Lutheran Synod Quarterly

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2012 Bjarne Wollan Teigen Reformation Lectures

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Formal and Functional Equivalence in Bible Translation

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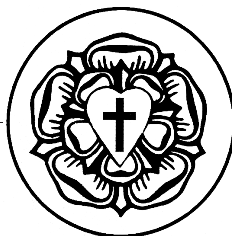

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LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY

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Foreword

LSQ Vol. 53, No. 1 (March 2013)

IN THIS ISSUE OF THE *Quarterly* we are pleased to share with our readers the 2012 annual Reformation Lectures, delivered October 25–26, 2012, in Mankato, Minnesota. These lectures are sponsored jointly by Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. This was the forty-fifth in the series of annual Reformation Lectures which began in 1967. This year the name of the Reformation Lectures has been changed to the Bjarne Wollan Teigen Reformation Lectures. Dr. B.W. Teigen was instrumental in the establishment of these lectures. (For more information, see the article, "The Bjarne Wollan Teigen Reformation Lectures.") The format of the lectures has always been that of a free conference and thus participation in these lectures is outside the framework of fellowship.

This year there were two presenters. The first lecture was given by Dr. Cameron MacKenzie, the Ellis Professor of Historical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and chairman of the department. Dr. MacKenzie has a B.A. in mathematics and history from the University of Detroit, an M.A. in history from the University of Chicago, an M.A. in classics (Latin and Greek) from Wayne State University, an S.T.M. in New Testament from Concordia Theological Seminary (Fort Wayne), and a Ph.D. in history from the University of Notre Dame. At Concordia Seminary, Dr. MacKenzie regularly teaches courses in the history of the Christian Church such as Reformation Era, Luther's theology, Calvin and Calvinism, Puritanism, and the history of the English Bible. He has published many articles in the field of

church history, lectures frequently, and is the author of *The Battle for the Bible in England, 1557–1582*. Prior to coming to Concordia Seminary, Dr. MacKenzie was pastor for eight years of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Detroit, Michigan, where he also served as headmaster of the parish school. He has served the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod as a member of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations and as chairman of the Doctrinal Review Commission and is presently the book review editor of the *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*. Dr. MacKenzie is married to Meg (nee Martin) of Midland, Michigan, who teaches second grade at St. Paul's Lutheran School in Fort Wayne. The MacKenzies are the parents of four grown children.

The second presenter was the Rev. Paul Wendland, president of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin. As professor of New Testament, his specialty is biblical interpretation and the book of Romans. He grew up in Zambia, Africa, the son of a Lutheran missionary. Pres. Wendland is a graduate of Northwestern College in Watertown, Wisconsin, and also earned a masters at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He is a graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin. Like his father, Paul served as a missionary in Africa for six years. Later, he was called to be a parish pastor in Michigan and then to be a home missionary in Salt Lake City, Utah. From 1993 to 2001, he taught English literature and Latin at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota. Since 2001 he has been serving at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, the last seven years as its president. He is the author of two volumes of the People's Bible: *1 Chronicles* and *2 Chronicles* (Northwestern Publishing House, 1994 and 1998). Paul and his wife, Margaret, have been blessed with three children.

The theme of the lectures was "Bible Translations for the 21st Century." The first lecture, given by Dr. MacKenzie, was entitled "Battling over Bibles: Episodes in the History of Translating the Scriptures." The second lecture, presented by Pres. Wendland, was entitled "Formal and Functional Equivalency in Bible Translation."

The Reformation Lectures consisted of an historical study of certain Bible translations and the principles involved in the proper translation of Holy Scriptures. All faithful translators of the Bible must adhere to a high view of the Scriptures, maintaining the verbal inerrancy of the original autographs. The theory of translation may be seen as a spectrum or a continuum moving from formal equivalency (word for word) to functional equivalency (thought for thought). No translation is purely

formal or functional, but each translation tends in one direction or the other.

The history of the demise and dissolution of the Synodical Conference will be of interest to members of the ELS. This event affected the lives of many in our synod and continues to have an influence on confessional Lutheranism today. As the Synodical Conference was founded on the basis of a particular understanding of the doctrine of church fellowship, it also dissolved over disagreement on that same doctrine of church fellowship. Prof. Erling Teigen makes this important point in his essay, "The Decline and Collapse of the Synodical Conference: A Timeline." Prof. Teigen teaches at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota.

The Rev. Craig Ferkenstad prepared the essay entitled "Ludvig Mathias Lindeman (1812–87): The Man Who Taught the Norwegian People to Sing," in honor of the 200th anniversary of Lindeman's birth. Lindeman was one of the leading composers in Norway and had a profound influence on the hymnody of the Norwegian Lutheran Church. The Rev. Ferkenstad is pastor of Norseland and Norwegian Grove Lutheran Churches in St. Peter and Gaylord, Minnesota.

In the bread and wine, blessed by the Word, is our cure. At the altar railing, look in the cup. There is the blood poured from His side for us. Look at the bread. There is His body broken by death for us. Jesus' body and blood cure us from our sin, creating us anew in Christ Jesus. They are the antidote for death, giving us eternal life. Take and eat. Take and drink. Look and live! With these comforting words, the Rev. Timothy Bartels encouraged the communicants to receive the Sacrament at the 2012 convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The Rev. Bartels is pastor of Saved By Grace Lutheran Church in Gresham, Oregon.

In marriage when we find it hard, and we struggle, and the hours are long, and the housework is endless, and we don't feel appreciated, and all the *mystery* is gone, Jesus makes it beautiful still and calls it blessed and makes it brand new. He forgives us all our sins—against Him and against each other. He preserves marriage. Hold it in reverent fear and rejoice in it, because it belongs to Jesus, and He loves it, and with it He loves you. This is the reminder that the Rev. Aaron Hamilton gives all those in the married estate in his wedding sermon based on Song of Solomon 8:6–7. The Rev. Hamilton is pastor of Hope Lutheran Church in West Jordan, Utah.

– GRS

The Bjarne Wollan Teigen Reformation Lectures

Erling T. Teigen
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Mankato, Minnesota

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THE LONG RUNNING REFORMATION LECTURES at Bethany Lutheran College, held on October 25 and 26, 2012, saw a slight change in course. The lectures are renamed in honor of Bjarne Wollan Teigen, president of Bethany Lutheran College and Seminary from 1950 to 1970.

Forty-seven years ago, in March 1965, Dr. Herman Sasse came to this country from Australia, visiting the Lutheran churches that were under assault by the pupils of Karl Barth, Rudolph Bultmann, and other European theologians—some of whom had been Sasse's colleagues while he had been a pastor and teacher in Germany. Because of their contacts with various men in the other church bodies, then President B.W. Teigen of Bethany Lutheran College and Seminary, and Seminary Dean, Milton H. Otto, invited Sasse to come to Mankato to meet and give some lectures on the theological situation in Germany.

That was the beginning of these lectures, even though they were not yet held in connection with the Reformation festival. It was probably not the intention at the beginning that the lectures should become an annual series. However, a couple of years later a young Australian pastor born in Estonia, raised in Germany, trained in the U.S. at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and serving a parish in Toowoomba, Australia, also came to the U.S. to give some lectures and meet with the members of the former Synodical Conference churches. Having been given a very high recommendation by Dr. Sasse, Kurt Marquart was also invited to

present lectures here at Bethany at Reformation time, and that did mark the institution of this long Reformation lecture series.

It soon became clear that this lecture series had the potential for becoming a meeting place for the various little pockets of confessional Lutherans in the U.S., who at the time had some reason to worry about their identity. At the time, there was no other meeting place for the confessional members of the former Synodical Conference churches. So the lecture series became, and remained for many years, a sort of a free conference for confessionally-minded Lutherans in the various Lutheran church bodies in the U.S. Continuing the tradition begun with Sasse and Marquart, the lectures were able to reach out to overseas Lutherans as well, who were fighting some of the same confessional battles as were confessional Lutherans in the U.S., and many of them have been at the Reformation Lecture podium: Hans Kirsten, Manfred Roensch, Wilhelm Oesch, Wilbert Kreiss, and Gottfried Hoffman. There have also been such luminaries as Heiko Oberman; the Preus brothers, Robert and Jacob; Robert Kolb; James Kittleson; Kenneth Hagen; John W. Montgomery; and a host of other competent theologians and scholars. There have also been parish pastors and everyday theology professors, honestly and diligently working their craft, producing very helpful pieces of scholarship in their sacristies and academic offices. We are very proud of the body of literature that all of them, from the most widely known to the lesser known, have produced for our *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*.

The various speakers who have been invited over the years have generally reflected the concerns of the times, and certainly this year's lectures do that as well, as we focus our attention on the issue of Bible translations. Our chief goal in these lectures has been to reflect sound, competent Lutheran theology.

Some years ago interest was expressed in establishing some kind of forum in memory of Bjarne Wollan Teigen and his wife Elna Tjernagel Teigen. After some time and much discussion, it was decided that an appropriate way to memorialize B. W. Teigen's contribution to Bethany and to our church would be to continue the Reformation Lecture series in his name, continuing the topics that have appeared over the years, but also opening up the scope of topics to include other matters of interest to him—including education and literature. Not only a competent theologian, but also a true renaissance man, steeped in the liberal arts, B.W. recognized the importance of the broad education for laity

and clergy advocated by Martin Luther in his education essays and by Phillip Melanchthon, the *praeceptor Germania*, the teacher of Germany.

