

How do we make sense of all of these translations?

Underly Principle:

From WCC's Statement of Faith

The Word of God

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. (John 17:17; Romans 15:4; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21)

Important Items to Consider:

- There are bad translation: New World Translation - Jehovah's witness - not faithful to original meaning, they approach the text with a theological agenda
- There are helpful resources that are NOT translations nor intended to be translations: The Message
- No translation is perfect
- We have so many excellent translations it is embarrassing

What is the purpose of Translation?

To faithfully communicate the Word of God from the original languages to a receiver's heart language so they may understand the Word.

How do we do that?

- Functional equivalent (thought for thought) vs formal equivalent (word for word)
- Albanian Example: a mentor was trying to bridge a rift between two Albanian pastors.
 - One Albanian pastor in English 'I will coffee with him.'
 - American pastor didn't understand
 - Albanian translated word for word but the meaning was lost
 - The true meaning is: I am willing to talk and try to reconcile
 - If I keep word for work I lose the meaning
 - If I use function equivalence I lost the setting for the relationship: Table fellowship
 - To add to the layer to the complexity, you can have coffee 'by drinking a coke and sharing a snack'
 - Fun extra: You can also eat bread by having a steak

Brain Teasers:

- How would you approach translating the phrase 'it's raining cats and dogs'?
- You go to the Chiropractor and he adjust your back and exclaims: 'You back exploded'

Some Examples of the Dynamics of Language and Culture

- Greek word for man/husband; woman/wife
- Greek word 'anthropos' - man - people
- Greek word order vs English Word order as related to emphasis
- Word combinations - like last week's sermon when Abraham takes the people he 'acquired'
- Greek understanding of the completedness of events - Aspect Theory and the use of the Aorist tense

Layers of Complexity

- Intertextuality
- History of translation
- Textual Traditions

What Bible Translation is best

-Most are very good, none is perfect

-What should you do?

-Have one translation be your main reader and the one you use to memorize verses

-Also read other translations and even paraphrases

Other things that affect our reading

-Chapter and Verse

-A word of warning against verse by verse translations

-Passage headings

-The organization of Scripture

-Attention Spans

-Silent Reading

-What does this mean to me vs What is God trying to tell me

-A need for growth in our understanding of Biblical Theology

A note on Study Bibles

- Study Bibles are incredibly helpful tools, the Geneva Bible (English Language Bible printed in Geneva during the suppression of the Protestant Reformation in England) was the first of its kind in this regard
- A Study Bibles that are developed by groups of scholars - think ESV Study Bible - are preferable to those produced by a single individuals. All individuals have biases and blind spots. When one person authors a study Bible, their notes reflect those biases and blindspots. Study Bible produced by groups of scholars tend to balance out what is lacking or excessive in any singular scholar.