



The War on the Word

There is a “War on the Word of God” in our culture. Understand that there has always been a “War on the Word of God” since the moment that God gave Adam and Eve the command as to what they could and could not partake of in the Garden of Eden. Today, the “War on the Word” is not just a cultural war of “Us versus Them” rather it is a war that has attacked every church in every town throughout the world.

A perfect illustration is found as the culture seeks to redefine the Word of God and minimize the level of authority we place on the Word within the local church. One example is discovered within a recent decision by First Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina. This church commissioned an LGBT Discernment Team which came to a non-Biblical conclusion which the church adopted as a formal policy,

Q U E S T I O N S

How does the culture seek to redefine the Word of God?

Why must we be aware of this attack?

In February of 2014, the Diaconate issued a charge to the LGBT Discernment Team to organize and provide opportunities for our congregation to prayerfully and intentionally consider our church’s relationship with members of the LGBT community. The Team was further charged to report to the Diaconate its sense of the church’s consensus as it relates to this topic.

On Monday, May 4, 2015, our Team presented such a report to the Diaconate. The Diaconate discussed the report and by an overwhelming majority accepted the report and joined our team in affirming the report’s description of the consensus of the congregation.

...the Discernment Team unanimously affirms the following:

“In all facets of the life and ministry of our church, including but not limited to membership, baptism, ordination, marriage, teaching and committee/organizational leadership, First Baptist Greenville will not discriminate based on sexual orientation or gender identity.”¹

Consider for a moment that First Baptist is more than 180 years old. It is one of the most historic churches in the South. It participated in the founding of the Southern Baptist Convention. The

¹ The full report information can be found at <http://firstbaptistgreenville.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/News2015-0505.pdf>

church was also largely responsible for the birth of Furman University and its old “church house” became the first home of “The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary” in 1859. This once conservative church proclaims in their Mission Statement these words,

We are a community of believers in God as revealed in Jesus Christ as Lord. We believe in the authority of the Bible, the equality of all members, unity in diversity, and the priesthood of all believers.²

The Word of God makes it clear that God alone is the author of creation, morality, and faith. As the Creator then God is the only One who is allowed to redefine His Word based on His authority versus redefining the Word of God based on the authority or philosophy of man.

Q U E S T I O N

Do the actions of First Baptist match up with their proclaimed doctrine as found in their mission statement?

Isaiah 45:5 – I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me...

Isaiah 55:9-11 – ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. ¹⁰“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Many individuals in our culture will applaud First Baptist on their new stance regarding the lifestyle choice of homosexuals and those who choose a transgender lifestyle. The problem is that when you redefine the Word of God from a man made philosophical perspective then you no longer can rest on the promises of the Bible in other areas such as salvation, inerrancy, and divine authority. It is problematic and revealing to observe the Mission Statement of First Baptist as they declare, “We believe in the authority of the Bible” yet they reject God’s inspired Word, based on His authority, in dealing with the condemnation of homosexuality as a sin. The illustration of First Baptist brings Biblical Christians to consider this question,

How Does a Church Get to the Point of Redefining the Word?

The slippery slope of the redefining the Word of God is found in forsaking the Divine Authority of Scripture and embracing the manipulating authority of man. This occurs when individuals begin rejecting the Word of God as being inspired by God Himself. Consider some of these facts,

American Bible owners have an average of 4 Bibles in their home.

More than half of adults (56%) believe the Bible has too little influence in U.S. society today

Nearly half of Americans (47%) strongly agree that the Bible contains everything a person needs to know to live a meaningful life.

80% of Americans believe that the Bible can be considered “sacred” or “holy” literature.

About one-quarter of adults (27%) say the Bible is the inspired word of God and has no errors, although some verses are meant to be symbolic.

