

# EVALUATING BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

*Alle Schrift von Gott eingegeben.*



Pastor Brian R. Keller  
Reformation 2011

Introduction .....	2
<i>Historical Timeline</i> .....	2
<i>Four Questions To Ask &amp; Answer When Evaluating Bible Translations</i> .....	5
<b>Bible Translations .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Luther's German Bible .....	6
The King James Version .....	9
<i>Modern Translations: Three Main Views</i> .....	11
Revised Standard Version (RSV) .....	12
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) .....	14
Living Bible (LB) - New Living Translation (NLT) .....	14
New American Standard Bible (NASB) .....	16
An American Translation (AAT) .....	19
New International Version (NIV) .....	21
<i>Colorado Springs Guidelines</i> .....	42
<i>What about the Collins Bank of English usage?</i> .....	44
<i>Verbal Inspiration and Bible Translation:</i> .....	44
<i>Christian judgment: A booklet of corrections?</i> .....	46
New King James Version (NKJV) .....	48
English Standard Version (ESV) .....	49
Holman Christian Standard Bible .....	52
<b>Translation Discussion Points .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<i>Readability</i> .....	55
Suggestions of "Better Solutions" for WELS/NPH .....	57
<i>What is "doctrine"?</i> .....	59

## Introduction

I sincerely thank the Translation Evaluation Committee (TEC) for asking me to write an essay with my thoughts on this important issue. Though I have not been asked to present this essay at the Symposium, it is a privilege to serve in this way. Most pastors probably do not have access to many of the materials that support this discussion, so I've made an effort to include many web links in this essay so that the average pastor can do further research into many points. As with my presentations in the Michigan District, I'd like to provide the reader with information to make a more informed decision about Bible translations today. I pray that God will bless this effort of sharing information that I believe will be helpful. I am thankful that we all agree that the Bible is God's verbally inspired, inerrant Word.

Friends have described how I arrived in this position as a "journey." My Savior has certainly guided this journey (Rom 8:28). May we follow his Word. About a dozen years ago, I was working pretty hard evaluating Bible translations. It had been a private interest for years. The reason for the intensive work was that I'd been asked to write a book on the Bible in the *People's Bible Teachings* series (NPH). Some fairly clear opinions formed.

I've continued evaluating translations since then. Questions about Bible translations provided more opportunity to evaluate. When it became clear that the NIV Committee on Bible Translation (CBT) was going to revise the NIV, I was aware of the controversies surrounding the NIV and the TNIV (see timeline below). It was clear that the plan was to merge the 1984 NIV and the TNIV. Concerned that it was going to be strongly in the direction of the TNIV, I suggested to President Schroeder and others that a committee be formed in WELS to evaluate Bible translations.

The debate about "gender inclusive" translation is neither simple nor new. A good historian would be able to write a helpful book on the trend over the past few decades and the forces applying pressure (egalitarians and complementarians included). Until 2010, WELS was largely isolated from the controversy. But, much has been happening. Let's briefly consider a little of the history outside of WELS, since most of us are likely aware of what happened within WELS. This little timeline focuses on some of the history and the concerns surrounding the revision of the NIV. (You may click on the links to read the materials mentioned - online. This will greatly increase understanding of the issues too.)

## Historical Timeline

- 1978 NIV complete Bible published.
- 1984 NIV revised.
- 1992 NIV Committee on Bible translation begins work on an "inclusive-language" NIV.
- 1995 NIV Inclusive Language edition published in Great Britain (also 1996).
- 1997 March 29, World magazine article, "*The Stealth Bible*" (<http://www.worldmag.com/articles/229>) reports that the NIV is "quietly going 'gender-neutral'" NIV CBT member Larry Walker quoted as saying it was "consensus" on the CBT to have inclusive NIV "take the place of the other" NIV. (See page 35 of "*Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy*" cited in the footnote below.)<sup>1</sup>
- 1997 "*The Stealth Bible*" article, mentioned above, prompts an outcry among Evangelicals, and many questions. For some examples of resources in understanding why

---

<sup>1</sup> For a more complete timeline see: "*The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy: Muting the Masculinity of God's Words*" by Poythress/Grudem. <http://www.cbmw.org/Online-Books/The-Gender-Neutral-Bible-Controversy/The-Gender-Neutral-Bible-Controversy>

Evangelical Christians have opposed gender-neutral translations visit this site: <http://www.cbmw.org/Gender-Neutral-Bible-Resources>.

- 1997 The International Bible Society announces that it had abandoned inclusive language plans.
- 1997 Evangelicals meet in Colorado Springs and agree on some guidelines for translating the Bible, in an attempt to guard against some of the negative effects of “gender-neutral” translation. You may see these guidelines at this site: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/csguidelines.html>.
- 1997 September 1, 1997 article in Christianity Today, entitled, “*Gender: Biblical Feminists Press for Gender-Inclusive NIV*” reports how Catherine Clark Kroeger, founder of Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE) was involved in applying this pressure and was promoting the NIVI. Kroeger was prominently mentioned in Prof. Panning’s WLQ article “*Authentein: A word study*.” Available online here: <http://www.wlssays.net/node/1648>. When reporting Kroeger’s death in February, 2011, Christianity Today summarized: “CBE advocates that women may serve as pastors, teachers, and leaders of churches.” There was pressure coming from both egalitarians and complementarians.
- 1998 In February, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod’s CTCR publishes a study called “*Biblical Revelation and Inclusive Language*.” This 39 page document may be found here: [www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcsm&id=314](http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcsm&id=314).
- 1998 D. A. Carson publishes, “*The Inclusive Language Debate: A Plea for Realism*.” For balance on Carson’s views, see this free book: <http://www.cbmw.org/Online-Books/The-Gender-Neutral-Bible-Controversy/The-Gender-Neutral-Bible-Controversy> This helpful book is practically essential for fairly understanding this controversy and discussion. It is the best source, far superior to Ryken, for representing the view that opposes radical gender neutral changes.
- 1999 The International Bible Society encourages the NIV Committee on Bible Translation (CBT) to continue its work. June 5, World Magazine cover story: “*There They Go Again*.”
- 2000 Danker’s personal revision of Bauer (BDAG) is published, with inclusive-language suggested. Frederick Danker is the Christ Seminary-Seminex Professor Emeritus of New Testament at the Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago. A proud Seminex liberal, Danker worked alone on the revision. There was a definite shift in theology from William Arndt (old LCMS) to Danker (ELCA). For this reason, we need to be more careful with BDAG. In the area of gender language, Danker is progressive/liberal, so many of his comments must be weighed with that in mind. For some help on evaluating BDAG see: [http://www.cbmw.org/images/articles\\_pdf/poythress\\_ern/poythress\\_jets46.4.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/articles_pdf/poythress_ern/poythress_jets46.4.pdf)
- 2002 *Today’s New International Version* (TNIV) – New Testament published.
- 2002 May 28 - 110 Evangelical leaders sign a “Statement of Concern” opposing the TNIV. See: [http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw\\_pdf/7\\_2/christian\\_leaders.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw_pdf/7_2/christian_leaders.pdf) or <http://www.bible-researcher.com/tniv2.html>. For a summary of the concerns, see: <http://www.cbmw.org/Journal/Vol-7-No-2/A-Brief-Summary-of-Concerns-About-the-TNIV>. Also: [http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw\\_pdf/7\\_2/scholars\\_statement.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw_pdf/7_2/scholars_statement.pdf)
- 2003 In September, the LCMS – CTCR answers the LCMS Commission on Worship request for an evaluation of Bible translations with this simple statement: “*On theological and linguistic grounds, the English Standard Version, the New American Standard Version, and the New King James Version are preferable to the New International Version. On text-critical grounds, the English Standard Version and the New American Standard Version are preferable to the New King James Version. The CTCR elects to leave “readability” questions to the Commission on Worship. In principle, the CTCR declines to*

*endorse officially any English translation of the Bible. Adopted. Commission on Theology and Church Relations, Committee II September 15, 2003.”* The LCMS hymnal and CPH now use the ESV. A rather helpful comparison of Bible translations produced by the LCMS may be found at: <http://www.cph.org/pdf/esv/011946study.pdf>

2005 **Today’s New International Version** (TNIV) - complete Bible published.

2005 The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) and Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) pass resolutions opposing TNIV and other inclusive language translations. Read the SBC resolution here: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/tniv4.html>. Read the PCA resolution here: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/tniv5.html>.

2009 July - The NIV’s publisher gets a new name. International Bible Society (IBS) and Send the Light (STL) become “Biblica.” See news article here: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/ibs-stl-changes-name-to-biblica-39707/>. Biblica announces that the 1984 NIV and TNIV will both be phased out in favor of a newly revised “NIV.” Biblica.com press release: “As we stated at the NIV update announcement in September 2009, we will not be releasing any new products in either the 1984 or TNIV texts after the updated NIV has been published... The 2011 update of the NIV will be called, simply, the NIV.”

2010 Nov 1 – The NIV revision is posted online. Evaluations begin. Biblegateway.com switches to revised 2010 NIV, and removes NIV 1984. After many complaints, NIV 1984 is returned to the site, for now. No one knows for how long NIV’84 will be available on this site. Zondervan owns biblegateway.com.

2010 December – The digital version of NIV 2011 is released without fanfare. Many customers buy it without realizing that it is the revised version, including some of our own members. Some buy it to evaluate.

2011 March – **NIV ©2011** published/released in book form. NIV 1984 is no longer published.

2011 June - The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) rejects the NIV 2011. You may read the resolution here: <http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/amResolution.asp?ID=1218>

2011 Summer: The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) completes a thorough evaluation of NIV 2011, available here: <http://www.cbmw.org/Resources/Articles/An-Evaluation-of-Gender-Language-in-the>. It concludes with this summary: “We regret, therefore, that we cannot recommend the 2011 NIV as a sufficiently reliable English translation. And unless Zondervan changes its mind and keeps the current edition of the 1984 NIV in print, the 2011 NIV will soon be the only edition of the NIV that is available. Therefore, unless Zondervan changes its mind, we cannot recommend the NIV itself.”

I knew that the revised NIV would appear online in November 2010. I read that Doug Moo, the chairman of the NIV Committee on Bible Translation (CBT), was pleased with TNIV’s handling of gender language. After some research into the other members of the CBT, I did expect most of them to be leaning toward TNIV. So, as I waited for the revision to appear online, I carefully reviewed and studied Professor Brug’s review of the TNIV in Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly (**WLQ volume 103, #2, Spring 2006, pages 138-151**).<sup>2</sup> This was time well-spent.

The burning question was whether the revised NIV would be more like the TNIV or NIV 1984. I learned that all of the passages that Prof. Brug had mentioned with some measure of concern

---

<sup>2</sup> also available online here: <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/2152>

(except for one minor example) had been carried over essentially unchanged from the TNIV. Since I already shared Prof. Brug's concerns with the TNIV (his WLQ review article), these became my first concerns about NIV 2010/2011. So, I was concerned about the new NIV beginning on November 1, 2010.

Since this was an important topic, we discussed the translation and the changes in circuit meetings. After further study, it became clear that all the pastors in our circuit were concerned about NIV 2011. My circuit brothers decided to pass a resolution and asked me to present information about the NIV changes to our pastors' conference. It was intended to be a fairly balanced study including some improvements, some debatable examples, and some weakened renderings. Entitled, "**Evaluating NIV 2011**," it included resources to enable pastors to study and evaluate more on their own.<sup>3</sup> A Bible study for use in congregations was also prepared and shared.

Soon, I was invited to present "**Evaluating NIV 2011**" to all four pastors' conferences in the Michigan District. My own Southeastern Michigan conference asked that the material be shared with others in the synod. The Michigan District Convention asked for my permission to share it, and it was granted. Eventually, the work must have reached many others. If you never saw or received it, it's attached as **appendix A**. It begins by attempting to seek common ground by borrowing from a work by Prof. Panning published in WLQ in 1973...

#### **Four Questions To Ask & Answer When Evaluating Bible Translations<sup>4</sup>**

**1. Is it based on an appropriate original text?**

Jesus promised that God's Word will never pass away (Mt 24:35). We are blessed with many reliable manuscripts. Did the translators carefully follow the original Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek text of the Bible?

**2. Does it render this original text faithfully?**

Remember that every word of the original Bible text is God's inspired, error-free Word (*Verbal Inspiration*). Does the translation faithfully and accurately convey the same meaning as the original text of God's holy Word?

**3. Is it doctrinally sound?**

Professor Armin Panning put it this way: "Does the translation of this passage agree with what God says about the subject in other passages? For us purity of doctrine must ever remain *the* essential test of a translation. To endorse a translation that features crisp, contemporary English and that 'reads like a novel' but subtly blends in error or undercuts the reader's confidence in the reliability of God's Holy Word is to court disaster: It is infinitely better to retain a translation that may not be as easy reading, that may not include the latest in scholarship, but which accords to the Lord Jesus Christ His rightful place in God's plan of salvation. I take it for granted that we agree on this, and that it will not be necessary to belabor the point." (*The NASB, Is This The Answer?* p.5) ... My question: Do we still agree on this? I do.

**4. Is the receptor language acceptable?**

This is a matter of judgment and taste. No translation is perfect. But can you understand what it says? Professor Panning added, "At the risk of being repetitious, let me emphasize that compromising on the style of language to be used in a translation is NOT the same as compromising on the content, on doctrine."

---

<sup>3</sup> This presentation is **Appendix A** - to be sent with this essay.

<sup>4</sup> See Prof. Armin Panning's helpful article: **WLQ January, 1973; Vol. 70:1, pp. 6-31**, especially p. 14; or *WLS Essay File* - <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/PanningNASB.rtf>.



If we can agree on his point #3, I believe we will be far along the path toward thinking the same way about how we evaluate the available Bible translations. If we cannot agree on point #3, it might be necessary to “belabor the point.” None of us wants a translation that promotes false teaching.<sup>5</sup> But I am not sure that everyone agrees with the judgment expressed in point #3 above.

### Bible Translations

Ever since the tower of Babel, people have been separated by different languages (Genesis 11). The Holy Spirit bridged this language gap at Pentecost when he enabled the apostles to speak in foreign languages (Acts 2). This miracle exempted the apostles from the long process of learning foreign languages. The gospel of Jesus Christ was proclaimed without delay in foreign languages. Today this translation requires much work.

In chapter ten of the *People’s Bible Teachings* volume on the Bible, some early Bible translations are described.<sup>6</sup> For this essay, let’s move straight to Dr. Martin Luther.

### Luther’s German Bible

There were at least 18 German versions of the Bible before Dr. Martin Luther began his work of translating.<sup>7</sup> These translations were apparently of very poor quality. Luther began translating the New Testament from the Wartburg Castle in the last few weeks of 1521. He was finished by March of 1522. The speed and quality of the translation remains astonishing. While Luther completed the work of translating the New Testament from Greek into German very rapidly, his work on the Old Testament proceeded much more slowly. He began the Old Testament translation in 1522 and finished in 1534. He often commented that Hebrew did not want to become German. Luther made use of a committee of scholars who met in his home to discuss the translation. But Luther certainly remained firmly in charge of the translation project. There was no doubt it was Luther’s translation. Even though Luther made use of a committee, the committee was of the same faith and fellowship too, so there was theological agreement. I cannot imagine Luther working as only one member of a committee of scholars from various church bodies (Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed). There is no question that Luther’s translation was often quite influenced by his interpretation of Scripture. I’m pretty sure that he would not have compromised with Roman Catholic or Reformed scholars to dial it up one degree of ambiguity on a passage in which there was doctrinal disagreement.

Luther continued to revise his translation, seeking to improve it, until his death. But today it is important to clarify that these revisions were not aimed to make the translation more acceptable to various religious views. Nor were these revisions made for the sake of avoiding perceived offense by various groups. The revisions were simply aimed to make the translation more accurate and clear. Luther always carried with him the latest version of his translation. The last version of the German Bible that Luther himself worked on became the standard

---

<sup>5</sup> For more on what is “doctrine” in Scripture, see: <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/982>

<sup>6</sup> Keller, Brian. *Bible: God’s Inspired, Inerrant Word* (People’s Bible Teachings series), Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, © 2002. Pages 159ff. (Much of this section/essay is adapted from the book.)

<sup>7</sup> Heinz Bluhm mentions 18 editions of the German Bible before Luther: 14 in High German and 4 in Low German. *Martin Luther: Creative Translator*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, ©1965. Pages 78 and 97.

German translation for many years (1545 edition).<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, some printers took liberties with the text after his death. And, as a result some “1545 editions” available on the internet are not really the 1545 edition of Luther.<sup>9</sup>

Luther’s methods and views of translations are widely regarded as the model for proper Bible translating. There are many claims about Luther’s translation views, but not all the claims can be correct. Some claim that Luther’s translation method was essentially dynamic equivalence.<sup>10</sup> Others have claimed that Luther translated literally.<sup>11</sup> Actually, Luther doesn’t fit either category, or he fits both. He almost defies categorization. Luther was often criticized for not always translating hyper-literally. So, much of his writing is his response to this charge. But in many places Luther did translate in an essentially literal way as he himself explained.

Luther tried to find just the right word in German to express the original meaning. Sometimes Luther went to the butcher to find just the right term for the body part of an animal. To a large degree, Luther’s translation standardized the German language. Luther’s principles of Bible translation involved sound judgment and understanding of the Bible text. His choice varied according to particular cases. Luther explained his translation method with these words: “We extolled the principle of at times retaining the words quite literally, and at times rendering only the meaning.”<sup>12</sup> In other words, Luther was not a strict literalist, but he did value the Bible’s very words. He wrote:

What purpose does it serve unnecessarily to abide by the words so rigidly and strictly that people can get no sense out of them? Whoever would speak German must not use Hebrew idioms; but if he understands the Hebrew writer, he must see to it that he grasps his meaning and must think: Now let me see. How does a German speak in this case? When he has the German words that serve the purpose, then let him dismiss the Hebrew words and freely express the sense in the best German he is capable of using. (*What Luther Says*, #319).

On the other hand, Luther was not always so free in translating. He wrote:

On the other hand I have not just gone ahead anyway and disregarded altogether the exact wording of the original. Rather with my helpers I have been very careful to see that where everything turns on a single passage, I have kept to the original quite literally and have not lightly departed from it. For example, in John 6[:27] Christ says, “Him has God the Father sealed [*versiegelt*].” It would have been better German to say, “Him has God the Father signified [*gezeichnet*],” or, “He it is whom God the Father means [*meinet*].” But I preferred to do violence to the German language rather than to depart from the word. Ah, translating is not every man’s skill as the mad saints imagine. It requires a right, devout, honest, sincere, God-fearing, Christian, trained, informed, and experienced heart. Therefore I hold that no false Christian or factious spirit can be a

---

<sup>8</sup> In fact, many scholars believe Luther’s version was a major basis of the English versions of William Tyndale and Myles Coverdale, to which versions the King James Version owes a debt. See, for example: Bluhm, Heinz. ***Luther Translator of Paul: Studies in Romans and Galatians***, New York: Peter Lang, ©1984. Especially pages 559ff.

<sup>9</sup> For various editions of the Luther Bible, see: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/links10.html>

<sup>10</sup> One example in our midst would be: <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/2159>. I greatly respect Wendland’s work in helping bring the Bible into foreign languages. I believe his paper overlooks the important “literal” aspect of Luther’s translation practice (see Luther quotes in this essay).

<sup>11</sup> E.g., “*Hebrew Bible / Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation, II: From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*.” Magne Saebo, ed. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008. Pp. 401-402. Also, James Price: <http://www.jamesdprice.com/translationtheory/completeequivalence.html>.

<sup>12</sup> Luther, M. (1999). *Vol. 35: Luther's works, vol. 35 : Word and Sacrament I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (222–223). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.



decent translator.<sup>13</sup>

I certainly agree with the TEC statement in the Supplemental Report: “We expect, with Luther, that when theologically necessary a translation will adhere closely to the exact wording of the original.” That is an important statement. Luther often did translate rather literally. One can see this by examining the text of Luther’s Bible in many places. Dr. Luther explained:

We have at times also translated quite literally—even though we could have rendered the meaning more clearly another way—because everything turns on these very words. For example, here in [Psalm 68] verse 18, “Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive,” it would have been good German to say, “Thou hast set the captives free.” But this is too weak, and does not convey the fine, rich meaning of the Hebrew, which says literally, “Thou hast led captivity captive.” This does not imply merely that Christ freed the captives, but also that he captured and led away the captivity itself, so that it never again could or would take us captive again; thus it is really an eternal redemption [Heb. 9:12]. St. Paul likes to speak in this way, as when he says, “I through the law died to the law” [Gal. 2:19]; again, “Through sin Christ condemned sin” [Rom. 8:3]; and again, “Death has been put to death by Christ.” These are the captivities that Christ has taken captive and done away: death can no longer hold us, sin can no longer incriminate us, the law can no longer accuse our conscience. On every hand St. Paul propagates such rich, glorious, and comforting doctrine. Therefore out of respect for such doctrine, and for the comforting of our conscience, we should keep such words, accustom ourselves to them, and so give place to the Hebrew language where it does a better job than our German.<sup>14</sup>

In summary, Luther’s own explanation bears repeating: “We extolled the principle of at times retaining the words quite literally, and at times rendering only the meaning.”<sup>15</sup> This was ideal. If a confessional Lutheran translation today is to follow Luther’s lead, we will want to do the same. Many careful students of Luther agree that it’s not so simple to put Luther into a little box or category, whether “functional equivalence” or “literal.”<sup>16</sup>

Above all, it requires excellent Christian judgment to make the tough calls of when to be more literal and when to be more free in translating. It certainly does matter what a translator’s theological position might be. I repeat Luther’s words with emphasis: “Ah, translating is not every man’s skill as the mad saints imagine. It requires a right, devout, honest, sincere, God-fearing, Christian, trained, informed, and experienced heart. Therefore I hold that no false

---

<sup>13</sup> Luther, M. (1999). *Vol. 35: Luther's works, vol. 35 : Word and Sacrament I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (194). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

<sup>14</sup> Luther, M. (1999). *Vol. 35: Luther's works, vol. 35 : Word and Sacrament I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (216). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

<sup>15</sup> Luther, M. (1999). *Vol. 35: Luther's works, vol. 35 : Word and Sacrament I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (222–223). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

<sup>16</sup> I still like using the term “literal,” even though some prefer “formal equivalent.” Nida followers sometimes ridicule the term, “literal,” but translators on the other side of the translation controversy nevertheless prefer keeping the time-tested term: “literal.” The NASB’95 clearly prefers the term “literal,” and has the slogan, “The most literal is now more readable.” Also, see here: <http://www.lockman.org/nasb/>. The ESV clearly wants to be known as “essentially literal.” Terms are what we make them. The term “literal” is still used in many books, including Luther’s Works as quoted here. It can still convey the same meaning it did then. It’s best to define it, so others don’t define it for you. Most pastors and people know the general meaning of “literal.” “Literal” is really not the straw man that opponents portray. For that type of inept translating, perhaps the term “literalistic” or “hyper-literal” is more appropriate. Maybe “inept” is the best term for the examples that come from “engrish.com.”

Christian or factious spirit can be a decent translator.”<sup>17</sup> In the hands of Luther, something similar to “functional equivalence” can be good. In the hands of Zwingli, such a method could become a highway to falsehood, and even “alloeosis.”<sup>18</sup>

Over the years, many confessional Lutherans have agreed that Luther showed excellent Christian judgment in his Bible translation. Luther’s translation set the standard for many years of a sound Bible translation. One of the reasons that Luther’s translation excelled was his God-given faith. A person’s beliefs influence and affect the character of a Bible translation. Fee & Strauss claim that “all translation involves interpretation.”<sup>19</sup> This is why Luther excelled as a translator. He excelled as an interpreter of God’s holy Word. Many otherwise gifted translators falter in this aspect of their work: interpretation. This might be the strongest argument for producing a confessional Lutheran version of the Bible. If “all translation involves interpretation,” then I’d prefer a confessional Lutheran translating the Bible, wouldn’t you? (If a non-Lutheran buys and uses it, more is gained than just a new customer!)<sup>20</sup>

Perhaps the quality of Luther’s translation may be seen in the fact that Jerome Emser, one of Luther’s sharpest critics, actually plagiarized much of Luther’s version. Luther responded: “What kind of virtue that is, to heap slander and shame on somebody else’s book, then to steal it and publish it under one’s own name—thus seeking personal praise and reputation through the slandered work of somebody else—I leave that for his Judge to discover.”<sup>21</sup>

### The King James Version

In 1604, King James I supported the idea of preparing a new translation of the Bible in English, to replace the *Geneva Bible* and the *Bishops’ Bible*. He hoped that the new English version would be a Bible common to all, read in both churches and homes. A committee of 47 men revised existing English versions on the basis of the original languages.<sup>22</sup> The King James Version (KJV) is also known as the “Authorized Version” (AV).<sup>23</sup> First published in 1611, the

---

<sup>17</sup> Luther, M. (1999). *Vol. 35: Luther's works, vol. 35 : Word and Sacrament I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (194). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

<sup>18</sup> **Alloeosis.** Figure of speech by which Zwingli construed all passages of Scripture in which anything is ascribed to the divine nature of Christ or to the entire Christ that properly is property of the human nature. The purpose of the alloeosis, as used by Zwingli, was denial of the communication of attributes. He also used it in the doctrine of absolution. Thus “Christ” in Lk 24:28 is referred only to His human nature, since it is a mere figure of speech if the suffering and death of our Lord is ascribed to His divine nature. M. Luther, *Vom Abendmahl Christi*, WA 26, 263–509; **FC SD VIII 21, 38–45.** -- *Christian Cyclopedia (CPH, electronic edition, 2000).*

<sup>19</sup> Fee, Gordon D.; Strauss, Mark L. (2009-05-19). *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions* (chapter four; Kindle Location 1090). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

<sup>20</sup> This is one reason that some prefer more literal versions. If the translators are not doctrinally united with us, there might be more safety in a version that is tighter to the text. Some pastors would prefer a Bible that allows them to show their interpretation from a more literal rendering to one that interprets it for them with an opposite view. Many laymen have shared this opinion too.

<sup>21</sup> Luther, M. (1999). *Vol. 35: Luther's works, vol. 35 : Word and Sacrament I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (185). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

<sup>22</sup> If only we could be as free today in using and adapting from other versions as the KJV was! But copyright laws now dictate restrictions.

<sup>23</sup> Whether or not it was ever really “authorized” is debatable. That’s another story.

KJV was not immediately accepted. Over time, it surpassed all existing translations so that it became “the Bible” for English-speaking people. Most do not realize that there were quite a number of revisions of the KJV over the years, especially to update archaic words and expressions. For example, in 1769, a Dr. Blayney of Oxford, revised the KJV.

Many churches and Christians have regarded the KJV as a faithful translation over the past four centuries. While generally quite close to the original text, the KJV carries a beauty of expression seldom matched by more modern versions. The KJV rendition of Psalm 23 and Luke 2, for example, have become classics through memorization and repeated usage. Why not try to match the KJV’s rendition of those two sections as closely as possible (as both ESV and NKJV have)? It would instantly give a favorable impression to many members and offer some English textual stability.

The KJV is still regarded as “the Bible” for many Americans to this day, including some in the WELS. Some would still like to retain it for everyday use. We should not look down on older members who want to run back to the KJV for a safe refuge during this Bible controversy. As a pastor, I never discourage people from using their KJV, especially if they’ve used it all their lives. But, we do need to gently explain that the KJV is not the original text of the Bible. And, there is simply no denying that many expressions in the KJV are no longer understood by average readers.<sup>24</sup> While many still do read from the KJV with benefit, it can be very difficult to comprehend in certain passages.

Some words change meaning over time too. While it might have been perfectly permissible even several decades ago to say that someone was “gay” (happy), it would not be wise to say that today without a careful explanation (See James 2:3 in the KJV, “the *gay* clothing.”). Some might squirm today if we read the Palm Sunday account from the KJV (Matthew 21:2,5,7). It’s just easier to read the word “donkey.”

Some have mentioned that translations have archaisms, and that can be a matter of taste, judgment, and debate too. The KJV has some true “archaisms.” A “mean man” is a common man. “Meat” is food, not merely flesh. A “meat offering” is a grain offering. To “ear” ground means to till it. Goliath’s “target” was a javelin. Going on a “road” could mean going on a raid. “Passengers” (e.g. Proverbs 9:15) are actually people who pass by, not what we commonly think of today. To “prevent” means to come before (similar to the Latin background of that word). “Wealth” is “welfare” and “wealthy” is “happy” instead of rich (see Psalm 66:12). “Conversation” refers to behavior, rather than mere discussion. To “advertise” means to advise, but today people would think of putting an ad in the newspaper. To refresh the “bowels” means to cheer the heart. A “carriage” was something carried, not a vehicle. “Pitiful” means full of pity, not deserving of it. So 1 Peter 3:8 can say, “Be pitiful.” Today, that sounds strange to most people. They might get the wrong idea.

These descriptions are certainly not intended to downgrade the value of the King James Version. Many passages remain clear enough for most people to understand. Many of today’s Christians have memorized hundreds of Bible verses from the KJV.<sup>25</sup> It is good to retain these passages! And even in the 21st century, the NIV CBT still wants to use the KJV for help in explaining their TNIV/NIV’11 translation of 1 Timothy 2:12.<sup>26</sup> No one needs to apologize for continuing to use the KJV in personal devotions either. But, in all honesty, there are significant

---

<sup>24</sup> For examples, please see pages 167-169 of ***Bible: God’s Inspired, Inerrant Word*** (People’s Bible Teachings series), Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, © 2002.

<sup>25</sup> I’m thinking mainly of members of our congregations who were confirmed prior to 1980.

<sup>26</sup> To be mentioned later in this essay. This seems particularly ironic. My sense is: if the CBT had anywhere else to run, they would. No offense, but the CBT translators are certainly not KJV advocates elsewhere.

difficulties in using the KJV today. The KJV served for four centuries, and it is still number two on the best-selling Bible chart. That is strong testimony to the level of confidence people have in this version of the Bible. Difficulties aside, the KJV is still marked by its classic, stately, and even rhythmic expressions of the English language.

### Modern Translations: Three Main Views

There are many different versions of the Bible. There are three main views of Bible translation.

**1. Literal translation or formal equivalence** attempts to offer the closest thing possible to a word-for-word translation from the original languages. It is true that no major Bible translation is “purely literal” in a sense that I call “hyper-literal” or “literalistic.” Often, the product would be unintelligible. Sometimes hyper-literal/literalistic translation might even render a wrong meaning. So, literal versions generally try to translate as literally as possible, as often as possible. Those who claim that literal translations don’t often depart from a “hyper-literal” rendering are erecting a straw man that does not exist. No major English Bible translation that I have seen is as bad as the example cited in WLQ Spring 2011, p. 111. That example was taken from “**english.com**” (sic) where one is able to see more silly examples. On the other hand, no literal translation that I have seen is quite as good as some think Ryken seems to describe.<sup>27</sup> The three most popular examples of essentially literal translations are: the New American Standard Bible - updated edition (NASB’95), the New King James Version (NKJV), and the English Standard Version (ESV). In many passages, these three are virtually identical.

**2. Dynamic equivalence or functional equivalence** is the attempt to communicate “thought for thought” a meaning, or “dynamic force,” similar to what an original reader might have obtained from the original language. Sometimes this means departing from literal forms and wording to catch the sense. Here the big name is Eugene Nida. Those who like this theory quote and mention Nida often. Those who oppose this theory, or oppose it being over-used to a fault, tend to attack Nida.<sup>28</sup> The *New International Version* (NIV) is the best known example of this viewpoint. Sometimes this method approaches paraphrase. By the nature of this method, even more depends on the interpretations of the translators than “literal” translators.

**3. A paraphrase** is a rather free attempt to catch the sense or basic idea of the original without struggling (or sometimes even trying) to maintain a word-for-word, or even phrase-for-phrase equivalence. Paraphrases are very free, and can essentially be interpretations at times. Two examples of paraphrases are the Living Bible and Today’s English Version. Sometimes it can be difficult to tell the difference between a paraphrase and functional equivalence. The lines of distinction can become fuzzy. The *New Living Translation* (NLT) insists that it is a translation, but many still call it a paraphrase. D. A. Carson and Doug Moo were NLT

---

<sup>27</sup> Ryken, Leland. *Choosing a Bible*, Wheaton: Crossway, © 2005. I’d rather not argue about Ryken. He bothers a few men a great deal. He overstates sometimes. But if others have been “demonized,” Ryken has too. He does make some valid points. He does allow for exceptions to literal translation (e.g., see page 24 “except where a completely literal translation would have been unintelligible to an English reader...”) As a matter of fact, Ryken is not the leader of essentially literal Bible translation. He’s just a popularizer. For leaders, one might rather look to the real translators of the NASB, NKJV, and ESV, as well as many translations before these.

<sup>28</sup> For one example, see <http://www.bible-researcher.com/dynamic-equivalence.html> ... The opposing view tends to attack Ryken in recent years, though they are far from equal targets. See previous footnote.

translators. The NLT is surprisingly more conservative than NIV 2011 in 1 Timothy 2:12, “have authority.” Most agree that NIV 2011 is a translation, but occasionally it looks like a paraphrase (e.g., Psalm 8, Hebrews 2). Some translations do not wish to be trapped into these neat categories, or wish to invent their own (e.g., HCSB below). I do not wish to trouble anyone by the standard categories and will try to explain further on the individual translations.

### Some Important English Bible Translations

Translation	Date	Translators
Revised Standard Version (RSV) New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)	1952/1971 1989	32 Ecumenical scholars, led by Bruce Metzger
Living Bible / New Living Translation (NLT)	1971/ 1996, 2004, 2007	Kenneth Taylor; by Tyndale House Foundation
New American Standard Bible (NASB)	1971/1977/1995	Committee of Evangelicals
An American Translation (AAT) God’s Word to the Nations (GWN) New Evangelical Translation (NET)	1976/2000 1988 1992	William F. Beck; revised by others
New International Version (NIV) Today’s NIV (TNIV)	1978/1984/ 2005/2011	116 Evangelicals; 15 member CBT
New King James Version (NKJV)	1982	130 Evangelicals
English Standard Version (ESV)	2001/2007/2011	Evangelicals
Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)	1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2009, 2010	Southern Baptist Convention; Evangelicals

### Revised Standard Version (RSV)

Some denominations accepted the RSV for use in their churches not long after it was completed in 1952. The RSV is really a revision of the American Standard Version (ASV, 1901). The RSV sold many copies because it was rather easy to read. However, the translators did not subscribe to the verbal inspiration of Scripture, and apparently denied many Old Testament Messianic prophecies. Many conservative Bible scholars declared the RSV’s treatment of Old Testament prophecies about the coming Savior to be unacceptable.<sup>29</sup> Perhaps the most well-known example of this was the RSV’s use of the words “young woman” instead of “virgin” in Isaiah 7:14 (See Matthew 1:23). Another concern was removing some passages that declared Jesus to be true God (see Romans 9:5). Some might have gained from reading some passages of the RSV, but there is a stigma attached to the RSV.<sup>30</sup>

The RSV has essentially been superseded by the NRSV (see below). Some religious periodicals have demonized the RSV and its translators. I will not defend the RSV. But, the truth is that the ESV scholars and translators were determined to correct the problems of the RSV, while saving the better parts. There were many parts that were useful. In fairness, WLS professors from the 1950’s often spoke of some of these positive aspects of the RSV. WELS ultimately declined to use it due to the serious doctrinal problems. Yet, it is interesting to trace the history of how the RSV was treated by the WELS and WLS. One may do this using just the electronic version of the past issues of WLQ. The first quotations in WLQ are positive ones.

<sup>29</sup> This was a main reason behind the making of the NASB. See page 16 below.

<sup>30</sup> Some *Christian Worship* “Verse of the Day” selections were taken from RSV. For the sake of not disturbing informed worshipers, I suggest switching those to ESV or similar.

The review of the RSV includes this paragraph early on:

It would be neither correct nor fair to denounce the translation of the New Testament in the RSV in sweeping, categorical terms because of errors in fact or misinterpretations that we have found in it. We believe that there are such. But the fact remains that “there are many things that can and should be said in favor of” the RSV of the Bible and of its New Testament in particular. Professor Reim has promised to point such out in an early issue of *The Northwestern Lutheran*, and coming issues of our Synod’s periodicals will no doubt publish articles on both the things to be commended and those to be criticized in the new version.<sup>31</sup>

Professor Blume’s conclusion to that WLQ article strikes a chord with me in this discussion:

Is the RSV really the New Testament in modern American speech?” and “Is it the best that modern scholarship can produce?”, our reply shall have to be: “As we can see it now, the answer is No on both counts.” What answers our pastors will give to the questions of those of their people who have bought and are reading the RSV poses a much more difficult problem. Since last September 30 this writer has become increasingly convinced that no answer to our people’s inquiries will be completely satisfactory to them or to us until we have given them a version of the New Testament that will do for our generation what Luther’s New Testament of 1522 did for the Germany of his day.<sup>32</sup>

Amen, Professor Blume. This becomes increasingly fascinating as one traces what followed...

#### **Announcement Re Bible Translation**

Included in the report of the Committee on Bible Translation, adopted at the Watertown Convention, August 5–12, 1953, was the following suggestion:

“Since the appearance of the *Revised Standard Version* has incited anew the study of Bible translations, also among us, and made us conscious anew of weaknesses in the *Authorized Version*, which has been in general use in our Synod; and since suggestions have again been made that we proceed with a revision of the *Authorized Version*: the Synodical Committee at its May meeting adopted the following resolution:

“We suggest that the assignment of the Committee on the Revised Standard Version be extended to include a study of some book of the New Testament (e.g. Galatians), that the Committee be encouraged to solicit the cooperation and comment of the members of the Synod and then to publish the book studied in the *Quartalschrift*, so that thereby the translation may be rather widely tested as to readability and theological correctness.’

“Your committee concurs in this recommendation, with the understanding that it be in the nature of a revision of the *Authorized Version*.”

As implied in the above resolution the committee now contemplates undertaking a trial translation of Galatians in the manner indicated, “that it be in the nature of a revision of the *Authorized Version*,” and herewith invites the members of the Synod to contribute whatever might be of value and help to the committee in carrying out its assignment.

The reasons most frequently advanced for urging at least a trial translation of some book of the Bible are: 1. that existing translations contain archaic words or phrases; 2. that they reveal a Calvinistic influence or otherwise reflect the theological bias of the translators. As to language the *Authorized Version*, of which the contemplated translation is to be a revision, could undoubtedly be brought up to date with a minimum of change. It is especially in regard to changes involving

---

<sup>31</sup> WLQ Vol. 50:1, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup> WLQ Vol. 50:1, p. 15.



doctrine that the committee invites comment, but asks that this be of a specific nature, both as to criticism of the translation to be changed as well as to a possible revision of the same. Contributions are kindly to be sent to the undersigned.

Gerald Hoenecke, secretary  
Wisconsin Synod Committee on Bible Translation  
Box 953, Thiensville, Wisconsin.<sup>33</sup>

There is more history to learn and tell there. Maybe someone else will study it as a historian and share wise insights with us. How interesting that a translation with doctrinal problems prompted a call to produce our own translation! How encouraging it is to read of the strong concern for pure doctrine. May we be just as concerned for pure doctrine today!

