

Appendix: The Basis for the Corrections: Lexicography, Word Usage, Grammar, Syntax, Versions, & Commentaries

The Gospel of Matthew

3:1 - “In those days John the Immerser came preaching in the desert of Judea.”

Comment: The Greek, *ho baptistēs* is a noun of agency. The verb from which it is derived, *baptizein*, is the causal form of *baptein*, ‘to dip,’ which thus means ‘to cause to be immersed’ (BAG, pp. 131-2; Chamberlain, *Grammar*, p. 11; Abbott-Smith, *Lexicon*, pp. 74-5). It should not have been merely *transliterated* as ‘to baptize,’ because it is a word early translators coined from the Greek, into which one can put any meaning one desires! In 1860, T. J. Conant, the chair of Biblical Literature and Criticism at Rochester Theological Seminary, published an exhaustive study of *baptizein* and its cognates, showing from all Greek literature that these words consistently relate to immersion. His book went out of print and was virtually unknown until Kregel reprinted it in 1977. He concluded that to put any other meaning on these words is ‘literary forgery’ (p. 187).

3:11 - “I immerse you in water based upon repentance.”

Comment: The Greek preposition *eis* can mean “on the basis of,” which makes better sense in the light of John’s insistence that people coming for ‘baptism’ must be repentant. (Dana & Mantey, *Grammar*, pp. 103-4, “Because of. Rom. 4:20, ‘. . . but because of the promise of God he did not waver in unbelief’ [cf. Mt. 3:11; Mk. 2:18; Rom. 11:32; Tit. 3:14].”) Only a dozen versions from the 1886 ERV, to the NCV, NLT, GNT, CEV, AMP, & Phillips recognize this.

4:1 - “Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tested by the devil.”

Comment: The Greek verb *peirazein* can mean ‘to test, try, or tempt.’ Since Christ did not have a sin nature, ‘test’ is a more appropriate rendering (BAG, *Lexicon*, p. 646).

5:39 - “You have heard that it was said, ‘an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I declare to you, Do not set yourself vengefully against the one who does evil to you. If someone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

Comment: Most translations follow the KJV: “Do not resist the evil person.” The Greek *anthistēmi* has a primary etymological meaning which makes better sense in this context: NEB, “Do not set yourself against the man who wrongs you.” TEV: “Do not take revenge on someone who wrongs you.” HCSB marginal reading: “Don’t set yourself against or don’t retaliate against.” The BAG lexicon (p. 66) says it has the middle voice (do it to yourself), “middle sense, *set oneself against, oppose, resist, withstand.*” The verb *hraptizein* commonly has the meaning ‘to slap,’ which in that culture would be a dishonor requiring revenge (BAG, p. 741). Paul affirmed this in Rom. 12:19. Middle eastern culture was an honor/shame culture, not a right/wrong culture. This is still true today in all of Asia.

This mistranslation is so important because pacifists base their view mostly on this verse, dispensationalists tend to put off the applicability of the Sermon on the Mount to the future kingdom, and covenantalists say it can’t be taken literally. If this translation correction can be substantiated, all three views are wrong!

6:13 - “Lead us not into trials.”

Comment: God does not tempt us (James 1:13), but He does test and try us! The usual translations contradict the rest of Scripture. See comments on 4:1.

7:1 - “Do not condemn, lest you too be condemned.”

Comment: The Greek *krinein* can mean ‘to judge or to condemn’ (BAG, p. 452; Abbott-Smith, p. 258; M&M, p. 360) The Pharisees were guilty of censorious condemnation of others; however, the church must judge overt sin among its people (1 Cor. 5:1-13).

7:7-8 - “Keep on asking and it will be given to you; keep on seeking and you will find; keep on knocking and the door will be opened unto you. For everyone who keeps on asking receives; those who keep on seeking find; and to those who keep on knocking it shall be opened.”

Comment: The present imperative in the Greek has the force of keeping on doing it. The NLB and HCSB follow Williams showing the true force of the verb (Wallace, *Grammar*, p. 485). Otherwise believers become disillusioned when they ask and don’t receive. There are also a number of other conditions to answered prayer.

8:5 - “When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion approached him, asking for help.”

Comment: The Greek *proserchomai* can have a metaphorical connotation common in that culture of approaching a powerful person through intermediaries. This is important since Lk. 7:1-10 tells about the centurion’s approach through Jewish elders. Thus to avoid contradiction between the two Gospel accounts this is mandatory! Only six out of 100+ translations have this correct. Robert Stein has a good discussion (*Difficult Passages*, pp. 34-36; Abbott-Smith, *Lexicon*, p. 384; Moulton & Milligan, *Vocabulary*, p. 547).

11:12 - “From the days of John the Immerser, God’s kingdom has been subjected to violence, and violent people have been attacking it.”

Comment: John was in prison about to be beheaded, ultimately Christ himself will be crucified, yet the original NIV

rendered both clauses positively, and other translations are confused (“the kingdom is forcefully advancing” and “forceful men snatch it by force,” etc.), except the TNIV, the 2011 NIV, and the CEB. Both Greek verbs have a hostile sense (*biazein* & *harpazein*, BAG, p. 140, 108), and many commentators since A. C. Gaebelein have correctly interpreted it. The people of Nazareth had tried to push the Lord over a cliff (Lk. 4:28-30), and they soon plotted His death. This is relevant to Luke 16:16 also (cf. website: www.mediatetheology.org).

11:16 - “To what can I compare this nation?” Also Mt. 12:39, 41, 42, 45; 16:4; 17:17; 24:34 and parallels in Mk. and Lk.

Comment: The primary meaning of *genea* is ‘family, descent, race, stock, nation’ not ‘generation’ as translated by all (BAGD, pp. 153-4; “especially of the Jewish people,” Abbott-Smith, p. 89; *TDNT*, I: 662). The context in most of these usages indicates that the nation Israel is being contrasted with Gentiles, and this is the determining factor. The editors of the Scofield Reference Bible suggested this (1909). Many commentators going back for centuries have advocated this view, but all translations except the Living Bible blithely ignore the evidence. This becomes especially crucial in the interpretation of Matthew 24:34. Did Christ err in saying it would all be fulfilled in one generation? Was that generation of people worse than preceding or succeeding ones? Cf. www.mediatetheology.org.

13:11 - “And in answer he said, ‘Because to you has been given to know the open-secret truths about God’s kingdom, but to them it has not been given.’”

Comment: Most translations have merely transliterated *mustēria*, but its usage clearly indicates something previously hidden but now revealed (Rom. 16:25-6). Williams used ‘open secret’ as the best way to communicate this. “In NT, of the counsels of God, once hidden but now revealed in the Gospel...” (Abbott-Smith, p. 298).

16:17-19 - “Jesus responded to him, “You are blessed, Simon son of Jonah, since this was not revealed to you by any human person, but directly by my heavenly Father. Moreover I myself affirm: You, Simon, are a small stone, but upon this massive bedrock I will build my church congregation, and the gates of Hades will not withstand the church’s attack. I am entrusting the keys to you to open up God’s realm; if indeed by proclaiming it you cause any doors on earth to be shut, they must be what God has already shut, and if indeed you cause any people to be set free, they must be those God has already set free.”

Comment: The name Christ gave to Simon *petros* (masc.) indicates small stones, while *petra* (fem.) indicates a cliff or bedrock (Abbott-Smith, p. 359; BAG, p. 660). His name in Aramaic (*Kaïpha*=Cephas) also is used of small stones (Jastrow, *Dictionary of Aramaic*, pp 634-5). S. Lewis Johnson, said that the contrast of these two distinct words indicates that Christ gestured toward himself when he used the word *petra*. Many pedantic scholars say that this contrast cannot be made in Aramaic, which is nonsense. There are several Aramaic words Christ could have used, even if He were not speaking Greek. Wycliffe and TLB got it right! The Amplified is on the right track, but not clear.

The Greek *katischuein* must be understood in a defensive way since gates do not jump up and attack. The church must attack the gates of Hades by rescuing brands from the burning, and Peter was to lead the charge by proclaiming forgiveness in Christ (M&M, p. 337).

The rare periphrastic future perfect passive participles in v. 19 are best translated as above, since Christ charged Peter to tell the gospel as it already is in heaven, by not legalistically binding what God has not bound, as the Pharisees did, nor rationalistically loosing what God has not loosed, as the Sadducees did. This is rabbinic language explained in Mt. 23:13. Williams, DLNT, WEB, Mounce, and the Amplified got it essentially correct, but the NAS waffled, finally expressing it awkwardly (1996). This must be translated in the *context* of its fulfillment in Acts. Peter exercised this responsibility by using the keys at Pentecost in preaching forgiveness to Jews, and to Gentiles with Cornelius, which was the opening of faith he defended twice in Jerusalem (Acts 11:2-18; 15:7). After the first missionary journey, the Apostles reported to the church how God had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 14:27). See *Getting the Gospel Right*, pp. 125-137 & *BC&A*, pp. 84-96; Chamberlain, *Exegetical Grammar*, p. 11; A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures*, I:134; Robert Gundry, *Matthew*, p. 335.

18:18 - “Most assuredly I tell you, whatever you prohibit on earth must be what has already been prohibited by God, and whatever you permit on earth must be what has already been permitted by God.”

Comment: Now in reference to the church’s responsibility to discipline its members, the Lord used these rare periphrastic future perfect passive participles which should be translated in a similar way as in 16:19 while recognizing the different context. Thus the church must make sure that church discipline is carried out on God’s terms.

21:43 - “Therefore I declare to you that God’s kingdom will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.”

Comment: The Greek *ethnē* does not refer to political nations but more to the diverse peoples of the world (BAG, p. 21). Only half of the major translations have got it right.

22:14 - “Yes, many people are summoned, but only a few are choice ones who respond.”

Comment: After a parable in which there is no mention of anybody being chosen, but those from the street corners who responded to the king’s invitation (summons) are those who get into the banquet, Christ’s aphorism must fit the parable. Either Christ had a lapse of thought or the aphorism has been mistranslated! The Greek *eklektos*

originally in classical Greek meant those choice people who were elected or appointed to an office with a responsibility to fulfill it well, and *Koine* Greek and the NT use it in the same way. None of the translations have recognized this. For a fuller discussion see *Getting the Gospel Right*, pp. 277-8 and *Beyond Calvinism and Arminianism*, pp. 315-27 (Coenen, *NIDNTT*, I:536-9; *TDNT*, IV:144-5, 171-182; BAG, pp. 241-2; Seebass, *TDOT*, II:83-7; Oswalt, *TWOT*, I:100-101; M. & M., p. 195; Eckert, *EDNT*, I:416).