Along with his colleagues in the 1940s, Bjarne realized that this college had to become an advocate for private, liberal arts education, and therefore they urged their colleagues to study education, and pursue the study of higher education in particular.

Several decades of students also got their primary or only exposure to English literature, especially Shakespeare and poetry, from B.W. Many students can remember his smooth transition from Shakespeare to Ogden Nash, from Luther, Augustine, and Chemnitz to his description of Lake Wobegon Lutheranism, where many are cold but few are frozen.

B.W. had completed most of his work for the doctoral degree in Shakespearean literature, but when he became president of the college, further work was placed on hold and remained there. Yet, it was a proud moment when he was awarded an honorary doctorate by Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne in 1979. Still his colleagues, and his family, realized that his education was furthered (but never complete) as a result of his self-analyzed insomnia.

Over three decades Bjarne taught the standard college-sophomore course in Christian Doctrine (which, unfortunately, was succeeded by another thirty years of a different Teigen in that position). But his influence was also felt, especially in later years, in courses taught in the seminary. Even so, one of his greatest podiums was in the faculty coffee room, where blessed were they who did not have 10:30 class and could stay. The discussions there ranged from theology, local and international, to politics, national and North Dakotan, but was thin on sports.

That outlines, but does not limit, the many interests of Dr. Teigen, which, I think we can safely say, was headed by theology. And it is those interests, working together, that will certainly inform the direction this series of lectures will take in the future.

Finally, we will have to say that most of all it was the reality and the necessity of a school like Bethany Lutheran College that motivated Bjarne Wollan Teigen. The church must have a well-educated clergy and laity, a laity well versed in Scripture and the biblical doctrine of the Lutheran Confessional writings, as well as in the broader fields of human learning. B.W. knew better than many the intent of Martin Luther's understanding of the two kingdoms, where Christians live in two God-given realms—the heavenly and the worldly, the topic of his lectures in 1975.

The college, in its first iteration as a ladies' college serving the churches of the Synodical Conference, had a real struggle to survive, and after 15 years, failed. There was, however, in 1926 and 27 a small remnant of the Norwegian Synod that was willing to take the plunge and purchased the college, making it a co-educational institution, but preserving its mission to serve the congregations of the Synodical Conference. Even so, the first two twenty-year presidents, S.C. Ylvisaker and Teigen, devoted more physical and emotional energy than they could reasonably have been expected to exert to keep the college, along with the high school, and then the seminary, afloat. There were many near misses, but the college has thrived, always with struggle, never with any reason to glory in itself, and continues to carry out that mission.

Responsibility for that success is not due alone to Bjarne Wollan Teigen, but to a great many, both clergy and laity in our church and fellowship and many outside of it. But especially, as all of them would hasten to say, this institution exists by the grace of God alone and none of our own doing.

While we now dedicate this lecture series to the memory of Bjarne Wollan Teigen we also intend that the confessional theology and love of learning and education that marked his service to our church and college will continue.

We are most grateful to the children of Bjarne and Elna Teigen for their interest in this project and for their support of it. And we hope that many others will now want to show their appreciation by contributing to the endowment fund for these lectures.

The lectures this year were devoted to Bible translation, certainly a topic of interest for B.W. Teigen. The first lecture, "Battling over Bibles: Episodes in the History of Translating the Scriptures," was presented by Dr. Cameron MacKenzie of Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana. The second lecture, "Formal and Functional Equivalence in Bible Translation," was presented by Prof. Paul Wendland, president of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin. Formal and functional equivalence describe two different approaches to Bible translation used today, the first of which refers to a generally word-for-word approach and the second to an approach which offers more paraphrase than the other. While the two speakers had a very lively, informative, and helpful debate on the matter, they agreed that no translation is purely one or the other. Much of the discussion was also devoted to the extent to which the translator must or may take

into account contemporary attitudes, which in this case would include the so-called "gender-neutral language."

The Reformation Lectures committee consists of the presidents of the college and the seminary, Pres. Dan Bruss and Pres. Gaylin Schmeling, and faculty members Donald Moldstad, Michael K. Smith, and Erling Teigen. The lectures are published each year in the *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*. LSQ

Battling over Bibles:
Episodes in the History of Translating the Scriptures

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As long as people take the Bible seriously, they are going to translate it. And as long as people take the Bible seriously, they are going to argue about translations! Although clearly a long way from our Lord's "new commandment" that His disciples love one another, it is nonetheless a mark of religious vitality—if not of charity—that Christians care enough about the Bible to denounce translations and translators who do not render the Word of God faithfully or, at least, so they think. Whether we are talking about Jerome's Vulgate or the NIV 2011, the first appearance of these versions created controversy. The same has been true with respect to many versions in between. The story of translating the Bible is also the story of controversy in the Church.

Obviously, in a short paper like this, we are not going to recount the entire history of translation controversies. Instead, I would like to focus on three particular eras that were marked not only by major efforts to put the Bible into the vernacular but also by major arguments over the character and quality of such versions. Our focus will be on the Bible in English; but we will begin with Luther and the Reformation as the period when vernacular Bibles became characteristic of Protestant Christianity. Then we will shift to the 19th century, when New Testament textual critics were able to persuade church leaders that the venerable King James Version had to give way to something better; and then

finally to the late 20th century when feminists began their assault on traditional English.

By beginning with the Reformation, I do not mean to suggest that translating the Bible came into vogue only with Martin Luther. That's not even the case with respect to the German Bible (there were at least 14 editions in print before Martin Luther),[1] nor is it true with respect to the early Church that employed not only the Greek Septuagint for its basic Bible but also quickly produced translations fitted to the mission field in Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, and Latin.[2] Nonetheless, it is still the case that theology and the printing press gave dramatic impetus to the production of vernacular Bibles in the 16th century. And not surprisingly, Martin Luther was at the source and center of this development.

We cannot understand the success of Luther's reformation movement apart from the "new technology" of his day. Although Luther was himself an impressive personality, it is hard to imagine the Reformation without the printing press. By printed works in the vernacular, especially pamphlets, the catechism, and the Bible, Luther communicated directly with ordinary people who embraced his faith and made it their own.[3]

But why the Bible in particular? Given some of Luther's basic beliefs about the Bible, viz., that the Scriptures alone are the source and standard for Christian doctrine and practice[4] and that every Christian is responsible for knowing and applying the Scriptures,[5] it is not surprising that Luther and his colleagues produced and promoted Bibles in the

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[1] M. Reu, *Luther's German Bible* (Columbus, OH: The Lutheran Book Concern, 1934; reprint, St. Louis: CPH, 1984), 27-39.

[2] James W. Voelz, *What Does This Mean? Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-Modern World* (St. Louis: CPH, 1995), 38.

[3] This has often been remarked upon. An excellent work that demonstrates just how effectively Luther employed the printing press is Mark U. Edwards, Jr., *Printing, Propaganda, and Martin Luther* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994). For a much broader look at the ways in which the printing press facilitated the transformation of western civilization (including religion) in the early modern period, see Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

[4] E.g., "We ought to see that every article of faith of which we boast is certain, pure, and based on clear passages of Scripture." *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520), LW 36:107 (WA 6:560.27-29).

[5] E.g., "We ought to march boldly forward and test all that they do, or leave undone, by our believing understanding of the Scriptures… it is the duty of every Christian to espouse the cause of the faith, to understand and defend it, and to denounce every error." *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate* (1520), LW 44:135-36 (WA 6:412.29-31, 37-38).

language of the people. Although the Reformer had published a few translations of biblical material before 1522, it was not until he was at the Wartburg that he actually undertook the project that would last him the rest of his life, putting the Word of God into the German tongue. It was a collaborative effort, of course. Nevertheless, Luther was its driving force and the one person more than any other responsible for its accomplishment.[6]

As noted above, the German Bible was already in print before Luther undertook the task, but previous editions were based on the Latin Vulgate. Luther wanted something different—and better—a Bible based upon the original languages and translated into an idiom that ordinary Germans could understand. Moreover, unlike his predecessors, he had access to printed editions of both the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament as well grammars and lexicons, Latin translations, and philological commentaries to help in understanding.[7]

Up until 1521 and his great confession before the Diet of Worms, Luther had neither time nor opportunity for such demanding work as translating the Bible; but afterwards, when his prince, Frederick the Wise, had him taken off to the Wartburg for safekeeping, Luther began the task that would last him the rest of his life. Beginning in December, 1521, with the Greek New Testament, he completed a German translation by the time he returned to Wittenberg in March of 1522. With the help of Melanchthon and others, the work was revised and then transmitted to the printers for publication in September 1522.[8]

And this was just the beginning. With the New Testament now being published, Luther and his Wittenberg colleagues turned to the Old and published it in parts as they completed them, the Pentateuch coming out in 1523 and the last of the prophets in 1532. Only in 1534 did a complete Luther Bible finally appear, and it was a magnificent achievement. Beautifully printed and illustrated, this work opened up

[6] Eric W. Gritsch, "Luther as Bible Translator," in *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 62-72.

[7] See Brooke Foss Westcott, *A General View of the History of the English Bible*, 3rd ed., rev. William Aldis Wright, reprint ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1998), 126-29, for brief description of what was available for original language biblical studies at the time of Luther. For a more detailed discussion, see Basil Hall, "Biblical Scholarship: Editions and Commentaries," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 3: *The West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, ed. S. L. Greenslade (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1963), 38-93.

[8] Willem Jan Kooiman, *Luther and the Bible* (Phil.: Muhlenberg Press, 1961), 90-95, 118-21.

