

UNDERSTANDING BIBLE TRANSLATIONS



CHANGING EVERYDAY PEOPLE INTO A
COMMUNITY OF PASSIONATE CHRIST FOLLOWERS



A GUIDE TO FOR HELPING YOU
CHOOSE A BIBLE...

CHOICE. YOU MAY LIKE THE OLD ENGLISH OF THE KING JAMES VERSION, OR THE READABILITY OF THE NEW LIVING TRANSLATION. NO MATTER WHAT BIBLE YOU USE HERE AT OLIVE BRANCH, WE HOPE YOU READ IT AND GROW BY OBEYING IT.

NOTES

1. CHART TAKEN FROM HOW TO READ A BIBLE FOR ALL ITS WORTH, GORDON D. FEE AND DOUGLASS STUART (ZONDERVAN: GRAND RAPIDS, 1993), PG 36.

2. CHART ADAPTED FROM PLAYING WITH FIRE BY WALT RUSSELL. (ZONDERVAN: GRAND RAPIDS, 2000), PG 276.

3. WE RECOMMEND EITHER THE NIV STUDY BIBLE, NASB STUDY BIBLE (WHICH ARE THE SAME NOTE), OR THE QUEST STUDY BIBLE FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO BEGIN STUDYING THE WORD.

5. OUR CHURCH

OLIVE BRANCH USES THE NASB AS IT'S STANDARD DURING ADULT SERVICES. ALL THE BIBLES IN THE CHAIRS ARE THIS VERSION.

OUR NEW BELIEVER'S RECEIVE AN NLT BIBLE FOR READABILITY, AND SO THEY CAN UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE IN THEIR LANGUAGE.

THE SECOND BIBLE WE RECOMMEND FOR STUDY AND GROWTH IS THE NIV. IT IS EASY TO READ AND GOOD FOR STUDY AT HOME.

IF YOUR BIBLE DIFFERS FROM THE TEACHER, DON'T WORRY, YOU WILL NOTICE OFTEN TIMES IT STILL MEANS THE SAME THING. IF IT'S CONFUSING TAKE OUT A BIBLE FROM THE CHAIRS AND COMPARE THE TEXTS.

6. YOUR CHOICE

AS YOU CHOOSE A BIBLE YOU WILL SEE THERE ARE MANY FORMS BIBLES COME IN. STUDY BIBLES USUALLY GIVE NOTES TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND THE TEXT. OTHERS MAY GIVE YOU APPLICATIONS OR QUESTIONS TO ANSWER. SOME MAY BE DESIGNED FOR CERTAIN PLACES IN LIFE. WE USUALLY RECOMMEND A GOOD STUDY BIBLE, OFTEN TIMES THEY WILL SERVE YOU FOR A LIFE OF STUDY IN GOD'S WORD.³

WE HOPE THAT YOU FEEL MORE INFORMED ON YOUR BIBLE. OUR GOAL IS NOT TO TELL YOU WHICH BIBLE YOU MUST USE, BUT TO HELP YOU MAKE AN EDUCATED

1. VERSIONS

THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE. THIS CAN BE CONFUSING, SO WE WANT TO HELP YOU KNOW WHICH BIBLE IS BEST FOR YOU, AND THE MOST HELPFUL IN YOUR CHURCH.

COMMON BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

KJV	KING JAMES VERSION
NKJV	NEW KING JAMES VERSION
NASB*	NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE
NRSV	NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION
NIV	NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION
TNIV	TODAY'S NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION
ESV	ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION
NLT	NEW LIVING TRANSLATION
LB	LIVING BIBLE
MSG	THE MESSAGE

* THIS IS THE 1995 VERSION.