24:22, 24 - “If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the choice witnesses those days will be shortened. ... For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even those choice witnesses, if that were possible.”

Comment: As suggested under 22:14 *eklektos* should not be transliterated as ‘elect’ or translated ‘chosen’ but rather as ‘choice’ or ‘appointed.’ Since the major use of this word in the Gospels is in the context of the end time great tribulation, the usage of it in Revelation 14:1 and 17:14 seems to link them with the 144,000 witnesses. All versions still use ‘elect.’

24:34 - “I absolutely declare to you that this nation will certainly not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

Comment: As discussed under 11:16, the word *genea* refers to the nation Israel, not to the first generation of people. This is a crucial mistranslation since many question Christ’s words since He did not return within one generation as people misinterpret and has caused much doctrinal confusion about the end times. See the full discussion on my website.

26:71 - “And when Peter went [from the outside courtyard] into the inner courtyard another maidservant said to the people there, ‘This man was with Jesus the Nazarene.’”

Comment: *Pulona* refers to the inner forecourt of the high priest’s house and *aulē* to the outer courtyard. It is important to know where Peter was at the time of each of his three denials in order to harmonize the Gospel accounts. It is also important to distinguish the different people to whom he was speaking. Cf. *Scripture Cannot Be Broken*, forthcoming.

The Gospel of Mark

1:4 - “And so John the Immerser came into the desert proclaiming an immersion based upon repentance for the forgiveness of sins.”

Comment: Instead of using a noun of agency as Matthew did, Mark used a present participle with an article *ho baptizōn* which even more clearly pictures John as the one who did the immersing. Jewish proselyte ‘baptism’ was a self immersion, so John was the first person ever to immerse another person. The genitive/ablative indicating the relationship of immersion and repentance is ambiguous. The context requires an ablative case of source, meaning that John immersed those who had repented, not the reverse order (Dana & Mantey, *Grammar*, p.82). Also Lk. 3:3.

1:8 - “I immerse you in water, but he will overwhelm you with the Holy Spirit.”

Comment: In reference to water, *baptizein* is always an immersion, but when used metaphorically it can mean ‘to overwhelm, to be identified with’ (Abbott-Smith, p. 74). The dative case can be used both in a locative sense (in water) or instrumental sense (with the Spirit).

4:9 - “And He said, ‘Anyone who has ears to hear should listen.’”

Comment: Clearly the Lord is playing on the different meanings of *akouein*. A dozen and a half versions (out of 130) recognize this and express it (also Mt. 13:9 and Lk. 8:8).

8:35- 37 - “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of Me and the gospel will save it. For what does it benefit a person to gain the whole world yet lose one’s life? What can a person give in exchange for one’s life?”

Comment: The Greek *psuche* can mean either ‘soul’ or ‘life.’ Most translations rightly render it ‘life’ in v. 35 since Christ is speaking to believers about the cost of true discipleship. We must relinquish our claim to our own lives. However, a majority of translations wrongly switch to ‘soul’ in vv. 36, 37, which might be understood as having to do with salvation. The Lord is still talking about discipleship and rewards in the Christian life. Less than 2 dozen out of 130 versions are right here. Also Luke 9:24-5.

The Gospel of Luke

3:23 - “Now Jesus, beginning his ministry at about thirty years of age and being supposedly a son of Joseph, was himself actually a descendant of Heli, Mary’s father.”

Comment: Luke focused upon Mary’s story in Ch. 1 & 2 and upon the humanity of the Lord Jesus and thus gave Mary’s genealogy since this is his physical lineage. Johnston Cheney (*Life of Christ in Stereo*, p. 222; Gleason Archer, p. 316) alerted us to the pronoun *autos* being in the emphatic position at the beginning of the Greek sentence really should come later in English. The only name without an article is Joseph, implying he is not a part of the genealogical sequence. The adverb ‘supposedly’ requires another contrasting adverb, ‘actually.’ Son can mean descendant in the Greek. The Talmud says that Mary, the daughter of Heli, is in sheol. None of the versions have got this right.

6:1 - “It happened on the first Sabbath after Passover of his second year as he was going through some grainfields, his disciples were picking heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands and eating the kernels.”

Comment: The Greek word *deuteroprōtō* mystified later Gentile copyists of the text, who left it out, not realizing it was a reference to the Jewish practice of counting Sabbaths after the Passover. Thus Luke, being very concerned with the chronology of Christ’s ministry, gave this pointer. This is confirmed by the fact that the harvest was ripe enough for the disciples to pick some heads of grain. This is important in clarifying that there were two Passovers in Christ’s ministry before the final Passover on which he was crucified. The textual evidence for the inclusion of this word is divided, but only a few versions correctly retain this word (Cheney, pp. 229-30).

6:13 - “When daylight came he summoned his disciples, and from them he appointed twelve, whom he also designated apostolic missionaries.”

Comment: The Greek verb *eklegomai* does not merely mean ‘to choose’ (Balz & Schneider, *EDNTT*, I: 416; Coenen, *NIDNTT*, I:536-9), but especially ‘to appoint or commission.’ This group of words (*eklektos, eklogē*) came out of Greek democracy before its demise under Alexander the Great and meant ‘to elect, to appoint, or to commission to an office.’ In the Greek Septuagint it was consistently the translation of *bāchar*, which was used for the appointing of Abraham, Aaron, the priests, and David. Since there no longer were democratic elections, the meaning ‘to elect’ dropped out of usage. In the NT, half of its usage relates to appointing apostles, deacons, or special envoys. What greater appointment than to be an apostle of Christ? It should never be transliterated ‘to elect’ and rarely given the broader meaning ‘to choose.’ See my “Astounding Discoveries about Election,” GES, April 2011 and *BCAA*, pp. 315-27). No version has recognized this meaning.

9:35 - “A voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my choice, appointed Son; listen to him!””

Comment: The word usually translated ‘chosen’ is a perfect passive participle of *eklegomai* used with an article. As translated it conflicts with Matthew and Mark, who report that God said, “**This is my beloved Son.**” Either they got it wrong, or there is a translational error here. Research into *eklegomai* shows that it means ‘to appoint or commission the choicest person to an office.’ The adjective *eklektos* mostly refers to that choice person or thing which is preferred, sometimes in the superlative. The background of this is Isaiah 42:1, where the Messiah is said to be Yahweh’s choice (*bāchar*) servant, which in the Septuagint is translated with *eklektos*. Beloved and choice are equivalent, so this translation eliminates a serious problem. God commissioned His choice Son to be the Messiah. No version has recognized this meaning. See *Getting the Gospel Right*, p. 277 & *BCAA*, p. 319. (cf. Lk. 6:13, above)

14:23 - “Then the Lord of the house told his slave, “Go out to the roads and country lanes and urge them to come in so that my house will be full.”

Comment: The usual translation ‘compel’ causes a serious problem because Augustine argued that we should use force to make people come into the Roman church. This was a basis for the inquisition and of Calvin and Luther following his bad example—all based upon misunderstanding of one word. But *anagkazein* has a weakened nuance ‘to strongly urge/ invite’ (BDAG lexicon, p. 60). In the classical and secular Greek its secondary meaning is “*constrain*, especially by argument” (LSJ, p. 100; M. & M., p. 31). The idea of physical coercion is not primary in the Septuagint, the papyri, or the other NT usages. Only about 16 translations have corrected this outrageous error. Many have softened it a little to ‘make them,’ but this does not really solve the problem.

16:16 - “The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being proclaimed, and all kinds of people are inflicting violence against it.”

Comment: Not one modern version has this verse right and the usual translations do not make any sense. Only John Wycliffe and the Catholic Douay-Rheims versions got the point. This is a prime example of the harmful tradition of following the KJV mistranslations. The verb *biazein* does not mean just ‘force’, but rather ‘violent force.’ The solution is found in a remote meaning for the preposition *eis*, ‘against’ rather than ‘into’ (BAG, p.228; BAGD, p. 238; Dana & Mantey, *Grammar*, p. 103; Wallace, *Grammar*, p. 369f), which Luke is fond of using (Lk. 12:10; 22:65). *Pas* can mean ‘all kinds’ (BAG, p. 636). Thus all kinds of people—Herod, Judas, the Jewish leaders, Pilate, the Roman soldiers, etc.—were shortly to crucify the King and had beheaded His herald, John. The Apostles were arrested and beaten, Stephen martyred, and Saul persecuted the church. Van Oosterzee in his 1861 commentary got it right, and many commentators since then have gotten Mt. 11:12 and Lk. 16:16 right, but the translators don’t seem to check the commentaries, the lexicons, or the grammars, for that matter. See discussion on my website for overwhelming documentation.

17:20-1 - “But when he was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he replied, “The coming of God’s kingdom will not need investigation. Nor will people have to say, ‘Look over here’ or ‘Look over there!’ Pay attention, for the kingdom of God is in your midst!” Then He told the disciples, “The time will come when you will long to see one of the kingdom days of the Son of Man and will not see it. People will say to you, ‘Look over here’ or ‘Look over there!’ Do not go to follow it up for when the Son of Man returns, it will be just as obvious as flashes of lightning which light up the sky from one end to the other.”

Comment: The ambiguity in the Greek of v. 21 has been resolved by a majority of translations. The KJV, the NCV, and the NIV have an impossible rendering ‘within you.’ Henry Alford pointed out 160 years ago that the kingdom certainly was not in the hearts of the Pharisees who asked the question. Since *entos humōn* can also be

rendered 'among you' or 'in your midst,' most other translations, including the TNIV, have corrected this since no other Scripture puts the kingdom in us.

The more difficult problem is the rendering of *paratērēsis* as 'observation.' Since Christ made clear that His second coming will be as obvious as a lightning storm, this makes a contradiction. Since this is the only place in the NT this noun occurs, we must carefully study the usage of the verb. It does not just mean 'to observe,' but rather both the noun and verb refer to a very scrupulous observation, that is, an investigation (Abbott-Smith lexicon, p. 343; BAG, pp. 627-8; Moulton and Milligan, p. 490; Lampe, p. 1027; *TDNT*, VIII:146-151). Standing in their midst was the King, but they were too blind to see Him! See website.

20:35 - **"But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection out from among dead people will neither marry nor be given in marriage."**

Comment: The Greek preposition *ek* primarily means 'out of' and the word for dead is not the abstract noun for death but the plural of dead people. The distinction between *apo* and *ek* is very important here. Christ is referring to an out-resurrection from among dead people. Later Paul described this in 1 Thess. 4:15-17, that it will be a rapture of only the "dead in Christ," not all the dead.

