

F. How to Translate



Reading Assignments

❑ Optional:

- ❖ Poythress and Grudem, *Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy*, especially chap. 4.
- ❖ Ryken, *The Word of God in English*



Cautions

- ❑ Language is complex and deep.
- ❑ We do not see everything.
- ❑ My own account is sketchy.

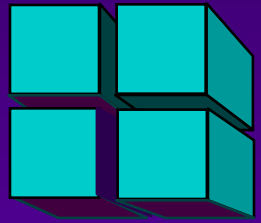


Quick solutions
are suspect.

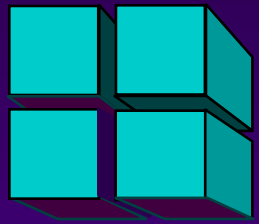


Why Look at Translations?

- ❑ For your own use.
- ❑ For advising others.
- ❑ English examples show principles.



1. Goals of Translation

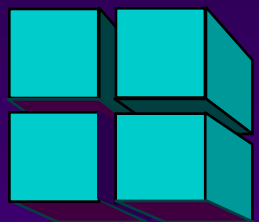


Possible Purposes of Translations

- ❑ A help for Greek and Hebrew
- ❑ Illustration of cultural relevance
 - ❖ Cottonpatch NT
 - ❖ Letters to Street Christians
 - ❖ The Message
- ❑ Continuous reading
- ❑ Study of cross-references
- ❑ General

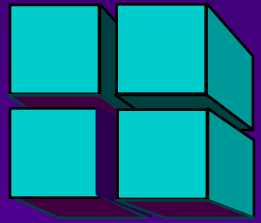
Many goals.



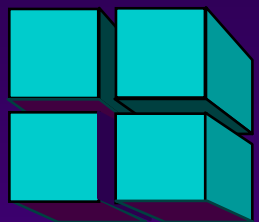


Possible Audiences

- ❑ Audiences with lower skills
 - ❖ Children's Bibles
 - ❖ Bible in Basic English
- ❑ Audiences with high skills (college graduate): NEB
- ❑ Using ecclesiastical tradition
- ❑ General

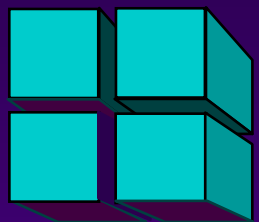


2. *Changing Language Form*



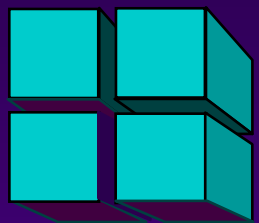
Ephesians 3:16

“that according to the riches of his glory
he may grant you to be strengthened
with power through his Spirit in your
inner being ...” (ESV)



An Example: Eph. 3:16

- ❑ κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ
- ❑ “according-to the wealth of-the glory his” (intrl.)
interlinear: copies form, with ungrammatical results.
- ❑ “according to the riches of his glory” (KJV, ESV)
literal method: meaning and form--minimal changes
- ❑ “out of his glorious riches” (NIV)
natural-idiom method: finds natural English idiom
- ❑ “from his glorious, unlimited resources” (NLT)
paraphrastic method: rephrases basic idea



Comparison of Methods (1)

Interlinear

“according-to the
wealth of-the glory his”

- ❑ exact copy
- ❑ ungrammatical
- ❑ unclear

Literal

“according to the
riches of his glory”

- ❑ words correspond
- ❑ strange
- ❑ fairly clear

Improvements.





Comparison of Methods (2)

Natural idiom

““out of his
glorious riches””

- ❑ some word relations
- ❑ ordinary English
- ❑ clear

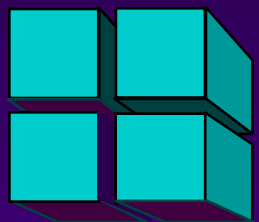
Paraphrase

“from his glorious,
unlimited resources”

- ❑ ideas only
- ❑ easy
- ❑ clear

Loss?





Spectrum of Methods

copy grammar

restructure grammar



inter-
linear

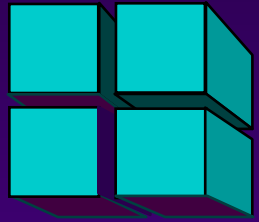
literal

natural
idiom

para-
phrase

easier
English

problems?



