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Class Number

505G

Class Title

**THESIS EXAMPLE – LESSONS IN TRANSLATION
FROM 1 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 14**

Prepared by

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Date

August 9, 2023

Units

6

Level

Master Level

This Syllabus is Approved for
Baptist International University School of the Scriptures

N. S. Desent, Ph.D., Th.D., D.D.

CLASS 505G EXAMPLE OF MASTER THESIS
LESSONS IN TRANSLATION FROM 1 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 14

This syllabus is an example of the thesis fulfilling the requirement for Class 505. The syllabus follows the typical class lesson outlines as normally used in *Baptist International University*. The thought is that any approved thesis should be used to teach others. We encourage the lesson format as found in this syllabus, however, following a class outline format is not required for this objective. The student may write in typical thesis book format. We do expect all work to follow the standard writing rules for papers as defined in Kate L. Turabian's *Manual for Writers*. (Turabian.org).

This syllabus was prepared to show how we can better translate the word of God using 1 Corinthians chapter 14 as instruction in respect to what scripture translation should accomplish. We believe the work of translating, publishing, and distributing the scriptures free of charge is a *commanded activity* according to Romans 16:25-26. The New Testament gives us teaching on every subject that every believer should know. The creation of the syllabus as a thesis is worth 6 units.

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LESSONS IN TRANSLATION FROM 1 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 14

Lessons in Translation from 1 Corinthians Chapter 14

An Example of the Master's Thesis

N. Sebastian Desent, Ph.D., Th.D., D.D.

In Fulfillment of the Thesis Requirement for

Class 505: Thesis on Approved Subject Matter

for Baptist International University School of the Scriptures

August 9, 2023

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LESSONS IN TRANSLATION FROM 1 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 14

LESSONS IN TRANSLATION FROM 1 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 14

A Syllabus Approved for Baptist International University School of the Scriptures – 6 Units.
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August 9, 2023

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Scripture References

1 Corinthians 14

1 Follow after charity, and desire spiritual *gifts*, but rather that ye may prophesy.

2 For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth *him*; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

4 He that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

5 I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater *is* he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?

7 And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?

8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it

be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them *is* without signification.

11 Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh *shall* be a barbarian unto me.

12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue pray that he may interpret.

14 For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but *my* understanding is unfruitful.

15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

16 Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.

18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:

19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that *by my*

voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue.

20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

21 In the law it is written, With *men* of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.

22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those that are* unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or *one* unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on *his* face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, everyone of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

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27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.

28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

30 If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

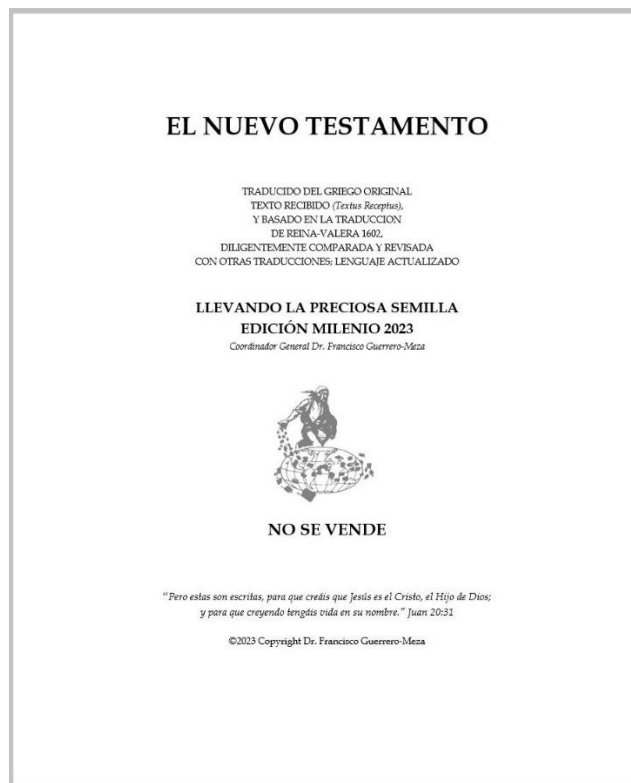
40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

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Introduction

It is with great joy and heart-felt blessings that I write this short study on the work of Bible translation. By God's grace and because of my 35-year involvement in the vision of Dr. Francisco Guerrero, I believe I have sufficient understanding and experience to write this paper.

Accordingly, thanks and well-deserved credit should be given to Dr. Francisco Guerrero Meza for his excellent translation work of the Spanish New Testament, which – as the chief translator for the project – has taken over forty years of work to complete, and it is just now polished and ready for further world-wide publishing (we first published John and Romans portions in 1993 in the USA and in 1996 in Honduras).



This New Testament translation is no small work. Spanish is listed second as the most popular *first language* (i.e., native speakers) spoken in the world today, with Chinese (Mandarin) taking the first place and English taking the third.

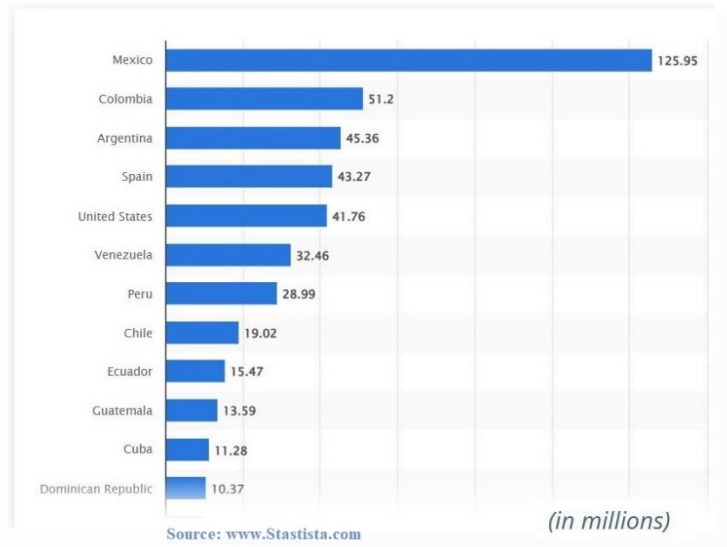
Counting *total speakers*, Spanish comes in at fourth place, closely behind Hindi. Because of the popularity of the Spanish language, we expect many will benefit from this *Llevando La Preciosa Semilla* (BPS – Bearing Precious Seed) version.