23:35 - **"The people stood watching, but the leaders kept scoffing at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, his Choice One!'"**

Comment: The Jewish rulers probably had in mind the Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 42:1 which refers to him as God's choice (*bāchar*) servant. There is no prophecy in the OT of the Messiah being one chosen from among many, nor does the NT affirm this. Cf. Mt. 22:14 & Lk. 9:35 comments for documentation.

The Gospel of John

1:1 - **"In the beginning of creation the Messianic Word already existed and was present with God; indeed the Word was Himself Deity."**

Comment: The complexity of the syntax of the third clause of v. 1 has been missed in major translations. Greek word order does not show which is the subject and predicate. The subject is indicated by the article, *ho logos*, even though it comes at the end of the clause. The word *theos* does not have an article, which indicates the quality of deity and was put at the beginning of the clause for emphasis. Liberal translators Moffatt and Goodspeed, a century ago rendered it, "The word was divine." Williams and the Amplified got it better, "The Word was God Himself." Although this is an improvement, it implies that Christ is the totality of God, which is not true. The NET Bible got it better, "The Word was fully God" and the Living Bible, "... and is himself God." As rendered above, the full deity of Christ is clear. Thus when Jehovah's Witnesses claim that we should insert an indefinite article, "a God," they were dead wrong. There are no indefinite articles in Greek, and the absence of the article is fully explained by the emphasis upon the quality of deity. *Logos* was a word in Greek philosophy which some Hellenistic Jewish philosophers identified with God, so John made it clear that Christ is really the LOGOS. (Dana and Mantey, *Grammar*, pp. 148-51; Wallace, *Grammar*, pp. 6, 41, 95-6, 257-9, 269.)

1:9 - **"The true light, by coming into the world, is the one who enlightens all kinds of people."**

Comment: This is called the Quaker verse since they took it to mean that every person in the world gets enlightenment from Christ. It has also been made the basis for the doctrine of universal 'prevenient grace.' However, the adjective *pas* in the singular can refer to 'all kinds of something' (BAG lexicon, p. 636; Wallace, p. 253), in this case it is people. Thus John affirmed that salvation is for all mankind, Gentiles as well as Jews, without implying that every individual has been enlightened by Christ. The participle 'coming' is instrumental as indicated by the word 'by' referring to Christ's incarnation, not every person's coming into the world and should not be left dangling as in some translations. Only the ERV and GNT broaden it to "all people." Thus none are really correct.

3:5 - **"Jesus explained, 'I certainly assure you that no one can enter God's kingdom without being born not just out of water, but even of the Spirit.'"**

Comment: Only the Amplified Version hints at the ascensive or explicative meaning of the conjunction *kai*: "Except a man be born of water and (even) the Spirit." If John used *kai* this way, he is indicating that water is a symbol for the reality of being born of the Spirit. Since John the Immerser had contrasted his water immersion with Christ's Spirit immersion (1:33), this is a very possible understanding. However, this also may be an adversative use of *kai*, as in CEV "not only by water..." In v. 6, Christ also made the contrast between physical and spiritual birth and reinforced it in v. 8b: "So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." This usage of *kai* is clearly spelled out by BAG, p. 393, Wallace, *Grammar*, pp. 670-1, and Dana & Mantey, *Grammar*, p. 250.

3:36 - **"The one who trusts in the Son has eternal life, but whoever refuses to believe the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."**

Comment: Translations are divided as to the meaning of *apeithein*. The rendering 'disobey' is misleading in that it implies that we are saved by obedience. But the first half of the contrast has *pisteuein*, which clearly means 'to believe' or 'to trust.' The positive verb *peithein* clearly means 'to trust, be confident, to be persuaded, to believe,' although it can also mean 'to listen to, to obey, to heed.' In any case, the core idea is to be persuaded, so the negative verb has the idea of being unpersuaded, thus, unbelieving. See Abbott-Smith, *Lexicon*, pp. 45, 350-1; BAG, pp. 82, 644; and Moulton & Milligan, *Vocabulary*, pp. 55, 500-1; Lampe, p. 179.

5:28 - “Do not be amazed at this since a time is coming in which all in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have practiced good things to a resurrection of life, and those who have practiced wickedness to a resurrection of condemnation.”

Comment: The majority of translations have simply almost transliterated *hora* as ‘hour,’ but only two dozen have recognized that the rendering ‘time’ is more accurate. Two distinct resurrections are clear from Dan. 12:1-2, Lk. 20:35, 1 Thess. 4:15-17, and especially Rev. 20:1-15. This is important because there will be a thousand years between the two resurrections, so ‘hour’ obscures this. The contrast between those who have done (*poieein*) good and those who have practiced (*prassein*) evil is also highlighted.

12:32 - “when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all kinds of people to myself.”

Comment: As discussed under John 1:9, the adjective *pas* can mean ‘all kinds’ of something. This makes it clear that the Lord died for all the various peoples of the world. This is in the context of Greeks who wished to see Jesus (Jn. 12:20). All version miss this.

14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7 - “And I for my part will ask the Father and He will give you another helping mediator like me, the Spirit of truth, to be with you forever.”

Comment: The translations are divided about translating the rare word *paraklētos*: ‘comforter,’ ‘helper,’ ‘counselor,’ or ‘advocate.’ The verb *parakalein* involves both encouraging and exhorting. Since *allos* means ‘another of the same kind’ as Christ Himself, the Holy Spirit helps exhorting and encouraging as a mediator. The conjunction, *kagō* should be translated and not ignored (BAG lexicon, p. 386-7, under 3.b.) Christ had just encouraged them to ask for anything in His name and had previously (Lk 11) encouraged them to ask for the Holy Spirit, which they probably did not do.

15:2 - “Every branch in me that bears no fruit, he lifts up, and he prunes every branch that bears fruit so that it will produce more fruit.”

Comment: Tragically, the KJV used the traditional rendering of *airein* as ‘taketh away,’ followed by half of modern versions. The other half make it worse: ‘cuts off,’ ‘cuts away,’ ‘removes,’ or ‘prunes.’ The outrageous result is that this verse seems to deny eternal security. However, the primary meaning in all the major lexicons is ‘to lift, take up, or raise’ (BAG, p. 23-4; A-S, p. 13; LSJ, p. 27; M&M, p. 14; *TDNT*, I:185-6; Lampe, pp. 38-9). Vineyardists normally lift branches up off the ground.

15:16 - “You did not appoint me, but I have appointed you as apostles and established you to go and produce fruit, and that your fruit will remain.”

Comment: *Eklegomai* has a primary meaning of ‘to appoint or commission to an office’ (Coenen, *NIDNTT*, I:536-9; *TDNT*, IV:144-5, 171-182; BAG, pp. 241-2; Seebass, *TDOT*, II:83-7; Oswalt, *TWOT*, I:100-101; M. & M., p. 195; Eckert, *EDNT*, I:416). Christ did not just choose 12 men willy nilly. They were commissioned to the highest office anybody could ever be appointed to—Apostles of God incarnate. This verse is misused by a few to teach predestination.

18:36 - “My kingdom does not originate from this organized world,” Jesus explained. ‘If my kingdom were from this world-system, my servants would fight so that I would not be handed over to the Jewish leaders. As it is, my kingdom does not have its origin here.’ ”

Comment: As most translate it, Christ’s words might be taken to mean that His kingdom will not be on this earth. However, by the use of the preposition *ek* and the noun *kosmos*, Christ made it clear that He is not referring to the earth but rather to this evil world-system as not being the source of His kingdom. His kingdom will be on this earth but not originating from this world-system.

19:30 - “When He had received the sour wine, Jesus said, ‘It has been accomplished.’”

Comment: The verb *tetelesthai* should be translated in a more positive way implying that the work of redemption He came to accomplish had indeed been accomplished. The traditional rendering merely seems to imply only that His life was finished.

20:23 - “Just as the Father has sent me, I am also sending you to proclaim forgiveness.’ With that he breathed on them, saying, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you thus secure forgiveness for people’s sins, they are already forgiven by God; if their sins are retained by them, they are retained by God.’”

Comment: The syntax of this verse is very difficult because of the rare proleptic perfects *aphēontai* and *kekratēntai* and the subjunctives *aphēte* and *kratēte*. Since this is somewhat parallel to Matthew 16:19, it is appropriate to put ‘by God’ in italics to help clarify the meaning. See the comment there. Williams argues the context requires ‘get’ or secure.

21:15-17 - “When they had finished eating breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon John, do you love me more than these?’ He responded, ‘Yes, Lord, you know that I am devoted to you.’” Jesus told him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ Again he asked him, ‘Simon John, do you love me at all?’ ‘Yes, Lord, you know that I am devoted to you,’ he replied.

‘Shepherd my sheep,’ he told him and then a third time asked, Simon John, are you really devoted to me?’ Peter was

distressed that he questioned him a third time, ‘Are you devoted to me?’ He responded, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I am surely devoted to you.’ ‘Feed my sheep,’ Jesus told him.”

Comment: The main issue here is the distinction between the word *agapaein* used in the first two questions and the word *philein* Christ used in the third question and Peter used in all three responses. Outside the NT *philein* and *philos* are widely used for affection on the natural level, while *agapein* and *agapē* are much less commonly used. But in the NT, *agapein* and *agapē* are used far more and on a higher level of self-giving love. It is unreasonable to think that John did not have some intent in changing words to represent their words more accurately. He would not have changed willy nilly. Peter himself made this distinction (1 Pet. 1:22; 2 Pet. 1:7). Yet all of the major translations ignore the distinction, which is quite meaningful. Only 7 versions made the distinction.

The Book of Acts

1:5 - “Show us which of these two you have appointed to take his place in this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.”

Comment: The verb *eklegomai* primarily means ‘to appoint, to commission to an office.’ Clearly they are praying to find out whom God had already appointed to this most important office.

2:23 - “This man was handed over to you by God’s foreknown, deliberate plan, and you with the help of wicked men put him to death by nailing him to the cross.”

Comment: The syntax of this verse is quite complex. Clearly foreknowledge is distinct from God’s deliberate plan since foreknowledge is part of God’s character, His omniscience. However, his set plan or appointed purpose (*horisemnē boulē*) relates to what God does, which springs from His character. *Horizein* is used five times of the appointment of Christ and should not be translated as ‘determinate.’ This Greek construction signifies dependence of the first term (deliberate plan) upon the second term (foreknowledge) far more frequently than the reverse (BDF, *Grammar*, p. 228; Moulton, *Syntax*, III:335-356; Wallace, p. 377). This has nothing to do with individual predestination; it is about the cross! See *Beyond Calvinism and Arminianism*, pp. 303-5.