Nuances

Literal

“according to the
riches of his glory”

OT:
God appears
in splendor
and brightness

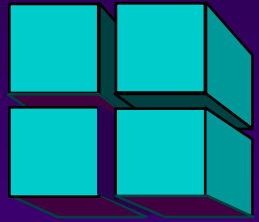
Natural idiom

“out of his
glorious riches”

idea of
glory in OT?

proportion?

nuances lost



Nuances in Paraphrase

Literal

“according to the
riches of his glory”

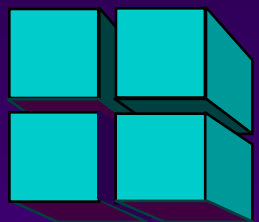
Paraphrase

“from his glorious,
unlimited resources”

idea of
lack of limit?

idea of
riches gone?

nuances changed



An Example: 2 Sam. 5:19

□ (2 Sam. 5:19) הֲתִתֵּנִם בְּיָדִי

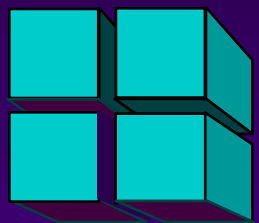
□ “?-you-give-them into-hand-my” (interlinear)

□ “Will you give them into my hand?” (ESV)

literal method: meaning and form--minimal changes

□ “Will you hand them over to me?” (NIV 1984)

natural-idiom method: finds natural English idiom

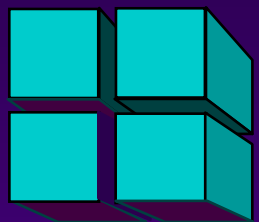


Evaluation

- ❑ Paraphrase is easier, but less nuanced.
- ❑ Choose ease or accuracy, but not both.
- ❑ Is the most literal always most accurate?

Loss and
gain.





Spectrum of Methods (2)

copy grammar

restructure grammar



inter-
linear

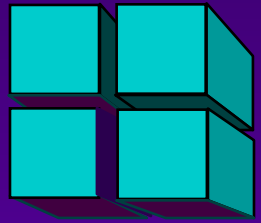
literal

natural
idiom

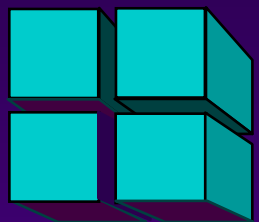
para-
phrase

more
obscure?

problems
here?



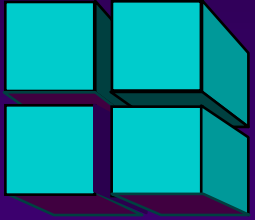
3. Conveying Meaning



An Example: Prov. 23:16

- ❑ וְתִעָלֶזְנָה כְּלִיּוֹתַי (Prov. 23:16)
 - ❑ “and-will-exult kidneys-my” (interlinear)
 - ❑ “Yea, my reins shall rejoice” (KJV)
- literal method: meaning and form--minimal changes
- ❑ “My inmost being will exult” (ESV; etc.)
 - ❖ kidneys are site of emotion

conservative (“essentially literal”) method:
when form is unclear, change for the sake of meaning



Comparison of Methods (3)

Literal

“my kidneys
will exult”

- ❑ words correspond
- ❑ strange
- ➡ ❑ obscure

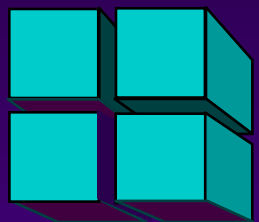
Conservative

“my inmost being
will exult”

- ❑ words correspond
- ❑ less strange
- ➡ ❑ clear

Improvements.

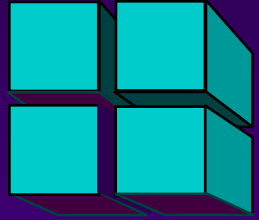




Footnotes Add Information

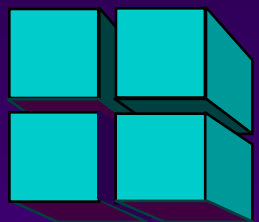
“My inmost being¹ will exult” (ESV)

¹Hebrew *my kidneys*



When to Change Form

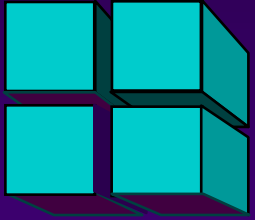
- ❑ Change to make grammatical.
- ❑ Change to indicate meaning.
- ❑ But questionable whether one should change for ease.