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Furthermore, in the western hemisphere, Spanish-speakers are 2.6 times that of English-speakers. Four of the five countries with the largest Spanish-speaking populations are in the western hemisphere, with the United States among them, closely behind Argentina and Spain*.

Countries with the largest number of native Spanish speakers worldwide in 2022



* Some statistics show higher populations of Spanish-speakers in the United States when including the estimated number of undocumented immigrants (estimated around 10 million). Also, the population of Puerto Rico (3.16 million) is not included in the US statistics, although technically Puerto Rico is a US territory and the people are US citizens, but without congressional representation and voting rights. In theory, we can say the US has the second-largest Spanish-speaking population.

This preacher has had the honor of working with Dr. Guerrero since 1988. God has allowed us to be friends and co-laborers in the work of missions, world evangelism, and scripture translation and publication. We

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both had the privilege of being students of Dr. Donald M. Fraser (August 8, 1926 – December 9, 2003), the founder of *Bearing Precious Seed* and a missionary and member of First Baptist Church of Fort Worth for over 40 years.

Because of our involvement in the translation work, and by God’s grace, we write this paper on how we can better translate the word of God from the lessons we learn from the fourteenth chapter of the Apostle Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians.

This is not the only place in the Bible one can study for a good understanding of how to do the scripture translation work rightly, but it deserves a special focus and emphasis for its direct application. This author has written extensively on how we can use the Bible to glean Godly methods for all types of work. For example, on page 73 of the syllabus for Class 505B (this is located at www.BaptistInternationalSeminary.org), we supply *13 Scriptural Considerations when Identifying the Correct vs. the Corrupt Manuscripts*. That study shows how one can use the Bible to identify which source texts are the right *vorlage* to use for scripture translation.

Everything we do should be Bible-based, Bible-backed, and Bible-blessed.

We understand the difference between “interpret” and “translate.” The first has to do with spoken words, the second with written words. But both words are connected. Especially in the work of Bible translation, we know translation (i.e., written) requires a much higher standard than simple interpreting. This is because translation is intended for formal long-term use and analysis by the readers, where most interpretation is temporary and informal – used only for the moment. Therefore, whatever instruction we have in the Bible in respect to the work of interpreting, the instruction will apply equally or even more so to the work of translating.

In respect to interpreting and translating, we have done both. Many missionaries around the world do both. The apostles did both. Even our Savior spoke a variety of languages. The word of God was written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek (and a little Latin – *Pontius Pilate, Caesar Augustus, centurion, spekulatora, denaraii*, etc.). Some believe that Paul’s letter to the Laodiceans mentioned in Colossians 4:16 was written in Latin. Of course, there is no scriptural evidence of this because we do not accept that letter as being inspired of God.

The work of language study and translation is high-level. Every preacher, teacher, should study languages and learn to preach in more than one language.

Furthermore, speaking multiple languages is God’s highest method in the order of teaching. Note Isaiah 28:9-11:

- 9 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.
10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:
11 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.

According to Isaiah 28:9-11, which is the basis for Don Fraser’s teaching method, God’s order of teaching men the Doctrine of Christ, goes like this:

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- ***Weaned from the breasts*** – students cannot be novices or babes in Christ – they must be saved and baptized and serving. See Psalms 111:10.
- ***Precept upon precept*** – we teach the Lord’s foremost and weightier commandments (called precepts). We teach them over and over to our students. According to the Great Commission in Matthew 28, we are to “teach them to observe all things” that Christ commanded. This is the work of the Lord.
- ***Line upon Line*** – students should read the whole Bible at least four times. Most of us have continually read the Bible our whole Christian lives, and this should be done. However, a student must read through his Bible at least four times before he has a relatively good understanding of the Bible – or at least he knows where to find certain passages.
- ***Here a little and there a little*** – Teaching on topics (topical studies) is for students who are obeying the commandments of Jesus Christ and reading their Bibles.
- ***With another tongue he speaks to his people*** – the speaking and study of the word of God in other languages allows the student to increase in understanding doctrine.

Interestingly, Paul refers to verse 11 when writing to the Corinthians in chapter 14.

When developing the Ph.D. level curricula for *Baptist International*, Dr. Don M. Fraser required the preaching ability in a second language. There are reasons for this requirement. But, at the same time, a man of God following the leadership of the Holy Ghost in his ministry will have already understood the need for languages and will probably already be using more than one language in his ministry.

With more languages we reach more people. All nations, whom we are commanded to teach, use various languages. Every creature has a language, and we are commanded to preach the gospel to every creature.

The progression and maturity of a man in the Lord’s word goes through these nine stages:

- Look
- Listen
- Learn
- Live
- Love
- Labor
- Lead
- Language
- Leave

A person can see that the *language* stage is at the mature level. But one should not wait to increase one’s knowledge and understanding of languages. It is a benefit at every level of personal development.

Many churches today have multilingual services, and many have sign language interpretation for their deaf members. These churches understand the need for languages and men who speak these languages.

Furthermore, although rarely preached, according to Romans 16:25-27 we can make known the gospel to all nations using the scriptures. Romans 16 says this:

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25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

Implicit in this passage is that we are commanded to make the gospel known to the world by use of the scriptures. And since the New Testament is committed to the churches (as the Old Testament is committed to the Jews – Romans 3:1-2), it is the duty of every good Baptist church to publish, distribute, and translate the word of God.

Many missionaries who serve among groups with no Bibles must “translate” the word of God as they preach. They either do this themselves or they have an interpreter. These men have the mind of Christ and many have the gift of interpreting. As they interpret the word of God as they preach, they give the word of God to people who otherwise do not have it.

Many of these men understand the need for scriptures in the languages of their people. These are mature servants of God who are the best men to do the work of translation (Hebrews 5:12-14).