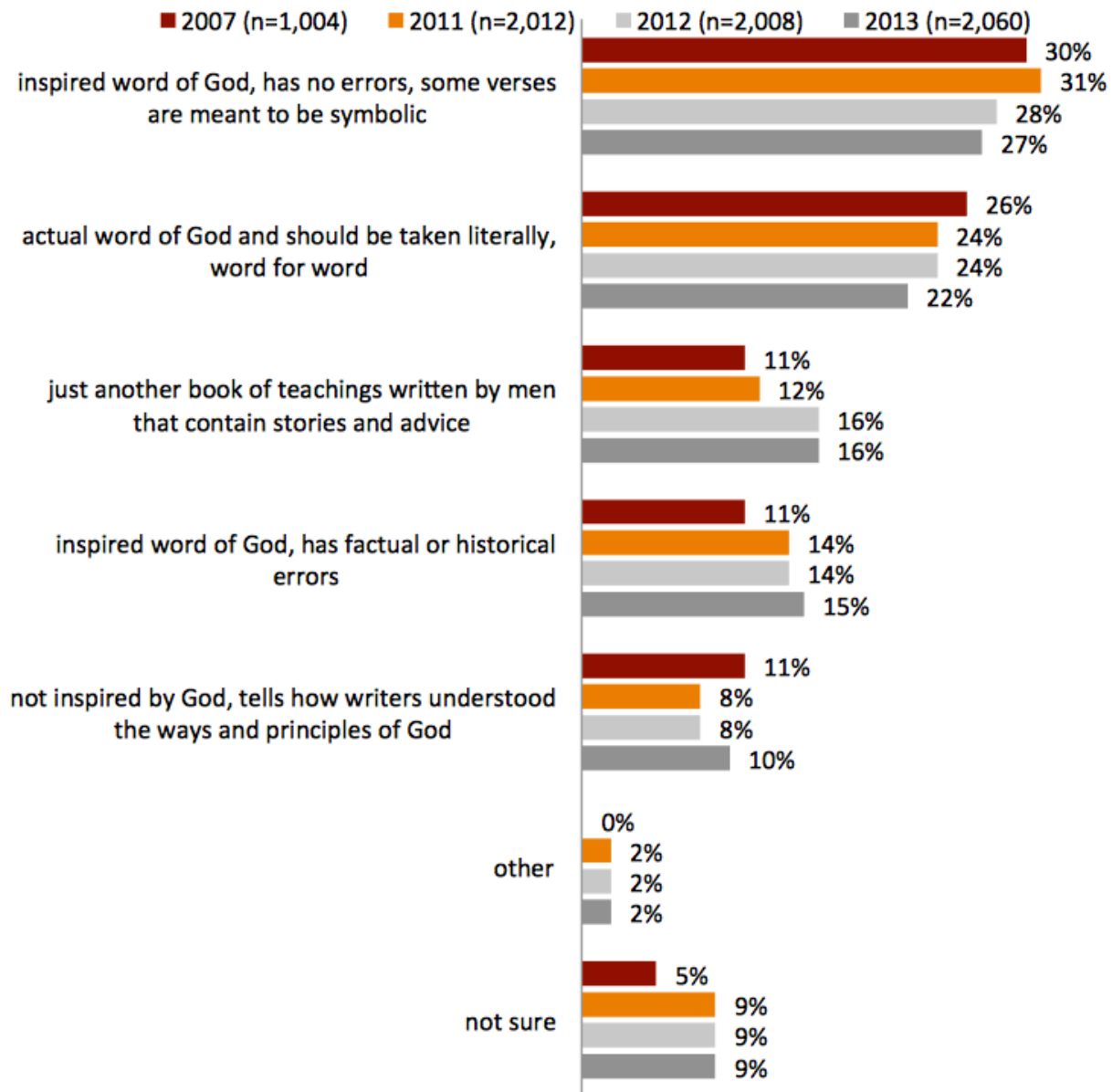
Another 22% consider the Bible to be the actual word of God that should be taken literally, word for word.³

You can view these results and more in the bar graph⁴ that follows,

² Ibid.

³ Barna Group and American Bible Society, “The State of the Bible: 2013.”

2013 Beliefs of Bible as Literal or Inspired Word of God (among U.S. adults, n=2,060)



Slippery Slope of Rejecting the Word

It is important to observe that as the culture distance themselves from the Word of God then they begin moving down the path of moralism and relativism. How can you tell if a church or a professed Christian has started going down this wayward path? The litmus test is that they begin rejecting a portion or the entirety of the S.C.A.N. of the Word of God.

