

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE FOR ALL ITS WORTH

CHAPTER 2 – THE BASIC TOOL:
A GOOD TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION ISSUES – 1 CORINTHIANS 7:36



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- NASB: “If any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin daughter. . .”
- NIV: “If anyone is worried that he might not be acting honorably toward the virgin he is engaged to . . .”

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- NKJV: “If any man thinks that he is behaving improperly toward his virgin . . .”
- NASB: “If any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin daughter. . .”
- NIV: “If anyone is worried that he might not be acting honorably toward the virgin he is engaged to . . .”
- NEB: “If a man has a partner in celibacy and feels that he is not behaving properly towards her . . .”

COMPILATION OF SCRIPTURE

- 66 Books
- 40 Authors
- 1,500 years
- 3 Languages

LANGUAGES OF SCRIPTURE

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 - Hebrew – Almost all the Old Testament

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 - Aramaic – Half of Daniel and 2 passages in Ezra
 - Greek – The New Testament

THE NEED FOR MULTIPLE VERSIONS

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- Consult commentaries to analyze differences

THE SCIENCE OF TRANSLATION

- Text

- Textual Criticism - The wording of the actual text

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- Language

- Transferring of words and ideas from one language to another

TEXTUAL CRITICISM

- Controls of Textual Criticism

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 - External Evidence

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- Controls of Textual Criticism
 - External Evidence
 - The character and the quality of the manuscripts
 - Internal Evidence
 - The mistakes copyists were known to make

TEXTUAL CRITICISM – EXTERNAL



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- Sources of Text – Old Testament

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- Medieval copies with careful copying tradition – 10th -16th C.
- Hebrew manuscripts in Masoretic Text (MT) – 9th C.
- Earlier Hebrew manuscripts, Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) – 2nd C. BC
- Ancient Manuscripts, (Greek Septuagint LXX) – 2nd-3rd C. BC

TEXTUAL CRITICISM – EXTERNAL

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- Sources of Text – New Testament
 - Best documentation preserved in Egypt
 - Documentation found from early Roman empire supports the Egyptian record

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 - Focused on copyists and authors
 - What mistakes were common to copyists?
 - What language and style did the author normally employ?

TEXTUAL CRITICISM – INTERNAL

- 1 Samuel 8:16

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 - NKJV/NASB – “he will take...your finest young men and your donkeys”

TEXTUAL CRITICISM – INTERNAL

- 1 Samuel 8:16
 - NKJV/NASB – “he will take...your finest young men and your donkeys”
 - NRSV/NIV – “he will take...your cattle and your donkeys”

TEXTUAL CRITICISM – INTERNAL

- 1 Corinthians 6:20

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 - NKJV – “Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s”

TEXTUAL CRITICISM – INTERNAL

- 1 Corinthians 6:20
 - NKJV – “Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s”
 - NIV – “Therefore honor God with your bodies.”

TEXTUAL CRITICISM – INTERNAL

- The words “in your spirit, which are God’s” are not found in all early and best manuscripts
- They appear in the late medieval period
- Added later to combat Greek philosophy’s low view of the body. This is not from Paul and not inspired.

LANGUAGE



LANGUAGE

- How ideas and words are translated from one language to another is a science and complicated.

LANGUAGE – IMPORTANT TOPICS



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- Original Language – The language the text is being translated *from*.

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- Receptor Language – The language the text is being translated *into*.

LANGUAGE – IMPORTANT TOPICS

- Historical Distance – How different is the original language from the receptor (words, grammar, idioms, culture, and history)?

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- Formal Equivalence – A “literal” translation remaining as close to the original as possible.

LANGUAGE – IMPORTANT TOPICS

- Functional Equivalence – A “dynamic” translation allowing the text to mean the same thing in either language.

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- Functional Equivalence – A “dynamic” translation allowing the text to mean the same thing in either language.
 - History and facts remain intact, but language, grammar, and style are updated.

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 - Easily can become “too free” as the translator embeds their perspective into the original text.

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 - Holy Kiss = Handshake of Christian love

LANGUAGE – IMPORTANT TOPICS

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- All theories of translation have challenges and must be updated and challenged.

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 - Free Translation which made Paul's Letter to "Rome", Paul's letter to "Washington"!