God’s Word is Preserved in Bibles

From before the time of Erasmus’ *Novum Instrumentum omneovum* in 1516 until now, translators use Greek and Hebrew *edited texts* for their translations. This false teaching of “only the originals are inspired” mocks God and makes his word a lie – for he said his word would never pass away (Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33). And if God’s word is not inspired, it is *by definition* not God’s word. For God’s word cannot be *God breathed* and *not God breathed* at the same time.

And so, using the New Testament as an example, from the first century until now God’s word has been preserved in accurate copies and faithful translations in other languages. The precept is simple: ***God preserves his word in good Bibles in many languages.***

And God be praised, today we have many good and faithful Bibles in a multitude of languages. Any person who is familiar with the many good Bibles in other languages available today will admit this readily. God’s word has reached many nations already. And it is by good Greek and Hebrew texts, and with good translations in other languages, that God has preserved his word. And these are what we use to rightly translate the word of God. And to the person who still says, “only the originals are inspired,” we say, that you are very unfortunate that you cannot hold every word of God in your hands. We are sorry that you believe one cannot do what Christ said in Matthew 4:4: But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

A Word-for-Word Translation versus a Paraphrase

At this point we should make clear that scripture translation must be word-for-word translation from the original tongues, with other good translations used as witnesses. In some ways this makes the translation work simple and straightforward. In other ways it adds a lot of work.

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Translating word-for-word is God's way of preserving his word. He gave his words to his people, and his people preserved his words. We do not add to his words, and we do not take away from his words. **God says what he means and means what he says.** He is not the author of confusion. Neither does God rely on some man to tell you what he means – for he has given us his very words that he wants us to keep.

The simplicity that we translate *God's words* into a new language using his words, means we do not have to try and explain what God says. We leave that to Holy Ghost-inspired pastors and teachers around the word as they study the words of God for their churches. We simply put the very words of God into a coherent and grammatically accurate sentence. Word by word, word by word, word by word.

In contrast, with a paraphrase, you have *one person* – and one who does not believe *every word* of God is pure – rewording what God says according to his own human wisdom. Even if at best he paraphrases a correct teaching, it is limited only to that verse. One cannot do a word study with a paraphrase.

The difficulty with word-for-word translations, of course, is when we do not have a word in the target language for the source word. If the people in South American jungle do not have a word for “camel,” it is a challenge to translate Matthew 3:14. But once we settle the word for “camel,” Matthew 19:24 and 23:24 are made a lot easier to translate. But we shall not use a different word (like *horse* or *alpaca*), and we shall not paraphrase and say, “large animal” or “humped beast of burden.” In some cultures, John having his raiment of “alpaca hair” is not odd.

So, in these cases the translator must transliterate or borrow a word from the nearest language.

Some prefer making paraphrases because the translation can go swiftly and there is little to check and scrutinize. One just rewrites the verse into something he thinks is equivalent or easier to understand. The issue is that he loses *God's inspired words* and makes a “paraphrase,” not a translation. The result of a paraphrase is that it is not a translation into another language but a whole new bunch of words and thoughts. The paraphrase cannot be used for study or preaching – for preaching requires study, and study requires the actual words of God.

A person may say a paraphrase is sufficient. But if that is all a man has, then where does he go to look for the truth (John 17:17)? Where does he go for the actual *words* of God? Of course, the word of God tells us in Proverbs 30:5:

Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

And again, in Luke 4:4:

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

And in Deuteronomy 4:2:

Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

And in Jeremiah 26:2:

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Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD's house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word:

Analysis of 1 Corinthians 14

We understand that the gift of tongues ceased by the close of the first century (1 Corinthians 13:8-10). The gift of tongues has ceased mainly due to the prophets' *written* word (eternal) taking precedence over the prophets' *spoken* words (temporary) in the first century. Consequently, many Baptist churches miss the *present application* of 1 Corinthians 14. It is a blessed chapter that is little emphasized these days, except to teach on how the gift of tongues was to be administered back in the first century.

The object of this paper is to show readers that a good translation fulfills Paul's instruction in respect to interpretations. Or, more specifically, how we can use 1 Corinthians 14 to help a translator understand the purpose and the objectives of his translation.

We admit this chapter is not specifically written as instruction in scripture translation, but it is instruction on interpreting the word of God, and the necessity of the words of God being available and understandable to the people of God. Scripture translation attempts to accomplish the same goals, and therefore we can learn from this chapter accordingly.

The Intent and Scope of Scripture Translation

In the scripture translation work many objects must be defined.

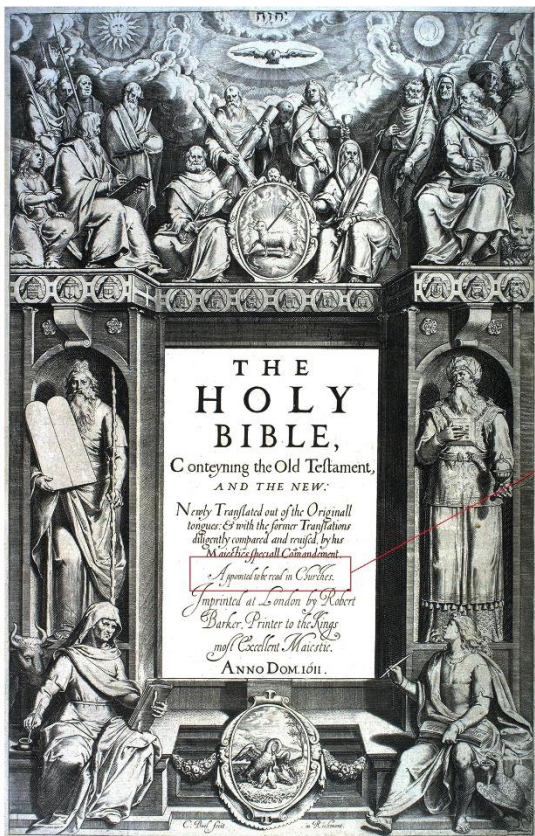
As examples, the translator must consider what is the purpose of the translation. Who are the intended readers? What are the translation criteria? How important is accuracy? How will the translation be used or published? What are the source texts that should be used? How are readers to benefit from reading the translation?