God's Word to the German reader as never before. Here the pious layman could read the entire narrative of God's revelation from the story of creation all the way through the book of Revelation with its visions of the end times. And when he didn't understand something, he had Luther's prefaces and notes to help him![9]

Prior to Luther's death, 12 more editions of the entire Bible appeared in Wittenberg. In addition, between 1522 and 1546, there were at least 22 official editions of the New Testament; and outside of Wittenberg, more than 250 editions of the Bible and portions thereof appeared during the same period. One scholar has estimated that during Luther's lifetime a half a million complete Bibles and parts of Bibles were printed in the German tongue.[10] It's no wonder then that Luther's German influenced the development of the German language in this period, for it seems that everyone who could read German was reading Luther's German during these years!

Of course, there were those who did not like what they read, and so, as was true of Luther's other works, his German Bible also received its fair share of criticism. The motivation was primarily theological, for those who opposed Luther's Bible also opposed his theology. However, besides theology, strictly speaking, Luther's critics also revealed what is a recurring theme in the story of Bible translations, viz., translation traditionalism, for there are always some Christians who resist a new version of the Bible whenever it appears. But why? One plausible explanation is this: the first translators to successfully produce a well-received and popular text naturally create the impression among their readers that their version *is* the Bible. Thus, the Old Latin *is* the Bible in the 4th century; the Vulgate *is* the Bible in the 16th; and the King James Version *is* the Bible in the 19th. So subsequent translators appear as innovators who are departing from the Word of God. This situation arose already in the days of Jerome who had to answer such criticism when he prepared the Vulgate, and among the critics was no less a figure than St. Augustine.[11]

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[9] Ibid., 131-63, 174-77.

[10] Ibid., 178.

[11] Basically, Augustine thought that Jerome should stick to *revising* the Old Testament of the Latin Bible by means of the Septuagint rather than translating afresh from the Hebrew. See J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), 217-18, 266-67, 270-72.

However, by the time of the Reformation the traditionalists were lining up behind that same version—more or less[12]—to which Augustine had initially taken exception.[13] That, of course, is how traditionalism works: given enough time, what was once a novelty becomes an integral element in the lives of people that they cannot imagine doing without. Something that has stood the test of time has thereby demonstrated its value. Furthermore, when it comes to the Bible, traditionalists instinctively suspect that attacks upon a venerable version are the consequence of a new theology, i.e., advocates of a new biblical text are rejecting the old doctrine as well as the old version. And sometimes they are correct. This is a very important point, so permit me to repeat it. Sometimes traditionalists are correct in their fears that a new translation means advancing a new doctrine. This certainly was the case in the 16th century.

If we look, for example, to one of Luther's earliest critics, Jerome Emser,[14] who not only criticized Luther's New Testament when it first came out but also published a version of his own in 1527,[15] we find that he placed his specific criticisms of Luther's Bible into the context of a general charge that Luther was a heretic. By the time the September Bible appeared in 1522, Emser had already written against Luther—and

[12] What made it out of the Middle Ages was not exactly Jerome's work. See Raphael Loewe, "The Medieval History of the Latin Vulgate," *The Cambridge History of the English Bible*, vol. 2: *The West from the Fathers to the Reformation*, ed. G. W. H. Lampe (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1969), 102-54.

[13] This became evident at the time of Erasmus's first publishing the Greek New Testament and accompanying Latin translation (1516) when his opponents reacted against him and asserted the primacy of the Vulgate. See Jerry H. Bentley, *Humanists and Holy Writ: New Testament Scholarship in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 199-211.

[14] For Emser's biography, see Hans J. Hillerbrand, ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, 4 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), s.v. "Emser, Hieronymus." There are more extensive treatments in Heribert Smolinsky, *Augustin von Alveldt und Hieronymus Emser: Eine Untersuchung zur Kontroverstheologie der Frühen Reformationszeit im Herzogtum Sachsen* (Münster Westfalen: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1983), 24-47, and Kenneth A. Strand, *Reformation Bibles in the Crossfire: The Story of Jerome Emser, His Anti-Lutheran Critique and His Catholic Bible Version* (Ann Arbor, MI: Ann Arbor Publishers, 1961), 21-34.

[15] *Das naw testament nach lawt der Christlichē kirchen bewertē text, corrigirt und widerumb zu recht gebracht* (Dreszden: Wolffgang Stöckel, 1527). This appeared in the same year as Emser's death. Based largely on Luther's first German New Testament, Emser's version has been examined by Strand, 61-73, and Heinz Bluhm, *Luther Translator of Paul: Studies in Romans and Galatians* (New York: Peter Lang, 1984), 133-53, 507-36.

Luther against Emser.[16] Not surprisingly, the papal apologist was not enthusiastic about Luther the translator. According to Kenneth Strand, Emser viewed Luther's work as that of a man already found guilty of heresy. "Why then," Emser asked, "should we Christians accept so quickly the New Testament translation of one individual and especially of an openly declared heretic [*von einem offenbaren erklerte kerzer*]?"[17] Emser went on to indict Luther for departing from the traditional Latin text prepared by Jerome at the request of a pope and used by the Church for over a thousand years, and for failing to translate the text literally. Instead, he claimed, Luther had omitted words, letters, and entire sayings and had translated in a confused manner. What's more, Luther had also accompanied the biblical text with heretical glosses and introductions. In other words, for Emser, Luther's "New Testament" was just one more attempt by a heretic to advance his own false views of religion. Departures from the traditional text also indicated departures from traditional doctrine.

Obviously, we are not going to agree with Emser's characterization of Luther's work as heretical, but we must acknowledge the fundamental accuracy of his charge regarding Luther's agenda. The Reformer was using his translation of the Scriptures to promote his own understanding of Christianity over against others, and in fact, he was quite open and honest about it. At the outset of the Preface to his New Testament, Luther complained about "many unfounded [*wilde*] interpretations and prefaces" that have resulted in no one knowing what is "gospel or law, New Testament or Old." This situation required a biblical text with notes and prefaces to rescue the common man from "his former delusions" and to guide his reading so that, as Luther argued, "he may not seek laws and commandments where he ought to be seeking the gospel and promises of God."[18]

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[16] See Smolinsky, 221-309, David V. N. Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents: Catholic Controversialists 1518-25* (Minn.: Fortress, 1991), 73-74, 86, 90, 95-96, 102, 135-38, 153, 207-08, and 230-33.

[17] As quoted in Strand, 38, but for the original see Emser's, "Vorrede," *Auss was gründ und ursach Luthers dolmatschung uber das nawe testament dem gemeinen man billich vorbotten worden sey* (Leipzig: Wolffgang Stöckel, [1523]), aiii[v]. I consulted the microform copy that is available in the IDC collection, *Flugschriften des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts* (Zug, Switzerland: Inter Documentation Co., 1979), Fiche 318-21, No. 1-905. Emser wrote another critique of Luther's Bible, his *Annotationes Hieronymi Emser uber Luthers naw Testament gebessert und emendirt* (Dresden: [Emserpresse], 1524). In this paper, I have based my summary of Emser's criticism on Strand's work.

[18] LW 35:357 (WA DB 6:2.2-11).

The Gospel, in particular, became the theme of Luther's preface, because it was the ultimate purpose for which God had given the Scriptures. "See to it," Luther wrote, "that you do not make a Moses out of Christ, or a book of laws and doctrines out of the gospel, as has been done heretofore and as certain prefaces put it, even those of St. Jerome. For the gospel does not expressly demand works of our own by which we become righteous and are saved; indeed it condemns such works. Rather the gospel demands faith in Christ: that he has overcome for us sin, death, and hell, and thus gives us righteousness, life, and salvation not through our works, but through his own works, death, and suffering in order that we might avail ourselves of his death and victory as though we had won it ourselves."[19]

But what about the traditional Latin text, departures from which were also a part of Emser's critique? Although Luther did not address this question in his New Testament preface, for some years he had already been assessing the Vulgate by means of the original language texts. In his early lectures on Romans (1513–15), he referred frequently to the Greek and at times used it to correct the Vulgate.[20] Likewise in his early publication on the Penitential Psalms (1517), he admitted to using Reuchlin's translation from the Hebrew for the text of his commentary in addition to the Vulgate.[21] Then in the very first of the 95 Theses, he implicitly faulted the Vulgate in comparison with the Greek. For in his subsequent defense of the statement, "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent' [*poenitentiam agite*] [Matt. 4:17], he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance," Luther argued explicitly "first from the Greek word *metanoeite* itself, which means 'repent' [*poenitentiam agite*] and *could be translated more exactly* by the Latin *transmentamini*, which means 'assume another mind and feeling, … have a change of spirit [emphasis mine].'"[22]

Later, on more than one occasion, Luther clearly expressed his appreciation for the biblical text in the original languages. For example, in his advice *To the Councilmen of Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools*, Luther wrote that "it was not without purpose that God caused his Scriptures to be set down in these two

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19 LW 35:360 (WA DB 6:8.3-11).

20 For examples of Luther's correcting the Vulgate by means of the Greek, see LW 25:386, 427-28, 492, 501 (WA 56:395.25-26; 435.11-12; 498.29-499.2; 507.4-6). According to the index (LW 25:534) of the English translation to the 1515-16 lectures on Romans, there are 58 references to the Greek text just in Luther's glosses.

