

WHICH  
Bible  
Translation  
SHOULD I USE?

*A Comparison of 4 Major Recent Versions*

*Andreas J. Köstenberger and David A. Croteau, Editors*

FOREWORD BY JOE STOWELL



NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

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## To the Reader

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**W**e are so glad you picked up a copy of this book. Which Bible translation should I use? is one of the questions we get asked most often by our students and people in the churches. It is an exceedingly important question and yet one that is not easy to answer in one or two sentences. Whether you and I realize it or not, translating the Bible from the original Greek and Hebrew into contemporary English is a complex and delicate undertaking. In many ways we are spoiled by the unseen, hard labors of translators in our day and in ages past. We can just walk into any LifeWay or other Christian bookstore, or go online and order any number of Bibles or study Bibles in various translations, many of them excellent.

But how do Bible translations come into being? And how do translators make their decisions on how to translate a particular passage in Scripture? Which Bible translation *should* you use? Two points immediately come to mind. First, Bible translation, by and large, is done by committees rather than individuals working alone and in isolation. For this reason the Bibles you and I have reflect the majority consensus of a given translation committee. The process in arriving at such a consensus may well involve negotiation or compromise (which, in this context, is not necessarily a bad thing). This is a commendable way to proceed in that committees tap into the collective wisdom of a group of Bible scholars to weigh translation options from every conceivable angle.

Then, once the work of the scholars on the committee is done, and sometimes while their work is still ongoing, the English stylists get to

work. They ensure that a translation does not merely reflect our best knowledge of the meaning of a given word in the original Greek or Hebrew but that it is rendered in readable, idiomatic English. In this sense it is actually the English stylists, not the Greek or Hebrew scholars, who have the last word! That said, Bible translation is a team effort with a considerable number of individuals making their contribution based on their respective areas of expertise.

The second point you may want to keep in mind as you make your way through this volume is that behind the various ways in which a given translation renders a certain passage is a translation philosophy. By this I mean the larger underlying principles and convictions that serve as the overall framework for a particular Bible translation. In essence the spectrum here ranges from literal, word-for-word translations (formal equivalence) to free, idiomatic thought-for-thought renderings (functional equivalence, also sometimes called dynamic equivalence). In between are translations that aim for a combination of literal accuracy and idiomatic readability. One translation, the HCSB, even coined their own phrase to describe this aim in translation: “optimal equivalence.”

Another aspect of Bible translation philosophy is the way a committee decides to handle gender issues. Several titles have been given to describe this translation issue: gender-inclusive, gender-neutral, and gender-sensitive. All three terms are different ways in which versions approach the issues of the gender communicated by certain words in Bible translation. A dialogue is occurring over whether certain words and phrases in Hebrew and Greek were originally referring to one specific gender or are generic and universal. For example, when Jesus said, “I will make you fishers of men” (Matt 4:19b ESV), did the word for “men” refer to only males or both males and females? Some translations replace the word “men” with “people” (NIV, NLT, HCSB); others retain the expression in the understanding that readers today will readily discern that the term refers to people in general. Another example comes from the phrase “son of man” in Hebrews 2:6. This phrase is a citation of Psalm 8:4 and could refer to a specific “son of man” (ESV and HCSB) or to “human beings” in general (TNIV). While all four translations agree that some words or phrases are gender neutral, the application of this in translation practice is hotly debated. Part of the debate is over the English language itself and whether English has changed in its use of certain words. The word *man* has been used in English to refer to “humanity in general” for many years, but some, perhaps even many, believe this use is fading in English. Another example

is the use of the generic pronouns *he*, *him*, and *his*. Are these still used to refer to people without reference to gender, or do they communicate maleness? These issues and questions will be addressed in the following chapters.

So, then, which Bible translation should you and I use? In the following pages, we will try to give you what you might call a “buyer’s guide” to some of the best and most recent English translations on the market today. First, you can read a succinct introduction on the history of translating the Bible into English over the centuries. This will help set the stage for the rest of the volume in which four leading experts discuss four major recent English Bible versions: the ESV, the NIV, the HCSB, and the NLT. Each of the essays will begin by laying out some of the guiding principles of the particular translation before discussing 16 specific passages that will serve as a basis for comparison of the distinctive natures of these four translations.

Three of the contributions in this volume (Grudem, Moo, and Clendenen) were originally presented as part of the Fall 2011 Liberty University Biblical Studies Symposium on Bible translation. You will notice QR codes inserted at various points throughout these chapters. By scanning the code with your mobile device, you can view a video clip of that contributor addressing the biblical passage under discussion. If you do not have a mobile device, the videos clips are also available at <http://www.bhpublishinggroup.com/translation>. The full-length video presentations from the symposium are available from Liberty University at <http://www.liberty.edu/academics/religion/index.cfm?PID=24987>.

Once you have read the four chapters, you will be well on your way to making an informed decision as you formulate your answer to the question, Which Bible translation should I use?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> While some versions (e.g., the New American Standard Bible) italicize words in the text of the translation, the four translations discussed in this volume do not. So any italicized words in Bible quotations in the chapters that follow reflect the contributors’ emphases.

## CHAPTER 1



# A Short History of Bible Translation

*Andreas J. Köstenberger and David A. Croteau*

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**Y**ou may be overwhelmed by the options of Bible translations available in the English language and by the various controversies regarding many popular versions. You may wonder how to evaluate which translation is best for you. In this book we will focus on a few major contemporary translations. Before addressing these modern-day translations, however, it will be helpful to understand the background to this dialogue. We will give a brief history and compare certain translations to observe how they deal with particular words, phrases, and sentences in order to give you an idea about how translations differ. We hope tracing these differences through history will give you a more informed perspective regarding the translation differences dealt with in the remainder of this book.

### **The Earliest Translations of the Old Testament into Non-English Languages**

The translation of the Bible from its original languages into other languages began before the Bible was completely written. The Old Testament was translated from Hebrew into Greek and was probably completed about 100 to 200 years before Jesus was born. This became known as the *Septuagint*, abbreviated as LXX in the footnotes of many translations. The Septuagint was not the product of a translation committee that had a

specific translation philosophy it followed closely.<sup>1</sup> Then what is it? While the Septuagint is at times fairly literal in its translation, it is hardly a word-for-word translation from the Hebrew. Many people are surprised to learn that there was not a single version considered “the official” Septuagint. In fact, it is probably best to refer to “Septuagints,” since there are many variations between manuscripts.

Before the New Testament was written, the Hebrew Old Testament had been translated into Aramaic, the primary language of Israel (and other areas toward the east). When an Old Testament passage was read out loud in a synagogue, it was read in the Hebrew language. Then a leader of the synagogue would translate or paraphrase the Hebrew text into Aramaic. Eventually, these translations began to be written down. These Aramaic translations, known as the *Targumim*, began to be recorded around the same time as the Septuagint. The Targumim were not literal, word-for-word translations. Instead, many times the translators would import their interpretation of the passage into their translation. The Targumim were used in Jewish worship and preaching from before the time of Jesus for the next 1,000 years. It was several centuries before there was a standard Aramaic text.

### **The Earliest Translations of the Entire Bible into Non-English Languages**

The early church translated the entire Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin. Because Christianity was not centralized in its early years, many versions were produced and were being used throughout the churches. Pope Damasus (late 4th century AD) commissioned Jerome to edit existing translations of the Bible in Latin so the church could have a standard Latin version. This translation project by Jerome became known as the *Vulgate*. It became so widely accepted that the older Latin translations<sup>2</sup> have become very rare. The translation of the Vulgate by Jerome differs from most other translations from this time period because the translation was accomplished by a scholar who knew Hebrew and Greek; most translations were not connected to any specific person.

*Syriac* translations of the Bible probably began in the second century AD, but in the fifth century a Syriac translation called the Peshitta replaced all previous versions. The Old Testament was translated from the Hebrew

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<sup>1</sup> This has been the approach of many translations since the Geneva Bible (1560).

<sup>2</sup> Known as the “Old Latin.”

and the New Testament from the Greek. *Coptic* versions of the Bible were in existence by the third and fourth centuries, and these translations were based on the Septuagint Old Testament and Greek New Testament manuscripts. Many other translations were made of the Bible, but they were translated from these previous translations and not from the Hebrew and/or Greek texts. The translations in this category include the *Georgian*, *Armenian*, *Gothic*, and *Ethiopic* versions. These translations were not purely academic exercises but were attempts at making the Scriptures accessible to followers of God who did not know the original languages.