We can say that in respect to the word of God the purpose is to rightly translate the very words of God so that the readers can know what words God has given to us. The readers are *whosoever*. The translation criteria are that we use the pure texts as the source of the translation, that the translation is grammatically accurate, that we compare scripture with scripture – every word checked for meaning and prior usage, and we prove the text by prayer and the testimony of others who use it. The accuracy of Bible translation must be perfect, because the translation will (hopefully) be read in churches, used for study, and proclaimed in gospel preaching, etc. We want to see souls saved and saints edified. We want God to be pleased, Jesus Christ to be magnified, and the Holy Spirit to guide.

The use of a good Bible (i.e., God's word) in God's churches is of such high importance one rarely understands how critical this application is. The edification of the churches was the purpose of the apostles (Acts 9:31; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 4:12; 1 Timothy 1:4), and therefore – by extension – the purpose of the scriptures, and – by extension – the purpose of preaching (2 Timothy 4:2). Frankly speaking, if a Bible cannot be used in churches for preaching, teaching, and evangelism; it fails in its primary purpose.

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We know the King James Version fulfilled the criteria mentioned above. The KJV accomplished these things, and therefore, this version is the primary witness to the correct and proper translation of the word of God.



The title page of the
King James Version of the Bible
A.D. 1611

Appointed to be read in Churches.

***From the first printing the KJV
has been intended for church use.***

This paper is a study of 1 Corinthians chapter 14 showing how a translation should be made considering its intended use.

As a personal testimony, this preacher has read various works on the subject of translation, including Dr. Eugene Albert Nida's *The Theory and Practice of Translation* and *From One Language to Another*. We admit these books have value, however, this preacher has seen very few scriptural studies of how a *Bible translation* should be rendered. We all admit Eugene Nida* was a tremendous and brilliant translator who added much to the discipline, but Nida introduced new *theories* in translation that we contend are not good for Bible translation, including his well-known principle of *dynamic equivalence*. The idea that the translator should focus on *the meaning and spirit of the original text*, rather than the formal correspondence of the words and language structure of the original text, is not a good practice in Bible translation.

* Dr. Nida (1914 – 2011), although an ordained “Baptist” by the Northern Baptist Convention, was – according to Wikipedia – instrumental in engineering the joint effort between the Vatican and the United Bible Societies (UBS) to produce cross-denominational Bibles in translations across the globe. This work began in 1968 and was carried on in accordance with Nida's translation principle of Functional Equivalence” [also known as Dynamic Equivalence]. Wiki further says, “Despite his

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conservative background, in later years Nida became increasingly ecumenical and New Evangelical in his approach.”

Dr. Nida was not part of the Revision Committee for the 1960 Reina-Valera Revision, but he was present at their meetings representing the American Bible Society. Among his tasks as an adviser, he was “... to assist the committee in digging out commentary data or providing information on special exegetical and linguistic problems” (*The Bible Translator*; July 1961, p. 111.).

The 1960 Revision Committee consisted of two Methodists, three Presbyterians, and one Baptist (*The History of the Reina-Valera 1960 Spanish Bible*, Di Calvin George, p. 47, 2004).

Eugene A. Nida, in his *Introduction* to the 1960 Popular Version Spanish Bible, wrote concerning the principles of this 1960 version: “Nevertheless, in some instances where a critical text is so much to be preferred over the traditional Textus Receptus, the committee did make some slight changes particularly if such changes were not in well-known verses where an alteration would be unduly upsetting to the constituency.” [Editor’s note: But, as the Apostle Paul wrote, “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (1 Corinthians 5:6; Galatians 5:9).]

The Doctrine of Scripture Translation and its Connection to Love Commandment Doctrine

As with every class, we must understand the subject and its connection to the Great Commandment of Loving God and your brother.

Having the love of God in your heart means you desire the same things God does. God loves the lost. He is not willing that any should perish. And God gave the word of God to all so they can be saved. God has magnified his word above all his name – Psalm 138:2.

When we love God, we obey Jesus Christ (John 14:15). Preaching the gospel to every creature and giving the scriptures to them are commandments of Jesus Christ. Romans 16:25-27 says this:

25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

A Study of 1 Corinthians Chapter 14

At this point we shall analyze 1 Corinthians 14 for the principles used in interpreting so that we may apply them to translating.

1 Corinthians 14 is shown here again for the readers benefit:

1 Follow after charity, and desire spiritual *gifts*, but rather that ye may prophesy.

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2 For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth *him*; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

4 He that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

5 I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater *is* he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?

7 And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?

8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them *is* without signification.

11 Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh *shall* be a barbarian unto me.

12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue pray that he may interpret.

14 For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but *my* understanding is unfruitful.

15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

16 Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.

18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:

19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue.

20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

21 In the law it is written, With *men* of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.

22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those that are* unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or *one* unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on *his* face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, everyone of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

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- 27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.
- 28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.
- 29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.
- 30 If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.
- 31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.
- 32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.
- 33 For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.
- 34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law.
- 35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.
- 36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?
- 37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.
- 38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.
- 39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.
- 40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

To organize the points of study, we have separated them into the following lessons, attempting to aliterate them in order of the verses.

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Lesson 1: Prophecy – verses 1-3

- 1 Follow after charity, and desire spiritual *gifts*, but rather that ye may prophesy.**
- 2 For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth *him*; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.**
- 3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.**

Prophesying is to be preferred over spiritual gifts. In the case of our churches today, prophesying has been replaced with the preaching of the word of God. It is by preaching that people are edified.

Prophesying today is achieved by preaching based upon the word of God. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter, and Jude are all “prophets of the Lord.” They are God-ordained apostles who spoke with the authority of Jesus Christ. And we have the *written words* of the apostles and prophets, so there is no need to ignore them to follow feelings, or claimed inspiration from God in visions and dreams, or other writings.