### **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)**

The NRSV appeared in 1989 as an update of the RSV with the same theological problems. Despite all the criticism of the RSV, the NRSV, a product of the National Council of Churches (NCC), remained unwilling to translate Isaiah 7:14 with the word, “virgin.” As Luther said, sometimes translators can’t help but reveal their confessional position. Matthew 1:23 reveals that this prophecy is a direct Messianic prophecy. The Hebrew term “*almah*” is used six times in the Old Testament and always refers to an unmarried lady who is still a virgin. The NRSV also strives to be gender-inclusive/neutral. The overseers of this translation seemed to have a few axes to grind, some of which were not even shared by the translators.<sup>34</sup> Instead of “Spirit of God” in Genesis 1:2, the NRSV says, “a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.” The NRSV might be helpful in some passages. It is superior to NIV’11 on 1 Timothy 2:12 (“have authority”), and better than its predecessor, the RSV, on Romans 9:5. But, it is not reliable enough for general use. That Fee and Strauss recommend the NRSV as the best of the “formal equivalent” versions probably reveals more about the theological viewpoints of Fee and Strauss than it does about the NRSV. Respectfully, I must strongly disagree with their judgment. It is debatable if the NRSV really fits in that category. The NRSV is not in the same league with the much more conservative and reliable “big three” of essentially literal versions (NASB’95, NKJV, ESV). The NRSV is the real “RSV” of today. It’s the translation of choice for many/most in the NCC, for many university “religion” professors, for more liberal theologians, and it is the basis for the ELCA’s “Lutheran Study Bible.”<sup>35</sup>

### **Living Bible (LB) - New Living Translation (NLT)**

Kenneth Taylor wanted his family to be able to understand the Bible. Though he didn’t have the ability to translate from the Hebrew and Greek languages, Taylor offered a paraphrase of the American Standard Version (ASV, 1901). This paraphrase, known as the **Living Bible (LB)** became very popular because it was so easy to read. However, it is not close enough to the original languages and does present some theological problems. It is especially weak on passages pertaining to the sacrament of Holy Baptism. For example, in Mark 1:4, the LB called John’s baptism “a public announcement of their decision to turn their backs on sin” instead of “a baptism of repentance *for the forgiveness of sins*.” I cannot recommend the Living Bible.

In 1989, ninety Evangelical scholars began work on the **New Living Translation (NLT)**,

---

<sup>33</sup> WLQ Vol. 51:1, p. 63.

<sup>34</sup> For a little more information, see: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/nrsv.html>

<sup>35</sup> One way to keep it separate from CPH’s “*The Lutheran Study Bible*,” is that the ELCA version is by Augsburg/Fortress, lacks “The” (definite article) in the name, and has a baby blue colored cover.

the heir to the Living Bible paraphrase.<sup>36</sup> The New Living Translation does claim to be a translation. Read this introduction to the NLT from the 2007 edition and see if this does not sound familiar.

English Bible translations tend to be governed by one of two general translation theories. The first theory has been called “formal-equivalence,” “literal,” or “word-for-word” translation. According to this theory, the translator attempts to render each word of the original language into English and seeks to preserve the original syntax and sentence structure as much as possible in translation. The second theory has been called “dynamic-equivalence,” “functional-equivalence,” or “thought-for-thought” translation. The goal of this translation theory is to produce in English the closest natural equivalent of the message expressed by the original-language text, both in meaning and in style.

Both of these translation theories have their strengths. A formal-equivalence translation preserves aspects of the original text—including ancient idioms, term consistency, and original-language syntax—that are valuable for scholars and professional study. It allows a reader to trace formal elements of the original-language text through the English translation. A dynamic-equivalence translation, on the other hand, focuses on translating the message of the original-language text. It ensures that the meaning of the text is readily apparent to the contemporary reader. This allows the message to come through with immediacy, without requiring the reader to struggle with foreign idioms and awkward syntax. It also facilitates serious study of the text’s message and clarity in both devotional and public reading.

The pure application of either of these translation philosophies would create translations at opposite ends of the translation spectrum. But in reality, all translations contain a mixture of these two philosophies. A purely formal-equivalence translation would be unintelligible in English, and a purely dynamic-equivalence translation would risk being unfaithful to the original. That is why translations shaped by dynamic-equivalence theory are usually quite literal when the original text is relatively clear, and the translations shaped by formal-equivalence theory are sometimes quite dynamic when the original text is obscure.

The translators of the New Living Translation set out to render the message of the original texts of Scripture into clear, contemporary English. As they did so, they kept the concerns of both formal-equivalence and dynamic-equivalence in mind. On the one hand, they translated as simply and literally as possible when that approach yielded an accurate, clear, and natural English text. Many words and phrases were rendered literally and consistently into English, preserving essential literary and rhetorical devices, ancient metaphors, and word choices that give structure to the text and provide echoes of meaning from one passage to the next.

On the other hand, the translators rendered the message more dynamically when the literal rendering was hard to understand, was misleading, or yielded archaic or foreign wording. They clarified difficult metaphors and terms to aid in the reader’s understanding. The translators first struggled with the meaning of the words and phrases in the ancient context; then they rendered the message into clear, natural English. Their goal was to be both faithful to the ancient texts and eminently readable. The result is a translation that is both exegetically accurate and idiomatically powerful.<sup>37</sup>

That’s a good explanation of Bible translation theory. Does the NLT really live up to its claims? I would have to agree with those who say that it does not. But, the NLT reads well. I believe that’s the only reason the NLT is the fourth best-selling Bible translation today.<sup>38</sup> The NLT surpasses NIV’11 in translating 1 Timothy 2:12, “have authority.” I believe that the NLT makes better translation judgments in a few areas where NIV’11 has made gender-neutral

---

<sup>36</sup> for more information, see: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/nlt.html>

<sup>37</sup> <http://newlivingtranslation.com/05discoverthenlt/nltintro.asp>

<sup>38</sup> [http://cbaonline.org/nm/documents/BSLs/Bible\\_Translations.pdf](http://cbaonline.org/nm/documents/BSLs/Bible_Translations.pdf)

changes, such as using “brothers” in Acts 1:16 and 6:3 instead of “brothers and sisters.” In Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3, the NLT might be a little more clear than NIV’11 on man/woman roles. What do you think of the NLT translation of Acts 2:42: “All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.” That one made me pause and stare. Interesting, right?

Unfortunately, upon closer examination of the words on the page, the NLT is certainly not the most accurate or doctrinally reliable version. For example, Romans 3:28 reads, “So we are **made right** with God through faith and not by obeying the law” (NLT uses “made right” 39 times; see Rom 5:1; 2 Cor 5:21, etc.). The familiar “flesh gives birth to flesh” in John 3:6 is rendered, “Humans can reproduce only human life” in NLT. The NLT shares some of the same problems/issues as the NRSV and TNIV/NIV’11, including some excessive gender-inclusive changes (e.g., Psalm 8:4-6, Hebrews 2:6-9). Acts 3:21 is rendered, “he must remain in heaven,” as one TEC appointed reviewer rightly described as “obnoxious.”

Fee & Strauss recommend all three of these versions (NLT, NRSV, TNIV), but I respectfully and strongly disagree with their judgment. I cannot recommend the NLT to the WELS. It’s just too loose from the original text.

If someone wants to read the NLT privately, because it does read very well, may God bless you. Occasionally, I have found a passage that is exceptionally good in the NLT. But, usually there is a verse in the near context that is exceptionally poor. The NLT impressed me in Philippians 2:9, “Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names.” But, two verses earlier, there is a serious problem: “Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form...” Php 2:7 (NLT). It would be a good lesson in Christian Dogmatics to find the problems in that one verse.<sup>39</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:18–19 (NLT) serves as another example of this. Verse 18 is a problem: “God has given us this task of reconciling people to him.” But verse 19 is much better: “For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.”

Overall, the NLT is just not sufficiently accurate. If readability (testing out how it reads or makes you feel, whether it’s accurate or not) is your #1 concern, NLT might hold the top spot. But I do not believe “readability” should be the #1 concern for the WELS in choosing a Bible translation.

### **New American Standard Bible (NASB)**

The NASB stands as an excellent example of literal translation. The NASB is a very faithful, conservative Bible translation. It “is a revision of the American Standard Version (1901). It was produced by a company of conservative scholars who wished to provide a literal and conservative revision of the ASV, as an alternative to the Revised Standard Version (1952), which had proven to be unacceptable to conservative churches.”<sup>40</sup> For a review of the original NASB, see the article by Professor Armin Panning.<sup>41</sup> Here are some excerpts from the preface to the NASB’95:

---

<sup>39</sup> Jesus did not give up his divine powers, he gave up the full and constant use of them. His humiliation does not consist in his being born as a human being, but in the lowly nature of his birth and humble life during his state of humiliation. See Pieper’s *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II, 292.

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.bible-researcher.com/nasb.html>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/1692>

In 1995 the NASB was updated, increasing clarity and readability. Vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure were carefully reviewed for greater understanding and smoother reading...

The NASB translators believe that to make the best translation of the Scriptures even better, change should not be made just for the sake of change. This means keeping the updated NASB exactly what it has always been and will forever be—literally accurate. In order to be deemed acceptable by translators, updated material had to maintain the highest standards of literal translation. Thus the smoother reading updated NASB refines the differences in style between the ancient languages and current English. In the process, Old English "thees," "thys," and "thous," archaic vocabulary, and sentences beginning with "And" have been updated for better English, while verses with difficult word order were restructured.

In addition, parallel passages have been compared and reviewed and verbs that have a wide range of meaning have been updated to better account for their use in the context. Proper names or titles have been used in place of pronouns only when the context made it clear who the person was. Punctuation and paragraphing have been formatted to fit today's standards. Notes about ancient manuscripts, which have appeared in most editions of the NASB, have been reviewed and, in many cases, feature new and more specific interesting facts.

The New American Standard Bible has been produced with the conviction that the words of Scripture, as originally penned in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, were inspired by God. Since they are the eternal Word of God, the Holy Scriptures speak with fresh power to each generation, to give wisdom that leads to salvation so that men and women may serve Christ for the glory of God.

The updated NASB represents revisions and refinements recommended over the last several years and incorporates thorough research based on current English usage. And rest assured, the translators and consultants who contributed to the updated NASB are, as always, conservative Bible scholars who have doctorates in biblical languages, theology, or other advanced degrees. Representing a variety of denominational backgrounds, the translators of the updated NASB meticulously followed all the same tried-and-true safeguards as set forth in the original NASB, which took the NASB translators nearly 10 years to complete.

In preparation, numerous linguistic tools and literature of biblical scholarship were consulted. Decisions about English renderings were made by consensus of a team composed of educators and pastors who were directed by their faith that the original words of Scripture were inspired by God. Therefore, their work was treated reverently and carefully, as changes were kept to a minimum. Completed sections of work were passed to critical consultants for a thorough review of the translation. The work passed between committees on numerous occasions before final review and revision in plenary sessions.

In perfecting the updated NASB, more than 20 translators spent nearly three years scrutinizing the NASB in order to modernize and maintain it in accordance with the most recent research on the oldest and best manuscripts. Thus, some passages have been updated for even greater fidelity to the original manuscripts.

At NO point did the translators attempt to interpret Scripture through translation. Instead, the NASB translation team adhered to the principles of literal translation. This is the most exacting and demanding method of translation, requiring a word-for-word translation that is both accurate and readable. This method follows the word and sentence patterns of the original authors in order to enable the reader to study Scripture in its most literal format and to experience the individual personalities of those who penned the original manuscripts. For example, one can directly compare and contrast the simple eloquent style of John with the deep complexity of Paul.

Instead of telling the reader what to think, the updated NASB provides the most precise translation with which to conduct a personal journey through the Word of God.<sup>42</sup>

You may decide for yourself if NASB'95 reads well enough or if it is still rather stiff or

---

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.lockman.org/nasb/>

wooden.<sup>43</sup> Its strength lies in the fact that it closely follows the original text. For this reason, the NASB is recommended as a reference Bible. If someone does not know Hebrew or Greek, and would like to check the translation of a Bible passage, the NASB is helpful.

My study of the NASB'95 reveals that it is not quite as literal ("formal equivalent") as its reputation. It catches more idioms than some have noticed. Genesis 4:1 is translated, "the man had relations with his wife Eve," although it notes the literal translation, "knew" (also Gen. 19:5). I wish I kept a list of all the times I've noted this aspect in my studies. Instead, I'll quote and highlight places where Fee & Strauss seem surprised to find ("even") NASB'95/NASU handling idioms fairly well:

For example, in John 10:24 the people ask Jesus (literally), "Until when will you take up our souls?" The Greek idiom "take up souls" means to "keep in suspense," so **even the NASU translates, "How long will You keep us in suspense?"** Similarly, in John 9:21 the parents of the man born blind tell the religious leaders that their son "has lifespan." **This idiom means he is "of age" (NASU, TNIV, ESV) or "old enough" (NJB, GNT, CEV) to speak for himself.** (Notice that "of age" is an English idiom.) Mark 1:32, translated literally, says that Jesus healed all "those having badly." The Greek idiom means "those who were sick." In cases like these, even formal equivalent versions must abandon a literal policy and translate idiomatically. Other Hebrew and Greek idioms may be comprehensible when translated literally, but result in awkward or obscure English. First Samuel 10:9 (ESV) reads, "When he [Saul] turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart." The Hebrew idiom "give a new heart" means "to change one's disposition or heart attitude." Most versions read **"God changed his heart" (NASU, HCSB, TNIV).** Esther 1:14 (ESV) speaks of the close advisers to King Xerxes "who saw the king's face." The Hebrew idiom means **those "who had special access to the king" (cf. NASU, TNIV, NIV, NRSV, HCSB).** In Joshua 10:6 (ESV) the men of Gibeon say to Joshua, "Do not relax your hand from your servants." The Hebrew idiom "relax your hand" means to "abandon," and most versions say **"do not abandon your servants" (NASU, HCSB, NRSV, TNIV, GW, NET; cf. NKJV).** Mark 1:2 NKJV reads, "I send my messenger before Your face." "Before your face" is a Greek idiom which means "ahead of you," and most versions translate accordingly (HCSB, NET, NIV, TNIV, NAB, GNT, GW). While the original NASB used "before your face," its **1995 update (NASU) revises this to "ahead of you."**<sup>44</sup>

Though Fee & Strauss did not specifically quote it, NASB'95 renders Mark 1:32 properly as "all who were ill" (see their reference above). I like NASB's treatment of Psalm 23, demonstrating admirable respect for the English translation tradition. I applaud their including "eternity" at the end of Micah 5:2. They characteristically use "lovingkindness" for *chesed*, one of the recognizable marks of the NASB.

NASB'95 is a fine conservative Bible translation, which does not introduce false doctrine. I am not aware of any problems with NASB'95, other than whether it reads well enough. That can be decided by more use. If you've used it and decided, fine. If you haven't used it, maybe you should. I believe that the NASB'95 "is a contemporary Bible translation which, although not

---

<sup>43</sup> Fee & Strauss use the less usual "NASU" for NASB'95. Since Fee & Strauss are on the CBT, I wonder if they would mind if we, in a similar way, might refer to NIV'11 as TNIV2. It seems more clear and less confusing.

<sup>44</sup> Fee, Gordon D.; Strauss, Mark L. (2009-05-19). *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions* (chapter 4; Kindle Locations 978-992). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.



a perfect translation, is one which may be used with a high degree of confidence.”<sup>45</sup>

Unfortunately, NASB’95 lacks confessional Lutheran materials to go along with it (i.e., no hymnals, Catechisms, Bible history materials, to my knowledge, make use of it). Some confessional Lutherans prefer it and quote it. NASB’95 hovers near the bottom of the top ten list, in terms of sales, and can be more difficult than other choices to find for purchase. The Lockman Foundation informed me of some vague plans to revise it, but no timetable has been set.<sup>46</sup> I would expect any revision to be conservative and in the direction of easier reading.

### **An American Translation (AAT)**

Most modern translations are the work of Evangelical/Reformed scholars. The AAT is the work of a Missouri Synod Lutheran, Dr. William F. Beck. Beck wanted to translate the Bible as Luther did. “Bible Bill Beck” wanted his translation to be in “coffee and doughnuts American language.” His translation still reads easily. It is generally clear and accurate in rendering the meaning of the original languages, although it is a rather free translation. In my terms, it is not particularly “tight to the text.”

Several attempts at revising the AAT followed, but it never became a very popular version, even among Lutherans. It was not adopted for use in most churches because of a perceived lack of proper dignity or solemnity in certain places. Some pastors reported in the 1970’s and 1980’s that reading the colloquial language of the AAT in worship did not seem to flow well. Some were “tripping over their tongues.” Of course, that is a matter of Christian judgment, and some might disagree. One significant problem was that it was not available for purchase in most bookstores. Some feared the accusation that they were using a “sectarian” Bible. But, overall Beck’s translation can be recommended, and is especially useful for devotional reading. Many find it to be the most helpful version for understanding certain key Bible passages. For many years, Reformed translators borrowed from Luther’s translation of the Bible. It seems fitting to have a conservative Lutheran translation available in English.

Since there have been several versions of Beck, and several spin-off versions, it might be helpful to clarify a little. Beck’s New Testament translation was first published by Concordia Publishing House in 1963. Since CPH no longer seemed interested, Christian News (New Haven, MO: Leader) published the full Beck’s Bible posthumously in 1976.

In 1978, some Lutherans decided to revise the AAT. Considerable effort went into this revision of Beck’s published in 1988 as “**God’s Word to the Nations**” (GWN; renamed the “**New Evangelical Translation** - NET, in 1990).<sup>47</sup> WLS Professors Siegbert Becker and David Kuske worked on this excellent New Testament translation. In the early 1990’s there were high hopes that **GWN/NET** would become a full Bible. Some good translation examples came out as ILCW worship lessons, and a Proverbs volume.

But then the oversight of the translation changed. The translation philosophy changed to

---

<sup>45</sup> This statement by the WLS faculty was actually applied to NIV 1978 and NIV 1984. I use it as boilerplate for a recommended version. Quoted words taken from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, & Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. (1998). *Vol. 85: Wisconsin Lutheran quarterly, Volume 85* (electronic edition.). Logos Library System; Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly (108). Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House.

<sup>46</sup> Email: “We are not in the process of revising or updating the NASB at this time. It is something we will likely do but it would not be ready for a number of years after it is started. We do not have a start date at this time.”

<sup>47</sup> One must distinguish this NET from the “*NET Bible*,” or *New English Translation*, see here: <http://bible.org/netbible/>. For this reason, I still use “GWN” or “GWN/NET” for clarity.



“closest natural equivalence.”<sup>48</sup> The result was a 1995 version known as the **“God’s Word” translation (GW)** that many confessional Lutherans could not recommend.<sup>49</sup> It was marked by doctrinal problems such as the phrase, “because of faith” making faith a cause of salvation. When Dr. Robert Preus saw that the changes included making faith a cause of justification, he wept.<sup>50</sup> The complaints of Preus and others did result in some passages being improved in the next edition. But the 1995 edition is the one on biblegateway.com. I found ten passages with that troublesome phrase: Romans 1:17; 3:28, 30; ch. 4 (heading); 4:20; 5:1; Galatians 2:16; 3:11,24; Hebrews 10:38. Romans 3:28 reads, “We conclude that a person has God’s approval because of faith, not because of his own efforts.” The revised version of GW seems to be at: <http://www.biblestudytools.com/gw/>, although it lists 1995 as the copyright date too. But, even in the revision, problems still remain. It still uses “approval” for just about every justification passage. Regularly inserting “Moses’ teachings” as the translation for “Law” becomes more annoying, and less clear, as I read the text. And Acts 6:3 says, “brothers and sisters” which is not correct. “Happy” seems to be used way too much (106 times). For example, 1 Corinthians 13:6 reads, “It isn’t happy when injustice is done, but it is happy with the truth.” How does this GW translation of James 1:2 sound to you: “My brothers and sisters, be very happy when you are tested in different ways”? I’m not ready to recommend GW for regular use. But in some passages it can be quite helpful (e.g., Romans 9:22-23). GW seems like a rather free paraphrase and not a serious contender for general use right now.

In 2000, Christian News (New Haven, MO: Leader) published another revision of the original AAT, this one prepared by John Drickamer. Some changes improved the text. In Romans 3:20 and 3:30, Drickamer changed Beck’s “make righteous” to “declare righteous.” For more examples, see **Appendix B**, being sent along with this essay. The strength of the AAT is excellent translations of Messianic prophecies. Overall, Beck’s AAT is probably the best translation in English in the category of Messianic prophecy. AAT offers helpful renderings of passages that are especially important in Lutheran doctrine (e.g., Romans 9:22-23; 1 Peter 2:8; etc.). There are many strong renderings in the AAT.

But, the AAT has its weaknesses and quirks too. AAT uses “fellow Christians” for “brothers” in 1 Corinthians 14:39, which is not good in context. AAT tends to use “holy people” instead of “saints.” This is possible, but I wonder... Will we soon have a “Holy People Triumphant” Sunday at the end of the church year? Will we sing “For All the Holy People” instead of “For All the Saints”? Will my congregation’s name be changed to “Holy Man Stephen” or even “Holy Person Stephen”? After we think a little more deeply, don’t quite a number of the changes being made these days (in NIV and other versions, including AAT) seem rather superficial and even shallow? One brother in the ministry who recently read the AAT wrote that he’s “sick of seeing the word ‘happy’” in the AAT (which also appears maybe too often in NLT and HCSB). He continued, “anyone suffering from depression, or even normal sadness that affects us all, would have to find the AAT a stumbling block.” I will add that “happy” is not the same as “blessed,” and I’m glad that at least the AAT left “blessed” in places like Psalm 1 and the Beatitudes of Matthew 5. While reviewing the AAT, I am repeatedly reminded of one major weakness: AAT is still not in a searchable computer format. We can’t just type the word “happy” and see where it appears. We have to page through the whole AAT Bible to see where it might or might not appear. But I share my brother’s perception that it’s overused in AAT too.

In many cases, the AAT would be better served to just adopt the GWN rendering. For

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.godswordtranslation.org/ME2/Sites/Default.asp?SiteID=87ADA8B8A8474F90A93883C58F52923F>

<sup>49</sup> see <http://www.bible-researcher.com/godsword.html>

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.reclaimingwalthers.org/articles/jmc00150.htm>

example, AAT's 2 Peter 1:10, "make sure you're God's called and chosen ones" is not nearly as good as GWN's "make sure that your calling and choosing are secure." Is there something we can do to pry into God's secret counsel? Or, worse, is there something we can do to make sure God calls and chooses us? This is how strange ideas are formed in readers' minds.

AAT has a tendency to turn Hebrew/Greek nouns into English verbs. I prefer that a translation be more "tight to the text," as I like to say. Changing Hebrew/Greek nouns into English verbs can lead to strange ideas too. In 1 Corinthians 6:10, the AAT says that those who "get drunk" will have no share in God's kingdom. Those who "get drunk" might have had too much to drink one time. That does not necessarily make them "drunkards" who do this habitually, without repenting. Again, this kind of over-simplification often just leads to more problems. Is it really that hard to understand, "drunkards"? Really? What do you think of AAT's version of the "fruits of the Spirit" section in Galatians 5:22-23, "But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace. He makes us patient, kindly, good, faithful, gentle, and gives us self-control." To some, this doesn't seem quite the same. It's a repetitive tendency in AAT. In the **Appendix B** comparison of translations, there are more examples of problems in the AAT.

But it is very strong in Messianic prophecy. I believe, overall, that the AAT "is a contemporary Bible translation which, although not a perfect translation, is one which may be used with a high degree of confidence."<sup>51</sup> I still prefer my 1988 GWN (New Testament) to the 2000 AAT. But, I would have no problems with the AAT being used for Bible History materials. Some will enjoy reading the AAT as a devotional Bible. Whether it is ready for regular worship use is another question. Some have described the style as simple, and flat. I believe too many contractions are used in all the Beck's editions mentioned above, since contractions are less clear to read/hear. But, if the WELS voted for AAT, I would go along with that. I'd suggest that an even better option would be to revise the AAT Old Testament and the GWN New Testament. That idea appeals to more than a few in WELS. Perhaps the WELS TFC will take that into account too.

WLS Prof.-em. David Kuske has completed his own New Testament revision in the Beck's tradition of simplified translation. Kuske's version is a revision of the GWN/NET (similar to a WELS/NPH translation for which I was privileged to serve as a parish reviewer). At this writing, Kuske's NT revision has not yet been published, but Prof. Kuske was kind enough to supply me with a copy. It features shorter sentences than NIV. Kuske uses "Good News" instead of "gospel," "undeserved favor" instead of "grace," "acquit" instead of "justify," and "holy people" instead of "saints," etc. It seems to me that it would serve well as a simplified Bible for English as a second language people, for inmates, for children, and for adult readers who like a simpler version. I'm not sure that all would be satisfied with it for regular worship and Bible Class use. Perhaps it will be more thoroughly discussed by the Translation Feasibility Committee (TFC).

### **New International Version (NIV)**

The original **NIV (1978/1984)** became the best-selling Bible translation on the market. All of the original NIV translators held that the Bible is God's inerrant Word. They aimed for "dynamic equivalence" of the original languages. In other words, the NIV aims to be neither a

---

<sup>51</sup> This statement by the WLS faculty was actually applied to NIV 1978 and NIV 1984. I use it as boilerplate for a recommended version. Quoted words taken from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, & Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. (1998). *Vol. 85: Wisconsin Lutheran quarterly, Volume 85* (electronic edition.). Logos Library System; Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly (108). Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House.

literal “word-for-word” version, nor a paraphrase. The NIV 1984 became familiar to WELS. It served us well. Yet, there is no such thing as a perfect translation. In some cases, the NIV 1984 was not as close to the original wording as I often hoped.<sup>52</sup> But, it read very well, and if NIV 1984 were not removed from the market, it would still achieve wide use and broad acceptance among us.

But the Committee on Bible Translation (CBT) has issued revisions that have not been as popular or as well-liked among us. ***The New International Version - Inclusive Language Edition (NIVI, 1996)*** was probably the worst.<sup>53</sup>

When the complete ***Today's New International Version (TNIV) 2005*** arrived, WELS did not instantly sign on the dotted line, making a new deal with TNIV. WELS was largely untouched by the firestorm of controversies roughly outlined in the timeline at the beginning of this essay. TNIV was a very controversial version with both supporters and critics.<sup>54</sup>

We often like to clarify that WELS does not have an “official translation.” But NIV’84 was widely used in WELS. It is difficult to see how the decision to remove NIV’84 from the market, essentially replacing it with a version of the TNIV is good for them or the churches using NIV. They were offering a choice when NIV’84 and TNIV were both available. Those who liked one or the other could choose. It was easy to see from the sales charts that NIV’84 was the more popular choice by far. TNIV was not selling well at all. So, it was quite a daring move to merge the two versions, with the product ending up much more like TNIV than NIV’84. This gamble will likely cost Zondervan sales. But all the translation decisions were made by the CBT, so Zondervan can’t really be blamed for that. But, it can’t make much business sense for Zondervan to essentially trade the #1 selling translation for one that struggled to stay in the top ten.

Removing NIV’84 has seemed oppressive to people. Some are ready to leave NIV simply because this seems so harsh to remove the #1 selling translation from the market. It has applied pressure on Northwestern Publishing House and WELS to make a quick decision, one that might not be in our best interests in the long run. Had we all been more informed about the controversies, we might be better prepared as a synod. Some will and some will not be fooled by an NIV cover on top of a translation that is essentially “TNIV 2.” If it had been called “TNIV 2,” I think that would be quite fair. Some would want it. Others would not. But people would know it’s “TNIV 2.”

It is easy to demonstrate that NIV 2011 is way more TNIV than NIV 1984. 91-92% of the verses are identical to TNIV, while only 61% of the verses are the same as NIV’84. See [http://www.slowley.com/niv2011\\_comparison/](http://www.slowley.com/niv2011_comparison/). See the chart at: <http://biblewebapp.com/niv2011-changes/>. See page 13 of **Appendix A: “Evaluating NIV 2011.”**<sup>55</sup> The CBT website does

---

<sup>52</sup> For some examples, see Appendix A, page 11, and also page 2.

<sup>53</sup> The 1995 CBT included a statement in the NIVI Preface that certainly did not calm concerns: “it was often appropriate to **mute the patriarchalism** of the culture of the biblical writers through gender-inclusive language when this could be done without compromising the message of the Spirit” (emphasis mine). For the whole preface, see: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/nivi-preface.html>. Some even began to ask if all current members of the NIV-CBT really subscribe to “inerrancy.” E.g., see: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/niv-inerrancy.html>. According to the original charter, article III, section 3, each CBT member must regard the Bible as “inerrant in the autographs.” I’ve heard that they have a “high view of Scripture” which dogmatically seems very indefinite.

<sup>54</sup> see “supporters and critics” at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Today's\\_New\\_International\\_Version](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Today's_New_International_Version)

<sup>55</sup> To my eyes, much has changed from NIV’84 in the direction of TNIV. For more information: [http://www.slowley.com/niv2011\\_comparison/index.html](http://www.slowley.com/niv2011_comparison/index.html).

claim that 95% of NIV remains the same.<sup>56</sup> I have not seen the raw data supporting that claim. That must be some kind of “word level” comparison, but the data I have seen shows only 91.37% of NIV’84’s words remain in NIV’11, and there is no comparison made to TNIV.<sup>57</sup> My question is: how much of TNIV remains the same in NIV’11? Might it be that more than 99% of the words remain from TNIV to NIV’11? The claim about 95% remaining the same from NIV’84 to NIV’11 is only important to this particular discussion if we also learn what percentage of TNIV’s words remain the same in NIV’11.

If 99+% is correct, it makes my point: NIV’11 is essentially TNIV 2. If this new translation were not called “NIV” but were called, “TNIV 2,” it would make the whole change even more interesting. Not as many people would assume it’s the same old NIV. People would not immediately make it the default selection, because we never had a deal with the TNIV, did we?

So, I would submit the idea that we do not so much need to seek a “deal-breaker” at all. Instead, an entirely new deal needs to be made. That is a more difficult road for a translation to travel, but I believe NIV’11 must travel that road.

There are serious concerns with NIV 2011. Some of these concerns were raised by TEC appointed reviewers (See the TEC appointed reviewers’ comments quoted in **Appendix B**: the chart comparing NIV 2011 with other translations). Several of the reviewers seemed to indicate that if their concerns continued through the Bible, there should be serious doubt whether we should adopt NIV’11. Many of those concerns do seem to continue from book to book. Individual reviewers may disagree. Some TEC appointed reviewers certainly did come to different judgments. I will not repeat a long list of passages here, so I will repeat this request: **please look for and read the TEC appointed reviewers’ concerns in Appendix B.** The first few pages document some of the more serious concerns. The remainder lists examples of other concerns in Biblical order, especially those mentioned by the TEC appointed reviewers.

In **Appendix A**, I tried to list some of the improvements, some debatable changes, and some weakened passages in NIV’11. I must admit that I did not find nearly as many improvements as problems. I will discuss a few of my concerns below. One purpose of **Appendix B** was to list other concerns, especially those of other TEC appointed reviewers.

At what point is “critical mass” reached for each pastor or professor or editor or teacher or layman...? At what point is a pastor able to say, “I’ve seen enough. There are too many problems here.” I cannot answer that question for anyone else. I can report that some have already reached that point. One pastor spoke on the synod convention floor, concluding that due to the problems, NIV 2011 is “unacceptable.” Several congregations have studied the NIV’s changes with their pastors and decided that they will not be using NIV’11. Some pastors have met and studied the issue and determined that NIV is not sufficiently reliable. Individual pastors have said in public and private that they could not recommend NIV’11. We all have the right to use our best Christian judgment in this matter.<sup>58</sup>

While reading and receiving materials from the TEC, we should not ignore the concerns that have been raised by others. I agree with President Schroeder’s comments on the September 2011 WELS Connection video regarding the importance of this issue, and the importance of “all viewpoints being heard and all concerns being addressed.” If this essay is read and/or heard within WELS, it can be one example of that being carried out. Thank you for this opportunity.

---

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.niv-cbt.org/category/questions/tniv/>

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.biblewebapp.com/niv2011-changes/>

<sup>58</sup> We do well to listen to these judgments. If NIV’11 is chosen, some have stated openly that they would not be purchasing materials based on NIV’11. Then NPH would unfortunately have to suffer a loss of sales. And perhaps this difference in judgment might become difficult in other ways.

Delegates will be voting on this matter in the summer of 2012. How much of the objective evidence will they see and have time to carefully weigh and consider? I do not believe it is sufficient to simply read through the NIV 2011 to see how it reads/feels. Sure, take that test drive. But it isn't enough. Pastors, please look under the hood too. Check it over carefully (exegetically/doctrinally).

I highly recommend that every pastor read Prof. Brug's TNIV review. See: <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/2152> in the WLS essay file (or, WLQ Spring 2006. Vol. 103, No. 2, pp. 138ff.). All of the points Prof. Brug made about the TNIV apply now to NIV 2011 (with the possible exception of a minor point - see if you can find it).

The NIV 2011 translators' notes make some nice claims.

***Using plurals instead of singulars to deal with generic forms was avoided.*** Except for some instances where all alternatives proved awkward or potentially misleading, singular nouns or substantive participles in the biblical languages were translated with singular nouns or noun equivalents in English ("The one who. . .," "the person who. . .," "whoever. . .," and the like).

***Using second person forms instead of third person forms to deal with generics was avoided.*** In other words, the translation does not read, "You who have this-or-that should do such-and-such," to avoid saying "He who has this-or-that should do such-and-such." The exception to this rule was when a second person form was already present in the immediate context and it would be poor English style not to preserve it throughout.<sup>59</sup>

When I examined the changes in NIV, I noticed that there are actually many examples of singulars being changed to plurals. The following are just a few examples: Psalm 8:4-6; Hebrews 2:6-8; John 14:23; Proverbs 10:26; 11:9; 12:11; 12:15; 16:17; etc... Many more could be given. And there are many examples of second person forms being used to replace third person forms, to avoid "he" such as, Matthew 6:24, 27; Luke 16:13; 1 Corinthians 3:18; etc.<sup>60</sup> Some in our midst have complained about the overstated claims of those promoting the ESV. The NIV has overstated claims too. Some of the CBT's claims mentioned above and below, among others, strike me the very same way ESV's claims strike TNIV/NIV'11 supporters.

One of the big claims by the *Translators' Notes* is "Progress in Scholarship." In some cases, there has been a little progress. In other cases, one must wonder. The following is one example of such "progress." The CBT wrote, "We now know that the word translated 'demons' in the original NIV of Psalm 106:37 is more accurately translated 'false gods.'" Really? What about the divinely inspired New Testament which says, "the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons (δαιμονίους) not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons (τῶν δαιμονίων)" (1 Cor 10:20, NIV)? Also Prof. Brug wrote regarding the term *šedu* in Psalm 106:37, that it "is a rare word that is usually translated 'demons.' Paul's comments in 1 Corinthians 10:18-22 seem to support this understanding. The Akkadian word *šedu* seems to refer to a supernatural being that is less than a god."<sup>61</sup>

The translators claim that "alien" means "extraterrestrial being." I wonder if their Collins Bank of English usage really bears that claim out. Might we find some uses for the term "illegal *alien*" during the election process? Isn't the CBT's reference to "E.T." from the 1980's? How up to date is that? The movie, "E.T." came out in 1982, before the 1984 NIV revision appeared. A good debate could ensue on "strangers" (as the replacement) and whether that's really the right term too. Isn't a "stranger" often someone creeping around in a dark neighborhood, a person

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.niv-cbt.org/niv-2011-overview/translators-notes/> or <http://biblica.com/niv/accuracy/>

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.cbmw.org/Resources/Articles/Data-Supporting-CBMW-Review-of-2011-NIV>

<sup>61</sup> Brug, John. *Commentary on Psalms 73-150*. Milwaukee: NPH, 2004. p. 255-256.



little children are warned to avoid? I still remember, “Don’t accept a ride from a stranger!” We can discuss these claims for days, perhaps. Finally, someone has to make judgment calls and the CBT made theirs.

There are many changes of many different types, as **Appendices A & B** demonstrate. We could discuss them all. But, I’m going to move on to some of the more serious concerns. The new footnote, “young woman,” on Isaiah 7:14, is a cause for some real concern for the future. Psalm 16 is significantly weakened as a Messianic prophecy as the TEC appointed reviewer noted. The footnote added to Psalm 45:6 is just wrong. The Messianic prophecies of Psalm 72 are changed into petitions.

## Psalm 8 & Hebrews 2

One of the biggest problems with the NIV 2011 is the changed translation of Psalm 8:4-6 and Hebrews 2:6-9. Dr. Martin Luther, the Lutheran Confessions, and many confessional Lutheran scholars have clearly explained Psalm 8:4-6 as a Messianic prophecy and Hebrews 2:6-9 as the fulfillment. I recommend the chapter, “*Luther and Psalm 8*,” in “*Luther Lives*” (NPH, 1983. pp. 85ff.), where Prof. Wilbert Gawrisch wrote about this “direct or rectilinear Messianic prophecy.” Now available here: <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/PS8.pdf>.

Some might debate that this is an exegetical question. **My main point in this presentation is that NIV 2011 makes it impossible for an English reader to interpret Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2 as direct, rectilinear prophecy about Christ.** Some, such as Fee & Strauss, actually assert that “all commentators agree” that Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2 are merely about humanity in general.<sup>62</sup> That is true of many commentators, but it is simply not true among confessional Lutherans of our heritage as will be demonstrated below.<sup>63</sup> It is not even true among non-Lutherans.<sup>64</sup> NIV 2011 unnecessarily closes the door on interpreting Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2 as all of the following have: Luther, The Formula of Concord - S.D., VIII, 70, Calov, Starke, Stoeckhardt, Zorn, Kretzmann, Lillegard, Honsey, Gawrisch, Brug, etc.

First, note the changes in this presentation below and consider the impact on Messianic prophecy here. More commentary will follow.

Psalm 8:4	Psalm 8:4 - New text in NIV2011 – (Heb. Ps. 8:5)
NIV1984	what is <b>man</b> (Heb: <i>Enōsh, nom. m. sg.</i> ) that you are mindful of <b>him</b> (Heb: <i>3<sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix</i> ), <b>the son of man</b> (Heb: <i>ben Adam</i> ) that you care for <b>him</b> (Heb: <i>3<sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix</i> )?
NIV2011	what is <b>mankind</b> that you are mindful of <b>them</b> , <b>human beings</b> that you care for <b>them</b> ?
Psalm 8:5	Psalm 8:5 - New text in NIV2011 – (Heb. Ps. 8:6)
NIV1984	You made <b>him</b> (Heb: <i>3<sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix</i> ) a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned <b>him</b> (Heb: <i>3<sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix</i> ) with glory and honor.
NIV2011	You have made <b>them</b> a little lower than the angels and crowned <b>them</b> with glory and honor.

<sup>62</sup> Chapter seven - since I only have the Kindle version, I do not know the page. See the discussion on Psalm 8 there. Occasionally, TNIV / NIV 2011 promoters make sweeping statements like this. Such statements can be just as irritating as some of Ryken’s statements are to the other side. There are at least two sides to this debate, and both make comments that annoy.

<sup>63</sup> Does it make you feel that confessional Lutherans do not matter at all to those who make such statements?

<sup>64</sup> e.g., *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Philip Edgecumbe Hughes, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977. pp. 86-87 on Hebrews 2:8b. See Guthrie, on Hebrews 2:8. Also F. F. Bruce mentions Spicq.