Traditionally, conservative Biblical Christians have held true to four essential characteristics of Scripture: sufficiency, clarity, authority, and necessity otherwise

QUESTION

Describe the results of the "slippery slope" when individuals begin rejecting the Word of God

⁴ Ibid.

known as S.C.A.N. which is meant to protect the important truths about the Bible.

Sufficiency: The Scriptures contain everything we need for knowledge of salvation and godly living. We don't need any new revelation from heaven.

Clarity: The saving message of Jesus Christ is plainly taught in the Scriptures and can be understood by all who have ears to hear it. We don't need an official magisterium to tell us what the Bible means.

Authority: The last word always goes to the word of God. We must never allow the teachings of science, of human experience, or of church councils to take precedence over Scripture.

Necessity: General revelation is not enough to save us. We cannot simply be saved by God by means of personal experience and human reason. We need God's word to tell us how to live, who Christ is, and how to be saved.⁵

The farther a culture, church, or individual goes from the Word of God then they will begin rejecting these characteristics of Scripture. This rejection comes with a redefinition of the Word of God and central doctrines in order to further their own humanistic agenda.

Why do we establish this case for us to consider today? What relevance does this hold for us? If a "Humanistic Gospel" that is redefined by the philosophy of man becomes the new norm for churches then the church will miss the promise of God's Inspired Word is as follows,

Romans 10:17 – So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Galatians 1:9 – As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

Romans 1:16a – For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...

2 Timothy 3:16-17 – ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Q U E S T I O N S

What are some of the promises of God's inspired Word within these verses?

What happens to these promises if you take away the inspiration of Scripture?

Three Reasons Why We Must Rediscover the Word of God

Biblical preachers will always establish the importance of reading, studying, and wrestling with the Truth of God's Word. This is not just simply encouraged for personal gain rather it is encouraged for the spiritual growth of the believer as you live out your faith. Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones observed the importance of Biblical study in this manner,

We do not encourage people to read their Bibles out of a legalistic mentality. We do not encourage people to read their Bibles so they can commend themselves to God and others. Nor do we say that people should read their Bibles to receive some mystical experience or vision. We encourage reading the Scriptures because in them the Holy Spirit reveals Christ as He truly is, and the true way of coming to Him for salvation.⁶

It is critical that the church reclaims strong, Biblical preaching in our current culture. It is also important for Christians to understand the necessity of studying the Bible in order to give a defense for their faith as stated by Peter,

⁵ Kevin DeYoung. *Taking God At His Word: Why the Bible is Knowable, Necessary, and Enough, and What that Means for You and Me.* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014), 44.

⁶ Joel R. Beeke, Mark Jones. *A Puritan Theology.* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books), 2012.

1 Peter 3:15 – But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect...

As we read through Scripture, we conclude that there are many reasons why we must rediscover the Word of God. This list has been narrowed down to three central reasons for you to wrestle with as a student of God's Word. Each of these reasons find their foundation within the Word of God and Expository Preaching. Dr. Steven Lawson sums up the importance of these principles for the time in which we are living,

The very essence of the gospel itself demands exclusivity...This truth, of course, cuts against the grain of the spirit of this age. In this present postmodern hour, tolerance is the new virtue. An acceptance of every opinion about religion and morality is to be commended. Thus, we find ourselves in a postmodern culture in which there are no moral absolutes. Many roads lead to God, we are told. In the maze of worldviews today, every world philosophy has some piece of the truth to contribute to the larger body of knowledge for the world community. This idea may look attractive to some. But its appeal is based on its accuracy, and it certainly is not accurate. To the contrary, the Scripture is adamant that truth is absolute and that the Jesus is the only way to heaven.⁷

Reason #1 – The Word of God Reveals the Triumph of the Living Word Over the Myth of Man

The first reason for "Rediscovering the Word of God" is found in 2 Peter 1:16 as we examine the need for such a defense of the authority of Scripture in the midst of a culture that is offering myths, fable, and fairy tales responds to false teachers and false gospels.

2 Peter 1:16 – ¹⁶For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

The false teachers of Peter's days were brilliant men who were polished speakers and deceived many Christians with myths and lies.