As prophecy was used in the Corinthian church, it was intended to edify, exhort, and comfort.



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A translation of God's word should edify the readers and hearers.

Timothy was told to "preach the word" in 2 Timothy 4:2. This preaching is defined as "reprove, rebuke, exhort." This is what God's word does. The word of God exhorts. Any translation of the word of God should be able to be used for exhortation.

Furthermore, 1 Corinthians 10:11 tell us the word of God is written for our admonition. Admonition fits well with the work of preaching.

The word of God should also give comfort. Romans 15:4 tell us this: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

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Lesson 2: Plainness – verse 4

4 He that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

Here in verse 4 Paul shows that a man giving the word of God in a language that no one but himself understands does nobody any good except for the originator of the words.

In Bible translating, we want the language to be understandable to the readers. Using words that are too hard to understand will make the word of no use. This is another reason to use the word-for-word translation method. God's word is plain – Proverbs 8:9. Paraphrases are usually dumbed-down and therefore not very useful for teaching.

Using God's words, even if the reader needs to learn the meanings (which is acceptable), will put the reading level God desires. For example, the reading level of the King James Version is averaged at 7th – 9th grade. In contrast, the NASB is said to be at an 11th grade level. And although these estimates vary (some say KJV is 12th grade, but the NKJV is 7th grade, which is basically saying the *thees* and *thous* make it five grades harder), we understand that the grade level progresses as a person reads through the Bible.

Whatever the grade level, God has determined it. We should follow it.

Part of this plainness of speech also affects language evolution. Apart from the King James Version, all languages evolve and require new versions in their language. This is because the definition of the words people use change, and the word of God is intended for the common people to read. This does not mean we use a common-type language.

The exception of the KJV helps us to understand that God's word should be put in "Bible language" (again, another reason we use word-for-word translation), meaning the words are correct for the target language, and if a reader has to consult a dictionary, so be it. We shall not translate into the *vernacular* of the people, trying to make the version more appealing. Whatever words we use should be understandable and applicable for long-term use.

The exception of the KJV puzzles many translators. They understand that the versions need updating because of language evolution. So, when they consider the KJV, they cannot understand why it is the most popular version in the world*.

Indeed, because of God's blessing on this Book, we must conclude it is THE JUDGE for all other translations.

* The KJV is still the most popular and most published book of all time. Even unbelievers recognize the majesty of this Book, surpassing even the works of literary giants Shakespeare and Chaucer.

The Guinness World Records, archived from the original on 15 March 2015, put the Bible as the most printed book, estimating more than 5 billion copies. Research conducted by the British and Foreign Bible Society in 2021 suggests that the total number probably lies between 5 and 7 billion copies.

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The number of KJV Bibles is impossible to count, but estimates start at more than 1 billion copies since 1611. This, of course, is numbering whole Bibles, not including New Testaments and Gospels of John, which are likely 5 times and 10 times respectively.

Wikipedia says:

A study published in 2014 by The Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture at Indiana University and Purdue University found that Americans read versions of the Bible as follows:

- King James Version (55%)
- New International Version (19%)
- New Revised Standard Version (7%)
- New American Bible (6%)
- The Living Bible (5%)
- All other translations (8%)

What a believer reads and what he purchases are two different things.

Although recent numbers may show “sales” of versions that put the KJV at number 4, there are reasons for this, including marketing efforts for translations that make money (anyone can print the KJV outside the United Kingdom without permission, so no reason to promote it), and the fact that many groups simply give away KJV Bibles. For example, *Bearing Precious Seed*, from the beginning has never charged for a copy of the scriptures. This preacher knows personally that millions of tons of scripture have been published and distributed to the world free of charge. In English, BPS only publishes the KJV.

In addition, *The Gideons International* says since 1908 when Bible placement began, that their organization has distributed over 2 billion bibles “free of cost” in 194 countries and in 94 languages. Internationally, they distribute free of charge the KJV in Bible form. They also have published and distributed other English versions: the NKJV that was then replaced with the *Gideon’s version* of the ESV (i.e., with a New Testament that is updated in 50 places based on the *Textus Receptus*, but that is considered a liberal form of the RSV) in 2013. But the KJV is still offered.

The change to use the NKJV probably came about in 1979, as that was the year Thomas Nelson first published the New Testament (Psalms 1980, and Whole Bible 1982). Amazon sells a Gideon NKJV bible that says 1980 and another that says 1983.

One website says there are about 100 million bibles printed each year and 20 million sold each year (<https://wordrated.com/bible-sales-statistics/>). This puts the number of bibles *sold* versus *printed* and 20%, meaning 80% of bibles printed are not sold. These are probably mostly KJV as there is no copyright infringement when they are printed and given away.

With these numbers we can safely conclude that the KJV is still the most-preferred and the most-published – even in 2022.

Furthermore, the worldwide popularity (nearly 1.5 billion speakers) of the English language – as this author has contended for decades – is due to the King James Version and its influence in the world. Being the top language spoken in the world is not by chance, considering the language originated in the British Isles by Anglo-Saxons (today 63 million people live in the United Kingdom). Languages isolated to islands and

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peninsulas – like Japanese (spoken in one country by 128 million people) and Korea (spoken in two countries by 80 million people) – do not usually become world-wide languages. The largest island nation is Indonesia with 255 million people. When was the last time that language was needed by foreigners?

A quick review of the populations and languages of the island nations shows the unlikelihood that any of their languages would become popular. But English is the one exception.



Melvyn Bragg, who is a British broadcaster, author, and parliamentarian, is quoted saying: “There is no doubt in my mind that the King James Bible not Shakespeare set this language on its path to become a universal language on a scale unprecedented before or since.”

Wikipedia says that Mr. Bragg, although he is a supporter of the KJV, “... does not claim to be a believer himself, seeing himself in Albert Einstein's term as a ‘believing unbeliever’, adding that he is ‘unable to cross the River of Jordan which would lead me to the crucial belief in a godly eternity.’”

We see that even an unbeliever realizes the power and authority of the KJV.