## The Bible in English

### The Earliest Known English Translations

For many centuries the Bible of English-speaking Christians was the Latin Vulgate. Some parts of Scripture were probably translated into Old English in the seventh and eighth centuries, but they do not exist today. The earliest translations still preserved are contained between the lines of text on Latin manuscripts. One of the earliest of these manuscripts dates to the tenth century. The *Wessex Gospels* is the first translation of the Gospels preserved in Old English.<sup>3</sup>

John Wycliffe, driven by his belief in the supreme authority of the Bible, began an ambitious translation project in the fourteenth century. Some scholars have referred to Wycliffe as “The Morning Star of the Reformation.” The Gospels (and possibly the entire New Testament) were translated by Wycliffe himself. However, it was probably his associates who completed the translation of the Old Testament. The translation was based on the Latin Vulgate and was woodenly literal to the point of sometimes being almost impossible to understand.<sup>4</sup> Wycliffe died of a stroke, and about six months after his death, his body was exhumed and burned to ashes for being declared a heretic.<sup>5</sup> His books were ordered to be destroyed, and it was illegal for any layperson to have a copy of the Bible

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<sup>3</sup> Aelfric was a main contributor to a translation of Genesis through Judges that occurred about the same time as the *Wessex Gospels*.

<sup>4</sup> The structure of a sentence in Hebrew or Greek can be radically different from English sentence structure. While English typically begins with a subject followed by a verb and then an object, Greek (for example) could change the word order to object, subject, and then verb. Keeping the words in the same order as the original language does not always communicate what the original text was trying to say.

<sup>5</sup> His views on predestination, authority, wealth and possessions, the Lord’s Supper, and the papacy were among the charges.

translated by Wycliffe. Anyone found in possession of a Wycliffe Bible was considered a heretic.

Wycliffe's translation was revised shortly after its completion, and this revision, probably accomplished by John Purvey, translated the Scriptures much more clearly. Purvey states his translation philosophy in the preface to this revision:

First, it is to be known that the best translating out of the Latin into English is to translate after the sentence and not only after the words, so that the sentence be as open, or opener, in English as in Latin, and go not far from the letter; and if the letter may not be followed in the translating, let the sentence ever be whole and open, for the words ought to serve to the intent and sentence, or else the words be superfluous or false.<sup>6</sup>

F. F. Bruce concludes concerning Purvey's translation philosophy that the translator should "not depart from the letter of the original more than is necessary to convey the true and plain sense."<sup>7</sup> Even though any use of an English Bible was forbidden by the authorities, the Lollards (followers of Wycliffe)<sup>8</sup> continued to circulate the revised translation widely. It became the main English Bible in the fifteenth century.

A couple of selections from Wycliffe's translation might help us understand this translation better. In Matthew 5:9, Wycliffe's translation uses the phrase "God's children,"<sup>9</sup> rather than "sons of God," which is a more literal translation from the Greek. Interestingly, in Ephesians 2:3, the phrase "children of wrath" has been translated as "sons of wrath."<sup>10</sup> Rather than translating John 3:16 with the common "whoever believes" or "everyone who believes," Wycliffe's translation has "each man that believeth."<sup>11</sup> The adverb translated with "so" by Wycliffe could refer to the extent of God's love for the world (which appears to have been Wycliffe's own interpretation) or the way in which he demonstrated his love. Another controversial word in this verse is the Greek word *monogenēs*, which Wycliffe translated as "only begotten."<sup>12</sup> He struggled with translating some technical words from the Greek. This can be seen

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<sup>6</sup> F. F. Bruce, *History of the Bible in English* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 19–20.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>8</sup> So named by Pope Gregory XI.

<sup>9</sup> Lit., "Goddis children."

<sup>10</sup> Lit., "the sones of wraththe."

<sup>11</sup> Lit., "ech man that bileueth."

<sup>12</sup> Lit., "oon bigetun."

in Luke 17:3 where he said that if your brother does “penance,”<sup>13</sup> forgive him, rather than using “repent” as most translations do today. However, in Matthew 27:3, Wycliffe said that Judas “repented.”<sup>14</sup> He also has an interesting translation of 1 Timothy 2:12, saying that the woman should not teach “neither to have lordship on the husband.”<sup>15</sup>

In this brief selection, one can see that Wycliffe was not overly rigid in his use of gender, translating a word many scholars would consider gender specific, “sons,” as “children,” and a word many scholars would consider a gender-neutral word, “children,” as “sons.” The translation does not shy away from masculine references, as would be expected. He understood the verb *authentain* in 1 Timothy 2:12 as “having lordship” and saw it exclusively in the relationship of a wife to her husband. Finally, just reading a few verses leads to the conclusion that Wycliffe retained the word order of the Greek (and sometimes Latin) even when the English rendering hardly made any sense.

### Translations in the Sixteenth Century

According to R. T. France, two factors separate sixteenth-century translations from the previous ones: (1) the rediscovery of Hebrew and Greek by European scholarship, and (2) the printing press.<sup>16</sup> The Hebrew Bible was first printed on a printing press in 1488 and the Greek New Testament in 1516. This new setting created an opportunity for someone to undertake translating the Scriptures into English from the original languages more precisely than had been accomplished previously. A leading figure of the Protestant Reformation in England took up this task.

William Tyndale (1494–1536), influenced by both Erasmus and Luther, translated much of the Bible into English for laypeople. In 1526, he completed translating the New Testament, but in England at that time it was forbidden to translate the Bible into English. For this reason it was printed in Worms, Germany (the location of Luther’s Diet of Worms a few

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<sup>13</sup> Lit., “do penance.”

<sup>14</sup> Lit., “he repentide.” The Greek word in Luke 17:3 means “to change one’s way of life as the result of a complete change of thought and attitude with regard to sin and righteousness” (Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, eds., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, 2 vols. [New York: United Bible Societies, 1988, 1989], 41.52). The Greek word in Matt 27:3 means “to feel regret as the result of what one has done” (*ibid.*, 25.270).

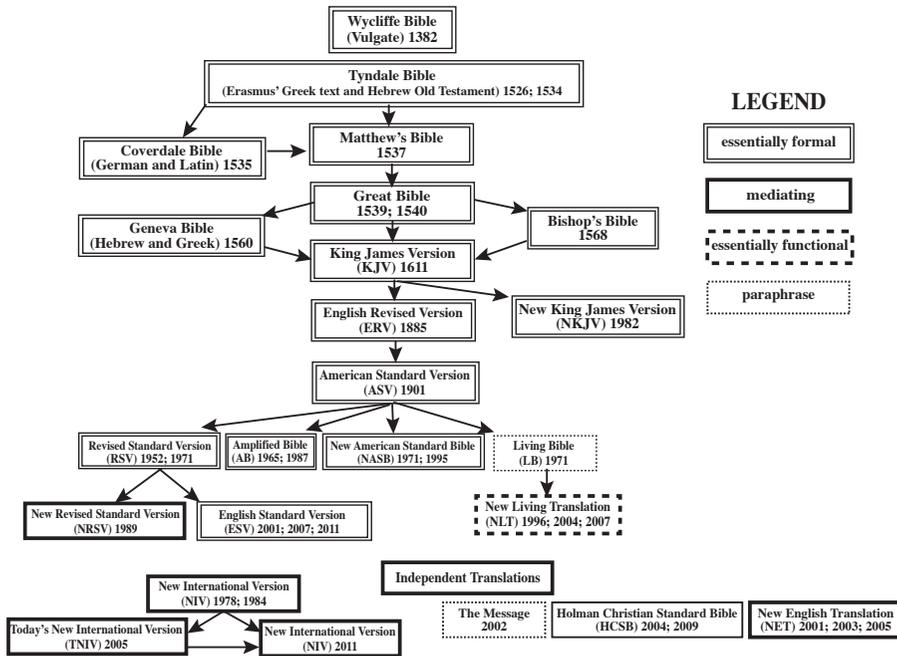
<sup>15</sup> Lit., “nether to haue lordschip on the hosebonde.”