- **Cleverly devised** stems from ("to make wise") and refers to sophisticated, subtly concocted ideas. The expression also refers to anything deceitful. Seeking to devour the sheep, the false teachers would disguise their lies (cf. 2:1) to make them appear as divine truth.
- **Myths** refers to lies, fabrications, and deceptions of all false teachers.

Q U E S T I O N

What are some cleverly devised myths taught today by false teachers?

There are still individuals that seek to propagate myths when it comes to the Word of God. One such group has published their own Bible called the "New World Translation" where they redefine the Word of God to further their false teachings. Consider two specific texts from this corrupt translation and compare to a solid interpretation as found in the ESV,

- **Genesis 1:1-2** (NWT) – ¹In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²Now the earth was formless and desolate, and there was darkness upon the surface of the

⁷ Dr. Steven Lawson, "Preaching an Exclusive Gospel in an Inclusive Age." (August 03, 2015), Downloaded from <http://www.onepassionministries.org/blog/2015/8/3/preaching-an-exclusive-gospel-in-an-inclusive-age>

watery deep, and God's active force* was moving about over the surface of the waters.⁸

- **Genesis 1:1-2** (ESV) – ¹In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society denies that the Holy Spirit is alive and active as the third person of the Trinity. Therefore, they have changed the correct translation of "... the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters" to say "... and God's active force was moving to and fro over the surface of the waters."

- **John 1:1** (NWT) – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.*⁹
- **John 1:1** (ESV) – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The New World Translation mistranslates the verse as "a god." Again, it is because they deny who Jesus is and must change the Bible to make it agree with their theology.

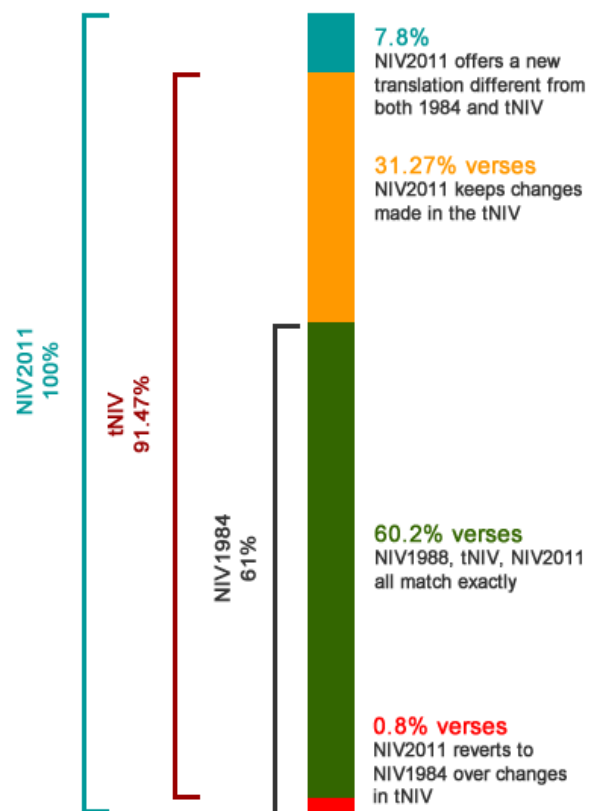
Peter emphasizes that the Word of God and the eyewitness account of the Gospel that they delivered was most certainly not a myth but was confirmed fact "made known by the power and coming of Jesus Christ."

Yet we observe that man has sought to redefine the Word of God in order to further their own philosophy because the inspired Word of God conquers the myth of man. This means that man must redefine the Word to make their myth a reality and live according to their humanistic lifestyle. This has been found with the arrival of many new versions of the Bible that have been produced since 2010. Consider the new NIV for one example as it has sought to become more gender neutral in its terminology.

Another New NIV by Marvin Olasky

More than 7,000 different Bible editions now exist. People read eBibles on computers, Kindles, iPads, or whatever. For the record, blogger John Dyer found that 91 percent of the words in the new NIV, expected to hit bookstores in March, are unchanged from the old version. Most-removed words: "He," "his," or "him" 2,700 times, "man" or "men" 1,600 times, and "fathers," "forefathers," or "brothers" 500 times.