<b>Psalm 8:6</b>	<b>Psalm 8:6 - Uses TNIV text – (Heb. Ps. 8:7)</b>
NIV1984	You made <b>him ruler</b> (Heb: 3 <sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix) over the works of your hands; you put everything under <b>his</b> (Heb: 3 <sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix) feet:
NIV2011	You made <b>them rulers</b> over the works of your hands; you put everything under <b>their</b> feet:

<b>Hebrews 2:6</b>	<b>Hebrews 2:6 - New text in NIV2011</b>
SBLGNT	διεμαρτύρατο δέ ποῦ τις λέγων· Τί ἐστὶν <b>ἄνθρωπος</b> ὅτι μιμνήσκη <b>αὐτοῦ</b> , ἢ <b>υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου</b> ὅτι ἐπισκέπη <b>αὐτόν</b> ;
NIV1984	But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is <b>man</b> that you are mindful of <b>him</b> , <b>the son of man</b> that you care for him?"
NIV2011	But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is <b>mankind</b> that you are mindful of <b>them</b> , <b>a son of man</b> that you care for him?"
<b>Hebrews 2:7</b>	<b>Hebrews 2:7 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	ἡλάττωσας <b>αὐτόν</b> βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους, δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφάνωσας <b>αὐτόν</b> ,
NIV1984	You made <b>him</b> a little lower than the angels; you crowned <b>him</b> with glory and honor
NIV2011	You made <b>them</b> a little lower than the angels; you crowned <b>them</b> with glory and honor
<b>Hebrews 2:8</b>	<b>Hebrews 2:8 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	πάντα ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν <b>αὐτοῦ</b> · ἐν τῷ γὰρ ὑποτάξαι τὰ πάντα οὐδὲν ἀφῆκεν <b>αὐτῷ</b> ἀνυπότακτον. νῦν δὲ οὐπω ὁρῶμεν <b>αὐτῷ</b> τὰ πάντα ὑποτεταγμένα·
NIV1984	and put everything under <b>his</b> feet." In putting everything under <b>him</b> , God left nothing that is not subject to <b>him</b> . Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.
NIV2011	and put everything under <b>their</b> feet." In putting everything under them, God left nothing that is not subject to <b>them</b> . Yet at present we do not see everything subject to <b>them</b> .

I prefer the **GWN** (1988) translation of Hebrews 2:6-9, utilizing the v.6 footnote:

<sup>6</sup> But somewhere someone has declared: "What is Man that You should think of Him, or a Son of Man that You should care for Him?" <sup>7</sup> You made Him lower than the angels for a little while, then crowned Him with glory and honor and made Him Ruler over what Your hands have made <sup>8</sup> and put everything under His feet. When God put everything under His feet, He left nothing outside His control. At the present time we do not yet see everything put under Him. <sup>9</sup> But we do perceive that Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, is now crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death, so that by God's grace [undeserved love] He might taste death on behalf of everyone.

**Textual note on Hebrews 2:8-9:** There is no contradiction in these verses if one interprets this as a direct, rectilinear prophecy of Christ. The original verbs ὁρῶμεν and βλέπομεν are usually both translated "see" in English, which makes it look to some like there might be a contradiction. But there isn't. Notice that these are two different Greek words. In Hebrews 2:9, βλέπομεν seems to be the "eyesight of faith" and seems to be more similar to the use of βλέπομεν in Hebrews 3:19, which seems to be more like "perceive." In the translation above (GWN), the

βλέπομεν is rendered “perceive,” which clarifies a superficial appearance of contradiction. It certainly can refer to “spiritual perception”<sup>65</sup> and likely does mean “perceive” in Hebrews 2:9.<sup>66</sup>

Only by faith can we know that Christ is the Ruler of the threefold Kingdom, and faith rejoices in this knowledge. As to the Kingdom of Power, we cannot see with our natural eyes that Christ governs all things. Heb. 2:8: “Now we see not yet all things put under Him.” Rather it often appears “as though not Christ, but the devil were sitting on the throne” (Luther, St. L. IV:2016).<sup>67</sup>

**Whose feet?** The crux of interpretation involves determining who is meant by “his” when Hebrews 2:8 says, “put everything under his feet.” NIV 2011 really changes the evidence needed by an English reader by translating “their,” and forcing the reader into a plural interpretation of people. Consider a few other New Testament passages that quote Psalm 8 and apply the Psalm to Christ. Examine each context carefully too. Let Scripture interpret Scripture. Letting the New Testament interpret the Old Testament prophecies is “essential for a correct understanding.”<sup>68</sup> Please check these verses in context...

***1 Corinthians 15:27 (NIV84) For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.***

***Ephesians 1:22 (NIV84) And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,...***

Jesus quotes Psalm 8:2 and applies it to himself in ***Matthew 21:16 (NIV84) “Do you hear what these children are saying?” they asked him. “Yes,” replied Jesus, “have you never read, “ ‘From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise’?”***

**Dr. Martin Luther** wrote that Psalm 8 “was written about our Lord Jesus Christ” (LW 12:97). He also wrote: “Thou hast put all things under His feet.” Thereby he testifies that Christ, true man, is also at the same time true God. For God does not make anyone Lord over the works of His hands nor put all things under anyone’s feet unless He is His equal, that is, unless He is God.” (LW 12: 131).

**Luther’s Works Vol. 12:** Here’s some more of Luther’s commentary on Psalm 8...

“a glorious prophecy about Christ, where David describes Christ’s person and kingdom and teaches who Christ is...” (p. 98).

“This passage is quoted powerfully in Hebrews 2:8: “In putting everything in subjection to Him, He left nothing outside His control.” Adam in Paradise is also made lord over God’s creatures and works, but not everything is put under his feet. Yes, according to the first creation no man is made lord over another man, much less over angels. The text in Genesis 1:28 reads this way: “Have

---

<sup>65</sup> Kittel, abridged, p.707; H. Meyer on 2:9, “perceive; namely, with the eyes of the mind; comp. iii. 19, al.”

<sup>66</sup> *The NIV Theological Dictionary of New Testament Words*. Verlyn Verbrugge, ed. Zondervan, 2000. p. 227.

<sup>67</sup> Pieper, II, 389.

<sup>68</sup> Prof. Wilbert Gawrisch in *Luther Lives*, p. 86. <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/PS8.pdf>

dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” In comparison with the dominion of Christ, that is still a small dominion, namely, a dominion of human reason over fish, birds, and animals. Here the text reads much differently: “Thou hast put all things under His feet,” excluding nothing but the Father, who has subjected everything to the Son (1 Cor. 15:27). And this dominion extends to angels, men, and everything that is in heaven and on earth.

St. Paul expresses this gloriously in Ephesians 1:20–23: “He raised Him from the dead and made Him sit at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come; and He has put all things under His feet and has made Him the head over all things for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.” And St. Peter speaks (1 Peter 3:21, 22) of “the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to Him.” Hebrews 1:6: “And again, when He brings the First-born into the world, He says, ‘Let all God’s angels worship Him.’”

Therefore Christ is a much greater and higher lord than Adam was before the Fall. For nothing was subjected to Adam or put under his feet, but everything is put under Christ’s feet, so that the whole world and all His enemies will have to be His footstool (Ps. 110:1). Therefore this text cannot be neglected, since it strongly proves the doctrine that Christ is true God and man. If He were not man, He could not be called אָנוּשׁ or *filius adam*, son of man. If He were not God, He could not be Lord over all the works of God nor have all things under His feet. For no one has a right to be Lord over heaven, earth, angels, man, life—yes, over sin and death—except one who is true God by nature. (pp. 133-134).

#### **Luther’s Works Vol. 29: Here’s what Luther wrote about Hebrews 2:7...**

Many have worked hard to expound this verse. A great number of teachers, especially Jerome and, at different times, Augustine, Ambrose, and Chrysostom, seem to understand it as referring to mankind alone. But we state briefly that though it is possible to understand this verse in an improper sense as referring to man, just as if someone were to understand the statement in Ps. 72:8 that “He will rule from sea to sea” in an improper sense as referring to the emperor, whereas it refers to Christ alone,... yet in the proper sense this verse can be understood only as referring to Christ. Otherwise it is necessary to force the words that precede and those that follow into that meaning by means of extraordinary twistings and turnings. Therefore those who think that this verse refers to the dignity of human nature, which is very close to that of the angels, follow an improper understanding, which is the death of true understanding.

#### **Formula of Concord, S.D., VIII, 70:**

For no other creature—neither man nor angel—can or shall say, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me” [Matthew 28:18]. For although God is in the saints with all the fullness of His Godhead that He has everywhere with Himself, He does not dwell in them bodily. Nor is He personally united with them as in Christ. For from such personal union it follows that Christ says, even according to His human nature, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me” (Matthew 28:18). Also John 13:3 says, “Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands.” Also Colossians 2:9 says, “For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.” Also Scripture says, “You have crowned Him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under His feet. Now in putting everything in subjection to Him, He left nothing outside His control” (Hebrews 2:7–8[; see also Psalm 8:6]). “He is excepted who put all things in subjection under Him” (1 Corinthians 15:27).<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>69</sup> **Concordia : The Lutheran Confessions.** 2005 (Edited by Paul Timothy McCain) (592). St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.

**Martin Chemnitz** wrote much that was based on Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2:

“So far we have spoken of the presence of the entire Person of Christ, according to both natures, in the Sacrament and in the Church, which Scripture and the witness of the ancient Christian Church set forth, and we have shown how comforting this doctrine is. But if we are asked beyond that regarding Christ’s presence with other creatures, which are outside the Church and subject to God’s general governance, Scripture teaches clearly that to the Lord Christ, according to His humanity, or, as the ancient teachers say, to the humanity of Christ, all things are subject, not only in the Church, but all things in general, so that nothing is excepted but Him who has subjected all things to Christ. In connection with this subjection, Scripture mentions especially the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, the fish of the sea, and, in general, all works of God’s hands, whether they are things in heaven, or things in earth, or things under the earth, even the enemies of Christ and so also the devil and death itself (Psalm 8; Philippians 2; Revelation 4; 1 Corinthians 15). In the last passage there is given as the correlative of this subjection Christ’s rule, which in Psalm 8 is explained by the term *maschal*. This means to have and exercise in a mighty way all rule, authority, and power. Christ’s human nature must therefore not be removed entirely and excluded from the universal dominion, which it has and exercises over all things, and so from the governance of the world, because Scripture expressly says that even all things outside the Church have been put under Christ’s feet. These statements must not be understood as referring alone to Christ’s divine nature, but properly of the subjection of all things to the human nature, which the human nature has received in time by its exaltation, as we have sufficiently shown above. We do not say that the human nature rules separately, but the Person rules mightily in and through both natures, with a dominion that is essential to the deity of the λόγος, but communicated to the human nature in time, by virtue of the personal union.”<sup>70</sup>

**Chemnitz:** “He is not, however, Lord and Judge of the godly or elect only, but all things, no matter what they are, whether in heaven or on earth or under the earth, are subjected to Christ as Lord (Ps. 8:6–8).”<sup>71</sup>

**Chemnitz:** “Ps. 8:6 speaks of the humiliation of Christ. David for the first time in Scripture begins to speak more clearly and openly regarding the death and resurrection of Christ, Ps. 8:6; 16:10; 22:1 ff...”<sup>72</sup>

**Chemnitz:** “all things are subject not only to Christ’s divine nature but also to His assumed nature (Eph. 1:20–23, Ps. 8:4–6, Heb. 2:6–8).”<sup>73</sup>

**Johann Gerhard:** “All things have been put under His feet” (Ps. 8:[6]).” Gerhard cites Psalm 8 when teaching about Christ’s exaltation. “The prophets also prophesied about the presence and dominion of Christ as man (Ps 8).” “All things are subject to Christ according to His humanity. Ps. 8:[6]; 1 Cor. 15:22; Eph. 1:22; Heb. 2:8” (see esp. p. 237 for Gerhard’s discussion). “The *kingdom of power* is the general dominion over all things, namely, the governance of heaven and earth (Ps. 8:[6]; Dan. 7:14; Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:21); the subjection of all creatures (1 Cor. 15:27; Eph. 1:[22]; Heb. 2:8)...”<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>70</sup> Pieper, II, 199-200.

<sup>71</sup> Chemnitz, Martin. *Examination of the Council of Trent*. CPH, 1971. Vol. 3, p. 335.

<sup>72</sup> Chemnitz, Martin. *Loci Theologici*. CPH, 1989. Vol. II, p. 458

<sup>73</sup> Chemnitz, Martin. *The Two Natures in Christ*. CPH, 1971. p. 217.

<sup>74</sup> Gerhard, Johann. *On the Person and Office of Christ*. CPH, 2009. pp. 51, 210, 222, 235-237, 244, 320.

**Professor Wilbert Gawrisch:** declared that Psalm 8 was a direct prophecy of Christ (rectilinear prophecy, only about Christ). Please read all of this article, including the endnotes: <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/PS8.pdf>. Prof. Gawrisch is listed here in my list because he listed some other great Lutheran theologians who agree with him including: Calov, Starke, Stoeckhardt, Zorn, Kretzmann, Lillegard, Honsey.<sup>75</sup>

**Prof. Adolph Hoenecke:** cites Hebrews 2:7 and Psalm 8:6 with reference to Christ.<sup>76</sup>

**Prof. John Schaller:** cites Psalm 8:5f. and Hebrews 2:7 with reference to Christ.<sup>77</sup>

**Prof. Stoeckhardt:**

“This can have reference only to the man, Christ Jesus... From verses 5 and 6 one can gain the right understanding for the whole Psalm. What is here said of the son of man, viz., that for a short time he was deprived of the protection of God, obviously does not apply to all men in general... We turn to Heb. 2:6-9 for light... The meaning is that the man... is no one else than Jesus... In 1 Cor. 15:27 the words of Psalm 8:6: “Thou hast put all things under His feet,” are also applied to Christ.”<sup>78</sup>

**Pastor C. M. Zorn:** first describes what “scholars” claim about Psalm 8, and then writes:

“And yet, in New Testament Scriptures, the Holy Spirit, who inspired David to write this psalm and led him to set it to music interprets it quite differently. Be willing to accept his interpretation in preference to that of the learned theologians if their interpretation does not agree with the Scriptures.... Jesus is the one the Lord here has in mind. He is the Son of man... Jesus Christ was for a little while not attended by angels (Mt 26:53) and was even forsaken by God (Mt 27:46)... This prophecy is about Jesus’ sufferings and majesty... In the Hebrews passage quoted previously, we noted that this passage refers to Jesus Christ. Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit, says this in 1 Corinthians 15:27 as well as in Ephesians 1:22. Jesus Christ is the supreme ruler, the Creator of all; his kingdom has no bounds; everything is subject to him and placed under his feet... This prophecy is about Jesus’ kingdom.”<sup>79</sup>

**Kretzmann’s Popular Commentary:**

“The reference, as Heb. 2, 6-10 shows, is to Christ, who assumed human nature, with all its weakness and lowliness, who was made in the likeness of men and was found in fashion as a man, Phil. 2, 7. 8. It is to this singular man alone that the next words can apply... Literally, “Thou hast caused Him to lack a little of God,” this being fulfilled when the Son of Man, in the depths of His sufferings for mankind, was forsaken by His heavenly Father, as He Himself cries out, and hast crowned Him with glory and honor, with the majesty and glory peculiar to the essence of God, this taking place when Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, entered upon His state of exaltation, when the Savior, who had deliberately waived the right to use the divine power and majesty communicated to His human nature, assumed and practiced this right, also according to His humanity. V. 6. Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands, as the Ruler of

---

<sup>75</sup> **Luther Lives:** “Luther and Psalm 8,” NPH, 1983, pp. 85ff. <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/PS8.pdf>

<sup>76</sup> Hoenecke, Adolph. **Evangelical Lutheran Dogmatics**, Vol. III, Tr. by James Langebartels. NPH, 2003. pages 107, 217.

<sup>77</sup> Schaller, John. **Biblical Christology**. NPH, 1981. pages 87, 96.

<sup>78</sup> **Lectures On Select Psalms**, Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1965/1980.

<sup>79</sup> **The Psalms: A Devotional Commentary**, NPH, 2005. page 25.

the entire universe, with boundless power and majesty, and that according to His human nature; Thou hast put all things under His feet, Eph. 1, 22.”<sup>80</sup>

**Prof. George O. Lillegard:**

“In regard to the interpretation of this psalm, it may as well be frankly stated that hardly any writer of the present age considers it a direct prophecy of Christ. But over against the virtual consensus of modern commentators, we confidently place the directly Messianic interpretation given by the N. T., the ancient church, and the older Lutheran exegetes.”<sup>81</sup>

**Prof. Rudolph E. Honsey:**

“As we consider this psalm as a whole, we can see that the Messianic Interpretation is more justifiable than any other interpretation even from internal considerations, apart from New Testament quotations, as we have noted in certain verses. The New Testament quotations leave us no other choice than the Messianic Interpretation. It was of the Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus stated: “They are they which testify of me.” (John 5:39.) Cf. also Luke 24:44–47”<sup>82</sup>

**Prof. John Brug:** “Psalm 8 is quoted twice in the New Testament as a Messianic prophecy which was fulfilled when Christ came and regained dominion over the world for us.” While Brug does see background allusions to the creation account, he writes, “The glorious things said of man in this psalm are fulfilled only by Christ and secondarily, by those with whom he shares this blessing. In that sense, the prophecy is direct.” “There is, however, no Old Testament figure who partially fulfilled the prophecy of the psalm. As a prophecy, it is fulfilled only by Christ.”<sup>83</sup> I do not believe that NIV’11 fits with Professor Brug’s explanation either.<sup>84</sup>

**Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*:**<sup>85</sup> demonstrates the importance of Psalm 8 / Hebrews 2 in dogmatics.

**The Kingly Office of Christ**

Christ, the Redeemer, also exercises dominion over all the world and the whole universe. Scripture stresses the universal character of the dominion of Christ: “All things are delivered unto Me of My Father” (Matt. 11:27); “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18); “Thou hast put all things under His feet” (Ps. 8:6; Eph. 1:22; 1 Cor. 15:27); “He left nothing that is not put under Him” (Heb. 2:8). (Vol. 2., p. 385; see also vol. 2, p. 219.)

**Communicated Omnipotence**

The Epistle to the Hebrews, by quoting the testimony of the Old Testament, gives us the following information: “Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet. For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him.” In these words there are stated two very important truths: First, the power given to Christ is described, not as limited power, but as divine omnipotence or as Christ’s rulership over the whole universe. The positive statement: “Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet,” is reinforced by the negative: “He left nothing that is not put under Him.” In the second place, as we study v. 8 in the light of vv. 7–9, we learn that divine omnipotence was given to Christ after His preceding humiliation, and so in time, according to His human nature. (Vol. 2, p 158-159)

---

<sup>80</sup> <http://www.kretzmannproject.org/home.htm>

<sup>81</sup> *Commentary on the Chief Messianic Psalms*, Bethany/WLS, 1972.

<sup>82</sup> <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/858>

<sup>83</sup> *A Commentary on Psalms 1-72*, Milwaukee: NPH, 2004.

<sup>84</sup> See: <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/2152> in the WLS essay file (or, WLQ Spring 2006. Vol. 103, No. 2, pp. 146-148.).

<sup>85</sup> Pieper, Francis. *Christian Dogmatics*. St. Louis: CPH, 1950-1953.



**Dr. Robert Preus:** described the classic confessional Lutheran position in this matter.

The New Testament, then, is the key to understanding these Old Testament prophecies; it is an inspired interpretation of these prophecies in the light of fulfillment... **Psalm 8:5 refers directly and only to the humiliation and exaltation of Christ.** And Ps. 45:6 points to Christ's throne and in no sense to Solomon's, as the Jews contended. Admittedly, according to such exegesis, the New Testament interpretation will settle the meaning of an Old Testament passage. This fact, however, does not imply that the Lutheran exegetes pay no consideration to the context of the Old Testament prophecies. On the contrary, they repeatedly attempt to show the Messianic character of such prophecies by the Old Testament context. For instance, Brochmand goes to great length in order to show from the Old Testament text alone that Ps. 45 can refer only to the coming King Christ. Some of his observations are that the throne of the King is the throne of God ("Thy throne, O God"); it is an eternal throne; it designates a rule of complete righteousness. No such description could possibly refer to Solomon's reign. That Solomon might have been a type of Christ does not occur to Brochmand in this instance. Of course, such an interpretation of the Old Testament text must agree with the interpretation given it in the New Testament; and therefore the New Testament is often of invaluable help to the interpreter of the Old Testament. If the old Lutherans were charged, as they were at times by Socinians and Arminians, of not reading the Old Testament prophecies in their Old Testament context, they replied that the New Testament understands perfectly and takes into account the Old Testament context; and furthermore the fulfillment of prophecy in the New Testament belongs to the wider context of the prophecies themselves.<sup>86</sup>

Many modern scholars do not see Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2 this way, but many confessional Lutherans have and still do. For this Messianic interpretation, NIV'11's changes to Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2 seem unworkable to me. How can anyone get the direct, rectilinear Messianic prophecy (meaning) from NIV'11? I will submit that it can't be done. That's unacceptable for a Bible translation. For some, this is a deal-breaker, if one must be named.<sup>87</sup> Repeating claims about progress and accuracy can begin to sound like fingernails on the chalkboard to someone who still wants to interpret Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2 as those above did.

#### **Psalm 8: Who is the "son of man"? Where does the idea of "the ideal man" come from?**

Some have said that Psalm 8 describes the ideal man, who would be Adam, right? But, how could "Adam" be his own son, the "son of Adam"? (Heb. "**ben Adam**" = son of Adam, or son of man, or Son of Man). Think about it. It can't be Adam. Then, if it is not Adam, how can a sinner be the "ideal man"? So if you use the phrase "ideal man," it still refers to Christ, not "human beings" (NIV'11).

From my past reading, this terminology ("the ideal man") at least seemed to be associated with liberal theology. Further research finds this term used by Philo, Schleiermacher, and liberal theologians. It seems to have a questionable past. Perhaps it was adopted by commentators without desiring or realizing the baggage connected with this phrase? Consider just three examples (below) of how this phrase formed baggage in my mind. I've highlighted the phrase "the ideal man" in each quotation.

**Pieper:** Accordingly the Son of Man is not **"the ideal man,"** not "the flower of humanity," not a mere man endowed with similar high gifts, but the singular, wonderful Man in whom the Son of

---

<sup>86</sup> Preus, Robert. *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. 1, CPH, 1970. p. 335.

<sup>87</sup> Along with **1 Timothy 2:12; Acts 1:16** and fn.; **Acts 6:3; 1 Cor 14:39; Isa 7:14** fn.; **Ps. 45:6** fn.; **Ps. 16:10**; changes to the pronouns, including **Mt. 18:15ff**, etc...

God appeared in the flesh for the purpose of destroying the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). Both the name and the definition are already given in the Old Testament (Dan. 7:13).<sup>88</sup>

**Mueller:** “The expression Son of Man which our Savior usually employed when He spoke of Himself, does not describe Christ as the “Ideal Man,” but as the unique Descendant of man, Gen. 3:15; 26:4; 28:14; 2 Sam. 7:12, in whom the Son of God became incarnate, Is. 7:14; 9:6. That is Christ’s own explanation of the name which He adopted as His usual designation, as this appears from Matt. 16:13–17 (cp. v. 16: “the Christ, the Son of the living God”). Hence the “Son of Man” is the God-man, foretold in the Old Testament, Dan. 7:13, 14, who came to destroy the works of the devil, 1 John 3:8, and who therefore had to be true God, Matt. 9:2, 4, 6; 12:8; 26:63, 64; 25:31 ff., and at the same time true man, Matt. 8:20; 11:19; 17:12, 22, 23; 20:18, 19.”<sup>89</sup>

**Prof. Blume** made a reference to the “ideal man” on the last page of his essay, “The Life of Our Lord in Contemporary Interpretation,” available here: <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/192>. He wrote:

This then is the Jesus who emerges from the studies in the Gospels being carried on in many places of the theological world in this 450th year of the beginning of Martin Luther’s Reformation. The resulting Jesus is still the teacher of profound insight; He is still the ideal man whose personal conduct is worthy of all emulation. But—as to the Baptist’s word about Him as the Lamb of God come to take away the sins of the world (John 1:29)? Here the men of The New Hermeneutic would answer with a unanimity that is not so common among them in other matters. They would say:

The words attributed to John the Baptizer surely reflect a great spiritual truth which the early church felt and was striving to bring to expression in this quaint figure. They may still be of value to us today if they will serve as a means whereby we may come to an existential encounter with the spiritual Christ.

This brief excursion through current Gospel interpretation will have served its purpose if it will but encourage us to a deeper devotion to God’s Written Word so that under our Lord’s gracious protection and guidance Luther’s heroic word may remain true for us also:

*Das Wort sie sollen lassen stahn  
und kein Dank dazu haben!*

### How do we interpret Messianic Psalms?

I looked back at the “*Introduction to the Psalms*” notes I received as a WLS student.<sup>90</sup> Professor Wilbert R. Gawrisch wrote this about Messianic Psalms:

Although Christ and His Gospel are to be found in every Psalm, those that treat specifically and in detail of the Messiah’s person, work, and kingdom are called Messianic Psalms. Examples are Pss 2, 8, 16, 22 (the so-called Holy of Holies of the Psalter), 23, 24, 40, 41, 45, 47, 68, 69, 72, 87, 89, 110, and 118. These Messianic Psalms have been of special significance to the people of God in OT as well as in NT times. They were the wellspring of faith and hope for those who looked for redemption in Israel, even as they are the foundation of the believer’s assurance and joy today.

Higher critics do not recognize the Messianic Psalms as being prophetic of Christ. Prejudiced by their refusal to admit the fact, or even the possibility, of divine prophecy and by their assumption of the purely human origin of the Scriptures, they regard the Messiah-King of Ps

<sup>88</sup> Pieper, Francis, *Christian Dogmatics*. Vol II, p. 71.

<sup>89</sup> Mueller, J.T. *Christian Dogmatics*, St. Louis: CPH, 1934. p. 259

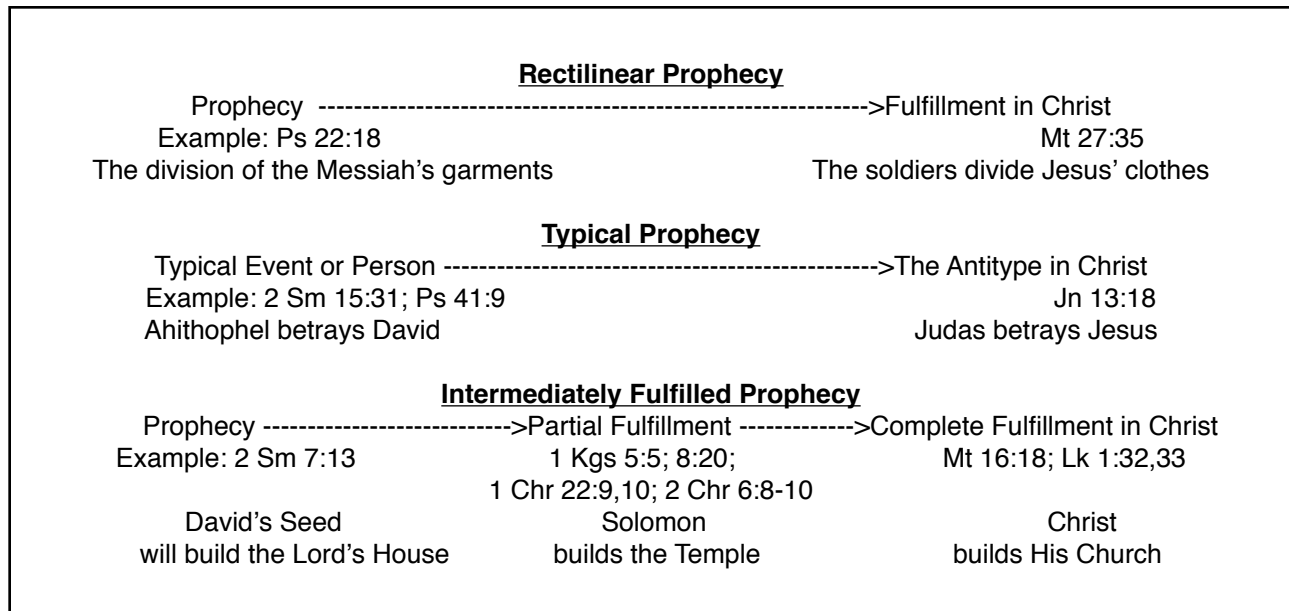
<sup>90</sup> Seminary Mimeo Co. 1973/1981, pp. 28-31. See online: <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/600>

2 and many other Messianic Psalms strictly as references to a reigning Hebrew king. Scores of NT passages assure us, however, that the Psalms predict in detail the coming of the Savior of the world and the establishment of His kingdom in grace and glory. Jesus Himself expressly said, "All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me" (Lk 24:44). He urges, "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me" (Jn 5:39). ...

The distinction between direct or rectilinear and typical prophecy is one that the interpreter must bear in mind. Direct Messianic prophecies are those which find their fulfillment in the Messiah and in no one else. Examples are Pss 22, 40, 45, 72, etc. Typical prophecies are those which refer to the Messiah by way of some type. David in his person, for example, was a type of the Messiah (Eze 34:23,24). What happened to David when he was betrayed by his friend Ahithophel is a typical prophecy of the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, one of the Twelve (Ps 41:9; Jn 13:18). So also the nation Israel as such was a type of Christ (Ho 11:1; Mt 2:15). At the same time Israel is also representative of God's people in the NT. Israel's experiences, such as its deliverance from slavery and its entrance into the Promised Land, are typical of the travail and triumph of the Christ's church, of Zion in a spiritual sense (Ga 3:7; Rm 11:26; He 12:22,23; Ps 2:6; 48).

There are in the OT Messianic prophecies also which find their complete and final fulfillment in Christ but which have, in addition, an earlier, intermediate, partial fulfillment. For example, in 2 Sm 7:1-16 (p.p., 1 Chr 17:1-15) the Lord tells David that he will set up his "seed" after him and that "he shall build an house" for the Lord's name. The Lord also promises that He "will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (cf. also Ps 89:3, 4, 27-29, 36-37). From 1 Kgs 5:5; 8:20; 1 Chr 22:9, 10; and 2 Chr 6:8-10 we see that this promise was fulfilled in part when Solomon built a temple for the Lord. But Solomon's temple of wood and stone was a type and symbol of the spiritual temple, the church, which is built by Christ as God's eternal dwelling place (Nu 12:7; Mt 16:18; 1 Cor 3:16, 17; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:19-22; 1 Tm 3:15; He 3:6; Rev 21:2,3)...

These three types of Messianic prophecies may be represented diagrammatically as follows:



I hope we all still agree that there is "direct, rectilinear" Messianic prophecy in Scripture. Professor Nass, of the TEC, has written, "I personally lean toward the typical understanding of

most all of the psalms, rather than the segregation into two groups.”<sup>91</sup> This statement seems to require further study and discussion.

Prof. Nass correctly notes that there has been a shift in the LCMS away from any direct, rectilinear Messianic prophecy. As you can see above, Professor Gawrisch taught us the possibility of all three types of Messianic prophecy. I have always held to the explanation above. Is there anyone in our midst who denies the possibility of “typical” prophecy when it is truly typical, as Prof. Gawrisch describes above? I’m not aware of anyone.

But, as Nass correctly noted, there has been a trend in the LCMS to remove all direct, rectilinear prophecy. This type of view can be seen in Lutheran Study Bibles (CSSC, CSSB, TLSB). These seem to never see direct, rectilinear Messianic prophecy, not even in Isaiah 7:14 or Psalm 22. Isn’t there a danger in denying the possibility of any direct, rectilinear prophecy of Christ? I believe more discussion and clarity is needed on this point.

When Professor John Jeske and Professor David Kuske reviewed the NIV Study Bible (NSB) and the Concordia Self-Study Bible (CSSB) in 1987, they commented on Messianic Psalms with clarity. They described the new “typical” way of interpreting these Psalms with words such as: “disappointing, inexcusable, and untenable.”

CSSB’s comment on Isaiah 7:14 will disappoint many Lutherans: “Matthew 1:23 understood the woman mentioned here to be a type (a foreshadowing) of the Virgin Mary.... ‘Immanuel’ ... may be another name for Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz,” Isaiah’s younger son. But his mother was no virgin, and Isaiah’s son was not God with us.

An area which will be a distinct disappointment to Lutheran readers is NSB’s treatment of the Messianic psalms. This becomes even more disappointing when one finds the same shortcoming in the “Lutheran edition.” In Psalm 2:2, e.g., the NIV text properly capitalizes “Anointed One.” But the note to this verse in both the NSB and CSSB says: “The psalm refers to the Davidic king and is ultimately fulfilled in Christ.” In the light of verses 8 and 12, which can refer only to the Messiah, such a comment from Lutheran commentators is inexcusable.

CSSB’s note to Psalm 110 makes the untenable comment, “It may be, however, that David composed the psalm for the coronation of his son Solomon, calling him ‘my lord’ (v. 1) in view of his new status which placed him above the aged David.” In Matthew 22:41–45, however, Jesus tells us clearly whom David was calling “his Lord.”

The comments on Psalm 16 are equally disappointing. In spite of what Peter says in Acts 2:29–31 that David who died and was buried was speaking not about himself but about Christ, CSSB says re verses 9–11: “David speaks here, as in the rest of his psalms, first of all of himself ...” CSSB’s note to Psalm 22 calls it “the anguished prayer of David as a godly sufferer ...” Despite the psalmist’s clear statements in verses 1, 16 and 18, the author of this note does not recognize the psalm as direct Messianic prophecy speaking only about Christ and not David. George Stoeckhardt, highly respected Missouri Synod exegete of a former generation, made this comment about Psalm 22: “To all who read this psalm the truth simply jumps out that here the suffering and glorified Messiah speaks all of the words of the psalm.... Contemporary exegetes who see in these words the suffering of David, and who see only a type of Christ’s sufferings ... have a veil over their eyes” (Stoeckhardt, *Selected Psalms* 57f.). On this score the CSSB’s introduction to the book of Psalms is also less than satisfactory.<sup>92</sup>

Please notice how these two WELS/WLS professors regard the commentary of George Stoeckhardt. I remember Professor Gawrisch recommending Stoeckhardt, Zorn, Lillegard, and Kretzmann to me personally after class when I asked him for commentaries on the Psalms that

---

<sup>91</sup> <http://www.wels.net/sites/wels/files/Messianic%20Prophecy%20and%20English%20Translations.pdf>

<sup>92</sup> *Wisconsin Lutheran quarterly*, Volume 84 (electronic edition.). Logos Library System; Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly (122). Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House.

correctly handle Messianic prophecy.<sup>93</sup> I still find these resources faithful and useful. More discussion and clarity would be helpful on this point of Messianic prophecy.

### What is the meaning of αὐθεντεῖν in 1 Timothy 2:12?

Another controversial issue is the NIV's adoption of the TNIV translation for 1 Timothy 2:12.

1 Tm 2:12	1 Timothy 2:12 - Uses TNIV text
SBLGNT	διδάσκειν δὲ γυναῖκι οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω, οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἀνδρός, ἀλλ' εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ.
NIV1984	I do not permit a woman to teach or to <b>have authority</b> over a man; she must be <b>silent</b> .
NIV2011	I do not permit a woman to teach or to <b>assume authority</b> over a man; she must be <b>quiet</b> .

Since this translation comes straight from the TNIV, see Professor Brug's comments in his review of the TNIV in Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly (**WLQ volume 103, #2, Spring 2006, pages 144-146**).<sup>94</sup> There he notes that:

1. The CBT was "divided doctrinally on this issue."
2. The CBT "had to yield to pressure to include 'adopting an unusual and perhaps undocumented meaning of a key Greek word.'"
3. The first choice of NIV'84 is the TNIV's last choice.

Actually, this last point reveals that NIV'11 is even worse than TNIV in that it doesn't even offer "have authority" as a possibility anymore. It seems completely forgotten. That's a trend to notice.

The NIV *Translators' Notes* explain incorrectly that the 1984 NIV read "exercise authority." Actually, it read "have authority." Here's the rest of the CBT's statement:

Much debate has surrounded the rare Greek word *authentein*, translated in the 1984 NIV as "exercise authority." The KJV reflected what some have argued was in some contexts a more negative sense for the word: "usurp authority." "Assume authority" is a particularly nice English rendering because **it leaves the question open**, as it must be unless we discover new, more conclusive evidence. The exercise of authority that Paul was forbidding was one that women **inappropriately assumed**, but whether that referred to all forms of authority over men in church or only certain forms in certain contexts is up to the individual interpreter to decide. Footnotes to verses 11 and 12 also inform the reader that *anēr* and *gunē* here could mean "husband" and "wife" rather than "man" and "woman."<sup>95</sup>

There are several troubling statements in there. First, by their own explanation, "it leaves the question open." The 1984 NIV "have authority" did not leave the question open. This is a very big difference. When a clear prohibition is turned into an ambiguous statement, that's a big change. Some might claim that they can still see a prohibition in there, but it's a different prohibition. Instead of forbidding "having" authority over men, women are now forbidden to "inappropriately assume" authority over men. If a congregation calls a woman to be the pastor, she could say she did not "inappropriately assume" that authority. Then, according

<sup>93</sup> This was before Prof. Brug's People's Bible commentaries on the Psalms were published. Gawrisch certainly did not recommend Leupold or CSSC/CSSB.

<sup>94</sup> also available online here: <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/2152>

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.biblegateway.com/niv/Translators-Notes.pdf>

to a likely understanding of the word, “assume,” she could “have” and “exercise authority” over men for the next four decades.

This reminds me of that old adage, “Don’t speak so someone can understand you, speak so you cannot be misunderstood.” To say the very least, 1 Timothy 2:12 in NIV’11 can be misunderstood. That will very likely become a problem for complementarian congregations who adopt NIV’11 as their primary Bible. The problem is really not that some complementarians can somehow find an interpretation they can live with in “assume authority.” The problem is that egalitarians and feminists will certainly be able to find their interpretation in “assume authority” when they definitely could not find it in “have authority.” This translation was designed that way, as the Translators’ notes indicate.

Should we find it strange that some who usually have no use for the King James Version, suddenly appeal to it in 1 Timothy 2:12? Since when do modern Greek scholars point to the KJV for exegesis? (Sure, it serves a purpose.)

Is KJV’s “usurp” precisely the same as TNIV’s/NIV 2011’s “assume”? It is very close. To my mind “assume” is more broad, and subject to misunderstanding as you will see in the definitions below. The KJV translators were certainly using a “different lexicon.” As one WELS professor stated, “usurp” was “wrong.”<sup>96</sup> It certainly did lead to some misunderstanding of the doctrine, which still remains today.

What was the Old English definition in 1611? What was the origin of “usurp”?

Origin: 1275–1325; Middle English < Latin ūsŭrpāre to take possession through use, equivalent to ūsū (ablative of ūsus use (noun)) + -rp-, reduced form of -rip-, combining form of rapere to seize + -āre infinitive ending u·surp - [yoo-surp, -zurp] –verb (used with object)

1. to seize and hold (a position, office, power, etc.) by force or without legal right: The pretender tried to usurp the throne.

2. to use without authority or right; employ wrongfully: The magazine usurped copyrighted material.<sup>97</sup>

Here is the Collins definition of **assume** — vb

1. (may take a clause as object) to take for granted; accept without proof; suppose: to assume that someone is sane
  2. to take upon oneself; undertake or take on or over (a position, responsibility, etc): to assume office
  3. to pretend to; feign: he assumed indifference, although the news affected him deeply
  4. to take or put on; adopt: the problem assumed gigantic proportions
  5. to appropriate or usurp (power, control, etc); arrogate: the revolutionaries assumed control of the city
  6. Christianity (of God) to take up (the soul of a believer) into heaven
- [C15: from Latin assūmere to take up, from sūmere to take up, from sub- + emere to take]<sup>98</sup>

There are quite a few possibilities for misinterpretation. Let’s work through the list above.

---

<sup>96</sup> If understood in a 20th century sense

<sup>97</sup> I cite the “Collins” Dictionary, since the CBT apparently respects Collins, and they’re British (like most of the Collins Bank Data). English Dictionary - Complete & Unabridged 10th Edition 2009 © William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1979, 1986 © HarperCollins Publishers 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009

<sup>98</sup> English Dictionary - Complete & Unabridged 10th Edition 2009 © William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1979, 1986 © HarperCollins Publishers 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009



1. Is a woman forbidden to take “authority” for granted? (Just assume it’s hers).
2. Is a woman forbidden to take the authority upon herself, as in “the call seeks the woman, the woman doesn’t seek the call”? If that’s the meaning, it also applies to men who are not to “assume” a called office in the church without a regular call.
3. Is a woman forbidden to pretend to have authority?
4. This meaning would not seem to apply.
5. Is a woman forbidden to “usurp” or “arrogate” authority? Is that the genuine meaning of ἀὐθεντεῖν?
6. This meaning would not seem to apply.