<sup>16</sup> Dick France, “The Bible in English: An Overview,” in *The Challenge of Bible Translation: Communicating God’s Word to the World*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie, Mark L. Strauss, and Steven M. Voth (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 181.

years earlier). Tyndale had it smuggled into England because of his commitment to get God’s Word into the hands of the laity.

Tyndale was heavily influenced by Martin Luther’s translation into German. Four years before Tyndale completed his translation, Luther finished the German New Testament. Several of Tyndale’s translations have been traced to Luther, including “mercy seat,” “twinkling of an eye,” “let there be light,” and “the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”<sup>17</sup> Luther’s Bible (completed in 1534) remains one of his greatest achievements. It had a lasting impact on Christianity in Germany and the German language itself.

Figure 1: A Brief History of English Bible Translation



Tyndale’s New Testament was based on Erasmus’s 1522 Greek New Testament. This translation became the basis for nearly all English translations for centuries. While Tyndale translated the Pentateuch and other Old Testament books, he continued to revise his New Testament translation.

<sup>17</sup> See Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 232, n. 62, for the first example.

The 1534 edition of the New Testament became the standard Tyndale edition. Tyndale was tried and found guilty of heresy; his views on justification by faith, adult baptism, and prayer to the saints. He was strangled and burned at the stake. His last words were “Lord! Open the king of England’s eyes.”<sup>18</sup> God answered that prayer! Four years after Tyndale’s death, the same king who condemned him, Henry VIII, commanded four translations to be published in England.

Tyndale followed Wycliffe in translating Matthew 5:9 with “children of God,”<sup>19</sup> but did not follow him in Ephesians 2:3, preferring “children of wrath.” Tyndale made an interesting adjustment in John 3:16, concluding that “none that believe in him should perish.”<sup>20</sup> Tyndale also believed the adverb should be translated as “so,” indicating the extent of God’s love. However, he translated *monogenēs* simply as “only.” Tyndale made a significant, enduring, and controversial change in translating the Greek words previously rendered “do penance” as “repent” and “repentance,” as in Luke 17:3. The phrase “do penance” seems to be referring specifically to the Catholic doctrine of penance, and Tyndale wanted to be faithful to the original text while not affirming a practice with which he disagreed. Most translations have continued to use the word “repent” since Tyndale. He also kept “repented” from Wycliffe’s translation in Matthew 27:3. In 1 Timothy 2:12, Tyndale differed from Wycliffe in two key ways. First, he translated the verb *authentēin* as “have authority”<sup>21</sup> rather than “have lordship.” Second, he saw the verse in relationship to men and women in general, in contrast to Wycliffe’s translation of it as being between a husband and wife. In another effort to avoid associations with Catholicism, Tyndale translated *ekklēsia* with the English word “congregation” (see Matt 16:18; Acts 5:11) rather than the common “church,” as Wycliffe had done.

Tyndale’s literary ability is obvious on nearly every page. Compare his translation to that of Wycliffe’s overly literal and awkward translation, and his brilliance becomes obvious. He truly wanted English Christians to understand Scripture and translated the text with this in mind. He does not embrace much in terms of gender-neutral translations, but his translation of Matthew 5:9 demonstrates that this translation concept was not off-limits for him. While still maintaining an essentially literal translation

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<sup>18</sup> John Foxe, *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs*, rev. ed., ed. Harold J. Chadwick (Gainseville, FL: Bridge-Logos, 2001), 133.

<sup>19</sup> Lit., “children of God.”

<sup>20</sup> Lit., “none that beleve in him shuld perisshe.”

<sup>21</sup> Lit., “have auctoricie.”

philosophy, Tyndale produced an English translation of the Bible that was eminently more understandable than any before it.

Miles Coverdale's Bible in 1535 was the first complete Bible printed in English. Coverdale was a friend of Tyndale's, and he made no claim to have translated from Hebrew or Greek. Instead, he essentially revised Tyndale's translation, utilizing Luther's translation as an aid. Two years later, in 1537, Thomas Matthew's Bible was published. It was the first English Bible published with official approval by the king of England. It was compiled and edited by John Rogers (writing under a false name), who was also a friend of Tyndale's. Matthew's Bible was the Tyndale Bible in the parts that Tyndale completed, with the remainder taken from Coverdale.

Now that the king had officially approved of a translation, the way was paved for an authorized translation. Coverdale was given the task of revising Matthew's Bible, and the result was the Great Bible (1539). It was the official Bible of England for approximately 20 years. The Great Bible's main weakness was that much of the Old Testament translation was not based on the Hebrew text but on the Latin Vulgate and even some German translations.

Some significant developments occurred with the next important translation: the Geneva Bible (1560). First, this translation was completed by a group of scholars, not one man. Second, the entire Old Testament was translated from the Hebrew text. Third, it contained introductions to the books of the Bible, maps, cross-references, and indexes. Some scholars have called it the first study Bible. Since it was produced and printed in Geneva, the notes were heavily Calvinistic. It was the first English Bible translation to use both chapters and verse numbers.<sup>22</sup> The Geneva Bible quickly replaced the Great Bible and became the Bible of William Shakespeare, John Bunyan, and John Knox.<sup>23</sup>

### **The King James Bible**

King James I of England did not appreciate the Geneva Bible because he thought the notes that accompanied the translation were too partial toward Calvinistic thinking. Therefore, he assembled a diverse group of the best scholars to form a translation committee in 1604, nearly 50 scholars in all.

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<sup>22</sup> It used the verse numbers given by Robert Estienne (Stephanus).

<sup>23</sup> Some other translations completed in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries include the Taverner's Bible (1539), Edmund Becke's Bible (1549), The Bishop's Bible (1568), and the Rheims-Douay Bible (1582–1610; a Roman Catholic translation).

Rules and procedures were formed, and translation began in 1607. It was published in 1611.

A wonderful 11-page preface preceded the translation. Unfortunately, most modern printings of the King James Bible do not include this preface.<sup>24</sup> A reading of the preface makes clear the justification for Bible translation; that the King James Bible was a revision (not a fresh translation); and several other points of view of the translators that could correct some thoughts about the King James Bible if known today. For example, while the translators did not include study notes as in the Geneva Bible, they did include marginal notes. Some of their adversaries thought it inappropriate to include alternate translations of the verse in the margin (like footnotes today), even when the original was less than clear, so the translators responded:

It hath pleased God in his divine providence, here and there to scatter words and sentences of that difficulty and doubtfulness, not in doctrinal points that concern salvation, (for in such it hath been vouched that the Scriptures are plain) but in matters of less moment, that fearfulness would better beseech us than confidence.

They continued by explaining that many words in Scripture occur only once. For example, they mention certain birds, beasts, and stones, which even the Hebrews had difficulty translating. Another key point was that they argued for a degree of flexibility in translating one Hebrew or Greek word with several English words: “We have not tied ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing.” They found it impossible to find one English word that could articulate all the meanings of a Hebrew or Greek word. Finally, they reference Augustine in a way that modern students of the Bible should take to heart: “Therefore, as S. Augustine saith, that variety of Translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures . . . so diversity of signification and sense in the margin, where the text is not so clear, must needs do good, yea, is necessary, as we are persuaded.” Here they commend the use of a variety of translations and alternate readings in the margins of a translation.

The King James Bible (KJV) is an excellent work of scholarship. The translation quickly became the common English translation used in England and, practically speaking, was really the only English translation

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<sup>24</sup> It can be found at <http://www.ccel.org/bible/kjv/preface/pref1.htm>.

in significant use between the mid-seventeenth century and 1881. The main deficiency of the KJV has nothing to do with the translators themselves. The Greek and Hebrew texts they used were inferior to the texts available to scholars today. For the New Testament Greek text, they used Stephanus's 1550 text (unfortunately known as the "Received Text" or "Textus Receptus"). Stephanus's text was based on later copies of Greek texts that had revisions and expansions from the originals. A few times (e.g., 1 John 5:7) no Greek text was available, and the Vulgate was translated back into Greek. The text of the KJV was edited several times, including 1629, 1638, 1762, and 1769. Nearly all of the changes related to printing errors, a change in typeface, the standardization of spelling, and some minor phrase changes.

