

NIV to Be Revised, TNIV Phased Out

✖ The New International Version (NIV)—the world's best-selling Bible translation—will be revised for the first time in 25 years, while the controversial Today's New International Version (TNIV) is to be phased out after the revision.

The major development was announced earlier this week by Zondervan—which publishes both the NIV and TNIV—the Committee on Bible Translation (CBT) and Biblica, holder of the NIV copyright. With more than 300 million copies sold since its first publication in 1978, the NIV will be updated to reflect changes in English usage and advances in biblical scholarship.

(Photo: Zondervan CEO Moe Girkins)

Comprising global biblical scholars who translated the NIV and TNIV, the CBT is slated to finish its revision late next year, with publication of the new NIV in 2011.

“We want to reach English speakers across the globe with a Bible that is accurate, accessible and that speaks to its readers in a language they can understand,” said Keith Danby, global president and CEO of Biblica, formerly IBS-STL Global, during a press conference Tuesday at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Ill. He added that the original charter called for the NIV to be evergreen, with revisions and updates.

However, previous efforts to remake the NIV for contemporary audiences in different editions have been hindered by controversies regarding gender language, dividing theological conservatives. Zondervan released a New Testament of the TNIV in 2002 and the complete Bible in 2005, although critics decried it for changing gender-specific pronouns in some

references.

Zondervan reported that in 2007—two years after the release of the complete TNIV—it had sold 1 million units, including the company's celebrity-driven audio *Bible, Inspired By... The Bible Experience*.

But during the press conference, Zondervan CEO and President Moe Girkins said the TNIV had “divided the evangelical Christian community,” and the Grand Rapids, Mich., publisher will phase out the translation in a period of 18 months to three years after the release of the revised NIV in 2011. Zondervan currently has more than 200 products featuring the NIV and TNIV, company officials said.

“I don't believe this is a commercial decision,” Girkins said referring to the updated NIV. “I believe it's a right decision. ... The NIV is getting out of date. 2011 is a great celebration year for the Bible.” The year 2011 marks the 400th anniversary of the King James Version.

Opponents of the TNIV were glad to hear that the translation will be phased out. “I'm delighted to see they have realized the TNIV was simply never going to be accepted by the Christian public who value accuracy in translating the word of God,” Wayne Grudem, co-author of *The TNIV and the Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy* (B&H Academic/B&H Publishing Group) and research professor of Bible and theology at Phoenix Seminary in Scottsdale, Ariz., told *USA Today*. “I'm thankful for their honesty.”

Albert Mohler, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and author, said the “unfreezing” of the NIV was announced “in a way that is respectful and honest.”

“Those of us who have had significant concerns with TNIV should communicate these concerns respectfully, candidly and directly to the Committee on Bible Translation, Zondervan and Biblica,” Mohler wrote on his blog. “We must all pray that

their work will produce an updated translation we can greet with appreciation and trust. We must take the Committee on Bible Translation at their word that they will consider these concerns.”

[Click here](#) for more information on the 2011 NIV.