

Next Steps with the Bible

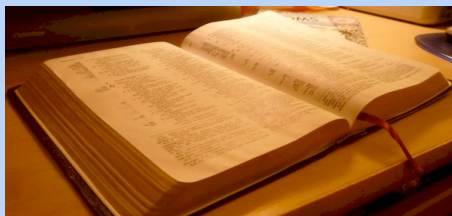
Going Deeper and Growing Stronger

Week One: Understanding Bible Translations



Next Steps with the Bible

- **Where we're heading: Class Introduction**
 - **Description**
 - **Learning Outcomes**
 - **Recommended Resources**
 - **Tentative Schedule**
 - **Questions or comments?**



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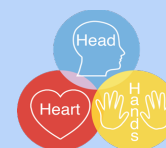
1. Why do we need Bible translations?

- The Old Testament was written mostly in ancient **Hebrew**. A few sections were written in a similar, related language, called **Aramaic** (Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26; Dan 2:4-7:28). In Old Testament times Aramaic was the international language of the world, and the Jews used Hebrew in religious contexts.

- The New Testament was written in ancient **Greek**, which had become the international language of the world through the conquests of Alexander the Great in the fourth century BCE.

- As the early Christians spread the good news of Jesus, the Bible began to be **translated** into other languages (e.g. Syriac, Latin, Coptic) as early as the second century CE.

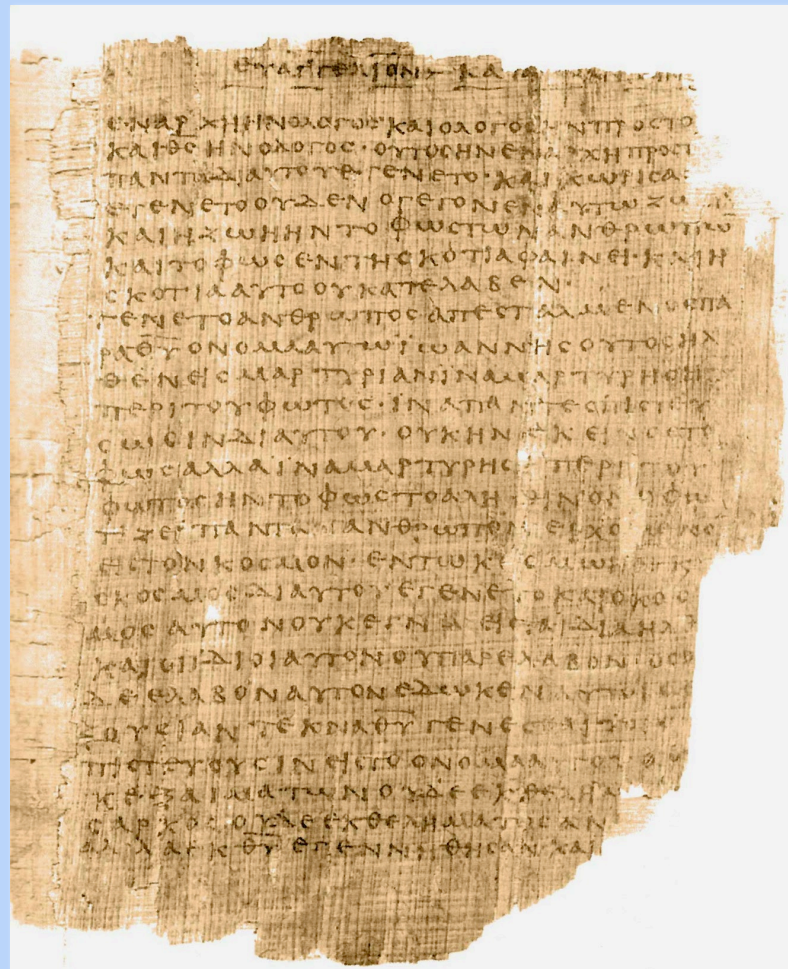
- Key early translations into English include John **Wycliffe's** Bible (1384), William Tyndale's New Testament (1525), Miles **Coverdale's** Bible (1535), the **Geneva** Bible (1560), and the **King James** Version (1611).