The influence of Tyndale's translation on the KJV can hardly be overstated. It is estimated that more than 75 percent of the KJV can be traced to Tyndale.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, many of the features discussed above with Tyndale's translation apply to the KJV as well. In Matthew 5:9, the King James followed Tyndale with the phrase "children of God." In Luke 17:3 and Matthew 27:3, the King James followed Tyndale by including the word "repent." In John 3:16, the King James offered "whosoever believeth in him," which was different from Tyndale and Wycliffe but followed Coverdale and the Geneva Bible.<sup>26</sup> The KJV translated the adverb as "so," referring to the extent that God loved the world.<sup>27</sup> It translated *monogenēs* with "only begotten," following Wycliffe, the Bishop's Bible, and Geneva.<sup>28</sup> The King James, against Tyndale (but with Wycliffe), translated *ekklēsia* with the English word "church," not "congregation." Finally, in 1 Timothy 2:12, the KJV sided with the Geneva Bible in that *authentēin* is understood as a reference to "usurping authority" and in relationship to "the man," not a woman's husband.

The King James has about three places where it appears to favor gender-neutral readings (the phrase "children of God"),<sup>29</sup> but it remains steadfast against that translation philosophy on the whole. It heavily depended upon previous versions, including Wycliffe's, Tyndale's, Coverdale's, and the Geneva Bible.

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<sup>25</sup> Some estimates say the KJV follows the Geneva Bible nearly 90 percent of the time.

<sup>26</sup> Coverdale had "who so euer beleueth in hi," and the Geneva had "whosoever beleueeth in him."

<sup>27</sup> As did Coverdale, Geneva, and the Bishop's Bible.

<sup>28</sup> Contrary to Coverdale and Tyndale.

<sup>29</sup> Besides Matt 5:9, see Luke 20:36 and Gal 3:26.

### Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Translations

While the KJV was not the only translation available, it reigned supreme among English translations. However, the English Revised Version (ERV) committee completed the New Testament in 1881 and the Old Testament in 1885. It retained a strict translation philosophy. American representatives served on the ERV committee, but they had a significantly weaker voice in the decisions compared to the scholars in England. Once the ERV was completed, the American committee continued working to produce a translation for the United States. The American Standard Version (ASV) was completed in 1901. This latter committee was not as conservative in its translation philosophy.

The ASV's translations are similar to translations that are essentially literal today. One notable exception is the use of "Jehovah" instead of "the LORD." Matthew 5:9 is translated as "sons of God," and John 3:16 contains "whosoever believeth." The adverb in John 3:16 is translated "so," and Jesus is called God's "only begotten" Son. Luke 17:3 uses the verb "repent," as does Matthew 27:3. The key verb in 1 Timothy 2:12 is translated as "to have dominion over," and the object is "a man." The ASV, and most major translations that followed it, retained the translation of "church" for the Greek word *ekklēsia*.

#### *Revisions of the American Standard Version*

The first major revision of the ASV was the Revised Standard Version (RSV) of 1952. This translation committee was attempting to revise the ASV so it would be more readable and less literalistic. The committee received harsh criticism, including accusations the translators wanted to undermine the deity of Christ. An example of a controversial translation is in Isaiah 7:14: "Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son." Translations have typically rendered the Hebrew word *almah* as "virgin." The RSV also agreed with Tyndale by stating that Jesus was God's "only" Son in John 3:16.

Two major versions have spawned from the RSV. The first was the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) in 1989. This committee was charged to update the language (ridding the translation of King James archaic language), achieve greater accuracy and clarity, and "eliminate masculine-oriented language concerning people."<sup>30</sup> The "thous" were eliminated,

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<sup>30</sup> Bruce M. Metzger, *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 156.

and gender-inclusive language was used more comprehensively than ever before. The NRSV retained “young woman” in Isaiah 7:14. It returned to “children of God” in Matthew 5:9 and used the verb “repent” in both Luke 17:3 and Matthew 27:3. The adverb in John 3:16 is translated to refer to the extent of God’s love (“so”), and Jesus is called God’s “only” Son. In 1 Timothy 2:12, the NRSV says that a woman is neither to teach nor “to have authority over a man.” A final interesting translation is Matthew 4:19, where Jesus says, “I will make you fish for people,” rather than “fishers of men.”

The second major version from the RSV is the English Standard Version (ESV) of 2001. The ESV committee sought to alleviate some objections from conservative Protestants over certain verses in the RSV. The committee was also concerned with recent “thought for thought” translations. While the ESV was much more restrained in its use of gender-neutral language than other contemporary versions, it still employed more gender-neutral phrases than its predecessor, the RSV. It does retain “sons of God” in Matthew 5:9. However, it does not have “repent” in Matthew 27:3 describing Judas but says that he “changed his mind.” In John 3:16, the ESV agreed with the NRSV in translating the adverb and the word *monogenēs*. However, the ESV also included a footnote giving an alternate translation: “For this is how God loved the world.” Finally, the ESV includes a footnote at the end of John 3:15 stating that “[s]ome interpreters hold that the quotation ends at verse 15.” The ESV has quickly grown in popularity and is now among the top five Bible translations sold today.

The Amplified Bible is also a revision of the ASV. This is truly one of the most unique English translations. The translators used a series of punctuation marks to inform readers of different aspects of the translation. For example, when a phrase is in brackets, it indicates that the words within the brackets are not explicitly contained in the original texts. A few examples should clarify what this translation is like.

Matthew 5:9 reads, “Blessed (enjoying enviable happiness, spiritually prosperous—with life-joy and satisfaction in God’s favor and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions) are the makers and maintainers of peace, for they shall be called the sons of God!” The word “blessed” is defined by the translators by the terms in parentheses. Luke 17:3 says, “Pay attention and always be on your guard [looking out for one another]. If your brother sins (misses the mark), solemnly tell him so and reprove him, and if he repents (feels sorry for having sinned), forgive him.” The

translators define repent as “feels sorry for having sinned.”<sup>31</sup> In John 3:16, the phrase “believes in” is followed in parentheses by “trusts in, clings to, relies on.” Regarding the adverb, this translation unmistakably favors the extent understanding: “For God so greatly loved and dearly prized the world.” For the controversial word *monogenēs*, it includes “only begotten” followed by a parentheses with the word “unique.” Finally, 1 Timothy 2:12 concludes with the phrase “in religious assemblies” in brackets. According to Fee and Strauss, one of the main weaknesses of the Amplified Bible “is that readers may simply pick whichever meaning they like instead of discerning the single correct meaning that fits the context.”<sup>32</sup> At other times the readers could conclude incorrectly that all the possible meanings of a word are applicable to any one particular use of the word.<sup>33</sup>

Another major revision from the ASV is the New American Standard Bible (NASB), which first appeared in 1971 and was updated in 1995. The NASB is a translation by conservative evangelicals desiring to use an essentially literal translation philosophy. The translators were willing to sacrifice English style in order to retain a literal translation. Several interesting approaches to Bible translation were adopted by the 58 translators. First, they used “Thy,” “Thou,” and “Thee,” but only when used in prayer to God. This was eliminated in the updated edition. Second, they capitalized all pronouns referring to deity. Third, when the New Testament quotes the Old Testament, the quotation is put in small capital letters.

The NASB retains “sons of God” in Matthew 5:9. It uses “repents” in Luke 17:3 but correctly translates the verb in Matthew 27:3 as “felt remorse.” It understands John 3:16 as referring to the extent of God’s love for the world. While Jesus is described as God’s “only begotten” Son in the text, a footnote adds that the word could mean “*unique*, only one of His kind.” The verse is left in quotations without any footnote stating that the quote might end at verse 15. The NASB was one of the first translations

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<sup>31</sup> Note footnote 15 above.

<sup>32</sup> Gordon D. Fee and Mark L. Strauss, *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 149. See also the comment by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, who say that the Amplified Bible “has had a run of popularity far beyond its worth. It is far better to use several translations, note where they differ, and then check out those differences in another source, than to be led to believe that a word can mean one of several things in any given sentence, with the reader left to choose whatever best strikes his or her fancy” (Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993], 43).