21 WA 1:158.8-10.

22 LW 31:83-84 (WA 1:530.16-17, 19-22).

languages alone—the Old Testament in Hebrew, the New in Greek. Now if God did not despise them but chose them above all others for his word, then we too ought to honor them above all others."[23] Not surprisingly, then, for his German Bible, Luther translated the New Testament Greek and the Old Testament Hebrew.[24]

When it came to translating the Scriptures, therefore, Luther was no traditionalist. Besides the text, Luther also employed a style and vocabulary that annoyed his critics, for instead of a literal translation, Luther committed himself to readable German. Another of Luther's critics, Friedrich Staphylus, described Luther's proceedings this way:

> For it is evident that Luther in his translation hath bothe corrupted the text omitting and altering the very words and also hath depraved the sence of the text by false and hereticall gloses partly added in the margin, partly foisted in the text it self. So by clipping awaie the termes of the text, and patching on the suttle shiftes of his owne braine, he hath gaily coloured his pernicious doctrine with the painted shethe of pretended scripture.[25]

Staphylus went on to offer seven examples of Luther's "lieger-demain" as he called it. Among other points, the Catholic apologist charged Luther with mistranslating Ephesians 6:13 by omitting the phrase, "as the perfect" ("*als die volkommen*") in order to advance his doctrine of man's total depravity. However, this was really a question

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[23] LW 45:359 (WA 15:37.17-22). Luther's respect for the originals was closely connected to his view of Scripture's inspired origins. See Mark D. Thompson, *A Sure Ground on Which to Stand: The Relation of Authority and Interpretive Method in Luther's Approach to Scripture* (Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Press, 2004), 141-46.

[24] According to Kooiman, 91 and 131, this meant Erasmus's 2nd edition (1519) of the Greek New Testament (along with Erasmus's translation into Latin) and the Brescia printing (1494) of the Soncino edition of the Hebrew (1st ed. 1488).

[25] Friedrich Staphylus, *The apologie of F. Staphylus. Intreating of the true understanding of holy scripture* (Antwerp: J. Latius, 1565), fol. 66r-v. Friedrich Staphylus (1512-1564) was a German theologian and imperial councilor, who converted from Lutheranism to Catholicism in 1552. A doctor of theology, he represented the Catholic side against Melanchthon, his former teacher, at the Colloquy of Worms in 1557. His *Apologia* first appeared in 1561, well after Luther's death, but I am using it here because the Catholic apologist, Thomas Stapleton, translated it into English as a part of his polemic against English Protestant Bibles. See my *The Battle for the Bible in England 1557-1582* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), 91-109. For Staphylus's life and work, see *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 17 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), s.v. "Staphylus, Friedrich," and *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 11 vols. (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 1957-67), s.v. "Staphylus, Friedrich."

of the underlying text since the phrase in question is in the Vulgate ("*omnibus perfectis*") but not the Greek.[26] Staphylus also accused Luther of misleading readers in his rendering of Romans 3:20 in the interests of justification by faith *alone*, since Luther employed *nur* ("only") in his translation ("*Durchs Gesetz ist* nur *erkantnus der Sünden* [emphasis mine]")[27] even though a literal translation of either the Latin or Greek would simply say, "By the lawe we have knowledge of sinne." So this is a criticism of Luther's style. Staphylus also criticized Luther's word choice in 1 Timothy 4:14 against the sacrament of ordination, for Luther had rendered *presbyteriou* (Latin, *presbyterii*) as *Der altisten* (literally, "the elders") instead of "priesthood."[28]

In short Luther's critics saw his choice of words, style, and text as evidence of his heretical bent. Although such critics were not especially convincing in their own times,[29] they did move Luther to write in defense of his translation efforts, and in so doing, he provided insights into his own thinking about the task of Bible translation.[30] For example, in answer to those who complained about his departure from a literal translation, Luther explained that he was not interested in a translation that employed stilted and unnatural German. He wanted one that ordinary people could understand. This is what he wrote:

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[26] For these textual comparisons, I am using a modern critical edition of the Vulgate, *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, ed. Robertus Weber, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969, 1983) and a contemporary reprint of the so-called "textus receptus." This is Η ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ *The New Testament: The Greek Text Underlying the English Authorised Version of 1611* (n.p.: The Trinitarian Bible Society, n.d.).

[27] For Luther's German, I have quoted in the text the version recorded by Staphylus but I have tested the accuracy of Staphylus's charges by examining a facsimile of the *September Bible*: Martin Luther, *Das Neue Testament Deutsch. Wittenberg 1522: "SEPTEMBERTESTAMENT"* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994).

[28] Staphylus, fol. 66v–73r. His other complaints include 1 Corinthians 9:5 (against clerical celibacy), Acts 3:1 (against canonical hours), Acts 3:12 (against meritorious works), and Colossians 2:8 (against the social order).

[29] Nonetheless, Emser's New Testament, after revision by Johann Dietenberger and Johann Eck, went through 65 subsequent editions. OER, s.v. "Emser, Hieronymus."

[30] See especially his *On Translating: An Open Letter* (1530), LW 35:177-202 (WA 30II:632-46), and *Defense of the Translation of the Psalms* (1531), LW 35:203-23 (WA 38:9-17, 69). For Luther as a translator, see Kooiman, 96-117; Gritsch, "Luther as Bible Translator"; Bluhm, *Luther Translator of Paul*; Heinz Bluhm, *Martin Luther: Creative Translator* (St. Louis: CPH, 1965); Reu, *Luther's German Bible*, 257-84; and W. Schwarz, *Principles and Problems of Biblical Translation: Some Reformation Controversies and Their Background* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1955), 167-212.

> We do not have to inquire of the literal Latin, how we are to speak German…. Rather we must inquire about this of the mother in the home, the children on the street, the common man in the market place. We must be guided by their language, the way they speak, and do our translating accordingly. That way they will understand it and recognize that we are speaking German to them.[31]

This principle was an important one for Luther, though not absolute. For Luther conceded that "where everything turns on a single passage," one must keep to the original "quite literally [*nach den buchstaben behalten*]."[32] Luther offered an example in John 6:27, "Him has God the Father sealed [*versiegelt*]." "It would have been better German," Luther added, "to say, 'Him has God the Father signified [*gezeichent*],' or 'He it is whom God the Father means [*meinet*].' But I preferred to do violence to the German language rather than to depart from the word."[33] Elsewhere, Luther cited a couple of other instances in which he retained a literal rendering, one of them Psalm 68:18, "Thou has led captivity captive." A more idiomatic rendering would have been, "Thou hast set the captives free." But in this instance, Luther preferred to keep the literal because it pointed to Christ's redemptive work. "These," he said, "are the captivities that Christ has taken captive and done away: death can no longer hold us, sin can no longer incriminate us, the law can no longer accuse our conscience."[34] In this instance, Luther retained the literal rendering for the sake of its theological significance.

But Luther provided yet another example that pointed in another direction. In Psalm 91:5–6, the Psalmist wrote, "You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday." This time, Luther's concern was the difficulty of knowing what particular misfortunes were pointed to by the images of terror, arrow, pestilence, and destruction. So in order not to foreclose any possible interpretations, Luther retained a literal translation.[35] In this case, uncertainty about the meaning motivated Luther's decision.

Clearly, therefore, one should not interpret Luther's remarks about a readable vernacular text to mean that he never translated literally.

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31 LW 35: 189 (WA 30^{II}:637.18-22).

32 LW 35:194 (WA 30^{II}:640.20-21).

33 LW 35:194 (WA 30^{II}:640.22-24).

34 LW 35:216 (WA 38:13.15-17).

35 LW 35:216-17 (WA 38:13.22-14.32).

Nevertheless, it remains true that the Reformer worked diligently to make his version understandable to the person who was going read it or hear it. In defending his translation in particular instances, he continually raised the question, "What German could understand something like that [*Welcher deutscher verstehet solchs*]?" as if to say, why translate at all if your reader will not comprehend the message? For Luther, translating the Bible was for the purpose of communicating God's Word and that required clear, natural German.[36]

A good translator, therefore, had to be an expert in *two* languages—the original and his own! Luther described his translation process for the Old Testament in this way:

> [The translator] must see to it—once he understands the Hebrew author—that he concentrates on the sense of the text; asking himself, "Pray tell, what do the Germans say in such a situation?" Once he has the German words to serve the purpose, let him drop the Hebrew words and express the meaning freely in the best German he knows.[37]

First, what does the Hebrew say? Then, how would a German say it? That was Luther's method.

Given the demands of such a method, it's clear that not everybody can be a successful translator. But Luther certainly was. He knew his Hebrew and his Greek – and he knew his German, as the success of his Bible through the centuries demonstrates. Of course, for Luther himself, linguistic and literary merits were hardly the point. He wanted a Bible in the language of the people so that they might learn from it all about Christ as their Savior from sin. That was its purpose. That was its goal.

Luther was not the only one in the sixteenth century to think this way. So what the Reformer started, others pursued. In England, for example, Luther inspired the first translators, William Tyndale and Miles Coverdale, directly;[38] and what they began *in English* after the example of Martin Luther, their successors built upon so that the King James Version of 1611 is really a culmination of previous efforts and its

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36 LW 35:189 (WA 38:637.26). Also LW 35:190, 191 (WA 38:638.1-2 and 638.16-17).