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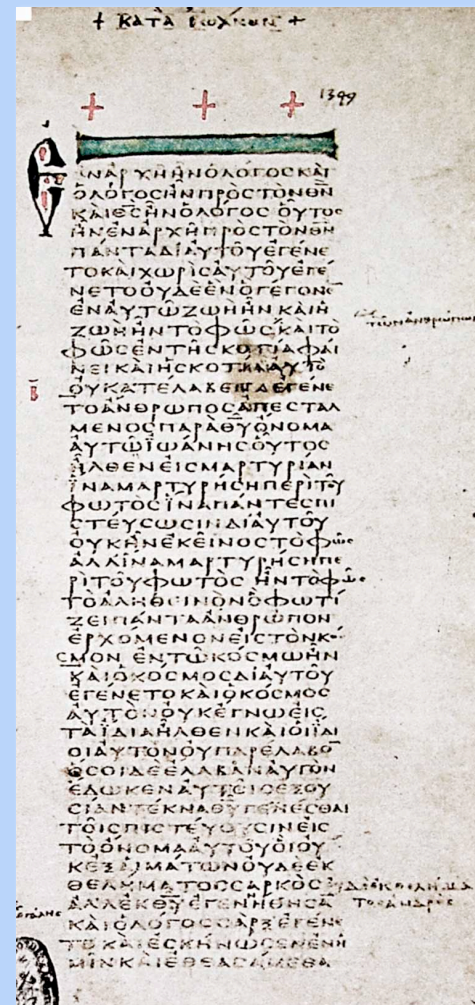
**Papyrus 66 (P⁶⁶)
200 CE**





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Codex Vaticanus
4th Century CE





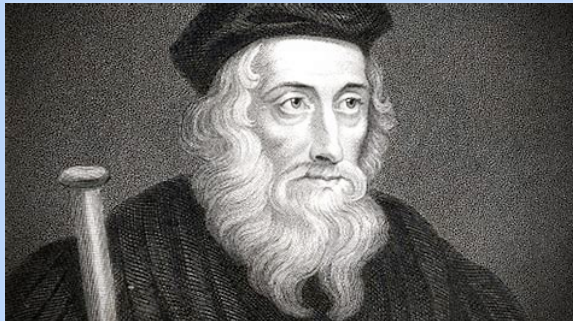
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Minuscule GA760
12th Century CE

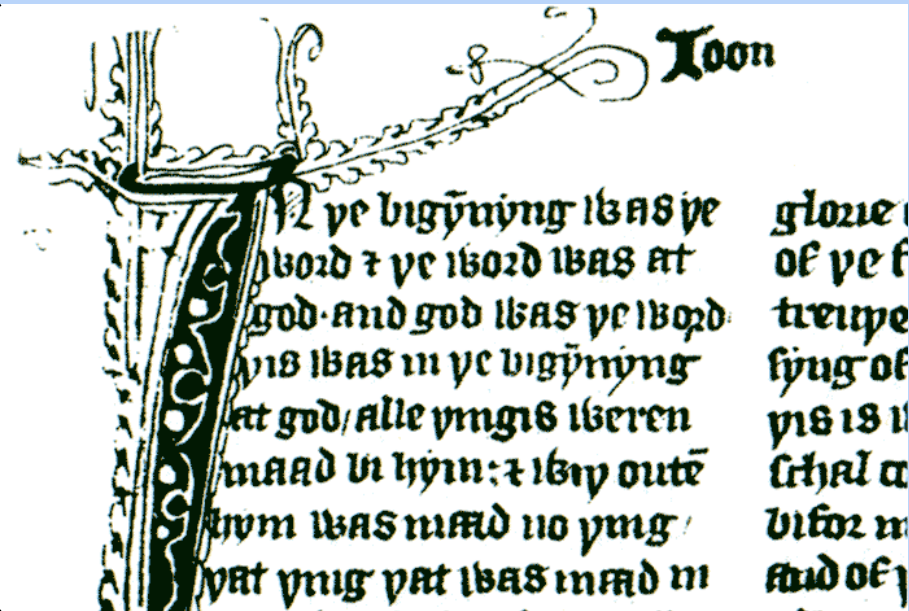
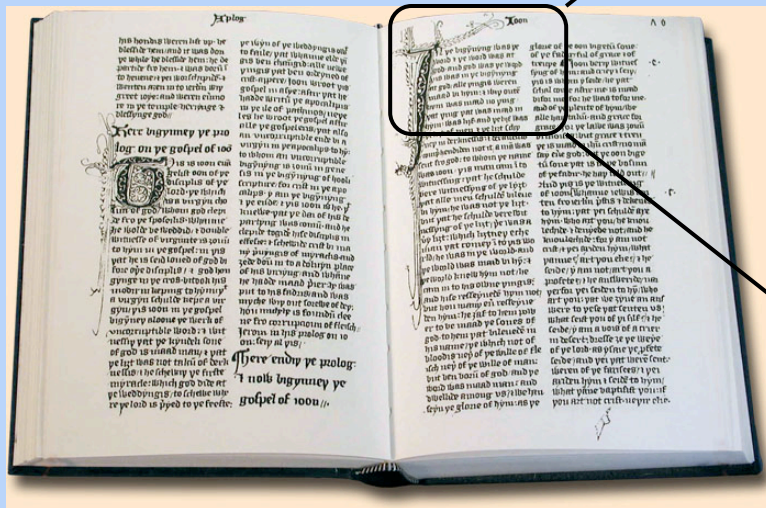




