to go, yet you do not pick it up and read, study, meditate and memorize it, it is not doing you any good.

Some Options

Because there is no perfect translation, it is often helpful to read or study Bible passages in multiple translations. If it can be afforded, purchase a Bible in each category – word-for-word and thought-for-thought.

Bibles that lean toward a word-for-word style are the New American Standard Bible (NASB), the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the English Standard Version (ESV), and the New King James Version (NKJV). Bibles that lean toward a thought-for-thought style are the New Living Translation (NLT), Contemporary English Version (CEV), the New Century Version (NCV), and The Message. For years a best selling translation has been the New International Version (NIV). Though it is still more in the thought-for-thought style, it is more in the middle than the others. The same is true of its update, the Today’s New International Version (TNIV).

If I did not own an English translation of the Bible, the first one I would purchase would be a TNIV or NIV. Then I would purchase a NASB or NRSV. Third I would purchase a copy of The Message or the NLT.

Another good resource is an online Bible called the NET Bible. You can access it for free at www.bible.org. It is a good translation with extensive translation notes.

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