<sup>33</sup> It is a word study fallacy to read a word’s entire range of meaning into one specific usage. This is called the “illegitimate totality transfer” fallacy (cf. D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd ed. [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1996], 60).

to adopt “to exercise authority” in 1 Timothy 2:12.<sup>34</sup> One example of an awkward rendering in the NASB is Joshua 15:18: “So she alighted from the donkey.” The use of archaic vocabulary, in this instance carried over from the ASV, may make this translation difficult for some modern readers to understand.<sup>35</sup>

On the opposite side of the translation spectrum (see fig. 1) from the NASB is the Living Bible. Also revised from the ASV, the Living Bible was the work of Kenneth Taylor. Taylor was frustrated in his family devotions because his children did not understand the Bible passage they were reading (either the KJV or RSV). So he started paraphrasing the passage, giving the basic thought of the passage, and then his children were able to answer his questions. He realized that he should write out these paraphrases before the devotion rather than doing them on the spot. Thus the Living Bible was born. In earlier editions<sup>36</sup> it was well received by organizations such as Youth for Christ and Young Life, as well as by Billy Graham. It was the best-selling book in America in 1972 and 1973. Taylor started Tyndale House Publishers in 1962 in order to publish his paraphrase.<sup>37</sup>

The Living Bible is not a translation but a paraphrase. It is loosely tied to the ASV, with Taylor summarizing the main thought of the passage. It retains “sons of God” in Matthew 5:9, stating that they are “happy,” instead of “blessed.” Instead of using the word “repent” in Luke 17:3, it says to “forgive him if he is sorry.” Judas is said to have “changed his mind” in Matthew 27:3. Women are never to “lord it over” men in 1 Timothy 2:12. A final example comes from Acts 13:48. While most translations say that those who were “appointed” (NASB) or “ordained” (KJV) for eternal life believed, the Living Bible says, “and as many as wanted eternal life, believed.”

In 1989, Tyndale House Publishers decided to revise the Living Bible. The revision turned into a new translation. With the help of about 90 scholars, the New Living Translation (NLT) was published in 1996. A second edition was published in 2004, and a minor update occurred in 2007. In July 2008, the NLT was number one on the Christian Booksellers Association list among Bible translations, temporarily unseating the New International Version from the top spot where it had remained for more

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<sup>34</sup> The Darby Bible (1884) uses “to exercise authority.”

<sup>35</sup> The use of “alighted” can be traced back to the Bishop’s Bible (1568).

<sup>36</sup> Called *Living Letters*.

<sup>37</sup> The name is in honor of William Tyndale and the translation he completed in 1526. Interestingly, Taylor was working at Moody Press when he did this.

than two decades.<sup>38</sup> The second edition moved further away from a paraphrase and more solidly into the category of functional equivalence in its translation philosophy.

The NLT translates Matthew 5:9 with the phrase “children of God,” as Wycliffe, Tyndale, and the KJV did. Though the word “repentance” is rare in the NLT, it is used in Luke 17:3.<sup>39</sup> Judas is “filled with remorse” in Matthew 27:3. John 3:16 is retained in quotation marks (without any accompanying footnote). The adverb is translated as “so much,” and Jesus is described as God’s “one and only” Son. And women are not to “have authority” over men in 1 Timothy 2:12.

### *Independent Translations*

An independent translation refers to a translation that was not a revision of a previous translation. Instead, the translators went back to the Hebrew and Greek texts without reference to an existing translation. The first translation we will discuss in this category is the translation that has successfully replaced the KJV as the standard translation in use in American churches: the New International Version (NIV).

The NIV project began as two separate committees, one appointed by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in 1956 and one by the National Association of Evangelicals in 1957, which combined into a joint committee. They began translating the Gospel of John in 1968 and published it in 1969. The New Testament was completed in 1973, and the entire Bible was published in 1978. There was a minor update in 1984. The approximately 100 scholars held to a high view of Scripture and were committed to the authority and infallibility of the Bible.

Controversy arose when plans for a 1997 revision in the United States were revealed.<sup>40</sup> The translation committee was going to use “inclusive language,” meaning that many masculine pronouns would be replaced with gender-neutral ones. *WORLD* magazine published a story on March 29, 1997, titled, “The Stealth Bible: The popular New International Version Bible is quietly going ‘gender-neutral.’”<sup>41</sup> Both Zondervan and the translation com-

<sup>38</sup> See <http://www.nltblog.com/index.php/2008/08/nlt-1-on-july-cba-bestseller-list>.

<sup>39</sup> It only occurs six times in the New Testament of the NLT, while it occurs 22 times in the NASB New Testament.

<sup>40</sup> The NIVI (New International Version: Inclusive Language Edition) was published in the UK by Hodder & Stoughton in 1995. In the preface to the inclusive-language NIV, the Committee on Bible Translation noted “that it was often appropriate to mute the patriarchalism of the culture of the biblical writers through gender-inclusive language when this could be done without compromising the message of the Spirit.”

<sup>41</sup> See <http://www.worldmag.com/articles/418>.

mittee responded and accused *WORLD* of misrepresenting the facts. The outcome of the controversy was that the planned revision was cancelled.

However, while the 1984 NIV was not going to change, the translators and Zondervan did produce a new translation in 2005: Today's New International Version (TNIV). Keith Danby, president and chief executive officer of Biblica (a Bible translation organization), said that they "erred in presenting past updates, failed to convince people revisions were needed and 'underestimated' readers' loyalty to the 1984 NIV."<sup>42</sup> The TNIV never really caught on with readers. Therefore, admitting it was a mistake to "freeze" the NIV to its 1984 edition,<sup>43</sup> both the TNIV and the 1984 version will no longer be published in favor of the updated NIV 2011.<sup>44</sup>

The NIV 2011 has changed the NIV 1984's "sons of God" to "children of God" in Matthew 5:9. While it retains the word "repent" in Luke 17:3, it says, "They repent . . . forgive them," rather than the NIV 1984's "He repents . . . forgive him." In Matthew 27:3, both say that Judas was "seized with remorse." John 3:16 was in quotation marks in the NIV 1984 but not in the updated NIV. The adverb is translated the same in both translations as a reference to the extent of God's love. Both translations also refer to Jesus as God's "one and only" Son. The NIV 1984 said that women were not "to have authority" over a man in 1 Timothy 2:12. The first edition of the TNIV repeated that, but a second edition changed it to "assume authority." The NIV now reads "assume authority."

A second major independent work was not accomplished by a committee but by one man: Eugene Peterson. *The Message*, completed in 2002, is a paraphrase of the Bible. The goal of this paraphrase is for the contemporary reader to encounter the text with the style and idiom of contemporary English. Speaking about his own project, Peterson said, "When I'm in a congregation where somebody uses it in the Scripture reading, it makes me a little uneasy. I would never recommend it be used as saying, 'Hear the Word of God from *The Message*.' But it surprises me how many do. You can't tell people they can't do it. But I guess I'm a traditionalist, and I like to hear those more formal languages in the pulpit."<sup>45</sup>

Comparing *The Message* with other versions can be difficult because bigger portions of text are necessary to comprehend what Peterson is doing

<sup>42</sup> See [http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2009-09-01-bible-translation\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2009-09-01-bible-translation_N.htm).

<sup>43</sup> See <http://www.dashhouse.com/blog/2009/9/1/interview-with-douglas-moo-on-the-2011-niv.html>.

<sup>44</sup> Maureen Girkins, the former president of Zondervan, said that "the 'divisive' TNIV and 'cherished' 1984 NIV will not be published after the newest NIV comes out." See [http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2009-09-01-bible-translation\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2009-09-01-bible-translation_N.htm).

<sup>45</sup> See <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2002/october7/33.107.html?start=2>.

with a certain word or phrase. For example, Luke 17:3–4 says: “Be alert. If you see your friend going wrong, correct him. If he responds, forgive him. Even if it’s personal against you and repeated seven times through the day, and seven times he says, ‘I’m sorry, I won’t do it again,’ forgive him.” The phrase “if he responds” is where one usually finds the word “repent.” In Matthew 27:3, Judas is described as being “overcome with remorse.” John 3:16 remains in quotations marks; the adverb is understood as a reference to the extent of God’s love; and Jesus is called God’s “one and only” Son. First Timothy 2:12 says, “I don’t let women take over and tell the men what to do. They should study to be quiet and obedient along with everyone else.” First Corinthians 14 is a good example of a text that has been highly interpreted in this paraphrase. The heading of the chapter says “Prayer Language.” Peterson explicitly refers to praying in tongues seven times in the first 19 verses, while verse 14 is the only one that explicitly refers to praying in tongues.

The Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB) is a fresh translation from the standard Hebrew and Greek texts used by most scholars today.<sup>46</sup> The complete Bible was published in 2003, with an update in 2009. There were two important motivations for the HCSB. First, the translators believed that Bible translations must keep up with the rapidly changing English language. Second, they recognized that significant advances in biblical research (such as the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls) have provided more information for Bible translators so that more accurate decisions can be made.<sup>47</sup> Though some have dubbed the translation a “Southern Baptist translation,” about 100 scholars and English stylists from 17 denominations worked on the project. The HCSB highlights three distinctives in promoting its translation: (1) They use “Messiah” instead of “Christ” in appropriate places in the New Testament. (2) Instead of using “LORD” for the personal name of God, “Yahweh” is used in appropriate places in the Old Testament. (3) They prefer to translate the Greek word *doulos* as “slave” rather than “servant” or “bondservant.”<sup>48</sup>

The HCSB retains “sons of God” in Matthew 5:9 and “repents” in Luke 17:3. Judas “was full of remorse” in Matthew 27:3. Women are not “to have authority” over a man in 1 Timothy 2:12. The HCSB retains the quotation marks in John 3:16 with a footnote after verse 21 stating that

<sup>46</sup> There has been confusion over which underlying manuscripts were used by the translators, but they used the United Bible Societies’ *Greek New Testament* 4th corrected edition, the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* 27th edition, and the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* 5th edition.

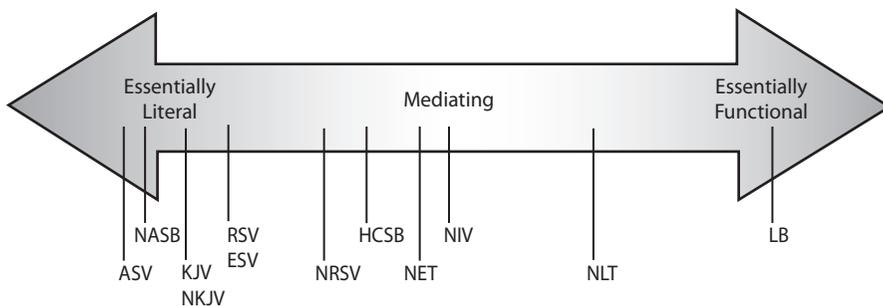
<sup>47</sup> See <http://hcsb.org/about.aspx>.

<sup>48</sup> See <http://hcsb.org/faq.aspx>.

it “is possible that Jesus’ words end” at verse 15. It translates the Greek adverb with the meaning that God was demonstrating *the way* in which he loved the world. Jesus is referred to as God’s “One and Only” Son.

The final independent translation is the New English Translation (NET or NET Bible), completed in 2001. The NET Bible project began in 1995 at the annual Society of Biblical Literature meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The original goal was to provide a digital translation that could be obtained for free on the Internet using modern English. The interdenominational committee of about 25 scholars translated from the standard Hebrew and Greek texts. The first edition was published with 60,932 translators’ notes. These notes often contain technical discussions in the Hebrew and Greek text. They typically contain alternate translations (usually a more literal translation than in the text), discussions on textual variants, explanations of translation decisions, word studies, background information, and references to articles, books, and dissertations that relate to the translation and/or understanding of the verse being referenced. The NET Bible is also noted for having a unique copyright, allowing users more freedom in using the NET Bible in ministry materials.<sup>49</sup>

The NET Bible, which veers toward a gender-neutral translation philosophy, has “children of God” in Matthew 5:9. While “repents” is used in Luke 17:3, Judas is said to have “regretted” his actions in Matthew 27:3. John 3:16 is not in quotation marks. The adverb is understood as a reference to the manner in which God loved the world, and Jesus is called God’s “one and only” Son. Paul does not allow a woman to “exercise authority” over a man in 1 Timothy 2:12. The NET Bible translates *almah* in Isaiah 7:14 as “young woman.”<sup>50</sup>



<sup>49</sup> See <http://bible.org/article/preface-net-bible-first-edition> for more information.

<sup>50</sup> Another interesting incorporation of modern scholarship in the NET Bible translation is Rom 3:22, which says that “the righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ for all who believe,” rather than “faith in Jesus Christ,” which is in the NIV, ESV, HCSB, and NLT.

## Conclusion

This book has been designed to help you choose which Bible translation is best for you. The discussion on the history of Bible translation is intended to get you up-to-date on some of the issues involved in translating the Bible that have fueled passionate discussions. Our hope is that as you read through this book, you will be thinking about the translation philosophy being defended and how that philosophy is demonstrated in the translation. While philosophies vary, in the end we all want to know God more through his Word. Choosing an accurate and readable Bible is essential to that goal. However, the meaning of *accurate* and *readable* is debated.

Four translations have been chosen for this discussion. The NIV has been the best-selling Bible for many years, and the 2011 update provides a fitting opportunity to examine this translation. The resources for the NIV are too vast to mention here, but the NIV Study Bible has been an indispensable aid for many Christians since 1985. A new NIV Study Bible is currently being prepared. The ESV has been growing in popularity in recent years, receiving endorsements from many Christian leaders. It is consistently near the top five in Bible sales. Many new resources have appeared with the ESV translation, including the ESV Study Bible, the ESV Student Study Bible, the MacArthur Study Bible, and the [www.ESVBible.org](http://www.ESVBible.org) website. The HCSB has also been gaining popularity and steadily moving up in Bible sales. The translation also has several quality resources, including the Apologetics Study Bible, the HCSB Study Bible, and the [www.MyStudyBible.com](http://www.MyStudyBible.com) website. Finally, the NLT is one of the top-selling translations, with many resources available, including the NLT Study Bible, the NLT Life Application Study Bible, and the NLT Parallel Study Bible (a combination of the NLT Study Bible and the NLT Life Application Study Bible). The Cornerstone Bible Commentary Series includes and is based on the NLT text.

The following chapters focus on 16 passages in a parallel format so that you can compare these four major translations as they apply their Bible translation philosophy. Each translation is represented by a scholar who has served on the translation committee of that particular version. There are many ways to read these chapters as you compare the respective translation philosophies and translations. The section immediately following this chapter contains the 16 passages in a parallel format that all contributors will discuss in their chapters. You could read straight through the book, chapter by chapter. That has the benefit of giving you a coherent

view of the translation being discussed. However, you will probably want to keep a finger on the 16 passages if you read it in this way.

You could also read the chapters section by section. You could read each author's description of their translation's philosophy to decide which is most convincing. Then you could read the discussion on each verse. So you could begin with Wayne Grudem's discussion of Exodus 2:5–6, then read Moo's, then Clendenen's, and then Comfort's.

We hope that by the end you have a greater understanding of how the various translations came to fruition. We hope you grow in your appreciation for all four translations as you obtain a better understanding of the distinctives of each and the labor that went into the final publishing of the English translations with your benefit in mind. We desire for you to have more clarity on the Bible you will choose for your daily devotions and study as you pursue God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. And we pray that your passion for God's Word increases, remembering the sacrifice of great saints of God such as John Wycliffe and William Tyndale, who gave their lives in the service of translating the Holy Scriptures into the English language.

## CHAPTER 1



# Translation Comparison

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## Passages Discussed

### Passage 1: Exodus 2:5–6

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- ESV <sup>5</sup> Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. <sup>6</sup> When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, “This is one of the Hebrews’ children.”
- NIV <sup>5</sup> Then Pharaoh’s daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. <sup>6</sup> She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. “This is one of the Hebrew babies,” she said.
- HCSB <sup>5</sup> Pharaoh’s daughter went down to bathe at the Nile while her servant girls walked along the riverbank. Seeing the basket among the reeds, she sent her slave girl to get it. <sup>6</sup> When she opened it, she saw the child—a little boy, crying. She felt sorry for him and said, “This is one of the Hebrew boys.”

NLT <sup>5</sup>Soon Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river, and her attendants walked along the riverbank. When the princess saw the basket among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it for her. <sup>6</sup>When the princess opened it, she saw the baby. The little boy was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This must be one of the Hebrew children," she said.