Also the NIV 2011 footnotes add “wife...husband” on 1 Timothy 2:12 too, which does not fit the context. And, speaking of footnotes, where is the old translation, “have authority”? It’s not there. The CBT doesn’t even seem to remember what the NIV 1984 really said. It said, “have authority.” It was clear. It was correct. Is there anything in the Greek or English language that makes “assume authority” more accurate and clear than “have authority”? Or is it really an ambiguous compromise?

See: “*Authentein – A Word Study*” - by Armin J. Panning. Prof. Panning’s study really does answer the question about what ἀὐθεντεῖν means. “With *authentein* the apostle expresses the general principle. The woman is not to exercise authority over the man. Whatever activity or pursuits would tend to overturn that order of things is to be avoided.”<sup>99</sup>

BAG/BAGD offer “have authority” as the first meaning for ἀὐθεντέω. I believe that’s correct. The second meaning “domineer” does not seem to be appropriate in 1 Timothy 2:12. Liddell-Scott-Jones (LSJ) suggests “to have full power or authority over” for 1 Tim. 2:12. That’s workable. In there I find “to have authority over” and that fits perfectly. Unfortunately, Seminexer Fred Danker’s personal revision of the Bauer lexicon (BDAG - see on the year 2000 in the timeline on the first page) reveals a theological bias by suggesting, “to assume a stance of independent authority, give orders to, dictate to.” I cannot accept that. That’s Danker’s personal opinion as a liberal scholar. It would be a mistake to follow him.

George W. Knight III (NIGTC) defines ἀὐθεντεῖν with a great deal of care and erudition. I think his definition is outstanding. Please notice all of the nuances in his excellent definition.

Contrary to the suggestion of KJV’s “to usurp authority” and BAGD’s alternative, “domineer” (so also NEB), the use of the word shows no inherent sense of grasping or usurping authority or of exercising it in a harsh or authoritative way, but simply means “to have or exercise authority” (BAGD...). Paul refers, then, with ἀὐθεντεῖν to exercise of a leadership role or function in the church (the contextual setting), and thus by specific application the office of *episkopos/presbyteros*, since the names of these offices (especially *episkopos*) and the activities associated with them (cf., e.g., 3:4,5; 5:17; Tit. 1:9ff.; Acts 20:17, 28ff.) indicate the exercise of authority. It is noteworthy, however, that Paul does not use “office” terminology here (bishop/presbyter) but functional terminology (teach/exercise authority). It is thus the activity that he prohibits, not just the office (cf. again 1 Cor. 14:34,35).<sup>100</sup>

I agree with Panning and Knight on the meaning of ἀὐθεντεῖν. I hope that we all do.

<sup>99</sup> Available online: <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/1648> or <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/PanningAuthentein.pdf>.

<sup>100</sup> *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Eerdmans, 1992. pages 141-142.

Even CBT “Chair” Doug Moo shared this exact same view in a 1980 Trinity Journal article.<sup>101</sup> He wrote that we can be fairly certain that ἀὐθεντέω. means “have authority” and that there is no reason for thinking it means anything like “usurp authority.” So, without knowing Doug Moo personally, I must wonder if he was outvoted, or changed his mind, or compromised. But, I will now utilize the old ball-yard appeal on a debated call, “Your own guy says so!” If a player on your own team says you are out, “your own guy says so” means you are out. In this case, even CBT “Chair” Doug Moo (1980) agrees with my/our view on this. The CBT’s own guy wrote that it means “have authority” and not anything like “usurp authority” way back in 1980. I agree.

### Hendiadys?

This might come up if we prepare a possible “confessional Lutheran” translation. In the past, a hendiadys explanation of 1 Timothy 2:12 was common in WELS/WLS, “teach **in such a way as to** have authority.” For years, I puzzled over that grammar, because the οὐδὲ seems perfectly fine as it usually is rendered, “or/nor.” The hendiadys explanation seems, to me, to have been virtually eliminated by this impressively thorough study: [http://www.cbmw.org/images/articles\\_pdf/kostenberger\\_andreas/syntactical1tim2\\_12.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/articles_pdf/kostenberger_andreas/syntactical1tim2_12.pdf). If you find this study as convincing as I do, you might agree that the translation “teach in such a way as to have authority,” is rather passe. In this case, I believe some careful scholarship has advanced our knowledge of the Greek grammar. When the time comes to do a translation, I hope someone remembers to re-check this article. There was nothing wrong with the translation of 1 Timothy 2:12 as NIV 1984 had it: ***“I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.”***

### What about Mark 16:9-20?

NIV 2011 casts way too much doubt on Mark 16:9-20.<sup>102</sup> This is unacceptable. The textual criticism of Mark 16:9-20 is a very large topic that I’ll have to abbreviate here. See the WLQ article on this part of God’s Word by Prof. David Kuske: <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/1287>. Also, see “*The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to St. Mark*” by John W. Burgon, available for free at Google books. You might be surprised when you read all the evidence! Also see the resources that will be mentioned under the New King James Version (NKJV) below. I’ll state it plainly based on the resources mentioned and my study of the texts: I am certain that Mark 16:9-20 belongs in God’s Word. My WLS professors said essentially the same thing in class. My understanding is that Professor Blume was very upset about this point in the first NIV, shortly before our Savior called him home to heaven.<sup>103</sup> Now, NIV’11 is much worse. I cannot accept the NIV’s treatment of this portion of God’s Word.

### What about clarity and comprehension?

We use and teach Matthew 18:15-18 very often. I believe that the following changes in the pronouns will make teaching and comprehending this section much more difficult. Many more examples could be listed in NIV’11 that are similar, and perhaps even worse. But this is a very common Bible passage among us. There will be repetitive uses of this section. That’s why I chose this as a representative example of a long list of pronoun changes.

---

<sup>101</sup> <http://www.djmoo.com/articles/1Tim2.pdf> See especially pages 66-67.

<sup>102</sup> See **Appendix B**.

<sup>103</sup> A brother in my circuit confirms this. I think I’ve heard it from more than one man.

Matthew 18:15	Matthew 18:15 - New text in NIV2011
SBLGNT	Εὰν δὲ ἀμαρτήσῃ εἰς σὲ ὁ ἀδελφός σου, ὕπαγε ἐλεγξον αὐτὸν μεταξὺ σοῦ καὶ αὐτοῦ μόνου. ἐὰν σου ἀκούσῃ, ἐκέρδησας τὸν ἀδελφόν σου.
NIV1984	"If your <b>brother</b> sins against you, go and show <b>him his</b> fault, just between the two of you. If <b>he</b> listens to you, you have won <b>your brother</b> over.
NIV2011	"If your brother <b>or sister</b> sins, go and point out <b>their</b> fault, just between the two of you. If <b>they</b> listen to you, you have won <b>them</b> over.

I believe these changes will make this passage more difficult to teach. Try to imagine teaching this in confirmation instruction.<sup>104</sup>

Matthew 18:17	Uses TNIV text
SBLGNT	ἐὰν δὲ παρακούσῃ αὐτῶν, εἰπὼν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ· ἐὰν δὲ καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας παρακούσῃ, ἔστω σοι ὡς περὶ ὁ ἐθνικὸς καὶ ὁ τελώνης.
NIV1984	If <b>he</b> refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if <b>he</b> refuses to listen even to the church, treat <b>him</b> as you would a pagan or a tax collector.
NIV2011	If <b>they</b> still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if <b>they</b> refuse to listen even to the church, treat <b>them</b> as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

**Matthew 18:17** (above) seems particularly confusing in NIV'11.

In NIV'11, "**they**" and "**them**" are intended to be singular. But it's confusing because "**they**" still brings the usual meaning of more than one person. Carefully notice the **plural verbs** (refuse, not refuses). If they were truly singular, wouldn't it take a singular verb? "If they still **refuses**..."? Yet it doesn't, because "**they**" still seems plural.

What if someone asked a wife, "Where is your husband?" Would she really say, "They is here?" No, but "**they**" is used with **plural verbs** in Mt 18:17 (NIV'11). So, if I asked a husband, where is your wife, could he say, "**They are** here"? Think of the outcome if the wife heard this! (Try this with your wife at your own peril). This is just not good, precise communication. It's confusing, and needlessly more difficult.<sup>105</sup>

### What is "accuracy"?

This question is being asked more and more by defenders of NIV 2011. The question first struck me as similar to Pilate's, "*What is truth?*" But there is objective truth in Scripture, and there is a correct meaning in a given Bible passage. So, there can be such a thing as "accuracy" and "inaccuracy" in Bible translation.

God's Word gives wisdom to "the simple" (Ps. 19:7). "It gives understanding to the simple" (Ps. 119:130). The Holy Scriptures are able to make ordinary children "wise for salvation" (2 Tim. 3:15). "One does not need to be a scholar to read and understand God's Word."<sup>106</sup> God's Word is clear. Please review Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics* I, 319-329; and Professor Carl Lawrenz's paper, "The Clarity of Scripture" in *Our Great Heritage*, I, 184-201. Let's understand all of the points made in these resources.

Accuracy refers to rendering the correct meaning into the receptor language (in our

<sup>104</sup> adapted from: [http://www.slowley.com/niv2011\\_comparison/Matthew.html](http://www.slowley.com/niv2011_comparison/Matthew.html)

<sup>105</sup> I credit p. 47 of this article for assisting my thinking in this matter: [http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw\\_pdf/7\\_2/criticisms\\_justified.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw_pdf/7_2/criticisms_justified.pdf)

<sup>106</sup> Kuske, David. *Biblical Interpretation: The Only Right Way*. NPH, © 1995. p. 71.

case, American English). On a subjective level, one can speak of various levels of accuracy in translating a given Bible passage. One might prefer one rendering over another, but either could be “acceptable” if the same meaning is conveyed. In some cases, a translation does not give the correct meaning, or the reader is not able to obtain that meaning by reading the passage. That could be “unacceptable” and “inaccurate.” And sometimes, an exegetical question appears which does not seem certain to us. This will require special care. But, there are times when the passage is quite clear and is not rendered the way it should be. Maybe the translators do not want to accept the passage.

The famous deal-breaker of the RSV was the use of “young woman” in Isaiah 7:14. In the immediate context of Isaiah chapter seven, and the wider context of Matthew chapter one, “young woman” simply will not cut it. It is an inaccurate and unacceptable translation. It will not help to list the names of “scholars” who claim it could mean that. It doesn’t in context. Matthew 1:23 is normative. It is difficult to look past this footnote. Draw your own conclusions.

Sometimes, perhaps a kind and well-meaning professor might suggest in class that a given student’s translation is at least grammatically possible. That same professor might call the same translation “inaccurate” or “unacceptable” in a published version. What is linguistically possible is not necessarily accurate or acceptable in context.

***This We Believe*** states: “Translations of the Hebrew and Greek that accurately reflect the meaning of the original text convey God’s truth to people and can properly be called the Word of God.” This statement takes it for granted that we are able to determine if a translation “accurately” reflects “the meaning of the original text.” It is possible to say that a given passage is translated accurately or inaccurately.

Gordon Fee & Mark Strauss also use the term “accuracy” and define it as, “equivalent meaning.”<sup>107</sup> That is a definition I can recognize. Fee & Strauss state that “translators must first of all be good interpreters of the biblical text.”<sup>108</sup> That’s one reason why a confessional Lutheran version might be the best choice for our use if a “functional equivalent” version is desired.

I would submit that “functional equivalence” (dynamic equivalence) reveals the translators’ interpretations more than “formal equivalence” (literal translation). For that reason, if the translation is done by an ecumenical group of “Evangelicals” (as most modern translations), the “formal equivalent” (literal) versions might be more tight to the original text and less interpretive (and so, safer). If we want a more interpretive translation, perhaps a confessional Lutheran viewpoint will be judged to be best for WELS.

### **Can we trust the pronouns?**

This is an important question with NIV 2011, because so many pronouns have been altered to suit the “gender-neutral” aims of the translators. I’m convinced that NIV’11 would frustrate me if I used it to teach Bible Class because, in my Christian judgment, the pronouns are not sufficiently accurate (examples follow). Others have shared that same concern with the TNIV / NIV’11.<sup>109</sup> Some of them even drew up some guidelines for translation that are quite

---

<sup>107</sup> Fee, Gordon D.; Strauss, Mark L. (2009-05-19). *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions* (chapter two; Kindle Location 332). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

<sup>108</sup> Fee, Gordon D.; Strauss, Mark L. (2009-05-19). *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions* (chapter five; Kindle Locations 1268-1269). Zondervan. Kindle Edition

<sup>109</sup> E.g., see the list of 901 examples here: [http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw\\_pdf/7\\_2/translation\\_inaccuracies.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw_pdf/7_2/translation_inaccuracies.pdf). I began working through this list. Some were changed in NIV’11, some were not. Such lists are possible if desired.

useful. For the background on these guidelines, please review the timeline at the beginning of this essay. I will insert a few comments in red below. By any standards, there were real scholars involved. Two members of the NIV CBT helped write the guidelines: Ken Barker and Ron Youngblood. But, these guidelines were not followed in the making of NIV'11.

### **Colorado Springs Guidelines for Translation of Gender-Related Language in Scripture<sup>110</sup>**

#### **A. Gender-related renderings of Biblical language which we affirm:**

1. The generic use of "he, him, his, himself" should be employed to translate generic 3rd person masculine singular pronouns in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. However, substantival participles such as *ho pisteuon* can often be rendered in inclusive ways, such as "the one who believes" rather than "he who believes."
2. Person and number should be retained in translation so that singulars are not changed to plurals and third person statements are not changed to second or first person statements, with only rare exceptions required in unusual cases.
3. "Man" should ordinarily be used to designate the human race, for example in [Genesis 1:26-27](#); [5:2](#); [Ezekiel 29:11](#); and [John 2:25](#).<sup>111</sup>
4. Hebrew *'ish* should ordinarily be translated "man" and "men," and Greek *aner* should almost always be so translated.
5. In many cases, *anthropoi* refers to people in general, and can be translated "people" rather than "men." The singular *anthropos* should ordinarily be translated "man" when it refers to a male human being. [BK: See *anthropos* in Matthew 19:5. It **must** mean "man" there.]
6. Indefinite pronouns such as *tis* can be translated "anyone" rather than "any man."
7. In many cases, pronouns such as *oudeis* can be translated "no one" rather than "no man."
8. When *pas* is used as a substantive it can be translated with terms such as "all people" or "everyone."
9. The phrase "son of man" should ordinarily be preserved to retain intracanonical connections.
10. Masculine references to God should be retained.

*continued on next page*

---

<sup>110</sup> <http://www.bible-researcher.com/csguidelines.html>

<sup>111</sup> See p. 12 in <http://www.cph.org/pdf/esv/011946study.pdf>. And see chapter 12, pp. 224ff in: "**The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy: Muting the Masculinity of God's Words**" by Poythress/Grudem. <http://www.cbmw.org/Online-Books/The-Gender-Neutral-Bible-Controversy/The-Gender-Neutral-Bible-Controversy>

**B. Gender-related renderings which we will generally avoid, though there may be unusual exceptions in certain contexts:**

1. "Brother" (*adelphos*) should not be changed to "brother or sister"; however, the plural *adelphoi* can be translated "brothers and sisters" where the context makes clear that the author is referring to both men and women.

[Note: the key is "context makes clear." See Acts 1:16; 6:3 in context, where NIV'11 is incorrect. Also, the guideline says that "*adelphoi* can be translated" that way, but that does not necessarily mean that it usually "should" be done.]

2. "Son" (*huios*, *ben*) should not be changed to "child," or "sons" (*huioi*) to "children" or "sons and daughters." (However, Hebrew *banim* often means "children.")

[See Galatians 3:26; 4:7 in NIV'11]

3. "Father" (*pater*, 'ab) should not be changed to "parent," or "fathers" to "parents" or "ancestors."

[See Exodus 10:6 as representative of many examples in NIV'11]

**C. We understand these guidelines to be representative and not exhaustive, and that some details may need further refinement.**

**SOME EXAMPLES YOU CAN CHECK FOR YOURSELF**

The following verses illustrate the guidelines for translation of gender-related language in Scripture. For Guideline **A1** (first sentence): [John 14:23](#); [Rev. 3:20](#); (second sentence): [John 3:18](#). **A2**: [Psalm 1:2](#); [34:20](#); [Gal. 6:7](#); [James 5:14-15](#). **A3**: See guidelines for examples; also [Psalm 90:3](#). **A4**: Hebrew: [Psalm 1:1](#); Greek: [Acts 20:30](#); [1 Cor. 13:11](#). **A5** (first sentence): [Matt. 12:36](#); (second sentence): [1 Cor. 15:21](#); [1 Tim. 2:5](#). **A6**: [Matt. 16:24](#). **A7**: [Gal. 3:11](#). **A8**: [John 12:32](#). **A9**: [Psalm 8:4](#); [Dan. 7:13](#). **A10**: [Matt. 6:9](#); [John 3:16](#). **B1**: [Matt. 18:15](#). **B2** (first sentence): [Gal. 4:7](#); (second sentence): [Exod. 19:6](#). **B3**: [Gen. 48:21](#).

**For many, many more examples:**

See this study: <http://www.cbmw.org/Resources/Articles/An-Evaluation-of-Gender-Language-in-the>. You may click on the spreadsheets here: <http://www.cbmw.org/Resources/Articles/Data-Supporting-CBMW-Review-of-2011-NIV>. Click on the Excel spreadsheet's tabs below (A1, A2, etc.) to see every example! They are overwhelming in number. See how many times a singular is changed to a plural, etc.

**Straw people?**

The controversy over "gender-inclusive" or "gender-neutral" translation has a history that seems to keep repeating. Sometimes advocates construct "straw men." Sometimes scholars talk past one another. To aid discussion, and save time/space, please consider reading through or at least skimming this article, written in 2002. [http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw\\_pdf/7\\_2/criticisms\\_justified.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw_pdf/7_2/criticisms_justified.pdf). Do you notice events repeating too?



### What about the Collins Bank of English usage?

Perhaps the CBT and NIV supporters make a little too much of the Collins Bank. For a little more information from a different angle, consider an article in the *Westminster Theological Journal* 73 (2011): pp. 89-96. You may access this article here: [http://frame-poythress.org/poythress\\_articles/2011Gender.pdf](http://frame-poythress.org/poythress_articles/2011Gender.pdf). The Collins Bank is discussed on pages 89 and following.

First, the Collins Bank never asked any of our members how they speak or understand language at our level or in church. In that sense, the survey completely missed us. Most of their sources were British (which would include some very liberal individuals in the media and academia, and probably even the NIV).

Second, isn't it a matter of historical record that over the past couple of decades there was pervasive pressure in academia and the media and in liberal churches (particularly in Great Britain) to use this type of language? Well, many did, and Collins Bank reflects that.

Third, on pages 93ff (esp., pp. 98-99) of the book "*The Gender Neutral Bible Controversy*," the authors assert that native speakers of a language (e.g., laity, teachers, parish pastors) are able to discern subtleties of language at a "level 3" (discerning), which means that our church members are able to sense what is and is not appropriate, understandable, and clear to them. They might even be better at this for the locality than many professors, foreign scholars, and the Collins Bank of English.

To ask, "is this how many members of the media and academia write?" is one thing. To ask people, "do you require this type of writing and speaking in order to comprehend what I am saying?" is another thing. That's apples and oranges.

Locality does matter too. I could say, "My thermometer indicates that it is 29 degrees. The weatherman reports it is 29 degrees. Therefore the temperature for all English speaking people is 29 degrees!" Would that be right? That fails to take into account location, location, location. Where is the thermometer? In Adrian, MI. Does that automatically count for Milwaukee, Texas, Alaska, or Buckingham Palace? Certainly not. The Collins Bank is a thermometer of English usage for what they checked. Before someone can say, "That's different," let me explain. If I need a drink at the Symposium, will I be directed to a water fountain or a bubbler? (My English dictionary says "bubbler" is local to WI.)

Might the Collins Bank data be useful? Yes. Is it the ultimate trump card for usage? No.

### Verbal Inspiration and Bible Translation:

Some questions have been raised about verbal inspiration and how it relates to Bible translation. It is helpful to re-read Franz Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. 1, pages 343ff. on the topic, "*The Original Text of Holy Scripture and the Translations*." There are many helpful reminders in that section for this discussion. The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC), of which WELS is a member, has provided a helpful treatment of the doctrine of verbal inspiration. Here are excerpts:

"Inspiration does not consist in the inspiration of the message or the thought content only, neither does it apply to the biblical writers only, but it is a *verbal inspiration*, an inspiration of every word in the Bible. The Holy Spirit caused the writers to write the exact words which they wrote... Every single word of the Bible is God's Word, and therefore every word is holy. No man is permitted to add anything to his Word or subtract anything from it (Dt 4:2; Pr 30:5-6)..."

#### ***All Scripture is given by inspiration of God -- even single words.***

That all Scripture is God-breathed means that every single word is the inspired Word of God. When Christ and the apostles appeal to Scripture, they do not adduce merely general scriptural thoughts; they are not even satisfied to quote single passages, but they often lay their

finger on a single word of Scripture to prove their point. In John 10:35, Christ refers to a single word *elohim* (gods) from Psalm 82:6, and adds, “The Scripture cannot be broken.”...

***All Scripture is given by inspiration of God -- even the specific forms of the words.***

... In Galatians 3:16 Paul attaches all weight to the singular noun “seed” (Ge 22:18), and proves by it that Christ was already promised to Abraham. The promise given to Abraham must refer to Christ since the word “seed” is a singular and not a plural noun. Paul also declares that God chose this term intentionally. It did not merely happen that Moses used the singular form “in your seed,” but it was the will of God that this form was used. The Holy Spirit, who taught Paul what he should say, thereby demonstrated that even the individual words of Scripture are exact and true.<sup>112</sup>

Please do not misunderstand. By quoting this, I am not asserting that translators must follow literalistic methods that result in a version that makes no sense in the receptor language! Nor am I saying that it is wrong to render the same exact meaning in a functional equivalent way. Luther often did that. I am saying that translators should be very careful not to change the meaning of Scripture. I am saying that translators must be very precise and extremely careful in following the original text in terms of its very words and forms, understood in context. The very words and forms of the original text are divinely inspired. Translators need to show reverent care for the text of Holy Scripture. In this evaluation, we need to show loving concern as watchful shepherds of the precious souls we are divinely called to serve.

But, it is not merely the original language words and forms that matter. The context is crucial for properly understanding the meaning of the words. Translators have occasionally become too free in rendering God’s Word to the point that meaning is changed. Some examples are mentioned above, such as:

- Some cases when singular is made plural, or plural is made singular, simply to fit a gender-neutral aim.
- When words that are not ambiguous are made to be ambiguous.
- When phrases that are more open to interpretation are made to favor an unlikely interpretation.

Is there some level of subjectivity in evaluating a translation’s accuracy? Sure. But pastors can do it too. Even an expert can err. God’s original text never does. May we never become sloppy with God’s Word to the extent that we say, “close enough,” when we could do better. In school days, we worked hard to learn the very words and forms of the original text. Why? Our professors taught us to be exact and precise in our interpretation of God’s holy Word.

Granted, translating is very hard work. Granted, no translation will be perfect in every respect. But translators still need to take great pains to be as exact and precise as possible in carrying over as much of the meaning as possible from the very words and forms that God has given in the Old and New Testaments. We must not be flippant about translating too freely, especially if the meaning changes by doing so. That said, there will be times when a “hyper-literal” or literalistic rendering gives the wrong sense too. To quote Luther again: “Ah, translating is not every man’s skill as the mad saints imagine. It requires a right, devout, honest, sincere, God-fearing, Christian, trained, informed, and experienced heart. Therefore I hold that no false Christian or factious spirit can be a decent translator.”<sup>113</sup>

**Appendix B** offers some of the places where there is concern. Please see them there. There is some legitimate concern about whether NIV’11 is accurate enough.

---

<sup>112</sup> from <http://www.celc.info/essays/TheEternalWordArticleI.pdf>

<sup>113</sup> Luther, M. (1999). *Vol. 35: Luther's works, vol. 35 : Word and Sacrament I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (194). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

### Christian judgment: A booklet of corrections?

I believe this basic idea came up at least twice at the 2011 Synod Convention: “Why don’t we publish a booklet that corrects the problems in NIV 2011 and give it to people when they buy the Bible?” Each time I heard that suggestion, it seemed that a member of the TEC agreed with it.

Well, I respectfully disagree. Members of the congregation I serve thought that was quite revealing. The very idea of publishing and supplying a “book of corrections” for a recommended Bible translation struck them as alarming. Why recommend that translation then? Should it tell us something that there’s a sincere desire for such a booklet, and an agreement that one could well be made? Think through how this sounds to the average WELS layman, who regards the Bible as God’s holy Word. To my members, it seemed to make the whole discussion rather obvious, to the point of seeming ridiculous. They asked, “Why would I need corrections for the Bible, if it’s really a good translation of God’s holy Word?” It is troublesome, isn’t it? It has just seemed to hover in mid-air ever since. There is agreement that a booklet could well be made, and might be very useful, if we opt for NIV’11. But, doesn’t that say something about NIV’11?

A “Study Bible” which features notes which repeatedly correct the translation above strikes some lay members as similar to what Roman Catholics have historically done with their notes. Usually, we teach them to believe the Bible text, even if you can’t always believe the notes below. Would we really want to start telling them the opposite?<sup>114</sup>

### NIV 2011 Evaluation:

I do not wish to oversimplify. Nor do I wish to be misrepresented. I do not wish to be unfair or unclear. There are some improvements in NIV’11, such as the ones I explained in my “Evaluating NIV 2011” presentation (**Appendix A**).

Philippians 2:6 is an improvement over NIV’84. I was never satisfied with “something to be grasped” there and explained it, even in worship lessons. The Greek ἀπαγγέλον can mean “used to his own advantage.” Actually, I prefer GWN’s, “a prize to be displayed,” but NIV’11 is an improvement.<sup>115</sup>

In Bible Class, I always corrected NIV’84 when it said “put their faith in.” NIV’11 has “believed” in those four passages (John 2:11; 7:31; 8:30; 11:45). That’s an improvement because it reduces the background of decision theology.

In Pastoral Theology, we discussed Matthew 5:32 as a problem passage. NIV’11 improves what was a misunderstood passage by using the phrase “makes her the victim of adultery.” Although, I prefer GWN’s “causes her to be looked upon as an adulteress.” A little daughter can be a “victim” of adultery when her parents divorce, but she is not “looked upon as an adulteress.” GWN is more accurate, but at least NIV’11 has a passive idea that could be explained.

Acts 3:21 is an improvement too. See the resources mentioned at the bottom of p. 2 in **Appendix A**. NIV’11 has a good change in 1 Timothy 2:4. I always explained it that way anyway. It was never a problem to explain it, but NIV’11 is accurate here. And Galatians 3:24 is an improvement (“until Christ came” instead of “to lead us to Christ”).

---

<sup>114</sup> A one volume Bible commentary that could be used in connection with various translations might be more practical for us.

<sup>115</sup> See the thorough discussion in the *New International Greek Testament Commentary* (NIGTC) on Philippians by Peter T. O’Brien. Pages 211-216.

Unfortunately, I found many more problems in NIV'11 than improvements. The problems in NIV 2011 involve departure from the meaning of the original text, not merely in form. See Psalm 8:4-6; Hebrews 2:5-8; and 1 Timothy 2:12 above. Also consider Acts 1:16 and its footnote; Acts 6:3; 1 Cor. 14:39; Psalm 16:10; Isaiah 7:14's footnote, and Psalm 45:6's footnote. See **Appendix B** and the comments there. Recall the many pronoun changes mentioned earlier and the extra sources for evidence provided.

Some cases were regarded as “debatable.” There was some disagreement of judgment in such cases, even among WELS professors, which I noted in part two of my “Evaluating NIV 2011” presentation (pp. 3-4). I will now reveal that I agree with Professor Brug's judgment in each case I mentioned.

I will allow debatable examples to remain that, but some examples do seem significantly worse. I cannot see 2 Peter 1:21 as an improvement. Luke 1:37 seems “questionable” as Prof. Brug noted. Removing “saints” in every case seems rather unnecessary. Just about every worship service reminds me how often we use the term “saints” in worship: liturgy, hymns, prayers, names, etc.

NIV'11 overuses the “brothers and sisters” change. Acts 1:16 is incorrect in context. Acts 6:3 is incorrect in context. “Sisters” were not voters in the early church. So, let's be honest. What is this change, really? “Sisters” in each case is a fabrication of the translators, who must assume that having women voters is normal. In these cases, adding “and sisters” is really adding to God's Word, because these words are not in the original text, and absolutely do not fit the context. So, this is a change of meaning. I am not going to stick my neck out and say translators may never use “brothers and sisters” in other contexts. The AAT does it too. Maybe ESV has a workable solution by keeping “*brothers*” in the text and stating in a footnote on Acts 1:14: “Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated “brothers”) refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, **depending on the context**, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church; also verse 15.” Interestingly, that footnote is not on Acts 1:16 (but it is on Acts 6:3). The key phrase is “depending on the context.” By leaving it out of the text, ESV left it up to the reader to interpret the context. NIV'11 does not leave the option open. In fact, NIV'11 compounds the problem by adding this footnote to Acts 1:16: “The Greek word for *brothers and sisters* (*adelphoi*) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God's family; also in 6:3; 11:29; 12:17; 16:40; 18:18, 27; 21:7, 17; 28:14, 15.” Note that the opposite view no longer exists. The NIV's door has slammed shut on my view of this verse.

Please see my list of examples: **Appendix B**. The first five pages list the examples I regard as the worst, most significant “weakenings.” Psalm 8:4-6, Hebrews 2:6-8, and 1 Timothy 2:12 are at the top of my list. Acts 1:16, 6:3, and 1 Corinthians 14:39 (etc.) will negatively impact the application of the principles of man/woman roles in the church. The NIV translators revealed something about themselves when they added the footnote to Isaiah 7:14, “*or young woman*.” That was the deal-breaker for many with the RSV. The new footnote definitely shows some movement in a direction away from us. Psalm 45:6 has a footnote that is just wrong, “Here the king is addressed as God's representative.” No, here the Messiah is called “God.” There is further weakening in Messianic prophecy in other Psalms, such as Psalm 16:10. It is harder to find Jesus in there now.

The remainder of the examples are gleaned, in Biblical order, mainly from the TEC appointed reviewers with whom I found agreement. Please read their words, and compare to the other translations.<sup>116</sup> In almost every case, there are better translations available. This is

---

<sup>116</sup> I thank my associate, Pastor James Backus, for assisting with Appendix B, and for serving faithfully to enable me to write this essay.

one reason why I was stunned to hear some call NIV'11 the "best" choice.

The original NIV 1978/1984 apparently fits a reading level of grade 7.8. Whether NIV 2011 fits the same exact level remains to be seen. NIV 2011 might actually read at a higher level. For example: "patience" was changed to "forbearance" in Galatians 5:22. How is that easier or better? I don't know of many people today who use the word, "forbearance." Other translations are accused of using "Biblish," but NIV'11 seems to have some too. In 1 Timothy 2:12, "have" was changed to "assume." This is not an easier word to read. There are others.

I believe that **Genesis 6:1-7** is an awkward read in NIV'11. And I agree with Professors Lawrenz and Jeske that in Gen. 6:3, NIV's "mortal" is "unacceptable" (their word). How many people know the word, "Nephilim" (6:4)? This is the type of translation that NIV proponents would mock in the ESV, if it were not in the NIV. At least ESV provides a footnote there, NIV'11 does not.

NIV'11 probably still reads at an 8th grade reading level, but I don't think it reads as well as NIV'84 supporters claim. Others share that view. NIV'84 was easier to read, and had better flow. The changes of NIV'11 do not seem to improve reading flow. NIV'11 does have the feel of a more "P.C." Bible. Some have told me that they find that aspect of NIV'11 annoying. I have to agree with that too.

After much study, thorough discussion, and careful consideration, I must respectfully disagree with the assessment that NIV'11 is the "best" choice. I will propose later in this essay that there are better choices available right now for a confessional Lutheran synod to use.

### **New King James Version (NKJV)**

This very literal version probably even surpasses the NASB in "word-for-word" translation. I wrote that more than a decade ago, but after continual study, I am even more convinced that it is true. Like the NASB, the NKJV is very reliable. NKJV is the #3 best-selling Bible today. It is available just about everywhere, even Walmart. What the NKJV lacks in readability, it makes up for in reverence and faithfulness to the original. Those who no longer understand many words of the KJV would do well to consider this revision.

The NKJV translators used the "textus receptus," the so-called "Received Text" as the basis of the New Testament, but carefully indicate where variants exist in footnotes. It is certainly not true that the NKJV did not consider other textual evidence. I would begin by submitting the book that describes the making of the NKJV: *The New King James Version: In the Great Tradition* by Arthur Farstad. The textual footnotes of the NKJV are the most fair of any major Bible translation. Not all scholars agree that the Alexandrian manuscripts are earliest and "best."<sup>117</sup> Past WLS professors routinely recommended a book about this written by Harry A. Sturz, *The Byzantine Text-Type & New Testament Textual Criticism* (1984). Prof. David Kuske began his WLQ review of Sturz's book with these words: "This is the best book written on the practice of New Testament textual criticism, bar none."<sup>118</sup> He concluded the WLQ review with this sentence, "It is the best single book written on the practice of NT textual criticism." Harry Sturz was the man who was mainly responsible for the NKJV footnotes. He was a first-rate scholar who did not share the "Alexandrian Priority" view.

This is not a simple subject, and one must be careful not to make simplistic statements disparaging the New King James Version. Before rejecting the NKJV or using the NKJV, I'd recommend, at the very least, reading through the book: *The New King James Version: In the*

---

<sup>117</sup> See for example the work of Robinson and Pierpont both here: <http://www.skypoint.com/members/waltzmn/RobPier.html> and here: <http://rosetta.reltech.org/TC/v06/Robinson2001.html>

<sup>118</sup> WLQ Vol. 82:1, p. 78.



*Great Tradition*” by Arthur Farstad. You might be surprised. When one reads about how this version was made, one realizes the impressive care that was taken to produce it.<sup>119</sup> Over-simplifications tend to gloss over that godly care. The NKJV deserves more respect and study in WELS. Many have used it to good benefit in the ELS.

From time to time, when reading a more free translation, it is helpful to check a more literal Bible translation. The NKJV supplies excellent literal translations of key passages of the Old and New Testaments, and deserves to be one of the most-consulted Bible translations today. The publisher of the NKJV (Thomas Nelson) has personally assured me that they definitely have no plans to revise the NKJV. For better or worse, that is something worth knowing. Those in ELS who wish to keep their NKJV may do so, while NIV users must change now, and later too.

I particularly appreciate the NKJV’s inclusion of Mark 16:9-20, which is often used in Luther’s Small Catechism (we still have children memorize it), and the Book of Concord. It is quoted at least 13 times in the WLS Dogmatics Notes. If you have never even looked at John Burgon’s book, “*The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to St. Mark*,” do yourself a favor and see how much evidence there really is.<sup>120</sup> It might surprise you. My WLS Professors recommended that we read it if we had questions about this section. In this old book, a scholar from over a century ago puts many of today’s scholars to shame. You’ll find evidence not found elsewhere. And it’s free as a PDF at Google Books.

You will find a few archaic words in the NKJV if you use it often, such as “tarry,” “brethren” (which if you study the definition, fits *adelphoi* perfectly, but it would have to be taught), and “gird.” Professor Panning’s statement seems to apply to the NKJV: “It is infinitely better to retain a translation that may not be as easy reading, that may not include the latest in scholarship, but which accords to the Lord Jesus Christ His rightful place in God’s plan of salvation. I take it for granted that we agree on this, and that it will not be necessary to belabor the point.”<sup>121</sup>

In these days of new and constantly changing Bible translations, the New King James Version (NKJV) stands firm as a very faithful and reliable translation of God’s holy Word. What I appreciate most about the NKJV is its accuracy. You can be sure that the pronouns and words of the NKJV correspond precisely to the original Hebrew or Greek text. I recommend the NKJV. I believe that the NKJV “is a contemporary Bible translation which, although not a perfect translation, is one which may be used with a high degree of confidence.”<sup>122</sup>

### English Standard Version (ESV)

The English Standard Version was produced by scholars who were not pleased with the direction the NIV was moving. Several LCMS professors were included in the group of scholars who worked on the ESV.<sup>123</sup> The ESV is a revision of the RSV, but with the clear aim of correcting the problems in the RSV. The ESV does correct the most serious problems (Isaiah

---

<sup>119</sup> Farstad, Arthur. *The New King James Version: In the Great Tradition*. Thomas Nelson. 1995

<sup>120</sup> Please do not confuse the real John Burgon with the Dean Burgon Society.

<sup>121</sup> “The NASB, Is This The Answer?” p.5, quoted above.

<sup>122</sup> This statement by the WLS faculty was actually applied to NIV 1978 and NIV 1984. I use it as boilerplate for a recommended version. Quoted words taken from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, & Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. (1998). *Vol. 85: Wisconsin Lutheran quarterly, Volume 85* (electronic edition.). Logos Library System; Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly (108). Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House.

<sup>123</sup> <http://www.esv.org/esv/scholarship/translation-review-scholars/>



7:14; Romans 9:5; etc.). Its goals are to be more “literal” than the NIV and more easy to read than the NASB. The ESV seems to accomplish both goals. The ESV purposefully aims to follow the “Colorado Springs Guidelines” mentioned above<sup>124</sup> These guidelines deal with gender-inclusive or gender-neutral Bible translation. Two members of the NIV CBT helped write the guidelines: Ken Barker and Ron Youngblood.

I agree with Prof. Brug’s good, even-handed preliminary review of the ESV.<sup>125</sup> Please read that. Brug compares TNIV (very similar to NIV 2011) to the ESV...

The ESV is better than the TNIV in so far as, it introduces fewer questionable or wrong interpretations into the translation. It is not entirely immune to the TNIV’s negative reputation as a divisive translation, in that it is something of a counter-translation to the TNIV, but it carries less negative baggage than the TNIV. Neither the TNIV or ESV will win the degree of acceptance that the NIV enjoyed in Evangelical Christianity. If the choice was between the TNIV and ESV, my vote, based on an initial study, would go to the ESV. What if the choice were between the NIV [1984] and the ESV? This decision would not be so easy. While the ESV does enjoy some advantage in not introducing as much interpretation into the text, it reads less smoothly than the NIV. It is not that its language is very archaic and hard to understand like the King James, but just that it does not have the natural flow of contemporary English. In many places it sounds quite stilted even to a reader used to the idioms of the King James. Perhaps some of this is due to the fact that the ESV is not a fresh translation but a touch-up of the RSV, done in part to meet the need for a quickly available alternative to the TNIV.

I also agree with the observation that ESV lacks “the natural flow of contemporary English.” In some cases, I believe that is partially due to the ESV’s attempt to be more “transparent” to the original text. Consider Ezekiel 33:7 which sounds a little awkward in the ESV, “So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel.” We would probably say, as NIV 1984 did, “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel.” But if you examine the Hebrew text, you will see that the ESV is trying to offer emphasis by prolepsis. “You” is brought forward for emphasis, perhaps (cp. NASB, NKJV).

According to evidence available, the ESV seems to read at a level comparable to the NIV. See some evidence of this from the ESV’s publisher: <http://www.crossway.org/blog/2005/08/readability-grade-levels/>. Also see this agreed to by the NIV’s publisher: <http://www.zondervan.com/Cultures/en-US/Product/Bible/Translations/ESV.htm?QueryString=Zondervan>. The people at the congregation I serve have repeatedly said that they find the ESV a little easier to understand than the NKJV, and similar to the NIV in terms of reading level. They were insulted when I told them that some say that the ESV is too hard for most people to understand in WELS. If the Missouri Synod can read it and make sense of it, is it possible that WELS members could too? It would seem so. It remains a good option on the table. See **appendix B**, for more examples.

