

# SCRIPTURE TRACK

## Week 3 – Translations

Why so many translations?

Which one is the most accurate?

Why are there variations of the text?

What about Revelation 22:18-19? “I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.”

### Fears or insecurities:

- Making it harder
- Misinformation
- Heresy

### Goals:

That we love and respect the Word of God more than ever.

That we appreciate all the good translations and translators that have worked to give us readable text.

### Original text:

Old Testament: Hebrew with some Aramaic

New Testament: Koine Greek

Every language evolves!

## American Bible Society – God’s Word for Unreached People

- 1.5 billion people without a complete Bible in their heart language
- 165 million people without a single verse of translated Scripture in their heart language
- 1,886 languages with a translation project in process
- 700 languages with the complete Word of God

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## What are the challenges of translation?

- No two words are exactly alike – range of meaning
- Vocabulary of any two languages will vary in size
- Languages organize phrases, clauses, and sentences differently
- Languages have different stylistic preferences
- Cultures create idioms – 25,000 in English
  - Acts 26:14

## What is the goal of translation?

Relay the meaning of the original text in a readable format.

- Accurate – hear it as the original audience did
- Clear – easy to understand
- Natural – how you would say
- Audience Appropriate

## Spectrum of Translation Philosophy:

- Formal/literal – word for word
  - New American Standard
  - English Standard Version
  - King James Version
- Dynamic/functional – thought for thought
  - New Living Translation
  - Good News Translation
  - The Message

	Formal Equivalence (literal)	Mediating	Functional Equivalence (idiomatic)
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Comprehension:</b> Alter the form until the text is <i>comprehensible</i> .	<b>Clarity:</b> Alter the form until the text is <i>clear</i> .	<b>Naturalness:</b> Alter the form until the text is <i>natural</i> .
<b>Examples</b>	KJV, NKJV, NASU, NRSV, RSV, ESV	NIV, TNIV, NAB, NJB, HCSB, NET	NLT, NCV, GNT, GW, GNT, CEV
<b>Strengths</b>	Helps to capture metaphors, verbal allusions, and ambiguities.	Achieves both accuracy and clarity.	Greatest comprehension. Communicates the message clearly and naturally.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	Can result in awkward English, obscurity, and inaccuracy. Comprehension test often fails.	More interpretation, so greater margin for interpretive error. Sometimes uses unnatural English.	Even more interpretation, so greater margin for error. Sometimes loses nuances of meaning in pursuit of simplicity and clarity.

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## Two Particular Challenges:

1. Culture – how we do what we do

Matthew 9:10 - Read and compare ESV and NIV

2. Gender neutral language

ἄνθρωπος - *anthrōpos* - a human being, whether male or female

Compare Matthew 4:4 in New American Standard, NIV, and New Living Translation

## God's Word is God's Word

- He preserved the manuscripts
- He protects the process

John 16:13

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

John 14:26-27

<sup>6</sup> But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. <sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

## Great resources:

[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) 200 translations in 70 languages

[www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org) Study tools, KJV & NASB tie to Strong's Concordance

How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth by Gordon D. Fee and Mark L. Strauss

The World's Greatest Book by Lawrence H. Schiffman, PH.D. & Jerry Pattengale, PH.D.