

ABOUT BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

For some people, just thinking about all of the various Bible translations can be overwhelming. But what exactly is a Bible translation? Translations, simply put, take the original Greek and Hebrew texts and put them into the English language.

There are a many accurate and high quality Bible translations available today. The translation method used for each Bible is what differentiates one Bible from another.

Translating the Bible is not easy.

Ask any Greek or Hebrew scholar and they'll tell you that translation is a long and arduous process...one that takes years. For example, a committee of 13 of the most respected evangelical scholars in the world spent more than 10 years working on Today's New International Version (TNIV), a readable, reliable translation for today's generation. Prior to that endeavor, the same committee spent roughly 13 years translating the New International Version (NIV), the most read, most trusted translation.

So why is Bible translation so difficult?

Well, for starters there's no such thing as a word-for-word translation. Anytime you translate something from one language into another language, there is some degree of interpretation.

Take for example the Spanish phrase
"¿Como se llama?"

The most literal translation of that phrase is, "How you call?"

But a meaning-based translation is,
"What is your name?"

Which is more accurate?

The scholars who translated the TNIV and NIV would tell you the second phrase is much more accurate, because it captures the meaning of "¿Como se llama?" in everyday English. And we think most English speakers would agree.

Therefore, the goal of Bible translation is not simply to swap words, but to translate the text in a way that conveys the original, intended meaning.

But why do we need to keep translating the Bible into English? Don't we have enough versions already?

Before you answer that, consider this: In only 10 years, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary made 100,000 changes and added 10,000 new words.

Language changes—and it changes quickly.

Whether it's advancements in biblical scholarship or just plain clearer English, there will always be new Bible translations as well as a variety of translations available for you to choose from.

There are three basic approaches to translation including:

Word-for-Word:

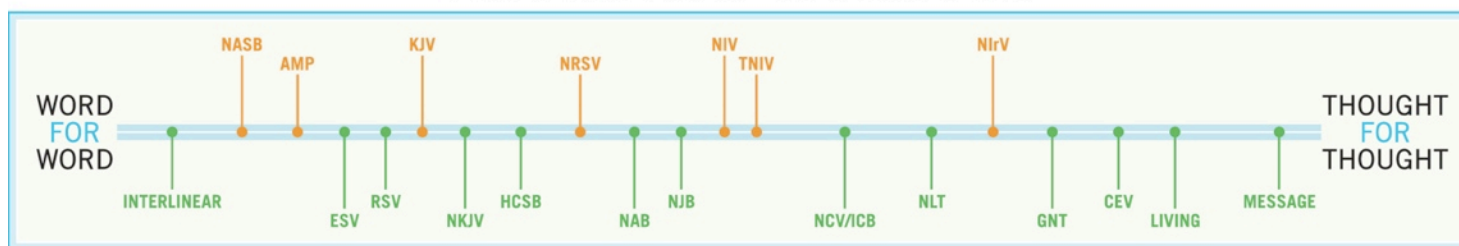
As much as possible, biblical scholars take each "word" from the original Greek or Hebrew text and an English word in its place.

Thought-for-Thought: Translators take the "meaning" of the original language and rewrite it in modern language that's easy to read and understand.

Balanced Approach: Scholars translate word-for-word where it results in a translation that's both clear and accurate. But where a **word-for-word** approach might result in an unclear or inaccurate translation (take the ¿Como se llama? example above), *these translations use the most natural English possible to clearly and accurately communicate the meaning.*

Paraphrases help people who are new to the Bible understand it. And literal translations

TRANSLATION CONTINUUM



This continuum shows how different Bible translations fit into the word-for-word and thought-for-thought translation philosophies,

are helpful for people who want to study each word. The NIV and TNIV are literal where possible and "thought-for-thought" where necessary to help the reader understand. The NIV and TNIV are the best balance between accuracy and readability.

The graphic below can help you understand how each translation fits into the philosophies.

There are five main translation families that make up over 90 percent of all Bibles sold today (updated 2007). The main translation families include:

1. The **New International Version Family**: [New International Version \(NIV\)](#), [Today's New International Version \(TNIV\)](#), [New International Reader's Version \(NIRV\)](#), and [La Biblia Nueva Versión Internacional \(NVI\)](#).
2. The King James Version Family: [King James Version \(KJV\)](#), [New King James Version \(NKJV\)](#).
3. [The New Living Translation \(NLT\)](#).
4. [The New American Standard Bible \(NASB\)](#).
5. [Paraphrase Bibles such as The Message](#).

In addition to these five translation families, there are a number of other translations available.

Bible Translations

Please click on the translation name to see statistics, history, and additional information about each translation.

Bible Translation Bible Sample Verse

[Amplified® Bible \(AMP\)](#)

We, on the other hand, will not boast beyond our legitimate province and proper limit, but will keep within the limits [of our commission which] God has allotted us as our measuring line and which reaches and includes even you.

2 Corinthians 10:13 (AMP)

[English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#)

But we will not boast beyond limits, but will boast only with regard to the area of influence God assigned to us, to reach even you.

2 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV)

[Good News Translation \(GNT\)](#)

As for us, however, our boasting will not go beyond certain limits; it will stay within the limits of the work which God has set for us, and this includes our work among you.

2 Corinthians 10:13 (GNT)

[Holman Christian Standard Bible \(HCSB\)](#)

We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but according to the measure of the area of ministry that God has assigned to us, which reaches even you.

2 Corinthians 10:13 (HCSB)

[King James Version \(KJV\)](#)

But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

2 Corinthians 10:13 (KJV)

[New American Bible \(NAB\)](#)

But we will not boast beyond measure but will keep to the limits God has apportioned us, namely to reach even to you.

2 Corinthians 10:13 (NAB)

[New American Standard, Updated \(NASB\)](#)

But we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the measure of the sphere which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even as far as you. - 2 Corinthians 10:13

[New International Reader's Version \(NIrV\)](#)

But I won't brag more than I should. Instead, I will brag only about what I have done in the area God has given me. It is an area that reaches all the way to you.

2 Corinthians 10:13 (NIrV)

[New International Version \(NIV\)](#)

We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the field God has assigned to us, a field that reaches even to you.

2 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV)

[New King James Version \(NKJV\)](#)

We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us--a sphere which especially includes you.

2 Corinthians 10:13 (NKJV)

[New Living Translation \(NLT\)](#)

But we will not boast of authority we do not have. Our goal is to stay within the boundaries of God's plan for us, and this plan includes our working there with you.
2 Corinthians 10:13 (NLT)

[New Revised Standard Edition \(NRSV\)](#)

We, however, will not boast beyond limits, but will keep within the field that God has assigned to us, to reach out even as far as you.
2 Corinthians 10:13 (NRSV)

[Nueva Versión Internacional \(NVI\)](#)

Nosotros, por nuestra parte, no vamos a jactarnos más de lo debido. Nos limitaremos al campo que Dios nos ha asignado según su medida, en la cual también ustedes están incluidos. 2 Corintios 10:13 (NVI)

[The Message](#)

We're not, understand, putting ourselves in a league with those who boast that they're our superiors. We wouldn't dare do that. But in all this comparing and grading and competing, the quite miss the point. We aren't making outrageous claims here. We're sticking to the limits of what God has set for us. But there can be no question that those limits reach to and include you.
2 Corinthians 10:13 (The Message)

[Today's New International Version \(TNIV\)](#)

We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the sphere of service God himself has assigned to us, a sphere that also includes you.
2 Corinthians 10:13 ([TNIV](#))