The main problem I had with the ESV was 1 Corinthians 11:3. But, if we explain the footnote as correct, that might be surmountable. Perhaps more study/discussion on this point would be helpful. Professor Nass has raised some criticisms of the ESV, many of which I would agree with. His paper, is available here: <http://www.wels.net/news-events/forward-in-christ/april-2011/some-thoughts-esv-and-bible-translation>. After reading the paper a few times, I addressed some matters with Professor Nass. The following is the basic gist of my response to Prof. Nass’s essay.

---

<sup>124</sup> See the guidelines here: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/csguidelines.html>

<sup>125</sup> <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/2151> (WLQ Fall 2006. Vol. 103, No. 4, pp. 302ff.)

The ESV has published a very conservative revision (ESV 2011) which corrects some of the concerns raised. For example, in 2 Cor 4:3 (cf. Nass p. 7) the new ESV 2011 has removed “only” so now it reads, “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.”

Prof. Nass demonstrates that ESV is neither perfectly literal nor perfectly consistent. Neither is NIV’11 perfectly functionally equivalent nor perfectly consistent. Both translations had to make judgment calls. That’s why we should judge translations on the words provided, not the “motives” of the translators or publicity claims. The following are just some notes on some of Prof. Nass’s criticisms of the ESV.

Col 2:8 (Nass, p.4) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing? Also see footnotes of each.

Jonah 1:2 (Nass, p. 11) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing “because”?

Jonah 1:5 (Nass, p.11) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing “had gone”?

Jonah 1:11 (Nass, p.12) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing “rougher and rougher”?

Jonah 1:14 (Nass, p. 12) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing, “have done as you pleased”?

Jonah 2:4 (Nass, p. 12) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing?

Jonah 2:8 (Nass, p. 12) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing?

Jonah 3:3 (Nass, p. 12) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing?

Jonah 3:7 (Nass, p. 13) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing?

Jonah 4:2 (Nass, p. 13) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing?

Jonah 4:5 (Nass, p. 13) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing?

Jonah 4:6 (Nass, p. 13) Doesn’t NIV 2011 do the same thing?

Acts 4:12 (Nass, p.17) ESV 2011 now has a footnote on “men”: “The Greek word *anthropoi* refers here to both men and women.”

Romans 5:18 (Nass, p.17) ESV 2011 now has a footnote on “men”: “The Greek word *anthropoi* refers here to both men and women; also twice in verse 18.”

Isaiah 53:5 (Nass, p.18) ESV 2011 has been revised as follows: “But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.” (Same as NIV, the comparison version there).

Luke 1:27 (Nass, p.19) Isn’t “betrothed” a preferable technical term? Please note the helpful footnote there: “That is, legally pledged to be married.”

Isaiah 43:28 (Nass, p.20) “princes” is also used in NASB95 and NKJV.

2 Cor 11:25 (Nass, p. 20) NIV 1984 uses “stoned” there too, and I prefer it. “Pelted with stones” seems like “pelted with dung, fruit, or vegetables,” more of an insult than an attempt to kill, like when a shoe was tossed at Pres. Bush. I never had a problem teaching “stoned” in Bible Class...

Eph 2:19 (Nass, p. 20) “Aliens” is in current use today as “illegal aliens.” We use that way more here than “E.T.” as a 1980’s reference. Note the footnote there: 2:19 “Or sojourners. A “stranger” can be someone creeping around in the neighborhood.

Acts 8:23 (Nass, p.21) “gall of bitterness” requires explaining, and there is a footnote: 8:23 “That is, a bitter fluid secreted by the liver; bile...”

2 Cor 6:12 (Nass, p.21), this is easier to read in NIV. But compare NASB and NKJV.

Gal 4:18 is a case where the ESV is rougher than other literal versions.

1 Kings 3:7 (Nass, p.22), see a TEC appointed reviewer who disagreed on this (on Acts 1:21 in Appendix B).

Amos 4:6 is actually touted by ESV as an example of what they intended to do. Interesting that both sides point this verse out. Both sides think they are right. I see your point here, but I think the AAT is closer to the idiom and catching the meaning in our language. But it’s not impossible to explain.

Php 1:3 (Nass, p.24) I’m pretty sure I heard a very nice choir piece with ESV’s exact words.

*continued on next page*

Psalm 23 is beautiful in the ESV. Luke 2 is nicely done. Isaiah 55:10-11 seems well done to me. It doesn't waver on Isaiah 7:14 as NIV'11 does. It's not as weak on Psalm 8 / Hebrews 2 as NIV is. It's certainly better on 1 Timothy 2:12. I am thankful for Prof. Nass's work on this issue, and for providing examples and discussion. It is my hope that some of these reactions might help provide something useful too.

Despite his criticism of the ESV's promotional claims, and some of its weaknesses, Prof. Nass also wrote: "It seems that the same judgment can be placed on the ESV today that was placed by WELS on the NIV in the 1970's: Doctrinally it is 'a translation which may be used with a high degree of confidence.'"<sup>126</sup> I agree with that statement of my brother in Christ. The more I examine and work with the ESV, the more I like it. I believe that the ESV "is a contemporary Bible translation which, although not a perfect translation, is one which may be used with a high degree of confidence."<sup>127</sup>

### **Holman Christian Standard Bible**

The Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB) is a relatively new translation. Here is Michael Marlowe's summary of some of the background.

*The Holman Christian Standard Bible* is a publishing project of Broadman & Holman Publishers, the trade books division of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. LifeWay (formerly known as the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) is a non-profit agency of the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest Protestant denomination in America. The version originated in 1984 as an independent project of Arthur Farstad, who had formerly served as general editor for the *New King James Version*. Farstad's original concept was to produce a modern English translation of the New Testament based on the Greek Majority Text which he had edited with Zane Hodges and published in 1982. At the time, Farstad was employed as a professor at Dallas Theological Seminary. In his translation work he was joined by another man on the DTS faculty, Edwin A. Blum. Together they produced translations of some portions of the New Testament.

In 1998 the people at Broadman & Holman were seeking to buy the copyright of some already-existing Bible version for use in their publishing projects. For many years they had been using the *New International Version*, but this was not convenient for them, because the copyright holder of the NIV (the International Bible Society) had sold exclusive North American publishing rights for their translation to the Zondervan corporation in Grand Rapids, and Zondervan would allow other publishers to use the NIV only under some very expensive and restrictive license agreements. Also, there was at the time no small concern about a planned revision of the NIV. In 1997 it had become public knowledge that the International Bible Society was preparing a politically correct "inclusive language" revision which would make the NIV less accurate but more acceptable to feminists. This move toward liberalism on the part of the IBS was very destructive of the trust which many Southern Baptists had formerly placed in the NIV, and there was a feeling that the denomination's publishing agency should not be dependent on the people who now control the text of the NIV. The desire of conservatives to have a version under their control was later expressed by David R. Shepherd, vice president of Bible publishing for Broadman &

<sup>126</sup> "Some Thoughts on the ESV," p. 4.

<sup>127</sup> This statement by the WLS faculty was actually applied to NIV 1978 and NIV 1984. I use it as boilerplate for a recommended version. Quoted words taken from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, & Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. (1998). *Vol. 85: Wisconsin Lutheran quarterly, Volume 85* (electronic edition.). Logos Library System; Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly (108). Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House.

Holman:

Some recent translations have reinterpreted the Bible to make it consistent with current trends and their own way of thinking ... Current trends in Bible translation have been a real wake-up call for everybody who's concerned about preserving the integrity of Scripture. The HCSB will be under the stewardship of Christians who believe we should conform our lives and culture to the Bible - not the other way around.<sup>128</sup>

Shepherd's comments were made in 1999. After the Southern Baptist Convention's resolution in 2011, there should be no doubt about the concerns there. After unsuccessfully trying to obtain the NASB, they chose the private translation work of Arthur Farstad, the general editor of the NKJV. When Farstad died, Blum took over. Michael Marlowe describes what happened next:

The version was then rapidly produced by a large team of translators, editors, and stylists under contract with Broadman & Holman. Most of the team members were Baptists, and all of the New Testament translators were Baptists. But, as usual, much of the harder work in the Old Testament was done by scholars from the Presbyterian seminaries. There were also people on the team from various other denominations. Looking at the list of translators, we see that a woman who was employed as an editor at Lifeway (Janice Meier) is credited with the translation of Psalms 1-51.<sup>129</sup>

The Introduction to the HCSB explains its translation philosophy as "Optimal Equivalence." This theory of translation comes from Dr. James Price, who (like Farstad) was also a key man in the making of the NKJV (then, his theory was called, "complete equivalence," and is described in the NKJV preface). Both the NKJV and the HCSB have conservative backgrounds and leanings. This is how the HCSB explains its translation theory.

**Optimal Equivalence:** In practice, translations are seldom if ever purely formal or dynamic but favor one theory of Bible translation or the other to varying degrees. Optimal equivalence as a translation philosophy recognizes that form cannot be neatly separated from meaning and should not be changed (for example, nouns to verbs or third person "they" to second person "you") unless comprehension demands it. The primary goal of translation is to convey the sense of the original with as much clarity as the original text and the translation language permit. Optimal equivalence appreciates the goals of formal equivalence but also recognizes its limitations.

**Optimal equivalence** starts with an exhaustive analysis of the text at every level (word, phrase, clause, sentence, discourse) in the original language to determine its original meaning and intention (or purpose). Then relying on the latest and best language tools and experts, the nearest corresponding semantic and linguistic equivalents are used to convey as much of the information and intention of the original text with as much clarity and readability as possible. This process assures the maximum transfer of both the words and thoughts contained in the original...

### **The gender language policy in Bible translation**

Some people today ignore the Bible's teachings on distinctive roles of men and women in family and church and have an agenda to eliminate those distinctions in every arena of life. These people have begun a program to engineer the removal of a perceived male bias in the English language. The targets of this program have been such traditional linguistic practices as the generic use of "man" or "men," as well as "he," "him," and "his."

A group of Bible scholars, translators, and other evangelical leaders met in 1997 to respond to this issue as it affects Bible translation. This group produced the "[Guidelines for Translation of](http://www.bible-researcher.com/csb.html)

---

<sup>128</sup> <http://www.bible-researcher.com/csb.html>

<sup>129</sup> <http://www.bible-researcher.com/csb.html>

[Gender-Related Language in Scripture](#)" (adopted May 27, 1997 and revised Sept. 9, 1997). The Holman Christian Standard Bible was produced in accordance with these guidelines.

*[i.e., the Colorado Springs Guidelines]*

The goal of the translators has not been to promote a cultural ideology but to faithfully translate the Bible. While the Holman CSB avoids using "man" or "he" unnecessarily, the translation does not restructure sentences to avoid them when they are in the text. For example, the translators have not changed "him" to "you" or to "them," neither have they avoided other masculine words such as "father" or "son" by translating them in generic terms such as "parent" or "child."<sup>130</sup>

There is much to like there! I appreciate the conservative background of the HCSB very much. And, I understand that many WELS pastors are reading and appreciating HCSB too. Maybe some of you know much more about it than I do. I like the HCSB's conservative approach to Scripture. I like that the HCSB does not waver on Isaiah 7:14. I like that the HCSB followed the Colorado Springs Guidelines, so that one can have some confidence about the pronouns. I'm impressed that HCSB does not make key passages overly "Baptist" in nature.

In many places where the NIV is weak, HCSB is better. For example, Romans 9:22-23, "And what if God, desiring to display His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience objects of wrath **ready** for destruction? And [what if] He did this to make known the riches of His glory on objects of mercy that He **prepared beforehand** for glory" (HCSB). That is just excellent! Sometimes, I get the impression that the HCSB translators were reading past issues of WLQ. Genesis 4:26 adds the footnote, "or *to proclaim*" the name of the LORD. I appreciate "from eternity" in Micah 5:2.

There is no playing around with the translation of 1 Timothy 2:12 in the HCSB, "I do not allow a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; instead, she is to be silent." Acts 1:16 and 6:3 both say "brothers" with no footnote there either. That's solid. I could live with HCSB's translation of Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2. (Almost no translations get the "capital letters" right on those, if they are applying them to the Messiah.) What I like are HCSB's references to the New Testament passages. That would be useful to the reader, for example: "Psalm 8:6 : [1Co 15:27](#); [Eph 1:22](#); [Heb 2:5-8](#)."

Prof. Nass has offered a helpful review of the HCSB.<sup>131</sup> Please read it. I appreciate his work. He's done such a fine job, I will defer to his review for the most part. I might differ slightly in the concluding comparison with the ESV. The HCSB does have individual passages which are superior to the ESV, but I'm not sure that the HCSB is superior to the ESV, overall. Maybe some day it will be. A few matters would take some getting used to.

HCSB uses "happy" instead of "blessed" in Psalm 1. I don't believe those two are synonyms, really. I definitely prefer "blessed." Happy can be a passing emotion. "Blessed" refers to gifts and blessings that come from God.

HCSB has the two disciples "arguing" on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:15). That's unusual. HCSB uses the word, "moron" (Matthew 5:22), which mimics the Greek sound. But it's quirky. I'm picturing smirking grade-school children, maybe.

The HCSB version of 1 Cor 14:33-35 certainly seems to answer the question about whether it is appropriate for women to speak in voters' meetings. "As in all the churches of the saints, the women should be silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak, but should be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, they should ask their own husbands at home, for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the **church meeting**." (It's

---

<sup>130</sup> <http://www.bible-researcher.com/csb-intro.html>

<sup>131</sup> <http://www.wels.net/news-events/forward-in-christ/april-2011/introduction-holman-christian-standard-bible-hcsb>

interesting that NLT has a similar view.)

The English style of the HCSB seems “flat” in these key passages: Psalm 23, Luke 2, and John 3:16. When I first read that the NIV was “flat” in an LCMS review, I struggled to understand what was meant. But now I get it. HCSB is really flat in those places. I’m not sure my people or I will ever quite be satisfied with HCSB’s Psalm 23. I really don’t like Psalm 23:6, “Only goodness and faithful love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord as long as I live.” I’m not really faulting the accuracy of Luke 2. It was a “feeding trough.” I just think our people expect “manger” still. “Away in a feeding trough” will be a good Christmas carol in the future, perhaps. This paragraph mainly relates to English style, English translation traditions, and expectations of people. These are minor concerns compared to those I have with other versions.

I am disappointed with the brackets around the Mark 16:9-20 text in HCSB, and I’m pretty sure Farstad would be too, for what it’s worth. The translation of 1 Tim 5:17 seems loose and narrowly interpreted: “The elders who are good leaders should be considered worthy of an **ample honorarium**, [a] especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.” At least the footnote comes to the rescue there: “*Lit of double honor, or possibly of respect and remuneration.*”

Then there are little preferences. In Acts 20:27, I prefer “will” or “counsel” to HCSB’s “plan.” In the latest text edition, “Yahweh” is used 495 times in the HCSB. That would take some getting used to. For another review of the HCSB, visit: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/csb.html>. President Wendland, while speaking at the Michigan District Convention, described the HCSB as “half-baked.” It doesn’t seem quite finished. If we could revise the HCSB ourselves, I would be very interested. But that won’t happen. Maybe the next edition of the HCSB will be even better.

The HCSB is pretty much under the control of the Southern Baptists, for better or worse. Like the LCMS, the SBC saw problems coming. They were wise to be aware and to act years ago. Baptists now have good options available to them.<sup>132</sup> The LCMS has not been vulnerable to the NIV change. It really cannot be denied that in the 1990’s the LCMS saw problems coming and issued a statement on inclusive language.<sup>133</sup> Now that we are all becoming more alert to the issues, perhaps we can produce something better than the HCSB. That would be my hope. I’m not convinced the HCSB is the answer for us. But when I consider the concerns with the NIV’11, I am convinced that HCSB is a more reliable version (overall) than NIV’11. I have not used the HCSB as much as some of the other versions I’ve reviewed. I’ve known some of those over a long period of time. At this point, I think the HCSB might be usable, but I’m not sure I am quite prepared enough to make the judgment. Let me just conclude by saying that I am favorably inclined toward HCSB. Based upon what I’ve seen and read, in a head to head comparison, based on reliability alone, I would choose it over NIV’11. The passages that concern me most about the NIV’11 are better in HCSB.

## Translation Discussion Points

### Readability

**Is readability (smooth reading) the number one concern in evaluating Bible versions?**

---

<sup>132</sup> HCSB, ESV, and NASB’95 seem recommended most often by Southern Baptists.

<sup>133</sup> <http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=681>



To listen to some people, one might get that impression. But I think we would all agree that readability is not the number one concern. Evaluating translations would be pretty easy, and quite fun and relaxing, if all it required was reading a translation a great deal and asking, “Do I like how this reads/sounds? How does it make me feel?”

Readability is certainly one aspect of evaluating Bible translations, but it is not the most important concern. Evaluating Bible translations includes checking Bible passages that have been controversial over the years (Isaiah 7:14; Romans 9:5). It includes checking passages that might reveal a theological slant (Romans 9:22-23; Psalm 8; 1 Timothy 2:12). There are many other considerations as well. Fee & Strauss list some of their considerations, but their list is certainly not exhaustive. Their conclusion that NRSV and TNIV and NLT are probably the best choices in each category reveals that their considerations are quite different from mine. I cannot recommend any of those three versions. I agree with my professors who taught me that doctrinal purity and accuracy should be at the top of the list of concerns (cf. Panning’s point #3 mentioned toward the beginning of this essay).

### **Evaluate: People cannot read or comprehend the more literal versions.**

One certainly hears this an awful lot. The members I’m called and privileged to serve generally find it annoying and insulting when someone says that they cannot understand this or that Bible. I do not wish to be careless in my answer, though. There are passages that are more difficult than others. There are translations that are more difficult to read than others. One has this opinion, and another has that.

I appreciate some objective comparisons, when they are available. I’m not saying that these are fool-proof. I’ve also read about the short-comings of this or that test. But consider just one example of a reading level test between the NIV and the ESV... See NIV’s test here: <http://www.zondervan.com/Cultures/en-US/Product/Bible/Translations/New+International+Version+%28NIV%29.htm?QueryStringSite=Zondervan>. Then, see ESV’s test here: <http://www.crossway.org/blog/2005/08/readability-grade-levels/> or here: <http://www.zondervan.com/Cultures/en-US/Product/Bible/Translations/ESV.htm?QueryStringSite=Zondervan>. One method of testing reading level is known as: “Flesch-Kincaid.” That’s what was used for the ESV. Was that the test used for NIV too? NIV’84 is placed at grade 7.8. The ESV is roughly the same. And, the NKJV has run several tests (Dale-Chall, Fry, and Raygor) that come to a similar conclusion that NKJV reads at an 8th grade level. You may read about this in the Introduction to Farstad’s, *“The New King James Version: In the Great Tradition.”* After that, there are also firm opinions of individuals. But the “objective” studies I have seen rate NIV, ESV, and NKJV as similar in readability.

### **Evaluate: We must simplify to the point of sacrificing terms such as “saint” and “grace.”**

I don’t think we do. Everyone sings, “For All the Saints” and “Amazing Grace” in the same worship service. It’s important that we teach these words. It is possible that we might consider two Bible versions: one that is simplified, and one for regular use in worship and Bible Class. These and other terms still seem important in the Catechism, the liturgy, hymns, prayers, and common use at church. (Also see comments on this in the review of the AAT).

### **What are the two key rules of thumb in selecting a Bible translation?**

1. Be sure that the translation accurately translates the original text of the Bible. Much was written about this above, but much more could be written.
2. Be sure that you can read and understand the words of the translation. Ultimately, a Bible translation that you can’t read is a Bible translation that is not that helpful for you. If it’s just going to sit on the shelf unused, it might as well be a Hebrew or Greek version. On the

other hand, a Bible translation that you love to read could be a great help, as long as it does not lead you astray. The best translations will be those that accurately translate God's verbally inspired and inerrant word from the original languages into language that you can easily read and understand.

### **A Statement of Christian Judgment: for further thought/discussion...**

If an ecumenical / Reformed / Evangelical group is doing the translating, I tend to prefer a more literal version so that it is more tight to the text. That way, we may interpret it.

If a more colloquial version is desired (functional equivalent), then I'd prefer that it be done by confessional Lutherans. I will always prefer a version that is tight to the text, but it is possible to have it read well too. Luther's German translation was really both.

### **If we cannot simply move forward with NIV 2011, what solutions are available to us?**

Here are some of the better selling translations on the market today:

#### **Bible Sales (as of Oct 2011):**

from [http://cbaonline.org/nm/documents/BSLs/Bible\\_Translations.pdf](http://cbaonline.org/nm/documents/BSLs/Bible_Translations.pdf)

- 1 New International Version (both 1984 & 2011, undistinguished)
- 2 King James Version
- 3 New King James Version
- 4 New Living Translation
- 5 English Standard Version
- 6 Holman Christian Standard Bible
- 10 New American Standard Bible update

The TEC has called the NIV 2011 the "best" option. Based upon my study of the text, and that of the other versions, I respectfully disagree with that judgment. So, I was asked to include any "better solutions" that I would suggest. Here they are.

### **Suggestions of "Better Solutions" for WELS/NPH**

1. **Continue to use NIV'84 for now. Do not revise the *Christian Worship* hymnal, *Luther's Small Catechism*, or any of the NPH Bible History ("Christ-Light") materials for years (as long as possible). By not changing these materials, the translation may remain unrevised (NIV'84). Publish the new Christ-Light curriculum now (prior to the 2013 deadline) using NIV'84.**

Explanation: I would imagine that the work on Christ-Light 2 was based on NIV'84 anyway. NPH would not suffer a loss for work already done. *Christ-Light* 2 could continue to be published (like the Catechism and hymnal) until a new translation is developed or chosen.... Congregations may continue to use NIV'84 under "fair use" rights.<sup>134</sup> Perhaps an attorney could explain this more clearly. My current understanding is that NPH could even publish new materials (including Meditations, Forward in Christ, and most books) using NIV'84 under "fair use," provided NIV'84

---

<sup>134</sup> See: <http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html> and <http://www.copyright.gov/history/studies/study14.pdf>. This is a legal matter: "The cases indicate that there are eight elements which the courts consider; any one of the eight may in a particular case, be decisive. These factors are: (1) the type of use involved; (2) the intent with which it was made; (3) its effect on the original work; (4) the amount of the user's labor involved; (5) the benefit gained by him; (6) the nature of the works involved; (7) the amount of material used; and (8) its relative value" (quoted in the second link cited: *Copyright Law Revision*, p.15). Also, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fair\\_use](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fair_use).

comprises less than 20% of the new publication. Books that occasionally quote NIV'84 would seem to be fine.

New or revised books that could not be published would likely include: a study Bible (if based on NIV'84), a Bible commentary (if based on NIV'84), a catechism (revision), and possibly other doctrinal books in which NIV'84 would comprise more than 20% of the text.

WELS/NPH could appeal to Zondervan to permit continued use of NIV'84. Yes, I know that it is very unlikely that they will allow it, but we could ask (again). It might make them think a little more.

One problem for pastors is: what do we recommend people to buy (new members, children, confirmands, etc.)? NIV'84 copies might be around for a few years, but people would have to be informed how to find them and recognize them. If newer members hear you use "NIV" they might accidentally buy NIV'11. At the congregation I serve, we are concerned about that.

Maybe like in the case of "Coke Classic," an ***NIV Classic*** will return to remain on the market, and available for use in NPH materials. But, I regard that as doubtful now due to the fact that the NIV is ruled by the 15 scholars on the CBT. My only reason for considering this as a possibility rests with Zondervan. Maybe they could push Biblica to allow NIV'84 to remain on the market. I'm not sure that NIV'11 is selling very well.<sup>135</sup> ....

Then, if the TFC agrees, a confessional Lutheran version might be available within a decade. May God bless the effort so that there is agreement on that version, or it will be very sad. It seems wise to encourage and receive the input of more parish pastors if there is such a project. It seems wise to learn from the mistakes made in other translations.

2. This is a modified version of #1. Continue to use NIV'84 under "fair use" rights, as described above. Maybe, if necessary, NPH could **make some use of other translations in various ways on a temporary basis.**

Explanation: If Meditations or another book would approach 20%, perhaps another reliable Bible version could be included for some of the devotions. I believe that AAT is available to WELS/NPH. Perhaps AAT could be used (revised) as needed for a few items. A combination of the best AAT Old Testament with the GWN New Testament would be a decent starting point for a revision. Not everyone is as optimistic about AAT's suitability. I'd suggest **revising it**, not taking it as is. My view of how to revise it would be consistent with what this essay has presented.

3. **The ESV** is usable. CPH materials use it. I am convinced it could be a solid Bible for us, if some could look past promotional claims, and if we could agree that the footnote of 1 Cor. 11:3 would be used. The ESV should be a stable text for the future. It could also be a temporary Bible for WELS to use, while a fresh confessional Lutheran version is being prepared.
4. **The NKJV** is usable. It's probably the most doctrinally reliable version, overall. Keep in mind Prof. Panning's point #3, quoted on page 5. The ELS has been using it for years, and a few pastors told me that they have no plans to change. If WELS had waited to decide on a Bible translation for use in publishing until the NKJV was finished, it might have been our choice. Several pastors have told me this. If we had chosen the NKJV, we would not be scrambling to make a decision right now. Yes, NKJV would require a shift in gears for people who are accustomed to the NIV. But it would have an easy transition in most congregations, where older members remember the KJV very well. Again, this could also be a temporary solution, until a confessional Lutheran version is completed.

---

<sup>135</sup> Anecdotal evidence: shared by some who visited various bookstores throughout the country. Zondervan called me to offer 50% off cases of NIV'11 with free shipping. The same deal was not offered for NIV'84. I wonder, do you do that if it's selling that well?

5. The **NASB'95** is usable. Some pastors prefer it. It's very close to NKJV in reliability. We could use it temporarily. Maybe when it is revised, it will be even more suitable for use.
6. The **HCSB** is usable. If this is the "compromise" version that brings together those who want a more accurate version than NIV'11 and those who want a more readable version than the more literal translations, I will go along with it. Although it is not my first choice, I am convinced that HCSB is a better choice than NIV'11. This could be a reliable version to use temporarily.
7. **Obtain another version and revise it.** There are various possibilities for the TFC to explore. The AAT is mentioned above. There are other free versions, such as the KJV, ASV, and the World English Bible (WEB)... <http://ebible.org/web/> It's free to use/revise... There are really no copyright restrictions. But, it's just someone's revision of the ASV. Perhaps a combination of these (and others) could be used. Could it work? I think so, but it would take some effort and care. Would all be satisfied with it right away? Maybe not. But, some would choose this over a new version that is judged unreliable.

### **What about a new Confessional Lutheran translation?**

It seems that any choice WELS makes might be relatively temporary, and that the long term solution really might be a good Confessional Lutheran version. Might I humbly offer a few suggestions about this? If these suggestions are not deemed wise, feel free to reject them, please.

The first suggestion is that we not follow the pattern used by modern translations, with ecumenical committees. I'd suggest that we follow the Luther model as closely as possible. Let's pick someone as close to Luther as we can, and put him in charge. A committee can assist him, but he would oversee the work. At first, I thought this might be risky, but it's really no more risky than bringing every translation decision up to a vote. Luther would have been outvoted a few times, but it was his baby. If the Lord provides the right man, it can work well.

I believe that we need to learn from the mistakes made in other translations. There is some degree of danger in inviting in too much influence from outside of our fellowship. Review how the GWN became the GW. That history teaches a lesson! Also examine the passages that have been pointed out as weaknesses. Let's avoid the problem areas. No version will be "perfect," but let's make it the best version it can be. Let's learn from the mistakes of others.

I believe we should check and compare Luther's German translation as this version is made and reviewed. The more I check Luther's translation, the more impressed I am. Yes, he wrote in a style that people could read, but he was not playing fast and loose with the original text. He was meticulous in getting the right meaning. And, sometimes, Luther's version is unique. Genesis 4:1 and Romans 3:28 come to mind.

### **What is "doctrine"?**

This question has come up in connection with the Bible translation evaluations. In the words of Yogi Berra, this seems like "deja vu all over again." Please read: *'What is "Doctrine" According to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions?'* (WLQ vol. 57:1, pp. 34ff.; vol. 57:2, pp. 81ff.). Harold Wicke's essay, is available online here: <http://www.wlsessays.net/node/982>.

Wicke asks, "What in Scripture is doctrine, and what, if anything, is not doctrine?" ... First consider the WLQ editor's comment:

*"Comments from readers after the appearance of the first installment of this essay raised the question whether in asserting that all that Scripture says is doctrine the author might not be losing*

*sight of the fundamental theme of Scripture. In response to these comments Pastor Wicke writes: "My article also acknowledges that Christ is the theme of the entire Scripture: page 91, line 24ff. It was, however, not my intention to show the relationship of all portions of Scripture to its central and all-pervading theme, but rather to answer the question how much is included in doctrine and whether this or that or some other point in Scripture is not to be included under the term doctrine." Thereby we were confirmed in our understanding that the essay acknowledges what the recently adopted Synodical Conference Statement on Scripture asserts with the words: "All Scripture is written because of Christ and has a connection with the revelation of God in Christ, some passages directly, some more remotely. Every word of Scripture is therefore an organic part of the Scripture's witness to Christ."—Ed."*

Now, consider excerpts from the second installment:

Everything in Scripture has spiritual value, even that remark in Genesis 12:6: "And the Canaanite was then in the land," which Dr. Reu in his essay "What is Scripture?" classifies as not being profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, etc. (p. 62). Leupold in his Exposition of Genesis (p. 419) points out: "This is stated in preparation for the promise about to be given to Abram. For no one can fully realize the greatness of the things promised to Abram until he remembers that the land promised to the posterity of Abram was already occupied by the Canaanites. But Abram's faith is not daunted by this seeming difficulty."

Wicke regarded 2 Timothy 3:16-17 as "decisive."

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine (*didaskalia*), for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Various translations have been offered for this passage, none of which, however, affect the point to be made. Whether we say: "All Scripture," or individualize: "Every Scripture," that is, every Scripture passage—all of it and each passage in it is profitable for doctrine." ... "all Scripture is profitable for doctrine ... The *pasa*, whether it is "all" or "every," simply leaves out nothing."

As far as I am concerned, therefore, "doctrine" and "Scripture" are synonymous: we can eliminate no statement in Scripture from having the character of or from being "doctrine."

Whether we include this or that individual item or this or that individual statement in a confession of faith or doctrinal statement, which we as Christians set up and adopt, does not decide whether it is a divine teaching or not.

I personally prefer the findings of the 1957 panel which studied this passage and summarized its findings thus: "By doctrine is meant the entire body of Christian doctrine. We believe that for practical purposes the terms 'doctrine' and 'Scripture' may be considered synonymous."

**Summary:** Let us attempt a summary. Doctrine includes everything in Holy Writ, for Holy Writ is God's Word—all of it in every particular profitable for doctrine.

## **Conclusion:**

May this information be useful to you and others. May we always regard God's Word as holy and gladly hear and learn it. May we believe, teach, and confess that "πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος -- *all Scripture is inspired by God.*" May God bless you richly!

**APPENDIX A: "Evaluating NIV 2011"** - presented to all Pastors' Conferences in the MI District

**APPENDIX B: "Comparison Chart"** - NKJV, NASB'95, ESV, HCSB, AAT, NIV'11, with comments from TEC appointed reviewers.

# EVALUATING NIV © 2011

*From a confessional Lutheran perspective*

Brian R. Keller

Prepared for:

**The Northern Pastors' Conference** of the Michigan District (WELS) – May 2, 2011  
**The Southeastern Pastors' Conference** of the Michigan District (WELS) – May 3, 2011  
**The Ohio Pastors' Conference** of the Michigan District (WELS) – May 9, 2011  
**The Southwestern Pastors' Conference** of the Michigan District (WELS) – May 10, 2011

This study was prepared rather rapidly at the request of pastors. If I have made any mistakes, I will be happy to correct them. My goal is to present resources to pastors who can evaluate and study further. I have tried to withhold most of my personal judgments. Charts adapted from: <http://www.slowley.com/niv2011>. This website lists and compares changes in the NIV (except footnotes).

## **Four Questions To Ask & Answer When Evaluating Bible Translations<sup>1</sup>**

### **1. Is it based on an appropriate original text?**

Jesus promised that God's Word will never pass away (Mt 24:35). We are blessed with many reliable manuscripts. Did the translators carefully follow the original Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek text of the Bible?

### **2. Does it render this original text faithfully?**

Remember that every word of the original Bible text is God's inspired, error-free Word (*Verbal Inspiration*). Does the translation faithfully and accurately convey the same meaning as the original text of God's holy Word?

### **3. Is it doctrinally sound?**

Professor Armin Panning put it this way: "Does the translation of this passage agree with what God says about the subject in other passages? For us purity of doctrine must ever remain *the* essential test of a translation. To endorse a translation that features crisp, contemporary English and that 'reads like a novel' but subtly blends in error or undercuts the reader's confidence in the reliability of God's Holy Word is to court disaster: It is infinitely better to retain a translation that may not be as easy reading, that may not include the latest in scholarship, but which accords to the Lord Jesus Christ His rightful place in God's plan of salvation. I take it for granted that we agree on this, and that it will not be necessary to belabor the point." (*The NASB, Is This The Answer?* p.5)

### **4. Is the receptor language acceptable?**

This is a matter of judgment and taste. No translation is perfect. But can you understand what it says? Professor Panning added, "At the risk of being repetitious, let me emphasize that compromising on the style of language to be used in a translation is NOT the same as compromising on the content, on doctrine."

---

<sup>1</sup> See Prof. Armin Panning's helpful article: *WLQ* January, 1973; Vol 70:1, pp. 6-31, especially p. 14; or *WLS Essay File* - <http://www.wlssays.net/files/PanningNASB.rtf>.



## A FIVE PART PRESENTATION

### 1. Bible passages that have been improved from NIV 1984 to NIV 2011.<sup>2</sup>

Php 2:6	Philippians 2:6 - Uses TNIV text
SBLGNT	ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ <b>ἄρπαγμόν</b> ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ,
NIV1984	Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be <b>grasped</b> ,
NIV2011	Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be <b>used to his own advantage</b> ;

John 8:30	John: 8:30 - New text in NIV2011
SBLGNT	ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος πολλοὶ <b>ἐπίστευσαν</b> εἰς αὐτόν.
NIV1984	Even as he spoke, many <b>put their faith</b> in him.
NIV2011	Even as he spoke, many <b>believed</b> in him.

Similarly: John 2:11; 7:31; 11:45 on this improvement.

Matt 5:32	Matthew 5:32 - New text in NIV2011
SBLGNT	ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ἀπολύων τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ παρεκτὸς λόγου <b>πορνείας</b> ποιεῖ αὐτήν <b>μοιχευθῆναι</b> , καὶ ὃς ἐὰν ἀπολελυμένην γαμήσῃ μοιχᾶται.
NIV1984	But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for <b>marital unfaithfulness</b> , <b>causes her to become an adulteress</b> , and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.
NIV2011	But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for <b>sexual immorality</b> , <b>makes her the victim of adultery</b> , and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.
Compared to NIV1984	But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for <del>marital</del> <b>sexual unfaithfulness</b> <del>immorality</del> , <del>causes</del> <b>makes her the</b> <del>to become</del> <b>victim of</b> <del>adulteress</del> <b>adultery</b> , and anyone who marries <del>the</del> divorced woman commits adultery.

Acts 3:21	Acts 3:21 - Uses TNIV text
SBLGNT	<b>ὃν δεῖ οὐρανὸν μὲν δεξασθαι</b> ἄχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων ὧν ἐλάλησεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ στόματος τῶν ἁγίων ἀπ' αἰῶνος αὐτοῦ προφητῶν.
NIV1984	<b>He must remain in heaven</b> until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.
NIV2011	<b>Heaven must receive him</b> until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

See **The Formula of Concord, S.D., VII, 119**. Also, Pieper, II, 326ff.

See The People's Bible on this passage. Also, Thomas P. Nass: WLQ Spring 2011. Vol 108, No. 2, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> Comparison charts on all NIV changes are from <http://www.slowley.com/niv2011>.

<b>1 Timothy 2:4</b>	<b>1 Timothy 2:4 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	ὅς πάντας <b>ἀνθρώπους</b> θέλει σωθῆναι καὶ εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἐλθεῖν.
NIV1984	who wants all <b>men</b> to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.
NIV2011	who wants all <b>people</b> to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

See:

**Kenneth A Cherney, Jr.: WLQ Spring 2011. Vol 108, No. 2, pp. 111ff.**

The translation here is good and clear. For further study, thought, discussion: Professor Cherney comments: “to require of a woman reader even the modicum of effort needed to see herself in NIV 1 Timothy 2:4 is wholly unjustifiable” (p. 127)... See also *Comparative Study of Bible Translations*, (LCMS) esp. page 12 as you consider carefully the use of “man” in the Scriptures. You may access this document for free here: <http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/CTCR/biblrev.pdf>

<b>Galatians 3:24</b>	<b>Galatians 3:24 - New text in NIV2011</b>
SBLGNT	ὥστε ὁ νόμος <b>παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν γέγονεν εἰς Χριστόν</b> , ἵνα ἐκ πίστεως δικαιωθῶμεν·
NIV1984	So the law was <b>put in charge to lead us to Christ</b> that we might be justified by faith.
NIV2011	So the law was <b>our guardian until Christ came</b> that we might be justified by faith.
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	So the law was <del>put our</del> <b>guardian</b> <del>charge until</del> <b>to lead us to Christ</b> <del>came</del> that we might be justified by faith.

See The People’s Bible on this passage.

<b>1 John 3:20</b>	<b>1 John 3:20 - Uses TNIV text - repunctuated</b>
SBLGNT	ὅτι ἐὰν καταγινώσκη ἡμῶν ἡ καρδιά, ὅτι μείζων ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς τῆς καρδίας ἡμῶν καὶ γινώσκει πάντα.
NIV1984	whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.
NIV2011	If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	<del>whenever</del> <b>If</b> our hearts condemn us. <del>For,</del> <b>we know that</b> God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

Yet, is this a little interpretive, loose on details? Is “*we know*” in Gk? Is “*hearts*” singular or plural?

## 2. Bible passages that have been changed (Better or worse? Debatable).

Two reviews of the TNIV were published in WLQ:

**Daniel P. Leyrer: WLQ Winter 2004. Vol. 101, No. 1, pp 73ff.**

**John F. Brug: WLQ Spring 2006. Vol. 103, No. 2, pp. 138ff.**

<b>Mt 1:18</b>	<b>Matthew 1:18 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	Τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ <b>χριστοῦ</b> ἡ γένεσις οὕτως ἦν. μνηστευθείσης τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Μαρίας τῷ Ἰωσήφ, πρὶν ἢ συνελθεῖν αὐτοὺς εὐρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου.
NIV1984	This is how the birth of Jesus <b>Christ</b> came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be

	married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be <b>with child</b> through the Holy Spirit.
NIV2011	This is how the birth of Jesus <b>the Messiah</b> came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be <b>pregnant</b> through the Holy Spirit.

Is the unborn still regarded as a child?

Should Christ be changed to Messiah as a general rule of translation?

Leyrer: "good change" (p. 74). Brug: "quite dubious" (pp. 139-140).