2:38 - “Peter then exhorted them, ‘It is imperative that you all repent by radically changing your mind-set to receive the forgiveness of your sins and the Holy Spirit as a gift, and each individual who repents should be immersed.’”

Comment: There is a sharp break in the grammar since *metanoēsate* is a 2nd person plural imperative and *baptisthētō* is 3rd person singular. Forgiveness and the giving of the Spirit are in the 2nd person again, so the command to be baptized is virtually parenthetical and has a weakened imperative force (Wallace, *Grammar*, p. 486). Repentance is a radical change of mindset, not a change of lifestyle (BAG, p. 513). That would be conversion, which should follow. This verse is wrongly misunderstood to teach that water baptism is needed for salvation. The Holy Spirit himself is the gift (*dōrean*) God gives to those who repent, not some distinct gift of the Spirit.

5:29, 32 - “We must submit to God’s authority, not man’s.” “... so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who submit to his authority.”

Comment: The rare verb *peitharcheō* is used only twice here and in Acts 27:21 and Tit. 3:1. It is not used of obedience to laws, but rather responding to an authoritative command. This is a command for unbelievers to respond to the gospel, not for believers to obey laws. This is confirmed by usage in Polybius and an Oxyrynchus papyrus (Moulton & Milligan, p. 500). Since no translation makes this distinction clear, many misuse this verse to say Christians must obey God to receive the Holy Spirit.

6:5-6 - “The proposal pleased the whole congregation, so they appointed Stephen (a Spirit-filled man, full of faith), Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas of Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented them to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.”

Comment: The Greek verb *eklegomai* clearly has the usual pre-New Testament meaning, ‘to appoint to an office.’ The Apostles’ action of laying hands on them shows that they were not merely chosen willy nilly (Eckert in Balz & Schneider, *EDNT*, I:416).

10:41 - “... but by us, witnesses specialy appointed beforehand by God, ...”

Comment: The very rare verb, *procheirtoneō* should certainly be rendered more forcefully than by the common verb, ‘to choose,’ as most translations do. The witnesses of Christ’s resurrection were certainly specially appointed by God (BAG, p. 732)! Luke’s forceful Greek should not be watered down by careless mistranslation!

11:20 - “...they began speaking to the Gentiles also, proclaiming the Lord Jesus.”

Comment: There is a major textual issue here, complicated by controversy over the meaning of the alternative Greek words. However, the context of the Apostles and Judean believers concluding with Peter that God was now giving the Gentiles the opportunity to believe (11:19) clearly requires understanding ‘Gentiles’ here as well. Usage of both words in secular Greek and the early versions shows they are terms for Gentiles, the non-Jewish population of Asia minor. Only NEB, NLT, CEV, GNT, WE, and Beck have Gentile, not just Greeks, and certainly not Hellenists (Metzger, *Textual Comm.*, p. 386-9).

13:33 - “God has fulfilled this to us their children by raising Jesus from the dead, as it is written in the second Psalm: ‘You are my Son; today I have brought you forth from the tomb.’ Since he raised him from the dead, never to return

to decay, he has spoken in this way, ...”

Comment: In trying to clarify the KJV obscure ‘begotten,’ modern translations have made it worse, virtual heresy: “today I have become your father.” The apostle Paul gave the inspired interpretation here of the resurrection. Both the Hebrew of the Psalm, *yālad* and the Greek, *gennaō*, have a metaphorical meaning, ‘to bring forth.’ They can refer to the father’s begetting a child, a mother’s bearing a child, or even what the midwife does in bringing forth the child. The Gesenius Hebrew lexicon is clear: “bear, bring forth, beget,” listing at least 4 other figurative usages (pp. 408-9). The BAG and Abbott-Smith Greek lexicons list figurative or metaphorical usages, such as 2 Tim. 2:23; 1 Cor. 4:15; & Phm. 10. The context here demands a reference to the resurrection of Christ, in that He was brought forth from the tomb and has nothing to do with the origin of Christ, who is eternal! J. O. Buswell, Jr. (*Theology*, 1:107) based this insight on Thayer’s *Lexicon*.

However, translators have not picked it up! Only Young got Ps. 2:7 right, and only the Amplified listed among alternatives “caused You to arise,” out of 130 translations checked. This is outrageous! No wonder Christians are confused. Scholars do not even check the lexicons! The cults feed on such ignorance. Apparently the church father Origen in the 3rd century, concocted the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son based upon misunderstanding of this verse, which has plagued theology ever since. No theologian can cogently explain what that means. Even worse, Mohammad was offended by the Christian belief that Christ’s claim to sonship relates to sex. So he put in the Qur’an, “Allah neither begets nor is begotten.” No, Paul’s inspired interpretation solves the problem!

13:46, 48 - “Then Paul and Barnabas boldly said, ‘It was necessary that God’s message be spoken to you first, but since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, look, we now turn to the Gentiles.’ ... When the Gentiles heard this, they rejoiced and honored the message of the Lord, and as many as had set themselves toward eternal life believed.”

Comment: The major problem in translating the last clause has been the failure to recognize the verb, *tetagmenoi*, being in the perfect tense can have either middle or passive voice (Bagster, *Analytical Greek Lexicon*, p. xx). Most assume it is passive, but the context of verse 46 provides major support for the middle voice here since Paul and Barnabas had just told the Jews that they were responsible for repudiating the word of God and had judged themselves (middle voice pronoun) to be unworthy of eternal life. Now Luke, in describing the reaction of the Gentiles, used a middle voice verb instead of a middle pronoun. This is likely an indirect middle, “the subject acts for himself or in his own interest” (Wallace, pp. 413ff.). This is the way Knowling rendered it in the *Expositor’s Greek Testament* a century ago (II:300). The verb *tassō* has many meanings: ‘to arrange, to set, to appoint, to place in a certain position, to agree upon, to settle, to be disposed,’ etc. If Luke had wanted to imply some sort of God’s predestining appointment to eternal life, there are many intensified compounds he could have used, such as *antitassein*, *protassein*, *diatassein*, or *hupotassein*. Since a middle voice indicates action that the Gentiles did for themselves, the simple *tassein* was more appropriate to his meaning. Cf. Parkhurst’s lexicon (ca. 1770), p. 848; Bagster, p. 398; Moulton & Milligan, p. 626; *TDNT*, VIII:28-31; *LSJ*, pp. 1759-60; Rackham, *Acts*, p. 221. Only TLB, Rotherham, and the Diaglott have this correct.

15:7 - “Peter stood up to say to them, ‘Brothers, you know that from the beginning, God appointed among you that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the message of the good news and believe.’”

Comment: The verb *eklegomai* does not mean just to choose, but involves appointment to a mission or an office. Not only had Peter been appointed as an Apostle, but at Caesarea Philippi, the Lord Jesus gave him the keys to open the door of faith, first to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, then to the Samaritans in laying hands on the new believers, and then to Cornelius and his household. If Peter had not been given Christ’s authority to do these things, the whole Christian faith and the makeup of the Church would be in doubt! Peter’s point is that the Holy Spirit remarkably confirmed his actions on each occasion.

16:31 - “They replied, ‘You (s.) must trust personally in the Lord Jesus and you (s.) will be saved, and in the same manner the members of your household will be saved. ... rejoicing greatly that he and his whole household had believed God.’”

Comment: Since the English ‘you’ can be either singular or plural, it is important to note that a singular is used in the original. There is no implication that the faith of the jailor directly brought salvation to the members of his household, whether adult or children. The context makes abundantly clear they all heard the word of God and individually believed. This involved members of his household who were able to understand and trust Christ.

22:16 - “And now, why delay? Get up and be immersed, and wash away your sins by calling on his name.”

Comment: As usually mistranslated this seems to connect baptism with forgiveness of sins. However, most translations render it in bad English, since English usage dictates we avoid ‘dangling participles.’ However, Greek participles do not really dangle since the inflections convey a number of possible connections to the Greek mind, most relevant is the instrumental adverbial participle, signifying the means by which sins are washed away (D. & M., p. 228). This is confirmed by Rom. 10:13-14. Only a few translations got this correct: Williams, NLV, NLT, WE, GNT, and HCSB. A few translations have “as you call upon His name.”

Paul’s Epistle to the Romans

1:17 - “This is because in the good news a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that comes from faith and leads to greater trust. ...”

Comment: The relation of righteousness to God is obscured by the ambiguity of the Greek genitive/ablative case used. It is even more obscure in the 5-case system since it is then called a genitive. However, the 8-case approach highlights a distinct ablative meaning, which is almost surely an ablative of source (or genitive of source) indicating that God is the source of righteousness. This is indeed the whole theme of Paul's letter! It is not God's attribute since there is no article with righteousness. Since this is the key verse of this whole epistle, this important theme gets lost in careless translation. A century ago Weymouth got this correct, and classical scholar Arthur Way put it, "God's gift of righteousness is revealed," and the NIV (1986) had it right, but changed it in 2011. A number of versions say it has to do with God's way of making people righteous in His sight, but that is only a part of Paul's emphasis. A number of translations also bring out that it begins and ends with faith. Certainly *ek pisteōs* makes it clear that faith is a necessary condition of receiving God's gift of righteousness. The second phrase *eis pistin* seems to indicate that the goal of that righteousness is a continued life of faith.

2:27, 29; 2 Cor. 3:6-7 - "The person who is not physically circumcised but fulfills the Law will condemn you who are a lawbreaker in spite of having the written code and circumcision. A person is not a real Jew who is so only outwardly and circumcised physically, but rather, a person is a real Jew who is one inwardly, and the only real circumcision is that of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written Mosaic code."

Comment: The word 'letter' is a Pauline figure of speech which most translations have not bothered to render in a functional equivalence way, causing the meaningless English expression, 'the letter of the law.' This implies that the problem is literal interpretation of the Law. The context makes clear Paul is contrasting the Mosaic Law as a system with the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart. There is nothing wrong with literal interpretation of Scripture. These translations are crass. A dozen modern translations have correctly rendered it, either as written law, written code or written precepts. Since it is a reference to the Mosaic Law in its entirety, this should be indicated in the translation. In the Corinthians passage Paul is referring to the Law written on stone tablets, the written code.

3:11 - "There is none righteous, not even one; they do not perceive clearly, nor persistently and diligently seek God; all have turned aside, together they have become useless."