An Example: 1 Peter 1:13

- ❑ ἀναζωσάμενοι τὰς ὀσφύας τῆς διανοίας ὑμῶν
- ❑ “up-girding the loins of the mind-your” (interl.)
- ❑ “gird up the loins of your mind” KJV
 - ❖ literal equivalence
- ❑ “preparing your minds for action¹” ESV
 - ❖ conservative equivalence

¹Greek *girding up the loins of your mind*



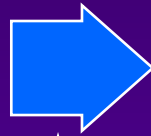
An Example: Eph. 1:18

- ❑ ἡ ἐλπὶς τῆς κλήσεως αὐτοῦ (Eph. 1:18)
- ❑ “the hope of-the calling his”
 - ❖ interlinear
- ❑ “the hope of his calling” KJV, NKJV, NASB
 - ❖ literal equivalence
- ❑ “the hope to which he has called you” RSV, ESV, NIV, NRSV, NEB, GNB
 - ❖ conservative equivalence



Difficulties with Meaning

“hope of
his calling”



“I hope that he calls me.”

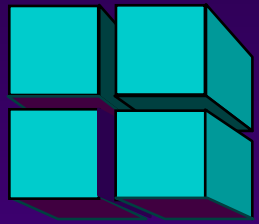
English “of” is naturally
read as objective

“hope to which
he has called you”



“he has spoken (and
guaranteed) my
destiny (hope)”

unambiguous meaning,
reproducing the Greek



Paraphrasing (radically restructuring)

conser-
vative

the hope to which he has called you. (ESV)

radical

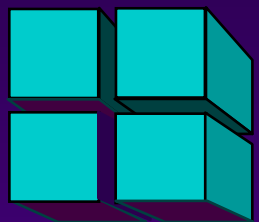
the wonderful future he has promised
to those he called. (NLT)

super?

where is our
response
in hope?

purpose
of call?

verbal
promise?



Spectrum of Methods (2)

copy grammar

restructure grammar



inter-
linear

literal

conser-
vative

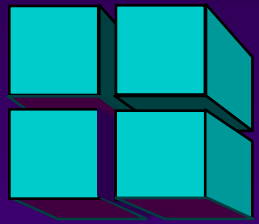
natural
idiom

para-
phrase

1-1 match,
but can lose
meaning

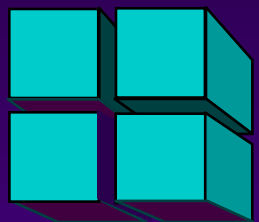
reason-
able
middle

easy, but
lose nuances



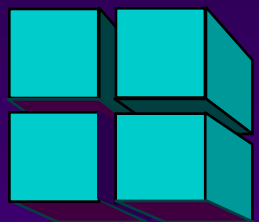
Conservative (“Essentially Literal”) Method

- ❑ Preserve form when possible.
- ❑ When meaning is obscure, change form.
- ❑ Change form conservatively.
 - ❖ No radical paraphrasing.
- ❑ Also called "essentially literal" method.



Terminology for Translation

- ❑ 20th century: "dynamic equivalence" moved away from form.
- ❑ It used "formal equivalence" to label (somewhat misleadingly) all earlier translations.
- ❑ It covered a spectrum.
- ❑ Now called "functional equivalence," "idiomatic equivalence," "meaning-based translation."



Problem with "dynamic"

- ❑ Focused on basic meaning.
- ❑ Underestimated nuances.
- ❑ Became a broad umbrella.

copy grammar

restructure grammar



formal equivalence

?

dynamic equivalence

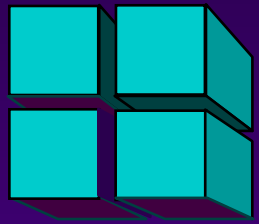
inter-
linear

literal

conser-
vative

natural
idiom

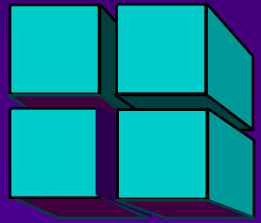
para-
phrase



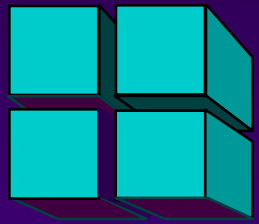
Evaluation of Translation

Methods

- ❑ Grammar and vocabulary systems differ.
- ❑ Often can copy both grammar and meaning.
- ❑ Cannot always copy both.
- ❑ When forced to choose form or meaning, copy meaning-content.
- ❑ Radical rewriting changes nuances.
- ❑ Consider ease for evangelism.