<b>Romans 3:25</b>	<b>Romans 3:25 - New text in NIV2011</b>
SBLGNT	ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων
NIV1984	God presented <b>him</b> as a sacrifice of atonement, <b>through faith in his blood</b> . He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished--
NIV2011	God presented <b>Christ</b> as a sacrifice of atonement, <b>through the shedding of his blood--to be received by faith</b> . He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished--
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	God presented <del>him</del> <b>Christ</b> as a sacrifice of atonement, through <del>faith</del> <b>the shedding of his blood--to be received by faith</b> . He did this to demonstrate his <del>justice</del> <b>righteousness</b> , because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished--

Leyrer: "good change" ... Brug: "questionable" ... Nass: "even clearer"

<b>2 Peter 1:21</b>	<b>2 Peter 1:21 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	οὐ γὰρ θελήματι <b>ἀνθρώπου</b> ἠνέχθη προφητεία ποτέ, ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι ἐλάλησαν ἀπὸ θεοῦ <b>ἄνθρωποι</b> .
NIV1984	For prophecy never had its origin in the will of <b>man</b> , but <b>men</b> spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
NIV2011	For prophecy never had its origin in the <b>human</b> will, but <b>prophets, though human</b> , spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	For prophecy never had its origin in the <del>will</del> <b>human of man</b> <del>will</del> , but <del>men</del> <b>prophets, though human</b> , spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Brug: "Were there women among the holy men of God who received the Scripture by inspiration? ... Again, unclarity is introduced." Where is "prophets" in the Greek?

<b>Luke 1:37</b>	<b>Luke 1:37 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	ὅτι οὐκ ἀδυνατήσει παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ πᾶν ῥῆμα.
NIV1984	For <b>nothing</b> is <b>impossible</b> with God."
NIV2011	For <b>no word</b> from God <b>will ever fail</b> ."
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	For <del>nothing</del> <b>no</b> <del>is</del> <b>word</b> <del>impossible</del> <b>from</b> <del>with</del> God <b>will ever fail</b> ."

Leyrer: "good change." Brug: "questionable."

Acts 9:32	Acts 9:32 - Uses TNIV text
SBLGNT	Ἐγένετο δὲ Πέτρον διερχόμενον διὰ πάντων κατελθεῖν καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἁγίους τοὺς κατοικοῦντας Λύδδα.
NIV1984	As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit <b>the saints</b> in Lydda.
NIV2011	As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit <b>the Lord's people</b> who lived in Lydda.
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the <b>saints</b> <b>Lord's people who lived</b> in Lydda.

The term “**saints**” is completely removed from the NIV now. In NIV, “saints” has been changed to:

“**God’s people**” (Ro 8:27), “**Lord’s people**” (Ac 26:10), “**holy people**” (Rom 1:7).

Leyrer: “useful change” (pp.74-75). Brug: “a tendency... to ‘homogenize’ terminology...” (p.140)

“Jews” become “Jewish leaders,” “they,” or “leaders.” See also John 1:19; 5:10,15,16,18; 7:1,13, etc...

John 7:11	John 7:11 - Uses TNIV text
SBLGNT	οἱ οὖν Ἰουδαῖοι ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ καὶ ἔλεγον· Ποῦ ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνος;
NIV1984	Now at the Feast <b>the Jews</b> were watching for him and asking, "Where is that man?"
NIV2011	Now at the festival <b>the Jewish leaders</b> were watching for Jesus and asking, "Where is he?"
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	Now at the <del>Feast</del> <b>festival</b> the <del>Jews</del> <b>Jewish leaders</b> were watching for <del>him</del> <b>Jesus</b> and asking, "Where is <del>that man</del> <b>he</b> ?"

**Brothers and sisters?** NIV 2011 often inserts “and sisters.” While sometimes the meaning of “**brothers**” might include some females, it is debatable whether this is an accurate translation. (By the way, to answer a question I received: The inspired writers were able to write “**brother and sister**” (See Matthew 12:50 Gk: ἀδελφὸς καὶ ἀδελφή) as well as “**brothers and sisters**.” (See Mark 10:30 Gk: ἀδελφούς καὶ ἀδελφάς and Luke 14:26 Gk: τοὺς ἀδελφούς καὶ τὰς ἀδελφάς).

Acts 12:17	Acts 12:17 - Uses TNIV text
SBLGNT	κατασεισας δὲ αὐτοῖς τῇ χειρὶ σιγᾶν διηγήσατο αὐτοῖς πῶς ὁ κύριος αὐτὸν ἐξήγαγεν ἐκ τῆς φυλακῆς, εἶπέν τε· Ἀπαγγεῖλατε Ἰακώβῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ταῦτα. καὶ ἐξελθὼν ἐπορεύθη εἰς ἕτερον τόπον.
NIV1984	Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell James and <b>the brothers</b> about this," he said, and then he left for another place.
NIV2011	Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell James and <b>the other brothers and sisters</b> about this," he said, and then he left for another place.
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell James and the <b>other</b> brothers <b>and sisters</b> about this," he said, and then he left for another place.

One Gk scholar (F. Danker) changed the way the Bauer lexicon translates the plural of adelphos. Cf. BAG (1957), to BAGD (1979), to BDAG (2000)... Caveat: for some helpful balance on BDAG, see:

<http://www.cbmw.org/Resources/Articles/How-Have-Inclusiveness-and-Tolerance-Affected-the-BDAG>. [http://www.cbmw.org/images/articles\\_pdf/poythress\\_ern/poythress\\_jets46.4.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/articles_pdf/poythress_ern/poythress_jets46.4.pdf)

Hebrews 2:10	Uses TNIV text
SBLGNT	Ἐπρεπεν γὰρ αὐτῷ, δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα καὶ δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα, πολλοὺς υἱοὺς εἰς δόξαν ἀγαγόντα τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν διὰ παθημάτων τελειῶσαι.
NIV1984	In bringing many <b>sons</b> to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the <b>author</b> of their salvation perfect through <b>suffering</b> .
NIV2011	In bringing many <b>sons and daughters</b> to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the <b>pioneer</b> of their salvation perfect through <b>what he suffered</b> .

Proverbs 1:10	Uses TNIV text – How “neutral” are the gender changes? Why change this?
NIV1984	My son, if <b>sinners</b> entice you, do not give in to them.
NIV2011	My son, if <b>sinful men</b> entice you, do not give in to them.

1 Cor 6:9	New text in NIV2011 – Masculine, but why don't they include females here?
SBLGNT	Ἡ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ἄδικοι θεοῦ βασιλείαν οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν; μὴ πλανᾷσθε· οὔτε πόρνοι οὔτε εἰδωλολάτραι οὔτε μοιχοὶ οὔτε <b>μαλακοὶ οὔτε ἀρσενικοῖται</b>
NIV1984	Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor <b>male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders</b>
NIV2011	Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor <b>men who have sex with men</b>

Galatians 3:26	Uses TNIV text – changes “sons” to “children”
SBLGNT	πάντες γὰρ υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐστε διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.
NIV1984	You are all <b>sons</b> of God through faith in Christ Jesus,
NIV2011	So in Christ Jesus you are all <b>children</b> of God through faith,
Compared to NIV1984	You <b>So in Christ Jesus you</b> are all <b>sons</b> <b>children</b> of God through faith <b>in Christ Jesus</b> ,

Is the object of faith as clear in the revised version? (faith in whom?)

\* Why isn't “**Daughter Zion**” (Isaiah 1:8; 52:2; passim) changed to “Child Zion”?

**Read Genesis 6:1-7 in NIV 2011. See if you notice anything different.**

<sup>1</sup> When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, <sup>2</sup> the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. <sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years.” <sup>4</sup> The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown. <sup>5</sup> The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. <sup>6</sup> The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. <sup>7</sup> So the LORD said, “I will

wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.”

**Read Galatians 6:3-6 in NIV 2011. Watch the pronouns carefully!**

<sup>3</sup> If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. <sup>4</sup> Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, <sup>5</sup> for each one should carry their own load. <sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor.

**Here are some assorted examples to check in NIV 2011:** (better or worse?)

<b>Joshua 6:23</b>	<b>Matthew 1:19,</b>	<b>Ephesians 4:11</b>
<b>Proverbs 21:2</b>	<b>Matthew 1:25</b>	<b>Colossians 2:14</b>
<b>Jeremiah 23:6</b>	<b>Luke 2:7,10</b>	<b>1 Timothy 3:1-2</b>
<b>Habakkuk 2:4</b>	<b>John 11:25-26</b>	<b>2 Timothy 2:24-25</b>
<b>Malachi 3:8</b>	<b>John 14:2</b>	<b>Hebrews 12:7-8</b>

**3. Some changed passages seem worse.**

Did women exercise authority in the early church? Did they preach?

<b>Acts 6:3</b>	<b>Acts 6:3 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	ἐπισκέψασθε δὲ, <b>ἀδελφοί</b> , ἄνδρας ἐξ ὑμῶν μαρτυρουμένους ἑπτὰ πλήρεις πνεύματος καὶ σοφίας, οὓς καταστήσομεν ἐπὶ τῆς χρείας ταύτης·
NIV1984	<b>Brothers</b> , choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them
NIV2011	<b>Brothers and sisters</b> , choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them

See also Acts 1:16,21,23,26; 1 Cor 14:39; Php 1:14; etc. (cf. Brug, p.143; Cherney, p. 125)

What about Psalm 8:4-6 (Messianic prophecy) and Hebrews 2:6-8 (fulfillment)?

See The Formula of Concord, S.D., VIII, 70. Also Prof. John Brug's Commentary.

**Recommended:** “Luther and Psalm 8,” in “Luther Lives” NPH, 1983. pp. 85ff.

Prof. Wilbert Gawrisc writes about this “direct or rectilinear Messianic prophecy” (cf. Luther, F.C.-S.D., VIII, 70, Calov, Starke, Stoeckhardt, Zorn, Kretzmann, Lillegard, Honsey...).

**\* Can you see the Messiah in the NIV 2011 translation of Ps. 8 & Heb 2?**

<b>Psalm 8:4</b>	<b>Psalm 8:4 - New text in NIV2011 – (Heb. Ps. 8:5)</b>
NIV1984	what is <b>man</b> (Heb: <i>Enōsh, nom. m. sg.</i> ) that you are mindful of <b>him</b> (Heb: <i>3<sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix</i> ), <b>the son of man</b> (Heb: <i>ben Adam</i> ) that you care for <b>him</b> (Heb: <i>3<sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix</i> )?
NIV2011	what is <b>mankind</b> that you are mindful of <b>them</b> , <b>human beings</b> that you care for <b>them</b> ?
<b>Psalm 8:5</b>	<b>Psalm 8:5 - New text in NIV2011 – (Heb. Ps. 8:6)</b>
NIV1984	You made <b>him</b> (Heb: <i>3<sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix</i> ) a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned <b>him</b> (Heb: <i>3<sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix</i> ) with glory and honor.
NIV2011	You have made <b>them</b> a little lower than the angels and crowned <b>them</b> with glory and honor.



<b>Psalm 8:6</b>	<b>Psalm 8:6 - Uses TNIV text – (Heb. Ps. 8:7)</b>
NIV1984	You made <b>him ruler</b> ( <i>Heb: 3<sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix</i> ) over the works of your hands; you put everything under <b>his</b> ( <i>Heb: 3<sup>rd</sup> m. sg. suffix</i> ) feet:
NIV2011	You made <b>them rulers</b> over the works of your hands; you put everything under <b>their</b> feet:

<b>Hebrews 2:6</b>	<b>Hebrews 2:6 - New text in NIV2011</b>
SBLGNT	διεμαρτύρατο δέ ποῦ τις λέγων· Τί ἐστὶν <b>ἄνθρωπος</b> ὅτι μιμήσκη <b>αὐτοῦ</b> , ἢ <b>υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου</b> ὅτι ἐπισκέπη <b>αὐτόν</b> ;
NIV1984	But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is <b>man</b> that you are mindful of <b>him</b> , <b>the son of man</b> that you care for him?"
NIV2011	But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is <b>mankind</b> that you are mindful of <b>them</b> , <b>a son of man</b> that you care for him?"
<b>Hebrews 2:7</b>	<b>Hebrews 2:7 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	ἡλάττωσας <b>αὐτόν</b> βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους, δόξη καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφάνωσας <b>αὐτόν</b> ,
NIV1984	You made <b>him</b> a little lower than the angels; you crowned <b>him</b> with glory and honor
NIV2011	You made <b>them</b> a little lower than the angels; you crowned <b>them</b> with glory and honor
<b>Hebrews 2:8</b>	<b>Hebrews 2:8 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	πάντα ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν <b>αὐτοῦ</b> · ἐν τῷ γὰρ ὑποτάξαι τὰ πάντα οὐδὲν ἀφῆκεν <b>αὐτῷ</b> ἀνυπότακτον. νῦν δὲ οὐπω ὁρῶμεν <b>αὐτῷ</b> τὰ πάντα ὑποτεταγμένα·
NIV1984	and put everything under <b>his</b> feet." In putting everything under <b>him</b> , God left nothing that is not subject to <b>him</b> . Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.
NIV2011	and put everything under <b>their</b> feet." In putting everything under them, God left nothing that is not subject to <b>them</b> . Yet at present we do not see everything subject to <b>them</b> .

Would you describe this as accurate translation? Does it convey the same meaning?

See Brug TNIV review, pp. 146-148. NIV leaves "son of man" in Psalm 80:17, Ezekiel (passim).

<b>1 Tm 2:12</b>	<b>1 Timothy 2:12 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	διδάσκειν δὲ γυναικὶ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω, οὐδὲ <b>αὐθεντεῖν</b> ἀνδρός, ἀλλ' εἶναι <b>ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ</b> .
NIV1984	I do not permit a woman to teach or to <b>have authority</b> over a man; she must be <b>silent</b> .
NIV2011	I do not permit a woman to teach or to <b>assume authority</b> over a man; she must be <b>quiet</b> .

See Brug TNIV review, pp. 144-146. NIV Translators say: "it leaves the question open."

<http://www.biblegateway.com/niv/Translators-Notes.pdf> Footnotes now say "wife...husband."

Did a change in Greek lead to this change? Is this more clear? Does it convey the same meaning?...

See: “*Authentein – A Word Study*” - *Armin J. Panning*. Available at WLS Essay file:  
<http://www.wlsessays.net/files/PanningAuthentein.pdf>

**Matthew 18:15-17 – confusion of pronouns; changes from the original text**

<b>Matthew 18:15</b>	<b>Matthew 18:15 - New text in NIV2011</b>
SBLGNT	Ἐάν δὲ ἁμαρτήσῃ εἰς σὲ ὁ <b>ἀδελφός</b> σου, ὕπαγε ἔλεγξον <b>αὐτὸν</b> μεταξύ σοῦ καὶ <b>αὐτοῦ</b> μόνου. Ἐάν σου ἀκούσῃ, ἐκέρδησας <b>τὸν ἀδελφόν</b> σου·
apparatus	εἰς σὲ
NIV1984	"If your <b>brother</b> sins against you, go and show <b>him his</b> fault, just between the two of you. If <b>he</b> listens to you, you have won <b>your brother</b> over.
NIV2011	"If your brother <b>or sister</b> sins, go and point out <b>their</b> fault, just between the two of you. If <b>they</b> listen to you, you have won <b>them</b> over.
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	"If your brother <del>sins or against</del> <b>sister you</b> <del>sins</del> , go and <del>show</del> <b>point him out</b> <del>his</del> <b>their</b> fault, just between the two of you. If <del>he</del> <b>they</b> <del>listens</del> <b>listen</b> to you, you have won <del>your brother</del> <b>them</b> over.
<b>Matthew 18:16</b>	<b>Matthew 18:16 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	ἐάν δὲ μὴ ἀκούσῃ, παράλαβε μετὰ σοῦ ἓτι ἓνα ἢ δύο, ἵνα ἐπὶ στόματος δύο μαρτύρων ἢ τριῶν σταθῇ πᾶν ῥῆμα·
NIV1984	But if <b>he</b> will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'
NIV2011	But if <b>they</b> will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	But if <del>he</del> <b>they</b> will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'
<b>Matthew 18:17</b>	<b>Matthew 18:17 - Uses TNIV text</b>
SBLGNT	ἐάν δὲ παρακούσῃ αὐτῶν, εἰπὸν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ· ἐάν δὲ καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας παρακούσῃ, ἔστω σοι ὥσπερ ὁ ἐθνικός καὶ ὁ τελώνης.
NIV1984	If <b>he</b> refuses to listen <b>to them</b> , tell it to the church; and if <b>he</b> refuses to listen even to the church, treat <b>him</b> as you would a pagan or a tax collector.
NIV2011	If <b>they</b> still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if <b>they</b> refuse to listen even to the church, treat <b>them</b> as you would a pagan or a tax collector.
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	If <del>he</del> <b>they</b> <del>refuses</del> <b>still</b> <del>to</del> <b>refuse</b> <del>listen to them</del> <b>listen</b> , tell it to the church; and if <del>he</del> <b>they</b> <del>refuses</del> <b>refuse</b> to listen even to the church, treat <del>him</del> <b>them</b> as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

<b>Psalms 2:2</b>	<b>Uses TNIV text – removes capitalization</b>
NIV1984	The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his <b>Anointed One</b> .
NIV2011	The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the LORD and against <b>his anointed</b> , saying,
<b>Compared to NIV1984</b>	The kings of the earth <del>take</del> <b>rise</b> <del>their</del> <b>up</b> <del>stand</del> and the rulers <del>gather</del> <b>band</b> together against the LORD and against his <del>Anointed One</del> <b>anointed</b> , saying,

**Do you see the Messiah here? See: Acts 4:26**

Psalm 16:10	Uses TNIV text
NIV1984	because you will not abandon me to <b>the grave</b> , nor will you let your <b>Holy One</b> see decay.
NIV2011	because you will not abandon me to <b>the realm of the dead</b> , nor will you let your <b>faithful one</b> see decay.
Compared to NIV1984	because you will not abandon me to the <del>grave</del> <b>realm of the dead</b> , nor will you let your <del>Holy</del> <b>faithful One</b> see decay.

**Do you see the Messiah here? See: Acts 2:24-31; 13:32-37**

**Is there a “realm of the dead”?** See J. Brug “A Commentary on Psalms” I, pp. 157-158.

Isaiah 7:14 has a new footnote on “virgin\*”, **“or: young woman”**

See Beck’s essay: <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/BeckAlmah.PDF>

**Psalm 45:6** has a new footnote on God: “Your throne, **O God,\*** will last for ever and ever”

(NIV 2011 footnote: “**Here the king is addressed as God’s representative.**”)

But see Hebrews 1:8 – “**But about the Son** he says, ‘Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever’” – Does the new footnote help the reader see the Messiah in Ps. 45:6?

Many examples like the following. Is this clear English usage for formal writing?

Matt. 16:24	Uses TNIV text
SBLGNT	Τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ· <b>Εἴ τις</b> θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἐλθεῖν, ἀπαρνησάσθω <b>ἑαυτὸν</b> καὶ ἀράτω τὸν σταυρὸν <b>αὐτοῦ</b> καὶ ἀκολουθεῖτω μοι.
NIV1984	Then Jesus said to his disciples, “ <b>If anyone</b> would come after me, <b>he</b> must deny <b>himself</b> and take up <b>his</b> cross and follow me.
NIV2011	Then Jesus said to his disciples, “ <b>Whoever</b> wants to be my disciple must deny <b>themselves</b> and take up <b>their</b> cross and follow me.
Compared to NIV1984	Then Jesus said to his disciples, “ <del>If</del> <b>Whoever</b> <del>anyone</del> <del>wants</del> <del>would to come</del> <del>be</del> <del>after my me,</del> <del>he</del> <del>disciple</del> must deny <del>himself</del> <del>themselves</del> and take up <del>his</del> <del>their</del> cross and follow me.

- Can the Bible reader be sure that a pronoun in NIV 2011 accurately reflects the original text?
- If a pastor is teaching Bible Class, can he trust that a pronoun in the NIV text is really in the original text?
- Can a layman be sure of the pronouns in his new NIV Bible?
- Are these changes truly necessary for comprehension or might there another reason for them?

For many more examples of TNIV issues, many of which remain in NIV 2011, see:  
<http://www.cbmw.org/Journal/Vol-7-No-2/Translation-Inaccuracies-in-the-TNIV>  
[http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw\\_pdf/10\\_2/small\\_changes\\_meaning.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw_pdf/10_2/small_changes_meaning.pdf)

#### 4. Bible passages that are not particularly good in either NIV version.<sup>3</sup>

**Mark 16:9-20** – Should be included as a part of the Bible text. NIV 2011 uses editorial technique to cast even more doubt on whether this section is part of God's Word. See Prof. David Kuske's article in: **WLQ Winter 2005, vol 102, No. 1, pp.58ff.** Also on WLS Essay file: <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/KuskeMark.pdf> Brug TNIV review, p. 147.

\* Keep in mind how often this passage is used in **Luther's Small Catechism**, and the **Book of Concord**. It's quoted at least 13 times in my WLS Dogmatics Notes. *The History and Practice of New Testament Textual Criticism* by David Kuske (WLS, 1992). *Biblical Interpretation: The Only Right Way* by David Kuske (NPH, 1995, esp. pp. 47-56).

**John 7:53-8:11** – textual note problem, NIV 2011 is worse due to editorial technique

**Romans 9:22-23:** replace "prepared" with "fit" (see footnote reference below)

**Romans 9:33** a stone **that causes men** to stumble and a rock **that makes them** fall

**Isaiah 65:23; John 17:12; 2 Thess 2:3** - "doomed to" (?)

**John 14:2** - omit "there"

**Acts 14:1** – omit "effectively"

**1 Cor 11:16**, replace "other practice" with "such custom."

**1 Cor 10:16**, suggest: "Is not the cup of blessing... a communion in..." etc.

**1 Cor 10:17**, replace "loaf" with "bread" in each case.

**Matthew 16:15,18**, indicate that each "you" is plural, perhaps using footnotes.

**Micah 5:2** – preferable: "from eternity."

**Genesis 4:1** -- a footnote: "man, the LORD."

**1 Peter 3:18**, "**flesh/spirit**." (Cf. Pieper II, 320, S. Becker's "Christological flesh/spirit antithesis"). NIV 2011 uses "flesh" 41x more than NIV'84. But stays with "body" here.

**1 Peter 3:21**, replace "pledge" with: "claim" (WLS Dog. notes); or "covenant" (Pieper III, 275).

**Rev 19:8**, replace "righteous acts" with "not guilty verdicts" or similar.

**Revelation 20:3**, replace "were ended" with "come to an end."

**Rev. 20:4**, replace "came to life" with "lived" (gnomic aorist).

**Rev. 20:5**, replace "come to life" with "**live**."

**Increased tendency to overcapitalize "spirit."** (eg., Ro 8:6; 1 Ti 3:16; 1 Pe 3:18).

**Jeremiah 23:5** - "establish justice and righteousness on earth."

**1 Corinthians 7:39** - "he must belong to the Lord" is too interpretive.

**Lk 11:28**, "obey" to "keep"

**Rom 1:5**, "obedience of faith" or "obedience that is faith"

**Rom 4:25**, "for" to "because of"

**2 Cor 5:19**, "God was in Christ" is better

**What will happen to the NIV? (Biblica.com)** "As we stated at the NIV update announcement in September 2009, we will **not** be releasing any new products in either the 1984 or TNIV texts after the updated NIV has been published... The 2011 update of the NIV will be called, simply, the **NIV**." Today, NIV 2011 is "the NIV." The translators are committed to "periodically updating" the NIV.<sup>4</sup> It is reasonable to expect that it will be revised again in the near future. If so, what can we expect? To consider that question, let's review the past...

<sup>3</sup> WLS Faculty: <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/wlsniv.pdf> And: <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/JeskeNIV.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Biblica press release, 1 Sept, 2009: "we are recommitting ourselves today to the original NIV charter, complete with its charge to monitor and reflect developments in English usage and Biblical scholarship by periodically updating the NIV Bible text." In the FAQ section, this quotation appears related to "guiding principles" and proposals for translation changes that were submitted by others: "Many of these proposals have led to revisions to the text and others, purely due to shortage of time, have been tabled for discussion at future meetings for potential inclusion in future updates." (Underlining mine).

## 5. Historical Timeline / Background behind NIV changes.<sup>5</sup>

- 1978 NIV complete Bible published.
- 1984 NIV revised.
- 1992 NIV Committee on Bible translation begins work on an “inclusive-language” NIV.
- 1995 NIV Inclusive Language edition published in Great Britain (also 1996).
- 1997 March 29, World magazine, “The Stealth Bible” (<http://www.worldmag.com/articles/229>) reports that the NIV is “quietly going ‘gender-neutral’” CBT member Larry Walker quoted as saying it was “consensus” on the CBT to have inclusive NIV “take the place of the other” NIV. (See page 35 of “*Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy*” cited in the footnote below.)
- 1997 The article prompts an outcry among Evangelicals, and many questions. For some examples of resources in understanding why Evangelical Christians opposed gender-neutral translations see this site: <http://www.cbmw.org/Gender-Neutral-Bible-Resources>.
- 1997 The International Bible Society announces that it abandoned inclusive language plans.
- 1997 Evangelicals meet in Colorado Springs and agree on some guidelines for translating the Bible, in an attempt to guard against some of the negative effects of “gender-neutral” translation. You may see these guidelines at this site: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/csguidelines.html>
- 1998 February, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod’s CTCR publishes a study called “Biblical Revelation and Inclusive Language” (which generally opposes translating the Bible with inclusive language; this 39 page document may be seen at this site: <http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/CTCR/biblrev.pdf>
- 1998 D. A. Carson publishes, “*The Inclusive Language Debate: A Plea for Realism*” (but is it really a balanced treatment?). For balance on Carson, also see: <http://www.cbmw.org/Online-Books/The-Gender-Neutral-Bible-Controversy/The-Gender-Neutral-Bible-Controversy>
- 1999 The International Bible Society encourages the NIV Committee on Bible Translation to continue its work. June 5, World Magazine cover story: “There They Go Again.”
- 2000 Danker’s revision of Bauer (BDAG) is published, with inclusive-language suggested. For help see: [http://www.cbmw.org/images/articles\\_pdf/poythress\\_ern/poythress\\_jets46.4.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/articles_pdf/poythress_ern/poythress_jets46.4.pdf)
- 2002 Today’s New International Version – New Testament published.
- 2002 May 28 - 110 Evangelical leaders sign a “Statement of Concern” opposing the TNIV. See: [http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw\\_pdf/7\\_2/christian\\_leaders.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw_pdf/7_2/christian_leaders.pdf) or <http://www.bible-researcher.com/tniv2.html>. For a summary of the concerns, see: <http://www.cbmw.org/Journal/Vol-7-No-2/A-Brief-Summary-of-Concerns-About-the-TNIV> Also: [http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw\\_pdf/7\\_2/scholars\\_statement.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/jbmw_pdf/7_2/scholars_statement.pdf)
- 2003 September, LCMS – CTCR answers the LCMS Commission on Worship request for an evaluation of Bible translations. The LCMS hymnal and CPH now use the ESV. One study is here: <http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/Worship/BibleComp.pdf>
- 2005 Today’s New International Version completed – TNIV.
- 2005 The Presbyterian Church in America and Southern Baptist Convention pass resolutions opposing TNIV and other inclusive language translations.
- 2010 Nov 1 – NIV revision is posted online as promised. Evaluations begin. [Biblegateway.com](http://Biblegateway.com) switches to revised NIV. After a brief removal, NIV 1984 remains on the site, for now.
- 2010 December – digital version of NIV 2011 is released.
- 2011 March – NIV ©2011 published/released.

---

<sup>5</sup> For a more complete timeline see: “*The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy: Muting the Masculinity of God’s Words*” by Poythress/Grudem. <http://www.cbmw.org/Online-Books/The-Gender-Neutral-Bible-Controversy/The-Gender-Neutral-Bible-Controversy>



**APPENDIX 1:** from [http://www.slowley.com/niv2011\\_comparison/index.html](http://www.slowley.com/niv2011_comparison/index.html)

Outcome	Num verses	Percent
No changes in any	18859	60.7%
Uses NIV1984 text	171	0.6%
Uses TNIV text	9736	31.3%
New text in NIV2011	2320	7.5%

The above table is a *verse level* comparison. It indicates what number and percentage of verses in the NIV2011 were the same in all three translations ('No change in any'), use the NIV1984 text, use the TNIV text, or have new text not found in either earlier translation ('New text in NIV2011').

**This means that:**

- **Compared to the NIV1984: 19,030 verses (61.1%) are the same, and 12,056 verses (38.8%) differ.**
- **Compared to the TNIV: 28,595 verses (91.9%) are the same, and 2491 verses (8.0%) differ.**

**Most Added / Removed Words from NIV1984 to NIV2011**

[http://www.slowley.com/niv2011\\_comparison/most\\_added\\_removed\\_words.html](http://www.slowley.com/niv2011_comparison/most_added_removed_words.html)

Most Removed words	Most Added words
1. He (1131 fewer occurrences)	1. Their (699 more occurrences )
2. His (975 fewer occurrences)	2. They (648 more occurrences )
3. O (911 fewer occurrences)	3. People (493 more occurrences )
4. Man (874 fewer occurrences)	4. Them (422 more occurrences )
5. Men (752 fewer occurrences)	5. Ancestors (312 more occurrences )
6. Him (605 fewer occurrences)	6. You (256 more occurrences )
7. Of (323 fewer occurrences)	7. On (236 more occurrences )
8. Fathers (268 fewer occurrences)	8. Are (227 more occurrences )
9. Upon (248 fewer occurrences)	9. One (224 more occurrences )
10. House (227 fewer occurrences)	10. Person (221 more occurrences )
11. Desert (159 fewer occurrences)	11. The (196 more occurrences )
12. A (136 fewer occurrences)	12. Wilderness (160 more occurrences )
13. Brothers (116 fewer occurrences)	13. To (157 more occurrences )
14. Forefathers (96 fewer occurrences)	14. Human (146 more occurrences )
15. And (93 fewer occurrences)	15. Have (135 more occurrences )
16. Is (92 fewer occurrences)	16. Sisters (126 more occurrences )
17. By (92 fewer occurrences)	17. Those (120 more occurrences )
18. Truth (89 fewer occurrences)	18. Whoever (114 more occurrences )
19. Himself (84 fewer occurrences)	19. Anyone (100 more occurrences )

**For discussion:** 1. Were the removed words difficult to understand?  
2. Are the added words more accurate? Clearer?



# APPENDIX B:

## A Comparison of Passages in: NKJV, NASB95, ESV, HCSB, AAT, and NIV 2011<sup>1</sup>

In the following chart, the first few pages of examples are brought forward due to special concerns with NIV'11. Unless otherwise noted, the comments are mine. Then, beginning with page 5, the remaining examples are in Biblical order. Most comments are from TEC appointed reviewers. I tried to mark my comments with "BK."<sup>2</sup>

**Psalm 8:4-6 Comment by TEC appointed reviewer:** "Psalm 8:4,5,6 effectively remove Messianic reference."

NKJV	What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,
NASB95	What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him? Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty! You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,
ESV	<sup>4</sup> what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? <sup>5</sup> Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. <sup>6</sup> You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet,
HCSB	what is man that You remember him, the son of man that You look after him? You made him little less than God and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him lord over the works of Your hands; You put everything under his feet:
AAT	What is man that You should think of him, or the son of man that You should come and visit him? You make Him do without God for a little while; then crown Him with glory and majesty and make him ruler over what Your hands have made, putting everything under His feet:
NIV 2011	what is <u>mankind</u> that you are mindful of <u>them</u> , <u>human beings</u> that you care for <u>them</u> ? You have made <u>them</u> a little lower than the angels and crowned <u>them</u> with glory and honor. You made <u>them</u> <u>rulers</u> over the works of your hands; you put everything under <u>their</u> feet:

**Comment by TEC appointed reviewer of Psalms:** "Messianic psalms weakened: (2), 8, (16), 45 note. Psalm 72 is changed from prophecy to prayer. There seems to be a strange inconsistency or carelessness at times... Overall I was not very impressed with the depth or quality of the work that seemed sometimes to be smoothing of an English translation rather than a reflection on the text."

<sup>1</sup> Companion to "Evaluating Bible Translations" - Pastor Brian R. Keller

<sup>2</sup> Special thanks to Pastor James Backus for assisting with this chart.

## Hebrews 2:6-8

NKJV	But one testified in a certain place, saying: “What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet.” For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.
NASB95	But one has testified somewhere, saying, “What is man, that You remember him? Or the son of man, that You are concerned about him? “You have made him for a little while lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And have appointed him over the works of Your hands; You have put all things in subjection under his feet.” For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.
ESV	<sup>6</sup> It has been testified somewhere, “What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? <sup>7</sup> You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, <sup>8</sup> putting everything in subjection under his feet.” Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him.
HCSB	But one has somewhere testified: What is man that You remember him, or the son of man that You care for him? You made him lower than the angels for a short time; You crowned him with glory and honor and subjected everything under his feet. For in subjecting everything to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. As it is, we do not yet see everything subjected to him.
AAT	But somewhere someone has declared: What is man that You should think of him, or a son of man that You should come to help him? You make Him lower than the angels for a little while; then crown Him with glory and honor and make Him Ruler over what Your hands have made, and put everything under His feet. Now when He put everything under His feet, He left nothing outside His control.
NIV 2011	But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is <u>mankind</u> that you are mindful of <u>them</u> , a son of man that you care for him? You made <u>them</u> a little lower than the angels; you crowned <u>them</u> with glory and honor and put everything under <u>their</u> feet." In putting everything under them, God left nothing that is not subject to <u>them</u> . Yet at present we do not see everything subject to <u>them</u> .

## 1 Timothy 2:12 – BK: Biblical principle of roles of man/woman

NKJV	And I do not permit a woman to teach or to <u>have</u> authority over a man, but to be in silence.
NASB 95	But I do not allow a woman to teach or <u>exercise</u> authority over a man, but to remain quiet.
ESV	I do not permit a woman to teach or to <u>exercise</u> authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet.
HCSB	I do not allow a woman to teach or to <u>have</u> authority over a man; instead, she is to be silent.
AAT	I don't allow a woman to teach nor to <u>have</u> authority over a man; she should keep silent.
NIV2011	I do not permit a woman to teach or to <u>assume</u> authority over a man; she must be quiet.

**TEC appointed reviewer comment:** Consider a real-life comment regarding the vote of women in a voters' assembly: "We men will give them the right to vote. Then they won't have usurped (read now assumed) the authority."

**Acts 1:16** – BK: A call meeting... where Matthias was nominated and chosen. NIV indicates that women were addressed as voters. Notice the NIV’s new footnote!

NKJV	“Men and brethren..
NASB95	“Brethren,...
ESV	“Brothers...
HCSB	“Brothers...
AAT	“Brothers...
NIV2011	<p>“Brothers <b>and sisters</b>,<sup>[a]</sup> the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus.</p> <p><b>Footnotes:</b></p> <p>a. <b>Acts 1:16</b> The Greek word for <i>brothers and sisters</i> (<i>adelphoi</i>) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God’s family; also in 6:3; 11:29; 12:17; 16:40; 18:18, 27; 21:7, 17; 28:14, 15.</p>

**Acts 6:3** BK: A voters’ meeting - NIV incorrectly indicates that women were voters

NKJV	Therefore, <u>brethren</u> , seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;
NASB95	“Therefore, <u>brethren</u> , select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.
ESV	Therefore, <u>brothers</u> , pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.
HCSB	Therefore, <u>brothers</u> , select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we can appoint to this duty.
AAT	Now, fellow disciples, appoint seven men among you whom people speak well of, who are full of the Spirit and wisdom and we’ll put them in charge of this work.
NIV2011	Brothers <u>and sisters</u> , choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them

**1 Corinthians 14:39** – BK: Preaching in church (see 1 Cor. 14:34-35 for context).

NKJV	Therefore, <u>brethren</u> , desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues.
NASB95	Therefore, my <u>brethren</u> , desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues.
ESV	So, my <u>brothers</u> , earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.
HCSB	Therefore, my <u>brothers</u> , be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in other languages.
AAT	So, my <u>fellow Christians</u> , be eager to speak God’s Word, and don’t try to keep anyone from speaking in other languages.
NIV2011	Therefore, my <u>brothers and sisters</u> , be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.

**Isaiah 7:14** BK: Prophecy of the virgin birth (Matthew 1:23). . See NIV's new footnote!

NKJV	Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the <u>virgin</u> shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.
NASB95	“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.
ESV	Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, <u>the virgin</u> shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.
HCSB	Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The <u>virgin</u> will conceive, have a son, and name him Immanuel.
AAT	Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Look, <u>the virgin</u> will conceive and have a Son, and His name will be Immanuel [God-Is-with-Us]!
NIV2011	Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin* will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. <b>Footnote: Or <u>young woman</u></b>

**Psalms 45:6** – BK: “God” = the Messiah (Jesus) here. NIV's footnote is wrong.

NKJV	Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.
NASB95	Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom.
ESV	Your throne, O God, is forever and ever...
HCSB	Your throne, God, is forever and ever...
AAT	Your throne, O God, is forever and ever...
NIV2011	Your throne, O God, <u>he</u> will last for ever and ever... <b>Footnote: <u>Here the king is addressed as God's representative.</u></b>

**Psalms 16:10** BK: Prophecy about Christ. It is harder to see Christ here in NIV.

NKJV	For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
NASB 95	For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.
ESV	For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.
HCSB	For You will not abandon me to Sheol; You will not allow Your Faithful One to see decay.
AAT	Because You will not leave Me in the grave nor let Your Holy One experience decay.
NIV2011	because you will not abandon me to <b>the realm of the dead</b> , nor will you let your <b>faithful[a] one</b> see decay. Footnote: “or holy”

**Psalm 72:2,8 TEC appointed reviewer:** “Psalm 72 is changed from prophecy to prayer.” BK: NKJV seems best here.

NKJV	<b>He will</b> judge Your people with righteousness, And Your poor with justice. <b>He shall</b> have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.
NASB 95	May he judge Your people with righteousness And Your afflicted with justice. May he also rule from sea to sea And from the River to the ends of the earth.
ESV	May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice! May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth!
HCSB	He will judge Your people with righteousness and Your afflicted ones with justice. And may he rule from sea to sea and from the Euphrates to the ends of the earth.
AAT	that He may judge Your people with righteousness and Your poor with justice. He will rule from sea to sea and from the Euphrates to the ends of the world.
NIV2011	<b>May he</b> judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice. <b>May he</b> rule from sea to sea and from the River[a] to the ends of the earth.

**Mark 16:9-20.** BK: NKJV seems best here. AAT is also good. I am disappointed in all the other versions. But, NIV 2011 casts even more serious doubt on this section than the others and than NIV’84. This is a fault and problem. Mark 16:9-20 has much greater support than most people realize. It belongs in the Bible. For more information see the discussion in the essay.

NKJV	<b>Text included.</b> No brackets. No italics... Footnote explains: Verses 9–20 are bracketed in NU [Nestle/UBS] -Text as not original. They are lacking in Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus, although nearly all other manuscripts of Mark contain them.
NASB 95	Text in brackets. Footnote: “Later mss add vv 9-20.”
ESV	Text in brackets. In text note: “[Some of the earliest manuscripts do not include 16:9-20.]”
HCSB	Text in brackets. Footnote: “Other mss omit bracketed text.”
AAT	<b>Text included.</b> Footnote: “The two oldest manuscripts lack Mark 16:9-20 but end Mark’s Gospel with v. 8.
NIV2011	A line. Then this note in text. “[The earliest manuscripts and some other ancient witnesses do not have verses 9–20.]” Then the text in italics.

**BK: The remainder of examples will be in Biblical order. Most of the comments are from TEC appointed reviewers. Mine are marked “BK”**

**Genesis 2:24 TEC appointed reviewer:** “NIV 2011 turns this important passage into a description of marriage. NIV 1984 captured its true sense as the prescription of marriage, as indeed Jesus’ quoting of it confirms (Mt 19:5). I don’t know if this instance alone should make NIV 2011 “unusable for WELS,” but the passage is an important *sedes doctrinae*. However, if there are other *sedes* passages in other books that are compromised by NIV 2011 in a similar way, NIV 2011 may be unusable for us.”