"Person," "ancestor," and "they" are three of the gap-fillers, but this translation sometimes maintains the role of the



⁸ The New World Translation, 2013. Make note that the * represents a footnote where they claim that an alternate translation of "active force" can be "God's spirit." This does not refer to the Holy Spirit as part of the Trinity rather a created force or being born or made from the divine Creator. Downloaded from <http://www.jw.org/en/publications/bible/nwt/books/genesis/1/>

⁹ The New World Translation, 2013. Make note that the * represents a footnote where they claim that an alternate translation of "god" can be "divine." This does not refer to the Word being divine as part of the Trinity rather a created force or being born or made as a slave to serve the Creator as found in their version of Philippians 2:7. Downloaded from <http://www.jw.org/en/publications/bible/nwt/books/john/1/>

individual and sometimes doesn't (Psalm 146:5). The most-criticized retranslated verse is 1 Timothy 2:12. The CMBW notes that virtually every translation, whether traditional or modern, has Paul writing that in church a woman is not to "have" or "exercise authority" over a man—but the new NIV has "assume authority." Critics argue that readers may conclude women can be pastors as long as they don't engage in a power grab.¹⁰

Warning: Danger Ahead

It is important that we observe that we must beware that the more gender neutral that a Bible becomes then the more humanistic it becomes, leaving the authority of God behind and embracing the authority of man. **(A list of Bible verse comparisons of NIV 2011 and the NASB can be found in Appendix A)**

There are many Christians that claim that this is a solid version of the Bible that helps us connect with our culture at a deeper level. On the opposite end of the spectrum, there are many Christians that will also flee from the NIV2011 because they will believe it to be a "man inspired" version of the Bible. One observation that must be made is simply this: The NIV2011 version of the Bible is a new improved version of the TNIV which was labeled as a gender neutral Bible. This only leads us to the fact that the NIV2011 is also gender neutral in its translating theology.

QUESTION

What is the danger of a "gender neutral" Bible?

Give an example of a passage where a "gender neutral" translation could change the meaning.

A gender neutral Bible could redefine marriage

- **Genesis 2:24 (NASB)** – For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

A gender neutral Bible could redefine sexuality

- **Romans 1:26-27 (NASB)** – ²⁶For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, ²⁷and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

A gender neutral Bible could redefine God's divine plan for the family

- **1 Corinthians 11:3 (NASB)** – But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.

There are not just many problems that face a gender neutral Bible but there are also many Biblical objections to a gender neutral Bible.

The Bible becomes "man inspired" versus "God inspired..."

- **2 Timothy 3:16 (NASB)** – All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

The Bible becomes man centered versus God centered...

- **2 Timothy 4:3 (NASB)** – For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires...

The Bible conforms to the pattern of the world versus transforming the world.

¹⁰ Marvin Olasky, "Another New NIV" (World Magazine, January 01, 2011). Downloaded from http://www.worldmag.com/2010/12/another_new_niv

- **Romans 12:1-2** – ¹ Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

No matter how you label a gender neutral Bible, we understand as conservative Christians that anytime the meaning of a text is changed due to a desire to be less offensive to the culture or to try to connect with a culture on their level then that version of the Bible has now become “man inspired” in order to fit into the culture around it. Beware of these versions of the Bible and pay careful attention to the details.

Reason #2 – The Word of God Reveals the Light of Life to a Darkened World

The second reason why we need to “Rediscover the Word of God” is found in 2 Peter 1:19 as we observe the importance of the Word of God as the source of wisdom, guidance, direction to light the way to salvation and deliverance in our world.

2 Peter 1:19 – ¹⁹ And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,

Peter was being attacked by the false teachers of his day which were questioning the validity of his claims to which he points out the fact that his claims are not based on theory, theology, philosophy, felt needs, or opinion but fact. Specifically the fact of the...

“...prophetic word more fully confirmed...”

What does this phrase mean? The Greek language actually renders it as “**we have more sure the prophetic word**.” The difference is important. The first translation allows the interpretation that Peter’s own experiences confirm the Word of God while the latter translation declares that God’s inspired Word is inerrant, infallible, and the all-sufficient source of truth, which does not require human confirmation.