LANGUAGE – IMPORTANT TOPICS

- Robert Young's literal translation from 1862
butchered 1 Corinthians 5:1

LANGUAGE – IMPORTANT TOPICS

- Robert Young's literal translation from 1862 butchered 1 Corinthians 5:1
 - It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father's wife.

LANGUAGE – IMPORTANT TOPICS

- “Whoredom is actually heard of among you, and such whoredom as is not even named in the nations – as that one hath the wife of the father.”

LANGUAGE

- “Best theory of translation is the one that remains as faithful as possible to *both* the original and the receptor language – without losing the meaning of the original language...”

LANGUAGE

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- Use a literal translation as a secondary source (NKJV/NASB)

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- Use a literal translation as a secondary source (NKJV/NASB)
- Free translations (Message/The Living Bible) are interesting, but care must be taken when reading

LANGUAGE

Formal Equivalence (literal)			Functional Equivalence (dynamic)				Free	
1. KJV	NASB	RSV	NIV ¹	NAB	GNB	JB	NEB	LB
2. NKJV	HCSB	NRSV	NIV ²	NJB	REB	NLT		The Message
		ESV						

TRANSLATION – PROBLEM AREAS



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- Weights, Measures, and Money

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- Weights, Measures, and Money
 - Matthew 18:23-24 (talents vs gold)
 - Isaiah 5:10
 - Bath = 6 gallons, Homer = 360 lbs, Ephah = 36 lbs

TRANSLATION – PROBLEM AREAS

- Euphemisms

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 - Translate literally
 - Use the *formal equivalent* which may be offensive
 - Use a *functionally equivalent euphemism*

TRANSLATION – PROBLEM AREAS

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 - 1 Samuel 24:3

TRANSLATION – PROBLEM AREAS

- Euphemisms

- 1 Samuel 24:3

- KJV - Saul went in to cover his feet.
 - NIV – Saul went in to relieve himself
 - TLB – Saul went into a cave to go to the bathroom

TRANSLATION – PROBLEM AREAS

- Vocabulary

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- The challenge is to not choose a word that is already conflated with other meaning.
- Functional Equivalence here tends to create a clearer meaning (flesh = body, human nature, sin nature, worldly perspective, etc)

TRANSLATION – PROBLEM AREAS

- Wordplays

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 - Amos 8:1-2 (NIV vs NRSV)

TRANSLATION – PROBLEM AREAS

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 - “Ripe” is the wordplay, yet it is lost in a formal equivalence

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- Wordplays
 - 1 Samuel Chapters 1-4

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TRANSLATION – PROBLEM AREAS

- Wordplays
 - 1 Samuel Chapters 1-4
 - Kabed = Heavy
 - Kabod = Honor
 - Ichabod = No glory

TRANSLATION – PROBLEM AREAS

- Euphemisms

- 1 Samuel Chs 1-4

- Eli died because he was “heavy” (*kabed*) and fell and broke his neck. He was *kabed* because he did not honor (*kabod*) God through the eating of sacrificial meat and therefore the glory of God left Israel (*Ichabod*).

TRANSLATION – PROBLEM AREAS

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- 1 Samuel Chs 1-4

- Eli died because he was “heavy” (*kabed*) and fell and broke his neck. He was *kabed* because he did not honor (*kabod*) God through the eating of sacrificial meat and therefore the glory of God left Israel (*Ichabod*).
 - No *Kabod* made Eli *Kabed* and resulted in *Ichabod*.

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 - Application of “possession” or the “genitive”

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- Grammar and Syntax
 - Formal Equivalents become difficult to read when they are too structured.
 - Application of “possession”
 - 1 Corinthians 3:9 – “God’s Co-Workers” or “Co-workers in God’s service”

TRANSLATION – PROBLEM AREAS

- Matters of Gender

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 - Psalm 1

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 - NRSV and NASB are good updates to KJV. NRSV is easier to read than NASB

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 - The Message, Amplified, The Living Bible and other Free Translations are not study Bibles

NEXT WEEK - HOMEWORK

- Read 1 Corinthians

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 - Use the processes discussed in the introduction using one of the translations discussed here.

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 - We will study it together next week.