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Lesson 3: Preaching – verse 5

5 I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

The translation of God's word that is done rightly will be used for preaching. It *should* be used for preaching. It basically preaches itself. Preaching (i.e., prophesying) is a higher-level gift than translating, showing us that preachers should be able to translate, and that translations should be used for preaching. The preference of preaching over translation – although both are God-given gifts in respect to the word of God – teaches us that the word of God (i.e., the scriptures) should prioritize the ministry of preaching.

Or, more simply stated, we “preach the word” (2 Timothy 4:2). So, that, if a translation is not conducive to preaching, it fails in one of its most important responsibilities.

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Lesson 4: Profitability – verses 6-15

6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?

7 And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?

8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them *is* without signification.

11 Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh *shall* be a barbarian unto me.

12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue pray that he may interpret.

14 For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but *my* understanding is unfruitful.

15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

Another higher work of the scripture translation is *edification*. When we deal in languages the purpose is to edify the readers with the actual words of God.

Additional ways the profitability of a translation can be judged is by its edification and how it is used for revelation, knowledge, prophesying, and doctrine. We already covered the need for prophesying (preaching) above.

What about *revelation*? Revelation is one of the many reasons the King James Version is so profitable. Because of the *perfect translation* of words. It supplies revelation to those who study it. It is the mind of God and past finding out.

Knowledge is also a fundamental requirement of a good translation. The translation should be a permanent and perfect depository of God's knowledge. It should have no errors. It should not teach anything incorrectly.

Doctrine is made up of the commandments of the Lord. This then leads us to verses 26 and 37. Considering verse 26 in addition to this verse, we can summarize the profit of a translation in respect to edification as following:

- Revelation
- Knowledge
- Prophecy (preaching)
- Doctrine
- Psalm
- Tongues

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- Interpretation



Tongues in a translation can be shown in places where other languages were used. Matthew 27:46 reads in the KJV: Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? This is a good translation. It kept the original words and gave the *interpretation* (translation).

Psalms can be thought of – not only being the songs in the Bible that would be rendered rightly – but also the rhythm and cadence of words used (and their order) that aid memorization and song writing.

Study must also be allowed. If one cannot study the word, where is the profitability (2 Timothy 2:15)?

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Lesson 5: Power – verses 16-17

16 Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.

Readers and hearers of a good translation should be able to say “Amen!” to the words used. This only comes by the Holy Ghost and the power of God’s word. This preacher says “Amen!” to every verse he reads. At the same time, this preacher cringes when he hears or reads poor translations or paraphrases.

Hebrews 4:12 says: “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Only if a translation achieves this standard can we say it is the word of God.

Romans 1:16 says: “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

Additionally, we can say that if a translation does not win souls by the Gospel, it is of no power.

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Lesson 6: Portions – verses 18-20

18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:

19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue.

20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

Paul here speaks of five good words being preferred over 10,000 words that are not understood. This means we should take the time to make a good translation, because a few words translated accurately are better than 10,000 words in a paraphrase.

This should be an encouragement to those who have spent forty years working on a translation. Quality – not quantity – is what God requires.

Additionally, the publishing and distribution of booklets of the Gospel of John and the Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Romans is supported. God gave his word piecemeal to his people. We can give it to the world piecemeal to the world. As D. M. Fraser showed, we give J/R's to the lost, New Testaments to the saved, and whole Bibles to the baptized.

Even a few words of God can be extremely profitable to an individual.

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Lesson 7: People of God – verse 21

21 In the law it is written, With *men* of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.

God's people have the Holy Spirit and thus they will be led by the Holy Spirit to truth (John 16:13). God's word is truth (John 17:17)

The testimony of God's people is indispensable when proving a translation. Do they use it? Do they memorize it? Do they live by it? Is it accepted by God's people?

For example, this preacher has used the BPS Spanish New Testament to preach and teach for years. This preacher loves the KJV, and he knows what the word of God should be like. He loves the high standard of the KJV, and dislikes watered down, lukewarm, and weak versions.

As a personal testimony, only rarely has he found a word that – although not incorrect – could be better translated. And because of our involvement in the translation, we can polish this translation *though use*.

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Lesson 8: Priority to Serve – verses 22-23

22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.
23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those that are* unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?

The New Testament was given to God's people by the close of the first century. The churches originally had living apostles and prophets (Ephesians 4:12), but these men were eventually replaced by the "written apostles and prophets." The scriptures are the basis of prophecy (1 Peter 1:20-21) and we are to "preach the word (2 Timothy 4:2). Paul was a servant of Jesus Christ and the churches (Romans 1:1; Philippians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 4:4), as was James (James 1:1), Peter (2 Peter 1:1), Jude (Jude 1:1), John (Revelation 1:1), and our Savior Jesus Christ (Matthew 12:18; 20:28; Ephesians 5:29). And if the Word (John 1:1) came to serve, so the word of God serves in our churches. We are subject to be the word of God, but the prophets and apostles serve us by giving us the word of God.

Consequently, a good translation of the word of God should serve the churches by being authoritative. This means the word is trustworthy and the basis for preaching and teaching. This means people submit to its teaching as the word of God.

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Lesson 9: Purpose – Conversion of Lost – verse 24-25

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or *one* unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on *his* face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

As mentioned under point 5 above, if the translation does not bear the fruit of people being saved, we have a big problem. One might think there are other uses for a translation, but Jesus said in Mark 8:36: “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

God using the translated word to win souls is *the purpose* of the word – 1 Peter 1:23: “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

If a translation does not win souls, there is no point in it.

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Lesson 10: Primary Judge – verse 26-29

26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, everyone of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.