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John Wycliffe
"the morning star of the reformation"

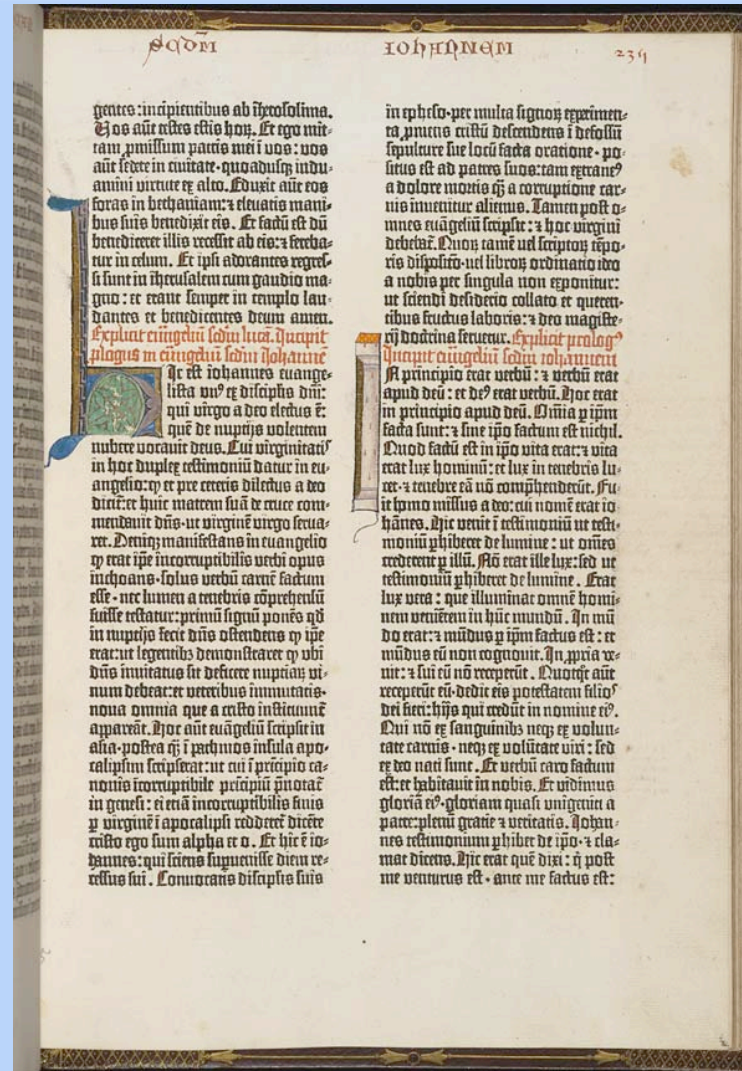


John 1:1-3 Facsimile (1384)



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Gutenberg Bible (1455) Latin Vulgate