- **Prophetic Word** – Refers to the inspired Word of God.
- **Pay Attention** – He encourages Christians to “Pay Attention” to the Word as to a lamp shining in a dark place. – The term “**Pay Attention**” literally refers to devoting yourself to the Word, hold firmly to belief in the Word of God, and to utilize it to guard your heart, soul, and mind.
- **Dark** – This word refers to a “dry, parched, dirty, or murky” place.
- **The Word as a Lamp** – As Peter refers to it as a “lamp shining in the dark” then he is referring to the power of the Word of God to bring life to that which is spiritually dry or dead and the power to illuminate the darkest of hours with the light of life that is found through Jesus.

Psalms 119:105 – Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

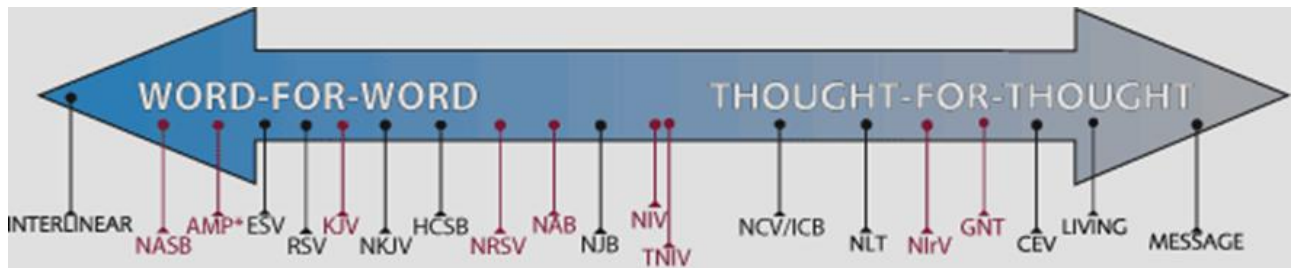
John 8:12 – Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

It is critical to make sure that we utilize the Word of God as a guide for our life but we need to make sure that we are letting the Word guide us and not just man’s philosophy. This is one of the reasons why I prefer to use the ESV. I use this version for the following reasons,

- It preserves more literal accuracy in details.
- It preserves more of the interpretative options that were available to original readers.
- It is not gender neutral but more accurately translates terms that refer to men and women.
- It preserves more theological terms.

There are multiple versions of the Word of God and you must choose the right version for your own study. Consider the different approaches to translation for a moment.

Three Approaches to Translation



Approach #1 – Word for Word (Literal)

A literal or “word for word” translation seeks to represent the original Greek and Hebrew in a more word for word manner. This method assures that each English word is represented by a Greek or Hebrew word, not some expansion or interpretation by the translators. If a Hebrew or Greek word means to “run” then literal translators should render the word “run” in the target language instead of shuffle, amble, move, skip, prance, or stroll, because neither of these verbs convey the most literal sense of running.

- **Examples:** New American Standard Bible, King James Version, Revised Standard Bible, and the New King James Version.
- **Example of a Literal Translation Text:** Revelation 3:20 (NASB)

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.”

QUESTION

Which translations are best for different levels of spiritual growth?

Example: Children, Teenager, Adult...

Approach #2 – Paraphrase

A paraphrase translation is not as concerned with original word order or sentence structure as it is the idea of the passage. This type of translation seeks to translate the ideas in the original text as accurately as possible in the target language. Paraphrases are more than just translation, for by definition, the author tries to place besides the correct translation, “other words” which contain similar meanings. This frequently employs the use of a commentary to help translate it and becomes a pocket commentary instead of a true translation.

- **Examples:** The Living Bible & The Message.
- **Example of a Paraphrase Translation Text:** Revelation 3:20 (The Message)

"Look at me. I stand at the door. I knock. If you hear me call and open the door, I'll come right in and sit down to supper with you.

Approach #3 – Thought for Thought (Dynamic)

A dynamic or “thought for thought” translation strives for a balance between the two mentioned above. The goal of this type of translation is to render the idea conveyed by the original language into that of the target language.

