

Which Bible Translation Should You Use?

Bible translations are typically categorized into three types.

- Formal Equivalent – a literal, word-for-word translation of the text (Examples: KJV, NKJV, NASB, etc.)
- Dynamic Equivalent – A thought-for-thought translation of the text (Examples: The Passion Translation, New International Version, etc.)
- Free or Paraphrase – A paraphrase of the original text (Examples: The Living Bible, Good News Translation, The Message, etc.)

While I was at Roberts Wesleyan College, I spent time in the library comparing word-for-word translations of the Greek by the King James Version, New American Standard Bible, and New International Version. The closest word-for-word translation was the NASB and then the KJV. The furthest was the NIV.

Since I don't speak Shakespearean English, I chose the NASB over the KJV. Now that we have the New King James Version (NKJV), I find that essentially equal to the NASB; however, I still use the NASB for careful Bible study. For devotional reading, I use The Passion Translation.

I love the free downloadable software e-Sword because it allows me to look up the exact Greek and Hebrew meanings of any word. (Bible Hub allows you to do the same.) I can also look up every verse where a specific Greek or Hebrew word is found to see every time it appears and how it was translated each time. Plus, they offer Young's Literal Bible, which is an exact literal translation of each word in a verse.

This makes it hard to read, so I only go there to confirm how that scholar translated the word. It is all so fascinating. A few of the interesting discoveries I made as I used this

process are concerning imagination, meditation and *aion*.

I Need the Guidance of the Holy Spirit

Jesus makes it clear that you need to hear from Him and the Spirit in order to properly interpret Scripture. The Pharisees were using the same Bible Jesus was using but they didn't hear from God, so they fought against Jesus. Paul had a Spirit encounter (Acts 9) and spent three years in the Arabian wilderness (Gal. 1:17-18) being taught by the Spirit. Paul came back with a transformed theology from that which he was taught in his earlier Scripture training.

We all need both an accurate translation of the Bible *plus* to have Jesus walking with us opening the Scriptures to our understanding and our hearts burning with revelation as the hearts of Jesus' followers did on the Emmaus Road (Luke 24:32).

Let's explore every verse where Jesus talks about discovering truth. Notice Jesus' heavy emphasis on the role of the Spirit in bringing one to truth. (All scriptures below are from the NASB1995 version.)

1. Jesus is the truth. "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me'" (John 14:6; see also vv. 7-9). This means truth is embodied in a person, whose Spirit bubbles up within us, leading us to the truth.

2. Beholding the glory of Jesus. "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). My understanding of this is that if I am gazing upon Jesus, asking for the leading of His Spirit and tuned to flow, the flow of thoughts will be truth from His Spirit.

3. Continuing in Jesus' words. "So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If you continue in My word, then

you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know [*ginosko* = word for intimacy] the truth, and the truth will make you free'" (John 8:31-32). So we see that truth demands an intimate encounter.

4. Practicing truth. "But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God" (John 3:21). Obedience takes you further into a revealing of the truth.

5. Truth is as we hear from God. "But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God" (John 8:40). Jesus received truth by living out of the voice of His heavenly Father, the Spirit of truth within—"The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you" (John 14:17).

6. The Spirit of Truth testifies about Jesus. "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me" (John 15:26).

7. The Spirit guides into all truth. "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come" (John 16:13; see also vv. 14-15). Note: Coming to truth is a process that is guided by the Holy Spirit.

8. Hearing Jesus' voice is evidence you are of the truth. "Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice" (John 18:37). Those declaring God isn't speaking will be unable to come to truth.

Summary of Jesus' nine statements concerning truth. Hearing from the Spirit (five times); I am the truth (one time); gazing upon Jesus (one time); continue in Jesus' words (one time); practicing truth (one time).

Yes, having an accurate Bible translation is a piece of the puzzle, but an equal or even larger piece is hearing from the Spirit of truth Himself. {eoa}

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