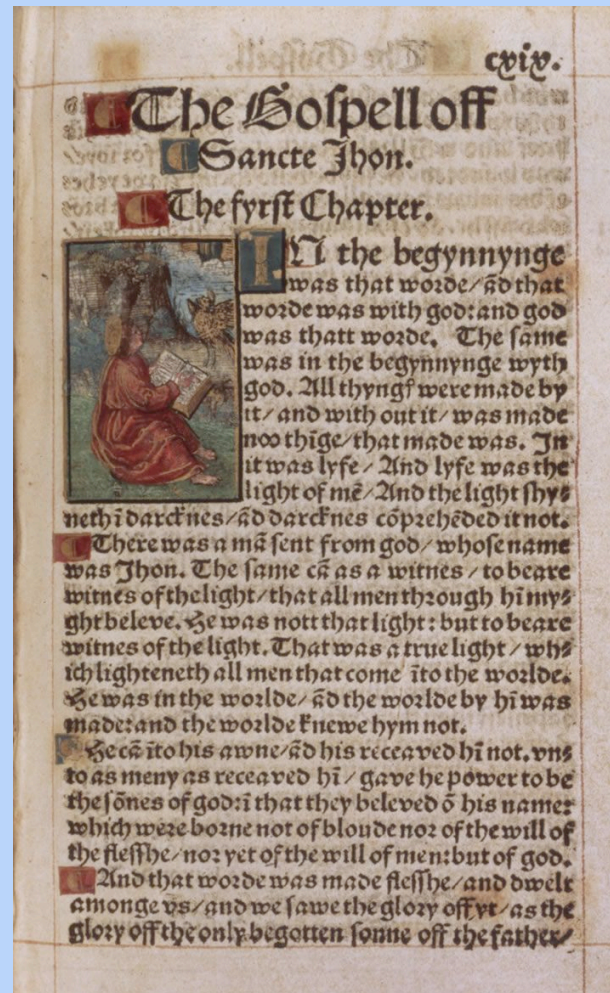


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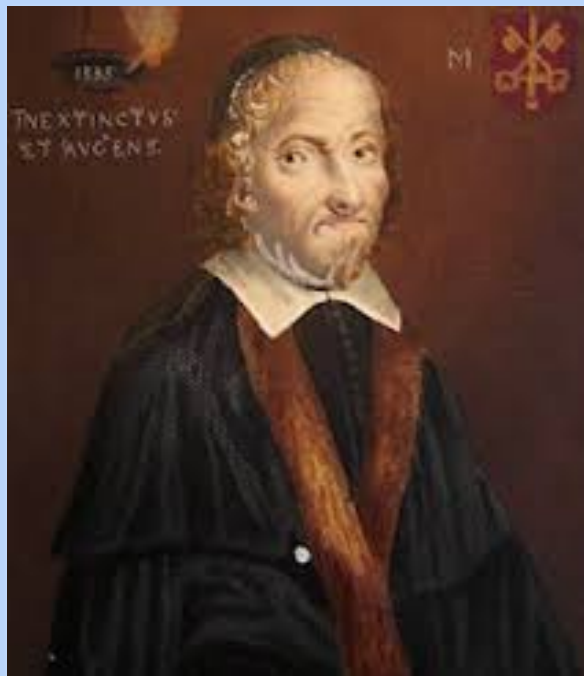
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William Tyndale (1525)

