

Bible Translations

My Page

Like 31

Share 31

Like 31

Tweet

Save

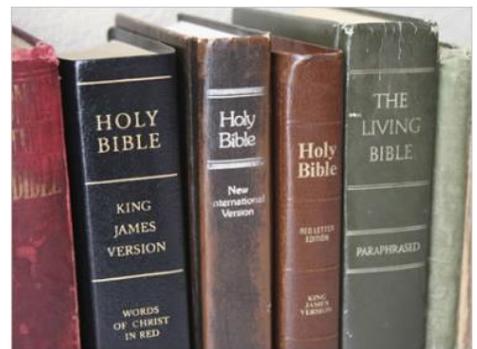
Share

Bible Translations

Should a Christian use only certain translations of the Bible? If so, which ones?

The Bible contains no specific command concerning which Bible translation to use. In order to avoid adding to God's Word, we must not legislate on something God has not legislated (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; 1 Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18-19). That said, these same passages would instruct Bible teachers and translators to do their absolute best to translate as close to the original inspired Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek writings in order to give us the actual will of God. The scriptural principle to make the laws of God understandable would also guide Bible teachers and translators in their work to make the translations of the Bible (Neh. 8:8, 12).

Most Bible translations over the years have generally accomplished both scriptural goals of accuracy and understandability. The differences between translations are miniscule in most cases. For example, compare the different translations of 1 Peter 3:21 as rendered by the [KJV](#), [NKJV](#), [ESV](#), and [NASB](#). God wants this passage to inform us that baptism saves us, that it corresponds to (meaning it is a figure or type of) the flood which saved Noah as talked about in the previous verses, that its purpose is not to make your physical body clean but to answer or appeal to God for a good conscience, and that it does all of this through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Each of the four versions of the Bible cited above says exactly that (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 3:6; 1 Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18-19), and they say them using language that was commonly used by the average reader at the time each of them were made (cf. Neh. 8:8, 12).



A wide variety of Bibles are often used in studying God's truth.

Therefore, the decision as to which Bible version to use is a matter of personal opinion for several reasons. First, there is no version of the Bible that has completely and undoubtedly translated every iota of the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek correctly. Every English translation has varying degrees of translation error, usually ranging from .5% to 3% of its entirety. Thus, one who demands that others

shouldn't use a particular Bible version due to it translating a particular verse wrong must be consistent and condemn themselves for using their own Bible translation for the same reason (Rom. 2:1).

Second, a distinct minority of these translation error relates to doctrinal matters which one needs to accurately know in order to obtain and keep salvation. Whenever I encounter a translation that has an error in a verse which teaches doctrine relating to God or salvation, I choose to correct the error in my own personal studies and also in the class or sermon I'm presenting and then move on rather than condemn the entire translation. I've read that some scholars (such as Alfred Edersheim in his work *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*) have found a few errors in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament which the apostles used in their inspired writings. Most scholars call the Septuagint "[a reasonably faithful translation](#)," but even so I've found none that say it's 100% perfect. If the inspired writers of the New Testament could use a less than perfect translation, then why can't we?

Third, God wants his Word to be understood by those who read it (Neh. 8:8, 12), and each version's understandability is different for each individual reader. One might find the King James Version easy to understand, while another might not and thus prefer the New King James or the English Standard Version...thus making it a matter of personal opinion and judgment, something on which we have no biblical right to legislate or judge each other (Rom. 14:1-12).

Brethren who argue or even condemn each other over Bible translations fall into the condemnation of 1 Timothy 6:4-5, which warn of people who **“are puffed up with conceit and understand nothing”** because they have **“an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are deprived in mind and deprived of the truth.”**

This entry was posted in [Jon Mitchell](#) and tagged [bible](#), [translate](#), [translations](#), [version](#), [versions](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

Comments are closed.