NKJV	Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
NASB95	For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.
ESV	Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
HCSB	This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.
AAT	This is why a man leaves his father and his mother and lives with his wife, and they become one flesh.
NIV2011	That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

**Genesis 6:6 TEC appointed reviewer:** The NIV 2011 translation (The LORD regretted...) as compared to NIV 1984 (“The LORD was grieved...”) is more open to misunderstanding, i.e., that God makes mistakes, that he second-guesses himself, etc.

NKJV	And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.
NASB95	The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.
ESV	And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.
HCSB	the Lord regretted that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.
AAT	Then the LORD was sorry He made people on the earth, and He was grieved at heart.
NIV2011	The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled.



**Leviticus 25:23 – TEC appointed reviewer:** NIV2011's new rendering, *reside in my land as foreigners and strangers*, seems to veer away from the desirable nuance of Canaan being the land of promise, Israel's inheritance, etc. "Sojourners" is nice, and even the NIV1984's *tenants* has biblical warrant. I just think that the new rendering gives an undesirable impression of God's relationship with his people.

NKJV	The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me.
NASB95	The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me.
ESV	"The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine. For you are strangers and sojourners with me.
HCSB	"The land is not to be permanently sold because it is Mine, and you are only foreigners and temporary residents on My land.
AAT	"The land must never be sold permanently, because the land is Mine, and you're only foreigners staying with Me.
NIV2011	"The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers.

**Joshua 6:23 BK: "and sisters"** is not in the Hebrew here.

NKJV	And the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, <u>her father</u> , <u>her mother</u> , <u>her brothers</u> , and all that she had. So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel.
NASB95	So the young men who were spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all she had; they also brought out all her relatives and placed them outside the camp of Israel.
ESV	So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and <u>her father and mother and brothers</u> and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel.
HCSB	So the young men who had scouted went in and brought out Rahab and <u>her father</u> , <u>mother</u> , <u>brothers</u> , and all who belonged to her. They brought out her whole family and settled them outside the camp of Israel.
AAT	The spies went out and brought out Rahab, her father, mother, brothers, and everything she had; they brought out all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel.
NIV2011	So the young men who had done the spying went in and brought out Rahab, <u>her father and mother</u> , <u>her brothers and sisters</u> and all who belonged to her. They brought out her entire family and put them in a place outside the camp of Israel.

**Deuteronomy TEC appointed reviewer:** "in my opinion the NIV translators have not shown respect for the original words of Scripture. This is what troubles me the most. The attempt to be gender neutral has become an agenda more important than what I believe should be the translator's real agenda , namely, to translate the words of Scripture. I'm aware of the fact that translation is not an exact science, that there will be a greater or lesser degree of paraphrase needed for each passage, and that a completely interpretation free is probably an ideal that will never be achieved. But when translators adopt an agenda that in some way gives predominance to cultural needs and allows this to trump the specific words of Scripture, I think we have a problem."

**Deut 1:35— “not a man of” to “no one from” TEC appointed reviewer** Even if Heb. *ish* can in some cases be made gender neutral, in this verse the reference is to the “men.” Only the men twenty years and older were counted in the census.

NKJV	Surely not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land of which I swore to give to your fathers,
NASB95	Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land which I swore to give your fathers,
ESV	‘Not one of these men of this evil generation shall see the good land that I swore to give to your fathers,
HCSB	None of these men in this evil generation will see the good land I swore to give your fathers,
AAT	None of these men, these wicked people of this generation, will ever see this fine land I swore to give your fathers
NIV2011	“No one from this evil generation shall see the good land I swore to give your ancestors

**Deut 5:9— “sin of the fathers” to “sin of the parents” TEC appointed reviewer** The original word is “fathers.” I have no objection to including mothers in the concept, but this changes the meaning of the word. Also, the plural can imply that the sin is being (or must be) performed by both parents

NKJV	you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,
NASB95	You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me,
ESV	You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,
HCSB	You must not bow down to them or worship them, because I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the fathers’ sin to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,
AAT	Do not worship them or serve them, because I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God; for their fathers sins I punish children, if they hate Me too, to the third and fourth generation.
NIV2011	You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me

**Deut 10:22—“fathers to ancestors”— TEC appointed reviewer** The seventy mentioned were all males. They were the “fathers” of the tribes and clans. Of course, ancestors in another context is an OK translation. But in the context of an attempt to be gender neutral, one cannot help but comment on the attempt to remove the gender specific nature of its use here.

NKJV	Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the Lord your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude.
NASB95	“Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons in all, and now the Lord your God has made you as numerous as the stars of heaven.
ESV	Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons, and now the Lord your God has made you as numerous as the stars of heaven.
HCSB	Your fathers went down to Egypt, 70 people in all, and now the Lord your God has made you as numerous as the stars of the sky.
AAT	Your fathers were 70 persons when they went down to Egypt, and now the LORD your God has made you as many as the stars in the sky.
NIV2011	Your ancestors who went down into Egypt were seventy in all, and now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky

**Deut 20:8—“is any man afraid . . . his brothers” to “is anyone afraid . . . his fellow soldiers” TEC appointed reviewer** This change seems to reflect the modern fact of women on the front lines. Were women in the front lines of battle at that time? In this verse note the new NIV uses “his” to refer to “fellow soldiers.” Was this an oversight? If not, why not use the words “men” and “brothers.”

NKJV	“The officers shall speak further to the people, and say, ‘What man <i>is there who is</i> fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return to his house, lest the heart of his brethren faint like his heart.’
NASB 95	“Then the officers shall speak further to the people and say, ‘Who is the man that is afraid and fainthearted? Let him depart and return to his house, so that he might not make his brothers’ hearts melt like his heart.’
ESV	And the officers shall speak further to the people, and say, ‘Is there any man who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go back to his house, lest he make the heart of his fellows melt like his own.’
HCSB	The officers will continue to address the army and say, ‘Is there any man who is afraid or cowardly? Let him leave and return home, so that his brothers’ hearts won’t melt like his own.’
AAT	The officers should also tell the troops: ‘Is anyone afraid and timid? Go back home, and don’t make the other Israelites afraid like yourself.’
NIV2011	Then the officers shall add, “Is anyone afraid or fainthearted? Let him go home so that his fellow soldiers will not become disheartened too.

**Deut 21:5; 31:9—“the sons of Levi” to “the Levitical priests” TEC appointed reviewer** There were no women priests. “Sons of Levi” is how the original reads. Removing the masculine nature of the priests seems to fall into error of applying modern ideas about church leadership to the Hebrews.

NKJV	Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come near, for the Lord your God has chosen them to minister to Him and to bless in the name of the Lord; by their word every controversy and every assault shall be <i>settled</i> .
NASB95	“Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come near, for the Lord your God has chosen them to serve Him and to bless in the name of the Lord; and every dispute and every assault shall be settled by them.
ESV	Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come forward, for the Lord your God has chosen them to minister to him and to bless in the name of the Lord, and by their word every dispute and every assault shall be settled.
HCSB	Then the priests, the sons of Levi, will come forward, for Yahweh your God has chosen them to serve Him and pronounce blessings in His name, and they are to give a ruling in every dispute and case of assault.
AAT	Then the priests, descended from Levi, should come forward, because the LORD your God has chosen them to serve Him to bless in the LORD’s name and settle cases wherever people quarrel or a blow is struck.
NIV2011	The Levitical priests shall step forward, for the LORD your God has chosen them to minister and to pronounce blessings in the name of the LORD and to decide all cases of dispute and assault.

**Deut 21:23—“bury him” to “bury it” TEC appointed reviewer** A person’s body is still that person, and does not become less than that. This seems to be a knee-jerk translation that avoids the English gender issue.

NKJV	his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.
NASB95	his corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day (for he who is hanged is accursed of God), so that you do not defile your land which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance.
ESV	his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance.
HCSB	you are not to leave his corpse on the tree overnight but are to bury him that day, for anyone hung on a tree is under God’s curse. You must not defile the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.
AAT	Don’t let his body stay on the tree all night, but be sure to burry him the same day, because a hanged man is cursed by God. Don’t make unclean the land the LORD your God gives you as your own.
NIV2011	you must not leave the body hanging on the pole overnight. Be sure to bury it that same day, because anyone who is hung on a pole is under God’s curse. You must not desecrate the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

**Deut 24:16x2—“Fathers shall not be” to “Parents shall not be” and “each is to die for his own” to “parents will die for their own” .... TEC appointed reviewer** At best, the individual nature of guilt is watered down. At worst, a person may understand that both parents have to be involved.

NKJV	“Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin.
NASB95	“Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor shall sons be put to death for their fathers; everyone shall be put to death for his own sin.
ESV	“Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to death for his own sin.\
HCSB	“Fathers are not to be put to death for their children or children for their fathers; each person will be put to death for his own sin.
AAT	Fathers should not be killed for their children or children for their fathers. Only for his own crime should anyone be killed.
NIV2011	Parents are not to be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their parents; each will die for their own sin

**Judges 2:18 TEC appointed reviewer:** The Hebrew verb... was translated “had compassion” in the NIV 1984. In the NIV2011 it is simply “relented.” Perhaps it is within the semantic range of the word, but “relented” seemed to rob the passage of some of its gospel content. Whether one considers it a “serious” weakening or not may be a matter of opinion.

NKJV	And when the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them.
NASB95	When the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge and delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed and afflicted them.
ESV	Whenever the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them.
HCSB	Whenever the Lord raised up a judge for the Israelites, the Lord was with him and saved the people from the power of their enemies while the judge was still alive. The Lord was moved to pity whenever they groaned because of those who were oppressing and afflicting them.
AAT	When the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with such a judge and saved them from their enemies as long as the judge lived, because their groaning under those who were cruelly oppressing them made the LORD feel sorry for them.
NIV2011	Whenever the LORD raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for the LORD <u>relented</u> because of their groaning under those who oppressed and afflicted them

**Judges 9:23**

NKJV	God sent a spirit of ill will between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech,
NASB 95	Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech,
ESV	And God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem, and the leaders of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech,
HCSB	God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the lords of Shechem. They treated Abimelech deceitfully,
AAT	Then God sent an evil spirit to come between Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem, and they treacherously turned against Abimelech
NIV2011	God <b>stirred up animosity</b> between Abimelek and the citizens of Shechem so that they acted treacherously against Abimelek

**Judges 17:3; cf. 17:4, 18:14, 18:17, 18:18, and 18:30**

NKJV	So when he had returned the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, "I had wholly dedicated the silver from my hand to the Lord for my son, to make a carved image and a molded image; now therefore, I will return it to you."
NASB95	He then returned the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother, and his mother said, "I wholly dedicate the silver from my hand to the Lord for my son to make a graven image and a molten image; now therefore, I will return them to you."
ESV	And he restored the 1,100 pieces of silver to his mother. And his mother said, "I dedicate the silver to the Lord from my hand for my son, to make a carved image and a metal image. Now therefore I will restore it to you."
HCSB	He returned the 1,100 pieces of silver to his mother, and his mother said, "I personally consecrate the silver to the Lord for my son's benefit to make a carved image overlaid with silver."
AAT	So he gave the 1,100 pieces of silver back to his mother, and she said, "I'm giving this as holy money to the LORD for my son to make a carved image and an idol of cast metal."
NIV2011	When he returned the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, she said, "I solemnly consecrate my silver to the LORD for my son to make <b>an image overlaid with silver</b> . I will give it back to you

**Comment by TEC appointed reviewer of Judges:** "A general comment I would like to forward to the committee: I found many instances of "inclusive language" quite irritating and unnecessary. It is hard for me to believe that the CBT is trying to remain neutral when I look at many of their translation choices for words that refer to males or groups of males. It is hard to believe that they don't have an agenda. Regarding inclusive languages, the steps for review stated, "...we feel that the ship has left the harbor on this, so it isn't worth fighting against." If that means that we won't prevent its ongoing intrusion into our culture and language, I agree. I can live with gender neutral terminology when there is clearly a reference to groups of people that include males and females. I will tolerate the new 3rd person singular common gender pronoun "they," though it grates on my ears and makes the English language, which already suffers from so much imprecision, still more imprecise.

"The problem I see with inclusive language and the NIV2011 is that the translation committee felt obligated to find gender neutral terminology for terms where there is no confusion about the gender of the men to whom Scripture is referring. "But because he was afraid of the...men of the town..." That translation offers no confusion to



anyone, whether traditionalist or feminist. It is idiomatic English, inoffensive, and perfectly understandable. It is highly doubtful Gideon had a great fear of the women and children of the town. But NIV 2011 adjusts the translation: “He was afraid of...the townspeople...” In and of itself it is not a major downgrade. All by itself I can’t give it a “5.” Most of us will breeze right past it, and I would, too, if I had not taken on this assignment. It is highly unlikely such a translation could be used to overthrow the distinction between the separate callings God has given to men and women. But the excision of “men” is completely unnecessary. It does not serve the purposes of “dynamic equivalence,” because it presents a translation that is a little less equivalent, and no more idiomatic or clear. If this were an isolated case, even bringing it up might be nothing more than a case of nit-picking. “No translation is perfect.” But this approach to dealing with the Hebrew words like “man” or “son” or “brother”, even when they clearly mean a male or groups of males, pervades the NIV 2011 translation of the book of Judges. God tells Gideon in Judges 7:7, “Let each person go, a man to his place.” NIV 1984 retains the masculine flavor. “Let all the other men go...” NIV 2011 says less, “Let all the others go home.” Are we to leave the possibility of female soldiers in the group open, in 1200 or 1300 B.C.? I don’t believe that is the CBT’s desire, but then why get rid of the men? Examples could be multiplied. Is “ancestors” really easier to understand than “fathers” or “forefathers”? I can’t argue that it is an invalid translation, but it captures less of the flavor of Old Testament culture and life. Something in the original has been left behind, denied entry into our expression. Was God the God of Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, and Rachel? Or was he the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Of course, he was the God of them all, but that is not how it was expressed. I am in favor of having God speak idiomatic, 21st Century English. I am bothered by attempts to force him to adopt our cultural quirks.”

**2 Samuel 7:28 TEC appointed reviewer:** “Your words” (literal translation of the Hebrew) is changed to “covenant”. I wonder whether the text or context compels such a change.

NKJV	“And now, O Lord God, You are God, and <b>Your words are true</b> , and You have promised this goodness to Your servant.
NASB 95	“Now, O Lord God, You are God, and <b>Your words are truth</b> , and You have promised this good thing to Your servant.
ESV	And now, O Lord God, you are God, and <b>your words are true</b> , and you have promised this good thing to your servant.
HCSB	Lord God, You are God; <b>Your words are true</b> , and You have promised this grace to Your servant.
AAT	And now, my Lord God, You are God, You tell the truth, and You promised Your servant this good thing.
NIV2011	Sovereign LORD, you are God! Your <b>covenant is trustworthy</b> , and you have promised these good things to your servant.

**2 Sam 8:3 TEC appointed reviewer:** “to restore control” is changed to “restore his monument”—they must have a different textual reading, because I can find nothing in the original text I worked with that would suggest such a change

NKJV	David also defeated Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his territory at the River Euphrates.
NASB95	Then David defeated Hadadezer, the son of Rehob king of Zobah, as he went to restore his rule at the River.
ESV	David also defeated Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to restore his power at the river Euphrates.
HCSB	David also defeated Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah, who went to restore his control at the Euphrates River.
AAT	When David went to re-establish his rule at the Euphrates, he also defeated Hadadezer, Rehob’s son, king of Zobah.
NIV2011	Moreover, David defeated Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah, when he went to restore his monument at[a] the Euphrates River. Footnote: Or “his control along”

**2 Samuel 12:16 TEC appointed reviewer:** “lying on the ground” is changed to “lying on the ground in sackcloth”—again my Hebrew text does not have the word sackcloth, and I do not see that anything in the original text compels such a translation

NKJV	David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground.
NASB95	David therefore inquired of God for the child; and David fasted and went and lay all night on the ground.
ESV	David therefore sought God on behalf of the child. And David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground.
HCSB	David pleaded with God for the boy. He fasted, went home, and spent the night lying on the ground.
AAT	David pleaded with the LORD for the child, and David fasted and would go in and lie on the ground all night.
NIV2011	David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and spent the nights lying in sackcloth[a] on the ground.

**2 Samuel 14:9 TEC appointed reviewer:** “let the blame...” versus “my lord the king, pardon...” this changes the meaning of the verse substantially—again I don’t see how the Hebrew text allows this change

NKJV	And the woman of Tekoa said to the king, “My lord, O king, <b>let the iniquity be on me</b> and on my father’s house, and the king and his throne <b>be</b> guiltless.”
NASB95	The woman of Tekoa said to the king, “O my lord, the king, <b>the iniquity is on me</b> and my father’s house, but the king and his throne are guiltless.”
ESV	And the woman of Tekoa said to the king, “ <b>On me be the guilt</b> , my lord the king, and on my father’s house; let the king and his throne be guiltless.”
HCSB	Then the woman of Tekoa said to the king, “My lord the king, may any <b>blame be on me and my father’s house</b> , and may the king and his throne be innocent.”
AAT	“My lord the king,” the woman from Tekoa said to the king, “ <b>let me and my father’s family be responsible for the wrong</b> , and the king and his throne be free of it.”
NIV2011	But the woman from Tekoa said to him, “ <b>Let my lord the king pardon me and my family</b> , and let the king and his throne be without guilt.”

**2 Samuel 16:12\_TEC appointed reviewer:** “repay me with good...” to me covenant blessing...” again they interpret “good” in Hebrew to be convent blessing—seems unwarranted

NKJV	It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing this day.”
NASB95	“Perhaps the Lord will look on my affliction and return good to me instead of his cursing this day.”
ESV	It may be that the Lord will look on the wrong done to me, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing today.”
HCSB	Perhaps the Lord will see my affliction and restore goodness to me instead of Shimei’s curses today.”
AAT	Perhaps the LORD will look at my misery and turn his curse into a blessing today.
NIV2011	It may be that the LORD will look upon my misery and restore to me his covenant blessing instead of his curse today.

**2 Kings 2:23 – TEC appointed reviewer:** This proposed revision is not necessarily a “deal-breaker” for me. However, the translation eliminates an understanding that can be supported by the Hebrew and the immediate context. The Hebrew verb certainly supports the translation “Go on up...” Furthermore, the immediate context demonstrates that this event happened shortly after Elijah was taken up into heaven. No doubt the school of the prophets from Jericho could have reported to the school of the prophets in Bethel what had happened. Such an event would be news that spread quickly. The comments of the boys from Bethel directed at Elijah, then, were comments more than just mocking his baldness or saying “take your message out of here.” The reference to “go on up” could indicate a hardened impenitence on the part of these young males. They could have heard the story of Elijah’s translation into heaven and still rejected that evidence. Seeing the successor prophet, they yelled that he, too, should “go on up.” The interpretation of the verse in this manner suggests the depth of the rejection of the prophets of God and their proclamation of the truth by the boys from Bethel. The town that housed one of the golden calf altars was steeped in hardened unbelief. Granted, this is an interpretation, but I believe an option that the Hebrew and the context could allow. **The revision removes that option**, and no doubt the reader would think more quickly that it is simply the rebellion and disrespect of boys to an elder, even if he were a prophet.

NKJV	Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up the road, some youths came from the city and mocked him, and said to him, “Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!”
NASB95	Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up by the way, young lads came out from the city and mocked him and said to him, “Go up, you baldhead; go up, you baldhead!”
ESV	He went up from there to Bethel, and while he was going up on the way, some small boys came out of the city and jeered at him, saying, “Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!”
HCSB	From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking up the path, some small boys came out of the city and harassed him, chanting, “Go up, baldy! Go up, baldy!”
AAT	From there he went up to Bethel. As he went up along the road, some youths came out of the city and mocked him. “Go up, baldy! Go up, baldy!” they said to him.
NIV2011	From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, some boys came out of the town and jeered at him. “Get out of here, baldy!” they said. “Get out of here, baldy!”

**2 Chronicles 34:22 TEC appointed reviewer:** Hulda is referred to as a prophet. While a case can be made for the usage, I think it is a weakening and unnecessary

NKJV	So Hilkiah and those the king <i>had appointed</i> went to Huldah the <b>prophetess</b> , the wife of...
NASB95	So Hilkiah and <i>those</i> whom the king had told went to Huldah the <b>prophetess</b> , the wife of ...
ESV	<sup>22</sup> So Hilkiah and those whom the king had sent went to Huldah the <b>prophetess</b> , the wife of...
HCSB	So Hilkiah and those the king had designated went to the <b>prophetess</b> Huldah, the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath, son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe. She lived in Jerusalem in the Second District. They spoke with her about this.
AAT	Then Hilkiah and the king's men went to Huldah the <b>prophetess</b> , the wife of...
NIV2011	Hilkiah and those the king had sent with him went to speak to the <b>prophet</b> Huldah, who was the wife of...

**Psalms 4:4 TEC appointed reviewer:** "Why ignore the NT use (Eph 4:26) when it is not necessary for faithfulness to the Hebrew? NT use seems to be slighted in other cases too."

NKJV	Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still.
NASB95	Tremble, and do not sin; Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still.
ESV	Be angry, and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent.
HCSB	Be angry and do not sin; on your bed, reflect in your heart and be still.
AAT	Tremble and don't sin. Think about it on your beds and weep.
NIV2011	Tremble and do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent.

**Psalms 12:6 TEC appointed reviewer:** 'adds word "gold" adopting a conjectural emendation of the text'

NKJV	The words of the Lord are pure words, Like silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times.
NASB95	The words of the Lord are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.
ESV	The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times.
HCSB	The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in an earthen furnace, purified seven times.
AAT	The words of the LORD are pure, like silver refined in a furnace purified seven times.
NIV2011	And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver purified in a crucible, like <u>gold</u> refined seven times.

**Psalm 17:4 TEC appointed reviewer:** ‘why “bribe”? I don’t know what they are translating here.’

NKJV	Concerning the works of men, By the word of Your lips, I have kept away from the paths of the destroyer.
NASB95	As for the deeds of men, by the word of Your lips I have kept from the paths of the violent.
ESV	With regard to the works of man, by the word of your lips I have avoided the ways of the violent.
HCSB	Concerning what people do: by the word of Your lips I have avoided the ways of the violent.
AAT	As for what others do – by Your word of warning I’ve kept myself from violent ways.
NIV2011	Though people tried to bribe me, I have kept myself from the ways of the violent through what your lips have commanded.

**Psalm 20:3 TEC appointed reviewer:** “why drop all the Selahs? They are part of all Hebrew texts.”

NKJV	May He remember all your offerings, And accept your burnt sacrifice. Selah
NASB95	May He remember all your meal offerings And find your burnt offering acceptable! Selah.
ESV	May he remember all your offerings and regard with favor your burnt sacrifices! <u>Selah</u>
HCSB	May He remember all your offerings and accept your burnt offering. Selah
AAT	May He remember all your gifts and accept your burnt offerings. (Music)
NIV2011	May he remember all your sacrifices and accept your burnt offerings.

**Psalm 23:4 TEC appointed reviewer:** ‘why eliminate “valley of the shadow of death” since the Hebrew has it?’

NKJV	Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You <i>are</i> with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
NASB95	Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
ESV	Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
HCSB	Even when I go through the darkest valley, I fear no danger, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff —they comfort me.
AAT	Even though I walk in a very dark valley, I fear no harm because You are with me; Your rod and Your staff give me comfort.
NIV2011	Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

**Psalms 25:22 TEC appointed reviewer:** ‘why change “redeem” to “deliver” here and elsewhere?’

NKJV	Redeem Israel, O God, Out of all their troubles!
NASB95	Redeem Israel, O God, Out of all his troubles.
ESV	Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.
AAT	O God, free Israel from all their troubles!
HCSB	God, redeem Israel, from all its distresses.
NIV2011	Deliver Israel, O God, from all their troubles!

**Psalm 30:3**

NKJV	O Lord, You brought my soul up from <b>the grave</b> ; You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.
NASB95	O Lord, You have brought up my soul from <b>Sheol</b> ; You have kept me alive, that I would not go down to the pit.
ESV	O LORD, you have brought up my soul from <b>Sheol</b> ; you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.
HCSB	Lord, You brought me up from <b>Sheol</b> ; You spared me from among those going down to the Pit.
AAT	O LORD, You lifted me up from <b>the grave</b> and saved me from going down to the pit.
NIV2011	You, LORD, brought me up from <b>the realm of the dead</b> ; you spared me from going down to the pit.

**Psalm 31:17**

NKJV	Do not let me be ashamed, O Lord, for I have called upon You; Let the wicked be ashamed; Let them be silent in <b>the grave</b> .
NASB 95	Let me not be put to shame, O Lord, for I call upon You; Let the wicked be put to shame, let them be silent in <b>Sheol</b> .
ESV	O Lord, let me not be put to shame, for I call upon you; let the wicked be put to shame; let them go silently to <b>Sheol</b> .
HCSB	LORD, do not let me be disgraced when I call on You. Let the wicked be disgraced; let them be silent in <b>Sheol</b>
AAT	I have called to You, O LORD; don’t let me be disappointed, but let the wicked end in shame and be thrown into <b>a grave</b> .
NIV2011	Let me not be put to shame, LORD, for I have cried out to you; but let the wicked be put to shame and be silent in <b>the realm of the dead</b> .

**Psalm 116:10 TEC appointed reviewer:** ‘weak NIV made worse. Why ignore NT? (2 Cor 4:13)’

NKJV	I believed, therefore I spoke, “I am greatly afflicted.”
NASB95	I believed when I said, “I am greatly afflicted.”
ESV	I believed, even when I spoke, “I am greatly afflicted”
HCSB	I believed, even when I said, “I am severely afflicted.”
AAT	(I believed even when I had to speak of my suffering so much.
NIV2011	I trusted in the LORD when I said, “I am greatly afflicted”



**Psalm 147:10 TEC appointed reviewer:** ‘is it necessary to change “strong man” to a “warrior”?’

NKJV	He does not delight in the strength of the horse; He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man.
NASB95	He does not delight in the strength of the horse; He does not take pleasure in the legs of a man.
ESV	His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the legs of a man,
HCSB	He is not impressed by the strength of a horse; He does not value the power of a man.
AAT	He doesn’t delight in a horse’s strength or take pleasure in a man’s legs.
NIV2011	His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor his delight in the legs of the <b>warrior</b>

**Proverbs 8:22-23 TEC appointed reviewer:** “... significant weakening” (*see below*)

NKJV	“The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old. I have been established from everlasting, From the beginning, before there was ever an earth.
NASB 95	“The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old. “From everlasting I was established, From the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth.
ESV	“The Lord possessed me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. <sup>23</sup> Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth.
HCSB	“The Lord made me at the beginning of His creation, before His works of long ago. I was formed before ancient times, from the beginning, before the earth began.
AAT	<i>The LORD became My Father at the beginning of His way, long ago before any of His works. I was set up from everlasting, from the first, before the earth was.</i>
NIV2011	“The LORD brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was formed long ages ago, at the very beginning, when the world came to be.

**TEC appointed reviewer:** “Under the category of significant weakening, I have placed Proverbs 8:22ff., the section on wisdom. Bible believing interpreters disagree whether the reference to wisdom in this section is a direct reference to the pre-incarnate Second Person of the Holy Trinity, a personification of God’s eternal divine attribute of wisdom, or God’s created gift of wisdom which he gives to humans. Much hinges on the meaning and translation of *kanah* in vs. 23 as possess or create (form). Andrew Steinmann’s recently published commentary on Proverbs in the *Concordia Commentary* series makes a compelling case that this verb always means possess and in no instance is the meaning create demanded by the context.

Even granting the meaning of *kanah* as possess, the case could be made for wisdom personified and not as a reference to the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. The problem with the NIV 2011 is that it slams the door shut on any possibility of the passage referring to Christ. In my opinion, that should be left to the interpreter/exegete and not the translator.

I would put this passage in the same category as the very unfortunate translation of Psalm 8:4-8 and Hebrews 2:5-9. The NIV 2011 translators should have stuck with translating and not interpreted in such a way that their translation slams the door shut on another possible meaning allowed by the text.

Is the NIV 2011 translation of Proverbs 8:22ff. a “deal breaker” for use in WELS? In my opinion, no. But if I was teaching a Bible class or preaching a sermon on Proverbs 8, like Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2, I would refuse to use the NIV 2011.

An observation not reflected in the tallies: Even though the Translators’ Notes of the NIV 2011 claims that the translation is gender neutral, reflected by the avoidance of the generic use of male nouns and pronouns, there are several instances in Proverbs where the translators kept the generic use of male nouns and pronouns where the context does not refer exclusively to males. Interestingly, these instances always involve a negative (immoral) connotation. I have noted some of the verses here. 1:10; 6:12-15, 30-32; 19:24; 21:25; 26:4-5, 14-15

If the NIV 2011 is truly and consistently gender neutral, then the NIV 2011 translation of Proverbs strongly gives the impression that only males are sluggards, troublemakers, villains, creators of conflict, thieves, and fools. Someone might make the case from such passages that the NIV 2011 undermines the doctrine of original sin. Why the NIV 2011 kept the generic male nouns and pronouns in these verses baffles me.”

*[BK: I also found this tendency quite often and wondered about it. I concur.]*

### Proverbs 21:2

NKJV	Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the hearts.
NASB95	Every man’s way is right in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the hearts.
ESV	Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the heart.
HCSB	All a man’s ways seem right to him, but the Lord evaluates the motives.
AAT	A man thinks all his ways are right, but the LORD weighs hearts.
NIV2011	A <b>person</b> may think <b>their</b> own ways are right, but the LORD weighs the heart.

### Isaiah 19:16

NKJV	In that day Egypt will be <b>like women</b> , and will be afraid and fear because of the waving of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which He waves over it.
NASB95	In that day the Egyptians will become <b>like women</b> , and they will tremble and be in dread because of the waving of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which He is going to wave over them.
ESV	In that day the Egyptians will be <b>like women</b> , and tremble with fear before the hand that the Lord of hosts shakes over them.
HCSB	On that day Egypt will be <b>like women</b> . She will tremble with fear because of the threatening hand of the Lord of Hosts when He raises it against her.
AAT	On that day Egyptians will be <b>like women</b> . They will tremble and be terrified because the LORD of armies will share His fist at them.
NIV2011	In that day the Egyptians will become <b>weaklings</b> . They will shudder with fear at the uplifted hand that the LORD Almighty raises against them.

## Jeremiah 23:6

NKJV	In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this <i>is</i> His name by which He will be called: <b>THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.</b>
NASB95	“In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘ <b>The Lord our righteousness.</b> ’
ESV	In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘ <b>The LORD is our righteousness.</b> ’
HCSB	In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. This is what He will be named: <b>Yahweh Our Righteousness.</b>
AAT	When He comes, Judah will be saved, and Israel will live safely. This is the name that He will be called: <b>The-LORD-Our-Righteousness.</b>
NIV2011	In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: <b>The LORD Our Righteous Savior.</b>

**Amos 4:6** BK: Each translation claims it handled this idiom well. You decide.

NKJV	“But I gave you also *cleanness of teeth in all your cities And lack of bread in all your places, Yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the Lord. <i>footnote: hunger</i>
NASB 95	“But I gave you also cleanness of teeth in all your cities And lack of bread in all your places, Yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the LORD.
ESV	“I gave you <u>cleanness of teeth</u> in all your cities, and lack of bread in all your places, yet you did not return to me,” declares the Lord.
HCSB	I gave you absolutely <u>nothing to eat</u> in all your cities, a shortage of food in all your communities, yet you did not return to Me. This is the Lord’s declaration.
AAT	And so I also gave you – <u>nothing for your teeth to bite</u> in all your cities and no food in all your places. But you didn’t return to Me,” says the LORD.
NIV2011	“I gave you <u>empty stomachs</u> in every city and lack of bread in every town, yet you have not returned to me,” declares the LORD.

**Habakkuk 2:4 TEC appointed reviewer:** Significant weakening, in the light of the NT... People’s Bible: “[The Lord] says, “But the righteous will live by his faith.” (Note: This translation is better than the footnote alternative in the NIV which translates “faith” as *faithfulness*. Although the Hebrew word often means “to act in a faithful or loyal way,” the focus here is not on *doing* but on *depending upon* the Lord to act faithfully in accord with his promises.)” Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38 reveal the correct meaning is “by faith” (*ek pisteos*).

NKJV	“Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his <b>faith</b> .
NASB95	“Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his <b>faith</b> .
ESV	“Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his <b>faith</b> .
HCSB	Look, his ego is inflated; he is without integrity. But the righteous one will live by his <b>faith</b> .
AAT	Look at the proud fellow whose soul is not right within him. But the righteous person will live by his <b>faith</b> .
NIV2011	"See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright-- but the righteous person will live by his <b>faithfulness</b> —

### Haggai 2:7

NKJV	and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the Lord of hosts.
NASB	'I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD of hosts.
ESV	And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of hosts.
HCSB	I will shake all the nations so that the treasures of all the nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory," says the Lord of Hosts.
AAT	I'll shake all the nations, and so the Desire of all the nations will come, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD of armies.
NIV2011	I will shake all nations, and what is desired by all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD Almighty.

**Malachi 2:10 TEC appointed reviewer:** 2:10 – (Significant Weakening) Change of “fathers” to “ancestors” -- I'm not sure that this doesn't greatly weaken an understanding that the covenants were made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and with the leaders of Israel and not with the “Fathers and mothers” which is likely the implication of using “ancestors.” I believe it would have been better here to leave the cultural context of the people of Israel in place in this passage. The priests were all men, there was no exception.

NKJV	the covenant of the fathers?
NASB 95	the covenant of our fathers?
ESV	the covenant of our fathers?
HCSB	the covenant of our fathers?
AAT	the covenant of our fathers?
NIV2011	the covenant of our <b>ancestors</b>

### Malachi 3:8

NKJV	“Will a <u>man</u> rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.
NASB 95	“Will a <u>man</u> rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, ‘How have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.
ESV	Will <u>man</u> rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions.
HCSB	“Will a <u>man</u> rob God? Yet you are robbing Me!” You ask: “How do we rob You?” “By not making the payments of the tenth and the contributions.
AAT	“Will a <u>man</u> rob God? Yet you are robbing Me. ‘How have we robbed You?’ you ask. “In the tithes and in offerings.
NIV2011	“Will a <b>mere mortal</b> rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “In tithes and offerings.

**New Testament: Matthew - TEC appointed reviewer comment:** “In their notes from August 2010 the translators explain: Certain uses of “Christ” are now “Messiah.” This was true particularly in the Gospels and Acts, where the word seemed to retain its titular sense of the coming deliverer of the Jews rather than its more common New Testament usage, in which it seems to be virtually equivalent to a second name for Jesus. I have to disagree most heartily. The name Χριστός is rich in meaning no matter where you see it. At the same time, to translate Χριστός as “the Messiah” on selected occasions doesn’t really serve to bring out that meaning any more than to translate it “Christ.” Instead it makes for an inconsistency that is going to call for frequent explanation. Of all the changes from NIV 1984 to NIV 2011, this is one about which I am completely puzzled. Unfortunately it’s repeated dozens of times in the Gospels and Acts. It’s bound to raise the ire of pastors and their people when (a) in many instances the word “Christ” is supposedly to be regarded as “a second name for Jesus”; and (b) the translation of many long-familiar passages -- such as, “Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord” -- have been altered for a reason that is suspect at best.”

#### **Matthew 1:19**

NKJV	Then Joseph her husband, being a just <u>man</u> , and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.
NASB 95	And Joseph her husband, being a <u>righteous man</u> and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.
ESV	And her husband Joseph, being a <u>just man</u> and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.
HCSB	So her husband Joseph, being a <u>righteous man</u> , and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly.
AAT	Joseph, her husband, was a <u>righteous man</u> and didn’t want to disgrace her. So he decided to divorce her secretly.
NIV2011	Because Joseph her husband was <b><u>faithful to the law</u></b> , and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

#### **Matthew 1:25 BK: Harder words for children here in NIV’11 now**

NKJV	and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.
NASB 95	but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.
ESV	but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.
HCSB	but did not know her intimately until she gave birth to a son. And he named Him Jesus.
AAT	but didn’t have relations with her until she had a son. And he called Him Jesus.
NIV2011	But he did not <b><u>consummate their marriage</u></b> until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

**Matthew 16:24**

NKJV	Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.
NASB95	Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.
ESV	Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let <u>him</u> deny <u>himself</u> and take up <u>his</u> cross and follow me.
HCSB	Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wants to come with Me, <u>he</u> must deny <u>himself</u> , take up <u>his</u> cross, and follow Me.
AAT	Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If you want to follow Me, deny <u>yourself</u> , take up <u>your</u> cross, and come with me.”
NIV2011	Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny <u>themselves</u> and take up <u>their</u> cross and follow me.

**Matthew 18:15** BK: A matter of clarity

NKJV	“Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have <u>gained</u> your brother.
NASB95	“If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.
ESV	“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have <u>gained</u> your brother.
AAT	“If your brother sins against you, go and point out his sin to him when you’re alone with him. If he listens to you, you have <u>won</u> your brother.
HCSB	“If your brother sins against you, go and rebuke him in private. If he listens to you, you have won your brother.
NIV2011	“If your brother <u>or sister</u> sins, go and point out <u>their</u> fault, just between the two of you. If <u>they</u> listen to you, you have won <u>them</u> over.

**Luke 1:37**

NKJV	For with God nothing will be impossible.”
NASB95	“For nothing will be impossible with God.”
ESV	For nothing will be impossible with God.
HCSB	For nothing will be impossible with God.”
AAT	There is nothing that God will not be able to do.
NIV2011	For <u>no word</u> from God <u>will ever fail</u> .



**Luke 2:7**

NKJV	And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.
NASB95	And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.
ESV	And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.
HCSB	Then she gave birth to her firstborn Son, and she wrapped Him snugly in cloth and laid Him in a feeding trough—because there was no room for them at the lodging place.
AAT	She had her first Son, and she wrapped Him in strips of cloth and laid him (sic) in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.
NIV2011	and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them

**Luke 2:10**

NKJV	Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.
NASB95	But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people;
ESV	And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.
HCSB	But the angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people:
AAT	“Don’t be afraid,” the angel said to them. “I have good news for you. A great joy will come to all the people:
NIV2011	But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

**Luke 12:18 TEC appointed reviewer: ‘NIV leaves out “my goods”’**

NKJV	So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.
NASB95	“Then he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.
ESV	And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.
HCSB	I will do this,’ he said. ‘I’ll tear down my barns and build bigger ones and store all my grain and my goods there.
AAT	Finally he said, ‘This is what I’ll do: I’ll tear down my barns and build bigger ones and store all my grain and goods in them.
NIV2011	Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain.

**Luke 17:1 TEC appointed reviewer:** “Stumble” just doesn’t reflect the deadly nature of sin.

NKJV	Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe <i>to him</i> through whom they do come!
NASB95	He said to His disciples, “It is inevitable that stumbling blocks come, but woe to him through whom they come!
ESV	And he said to his disciples, “Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come!
HCSB	He said to His disciples, “Offenses will certainly come, but woe to the one they come through!
AAT	“Temptations to sin are sure to come,” Jesus told His disciples, “but woe to him through whom they come.
NIV2011	Jesus said to his disciples: “Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come.

### John 7:11

NKJV	Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, “Where is He?”
NASB95	So the Jews were seeking Him at the feast and were saying, “Where is He?”
ESV	<u>The Jews</u> were looking for him at the feast, and saying, “Where is he?”
HCSB	<u>The Jews</u> were looking for Him at the festival and saying, “Where is He?”
AAT	So <u>the Jews</u> were looking for Jesus in the crowd at the festival.
NIV2011	Now at the festival <u>the Jewish leaders</u> were watching for Jesus and asking, "Where is he?"

**John 3:21 – TEC appointed reviewer:** “NIV 2011 is breaking new ground with this translation of John 3:21, but without good reason.”