2. DIFFERENCES IN VERSIONS

VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE. DIFFER FROM EACH OTHER BECAUSE OUR BIBLE WAS TRANSLATED FROM ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS WRITTEN IN HEBREW, ARAMAIC AND GREEK. THUS TRANSLATION TEAMS MUST MAKE DECISIONS ON TWO MAJOR ISSUES:

1. BIBLE TRANSLATION METHOD

2. THE MANUSCRIPTS THEY ACCEPT

3. TRANSLATION METHOD

TRANSLATORS WORK BETWEEN TWO POLES (SEE BELOW). A LITERAL BIBLE WILL TRY TO KEEP AS CLOSE TO THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE AS POSSIBLE. MANY THINGS, LIKE FIGURES OF SPEECH WILL BE LEFT LIKE THE ORIGINAL. THESE BIBLES ARE GOOD FOR STUDY, BUT AT TIMES HARD TO READ. THE THOUGHT FOR THOUGHT BIBLE, TRIES TO KEEP THE BEST OF BOTH. THESE ARE EASY TO READ AND STUDY FROM. ALTHOUGH SOME ARE BETTER FOR STUDY, AND SOME FOR READING. FINALLY A FREE BIBLE IS ONLY CONCERNED WITH BEING EASY TO READ, AND ARE NOT GOOD TO STUDY FROM.¹

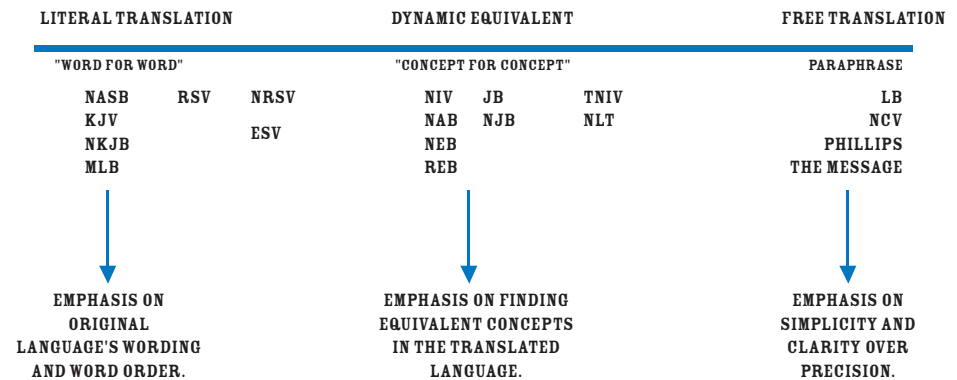
4. MANUSCRIPTS

THE BIBLE IS THE ONLY ANCIENT BOOK IN WHICH WE HAVE THOUSANDS OF MANUSCRIPTS WRITTEN OVER A BROAD RANGE OF DATES AND LOCATIONS. WITH SO MANY MANUSCRIPTS AVAILABLE THERE ARE AT TIMES SLIGHT VARIATIONS FROM ONE MANUSCRIPT TO THE NEXT, BUT THEY DO NOT CONTRADICT ANY MAJOR TEACHING OF SCRIPTURE .

SO WHAT?

WE'VE TOLD THIS TO YOU FOR YOUR INFORMATION. THE MANUSCRIPTS AGREE WITH EACH OTHER WHEN IT COMES TO DOCTRINE. JUST KNOW A FEW VERSES WILL BE DIFFERENT IN DIFFERENT BIBLES BY WHAT METHOD THEY USE.

THE TRANSLATION SPECTRUM²



EXAMPLES- TRANSLATION OF TERM "SARX" OR LITERALLY "FLESH" IN GALATIANS 5:24

LITERAL TRANSLATIONS	
NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE	"THE FLESH"
KING JAMES BIBLE/NEW KING JAMES BIBLE	"THE FLESH"
REVISED STANDARD VERSION/NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION	"THE FLESH"
DYNAMIC EQUIVALENT TRANSLATIONS	
NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION	"THE SINFUL NATURE"
NEW LIVING TRANSLATION	"OF THEIR SINFUL NATURE"
NEW ENGLISH BIBLE	"THE LOWER NATURE"
REVISED ENGLISH BIBLE	"OF THEIR SINFUL NATURE"
NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE	"THE LOWER NATURE"
FREE TRANSLATIONS	
TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION	"THEIR HUMAN NATURE"
LIVING BIBLE	"THEIR NATURAL EVIL DESIRES"
PHILLIPS	"THEIR OLD NATURE"
THE MESSAGE	"EVERYTHING CONNECTED WITH GETTING YOUR OWN WAY AND MINDLESSLY RESPONDING TO WHAT EVERYONE ELSE CALLS NECESSITIES"