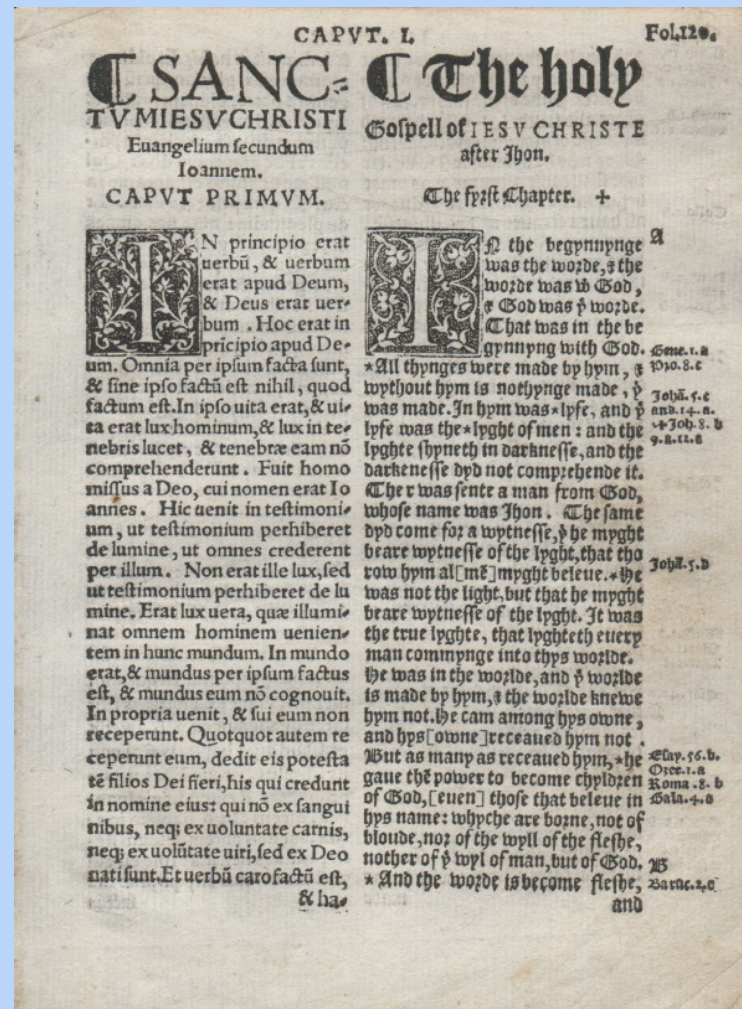




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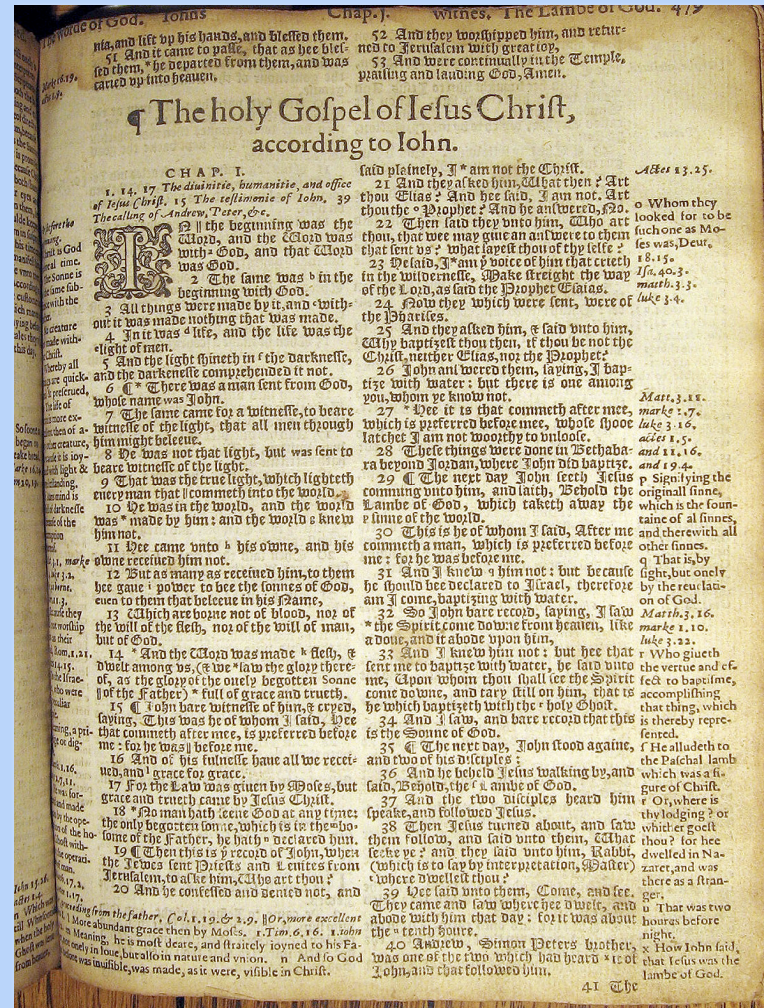
Miles Coverdale (1535)





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The Geneva Bible (1560)