### Passage 2: Psalm 1:1

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ESV Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; . . .

NIV Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, . . .

HCSB How happy is the man who does not follow the advice of the wicked or take the path of sinners or join a group of mockers!

NLT Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers.

### Passage 3: Ezekiel 18:5–9,21–24

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ESV <sup>5</sup>"If a man is righteous and does what is just and right—<sup>6</sup>if he does not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbor's wife or approach a woman in her time of menstrual impurity, <sup>7</sup>does not oppress anyone, but restores to the debtor his pledge, commits no robbery, gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with a garment, <sup>8</sup>does not lend at interest or take any profit, withholds his hand from injustice, executes true justice between man and man, <sup>9</sup>walks in my statutes, and keeps my rules by acting faithfully—he is righteous; he shall surely live, declares the Lord GOD. . . .<sup>21</sup> But if a wicked person turns away from all his sins that he has committed and keeps all my statutes and does what is just and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. <sup>22</sup>None of the transgressions that he has committed shall

be remembered against him; for the righteousness that he has done he shall live. <sup>23</sup>Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live? <sup>24</sup>But when a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice and does the same abominations that the wicked person does, shall he live? None of the righteous deeds that he has done shall be remembered; for the treachery of which he is guilty and the sin he has committed, for them he shall die."

NIV <sup>5</sup>"Suppose there is a righteous man who does what is just and right. <sup>6</sup>He does not eat at the mountain shrines or look to the idols of Israel. He does not defile his neighbor's wife or have sexual relations with a woman during her period. <sup>7</sup>He does not oppress anyone, but returns what he took in pledge for a loan. He does not commit robbery but gives his food to the hungry and provides clothing for the naked. <sup>8</sup>He does not lend to them at interest or take a profit from them. He withholds his hand from doing wrong and judges fairly between two parties. <sup>9</sup>He follows my decrees and faithfully keeps my laws. That man is righteous; he will surely live, declares the Sovereign LORD. . . . <sup>21</sup>But if a wicked person turns away from all the sins they have committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, that person will surely live; they will not die. <sup>22</sup>None of the offenses they have committed will be remembered against them. Because of the righteous things they have done, they will live. <sup>23</sup>Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live? <sup>24</sup>But if a righteous person turns from their righteousness and commits sin and does the same detestable things the wicked person does, will they live? None of the righteous things that person has done will be remembered. Because of the unfaithfulness they are guilty of and because of the sins they have committed, they will die."

HCSB <sup>5</sup>"Now suppose a man is righteous and does what is just and right: <sup>6</sup>He does not eat at the mountain shrines or raise his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel. He does not defile his neighbor's wife or come near a woman during her menstrual impurity. <sup>7</sup>He doesn't oppress anyone but returns his collateral to the debtor. He does not commit robbery, but gives his bread to the hungry

and covers the naked with clothing.<sup>8</sup> He doesn't lend at interest or for profit but keeps his hand from wrongdoing and carries out true justice between men.<sup>9</sup> He follows My statutes and keeps My ordinances, acting faithfully. Such a person is righteous; he will certainly live." This is the declaration of the Lord God. . . .<sup>21</sup> "Now if the wicked person turns from all the sins he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is just and right, he will certainly live; he will not die.<sup>22</sup> None of the transgressions he has committed will be held against him. He will live because of the righteousness he has practiced.<sup>23</sup> Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked?" This is the declaration of the Lord God. "Instead, don't I take pleasure when he turns from his ways and lives?<sup>24</sup> But when a righteous person turns from his righteousness and practices iniquity, committing the same detestable acts that the wicked do, will he live? None of the righteous acts he did will be remembered. He will die because of the treachery he has engaged in and the sin he has committed."

NLT <sup>5</sup>"Suppose a certain man is righteous and does what is just and right. <sup>6</sup>He does not feast in the mountains before Israel's idols or worship them. He does not commit adultery or have intercourse with a woman during her menstrual period. <sup>7</sup>He is a merciful creditor, not keeping the items given as security by poor debtors. He does not rob the poor but instead gives food to the hungry and provides clothes for the needy. <sup>8</sup>He grants loans without interest, stays away from injustice, is honest and fair when judging others, <sup>9</sup>and faithfully obeys my decrees and regulations. Anyone who does these things is just and will surely live, says the Sovereign LORD. . . .<sup>21</sup> But if wicked people turn away from all their sins and begin to obey my decrees and do what is just and right, they will surely live and not die. <sup>22</sup>All their past sins will be forgotten, and they will live because of the righteous things they have done. <sup>23</sup>"Do you think that I like to see wicked people die? says the Sovereign LORD. Of course not! I want them to turn from their wicked ways and live. <sup>24</sup>However, if righteous people turn from their righteous behavior and start doing sinful things and act like other sinners, should they be allowed to live? No, of course not! All their righteous acts will be forgotten, and they will die for their sins."

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 Passage 4: Matthew 5:1–3
 

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- ESV <sup>1</sup> Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: <sup>3</sup> "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- NIV <sup>1</sup> Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, <sup>2</sup> and he began to teach them. He said: <sup>3</sup> "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- HCSB <sup>1</sup> When He saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. <sup>2</sup> Then He began to teach them, saying: <sup>3</sup> "The poor in spirit are blessed, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.
- NLT <sup>1</sup> One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, <sup>2</sup> and he began to teach them. <sup>3</sup> "God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

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 Passage 5: Mark 1:40–45
 

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- ESV <sup>40</sup> And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean." <sup>41</sup> Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I will; be clean." <sup>42</sup> And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. <sup>43</sup> And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once, <sup>44</sup> and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them." <sup>45</sup> But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter.

NIV <sup>40</sup> A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."<sup>41</sup> Jesus was indignant. He reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!"<sup>42</sup> Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.<sup>43</sup> Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning:<sup>44</sup> "See that you don't tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them."<sup>45</sup> Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.

HCSB <sup>40</sup> Then a man with a serious skin disease came to Him and, on his knees, begged Him: "If You are willing, You can make me clean."<sup>41</sup> Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out His hand and touched him. "I am willing," He told him. "Be made clean."<sup>42</sup> Immediately the disease left him, and he was healed.<sup>43</sup> Then He sternly warned him and sent him away at once,<sup>44</sup> telling him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go and show yourself to the priest, and offer what Moses prescribed for your cleansing, as a testimony to them."<sup>45</sup> Yet he went out and began to proclaim it widely and to spread the news, with the result that Jesus could no longer enter a town openly. But He was out in deserted places, and they would come to Him from everywhere.

NLT <sup>40</sup> A man with leprosy came and knelt in front of Jesus, begging to be healed. "If you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean," he said.<sup>41</sup> Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out and touched him. "I am willing," he said. "Be healed!"<sup>42</sup> Instantly the leprosy disappeared, and the man was healed.<sup>43</sup> Then Jesus sent him on his way with a stern warning:<sup>44</sup> "Don't tell anyone about this. Instead, go to the priest and let him examine you. Take along the offering required in the law of Moses for those who have been healed of leprosy. This will be a public testimony that you have been cleansed."<sup>45</sup> But the man went and spread the word, proclaiming to everyone what had happened. As a result, large crowds soon surrounded Jesus, and he couldn't publicly enter a town anywhere. He had to stay out in the secluded places, but people from everywhere kept coming to him.

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Passage 6: Mark 16:9–20

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ESV <sup>9</sup>[[Now when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. <sup>10</sup>She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. <sup>11</sup>But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it. <sup>12</sup>After these things he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. <sup>13</sup>And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them. <sup>14</sup>Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. <sup>15</sup>And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. <sup>16</sup>Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. <sup>17</sup>And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; <sup>18</sup>they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.” <sup>19</sup>So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. <sup>20</sup>And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.]]