37 LW 35:213-14 (WA 38:11.28-32).

38 Bluhm, *Creative Translator*, 169-232, and Heinz Bluhm, "Martin Luther and the English Bible: Tyndale and Coverdale," in *Martin Luther Quincentennial*, ed. G. Dünnhaupt (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984).

text is directly related to the versions that came before it.[39] In fact, one of the editors of the King James Version wrote in the preface:

> Truly… wee never thought from the beginning, that we should neede to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one… but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principall good one, not justly to be excepted against; that hath been our indeavour, that our mark.[40]

So the very first rule given to the translators was that "The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original will permit." A later rule specified that when faithfulness to the original required a departure from the Church's text, then the KJV translators should use the English text found in Tyndale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, the Great Bible, or the Geneva versions.[41] In this way, the King James Version became heavily indebted to its predecessors and, in fact, a commonly quoted statistic is that in those parts originally translated by Tyndale, 90% of the King James text is still Tyndale's version.[42]

Therefore, what began in England with Tyndale as a radical departure from the traditional Bible eventually became the founding of another tradition! Through the course of the sixteenth century, new versions of the English Bible started with the text of a predecessor and "improved" it, usually by bringing it more into line with the original languages. So in the late 1530s, when the King of England first authorized an official Bible for his church, the principal translator in charge of this project, Miles Coverdale, did not start afresh but employed an earlier version which, in turn, had incorporated much of Tyndale's pioneering effort into its own text. As an "official" Bible, Coverdale's achievement, the so-called Great Bible of 1539, was an important

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[39] Works that do an excellent job of tracing these relationships include: Charles C. Butterworth, *The Literary Lineage of the King James Bible 1340-1611* (Phil.: University of Pennsylvania Press 1941) and Westcott, *History*, 123-284.

[40] "Preface to the Version of 1611," in *Records of the English Bible: The Documents Relating to the Translation and Publication of the Bible in English, 1525-1611*, ed. Alfred W. Pollard (London: Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1611), 369.

[41] For the rules, see David Norton, *A Textual History of the King James Bible* (Cambridge: University Press, 2005), 7-8.

[42] See, for example, G. E. Duffield, "Introduction," in *The Work of William Tyndale* (Appleford, Bershire, England: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1964), xxxv-xxxvi, and J. F. Mozley, *William Tyndale* (London: SPCK, 1937), 108; but Gordon Campbell, *Bible: The Story of the King James Version 1611-2011* (Oxford: University Press, 2010), 15, says only 83%.

milestone in the construction of a tradition. Thirty years later, when Queen Elizabeth authorized a new official Bible, the Bishops' version of 1568, the result was a revision of the Great Bible; and in 1611, the King James Version was a revision of the Bishops.'[43]

But all the while English Protestants were translating and improving their version of the Bible, English Catholics were attacking such efforts from the perspective of their own tradition. As was the case with Luther's Bible, so too with the English versions from Tyndale (1525) to King James (1611), there developed alongside the Bibles a body of controversial literature regarding the merits of various English versions as well as the propriety of the enterprise in the first place. The English debate proceeded along the same grounds as that surrounding Luther's Bible: text, style (including terminology), and, especially, doctrine.

This is hardly surprising, at least in the beginning, because William Tyndale's pioneering work reflected Luther's in several respects. For example, Tyndale's very first effort at publishing the New Testament, the so-called Cologne Fragment (1525) included only the first several chapters of Matthew since the imperial authorities interrupted it before the printer could complete it.[44] Nonetheless it clearly displayed Lutheran influence. For one thing, there was the table of contents. Tyndale's work reproduced Luther's organization of the New Testament books that reflected the Reformer's questioning the canonicity of Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation, by grouping them, unnumbered, at the end.[45]

Tyndale's prologue also revealed Lutheran influence. The first three pages were basically a translation of the first two pages in Luther's introduction to the September Testament.[46] Even more importantly,

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[43] Westcott, *History*, 67-121.

[44] For the story of Cologne Fragment, see Mozley, *Tyndale*, 56-66, and Edward Arber, ed., *The First Printed English New Testament translated by William Tyndale*, facsimile ed. (London: n.p., 1871).

[45] (The New Testament) [Cologne: Peter Quentell, 1525], fol. Bv^{r}. This is the first item in T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule, *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of the English Bible, 1525-1961*, rev. ed. by A. S. Herbert (London: The British and Foreign Bible Society, 1968). I have consulted the copy in the microfilm collection produced by University Microfilms International (Ann Arbor, Michigan), *Early English* Books I *(Pollard and Redgrave, STC I), 1475-1640*. For a summary of Lutheran influences evident in this edition, see David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 108-33, and F. F. Bruce, *History of the Bible in English* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 31-36.

[46] Cf. *The Cologne Fragment*, fol. Aii^{r}–Aiii^{v} (top two lines) and "*Vorhede*," *The September Bible*, [fol. 2^{r-v}]. Mozley, 63, estimated that nearly half of Luther's introduction made it into Tyndale's but that Tyndale added so much additional material that the Luther portion was only an eighth of the total.

Tyndale's work demonstrated Luther's understanding of the Gospel: "The righteousness that before God is of value, is to believe the promises of God, after the law hath confounded the conscience." Tyndale explained, "When God's law hath brought the sinner into knowledge of himself, and hath confounded his conscience and opened unto him the wrath and vengeance of God; then cometh good tidings. The Evangelion sheweth unto him the promises of God in Christ, and how that Christ hath purchased pardon for him, hath satisfied the law for him, and appeased the wrath of God. And the poor sinner believeth, laudeth and thanketh God through Christ, and breaketh out into exceeding inward joy and gladness."[47]

Clearly, Tyndale was advancing Luther's view of justification by means of an English Bible. And what he began in 1525 with the Cologne Fragment, Tyndale continued in subsequent editions of the English Bible and his other writings. In his first major revision of the New Testament, published in 1534, Tyndale did not reprint his original preface. He wrote a new one, but he did include several prefaces to New Testament books, and most of them show a marked dependence upon a Luther original.[48] The longest of Tyndale's prefaces is by far the one to Romans, which is a translation or paraphrase of Luther's preface to the same book. Like Luther, therefore, Tyndale recommended Romans as "the principall and most excellent part of the newetestament, and most pure Evangelion, that is to saye gladde tydinges and that we call gospel, and also a lyghte and a waye in unto the hole scripture. I thynke it mete, that every Christen man not only knowe it by rote and with oute the boke, but also exercise him selfe therin evermore continually, as with the dayly brede of the soule." Later in the same piece, Tyndale summarized

[47] William Tyndale, "A Pathway into the Holy Scripture," in *The Work of William Tyndale*, ed. G. E. Duffield (Appleford, Berkshire, Eng.: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1964), 12-13. Tyndale reworked his prologue into a separately published "Pathway." Duffield's modern language edition of the latter is careful to point out differences between the two, but I have checked my quotations, cited from Duffield, against the original edition, *The Cologne Fragment*, fol. Bii[r].

[48] See specifically the prefaces to 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians (almost an exact translation), 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy (almost an exact translation), 2 Timothy, Titus (almost an exact translation), Philemon, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, and the three epistles of John. These are conveniently found in William Tyndale, *The New Testament*, ed. N. Hardy Wallis, facsimile ed. (Cambridge: University Press, 1938), and LW 35:357-411. According to William A. Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants, 1520-1535*, reprint ed. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), 144-45, "Hardly a thought expressed in these pieces [Tyndale's prefaces] is not to be found in the German's prefaces." On the other hand, Daniell, *Tyndale*, 326, calls them "almost, but not quite, pure Luther."

Paul's message just like Luther, "Here of cometh it, that faith only justifieth, maketh rightewes, and fulfilleth the lawe, for it bringeth the sprete thorowe Christes deservinges, the sprite bringeth lust [i.e., delight], looseth the hert, maketh him free, setteth him at liberte, and geveth him strength to worke the dedes of the lawe with love, even as the lawe requiyreth. Then at the last out of the same faith so working in the herte, springe all good works by there awne accorde."[49]

Tyndale, however, was not a carbon copy of Luther. In some of these 1534 prefaces, he took direct issue with Luther though not by name. Regarding the epistle to the Hebrews, for example, Tyndale offered an orthodox explanation for the "hard knots" that Luther had cited in order to show why he questioned the book. Tyndale concluded his preface with a rhetorical question, "And seinge the pistle agreeth to all the rest of the scripture, yf it be indifferentlye loked on, how shuldit not be ofauctoryte and taken for holye scripture?" Even more forcefully, regarding James, Tyndale, while acknowledging Luther's various arguments against the book, nevertheless stated, "Me thynketh it ought of right to be taken for holye scripture."[50]

The connection between Tyndale and Luther did not escape the defenders of the old religion in England. From the beginning, they indicted Tyndale as a heretic right along with Luther. Probably the best known of Tyndale's critics, Thomas More, wrote *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies* (1529) and included in the title this phrase, "the pestilent secte of Luther and Tyndale, by the tone bygone in Saxony, and by the tother labored to be brought into England." More's *Dialogue* is a wide ranging criticism of the reformers that included an attack upon their translations of the Bible – an attack best summarized in More's own words, "Who so callyth [it] the newe testament calleth it by a wronge name except they wyll call it Tyndals testament or Luthers testament. For so had Tyndall after Luthers counsayle corrupted and changed it frome the

[49] Tyndale, *The New Testament* (1534), 293, 297. Here's Luther in the same places: "This epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament, and is truly the purest gospel. It is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart but also that he should occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul" (LW 35:365) and "So it happens that faith alone makes a person righteous and fulfils the law. For out of the merit of Christ it brings forth the Spirit. And the Spirit makes the heart glad and free, as the law requires that it shall be. Thus good works emerge from faith itself" (LW 35:368-69). For the Luther original, see *The September Bible*, fols. ai^{r} and ai^{v}.