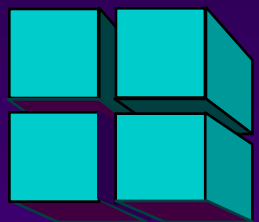
4. *The Question of Culture*



Cultural Transfer:

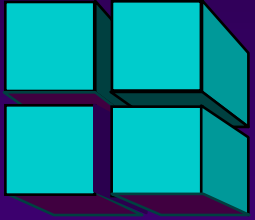
1 Cor. 16:20

- ❑ “Greet one another with a holy kiss.”
(NASB, ESV, NIV)
- ❑ “I should like you to shake hands all round as a sign of Christian love.”
(Phillips)
- ❑ “Pass the greetings around with holy embraces! (Message)
- ❑ “Greet each other in Christian love.”
(NLT)



Cultural: Heb 13:9

- ❑ “Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings” (ESV).
- ❑ “So do not be attracted by strange, new ideas” (NLT).
 - ❖ our culture attracted by newness
- ❑ “Don’t be lured away from him by the latest speculations about him” (Message).
 - ❖ our culture attracted by speculation



Questions about Culture

“dynamic equivalence”



from Eugene Nida,
transferring
linguistic meaning



John Beekman calls it
“idiomatic equivalence”

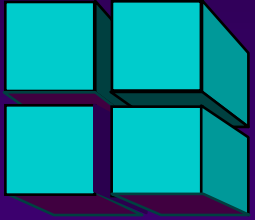


from Charles Kraft,
transferring
cultural function;
“cultural equivalence”

different
practices



Watch out!



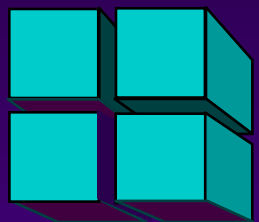
Cultural Equivalence

+Insights+

- ❑ Embed meaning in cultural context
- ❑ Apply gospel flexibly

-Dangers-

- ❑ Wipe out unique history
- ❑ Underestimate complexity
- ❑ Anthropologist as new priest



A Spectrum of Practices

copy grammar

restructure grammar



cultural
preservation

KJV/ESV
NASB RSV NIV1984 GNB
interlinear NEB
Young's

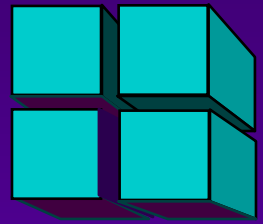
NIV2011
NRSV Phillips
NLT

cultural
reexpression

LB

“cultural equivalence”

Message

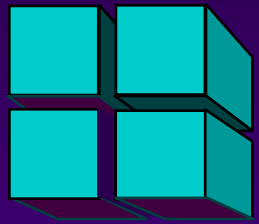


5. Difficulties in Achieving Translation Goals



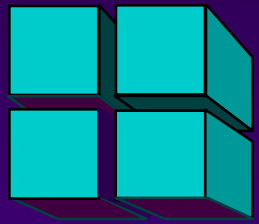
Thanks for What We Have

- ❑ All main translations show main meanings.
- ❑ All show the gospel.
- ❑ People come to salvation through them.



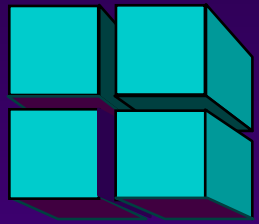
Difficulties with Literal Translation

- ❑ Words don't match, 1-1.
- ❑ Grammar doesn't match, 1-1.
- ❑ 1-1 grammar gives illusion of faithfulness, but subtle obstacles to understanding.
- ❑ Difficult to read in large amounts.
- ❑ Holiness confused with alienness.



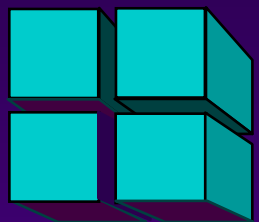
Difficulties with Restructuring

- ❑ Obscurities and ambiguities glossed over.
- ❑ Frustrates preacher's reference to interpretive problems.
- ❑ Flattens metaphors.
- ❑ More prone to big errors.
- ❑ Hides allusions to other passages.
- ❑ Overconfidence in translator's understanding of language.