28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

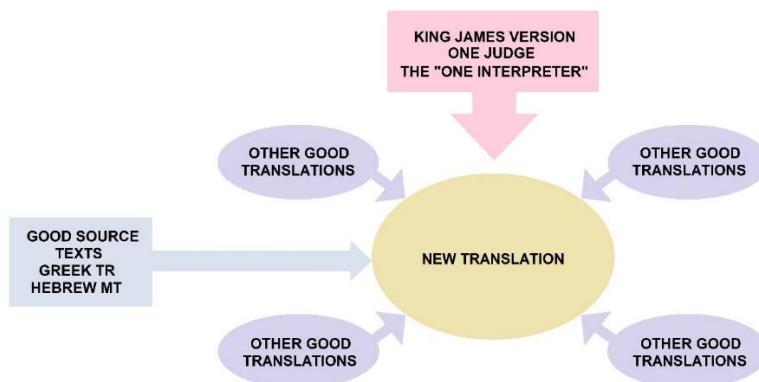
In all translations a multiplicity of testimony is required to identify the correct words to be used. In the multitude of counselors, there is safety (Proverbs 11:14; 24:6). It is in the mouth of two or three witnesses that every word is established.

Matthew 18:16 – But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

2 Corinthians 13:1 – This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

We know from 400-plus years of seeing God’s blessing on the King James Version these two things: First, the KJV translators used a method that produced a Book that has been used by God to see many thousands of millions of souls saved*. Second, because of God’s blessing on the Book we can safely use it as the final Judge of which words should be included in the Bible and their proper translation in English. It is the *One Interpreter*.

* There have been *billions* of KJV Bibles, New Testaments, and Gospels of John published and distributed since 1611. If we estimate conservatively that one out of ten KJV scriptures bore the fruit of salvation (see Mark 4:1-9 and Isaiah 55:11); we can expect to see at least a billion souls that will have come to Christ because of that *Blessed Book!*



IN ALL TRANSLATION WORK OF THE SCRIPTURES, THE TRANSLATION SHOULD BE DONE WORD-FOR-WORD FROM THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGES USING RELIABLE GREEK AND HEBREW EDITED TEXTS.
ALL TRANSLATIONS SHOULD DILIGENTLY BE COMPARED TO OTHER GOOD TRANSLATIONS.
THE KING JAMES VERSION IS THE "ONE JUDGE" THAT IS USED TO DECIDE ALL QUESTIONS OF TRANSLATION.

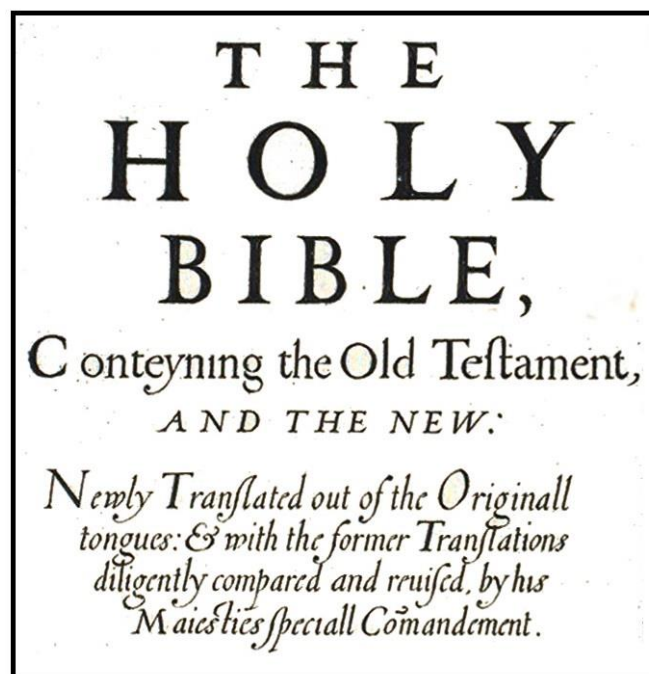
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Because of the minute differences in source texts and the human instrumentality involved in editing and translating the word of God, along with the difficulty of some passages that present differences of word translations, one must have the ability to appeal to a *Final Authority and Judge* for the final rendering of each verse. 99.9999% of the Bible (the KJV has 783,137 words with maybe 80 words that have difficulty) is perfectly and obviously rendered in good translations. And for those *very few* places where one questions the best rendering, God has given us a King James Bible to compare to.

This is not to say we should translate from the KJV. That is not the correct method of translation. A translation must come from the original languages if it is to be a word-for-word translation. And good translations in other languages add italicized words to smooth out the grammar and rhythm of the verse. They also may use words available in that language that may not be available in every language.

Furthermore, many versions in many languages should be used for testimony. The comparison with other good versions helps the translator know how the Holy Ghost led other translators.

This was the process used by the KJV translators:



The translators of our 1611 King James Bible understood the requirement of translating from the original languages and diligently comparing other translations.

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Lesson 11: Public, Not Private – verses 30-31

30 If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

From this passage we can learn three things:

First, God uses multiple sources to reveal his word. God will use any vessel that prepares himself to be used of God.

Second, we should honor other good translations of the word of God. Although good translations may differ slightly, we can still learn from them and use them as witnesses to the truth.

Third, translation should be done decently and in order so that all may learn, and that are comforted.

God wants all people to learn of Jesus Christ, be comforted, and be saved. He is not willing that any should perish.

Fourth, almost any dedicated, God-fearing child of God can help in the work of translating the scriptures. It may take time, study, and personal development; but it is a work for God's people.

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Lesson 12: Precision – not a Paraphrase – verses 32-33

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

A paraphrase is basically one man's opinion of what a passage says and means. I should rather have the actual words of God and study for myself what God intends for me to learn from his word. I shall use the Holy Ghost as my guide rather than a person who is little-known to me.

Preachers can control their speech – speak or remain quiet. God is not the author of confusion. God's word should be precise and word-for-word, consequently it will not be confusion.

The human author of a paraphrase can cause confusion, and as such should remain quiet when he wants to speak.

Furthermore, God does not author confusion. God authors peace. The scriptures, translated rightly, will bring God's peace to the readers.

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Lesson 13: The People of Translation – verses 34-35

34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

Because men are the preachers and not women, translators should be who understand the application of scripture to preaching. When translating, a preacher subconsciously and consciously understands the words he is choosing will be used for preaching.

A woman cannot understand this practice of preaching the word of God.

Because missionaries that interpret and translate the word of God to people without Bibles make the best translators, we understand these to be men. Men in the ministry are who God uses for leadership.