Comment: This has become a proof-text for the notion that nobody ever seeks God at all. Despite over fifty commands in the Bible to seek God and examples of individuals who sought God, both in the Bible and in the world, some focus on a simplistic understanding of this verse, leading to error. Paul's own words on Mars Hill (Acts 17:27) contradict this notion. Paul used not the simple *zēteō*, but the intensified *ekzēteō* from the LXX. This means 'to diligently seek' (Lampe, p. 427; cf. Heb. 11:6). Also it is a present participle meaning, 'those who persistently or habitually seek.'

These words are from Psalm 14, which describes the atheistic fools who say that there is no God. Paul paraphrases the LXX, omitting the part that "God looks down from heaven to see if there are any people understanding or seeking him." We must also understand the genre of Psalms, which is a generalization of the human race. Thus neither David or Paul actually says that none ever seeks God. They describe the general state of those who are in universal unrighteousness and don't perceive clearly or persistently make a diligent search for God.

6:6 - "For we know that our old Adamic self was crucified with Him, in order that the sin nature in our bodies might lose its power, so that we should no longer be enslaved to sin."

Comment: The verb *katargeō*, normally means 'to render inoperative' (Abbott-Smith, p. 238). Most translations wrongly use 'destroyed,' which implies sinless perfection. The NLT, NCV, NIRV, Way, Williams, and the Amplified have good renderings. The body of sin seems to be a reference to our Adamic sin nature, which is distinct from the old Adamic self, that is, all that we were before we were born again and received a new divine nature.

7:25 - "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, should I really, on the one hand, serve the law of God with my mind, but on the other hand, serve the principle of sin with my sinful nature? Absolutely not!"

Comment: The little particle *ara* frequently indicates that a sentence is a question. As wrongly rendered in the indicative by all translations, the second sentence is a tremendous downer! Paul had just exclaimed such victory in the Lord and then seems to state a most pessimistic perspective. Translating it as a question makes ultimate sense in this context since Paul goes on in Ch. 8 expounding the wonderful victory over the flesh available to every believer. Here he strongly questions the absurdity of living a life in defeat just described in Ch. 7, when we have God's wonderful provision of the Holy Spirit. Apparently three-letter words don't matter! Abbott-Smith lists three clear interrogative uses of *ara*: Acts 8:30, 21:38, & p. oxy. I, 33:IV, 7, p. 57. (D & M, p. 242; M&M, p.73)

8:12-13 - "Therefore fellow believers, we are not obligated to the sinful nature to live according to it, for if you live according to it, you are about to die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the practices of the body, then you will live."

Comment: Most translations do not take into account the verb *mellō*, which clarifies the issue Paul addresses, that is, the imminent danger of physical death for those living in carnality. It is probable he has in mind cases such as Ananias and Sapphira, the immoral man in the Corinth church (1 Cor. 5:5), those getting drunk at the Lord's table (1 Cor. 11:29-30), or the teaching of John in 1 John 5:16 or of Hebrews 6:8. Although this verb is sometimes used as a periphrasis for the future tense, many times it should be translated as above. Williams, HCSB, Rotherham, Moffatt, Darby, GW, GNT, Young, and LEB render it similarly, seeing death as impending or about to happen. (A-S, pp. 282-3; BAG, pp. 501-2; M&M, pp. 395-6)

8:28-30 - “For we know that in all things God works together for good with those who keep on loving him and are summoned according to his plan. For this reason, he foreknew these very people and appointed them beforehand to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be pre-eminent in his large family. Indeed, the same people whom he had preappointed he also summoned, and those so summoned were also declared righteous, and those counted righteous he also glorified.” (OLS)

“... and in everything, as we know, he co-operates for good with those who love God and are called according to his purpose. For God knew His own before ever they were, and also ordained that they should be shaped to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the eldest among a large family ...” (New English Bible).

“Because those whom He knew beforehand He appointed beforehand to share in the likeness of His Son, ...” (Modern Language Bible).

Comment: Careless translation of these favorite and oft quoted verses has done much harm. Forty translations imply that somehow all things work out for good automatically. Others rightly recognize that God is the subject of the sentence and works everything for believers for the good. But when things don't turn out for good, Christians blame God and become alienated. Tim Geddert, in *Double Take* suggests overlooked grammatical facts necessary to rightly translate and understand verse 28. God is the subject of the sentence, whether actually in the text, as some ancient manuscripts read, or else implied from the first phrase in the Greek. The verb, *sunergeō* is not used for things working together, but clearly means persons working together (A-S, pp. 427-8; BAG, p. 795). Thus in 1897, James Denney rendered it that “God cooperates for good in all things” (EGT, II:652). Not only are there four other clear uses of the verb in this way in the NT, but there are many such uses in the secular Greek. The early Syriac and Coptic translations render it this way. The noun, *sunergos* refers to fellow workers and helpers in the NT frequently, with many such examples from the secular Greek (M & M, p. 605). This is strongly supported by the use of the dative or instrumental case in the two clauses about the people involved with God in this (Wallace, pp. 159-60). So God works with those who love Him for good, but if they do not cooperate with Him, things do not work out for good. Believers must be involved in working with God to see good come out of each situation. The context also supports this since the Holy Spirit is deeply involved in our prayer lives (8:26-7). This whole chapter is about the Spirit's involvement in our lives to give us victory over the sinful flesh. It is unthinkable that we can live according to the flesh and expect God to work all things out for good. The NEB, quoted above, is one of the very few who got this right.

The connection with verse 29 has been weakened in virtually all translations. The conjunction *hoti* should not be rendered as simply 'for' but is clearly causal and should be rendered, 'because' or 'for this reason' (Moulton & Geden, p. 718; BAG, p. 593; Abbott-Smith, pp. 326-7). God foreknew who would respond to His gospel summons and come to love Him. Peter made it clear in the only other Scripture on this issue that we become God's choice people according to God's omniscient foreknowledge by the sanctifying work of the Spirit (1 Pet. 1:1-2). Thus both Paul and Peter put God's foreknowledge first. Many try to make foreknowledge selective. However, a careful word study of the verb *proginoskō* and the noun *prognosis* will not allow that spin (Lexicons: Thayer, pp. 117-8; A-S, p. 92; BAG, pp. 159-61; TDNT, I:700; cf. my BCAA, pp. 298-313).

Further confusion was introduced into this passage by Jerome in his Latin Vulgate in the 4th century, by rendering *proorizō* as *praedestino*, from which most translations have mindlessly rendered it 'predestinate.' For four centuries the church fathers spoke much about free will, but never touched on predestination or election until Jerome and Augustine. They knew Greek far better than scholars today and knew that this word has nothing to do with destiny. The verb is very rare in Greek literature and means 'to preappoint' or 'foreordain,' occurring only in Demosthenes before the NT and twice in the third century AD, where it has nothing to do with destiny or predestination (Lexicons: Parkhurst, pp. 727-8; Thayer, p. 541; Abbott-Smith, p. 382; BDAG, p. 716). The root word, *horizō*, is used 8 times in the NT and usually has to do with Christ being appointed as the Messiah. Wycliffe in 1382 put 'foreordain,' as did the ERV, ASV, F.F. Bruce, and A. T. Robertson. The NCV, Way, Diaglott, Rotherham, YLT and GW have other non-deterministic renderings, as do Williams, Marshall, Amplified, NEB, TLB, NLT, and MLB less consistently. (For a full word study see my *Getting the Gospel Right*, pp. 156-7, 259, 308 & BCAA, pp. 330-344).

Note also that the word used for Christ, '*prototokos*,' has nothing to do with being born first, but refers to the pre-eminence that the firstborn son in a family was given. Few translations have picked up this cultural insight. Since Christ is eternal and had no origin, this word should not be rendered so crassly.

9:19 - “You will say to me therefore, ‘Why then does He still find fault? For who can resist his decree?’ But who are you, a mere human being, to talk back to God?”

Comment: This is a context which some try to use to prove God's sovereign decrees in salvation, in which they fail to check out the Old Testament passages to which Paul refers. The issue is God's sovereign choice of Israel as His divinely appointed nation and has nothing to do with God's decrees of salvation. Actually there is no reference at all in the whole New Testament to any decrees of God, except this verse. The word, *boulēma* occurs only in two other places, which might be fairly translated as 'decree' since the *ma* ending conveys the result of the purpose. But this word is in the mouth of an objector to Paul's teaching about God's right to choose Israel and then to set them aside for two millennia. He had just finished arguing in vv. 14-18 that God had the perfect right to have compassion on Moses (who was already a believer) in continuing to bless rebellious Israel and bring judgment on Egypt and Pharaoh, who had already hardened their own hearts in their blasphemous idolatry. But the objector feels that God has not been fair to Israel in setting them aside. Paul went on to use the story of the potter's clay in Jeremiah 18 to show God's sovereign right to deal with nations as He pleases. But that the only NT reference to any decree of God is in the mouth of an objector shows that centuries of theological argument about God's decrees of salvation is

absolute nonsense!

9:22 - “What if God, desiring to display his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath, who have prepared themselves for destruction.”

Comment: This is another favorite proof-text for determinism. Few translations have recognized that *katērtismena* is a perfect participle which can be either middle voice or passive, and thus can be rendered as above. However, the BAG lexicon stated, “... *ready (ripe) for destruction*, or, taking *k.* as a middle, *having prepared themselves for destruction Rom 9:22*” (pp. 418-9). In the Jeremiah 18 story of the potter’s clay which Paul had just referenced in v. 21, it is clear that God is giving opportunity to the nation Israel to repent and be spared and like soft clay be remolded again. Israel prepared themselves for the destruction of the Babylonian captivity by their unrepentant response to God’s appeal. The example Paul gave before the potter passage was Pharaoh, whom Exodus stated hardened his own heart before God hardened it further in judgment (Exodus 7:13-14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7). The sequence is important. The issue is actually the nation Israel contrasted with Egypt. God patiently endured Egyptian paganism before judging the nation and patiently endured apostate Israel in Jeremiah’s day in giving them opportunity after opportunity to repent and be spared from exile. See *Beyond Calvinism and Arminianism*, pp. 348-351.

However, Daniel Wallace argued this must be passive since this verb has the same form in 4 other passages where it is passive. Only Heb. 11:3 is clearly passive. In Lk. 6:40, Christ said “every *student who prepares himself* will be like his teacher.” It is obvious that students who do not prepare themselves and sit passively will not be like their teachers. In 1 Cor. 1:10, Paul exhorts divided Corinthians “to speak the same thing, and there not be divisions among you, but you may restore yourselves to the same mind and opinion.” Again it is obvious that unless they work at reconciliation, it will not happen passively. In 2 Cor. 13:11, Paul’s final exhortation is to “restore yourselves, admonish yourselves (pres. imper. m/p), think the same thing, and be at peace (with one another).” Both verbs here must be middle voice. Again it is obvious that they can’t passively hope to be restored or be admonished unless they work at it themselves. Since 3 of 4 examples given must be rendered in a middle voice, as should Rom. 9:22, doctrinal bias enters in here. Only the HCSB, NLT, CEV, TLB get this right, and MLB partly right.