Difficulties with Cultural-Equivalent Translation

- ❑ Wipes out scandal of incarnation.
- ❑ Can't succeed. (Too many cultural references.)
- ❑ Arbitrary stopping point.
- ❑ Paternalistic in assuming people can't understand cultures.
- ❑ Overconfidence in judging what is "significant."

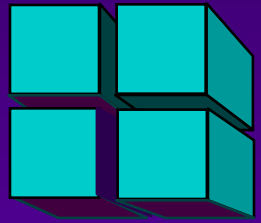


Choosing a Translation

- ❑ One central translation for memorization.
- ❑ Reject cultural modernization.
- ❑ Look for fullest meaning equivalence.
- ❑ Right now in USA, NIV popular.
- ❑ But NIV is too dynamic.
- ❑ NIV 2011 is gender-neutral.
- ❑ ESV (2001) better.

An imperfect world.



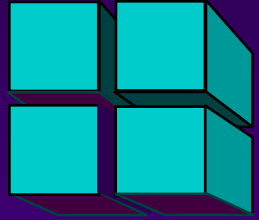


6. *Gender-Neutral Translation*



Dangers from Attitude

- ❑ A delicate question.
- ❑ Our own sin affects attitude.
- ❑ Charity needed.

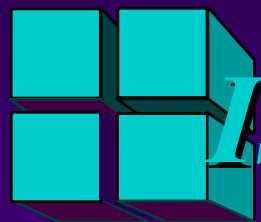


The Issue

- ❑ Since 1980 academia has turned toward “gender-neutral” English.

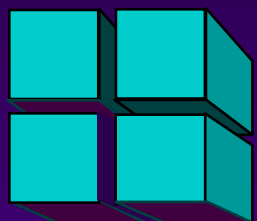
Those He who keeps the law is a wise son, *are* children
but a companion of gluttons shames his father.
their *parents*

- ❑ Should a translation follow?



Issues in Language in General

- ❑ Real sins toward women exist.
- ❑ Idea: “Eliminate generic ‘he’ and other usages for ‘equality.’ ”
- ❑ But English is awkward without it.
- ❑ There are secondary consequences.



“Man” and “Men”

Greek:

ἄνθρωπος



English:

“person, people,
human being”
(includes men
and women)

ἄνῆρ

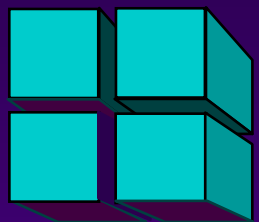


“man, men,
husband”
(male human
beings)

γυνή



“woman,
wife”
(female
human
beings)

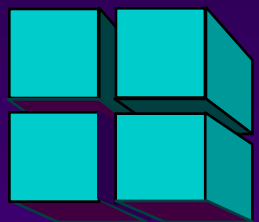


James 3:9

“With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who have been made in God’s likeness. (NIVI)

Greek: ἄνθρωπος, “people”

O.K.: a good rendering of the meaning of Greek.



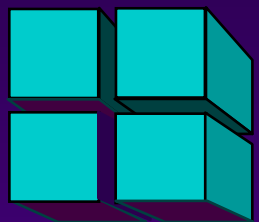
Acts 20:30 “Men”

- ❑ “Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.”

Greek: ἀνὴρ,
“male human being”

- ❑ “Even from your own number some will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.” (NIVI, TNIV)
- ❑ NRSV, NIVI, TNIV, NLT, CEV drop “men.”

Distorts meaning.



Acts 1:21 “Men”

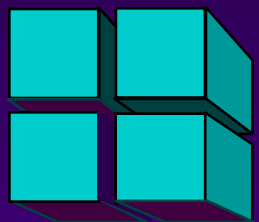
- ❑ “Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, ...” (NIV).

Greek: ἀνὴρ, “male human being”

- ❑ “Therefore it is necessary to choose one of those who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ...” (NIVI)

- ❑ NIVI, NLT drop “men.”

Distorts meaning.



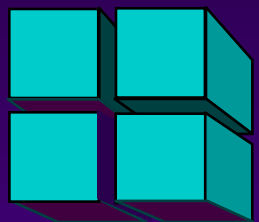
The Problem with “Son”

Prov. 13:24 (NIV 1984): He who spares the rod hates his son, ...