- **Examples:** New International Version, New Revised Standard Version, and New American Bible)
- **Example of a Dynamic Translation Text:** Revelation 3:20 (NIV 2011)

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with **that person**, and **they** with me.”

NASB	New American Standard Bible (1971; update 1995)	NJB	New Jerusalem Bible (Catholic, 1986; revision of 1966 Jerusalem Bible)
AMP	Amplified Bible (1965)	REB	Revised English Bible
ESV	English Standard Version (2001)	CEV	Contemporary English Version
RSV	Revised Standard Version (1952)	NLT	New Living Translation (1 st ed. 1996; 2 nd ed. 2004)
KJV	King James Version (1611; significantly revised 1769)	GNT	Good News Translation (also Good News Bible)
NKJV	New King James Version (1982)	GW	God’s Word to the Nations. Paraphrase by William Beck.
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Version (2004)	LB	Living Bible (1950). Paraphrase by (Living) Ken Taylor
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version (1989)	TM	The Message by Eugene Peterson (Message) (1991-2000s)
NAB	New American Bible (Catholic, 1970, 1986 (NT), 1991 (Psalms)	OIV	Oxford’s Inclusive Language Version – revision to NRSV
NIV	New International Version (1984)		
NIrV	New International reader’s Version		
TNIV	Today’s New International Version (NT 2001, OT 2005)		
NCV	New Century Version		

Choosing the Right Translation

Now we have come to the point of asking ourselves a very simple question and that is: Which translation is best for me? Every translation is going to have its pluses and minuses. I would encourage you take the information that you have gathered and begin to formulate your personal philosophy on studying the Word of God. As you develop your personal philosophy then you can begin to clearly answer the question: **Which translation is best for me?**

The Word of God has been given to each one of us to help us grow closer to the Lord in our relationship as well as our walk with Him. It is important that we understand God’s desire for our lives in the clearest possible manner. Observe three basic criteria used in helping you choose the right translation for you.

Three Criteria

Criteria #1 – Accurate translation of the Hebrew and Greek Manuscripts

The first criteria brings out the clear point that in order to clearly understand that Word of God and His commands for our life, walk, and relationship with Him then we must have an accurate translation of His inspired Word. The word "translate" means: bearing or transferring the meaning of one language to another language. Remind yourself of the three different translation philosophies.

Criteria #2 – Translation that reflects a high view of Scripture

The second criteria brings out the clear point that the translation that you choose must reflect a high view of Scripture. This means that the translation believes and promotes the fundamental fact that the Word of God is inspired by God not meant to be manipulated by man to serve their own purpose.

- Clarence Jordan, founder of Koinonia Farm in Americus, Georgia, in his [Cotton Patch Version](#) of the Bible has coined a new version of translation called: "thematic interpretation." It is another step beyond Paraphrase and allows the author's imagination to simply carry the theme of the passage. Jordan's theme is a laid back "southern walk through Georgia" which delivers Zack Harris the preacher for Zacharias the priest in Luke, and Apostle Paul's first missionary journey to the island of Crete by way of Pensacola and Montgomery -- riding on a bus!
- CottonPatch Gospel Example
- **Acts 2 Example** – When Thanksgiving Day arrived, they were all gathered in one place. Then all of a sudden there came from the sky a rumbling like a tornado, and it filled the whole house where they were gathered. And they saw forked flames as from a fire, and it stayed in contact with each one of them. Everybody was bursting with Holy Spirit and started talking in whatever different languages the spirit directed. Now at that time there were a lot of delegates gathered in Atlanta, religious people from countries all over the world. So when they heard this great noise, they all came running together. And then they heard these folks talking to each one of them in their own native tongue, and were they excited! Amazed and astounded to no end, they said, "Look, aren't all these speakers Americans? Then how is it that each of us is hearing it in his own native tongue -- French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Chinese, Russian, Italian, Greek, Turkish, Burmese, Hebrew, Swedish, Afrikaans, Hindi -- in our own languages we are hearing them tell of God's mighty doings." Everybody was dumfounded and puzzled, saying one to another, "What's the meaning of this?" but others sneered, "They're tanked up on white lightning."