16:13 - “Greet Rufus, a choice brother in the Lord, and also his mother– and mine.

Comment: A dozen translations recognize that *eklektos* here does not make sense as ‘chosen’ or ‘elect,’ since many other true believers are greeted here which would be pejorative to them. Here is a classical example of the consistent meaning, ‘choice.’

Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians

1:1 - “Paul, summoned to be an apostolic missionary of Jesus the Messiah by the will of God, ...”

Comment: The word *apostolos* means a sent one. Christ appointed twelve as missionaries to their own people, Israel. Paul clearly understood his appointment as a missionary to the Gentiles. His authority as an “apostle” came from his ministry of planting new churches. The missionary dimension is lost in the usual rendering.

7:1 - “It may be good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman, but since there is so much sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.”

Comment: The most important correction here is the research by Gordon Fee (*NICNT*, p 275) indicating that the expression ‘to touch a woman’ is a euphemism for sexual relations. Apparently some Corinthians, being influenced by Greek asceticism, asked Paul to clarify the issue of sexual relations, thinking all sex was sinful. The second point is that in the absence of a verb, Paul does not state that it is good, but probably that it may be good, which makes better sense in the context. Then he clarifies that sex may be good as long as it is within marriage because of the prevalent immorality in Corinthian culture. Only a dozen translations got the euphemism right, but none noted the subjunctive meaning except Williams and the TCNT.

7:14 - “For the unbelieving husband is set apart by his wife, and the unbelieving wife is set apart by her believing husband. Otherwise the children would be impure, but now they are set apart.”

Comment: Mistranslation of this verse has caused untold confusion since only half a dozen translations recognize that the root meaning of *hagiazō* is ‘to set apart’ or ‘to separate’ (Abbott-Smith, p. 5). In the Mosaic system things were set apart for God. Now the Corinthians are concerned whether with the higher moral standards of their new Christian faith, they should separate from an unbelieving spouse since he/she might be a contaminant. Paul makes very clear in verses 12 & 13, that they should not divorce if the spouse is willing to continue the relationship. He then affirms that the unbeliever is set apart in the sense of now being able to have an intimate relationship with a believer and potentially oneself become a believer. Furthermore, the children are not morally impure, and can also be set apart with the potential of becoming believers. Certainly this passage does not mean that an unbelieving spouse would automatically get to heaven apart from personal saving faith in Christ, nor does it have anything to do with christening a child.

10:3-4 - “... they all ate the same Spirit-provided food and all drank the same Spirit-provided drink, for coming after this in the account they drank from a Spirit-provided rock, in fact that rock represents the Messiah.”

Comment: Although there was a Jewish tradition that the rock in the wilderness followed the Jews, we should not read this into Paul’s statement since the word ‘them’ is not found in the Greek. Although the Greek word order is

difficult, it seems that Paul was referring to the account of drinking from the rock *following* the account of their eating the manna. Both the manna and water were literal substances so we should understand them as miraculously Spirit-provided provisions (Sidlow Baxter, *Studies in Problem Texts*, pp. 27-31). None of the translations checked seemed sensitive to the problem. This may be the best solution.

12:31 - “On the other hand, you all are jealously desiring to get the greater gifts, but yet I am declaring to you a better way beyond comparison.”

Comment: The verb in the first clause, *zēlesthe*, has the primary meaning, “to burn with envy or jealousy” and can be either indicative, subjunctive, or imperative (Abbott-Smith, p. 195). Only three translations take it as indicative. However, the noun derived from the verb, *zēloi*, directly affirms that love is not jealous (13:4). Would Paul use the verb in a positive sense and then five verses below use the noun in a negative sense? He is clearly contrasting their jealous vaunting of spiritual gifts with a love which is not jealous. He had just clearly emphasized that God sovereignly distributes the gift to believers (12:11, 18, 28) so an exhortation to seek the higher gifts does not fit the context.

13:1-3 - “Supposing that I could speak in various human languages, or even those of angels, yet do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.”

Comment: This is a third class condition in the Greek, which covers a broad range of possibilities from a mere hypothetical situation to a more probable future occurrence. Thus it is probable that Paul spoke with the gift of foreign languages, but improbable that he spoke angelic languages (Wallace, *Grammar*, pp. 696, 698). The ERV, NCV, GNT, Goodspeed, and Williams got this right.

13:8 - “Love never fails; but if *there are* prophecies, they will be done away; if *there are* foreign languages, they will cease of themselves; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.”

Comment: Paul’s switch from the passive to the middle voice seems to indicate a difference. This was confirmed by the historical narrative in which there is no mention of foreign languages after Acts 19 or in any other epistle, while the transition to the body church of both Jews and Gentiles was in progress. Only the GW and NOG translations note this.

14:5 - “Now I could wish that you all spoke in foreign languages, but even more that you would proclaim; indeed, the one who proclaims is greater than one who speaks in foreign languages, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.”

Comment: None of the translations recognize the probable subjunctive in the first verb, and the emphatic double use of the particle *de* by which Paul contrasted these two gifts. The verb, *prophēteuō*, does not just refer to foretelling, but mainly to forthtelling. This was the case with the OT prophets and certainly was the case in the early church. Thus ‘proclamation’ is more appropriate.

14:21-23 - “In the Law it is written, ‘By men of strange languages and by the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people Israel, and even so they will not listen to Me, says the Lord.’ So then foreign languages are a miraculous proof, not only to believers, but especially to unbelieving Israel; on the other hand, proclamation serves not just for unbelievers, but especially for believers. Therefore, if the whole church assembles together and all speak in foreign languages, and inquirers or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind?”

Comment: The translational problems here are so many that J. B. Phillips arbitrarily reversed the text to make sense out of it. However, if we see it in its context, examine word meaning and grammar, and put it in its historical context, it all comes together. Paul’s quotation of Isaiah 28 focused on God speaking to the nation Israel through the Gentile Assyrians in captivity. Paul made an analogy with the way that God used foreign Gentile languages to speak to the Jewish nation on the day of Pentecost and at the conversion of Cornelius and his Gentile household, thus revealing that He was doing a brand new work through the church. The phenomenon of foreign languages was a miraculous sign to convince skeptical Jews of this new work through the church, but it was not intended to be a normative way of revelation of his truth to the church. This was to be by the gift of prophecy or proclamation. A key grammatically is the ascensive use of *ou alla*, which occurs twice in v. 22 (BAG, p. 37; Blass/ deBrunner, p. 233, sect. 448; Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1166; Findlay, *EGT*, pp. 908-10; Johnson, *Wycliffe Bible Comm.*, p. 1254). The word *idiotēs* clearly refers to inquirers.

Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians

5:4 - “You who are trying to be declared righteous by the Law have by so much become estranged from Christ; you have drifted out of the sphere of God’s unmerited favor.”

Comment: By using *katargeō*, Paul expresses his great concern about those legalistic Galatians who were moving themselves away from Christ by trying to be saved by the Mosaic Law thus moving out of the pale of God’s saving grace (TDNT, I:454; A.-S., p. 238). Then he used *ekpiptein*, which is used of drifting away from grace (BAGD, pp. 243-4). Unfortunately, deniers of eternal security have used this as a proof-text for true Christians losing salvation by sin or self-will. However, Paul is warning legalists against confidence in the Mosaic Law, and many legalists today have little clue about God’s saving grace. Virtually all versions bring confusion with “fallen from grace” or “severed from grace.”

Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians

1:3-14 - "Praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly realms in union with Christ, just as before creation he appointed us in union with him to be responsible as holy and blameless people in his sight. Thus in love by laying claim to us as his own adopted sons, he brought us to himself through Jesus Christ according to his pleasure and plan, resulting in praise for his glorious unmerited favor from which he freely favored us in the beloved One.

⁷It is through Christ we have liberating redemption through his shed blood giving forgiveness of our trespasses according to the wealth of his unmerited favor which he lavished on us in all wisdom and understanding. God purposed in him to do this by revealing to us *apostles* the open secret of his plan as it pleased him, ¹⁰looking toward the trusteeship of the climax of the ages, when all these believers in Christ will be gathered together under his headship, whether those in him already in heaven or those now on earth. Also, it was through Christ we were made his inheritance by his laying claim to us according to his purpose who works all these things according to the counsel of His will, so that we who have already put our confident hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory.

Comment: Most translations have made Paul's Greek prose into obscure English by importing heavy theological notions which have no basis in the Greek. The first verb in v. 4, *eklegomai*, is not a mere choosing, but an appointment to an important office with the responsibility to fulfill it well (Coenen in *NIDNTT*, I:536-8; TDNT, IV:144-5, 176,181; Seebass in *TDOT* II:83; Eckert in *EDNT*, I:416; cf. *BCAA*, pp. 314-27).

The participle, *proorisas* does not mean 'to predestinate,' since the only usage before the NT is in Demosthenes (362 BC), where it means 'to lay claim.' Two 3rd century AD usages also do not relate to destiny. Centuries of usage by church fathers confirms this. Neither Parkhurst's lexicon (1769), nor Thayer, nor Abbott-Smith give 'predestinate' as a meaning. Nor do the contexts of the NT usage indicate predestination. Most translations have 'predestine,' 'destined' or 'determined.' However, about 20 translations have more accurate renderings, such as, 'ordained,' 'foreordained,' 'planned,' or 'designed' (NLB), which is supported by usage and the context. (cf. under Rom. 8:29).

The compound word for redemption, *apolutrosis* emphasizes the subjective liberation of the slave. In v. 11, the verb, *eklērothēmen*, coming from the words for inheritance which Paul used again twice (vv. 14, 18), certainly should not be rendered 'to chose.' The expression, *ta panta* should not be rendered 'all things' as in all other versions since the article has a demonstrative force and in this context clearly makes reference to all the things previously mentioned and should not be understood universally. The absurd notion of 'universal divine causation' has been derived from this mistranslation, which states that everything that happens in the universe was decreed by God in eternity past. This contradicts most of biblical truth! It is important to note that vv. 13-14 come after the reference to 'all these things' and therefore could not be included among them as part of the objective truths of salvation described in vv. 4-12. The Holy Spirit's work in the lives of individuals as they come to faith is subjective and certainly not determined before creation. Very few, if any, translations have made these wonderful truths clear (Cf. *BCAA*, pp. 32-34; 336-40).