Prov. 13:24 (NIV 2011): Whoever spares the rod hates their children, ...

❑ Hebrew has בֶּן (“son”).

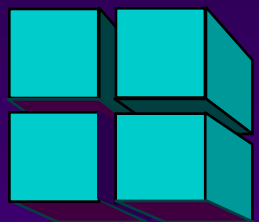
Distorts meaning.



Generic “He”

- “If anyone loves me, **he** will keep my word, and my Father will love **him**, and we will come to **him** and make our home with **him**’ (John 14:23 ESV).

Generic “he” means “he/him/his” used to refer to a representative person in a general statement including men and women.



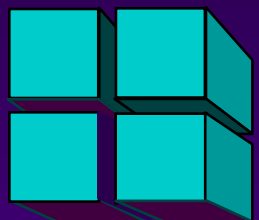
Plurals Change Meaning

❑ “If **anyone** loves me, **he** will keep my word, and my Father will love **him**, and we will come to **him** and make our home with **him**’ (John 14:23 ESV).

individual
receiver
and home

❑ “Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them” (John 14:23 NRSV).

corporate
receiver
and home



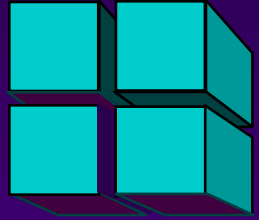
Singular Plus Plurals

□ “If **anyone** loves me, **he** will keep my word, and my Father will love **him**, and we will come to **him** and make our home with **him**’ (John 14:23 ESV).

individual
receiver
and home

□ “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them” (John 14:23 NIV 2011).

corporate
receiver
and home



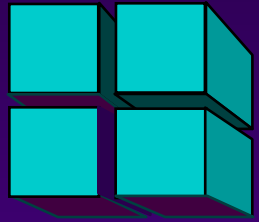
Types of Translation

acceptable

- ❑ “anyone” for original “anyone”
- ❑ “person/people” for original “human being”

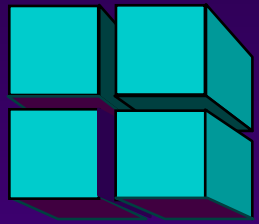
unacceptable meaning changes

- ❑ “he” to “they” (pluralize whole)
- ❑ “he” to “you” (another way to avoid “he” in some contexts)



Reasons for Avoiding Generic “He”

- ❑ 1 Cor. 9:15-23.
- ❑ In America, gender-neutrality is the prestige form.
- ❑ Some are aggrieved by generic “he.”

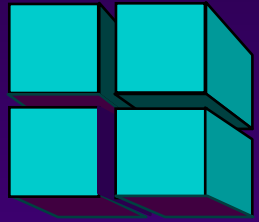


Reasons for Continuing Generic “He”

- ❑ Needed for accuracy in translation.
- ❑ Similar to generic masculines in Hebrew and Greek.
- ❑ English awkward without “he.”
- ❑ Past literature.
- ❑ Newspapers attest generic “he.”
- ❑ Bible memorization.

Needed.





What Are Orthodox Christians Doing?

❑ Various things.

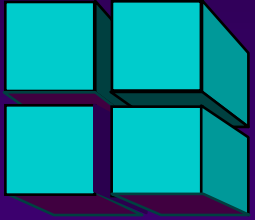
sermons, formal
oral addresses

modern
written materials

“you”;
“he or she”;
occasionally “he”

“one”;
“they”;
occasionally “he”

❑ **But: when translating, much less flexibility exists.**



Author Controls Meanings

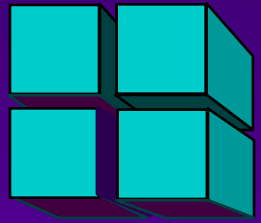
authors

I'll make my sentence plural to avoid "he."

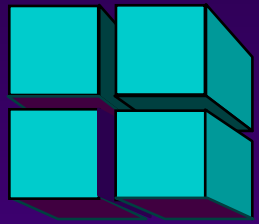
I'll stick with "he" because I want an individual example.

translator

God said it.
I can't change his meanings.

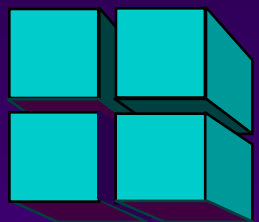


Cultural Adaptation?