[50] Tyndale, *The New Testament* (1534), 502, 521.

good and holsom doctrine of Cryste to the devylysh heresyes of theyr owne that it was clene a contrary thing."[51]

Although More claimed that deliberate mistranslation affected more than "a thousand textys" in Tyndale's New Testament, he restricted himself to discussing just seven of them in order to document Tyndale's deliberate avoidance of traditional terminology for the sake of promulgating false doctrine. According to More, these included using "seniors" (later editions "elders") for "priests"; "congregation" for "church"; "love" for "charity"; "favor" for "grace"; "knowledge" for "confession"; "repentance" for "penance"; and "a troubled heart" for "a contrite heart." By such substitutions, More claimed, Tyndale would "make the people wene [i.e., know] further that such artycles of our faythe as he laboreth to destroy and whyche be well proved by holy scripture were in holy scripture nothynge spoken of."[52] In other words, Tyndale rejected traditional terminology in order to reject traditional doctrine.

Basically, More was right, and Tyndale admitted as much in his *Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue* (1531) while, of course, insisting that the new theology – and translation – were correct. On the one hand, Tyndale defended his particular renderings as accurate expressions of the Greek; but on the other, he contended that yes, indeed, the new terminology corrected current and false opinions. For example, Tyndale argued that by "congregation" instead of "church" readers would understand "the whole multitude of all that profess Christ" rather than just "the juggling spirits" of the Roman clergy.[53] He also defended "repentance" instead of "penance" since the text was not referring to any works of satisfaction but rather had in view, "Repent, or let it forethink you; and come and believe the gospel, or glad tidings, that is brought you in Christ, and so shall all be forgiven you; and henceforth live a new life."[54]

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[51] Thomas M. C. Lawler, Germain Marc'hadour, and Richard C. Marius, eds., *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, vol. 6: *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), Part I: 285. For the More/Tyndale debate, see Rainer Pineas, *Thomas More and Tudor Polemics* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1968), 36-119, and Heinz Holeczek, *Humanistische Bibelphilologie als Reformproblem bei Erasmus von Rotterdam, Thomas More und William Tyndale* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975), 279-358.

[52] More, *A Dialogue*, Part I, 290.

[53] William Tyndale, *An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue*, Parker Society Edition (Cambridge: University Press, 1850), 14-15.

[54] Ibid., 23.

Like Luther, Tyndale offered his translation in order to advance the true and saving doctrine, so he chose his terminology accordingly.[55]

The More-Tyndale debate occurred just a few years after the appearance of Tyndale's first complete New Testament (1526), but it raised issues that continued to appear over the course of the century in connection not just with Tyndale but later versions of the Bible as well. The most thorough of the Catholic critics of the Protestant versions during the Reformation period was Gregory Martin, himself the principal translator of the Rheims New Testament (1582), the first Catholic version in English.[56] Besides the New Testament, Martin also published an extensive analysis of the Protestant Bibles,[57] and to the translation itself he appended an introduction that justified the entire undertaking. In that introduction he defended his text, terminology, and style, all in the interests of a vernacular Bible, profitable for instruction in life and doctrine, and "specially for deciding the doubtes of these daies."[58]

By 1582, of course, the Council of Trent had declared the Latin Vulgate to be "authentic Scripture";[59] and Martin listed the council's decision as his fifth reason (out of 10) for translating "the old vulgar Latin text, not the common Greeke text." His first reason, however, was not ecclesiastical authority as such but pure traditionalism: "It is so auncient, that it was used in the Church of God above 1300 yeres agoe, as appeareth by the fathers of those times." In subsequent reasons he claimed the authority of both Jerome and Augustine and maintained, "It is that, which for the most part ever since hath been used in the

[55] It's interesting to observe that Luther used similar non-traditional terminology in his *September Bible*. In the following examples, I have placed Luther's terminology next to that of Jerome Emser's New Testament. I used the 2nd (1528) edition, *Das Naw Testamēt, So durch L. Emser saelige vteuscht, und des Durchlewchtē Hochgebornē Furstē und herr Georgē hertzogen zu Sachssen, etc.* (Leyptzick: Valten Schuman, 1528) This is available in the microform collection, *Early Printed Bibles* (Leiden: IDC, 1989), HB-230/1.

Luther used "Elltissten" not "Priestern" (Titus 1:5); "gemeyne" not "Kirchen" (Mt. 18:17); "Bessert euch" not "Thuet buss" (Mt. 3:2); and "holdselige" not "voll genaden" (Luke 1:28).

[56] *The New Testament of Jesus Christ, translated faithfully into English, out of the authentical Latin….* (Rhemes: John Fogny, 1582). For a demonstration of its "Catholic" character, see my *Battle for the Bible*, 187-210. The Old Testament came out only many years later, 1610-11. For Martin's biography, see OER, s.v. "Martin, Gregory."

[57] *A discoverie of the corruptions of the holy Scriptures by the Heretikes of our daies...* (Rhemes: John Fogny, 1582).

[58] Pollard, *Records*, 301. Martin worked with others on the translation so the introduction may also include the contributions of others.

[59] H. J. Schroeder, ed., *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1941), 18, 297.

Churches service, expounded in sermons, alleaged and interpreted in the Commentaires and writings of the auncient fathers of the Latin Church." In other words, long standing usage had created a prejudice in favor of the Vulgate.[60]

Similarly, tradition also contributed to Martin's choice of terminology, since he employed words like "advent," "penance," "chalice," "aultar," and "host" to show readers that such ecclesiastical terms "procede even from the very words of Scripture." Conversely, like Thomas More, Martin repeated the charge that Protestant translators used "usual English words…to deceive the reader." In fact, Martin argued for a Latinate style that reflected not only the vocabulary of the Latin text but also its word order: "We presume not in hard places to mollifie the speaches or phrases, but religiously keep them word for word, and point for point, for feare of missing, or restraining the sense of the holy Ghost to our phantasie." Admittedly, this could result in rather awkward English, e.g., "Against the spirituals of wickedness in the celestials" (Eph. 6:12) or "As infants even now borne, reasonable, milke without guile desire ye" (1 Peter 2:2). To clarify any ambiguities, the Rheims New Testament included copious marginal notes and annotations. Encumbered by no doctrine of the perspicuity of the Scriptures, the Catholic translators did not have to produce an easy-to-read version, and in point of fact, they did not.[61]

Protestants did not leave Martin's claims and criticism unanswered. In fact, the King James translators used their introduction "To the Reader" to respond in part to their critics, defending their use of the Hebrew and Greek texts and their choice of vocabulary. With respect to the latter, they positioned themselves between extremes, rejecting not only the Catholic insistence on Latinate (and hardly English) terms but also the Puritan (actually, Tyndale's) policy of avoiding "olde Ecclesiastical words," and instead, "betak[ing] them to other," e.g., "washing" for "baptism" and "congregation" for "church." But this retreat from Tyndale was only partial – perhaps another tradition was beginning to settle in. "Elders" and "repentance" both stayed in the text.[62]

The degree to which Protestant biblical traditionalism had set in by 1611 is difficult to assess, but it was strong and clear more than two hundred fifty years later when the Church of England prepared a successor to the King James. The modern era of English Bibles began

[60] Pollard, *Records*, 302-303. Regarding the Latin text, see my *Battle for the Bible*, 187-201.

[61] Pollard, *Records*, 308.

[62] Ibid., 370, 375-76.

in 1881 with the publication of the Revised New Testament.[63] The Old Testament followed in 1885.[64] Ever since, there has been a more or less continuous stream of Bibles designed to replace their predecessors. Even though the revision of 1881/1885 did not unseat the King James as the standard English Bible, it raised important issues, especially regarding the Greek text, that undermined confidence in the Authorized Version and paved the way for subsequent versions.

By the middle of the 19th century, English Bible scholars were starting to call for a new Bible, especially a New Testament, on the grounds that the Greek text available in the 16th century was in many instances an inaccurate representation of the original. Prompted by the discovery of many more manuscripts, including Tischendorf's Sinaiticus from the fourth century,[65] and equipped by the development of textual criticism, by the 19th century New Testament scholars were printing Greek New Testaments, designed to replace the *textus receptus*, of previous centuries.[66] One consequence was a decision by the Church of England in 1870 to prepare a new version of the Bible.[67]

At that time, however, the force of traditionalism was so strong that the decision was made only to produce a *revision* of the King James and not a brand new Bible. Rule #1 for the revisers required them "to introduce as few alterations as possible into the Text of the Authorized Version consistently with faithfulness"; and Rule #2 ordered the revisers "to limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the Authorized and earlier English versions."[68] The result then was a deliberately archaic version of the Scriptures but based on a "modern" Greek text (the Hebrew remained basically the same) translated into old-fashioned English. Such a proceeding seems strange to

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[63] *The New Testament…translated out of the Greek: being the version set forth A.D. 1611 compared with the most ancient authorities and revised A.D. 1881* (Cambridge: University Press, 1881).

[64] *The Holy Bible translated out of the original tongues: being the version set forth A.D. 1611 compared with the most ancient authorities and revised…*, 5 vols. (Oxford: University Press, 1885).

[65] Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 62-65.

[66] Ibid., 152-85.

[67] For the story of the Revised Version, see Bruce, 135-52, and David Norton, *A History of the Bible as Literature*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 2:218-61.

[68] For the rules regarding translation, see Norton, *Bible as Literature*, 2:219-20.

contemplate at this late date, but such is the pull of translation traditionalism.