Criteria #3 – Translations that Challenge You but that You Can Understand

The final criteria that we examine is extremely important. The KJV of the Bible is a good word-for-word translation but it utilizes words that might cause confusion for modern day readers. Some students of the bible love the KJV while others may get lost in some of the terminology. It is important that you ask yourself which Bible translation meets the previous two criteria and is still one that you can understand clearly in order to grow deeper in your relationship with the Lord.

Reason #3 – The Word of God is Inspired by God Not by the Agenda of Man

The final reason for “Rediscovering the Word of God” that we examine is found in 2 Peter 1:20-21. It is in these verses that we observe the source of the Word of God. As we examine this text then consider the difference between the Word of God and other books,

2 Peter 1:20-21 – ²⁰ knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

There are a many different views regarding the Word of God and today. We know that today,

- 16% of Americans strongly agree that the Bible, the Koran, and the Book of Mormon are all different expressions of the same spiritual truths.¹¹

But out of those views, we know that the Word of God is inspired by God alone. Peter declares,

- The phrase “**is a matter of**” more precisely means “comes into being,” “originates,” or “arises.” No portion of the holy writings, Old Testament or New, came into existence in the manner all false prophecies did.
- **Interpretation** is an unfortunate translation because in English it indicates how one understands Scripture, whereas the Greek noun is a genitive, indicating source. Thus Peter is not referring to the explanation of the Scripture, but to its origin. The next statement in verse 21, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but (“just the opposite,” “quite the contrary”) men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God, further supports the point of source.

False prophets spoke of their own things, from their own ideas, but no true message from God ever arose from a human interpretation.

Conclusion

We have shown the evidence that our country is at a “Crossroads” when it comes to morality, leadership, and social justice. Now is the time for the country to turn back to the Lord in order to experience His blessings once again. Be a voice of truth to a dying culture and choose this day to honor Him with the life you live.

¹¹ Barna Group and American Bible Society, “The State of the Bible: 2013.”

Appendix A

This section is where we compare the NIV2011 to the NASB version of the Bible. The NASB is a reliable word-for-word translation.

Reference	NIV 2011	NASB	Question/Notes
Revelation 3:20	Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person , and they with me.	Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.	What are the differences? Notice the change from singular to plural language in the NIV. This is a seemingly innocent change but notice how it eliminates the gender from the Greek language. This is going to leave pastors and teachers with advising the flock: "that is a singular 'they'" or "that is a singular 'them.'"
Hebrews 2:17	For this reason he had to be made like them , fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.	Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.	What are the differences? The NIV improves this translation from the TNIV but it again it takes away the gender associated with this text which might cause a misunderstanding among the readers. Example: The word them could be understood by some to refer to both brothers and sisters. Did Jesus have to become like his sisters "in every way" in order to become a "high priest in service to God"? All the Old Testament priests were men, and surely the high priest was a man. Meditate on that phrase "in every way." Can you trust the NIV?
1 John 4:16	And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them .	We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him .	What are the differences? The new NIV opens the door to a corporate translation where God dwells in the group and not in the individual. This opens the door for a worldly form of salvation called <i>Collective Salvation</i> where the salvation of the people is based upon the
1 John 3:3	All who have this hope in him purify themselves , just as he is pure.	And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself , just as He is pure.	

Luke 9:26	Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of <u>them</u> when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.	"For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of <u>him</u> when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.	people within that group not the individual response to the Lord.
Psalm 23:4	Even though I walk through the <u>darkest valley</u> , I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.	Even though I walk through the valley of the <u>shadow of death</u> , I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.	What are the differences? The NIV changes Psalm 23 in order to gain wider acceptance. The familiar phrase "valley of the shadow of death" is replaced by the words "darkest valley."
1 Timothy 3:2	Now the overseer is to be above reproach, <u>faithful to his wife</u> , temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,	An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the <u>husband of one wife</u> , temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,	What are the differences? The NIV changes "husband of but one wife" to "faithful to his wife."
2 Peter 1:20	Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own <u>interpretation of things</u> .	But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own <u>interpretation</u> ,	What are the differences? The NIV changes "no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation" to "no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things." This might cause the reader to misunderstand where the inspiration for the Scriptures came from...From God or things in the world?

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