NIV <sup>9</sup>When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. <sup>10</sup>She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. <sup>11</sup>When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it. <sup>12</sup>Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. <sup>13</sup>These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either. <sup>14</sup>Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen. <sup>15</sup>He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. <sup>16</sup>Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. <sup>17</sup>And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will

drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; <sup>18</sup>they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.” <sup>19</sup>After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. <sup>20</sup>Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

HCSB <sup>9</sup>[Early on the first day of the week, after He had risen, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had driven seven demons. <sup>10</sup>She went and reported to those who had been with Him, as they were mourning and weeping. <sup>11</sup>Yet, when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe it. <sup>12</sup>Then after this, He appeared in a different form to two of them walking on their way into the country. <sup>13</sup>And they went and reported it to the rest, who did not believe them either. <sup>14</sup>Later, He appeared to the Eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table. He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who saw Him after He had been resurrected. <sup>15</sup>Then He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. <sup>16</sup>Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. <sup>17</sup>And these signs will accompany those who believe: In My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new languages; <sup>18</sup>they will pick up snakes; if they should drink anything deadly, it will never harm them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will get well.” <sup>19</sup>Then after speaking to them, the Lord Jesus was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. <sup>20</sup>And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by the accompanying signs.]

NLT <sup>9</sup>After Jesus rose from the dead early on Sunday morning, the first person who saw him was Mary Magdalene, the woman from whom he had cast out seven demons. <sup>10</sup>She went to the disciples, who were grieving and weeping, and told them what had happened. <sup>11</sup>But when she told them that Jesus was alive and she had seen him, they didn’t believe her. <sup>12</sup>Afterward he appeared in a different form to two of his followers who were walking from Jerusalem into the country. <sup>13</sup>They rushed back

to tell the others, but no one believed them. <sup>14</sup>Still later he appeared to the eleven disciples as they were eating together. He rebuked them for their stubborn unbelief because they refused to believe those who had seen him after he had been raised from the dead. <sup>15</sup>And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. <sup>16</sup>Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. <sup>17</sup>These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. <sup>18</sup>They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed." <sup>19</sup>When the Lord Jesus had finished talking with them, he was taken up into heaven and sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand. <sup>20</sup>And the disciples went everywhere and preached, and the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs.

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#### Passage 7: Luke 17:3

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- ESV Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, . . .
- NIV So watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them.
- HCSB Be on your guard. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.
- NLT So watch yourselves! "If another believer sins, rebuke that person; then if there is repentance, forgive.

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#### Passage 8: John 1:3–4,14,18

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- ESV <sup>3</sup>All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and the life was the light of men . . . <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son

from the Father, full of grace and truth . . .<sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

NIV <sup>3</sup>Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind . . .<sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth . . .<sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

HCSB <sup>3</sup>All things were created through Him, and apart from Him not one thing was created that has been created. <sup>4</sup>Life was in Him, and that life was the light of men . . .<sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and took up residence among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the One and Only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth . . .<sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. The One and Only Son—the One who is at the Father's side—He has revealed Him.

NLT <sup>3</sup>God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. <sup>4</sup>The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone . . .<sup>14</sup>So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son . . .<sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.

#### Passage 9: John 2:25–3:1

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ESV <sup>2:25</sup>and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man. <sup>3:1</sup>Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

NIV <sup>2:25</sup>He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person. <sup>3:1</sup>Now there was a Pharisee, a man

named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council.

HCSB <sup>2:25</sup> and because He did not need anyone to testify about man; for He Himself knew what was in man. <sup>3:1</sup> There was a man from the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

NLT <sup>2:25</sup> No one needed to tell him what mankind is really like. <sup>3:1</sup> There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee.

### Passage 10: 1 Corinthians 2:1,13

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ESV <sup>1</sup> And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom . . . <sup>13</sup> And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

NIV <sup>1</sup> And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God . . . <sup>13</sup> This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.

HCSB <sup>1</sup> When I came to you, brothers, announcing the testimony of God to you, I did not come with brilliance of speech or wisdom . . . <sup>13</sup> We also speak these things, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual things to spiritual people.

NLT <sup>1</sup> When I first came to you, dear brothers and sisters, I didn't use lofty words and impressive wisdom to tell you God's secret plan . . . <sup>13</sup> When we tell you these things, we do not use words that come from human wisdom. Instead, we speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths.

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Passage 11: Galatians 5:2–6

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ESV <sup>2</sup>Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. <sup>3</sup>I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. <sup>4</sup>You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. <sup>5</sup>For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. <sup>6</sup>For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

NIV <sup>2</sup>Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. <sup>3</sup>Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. <sup>4</sup>You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. <sup>5</sup>For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope. <sup>6</sup>For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

HCSB <sup>2</sup>Take note! I, Paul, tell you that if you get yourselves circumcised, Christ will not benefit you at all. <sup>3</sup>Again I testify to every man who gets himself circumcised that he is obligated to keep the entire law. <sup>4</sup>You who are trying to be justified by the law are alienated from Christ; you have fallen from grace. <sup>5</sup>For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. <sup>6</sup>For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision accomplishes anything; what matters is faith working through love.

NLT <sup>2</sup>Listen! I, Paul, tell you this: If you are counting on circumcision to make you right with God, then Christ will be of no benefit to you. <sup>3</sup>I'll say it again. If you are trying to find favor with God by being circumcised, you must obey every regulation in the whole law of Moses. <sup>4</sup>For if you are trying to make yourselves right with God by keeping the law, you have been cut off from Christ! You have fallen away from God's grace. <sup>5</sup>But we who live by the Spirit eagerly wait to receive by faith the righteousness God has promised to us. <sup>6</sup>For when we place our faith in Christ Jesus,

there is no benefit in being circumcised or being uncircumcised. What is important is faith expressing itself in love.

### Passage 12: Colossians 2:8–15

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ESV <sup>8</sup>See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. <sup>9</sup>For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, <sup>10</sup>and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. <sup>11</sup>In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, <sup>12</sup>having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. <sup>13</sup>And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, <sup>14</sup>by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

NIV <sup>8</sup>See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. <sup>9</sup>For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, <sup>10</sup>and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. <sup>11</sup>In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, <sup>12</sup>having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. <sup>13</sup>When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, <sup>14</sup>having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

HCSB <sup>8</sup>Be careful that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit based on human tradition, based on the elemental forces of the world, and not based on Christ. <sup>9</sup>For the entire fullness of God's nature dwells bodily in Christ, <sup>10</sup>and you have been filled by Him, who is the head over every ruler and authority. <sup>11</sup>You were also circumcised in Him with a circumcision not done with hands, by putting off the body of flesh, in the circumcision of the Messiah. <sup>12</sup>Having been buried with Him in baptism, you were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. <sup>13</sup>And when you were dead in trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive with Him and forgave us all our trespasses. <sup>14</sup>He erased the certificate of debt, with its obligations, that was against us and opposed to us, and has taken it out of the way by nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>He disarmed the rulers and authorities and disgraced them publicly; He triumphed over them by Him.

NLT <sup>8</sup>Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. <sup>9</sup>For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. <sup>10</sup>So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority. <sup>11</sup>When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature. <sup>12</sup>For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. <sup>13</sup>You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. <sup>14</sup>He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

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### Passage 13: 1 Thessalonians 1:3

ESV remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

- NIV We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.
- HCSB We recall, in the presence of our God and Father, your work of faith, labor of love, and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, . . .
- NLT As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Passage 14: 1 Timothy 2:12

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- ESV I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet.
- NIV I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.
- HCSB I do not allow a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; instead, she is to be silent.
- NLT I do not let women teach men or have authority over them. Let them listen quietly.

#### Passage 15: Jude 4–5

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- ESV <sup>4</sup>For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. <sup>5</sup>Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.
- NIV <sup>4</sup>For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly

people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.  
<sup>5</sup>Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord at one time delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe.

HCSB <sup>4</sup>For some men, who were designated for this judgment long ago, have come in by stealth; they are ungodly, turning the grace of our God into promiscuity and denying Jesus Christ, our only Master and Lord. <sup>5</sup>Now I want to remind you, though you know all these things: The Lord first saved a people out of Egypt and later destroyed those who did not believe; . . .

NLT <sup>4</sup>I say this because some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches, saying that God's marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives. The condemnation of such people was recorded long ago, for they have denied our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. <sup>5</sup>So I want to remind you, though you already know these things, that Jesus first rescued the nation of Israel from Egypt, but later he destroyed those who did not remain faithful.

#### Passage 16: Revelation 3:20

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ESV Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

NIV Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

HCSB Listen! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and have dinner with him, and he with Me.

NLT "Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.