NKJV	But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been <u>done in God.</u> ”
NASB95	“But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been <u>wrought in God.</u> ”
ESV	But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that <u>his works have been carried out in God.</u> ”
HCSB	But anyone who lives by the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be shown to be <u>accomplished by God.</u> ”
AAT	But anyone who lives in the truth comes to the Light so that his works may be seen to have been <u>done in God.</u> ”
NIV2011	But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been <u>done in the sight of God.</u>

**John 11:25-26**

NKJV	Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”
NASB95	Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?”
ESV	Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, <sup>26</sup> and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”
HCSB	Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me, even if he dies, will live. Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die—ever. Do you believe this?”
AAT	“I am the Resurrection and the Life,” Jesus said to her. “Anyone who believes in Me will live even if he dies. Yes, anyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe that?”
NIV2011	Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

**John 14:2** BK: see Wenzel commentary on the Gospels, p. 664... where did Jesus go to “prepare a place”? Is it possible to interpret that it is the cross and empty tomb with the NIV?

NKJV	In My Father’s house are many mansions; if <i>it were</i> not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
NASB95	“In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.
ESV	In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?
HCSB	In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you.
AAT	In My Father’s house there are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you, because I go to prepare a place for you.
NIV2011	My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going <u>there</u> [not in Gk] to prepare a place for you?

**Acts 2:43 TEC appointed reviewer:** NIV1984 is reasonably close to the original: "Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles." In context the impression given (as in the Greek) is that the "awe" grew out of the apostolic preaching and the worship life of the believers (verse 42), and that apostolic miracles are subsequently mentioned as an additional feature of the community's life. NIV2011 combines the two coordinate clauses of verse 43 into one in a paraphrase that gratuitously connects the "awe" with the miracles: "Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles."

NKJV	Then <u>fear</u> came upon every soul, <u>and</u> many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.
NASB 95	Everyone kept feeling a sense of <u>awe</u> ; <u>and</u> many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.
ESV	<sup>43</sup> And awe came upon every soul, <u>and</u> many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.
HCSB	Then <u>fear</u> came over everyone, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles.
AAT	<u>Awe</u> came on everyone – the apostles were doing many wonders and miracles.
NIV2011	Everyone was filled with <u>awe at the</u> many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.

**TEC appointed reviewer:** 'Acts 4:26 in NIV2011 reads, "The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one." The last phrase is *kata tou Christou autou* in Greek. Elsewhere, NIV2011 renders *ho Christos* in Jewish contexts as "the Messiah," and it would have been consistent with that policy to render the present phrase, "against his Messiah." Their departure from that policy here in favor of lower case "anointed one" is unfortunate. The passage quoted here (Ps. 2:2) is a rectilinear prophecy of the Messiah, but NIV2011 seems hesitant to make that clear (although their footnote is a partial remedy).'

NKJV	<i>The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ.</i> '
NASB 95	'The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ.'
ESV	The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against <u>his Anointed</u> —
HCSB	The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers assembled together against the Lord and against <u>His Messiah</u> .
AAT	The kings of the earth stand ready, and the rulers get together against the lord and <u>His Anointed</u> .
NIV2011	The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against <u>his anointed one</u>

**Acts 5:31**

NKJV	Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
NASB95	“He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.
ESV	God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
HCSB	God exalted this man to His right hand as ruler and Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.
AAT	And took Him up to His right hand as Leader and Savior in order to give the people of Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins.
NIV2011	God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins

**Acts 9:32**

NKJV	Now it came to pass, as Peter went through all parts of the country, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda.
NASB95	Now as Peter was traveling through all those regions, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda.
ESV	Now as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the <u>saints</u> who lived at Lydda.
HCSB	As Peter was traveling from place to place, he also came down <u>to the saints</u> who lived in Lydda.
AAT	Now when Peter was going around among all the disciples, he also came down to <u>the holy people</u> living in Lydda.
NIV2011	As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit <u>the Lord's people</u> who lived in Lydda.

**Acts 13:39**

NKJV	and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.
NASB95	and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.
ESV	and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.
AAT	And declares everyone who believes righteous and free from everything from which Moses' Law couldn't free you.
HCSB	and everyone who believes in Him is justified from everything that you could not be justified from through the law of Moses.
NIV2011	Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses.

## Acts 15:10

NKJV	Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?
NASB95	“Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?
ESV	Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our <u>fathers</u> nor we have been able to bear?
AAT	Now then, why do you test God by putting on the disciples’ neck a yoke neither our <u>fathers</u> nor we could bear?
HCSB	Now then, why are you testing God by putting a yoke on the disciples’ necks that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear?
NIV2011	Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our <u>ancestors</u> have been able to bear?

**TEC appointed reviewer of Acts: Added comments on Gender issues --** I think I have heard that Douglas Moo of the NIV2011 team considers himself a complementarian on gender issues in the Bible. That is interesting, but he and his associates seem eager to get rid of as much of the indirect evidence for complementary gender roles as possible.

Embedded in ancient Greek were some linguistic conventions that in some measure reflected male headship. Masculine pronouns and adjectives were used to refer to mixed company or to individuals viewed as somehow being typical of mixed groups or of society at large. Crowds were often addressed with terms suggesting a primary reference to or a highlighting of the males. Until recent times English was similar. That there was some element of male headship embedded in English seems clear enough from the recent feminist and egalitarian insistence on eradicating those features of English. But it is noteworthy that the Holy Spirit did not teach the apostles to abandon gender-weighted speech habits and form a new set of linguistic conventions in this area (although the gospel had a considerable impact on language in other areas). The Spirit-inspired language of the NT may be uncongenial to feminists, but it is a fact of sacred history.

The eagerness of the NIV2011 to replace "fathers/forefathers" with "ancestors" makes me wonder. Do the revisers consider it anomalous or embarrassing when God is referred to as the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob? Do we find those expressions counterbalanced by a comparable set of references to the God of Sarah or the God of Rebekah? Would it be surprising for a nation that emphasized Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to speak of their ancestors in a way that highlighted the ancient *fathers*? After all, if they wanted to be understood in a gender neutral way, why was there not a preference for a more gender neutral term for ancestors, *hoi progeneis*?

I am also puzzled (sometimes amused) by the NIV2011 handling of the word *andres*. In most contexts the word unmistakably denotes males, but NIV2011 treats that element of meaning as zeroed out whenever there are women present. For example, when Paul was in Athens (a male- dominated society if ever there was one) he addresses the Areopagus council by saying, *Andres Athenaioi* (Acts 17:22). NIV2011 translates, "People of Athens." If I remember correctly, the revisers appeal to the mention of Damaris in verse 34, but that proves nothing. Luke tells us that certain men (*tines andres*) attached themselves to Paul and came to faith, "among whom" were Dionysus the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them. If I say, "I saw a number of men from the football team, and among them was a woman....," that hardly proves I meant "men" in a gender neutral sense. Men continue to be men when a



woman is among them. Furthermore, Luke's reference to Damaris in no way proves that she was present at Paul's speech, much less that he meant to include her when he said *Andres Athenaioi*. The men who followed Paul were converted by his gospel teaching after the Areopagus speech, and it is only at that point that Luke mentions Damaris. NIV2011 is similarly gender neutral on most other occasions when *andres* is used in addressing a group—but not in Acts 5:35. There Gamaliel is addressing the Sanhedrin with the words *Andres Israelitai*, and instead of saying "People of Israel," NIV2011 has "Men of Israel." I get the impression that sometimes the NIV2011 revisers are less interested in consistently reflecting the text and more interested in recording what they would consider appropriate under the circumstances. Most curious is the prediction of heretics in Acts 20:30. Paul says that "Even from your own number *andres* will arise and distort the truth..." and here NIV2011 abandons TNIV's "some" and returns to NIV1984's "men." (I am reminded of a feminist proposal to refer to God as "She" in Bible translations, to which one theologian replied: "I'd have more respect for the proposal if they also wanted Matthew 25:41 to include the phrase, 'the devil and her angels.'")

When we come to *adelphoi*, we can find a bit more support for a gender neutral translation such as "brothers and sisters." BDAG records a few instances in which the plural clearly includes one or more females. Since the word for sister is *he adelphe*, it is plausible to suppose that the noun *hoi adelphoi* could work like plural masculine adjectives that can refer either to males only or to mixed gender groups. But in practice is "brothers and sisters" a precise representation of the way NT writers and their original readers understood *adelphoi*? Or was it taken for granted by them that the primary reference was to the men as the appropriate way of addressing a mixed group in those days? It is interesting that we sometimes find a congregation addressed as *Andres adelphoi* as in Acts 13:26. That suggests an exegetical fork in the road. Either *andres* in such a context is little more than a superfluous noise, a gender neutral way of saying "human beings" that wasn't needed to begin with and came to look that much more expendable when *adelphoi* was added, or *andres* retains its normal value and continues to function in direct address as a term of respect for males who have reached the age of majority. The latter seems more likely to me, especially when I see other practices that NT writers and speakers employ without any hesitation. To cite just one example, in 1 John 2 we find these terms of address: children, fathers, young men, children, fathers, young men. Nowadays many writers would feel obliged to replace "fathers" and "young men" with gender neutral terms, or they would include "mothers" and "young women" to provide balance. But John writes in a way that seemed appropriate to him, highlighting the males. Where things like that can happen, is it so obvious that *adelphoi* is gender neutral? I don't think so. I can't help thinking that NIV2011 is in a subtle but far-reaching way misrepresenting the apostolic church by its frequent refusal to translate *adelphoi* simply as "brothers," even though many modern readers will welcome the change.

**Acts 1:21 – TEC appointed reviewer comments:** “I wonder if we are living in a trend. I suspect that Bible translators will more and more see it as their task to paraphrase for a variety of reasons, and that they will paraphrase more extensively. But there can be too much of a good thing.

Acts 1:21 can serve as an illustration of the phenomenon and the potential danger. NIV1984 has, “Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us...” That was not a perfect translation since “among us” blurs the point of *eph' hemas*, which means “over us” in the sense of an authoritative leader (“as our leader” would be an OK paraphrase). But the NIV2011 revisers seem unaware of that flaw, and instead they seem preoccupied with the thought, “It sounds just a trifle odd to say ‘Jesus went in and out’ because we don’t talk that way. Let’s say it the way we would say it, ‘the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us.’” And with that paraphrase they make it impossible to see here an echo of Numbers 27:17 and 1 Samuel 18:13,16 (passages in which a more literal translation would also be desirable so that a footnote at Acts 1:21 could usefully reference them). Jesus is the new Joshua, whom God provided so that Israel would not be like sheep without a shepherd (Nu 27:17). Jesus is great David’s greater Son, the leader of the reconstituted Israel in which Peter and the rest of the Twelve were given an important role—and just as Israel and Judah loved David “because he went out and came in before them” (1 Sa 18:16, KJV), so Peter and his fellow disciples loved Jesus as they witnessed him coming in and going out as their leader. Now there was nothing badly unidiomatic about NIV1984 in Acts 1:21. The grammar and words were simple and transparent. But because the ultimate degree of naturalness is such a high priority for NIV2011, the biblical phrase was not allowed to survive, and the warm, eloquent allusion was lost.

I wonder how often things like that happen as translators become more enamored of naturalness of expression and less inclined to confront the reader with expressions that provoke the thought, “Why would God put it this way?”

NKJV	“Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,
NASB95	“Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us—
ESV	So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,
HCSB	“Therefore, from among the men who have accompanied us during the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us—
AAT	He should be one of these men who went with us all the time the Lord Jesus <u>went in and out among us</u>
NIV2011	Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus <u>was living among us</u>

**Romans 4:25 BK:** For Gk: διὰ - “because of” would be clearer / better.

NKJV	who was delivered up <u>because of</u> our offenses, and was raised <u>because of</u> our justification.
NASB95	<i>He</i> who was delivered over <u>because of</u> our transgressions, and was raised <u>because of</u> our justification.
ESV	who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification
HCSB	He was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.
AAT	It was He Who was handed over to death <b>for</b> our failures and then was raised <b>for</b> our justification. <b>GWN (1988): “because of”</b>
NIV2011	He was delivered over to death <b>for</b> our sins and was raised to life <b>for</b> our justification.

## Romans 11:12

NKJV	Now if their fall <i>is</i> riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their <u>fullness</u> !
NASB95	Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their <u>fulfillment</u> be!
ESV	Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their <u>full inclusion</u> mean!
HCSB	Now if their stumbling brings riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full number bring!
AAT	And if their error made the world rich and their loss made the non-Jews rich, how much more certainly will that happen when their <u>full number</u> comes in!
NIV2011	But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their <u>full inclusion</u> bring!

**1 Corinthians 1:5-6 TEC appointed reviewer:** “NIV2011 continues to bark up the wrong tree, as though Paul is focusing on special gifts like tongues and prophecy as confirming signs”

NKJV	that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you,
NASB95	that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you,
NKJV	that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, <sup>6</sup> even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you,
ESV	that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge— <sup>6</sup> even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—
HCSB	that by Him you were enriched in everything—in all speech and all knowledge. In this way, the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you,
AAT	For in Him you have been made rich in every way, in speech and knowledge of every kind, as the truth of Christ we spoke was confirmed in you.
NIV2011	For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge— God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you

## 1 Corinthians 2:13

NKJV	These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, <u>comparing spiritual things with spiritual</u> .
NASB 95	which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, <u>combining spiritual <i>thoughts</i> with spiritual <i>words</i></u> .
ESV	And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, <u>interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual</u> .
HCSB	We also speak these things, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, <u>explaining spiritual things to spiritual people</u> .
AAT	And we tell about them in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit <u>as we explain the things of the Spirit to those who have the Spirit</u> .
NIV2011	This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, <u>explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words</u> .

## 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 BK: A comparison of versions here. I like "communion" here.

NKJV	The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the <b>communion</b> of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the <b>communion</b> of the body of Christ? For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.
NASB95	Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.
ESV	The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.
HCSB	The cup of blessing that we give thanks for, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for all of us share that one bread.
AAT	Is the cup of blessing which we bless not a <b>communion</b> of the blood of Christ? Is the bread which we break not a <b>communion</b> of the blood of Christ? All of us are one body, because there is one bread and all of us share that one bread.
NIV2011	Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all <b>share</b> the one loaf.

**1 Corinthians 12:13 TEC appointed reviewer:** “The phrase, “into one body,” is correct. The body is already there before we are baptized because Christ is already there before we are baptized (*ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia*), and we are incorporated into the body of Christ. But NIV2011 sounds like Schleiermacher's view that the church comes into existence as individuals come together”

NKJV	For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body— whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.
NASB95	For by one Spirit we were all baptized <u>into one body</u> , whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.
NKJV	For by one Spirit we were all baptized <u>into one body</u> — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.
ESV	For in one Spirit we were all baptized <u>into one body</u> —Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.
HCSB	For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and we were all <u>made to drink of one Spirit</u> .
AAT	By one Spirit all of us – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – were baptized <u>to form one body</u> , and that one Spirit was poured out for all of us to drink.
NIV2011	For we were all baptized by one Spirit <u>so as to form one body</u> —whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink

**TEC appointed reviewer:** “A hypothesis I want to test more thoroughly is that Paul more readily addresses men in the second person and tends to put his specific remarks about women in the third person. Consider, for example, 1 Corinthians 7:27-28, where a fairly literal translation might go like this: “Are you bound to a woman? Don't seek a release. Are you free from a woman? Don't seek a woman. But if you do get married, you do not sin (thereby), and if the virgin gets married, she does not sin (thereby).” This distinction in the use of the second and third persons is not an absolute rule for Paul. But it may be a linguistic habit he grew up with, a habit he sometimes follows without giving it any conscious attention (at other times he may in fact make a conscious decision whether to follow the pattern or make an exception). We see in John 4:27 that the disciples “were surprised to find [Jesus] talking with a woman.” Paul was brought up in the same culture—he was born in Tarsus but spent his formative years in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3)—and old habits tend to persist, particular when a person sees them as having a certain propriety. Paul considers it proper for a woman to ask her husband at home if questions occur to her at a gathering of the congregation (1 Co 14:35). Occasionally he addresses women directly in the second person, but the examples that come to mind happen to be ones where Paul might relax his sense of tact because there is no reason to fear that anyone will take it amiss. In 1 Corinthians 7:16 he briefly addresses a Christian woman whose husband is an unbeliever and not part of the audience. In Colossians 3:18 he briefly addresses the married women in the Colossian church, a church Paul is not personally acquainted with. The husbands cannot have the least suspicion that Paul is getting over-familiar with their wives, especially since he is telling them, “Submit to your husbands.” (There is something of a parallel in the second person forms occurring in 1 Peter 3:2,6).

That brings us to the question: Does Paul intend the vocative *adelphoi* to be heard in a perfectly gender neutral way? Or would it be more accurate to infer that his thinking is along these lines: “Of course the letter will be read in church and heard by all the congregation, and so I include instruction intended for the benefit of all, but it is nonetheless natural for me to address myself first and foremost to the men”?

It is interesting that his closing remarks include the plural imperative *andrizesthe* (1 Co 16:13). The key component of meaning in this context is "be courageous," but it is not as though the usage of this verb had so drifted from its transparent etymology that people used it with no thought of the root. For example, BDAG cites a passage in the Shepherd of Hermas in which a female figure appearing in a vision as a representation of the virtue of self-control is described as *andrizomene*, and the word loses its point in context entirely if we imagine that it has nothing to do with manliness. In 1 Corinthians 16:13 we might render the imperative, "Act with manly courage." If Paul is addressing the men in the congregation as his primary audience, there is no linguistic tension here. If it can be shown that he is addressing all equally (men, women, and children), we still do not have the gender-neutral Paul that NIV2011 wishes to portray. A writer with gender-neutral sensitivities would have used a different Greek expression.

On one occasion NIV2011's rendering of *adelphoi* as "brothers and sisters" produces jarring results. In 1 Corinthians 7:29, the explicit inclusion of "sisters" seems odd since Paul immediately goes on to speak of "those who have wives" without any mention of "those who have husbands." In the Greek Paul simply says *adelphoi* and proceeds to talk about men in the church. I suppose the NIV2011 revisers figured they couldn't afford to concede that this instance of *adelphoi* in the vocative might show Paul is thinking of men, because then that might be true of all the other instances. In any case, they chose to translate "brothers and sisters" here too, and the jarring effect follows. **1 Corinthians 7:27-29**

NKJV	Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you. But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none,
NASB95	Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife. But if you marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you. But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened, so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none;
ESV	Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. <sup>28</sup> But if you do marry, you have not sinned, and if a betrothed woman marries, she has not sinned. Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that. <sup>29</sup> This is what I mean, <u>brothers</u> : the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none
HCSB	Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. However, if you do get married, you have not sinned, and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But such people will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you. And I say this, brothers: The time is limited, so from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none,
AAT	Are you married? Don't look for a divorce. Are you separated from a wife? Don't look for a wife. But if you get married, it's no sin, and if a girl gets married, it's no sin. But if you do, you'll have trouble in your life, and I'm trying to spare you. I mean, my fellow Christians, the time has been shortened. While it lasts, if you have a wife, live as if you had none;
NIV2011	Are you pledged to a woman? Do not seek to be released. Are you free from such a commitment? Do not look for a wife. But if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this. What I mean, brothers <u>and sisters</u> , is that the time is short. From now on those who have <u>wives</u> should live as if they do not



**1 Corinthians 16:13 BK: comparison on “act like men”**

NKJV	Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.
NASB95	Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.
ESV	Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.
HCSB	Be alert, stand firm in the faith, act like a man, be strong.
AAT	Watch, stand firm in your faith, be men, be strong.
NIV2011	Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.

**2 Corinthians 8:7 TEC appointed reviewer: “NIV2011 adopts a weaker variant reading... ‘kindled.’”**

NKJV	But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that you abound in this <u>grace</u> also.
NASB95	But just as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all earnestness and in the love we inspired in you, see that you abound in this gracious work also.
ESV	But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of <u>grace</u> also.
HCSB	Now as you excel in everything—faith, speech, knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love for us —excel also in this grace.
AAT	As you are rich in everything, in faith, speech, knowledge, every kind of zeal, and in the love which you have toward us, we want you also to be rich in this work of God’s kindness.
NIV2011	But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have <u>kindled</u> in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving

**Galatians 3:26 BK: (Gk: υἱοὶ)**

NKJV	For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
NASB95	For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
ESV	for in Christ Jesus you are all <u>sons</u> of God, through faith.
HCSB	for you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
AAT	You are all God’s <u>children</u> through faith in Christ Jesus,
NIV2011	So in Christ Jesus you are all <u>children</u> of God through faith,

**Galatians 5:22-23** BK: NIV'11 changes to a more difficult / archaic word.

NKJV	But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.
NASB95	But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
ESV	But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, <u>patience</u> , kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
HCSB	But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.
AAT	But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace. <u>He makes us patient</u> , kindly, good, faithful, gentle, and gives us self-control. There's no law against such things.
NIV2011	But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, <b>forbearance</b> , kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

**Galatians 6:3-6** BK: Readability question. Compare how NIV'11 reads.

NKJV	For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load. Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.
NASB95	For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. For each one will bear his own load. The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him.
ESV	For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. <sup>4</sup> But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. <sup>5</sup> For each will have to bear his own load. <sup>6</sup> One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches.
HCSB	For if anyone considers himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But each person should examine his own work, and then he will have a reason for boasting in himself alone, and not in respect to someone else. For each person will have to carry his own load. The one who is taught the message must share all his good things with the teacher.
AAT	If anyone thinks he's something when he's nothing, he's fooling himself. Everyone should examine his own work. Then he will have something in himself that deserves praise, without comparing himself with anyone else. Everyone will have to carry his own burden. If someone teaches you the Word, share all your good things with your teacher.
NIV2011	If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. <sup>4</sup> Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, <sup>5</sup> for each one should carry their own load. <sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor.

### Ephesians 4:11-12

NKJV	And He Himself gave some <i>to be</i> apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,
NASB95	And He gave some <i>as</i> apostles, and some <i>as</i> prophets, and some <i>as</i> evangelists, and some <i>as</i> pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;
ESV	And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,
HCSB	And He personally gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the training of the saints in the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ,
AAT	And He gave us some men to be apostles, some to speak the Word, some to tell the good news, some to be pastors and teachers, in order to get his holy people ready to serve as workers and build the body of Christ
NIV2011	So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

**Ephesians 4:20 TEC appointed reviewer:** Significant Weakening - The 2011 translation does not reflect the original, which uses Christ. While the section certainly focuses on sanctification/way of life, this translation seems to move too far away from the original and gives it a different emphasis.

NKJV	But you have not so learned Christ,
NASB95	But you did not learn Christ in this way,
ESV	But that is not the way you learned Christ!—
HCSB	But that is not how you learned about the Messiah,
AAT	But that is not what you learned when you got to know Christ,
NIV2011	That, however, is not the way of life you learned

**Philippians 1:1 TEC appointed reviewer:** (Significant Weakening) - Despite the explanation given in the translators notes, I feel the change from “saints” to “God’s Holy People” loses a significant connection to the doctrine of the church which we confess in the Creed is the “Communion of Saints.” BK: NIV’11 never uses “saints.”

NKJV	Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:
NASB95	Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:
ESV	Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:
HCSB	Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus: To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons.
AAT	Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the holy people in Christ Jesus in Philippi, especially to the spiritual overseers and deacons:
NIV2011	Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all God’s holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons

**Philippians 1:14 BK:** see the following verses for context... preaching?

NKJV	and most of the <u>brethren</u> in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.
NASB95	and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.
ESV	And most of the <u>brothers</u> , having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.
HCSB	Most of the brothers in the Lord have gained confidence from my imprisonment and dare even more to speak the message fearlessly.
AAT	And so my chains have given most of our <u>friends</u> the confidence in the Lord to speak God's Word more boldly and fearlessly than ever.
NIV2011	And because of my chains, most of the brothers <u>and sisters</u> have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.

**Philippians 2:5-8**

NKJV	Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.
NASB95	Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
ESV	Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
AAT	Think just as Christ Jesus thought: Although He was God, He did not consider His being equal with God as a prize to be displayed, but He emptied Himself, made Himself a slave, became like other human beings, and was seen to have the ways of a man. He became obedient and humbled Himself until He died, yes, died on a cross.
HCSB	Make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be used for His own advantage. Instead He emptied Himself by assuming the form of a slave, taking on the likeness of men. And when He had come as a man in His external form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death— even to death on a cross.
NIV2011	In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!

**Philippians 3:9 TEC appointed reviewer:** (Significant Weakening) – In my opinion this is a significant weakening because “on the basis of faith” rather than “by faith” can suggest that the righteousness is “on the basis of faith” rather than a righteousness that is only on the basis of Christ but is given and becomes ours through faith. The *epi* is not telling us the basis of the righteousness, but the basis on which it is given and counted as ours, that is “by faith.” The context makes this clear as does the parallelism with “*ek pistews*” in the earlier part of the verse. The righteousness does not come from the law as its basis, but from God as its basis and it is “given” (understood in the context) by and upon (on the basis of) faith. In the only other use of this expression in the NT the NIV 2010 retains the translation “by faith.” Why not here? Does this make the NIV unusable? It depends on how often the NIV 2010 uses this wording in other places where faith is being explained as the means of receiving and not the basis of the righteousness. I feel we need to think about this very carefully!

NKJV	and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which <i>is</i> from the law, but that which <i>is</i> through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God <b>by faith</b> ;
NASB95	and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from <i>the</i> Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which <i>comes</i> from God <b>on the basis of faith</b> ,
ESV	and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that <b>depends on faith</b> —
HCSB	and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but one that is through faith in Christ —the righteousness from God <b>based on faith</b> .
AAT	And to be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which comes from keeping the Law but having the righteousness which is through faith in Christ and which comes from God <b>on the basis of faith</b> .
NIV2011	and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in[a] Christ—the righteousness that comes from God <b>on the basis of faith</b> .

#### Philippians 4:21

NKJV	Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.
NASB95	Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.
ESV	Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you.
HCSB	Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. Those brothers who are with me greet you.
AAT	Greet all the <b>holy people</b> in Christ Jesus. The <b>Christians</b> who are with me greet you. <i>GWN: [saints] in brackets</i>
NIV2011	Greet all <b>God’s people</b> in Christ Jesus. The <b>brothers and sisters</b> who are with me send greetings.

**Colossians 2:8 TEC appointed reviewer: “significant weakening”**

NKJV	Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.
NASB95	See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.
NKJV	Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.
ESV	See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.
HCSB	Be careful that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit based on human tradition, based on the elemental forces of the world, and not based on Christ.
AAT	Be careful or someone will capture you by his philosophy, tricking you with meaningless words, as he follows the traditions of men and the principles of this world rather than Christ.
NIV2011	See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and <b>the elemental spiritual forces</b> of this world rather than on Christ.

**Colossians 2:14 TEC appointed reviewer: “significant weakening”**

NKJV	having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.
NASB95	having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.
ESV	by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.
HCSB	He erased the certificate of debt, with its obligations, that was against us and opposed to us, and has taken it out of the way by nailing it to the cross.
AAT	wiped out the Law’s demands that were against us and took them out of the way by nailing them to the cross.
NIV2011	having canceled <b>the charge of our legal indebtedness</b> , which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.

**1 Thessalonians 4:4,6 TEC appointed reviewer: “significantly weakened”**

NKJV	that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor...that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified.
NASB95	that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you.
NASB 95	that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,... <sup>6</sup> <i>and</i> that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is <i>the</i> avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned <i>you</i> .
ESV	that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor,... <sup>6</sup> that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you.
HCSB	so that each of you knows how to control his own body in sanctification and honor...This means one must not transgress against and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger of all these offenses, as we also previously told and warned you.
AAT	Every one of you should know how to get a wife in a holy and honorable way... No one should wrong and cheat his fellow Christian in business, because the Lord avenges all these things, as we told you and warned you before.
NIV2011	that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable,... and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before.

**1 Timothy 1:10 BK:** A comparison on a word for homosexuality; does “**practicing**” mean that homosexual desires or inclination would not be included? I wonder. All are probably useable here.

NKJV	for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine,
NASB 95	and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching,
ESV	the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine,
HCSB	for the sexually immoral and homosexuals, for kidnappers, liars, perjurers, and for whatever else is contrary to the sound teaching
AAT	Men who sin sexually with women or other men, kidnappers, those who lie or swear to lies – and anything else that is contrary to sound teaching.
NIV2011	for the sexually immoral, for those practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine



### 1 Timothy 1:16

NKJV	However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.
NASB95	Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.
ESV	But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.
HCSB	But I received mercy for this reason, so that in me, the worst of them, Christ Jesus might demonstrate His extraordinary patience as an example to those who would believe in Him for eternal life.
AAT	But God was merciful to me so that Jesus Christ would first show in me all His long-suffering and make me an example to those who are going to believe in Him and live forever.
NIV2011	But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his <b>immense</b> patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.

### 1 Timothy 1:18

NKJV	This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare,
NASB95	This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight,
NASB95	This command I entrust to you, Timothy, <i>my</i> son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight,
ESV	This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare,
HCSB	Timothy, my son, I am giving you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies previously made about you, so that by them you may strongly engage in battle,
AAT	I'm giving you these instructions, my son Timothy, according to the prophecies made earlier about you. In the spirit of those prophecies fight a good fight
NIV2011	Timothy, my son, I am giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by recalling them you may <b>fight the battle well</b>

### 1 Timothy 1:19

NKJV	having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck,
NASB95	keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.
ESV	holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith,
HCSB	having faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and have suffered the shipwreck of their faith.
AAT	With faith and a good conscience. Some refused to listen to their conscience and suffered shipwreck in their faith.
NIV2011	holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith

**1 Timothy 2:6 – TEC appointed reviewer:** “*the testimony to this has been witnessed to* – seems to be a change to being people-focused rather than God-focused. The testimony to the ransom was given at the time God decided”

NKJV	who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,
NASB95	who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.
ESV	who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.
HCSB	who gave Himself—a ransom for all, a testimony at the proper time.
AAT	Who gave Himself as a ransom to free all people, and this was announced at the right times.
NIV2011	who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.

**1 Timothy 3:1-2 (see also 3:12 below)**

NKJV	This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;
NASB95	It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,
ESV	The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, <u>he</u> desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the <u>husband</u> of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,
HCSB	This saying is trustworthy: “If anyone aspires to be an overseer, he desires a noble work.” An overseer, therefore, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, self-controlled, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an able teacher,
AAT	This is a statement we can trust: If anyone sets <u>his</u> heart on being a spiritual overseer, <u>he</u> wants to do a noble work. Now, a spiritual overseer must be blameless, the <u>husband</u> of one wife, not drinking too much wine, a <u>man</u> of good judgment and fine behavior, kind to guests, able to teach,
NIV2011	Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach

**1 Timothy 3:12 TEC appointed reviewer:** “another step away from the Greek”

NKJV	Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.
NASB95	Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.
ESV	Let deacons each be the <u>husband</u> of one wife, managing their children and their own households well.
HCSB	Deacons must be husbands of one wife, managing their children and their own households competently.
AAT	A deacon should be the <u>husband</u> of one wife and should manage his children and his home well.
NIV2011	A deacon must be <u>faithful</u> to his wife and must manage his children and his household well.

**1 Timothy 3:16 – TEC appointed reviewer:** “adds words to the text and interjects meaning”

NKJV	And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.
NASB95	By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.
ESV	Great indeed, we confess, is <u>the mystery of godliness</u> : He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.
HCSB	And most certainly, the mystery of godliness is great: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.
AAT	It must be admitted: Great is the mystery of our faith! He appeared in the flesh, was declared righteous in spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.
NIV2011	Beyond all question, <u>the mystery from which true godliness springs</u> is great: He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

**1 Timothy 5:8 – TEC appointed reviewer:** “from *If anyone does not provide for his relatives* to *Anyone who does not provide for their relatives* – loses the conditional of the Greek, mismatches singular and plural to avoid a male pronoun.”

NKJV	But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
NASB95	But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
ESV	But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
HCSB	But if anyone does not provide for his own, that is his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
AAT	If anyone doesn’t take care of his own relatives, especially his family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
NIV2011	Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

**1 Tim 5:10 – TEC appointed reviewer:** “from *saints* to *Lord’s people* – becomes an interpretation rather than a translation and loses a good and important word I think we need to protect, just as we do with the words justify and redeem and sanctify, cf. The Apostles’ Creed.”

NKJV	well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints’ feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.
NASB95	having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints’ feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work.
ESV	and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of <u>the saints</u> , has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work.
HCSB	and is well known for good works —that is, if she has brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the saints’ feet, helped the afflicted, and devoted herself to every good work.
AAT	If people tell about the good she has done, if she raised children, welcomed strangers, washed the feet of <u>holy people</u> , helped the suffering, and was busy doing every kind of good work.
NIV2011	and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of <u>the Lord’s people</u> , helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds

**1 Timothy 5:13 – TEC appointed reviewer:** “from *gossips and busybodies* to *busybodies who talk nonsense* – it’s a change of words which is also a change of meaning. Gossip is often non nonsensical. That’s what makes it so evil and dangerous”

NKJV	And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not.
NASB95	At the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention.
ESV	Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also <u>gossips and busybodies</u> , saying what they should not.
HCSB	At the same time, they also learn to be idle, going from house to house; they are not only idle, but are also gossips and busybodies, saying things they shouldn’t say.
AAT	At the same time they learn to be idle and go around from house to house. And they’re not only idle but <u>gossiping and meddling</u> , saying things they shouldn’t say.
NIV2011	Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also <u>busybodies who talk nonsense</u> , saying things they ought not to

**1 Timothy 5:20 – TEC appointed reviewer:** “from *Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly*, to *But those elders who are sinning you are to reprove before everyone*, - This becomes interpretive and removes the double-barreled construction in the Greek.”

NKJV	Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.
NASB95	Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning.
ESV	As for those who persist in sin, <u>rebuke them in the presence of all</u> , so that the rest may stand in fear.
AAT	Those who keep on sinning, correct before everyone in order to make the others afraid.
HCSB	Publicly rebuke those who sin, so that the rest will also be afraid.
NIV2011	But those <u>elders</u> who are sinning <u>you are to reprove before everyone</u> , so that the others may take warning

**1 Timothy 6:2 – TEC appointed reviewer:** “loss of an imperative; loss of *brothers*; paraphrases and interprets in the last part and the encouraging of *agaphtoi* is lost”

NKJV	And those who have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather serve them because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things.
NASB95	Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these principles.
ESV	Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are brothers; rather they must serve all the better since those who benefit by their good service are believers and beloved. Teach and urge these things.
HCSB	Those who have believing masters should not be disrespectful to them because they are brothers, but should serve them better, since those who benefit from their service are believers and dearly loved. Teach and encourage these things.
AAT	If you have masters who believe, don't think less of them because they are fellow Christians, but serve them all the better because those who get the benefit of your work are believers and dear to you.
NIV2011	Those who have believing masters should not show them disrespect just because they are fellow believers. Instead, they should serve them even better because their masters are dear to them as fellow believers and are devoted to the welfare of their slaves.

**TEC appointed reviewer:** “Taken together, these weaknesses (1 Timothy) cause me to doubt the advisability of using the NIV 2011, particularly if there are similar weakness spread through the rest of the reviews.”

**2 Timothy 2:2 BK:** Carefully examine the context too. Will they teach other men?

NKJV	And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful <b>men</b> who will be able to teach others also.
NASB 95	The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful <b>men</b> who will be able to teach others also.
ESV	and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful <b>men</b> who will be able to teach others also.
HCSB	And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful <b>men</b> who will be able to teach others also.
AAT	And what you heard me say before many witnesses entrust to faithful <b>people</b> who will be able to teach others.
NIV2011	And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable <b>people</b> who will also be qualified to teach others.

**2 Timothy 3:17**

NKJV	that the <b>man</b> of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.
NASB95	so that the <b>man</b> of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
ESV	that the <b>man</b> of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.
HCSB	so that the <b>man</b> of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
AAT	So that a <b>man</b> of God is ready and equipped for every good work.
NIV2011	so that the <b>servant</b> of God[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. Fn: Or <i>that you, a man of God,</i>

**Hebrews 5:1 BK:** No high priests were women. Why the change?

NKJV	For every high priest taken from among <b>men</b> is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.
NASB95	For every high priest taken from among <b>men</b> is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;
ESV	For every high priest chosen from among <b>men</b> is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.
HCSB	For every high priest taken from <b>men</b> is appointed in service to God for the people, to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.
AAT	Any high priest selected from <b>men</b> is appointed to represent them before God and to bring gifts and sacrifices for sins.
NIV2011	Every high priest is selected from among the <b>people</b> and is appointed to represent the people in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.

**Hebrews 12:7-8 BK: Since the Gk term repeatedly used in this section is “υιός” I regard this is a significant weakening.**

NKJV	If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.
NASB95	It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.
ESV	It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as <u>sons</u> . For what <u>son</u> is there whom <u>his</u> father does not discipline? <sup>8</sup> If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not <u>sons</u> .
HCSB	Endure suffering as discipline: God is dealing with you as sons. For what son is there that a father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline—which all receive—then you are illegitimate children and not sons.
AAT	What you endure is to correct you. God is treating you as His sons. Is there a son whom his father doesn't correct? All sons are corrected; if you're not corrected, you're not sons but are illegitimate.
NIV2011	Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as <u>his children</u> . For what <u>children</u> are not disciplined by <u>their</u> father? If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not <u>true sons and daughters</u> at all.

#### 1 Peter 2:8

NKJV	and “ <i>A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense.</i> ” They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.
NASB 95	and, “A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense”; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this <i>doom</i> they were also appointed.
ESV	and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.
HCSB	and A stone to stumble over, and a rock to trip over. They stumble because they disobey the message; they were destined for this.
AAT	The Stone they stumble over and the Rock they fall over.” When they disobey the Word, they <u>stumble over it</u> ; that's the end appointed for them.
NIV2011	and, “A stone that <u>causes</u> people to stumble and a rock that <u>makes</u> them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.

**1 Peter 3:19 TEC appointed reviewer:** It is probably best rendered “He was made alive in a spiritual state of existence, in which (state) he also went and preached to the imprisoned spirits.”

NKJV	by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison,
NASB 95	in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits <i>now</i> in prison,
ESV	in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison,
HCSB	In that state He also went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison
AAT	In this spirit He also went and preached to the spirits kept in prison
NIV2011	After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits



## 2 Peter 1:21

NKJV	for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.
NASB95	for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.
NKJV	for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke <i>as they were</i> moved by the Holy Spirit.
ESV	For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of <u>man</u> , but <u>men</u> spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
HCSB	because no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.
AAT	For no prophecy was ever spoken because a man decided to prophecy (sic), but men said what God gave them to say as they were directed by the Holy Spirit.
NIV2011	For prophecy never had its origin in the <u>human</u> will, but <u>prophets, though human</u> , spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

**1 John 2:5 TEC appointed reviewer:** I am convinced that the love that finds its goal when we obey his Word is God's love. The NIV 2011 turns that around. I think they have missed it.

NKJV	But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.
NASB 95	but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:
ESV	but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him:
HCSB	But whoever keeps His word, truly in him the love of God is perfected. This is how we know we are in Him:
AAT	But if you keep His word, God's love has really accomplished in you what He wants. That's how we know we're in Him.
NIV2011	But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him:

**Revelation 2:11,17** BK: Note carefully all the pronoun shifts in NIV'11... singulars to plurals, etc. There are many, many examples of this in Revelation and elsewhere... For more examples, see: [http://www.slowley.com/niv2011\\_comparison/Revelation.html](http://www.slowley.com/niv2011_comparison/Revelation.html)

NKJV	“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.” “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.” ’
NASB95	He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.’ ... ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.’
ESV	<sup>11</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.’ <sup>17</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.’
HCSB	“Anyone who has an ear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. The victor will never be harmed by the second death. “Anyone who has an ear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. I will give the victor some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name is inscribed that no one knows except the one who receives it.
AAT	You have ears; then listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. Be victorious, and the second death will not hurt you. You have ears; then listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. Be victorious, and I will give you some of the hidden manna, and I will give you a white stone, and on the white stone is written a new name that is known only to him who gets it.
NIV2011	Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.