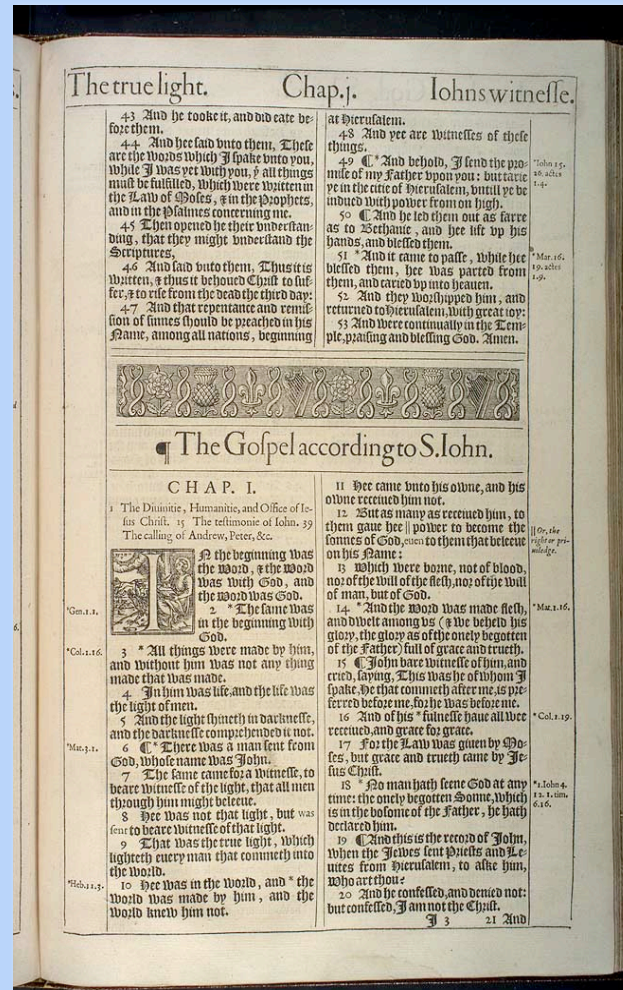


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King James Version (1611)





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2. Comparing three popular translations of Jude 3-4:

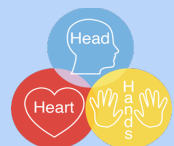
| ESV 2001-16 (72 words) | NIV 2011 (80 words) | NLT 2015 (91 words) |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Beloved, <u>although</u> I was very eager to <u>write</u> to you about our common salvation,</p> <p>I found it necessary to write <u>appealing</u> to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.</p> <p>For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago <u>were</u> designated for this <u>condemnation</u>, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our <u>only</u> Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.</p> | <p>Dear friends, <u>although</u> I was very eager to <u>write</u> to you about the salvation <u>we</u> share,</p> <p>I felt compelled to write and <u>urge</u> you to contend for the <u>faith</u> that was once for all <u>entrusted</u> to God's holy people.</p> <p>For certain individuals whose condemnation was written <u>about</u> long ago have secretly <u>slipped</u> in among you. They are ungodly people, who <u>pervert</u> the grace of our God into a license for immorality and <u>deny</u> Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.</p> | <p>Dear friends, I had been eagerly planning to <u>write</u> to you about the salvation <u>we</u> all share.</p> <p>But now I find that I must write <u>about</u> something else, urging you to <u>defend</u> the faith that God <u>has</u> entrusted once for all time to his holy people.</p> <p>I say this because some ungodly <u>people</u> have wormed their way <u>into</u> your churches, saying that God's marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives. The <u>condemnation</u> of such people was recorded long ago, for they have <u>denied</u> our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.</p> |



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3. Why are the translations different?

- Two approaches to translation
 - Some translations (e.g. KJV, NASB, ESV) match up an English **word** to each ancient Hebrew and Greek **word**. These are called **formal correspondence** translations. Such *word-for-word* translations are usually marketed on their **accuracy**.
 - Other translations (e.g. NIV, NLT) transfer the **ideas** conveyed by the original languages into English. These are called **functional equivalence** translations. Such *phrase-by-phrase* translations are usually marketed on their **readability**.





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- Linguistics: how do words convey meaning?
 - Which came first, the ~~chicken~~ idea or the egg word? We think before we speak or write, so *how* we "word" meaning is the issue, not *what* words mean.
 - Languages are systems of *conventional* signs (words) that mark ideas or concepts.
 - Why do we look *down* if someone says "Look at this beautiful *floor*"?
 - How do we know what a "butterfly" is?
 - Words mark ideas or concepts in connection with associated words in phrases, clauses, and sentences. Individual words, in isolation from other words, do not convey meaning clearly. The context rules the meaning, not *vice versa*!
 - What is the meaning of the word "battery"?