Furthermore, not just any man that can translate the word of God. He should be Holy Ghost led, spiritual, and faithful in his walk with God. For further study, the syllabus *Class 505E Introduction to Scripture Translation* has chapters 40 through 58 describing the translator God uses.

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Lesson 14: Preserved in Languages – verse 36

36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

We have taught that God's word is preserved in good Bibles. God has given his New Testament word to the churches, and we are responsible to get this word to all nations for the obedience of the truth. Romans 16:25-27 says this:

25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,
26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:
27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

Churches should be involved in scripture translation – or at least support the work of scripture translation. Jesus did not leave his word to the world to preserve, copy, distribute, and keep. Neither did he give his word to worldly organizations that “translate” the words of God according to every whim and market.

It is ridiculous to assume we need over 100 versions of the Bible in English. But the will of God is that everyone has a Bible in their own language.

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Lesson 15: Precepts – verse 37

37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

The things given unto us in the New Testament are the commandments of Jesus Christ. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) commands the church leadership to “teach all nations,” and teach the converts to “observe all things” Jesus commanded.

Paul also says that these things he has written are the commandments of the Lord. And, in the context, we can safely state that a spiritual person or a preacher (i.e., prophet) should acknowledge the word of God is made up of the commandments of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Translators of the scriptures are handling the commandments of the Lord. As such, we should be careful to make them clear. This is another danger with paraphrases: How does one translate the commandments of the Lord using a paraphrase? It appears a paraphrase would alter or water-down the commandments of the Lord.

For example, let us compare some versions in respect to obedience and commandments.

Romans 10:16:

King James Bible

But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

New International Version

But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?"

New Living Translation

But not everyone welcomes the Good News, for Isaiah the prophet said, "LORD, who has believed our message?"

New American Standard Bible

However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?"

To me, welcoming the good news and obeying the gospel are radically different.

Galatians 5:7:

King James Bible

Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

New Living Translation

You were running the race so well. Who has held you back from following the truth?

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GOD'S WORD® Translation

You were doing so well. Who stopped you from being influenced by the truth?

Jubilee Bible 2000

Ye did run well; who hindered you that ye should not trust in the truth?

Totally different teaching depending on the translation.

2 Thessalonians 1:18:

King James Bible

In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Aramaic Bible in Plain English

Whenever he executes vengeance in blazing fire on those who do not know God and on those who have not recognized The Good News of our Lord Yeshua The Messiah,

GOD'S WORD® Translation

He will take revenge on those who refuse to acknowledge God and on those who refuse to respond to the Good News about our Lord Jesus

1 Peter 4:17:

King James Bible

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Aramaic Bible in Plain English

For it is time that the judgment will begin from the house of God; but if it begins from us, what is the end of those who are not convinced of The Good News of God?

Douay-Rheims Bible

For the time is, that judgment should begin at the house of God. And if first at us, what shall be the end of them that believe not the gospel of God?

Weymouth New Testament

For the time has come for judgement to begin, and to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the end of those who reject God's Good News?

Acts 1:2:

King James Bible

Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

New International Version

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until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.

New Living Translation

until the day he was taken up to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions through the Holy Spirit.

Berean Study Bible

until the day He was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles He had chosen.

New American Standard Bible

until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.

Darby Bible Translation

until that day in which, having by the Holy Spirit charged the apostles whom he had chosen, he was taken up;

Weymouth New Testament

after giving instruction through the Holy Spirit to the Apostles whom He had chosen, He was taken up to Heaven.

One can easily see that the odd bibles are not trustworthy for study. They disconnect the cross-references for *commandment* and *obey*. Trying to do diligent word study falls flat if one does not use the KJV.

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Lesson 16: Proved, Not Ignorant – verses 38-39

38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

Two things we can glean from these verses: first, ignorant men should not be involved in translation. Good translating requires much study, persistence, and focus. It is not work for the lighthearted or sloppy. One is literally handling the very words of God. Any man involved in scripture translation should be very careful and check and recheck and check again his work.

Secondly, we learn that churches should encourage and support translation work. Many brethren think the translation work should be left to the “experts” – which can be interpreted as textual critics who do not tremble at God’s word, people who make merchandise of the word of God. We can learn from the verses below:

Isaiah 66:1-5

1 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?

2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

3 He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

4 I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.

5 Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.

John 2:16

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

2 Peter 2:3

3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

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Lesson 17: Performed Decently and in Order – verse 40

40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

Any translation should be done decently and in order. We speak of this in other syllabi, but sufficient here is to say that every change that is needed should be kept, checked diligently, and the text updated as needed.

One should have a master file that carries the latest revisions. That file should have back-up files in case of loss.

When distributing the text for checks and revisions, version control should be used so that each iteration of the translation is identified.

Furthermore, if a typo or change is needed in one place, the other places with similar usages should be checked.

For example, if “*fariseos*” is used with miniscule “f,” then all usages of that word should follow suit. Consequently, the word “*saduceos*” should also use miniscule.

Lastly, when in production, if an error is found, it should be corrected before the next printing.

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Lesson 18: Conclusion

Thank you, readers, for the time you have invested in reading or teaching this short study. Our hope is that you will be edified and encouraged in the work of scripture translation and in the work of learning other languages to better evangelize the world.

Translating the scriptures is a necessary and wonderful work. Pastors, preachers, missionaries, and teachers should encourage, support, and be personally involved in the translation work.

Imagine for a moment the blessings and rewards one shall receive from giving the scriptures to those in need. Pastor Jimmy Gid Tharpe, my pastor when I was on staff at Baptist Tabernacle in Shreveport, Louisiana; said this about Don Fraser – the man who with the Lord’s help has been responsible for hundreds of churches publishing and distributing thousands of tons and millions of scriptures: In this century (the 20th), I believe Don Fraser has been responsible for more salvations than any other man.” I also agree with this statement.

There are blessings and promises we can understand from Isaiah 55:8-11:

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

12 For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Our prayer is that we will be considered great in God’s work. Psalm 68:11: “The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.”