Of course, the Revised Version was an extreme example. Nevertheless, the shadow of the King James Version hovers over subsequent versions of the English Bible to this very day and its influence defines an entire family of vernacular Scriptures, the so-called Great Tradition,[69] each member of which has committed itself in some degree or other to retaining the language and style of the King James Version. The Preface to the most recent addition to the family, the English Standard Version (2001), described itself as standing "in the classic mainstream of English Bible translations over the past half-millennium" that began with William Tyndale.[70] To those who were raised in this tradition, the ESV is a Bible that still "sounds like" the Bible, e.g., "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Ps. 23:1); "He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Is. 53:3); "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Mt. 5:5); and "In those days a decree went out from Caesar August that all the world should be registered" (Luke 2:1). Well, you can't have everything—but you get the idea. In versions like the ESV, translators have not chosen an English style that perfectly reflects a modern idiom but one that retains the "sound" of previous Bibles.

But the commitment to traditional language, present to one degree or another throughout the Great Tradition, was not enough for some. Already in the 19th century, the Revised Version provoked a backlash, led by John W. Burgon, an eminent scholar and Dean of Chichester Cathedral.[71] Even before the Revised New Testament appeared, he had already tangled with textual critics over the authenticity of the "last twelve verses of Mark,"[72] so he was the perfect scholar to comment on an entire New Testament that rested on a non-traditional text. Burgon's

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[69] My first exposure to the term, "Great Tradition," for the King James family of translations was in the title of Arthur L. Farstad's *The New King James Version in the* Great Tradition (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989).

[70] "Preface" to *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, a Division of Good News Publishers, 2001), vii.

[71] For Burgon's biography, see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 61 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), s.v. "Burgon, John William."

[72] John William Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark Vindicated against Recent Critical Objectors and Established* (Oxford: J. Parker, 1871).

review of the new version[73] was comprehensive, and he attacked style and theology as well as the text. But this last point is perhaps the most important, because even today – when no one is reading the Revised Version any more – the question of the Greek text of the New Testament remains an important one. For Burgon, biblical textual criticism was both scholarly *and* theological, "I…strenuously insist that *the consentient voice of Catholic Antiquity* is to be diligently inquired after and submissively listened to [emphasis original]." To determine what that "voice" is demands scholarly expertise but "submissively" to listen to it is a theological position.[74]

First of all, Burgon rejected the textual criticism of his day as entirely too subjective. He dismissed efforts to explain variant readings by trying to answer the question, What is a copyist most likely to have written, as hopeless: "We venture to declare that inasmuch as one expert's notions of what is 'transcriptionally probable' prove to be the diametrical reverse of another expert's notions, the supposed evidence to be derived from this source may, with advantage, be neglected altogether."[75]

For Burgon, one should rely exclusively on the external evidence, not just the extant manuscripts and ancient versions but also the testimony of the Church fathers who frequently quoted the New Testament and so represented additional witnesses to the original text.

> It…stands to reason that we may safely reject any reading which, out of the whole body of available authorities—Manuscripts, Versions, Fathers—finds support nowhere save in one and the same little handful of suspicious documents. For we resolutely maintain, that *external Evidence* must after all be our best, our only safe guide.…We refuse to throw in our lot with those who, disregarding the witness of *every other* known Codex—*every other* Version—*every other* available Ecclesiastical Writer,—insist on following the dictates of a little group of authorities, of which nothing is known with so much certainty as that

[73] John William Burgon, *The Revision Revised: Three Articles Reprinted from the* Quarterly Review (London: John Murray, Albemarle St., 1883). I have used the electronic edition available at <http://books.google.com/books?id=nXkw1TAatV8C&pg=PA556&ots=NzPAkekfgn&dq=Revision+Revised>. Accessed on 10/17/12. An abridged version is available in David Otis Fuller, ed., *True or False? The Westcott-Hort Textual Theory Examined* (Grand Rapids, MI: Grand Rapids International Publications, 1973), 123-215.

[74] Burgon, "Preface," *The Revision Revised*, xxvi.

[75] Ibid., 252.

> often, when they concur exclusively, it is to mislead [emphasis original].[76]

But what is it that led Burgon to placing confidence in the majority of the witnesses instead of the earliest? Was it a kind of textual democracy? The variant reading with the most votes wins? Not really. Instead, the preponderance of that evidence was the testimony of the Holy Spirit, who not only inspired the text but has also preserved it!

> The provision, then, which the Divine Author of Scripture is found to have made for the preservation in its integrity of His written Word, is of peculiarly varied and highly complex description. First, by causing that a vast multiplication of copies should be required all down the ages beginning at the earliest period, and continuing in an ever-increasing ratio until the actual invention of printing, He provided the most effectual security imaginable against fraud…. It is a plain fact that there survive of the Gospels alone upwards of one thousand copies to the present day.[77]

Finally, Burgon also believed that "under the Providence of God" the Reformation era editors of the text, limited though they were to a relative handful of manuscripts, produced a printed Greek text whose "general purity…is demonstrated by all the evidence which 350 years of subsequent research have succeeded in accumulating."[78] In other words, Burgon's attack on the critical text of his day amounted also to a defense of the basic Greek text upon which the King James Version stood and was supported by a careful examination of all the evidence that God in His goodness had preserved.[79]

So, how persuasive were Burgon and his allies in defending the traditional text? On the one hand, neither the Revised Version nor its American cousin, the American Standard Version (1901), replaced the KJV in most homes and churches.[80] So from that perspective, perhaps one could declare Burgon and company the winners. However, when

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[76] Ibid., 19.

[77] Ibid., 8-9.

[78] Ibid., 250.

[79] But Burgon did not think the *textus receptus* was beyond improvement. See Doug Kutilek, "What did John Burgon Really Believe about the Textus Receptus and the King James Version?" electronic reprint from *As I See It* 1(1998):n.p. <http://www.kjvonly.org/doug/kutilek_burgon_textus_pr.htm> Accessed 10/11/12.

[80] Bruce, 152.

the Revised Standard Version (1946, 1952) came along and began a new period of translation proliferation, only one of the better known versions, the New King James,[81] used anything other than a modern, critical text of the Greek New Testament. Zane Hodges and Arthur Farstad did succeed in printing a "majority text,"[82] but so far no major translating effort has followed it—not even those arising from the more conservative elements of American Christianity like the Southern Baptists.[83]

However, as we noted at the outset, the underlying text is only one issue that concerns translation traditionalists. They are often concerned about terminology and style as well. But the issue that trumps them all is ideology—the perception that translators are using a new Bible in order to promote new doctrine. And sometimes, as we have seen, the critics are correct. Recalling this point is important as we take a brief look at the present era of Bible translations that began in the 1980s with the first attempts at accommodating *feminist* interests in English Bibles.

Feminists scored a major victory when the New Revised Standard Version (1989) appeared.[84] Still another representative of the Great Tradition, the New RSV incorporated many changes that arose from purely textual and linguistic considerations, but it was also motivated by changes in English style. In the preface "to the reader," Bruce Metzger, chairman of the translation committee, described their task this way: "to continue in the tradition of the King James Bible, but to introduce such changes as are warranted on the basis of accuracy, clarity, euphony, and current English usage." As a result, Metzger continued, "the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) remains essentially a literal translation." In general, this characterization is true of other versions in the Great Tradition as well.

However, Metzger went on to devote an entire paragraph to what the New RSV translators viewed as one of their most pressing stylistic challenges, dealing with "linguistic sexism," i.e., "the inherent bias of

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[81] The "Preface" of the New King James identifies its New Testament text as the *Textus Receptus*. See *Holy Bible: The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982), v.

[82] Zane C. Hodges and Arthur L. Farstad, eds., *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982).

[83] The preface to the *Holy Bible: Holman Christian Standard Bible* (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2004), ix, identifies its New Testament text as the Nestle-Aland, 27th edition.

[84] *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments: New Revised Standard Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989).

the English language towards the masculine gender."[85] As a result, the New RSV employed a series of linguistic gymnastics in order to escape a literal rendering of the text if it would involve using the inclusive "he," "him," or "his." Among other techniques, this meant replacing the singular by the plural, personal statements by impersonal ones, third person pronouns by second and first person, and direct quotations by indirect discourse. This new sensitivity also meant that the New RSV would avoid masculine terminology for masculine originals in order to accommodate feminist concerns, e.g., "brother" became "brother or sister," "neighbor," "kin," "believer," and "another member of the church."[86] What had been standard English style and terminology a generation previously—and for countless generations before that—now had to go.

Of course, the assault upon traditional English went far beyond Bible translations and was a part of a larger feminist agenda that aimed at radical social equality for men and women.[87] But it clearly had theological ramifications as well. For example, just a few years prior to the appearance of the New RSV, feminist theologian Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza had called for new translations of the Bible as part of reworking the entire Christian tradition in the interests of liberating women "from oppressive patriarchal texts, structures, institutions, and values."[88] But reworking the biblical text in the interests of a theological agenda, she insisted, was already evident in the Bible itself: "The early Christian authors have selected, redacted, and reformulated their traditional sources and materials with reference to their theological intentions and practical objectives."[89] Furthermore, she contended that since

[85] Bruce M. Metzger, "To the Reader," NRSV, [ix].