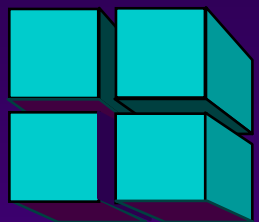
Problem of Crossing Cultures

- ❑ Bible must speak of ancient cultures.
- ❑ Generic “he” is “gnat”; fathers are “camel.”
- ❑ Cultural “adjustments” may increase offense and decrease understanding.



Types of Cultural Change

- ❑ “He” to “they” in (Messianic) psalms (e.g. NRSV Ps. 34:20)
- ❑ “Father” to “parent”
- ❑ “my son” (Prov.) to “my child”
- ❑ “Son of Man” to “human being”
- ❑ Remove masculine elder in 1 Tim. 3
- ❑ Remove masculine pronouns referring to God



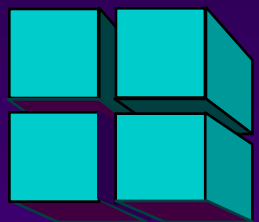
Test of Gender Neutral

- ❑ Test by asking: what happens to generic “he”?
- ❑ Look at John 14:23 as test verse.
“If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”



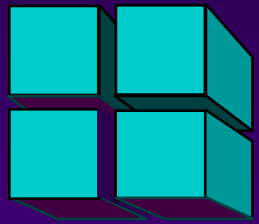
Which Are Gender Neutral?

- ❑ The following remove generic “he”:
NRSV, NCV, GNB(1992), CEV, NIVI,
TNIV, NIV 2011, NLT, GW.



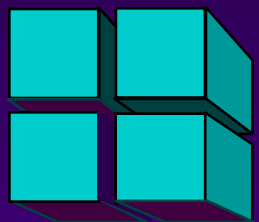
Evaluation on Gender

- ❑ Cultural adjustments not acceptable.
- ❑ Accuracy is primary.
- ❑ Gender-neutral translations cannot serve.
- ❑ NIV can no longer serve.
- ❑ NASB, NKJV, and ESV are also available, without these problems



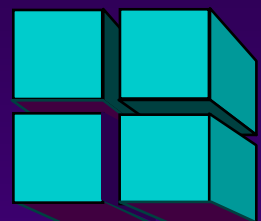
Moving People to Use a New Translation

- ❑ Don't move precipitously.
- ❑ Be realistic.
- ❑ Adapt translation to audience capacity.
- ❑ Set an example.
- ❑ Show benefit, rather than demanding submission.



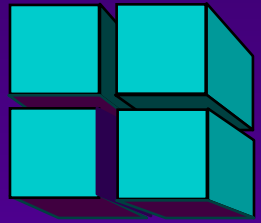
Issue of Devotion to KJV

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. – Rev. 22:18-19

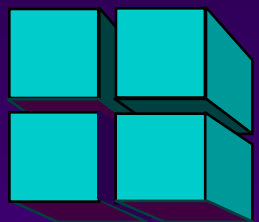


Data

- ❑ ξύλου ["tree"]
- ❑ "tree" (NASB, ESV, NIV, RSV, GNB, etc.)
- ❑ "book" (KJV, NKJV [with marginal note])
- ❑ "book" (*libro* –Vulgate) [vs. *ligno*, "tree"]
- ❑ Erasmus in 1516 back-translated from the Vulgate because his one manuscript of Revelation lacked the last six verses. (See Jan Krans, "Erasmus and the Text of Revelation 22:19: ... ," *TC*. 16 [2011], internet.)



7. *Practicing Translation*



Doing Your Own

- ❑ When studying a passage.
- ❑ Translate to make sure you understand.
- ❑ Avoid jargon and traditional expressions.
- ❑ A sermon needs freshness, not reiteration.

17 הַתְּעוֹרְרִי הַתְּעוֹרְרִי
 קוּמִי יְרוּשָׁלַם
 אֲשֶׁר שָׁתִית מִיַּד יְהוָה
 אֶת־כּוֹס חֲמָתוֹ
 אֶת־קַבְעֵת כּוֹס הַתַּרְעֵלָה
 שָׁתִית מְצִית׃
 18 אִין־מְנַהֵל לָהּ
 מִכָּל־בָּנִים יִלְדָּהּ
 וְאִין מַחְזִיק בְּיָדָהּ
 מִכָּל־בָּנִים גָּדְלָהּ
 שְׁתֵּים הֵנָּה קָרְאתֶיךָ׃
 19 מִי יְנַוֵּד לָךְ
 הַשֹּׁד וְהַשָּׁבֶר
 וְהַרְעָב וְהַחֲרָב
 מִי אֲנַחֲמֶךָ׃
 20 בְּנִיךָ עָלְפוּ
 שָׁכְבוּ בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל־חֻצוֹת
 כָּתוּא מִכָּמָר
 הַמְּלֵאִים חֲמַת־יְהוָה
 גְּעֵרַת אֱלֹהֶיךָ׃