2:8-9 - "You thus stand saved by his unmerited favor through trust, and this salvation is not from yourselves; since it is God's free gift, not of human performance so that no one can boast."

Comment: Some have read into this verse that faith is the gift of God, but this is impossible since the neuter gender of the relative pronoun does not match that of 'faith.' Even Calvin rejected this misinterpretation, which should be made clear in English (Calvin, *Comm.*, XXI: 228-9; Wallace, p. 575; cf. *BCAA*, pp. 163, 259).

3:2-10 - "²Surely you have heard of the trusteeship of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³that is, the open secret was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote before. ⁴By reading this you can perceive my insight into Christ's open secret, ⁵which was not made known to people in past ages, but now is revealed by the Spirit to his dedicated apostles and prophets, ⁶that through the good news Gentiles become joint heirs *with Jews*, part of the same body, and sharers together of the promise in Messiah Jesus. I was made a servant of this good news by the gracious gift of God given me by his powerful working. ⁸Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given to me to proclaim to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ ⁹and to reveal the trusteeship of the open secret. In past ages it was kept hidden by God, the Creator of all things."

Comment: This wonderful passage has been obscured by poor renderings of two key terms. The word, *oikonomia* has been rendered 'stewardship' which does not communicate the truth today that it is a trusteeship. Since God had entrusted the gracious gospel for both Jews and Gentiles to the apostles and most fully to Paul, this truth was a special trust. Words like dispensation, age, or administration fit elsewhere, but trusteeship fits the context here. This message was clearly hidden from past generations, not just relatively as some misunderstand the conjunction *hōs*. Wallace identified a causal and a result usage beside the comparative (Wallace, pp. 674-8; BAG, pp. 905-7). The context and the parallel passages require a result meaning. *Mustērion* should not be just transliterated, but its full meaning brought out as an 'open secret.' (Cf. Rom.16:25-6).

4:15 - "... instead by pursuing the truth in love we should grow up in every way unto Christ, who is the head."

Comment: The verb, *alētheuontes* should not be limited to speaking the truth as most do (A-S, p. 20). Over a dozen translators from diverse backgrounds have 'holding' or 'living' the truth, but Rotherham's

rendering surpasses them all, as reflected above.

5:18 - “Indeed, if you get drunk on wine, you must stop, for that is debauchery, but rather keep on being filled with the Spirit as you speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, by singing and making music from your hearts to the Lord.”

Comment: The continuous force of the present imperative should be emphasized here. Only Williams, ISV, & CJB got it right (cf. Mt. 7:7-8).

Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians

2:6-8 - “Have the same attitude of mind in you Christ Jesus had, who though continuing to be essentially God, did not think to cling to equal rights with God, but rather emptied himself of the glory of deity by taking the form of a slave and becoming essentially human. Moreover, being found in human form he humbled himself even further by being obedient unto death, in fact, a criminal’s death on a cross.”

Comment: Two words cause problems. The noun, *harpagmos* can refer to ‘a prize or a privilege to be grasped.’ More difficult is the verb, *kenaō*, ‘to empty.’ The context makes clear that he relinquished the glory of his deity. Misunderstanding of this passage caused a significant liberal Kenotic theology in the U.K. over a century ago. Only 4 versions significantly clarified the meaning, but 6 have made it worse by saying, “he made himself nothing.” How demeaning of our wonderful savior!

4:13 - “I have strength to do all these things through him who strengthens me.”

Comment: Only 14 out of 130 translations restricted the ‘all things’ to the context of Paul’s circumstances. The most widely used versions all had Paul able to jump over a tall building, or some such nonsense. Perhaps the translators understood that Paul’s intention was not universal, but the reader would never know that from their wording. The verb, *ischeuō* focuses on strength.

Paul’s Epistle to the Colossians

1:13-20 - “He has rescued us from the authority of darkness and transferred us into a new position in the Son’s kingdom love. In union with him we have liberating redemption, the forgiveness of our sins. He is the image of the invisible God, pre-eminent over all creation, ... Indeed, he is the head of the body, his called-out assembly of believers. He is the beginning, pre-eminent in resurrection out from dead people so that he might have supremacy in everything. For all the fullness was pleased to dwell in him and through him to reconcile to himself all these people, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peaceful wholeness through his blood shed on the cross.”

Comment: The verb in v. 13, *methistēmi* only occurs twice elsewhere in the NT, but confirmed by the secular usage means ‘to change one’s position, mentally, spiritually, or vocationally (Lk. 16:4; Acts 13:22; BAG, p. 500; M&M, p. 394). This is positional truth! We have been transferred to a new position in Christ’s kingdom love, but since this is Paul’s only reference in the epistles to the kingdom, it is clear that believers are not yet literally in the future millennial kingdom. We are recruiting citizens for that kingdom.

The noun, *prototokos* should be understood culturally not sexually. The firstborn son was pre-eminent in the family. Christ’s pre-eminence extends both to His work of creation and His bodily resurrection from the dead.

‘Church’ is a misleading rendering of *ekklēsia* since it refers to an assembly of people, not a building or an organization. In v. 20, the expression, *ta panta* does not have a universal sense, as explained under Eph. 1:11, which has been wrongly taken as a basis for universalism, that all people will ultimately be saved (Stein, *Difficult Passages*, p. 300ff; my *BCAA*, pp. 32-34).

1:23b - “... the hope of the good news, of which I, Paul, became a servant, which you also heard as it is beginning to be proclaimed in all this created world under heaven.”

Comment: Virtually all translations have totally missed the solution to a serious problem: when Paul wrote this in AD 62 had the gospel been preached in the whole world? Obviously not! Most translations use a past tense and only four use a present tense to indicate an on-going process. However, the solution is clear in the grammar books! The verb, *kēruxthentos* is an aorist passive participle. Thus, since it is not indicative, its time is undetermined and could be proleptic or futuristic. Aorists can also be ingressive, that is, stressing the beginning of the action. Furthermore, participles tend to indicated continuing action. Thus, it must be translated as above, or else it is nonsense. See Dana and Mantey, p. 196 and Daniel Wallace, p. 558.

A student from inner-city Newark, Colin Akridge, asked in class about this verse. Our Greek professor, Chip McDaniel, quickly came up with the solution above. Do none of the translators have the sensitivity to realize that their renderings are senseless? The commentators give gross explanations, worst of all: “Paul may be allowed a hyperbole inevitable to a ‘born’ evangelist” (Earle Ellis, *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, p. 1339).

Paul’s Second Epistle to the Thessalonians

2:1-3 - “Indeed, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to Him, ... Let no one deceive you in any way, for that day will not come unless the departure comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.”

Comment: The issue here is the meaning of the noun *apostasias*. Translations are divided between ‘rebellion,’ ‘revolt,’ ‘apostasy,’ ‘falling away,’ or ‘turning away.’ Only 2 translate it ‘departure’ recognizing its basic literal meaning

as a reference to the rapture of 1 Thess. 4:13-18 or to “our gathering together to Him” of 2:1. Otherwise it would seem that Paul announced his subject as the coming of Christ and our gathering together to Him without ever raising it again here. However, linguistic support for this alternative rendering is not strong, although the meaning of a physical withdrawal is more clearly found in the verb, *aphistēmi*, than in the noun. Thus I would suggest this for consideration, but without strong advocacy.

2:13-14 - “But we must always give thanks to God for you, dear fellow believers, loved by the Lord, since God has picked you Thessalonians out as the firstfruits of the harvest of salvation through the Spirit by setting you apart through trust in the truth.”

Comment: There is a serious textual issue involved here. The ABS committee preferred *aparchēn* over *ap' archēs* as a 'C' reading for a number of good reasons. The manuscript external evidence is divided. But the internal evidence of Pauline word usage strongly supports their decision (Metzger, 636-7). This means that the Thessalonian Christians were identified as among the firstfruits of Paul's ministry, which was historically true as recorded in Acts 17. Over a dozen modern translations have so rendered it based upon the ABS text. The context is strongly supportive of this rendering since Paul said it was accomplished by “sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.” This happened when Paul came to Thessalonica and proclaimed the message, not in eternity past by some fictional decree of God.

Titus 2:11 - “For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.”

Comment: Two dozen, including the NIV above, of 130 translations make it clear that God's salvation has not reached to all people, does not save all people, but rather has been provided for all mankind.

The Epistle to the Hebrews

1:1-2 - “After God in many portions and in various ways over past ages used to speak to our ancestors through the prophets, now in the end of these days has spoken to us through his Son, ...”

Comment: Only Wycliffe, ASV, Darby, DLNT, Phillips, Knox, MLB, Diaglott, Way, Confraternity, and WEB recognized that *eschatos* is used as a substantive and should be translated, ‘end.’ This is not an insignificant mistranslation since it implies that Christ inaugurated the last days, which is supportive of amillennialism. Actually it states that Christ came at the end of previous days or ages, which is what v. 1 refers to. This correction is supported by the BAG lexicon (p. 313-4), which refers to the end of place, “to the ends of the earth.” In reference to time, it lists, “a. with reference to its relation to something preceding.” Wallace in discussing the Greek construction in this verse said, “When the adjective is outside the article-noun group, it is predicate to the noun and hence makes an assertion about it” (p. 308). A. T. Robertson said that this “is probably a substantive use” (p. 775). It is common for an adjective to function as a noun.

1:5 - “For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son, today I have brought you forth from the tomb.’”

Comment: This quotation from Psalm 2:7 has also been clarified in discussion of Acts 13:33 where Paul interpreted it of the resurrection, when Christ was brought forth from the tomb.

2:18; 4:14 - “Since he himself has suffered when he was tested, he is able to help those who are being tempted. ... For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tested in every way as we are, yet without sin.”

Comment: This issue was raised in connection with Mt. 4:1, the record of Christ's wilderness testing. Since *peirazō* means ‘to test, try, or tempt,’ translators should pick the English meaning which does not imply that Christ could have sinned. Although the doctrine of Christ's impeccability is not explicitly spelled out in the Bible, there is good theological evidence for it. The translations should not naively contradict this truth since the Greek word is flexible. Only a dozen out of 130 versions were sensitive enough to get it right. Some waffled, and a few included ‘tested’ as an alternative.

3:18; 4:6, 11 - “In fact, to whom did he swear that they would never enter his rest if not those who refused to believe? So we see that they were not able to enter because of their unbelief ... and those who formerly received the good news did not enter because of refusing to believe.”...

Comment: The noun *apeitheia* was discussed under John 3:36. Most translations use disobedience, which is misleading.

4:11 - “Therefore, let us be eagerly diligent to enter that salvation rest, so that no one will fall by following their bad example of refusal to believe.”