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- Ἀγαπητοί, πᾶσαν σπουδὴν ποιούμενος γράφειν ὑμῖν περὶ τῆς κοινῆς ἡμῶν σωτηρίας (Ancient Greek New Testament)
 - *Agapetoī pasan spouden poioumenos graphein humin peri tes koines hemon soterias* (Greek "transliterated" into English letters)
 - Beloved every effort making to write to you about the common of us salvation (interlinear match-up "translation")
 - Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, (ESV)
 - Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, (NIV)
 - Dear friends, I had been eagerly planning to write to you about the salvation we all share. (NLT)
-
- ἀνάγκην ἔσχον γράψαι ὑμῖν παρακαλῶν ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι τῇ ᾧπαξ παραδοθείσῃ τοῖς ἁγίοις πίστει. (Ancient Greek New Testament)
 - *Anangken eschon grapsai humin parakalwn epagonizesthai te hapax paradotheisei tois hagiois pistei* (Greek "transliterated" into English letters)
 - necessity I had to write to you appealing to contend the once delivered to the saints faith (interlinear) (interlinear match-up "translation")
 - I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. (ESV)
 - I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people. (NIV)
 - But now I find that I must write about something else, urging you to defend the faith that God has entrusted once for all time to his holy people. (NLT)
-
- παρεῖσεδυσαν γάρ τινες ἄνθρωποι, οἱ πάλαι προγεγραμμένοι εἰς τοῦτο τὸ κρίμα, ἄσεβεῖς, (Ancient Greek New Testament)
 - *pareisedusan gar tines anthropoi oi palai progegrammenoi eis touto to krima, asebeis*, (Greek "transliterated" into English letters)
 - crept in for some men the long ago written about for this the judgment, ungodly (interlinear match-up "translation")
 - For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, (ESV)
 - For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, (NIV)
 - I say this because some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches, . . . The condemnation of such people was recorded long ago,
-
- τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν χάριτα μετατιθέντες εἰς ἀσέλγειαν καὶ τὸν μόνον δεσπότην καὶ κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἀρνούμενοι. (Ancient Greek NT)
 - *ten tou theou hemon charita metatithentes eis aselgeian kai ton monon despoten kai kurion hemon iesoun Christon amoumenoi* ("transliteration")
 - the of the God of us grace turning into sensuality and the only master and lord of us Jesus Christ denying (interlinear "translation")
 - who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. (ESV)
 - who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord. (NIV)
 - . . . saying that God's marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives . . . for they have denied our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. (NLT)

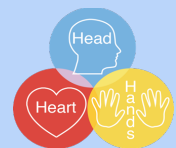


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- Theology: God guided the writing of every word in the Bible (verbal inspiration), but he also guided the arrangement of the words in phrases, clauses, sentences, and larger discourses. God's revelation in the Bible is verbal and propositional.



***WE BELIEVE** the Scriptures, both Old and New Testament, to be the verbally inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men, and the divine and final authority for all Christian faith and life (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21; Proverbs 30:5). [<https://chapel-pointe.org/beliefs/>]*

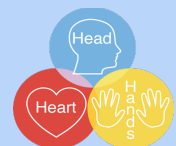


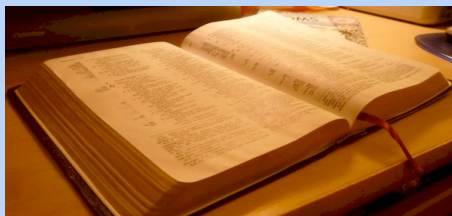


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4. So, why do Bible translations matter?

- Many biblical texts underline the power of God's word when accurately understood, including Neh 8:1-12; Ps 1; 119:105, 130; Isa 55:8-11; 2 Tim 2:15; 3:16-17
- The "still small voice" of conscience and the "impressions" we *think* we receive from Jesus and the Spirit are not a reliable foundation for our beliefs or a clear guide for our lives.
- If Adam and Eve needed God's words even before they sinned in the garden of Eden, *how much more* today do we need an *accurate* word from God!
- *Sola Scriptura*! 500 years ago our spiritual ancestors, the "protestants" whose views led to the reformation, affirmed that the Bible alone was sufficient for our faith and practice.
- Let's thank God for good Bible translations and rededicate ourselves to understanding and obeying the Bible! To whom much is given, much will be required (Luke 12:48).





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Luke 24

²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, **he explained to them** what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. . . . ³² They asked each other, **"Were not our hearts burning within us while he . . . opened the Scriptures to us?"** . . .

⁴⁴ He said to them, ". . . **Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me** in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

⁴⁵ **Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.** ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ **You are witnesses of these things.**