17 Rouse yourself, rouse yourself.
 Get up, Jerusalem.
 You have drunk the
 cup of God's fury
 which you got
 from the Lord.
 You have drunk
 to the bottom
 the goblet-cup causing
 reeling drunkenness.
 18 There is no one
 to guide her
 among the sons
 she has borne.
 There is no one
 to take her
 by the hand
 among the sons
 she has brought up.
 19 Two things have
 happened to you.
 Who will console
 you? Devastation
 and destruction,
 famine and war.
 How may I
 comfort you?
 20 Your sons have
 fainted. They have
 lain down in all
 the street intersec-
 tions, like an ante-
 lope caught in a net,
 Full of the fury of the Lord,
 the rebuke of your God.

17 Jerusalem, wake up!
 Rouse yourself
 and get up!
 You have drunk the
 cup of punishment
 that the Lord in his anger
 gave you to drink;
 you drank it down, and it
 made you stagger.
 18 There is no one
 to lead you,
 no one among
 your people
 to take you by the hand.
 19 A Double disaster
 has fallen on you:
 your land has been
 devastated by war,
 and your people
 have starved.
 There is no one to
 show you sympathy.
 20 At the corner
 of every street
 your people collapse
 from weakness;
 they are like deer
 caught in
 a hunter's net.
 They have felt
 the force of
 God's anger.

17 Rouse yourself!
 Rouse yourself!
 Arise, O Jerusalem!,
 You who have drunk
 from the Lords' hand
 the cup of His anger;
 The chalice of reeling
 you have drained
 to the dregs.
 18 There is none
 to guide her
 among all the sons
 she has borne;
 Nor is there one
 to take her
 by the hand
 among all the sons
 she has reared.
 19 These two tings
 have befallen you;
 Who will mourn for you?--
 The devastation and
 destruction,
 famine and sword;
 How shall I comfort you?
 20 Your sons have fainted,
 They lie *helpless*
 at the head of every street,
 Like an antelope in a net,
 Full of the wrath of the Lord,
 The rebuke of your God.

Isaiah 51:17-20

Mine

הַתְּעוֹרְרִי הַתְּעוֹרְרִי 17
קוּמִי יְרוּשָׁלַם
אֲשֶׁר שָׁתִית מִיַּד יְהוָה
אֶת־כּוֹס חֲמָתוֹ
אֶת־קִבְעַת כּוֹס הַתַּרְעֵלָה
שָׁתִית מְצִית׃
אֵין־מְנַהֵל לָהּ 18
מִכָּל־בָּנִים יְלָדָהּ
וְאֵין מַחֲזִיק בְּיָדָהּ
מִכָּל־בָּנִים גִּבָּהּ לָהּ

17 Rouse yourself, rouse yourself.
Get up, Jerusalem.

You have drunk the cup
of God's fury which
you got from the Lord.

You have drunk to the bottom
the goblet-cup causing
reeling drunkenness.

18 There is no one to guide her
among the sons she has borne.

There is no one to take her
by the hand

among the sons she has brought up.

Isaiah 51:17-20

Mine

19 שְׁתֵּים הֵנָּה קִרְאתֶיךָ
מִי יְנַוֵּד לָךְ
הַשָּׂדֶה וְהַשָּׂכָר
וְהָרָעָב וְהַחֶרֶב
מִי אֲנַחֲמֶיךָ׃
20 בְּנֶיךָ עָלְפוּ
שָׁכְבוּ בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל־חֻצוֹת
כִּתּוּא מִכָּמָר
הִמְלֵאִים חֲמַת־יְהוָה
בְּעֶרְת אֵלֶיךָ

19 Two things have
happened to you.
Who will console you?
Devastation and destruction,
famine and war.
How may I comfort you?
20 Your sons have fainted.
They have lain down in all
the street intersections,
like an antelope caught in a net,
Full of the fury of the Lord,
the rebuke of your God.