Comment: The Greek verb, *spoudazō* is better translated as above since the BAG lexicon lists the following meanings: “1. hasten, hurry ... 2. be zealous or eager, take pains, make every effort ...” (p. 771). The two derived nouns and the adverb confirm these meanings, including, ‘diligent,’ ‘earnest,’ ‘earnestly,’ and ‘diligently.’ The focus is upon an attitude of mind rather than upon human effort or works. Such mistranslation would be contradictory to Paul's emphasis on salvation by grace through faith. Only 17 out of 130 translations, including Wycliffe, avoid the emphasis upon human effort as justified by the word's usage. Also the rendering of *apeitheia* needs to be clarified as discussed under John 3:36.

5:7-9 - “... but the one who appointed him declared to him, ‘You are my Son; today I have brought you forth from the

tomb. ...’ During the days of Jesus’ earthly life he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to him who was able to deliver him out of death by resurrection, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

Though a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered, and having been made complete, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who are subject to him.”

Comment: The seemingly superficial difference in the rendering of the Greek preposition *ek* in v. 7 makes a tremendous difference, which virtually all translators have missed, except the NLB, NEB, Amplified, Darby, Diaglott, Way, Rotherham, and Williams. If Christ prayed to be saved from death and his prayers were heard, then Muslims can claim that the Lord Jesus did not die by crucifixion. But if He prayed to be saved out of death, His prayer was answered in the resurrection. In Pakistan, I was confronted by an Ahmadiyya Muslim scholar who used this verse to prove that Christ did not die on the cross. Most Muslims believe He was caught up to heaven before death, and someone who looked like Him was actually crucified in His place.

There are two issues in v. 9: the rendering of the verb, *teleiaō* and the force of the verb, *hupakouō*. To render the first as ‘perfect’ implies that the Lord Jesus was imperfect. However, it is commonly translated elsewhere as, ‘to make complete,’ which resolves the problem. As a sinless human He was made complete in His ministry and in His sufferings. The root meaning of the second verb is ‘to listen to.’ The BAG lexicon lists, “1. obey, follow, be subject to ... 2. hear, grant one’s request ... 3. simply open or answer (the door) (p. 845). The Abbott-Smith lexicon has, “to listen, attend” (p. 456). Thus Christ provides salvation to those who listen up to Him and are subject to Him. To be harmonious with Paul’s clear teaching on salvation by grace through faith, renderings in Hebrews should be kept harmonious with that, since the author was someone connected with Paul (Barnabas, Apollos, etc.).

6:4-6 - “For it is impossible to relay this foundation for those who were once for all enlightened by the Spirit, have experienced God’s gift of salvation and the goodness of God’s word, have shared in the Holy Spirit and the miraculous powers of the coming age, if they then by stumbling fall by the wayside into transgression. It is impossible for them to be renewed all over again to that first saving repentance, since by so doing they would be recrucifying the Son of God all over again to themselves and putting Him to open shame.”

Comment: The adjective *hapax* here is used in contrast with the idea of repetition, so that it should be appropriately rendered ‘once for all.’ This is confirmed by the use here of five aorist participles, which focus on the point action involved in the impressive saving works of God in the lives of these individuals. Subsequent to these verbs, the impossibility of repetition or renewal all over again to the original once-for-all salvation repentance is clearly emphasized by *palin anakainizein* and *anastaurontas*, both using the prepositional prefix *ana*=again, as well as *palin* and *hapax*.

The verb, to taste, obviously means to experience since it is used in 2:9 of Christ’s death. Compare Psalm 34:8.

The most crucial verb in the passage is *parapiptō*, which occurs only here in the NT. Thus it is necessary to start with its etymology even though etymologies are rightly considered suspect. It is the simple verb *pipto*, ‘to fall’ with the prepositional prefix, *para*, ‘beside’ or ‘on the side.’ Thus Williams rightly translated it, ‘to fall by the wayside,’ and JUB has ‘backslid.’ This is confirmed by the common noun derived from it, *paraptoma*, meaning ‘transgression.’ Thus the above rendering is *prima facie* justified. Hal Harless’s extensive study of the usage in all Greek literature found that it never means, ‘to fall away’ and confirmed the above renderings (ETS paper San Antonio, Nov. 2004). No other translation checked the usage outside the NT. Obviously this rendering is of tremendous theological significance since Heb. 6:4-6 is the major proof-text used by Arminians. Although Arminius never denied eternal security, he struggled with the meaning of this passage, as have most interpreters up to the present. Don Carson lists 16 different interpretations. Cf. the extended discussion in my *Beyond Calvinism and Arminianism*, Ch. 15.

10:29 - “How much more severely do you think those deserve to be punished who have trampled the Son of God underfoot and have profaned the blood of the covenant that set them apart, and who have insulted the Spirit of grace?”

Comment: The failure of translators to recognize the theological problem raised by the rendering of the verb, *hagiazō*, the root meaning of which is simply ‘to set something or someone apart.’ Rendering it as ‘sanctified’ forces the reader to assume these were true believers when the language of God’s judgment on them is so severe. All translations have ‘sanctified’ or ‘make holy.’ The same confusion was evident in 1 Cor. 7:14.

The Epistle of James 1:18:

“According to his deliberate plan he gave us new birth through the message of truth so that we would be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.”

Comment: Although most translations rendered *boulētheis* in a way reflecting the will of God or His willingness, a dozen popular translation lapsed back into the use of ‘to choose,’ which they tend to use for a whole variety of verbs. The MLB seems most helpful and accurate. The birth referred to is obviously the new birth and should be rendered that way.

The First Epistle of Peter:

1:1-2 - “Peter, a missionary of Jesus Christ, to the choice exiles scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, who were set apart by the Spirit to respond to and be cleansed by the sprinkled blood of Jesus Christ.”

Comment: The noun *eklektos* refers to choice people appointed to a responsible office as part of God’s plan which was accomplished by His omniscient foreknowledge (Coenen, *NIDNTT*, I:536-9; *TDNT*, IV:144-5, 171-182; BAG, pp. 241-2; Seebass, *TDOT*, II:83-7; Oswalt, *TWOT*, I:100-101; M. & M., p.

195; Eckert, *EDNT*, 1:416). All Jews were exiles since they were not ruling their own country, but Asia Minor Jews were doubly exiled.

1:20 - “In fact, he had been foreknown before the creation of the world, but was revealed at the end of those vain times for your sake. It was through Christ that you really came to trust in God, ...”

Comment: There are two translation issues here. The first is most of the 130 translations have read into the verb, *proginoskō*, a determinative meaning derived from Calvinistic theology. Berkhof called it a ‘pregnant meaning.’ As argued in a significant word study in my soteriology, it simply means ‘to foreknow’ (*Beyond Calvinism and Arminianism*, Ch. 22). To read the notion of choice into the verb here causes a serious additional theological problem. Jesus of Nazareth was never chosen, one among many, to be the Messiah. This is an ancient cultic heresy that Jesus was chosen at His baptism to be the Messiah.

The second issue parallels the discussion of Hebrews 1:1-2 since the same construction is used in reference to the appearance of Christ after many ages of OT history. Although *eschatou* is an adjective, in this construction it acts as a substantive, ‘the end.’ Here only a dozen out of 130 translations have it correct.

2:4, 6 - “As you come to Him, a living stone rejected by people but choice and precious in the sight of God, ... ‘Look! I lay a stone in Jerusalem’s Zion, a choice and precious cornerstone, ...’”

Comment: Only four out of 130 translations have recognized that the context of 2:4 demands the preferred meaning of *eklektos*, ‘choice’: the NAS, the NEB, the TCNT, and Young’s Literal Translation. Two more get it in 2:6. Since it is synonymous with ‘precious,’ these recognized that ‘choice’ makes far better sense in the context. The extensive word study of this group of cognates shows that this is the preferred meaning in classical, koine, and NT Greek (cf. *BCAA*, Chapter 23). The Lord Jesus was never chosen by God. He has been a member of the Tri-unity of God since eternity!

2:7-9 - “... but for those who do not believe, ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,’ and, ‘a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense’; for by refusing to believe the message they were indeed set up to stumble over it. But you are a choice family, a royal priesthood, a holy people for God’s own possession, ...”

Comment: There are four issues here. Since in v. 7 *apisteuō* clearly means ‘to disbelieve,’ *apeitheuō* in parallel should be so translated, but more strongly, as has been already been argued in many other contexts, starting with John 3:36.

Also J. B. Phillips clarified the syntactical relationship of the aorist passive verb, *tithēmi*, (BAG, p. 823: 1a. ‘put, place, lay; set up’) as connecting with the stumbling rather than with the unbelief. Those who refuse to believe will definitely stumble. Phillips put it: “... **which makes stumbling a foregone conclusion.**” GW renders it: “**Because they refused to believe it. Therefore, this is how they ended up.**” NLV is similar. The notion of destiny should not be read into this verb. This resolves a serious theological problem, that is, having God cause people to disbelieve, when the whole Bible is full of exhortations and pleas for all people to believe in Christ. Peter, in writing to diaspora Jewish Christians, has been dealing with their connection with Christ as living stones in God’s new temple, the church. He quoted Isaiah 28:16 and Psalm 118:22 in reference to Israel’s refusal to believe in Him. Thus the issue is the transition from Israel to the NT church, not anything about individual reprobation as the mistranslations might imply.

Just as in v. 7 *eklektos* must be translated ‘choice,’ so here also God’s people are described as ‘choice.’ This is our wonderful position in the choice One, the Lord Jesus.

The primary meaning of *genos* is ‘family,’ so why not translate it this way, since the church is the family of God? Some versions use ‘people’ or ‘race,’ but obviously the church is not a race and family is a more suitable description than some vague ‘people.’

The Revelation 1:1, 3 - “The revelation of Jesus the Messiah, which God gave Him to show to His servants the things which must imminently take place. ... Blessed are those who listen to it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is impending.”

Comment: There are a number of issues which must be resolved to communicate the truth of this passage and subsequent uses of *tachus* in the book of Revelation. Virtually all translations render it ‘soon.’ The problem is that 2000 years have passed and these events after 4:1 clearly have not yet happened. The second issue is the widespread notion that Christ expected to return in one generation, as did His Apostles. It has already been shown that *genea* has been mistranslated as ‘generation’ in many eschatological passages, which leads to that error. A possible solution is recognizing that with the limited vocabulary of Koine Greek and John’s even more limited vocabulary, a subtle term as ‘imminent’ was not available to communicate the desired force. Translators must creatively draw on the vastly expanded vocabulary of modern English to communicate what the broader context requires.