[86] For numerous examples of all of these, see Wayne Grudem, "What's Wrong with 'Gender Neutral' Bible Translations?" (n.p.: Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, 1996), available at <http://theresurgence.com/files/pdf/wayne_grudem_1997_whats_wrong_with_gender-neutral_bible_translations.pdf>. Accessed 10/13/12. See also my "The English Bible in a Post-Modern Age" in Paul T. McCain and John R. Stephenson, eds., *Mysteria Dei: Essays in Honor of Kurt Marquart* (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1999), 155-63.

[87] For a very helpful overview, see Jennifer Saul, "Feminist Philosophy of Language," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2010 Edition)*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2010/entries/feminism-language/>. Accessed 10/13/12. For some of the concrete feminist "corrections" to traditional English that are later to be found in English Bibles, see Casey Miller and Kate Swift, *The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing* (New York: Lippincott and Crowell, 1980).

[88] Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Her Memory: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1983), 33.

[89] Ibid., 49.

the communities that produced the New Testament documents were themselves "patriarchal" and "androcentric," contemporary readers could not simply accept such documents at face value but had to read them "in such a way that they can provide 'clues' to the egalitarian reality of the early Christian movement."[90] Fiorenza believed that "every translation is also an interpretation influenced by the contemporary perspective of the translators."[91] Therefore, she advocated producing a Bible that would invite feminist interpretations of the Christian tradition. With the New RSV, Fiorenza was on her way.

And not just with the New RSV. Many other major Bible translations have accepted feminist conventions regarding English style to one degree or another. These include the Revised English Bible (1989), Today's English Version (1992), the Contemporary English Version (1995), the New Living Translation (1996), and finally, the New International Version (2011).[92] However, by 2011, in all fairness, the argument was no longer between those who wanted to change the English language for ideological reasons and those who did not, but between those who believed that the language had now changed in a feminist direction and those who nevertheless wanted to defend their Bibles from the feminist ideology behind the changes.

So have the feminists won their crusade against traditional English? Without putting it quite this baldly, the Committee on Bible Translation for the NIV has contended that contemporary usage now necessitates a wide array of changes from the 1984 NIV.[93] But these also happen to be changes that accommodate a feminist agenda to erase gender differences. The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, an evangelical organization committed to maintaining traditional, biblical distinctions between men and women in the home and in the church,[94]

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[90] Ibid., 41.

[91] Ibid., 46.

[92] See William W. Combs, "The History of the NIV Translation Controversy," (n.p.: Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011), 14. <http://www.dbts.edu/pdf/macp/2011/Combs,%20History%20of%20NIV%20Translation%20Controversy.pdf>. Accessed 10/13/12. Combs's entire essay is a well-documented presentation of the entire controversy.

[93] "One of the main reasons the task of Bible translation is never finished is the change in our own language, English. Although a basic core of the language remains relatively stable, many diverse and complex linguistic factors continue to bring about subtle shifts in the meanings and/or connotations of even old, well-established words and phrases." "Preface," *Holy Bible: New International Version* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), vi.

[94] See their self-description at <https://www.cbmw.org/>. Accessed 10/13/12.

has carefully compared the 1984 version of the NIV to the 2011 version. Here are some examples of their findings.[95]

(1) Incorrectly changing "father" to "parent" or something else.

1984 NIV: *Proverbs 15:5* "A fool spurns *his father's* discipline, but whoever heeds correction shows prudence."

2011 NIV: *Proverbs 15:5* "A fool spurns *a parent's* discipline, but whoever heeds correction shows prudence."

The Hebrew word is *'ab*. Fifteen other verses make the same change. Why?

(2) Incorrectly changing "son" to "child."

1984 NIV: *Proverbs 13:24* "He who spares the rod hates *his son*, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him."

2011 NIV: *Proverbs 13:24* "Whoever spares the rod hates *their children*, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them."

The Hebrew word is *ben*. In 33 places, the new NIV changes the gender-specific "son" to something else. Why?

(3) In at least one instance, this has Christological significance.

1984 NIV: *Psalm 8:4* "What is man that you are mindful of him, *the son of man* that you care for him?"

2011 NIV: *Psalm 8:4* "What is mankind that you are mindful of them, *human beings* that you care for them?"

In Hebrews 2:6 this passage is applied to our Lord and so the 2011 NIV cites the verse with "son of man" language in spite of the fact that that phrase is not present in the 2011 NIV Old Testament. Why the confusion? Is it really necessary?

(4) Incorrectly changing "man" to some gender-neutral term when the original clearly intends a masculine person.

1984 NIV: *1 Kings 9:5* "I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father when I said, 'You shall never fail to have *a man* on the throne of Israel.'"

2011 NIV: *1 Kings 9:5* "I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father when I said, 'You shall never fail to have *a successor* on the throne of Israel.'"

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[95] "An Evaluation of Gender Language in the 2011 Edition of the NIV Bible: A Report from the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood," (Lexington, KY: Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, 2011), 10-13. <https://www.cbmw.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/cbmw-final-analysis-of-2011-niv.pdf>. Accessed 10/13/12. These are just a few of the examples cited in the report, but for the data in detail, see also <http://www.slowley.com/niv2011_comparison>.

The Hebrew is *ʾish*. In 278 places in the new NIV, masculine words like this have been translated in a gender neutral way. Why?

(5) Incorrectly changing "brother" to "brother or sister" or some other non-family word.

1984 NIV: *Luke 17:3* "So watch yourselves. If your *brother* sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him."

2011 NIV: *Luke 17:3* "So watch yourselves. If your *brother or sister* sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them."

New Testament Greek is perfectly capable of saying, "brother or sister," as it does, for example, in James 2:15. But our Lord chose not to do so in this particular passage. So why did the 2011 NIV decide to translate *adelphos* in this way – and similarly in 62 other passages?

These are just a few of the 2766 such changes that the CBMW has documented.[96] And it may very well be that the answer in each case is simply, by 2011, we no longer talked that way! In which case, the traditionalists must either concede that feminist ideologues have won the battle over language or else insist that in translating the Scriptures, the end product should reflect the world of the Bible and not the world of the reader.

These are not easy issues to resolve, nor by treating them so summarily do I wish to suggest that they are. The point of this paper is rather different. Translation issues are perennial, and we have just scratched the surface. For example, ignoring the whole controversy over the RSV when it first appeared is almost inexcusable, since it was a real donnybrook and featured such episodes as one preacher publicly torching the offending text and others renaming it, the "Revised Standard *Per*version" of the Bible.[97] But even without exploring that controversy, we can see that arguments over text, style, and ideology (or theology) arise right along with new translations. There's no escaping it. The Bible – God's Word – is basic to Christianity. So translating the Bible is one of the most important tasks that Christians can ever undertake, and debating the results of that enterprise will always follow. Personally, we may not enjoy the fight but we have no choice. After all, at least for now, we are still a part of the Church *militant*! LSQ

[96] "An Evaluation," CBMW, 4.

[97] See, for example, Peter J. Thuesen, *In Discordance with the Scriptures: American Protestant Battles over Translating the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 93-119.

Formal and Functional Equivalence in Bible Translation

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THOSE OF YOU WITH MEMORIES stretching back to the nineteen seventies will doubtless recall the ads that launched Miller Lite. Burly sports figures engaged in heated debate: "Tastes great!" "Less filling!" The argument see-sawed back and forth, with each side apparently unwilling to give in to the other. What made the ads so funny was, of course, the fact that they were apparently fiercely divided over their different reasons for liking the same product.

In the translation discussions I[1] have participated in for the past few years, I have had a sense at times that something vaguely similar was going on: people passionately contending for different ways of translating the same Bible. I do not believe the issue is at bottom one of accuracy or faithfulness (concepts which in themselves are not all that easy to nail down). I believe that the NIV, the HCSB, the ESV, and the NKJV are all translated by people who have a high view of Scripture and

[1] I come to this discussion as a non-expert. What I know, I know from my discussions with my brother, Dr. E.R. Wendland, who for many years has challenged me and deepened my understanding of the complexities of these matters. I also had the privilege of working with him in translating the Psalms in one of the initial drafts of the Buku Loyera (the new Chewa version of the Bible). Finally, as the chair of our synod's Translation Evaluation Committee, I have spent a considerable amount of time reading and reflecting on these matters. In this, my own understanding has received from others far more than it has ever given. I am greatly indebted to my friends and colleagues on this committee: Professors Cherney and Nass, President Joel Petermann, and Pastor John Braun. I would commend their essays and Bible studies to you: <http://www.wels.net/translation>.

who see the Bible's message centering in Christ. Rather, the matter has more to do with translational preference. More specifically: whether one prefers a functionally or a formally equivalent translation of the Bible.

In saying this, I have no wish to be understood as saying that translating the Bible is an unimportant enterprise. Nor am I suggesting that we should simply give up talking about the best way to do it. This is obviously a matter over which people have strong feelings and reasons—even pastoral ones—for their preferences. They have a right to them. Some, because of such concerns, may prefer not to use a translation like the new NIV. I can understand and respect this point of view. I am merely saying that this is a matter over which godly people can honestly disagree. Above all, I don't wish to demonize those who come to a different conclusion than I have. God has blessed us with a rich array of translations that we can choose from, all of which are acceptable and all of which have their varying strengths and weaknesses.

So I have some relatively modest hopes for this paper. My goal is not to convince you to become a committed disciple of one approach or the other. I only hope there would be a little less heat and a little more light as we talk about them. Both approaches—formal and functional—have their merits. Both approaches have their limitations. Both approaches have had their advocates who have oversold the case and made what I believe are exaggerated claims for them. If this paper can succeed in at least beginning to make people more aware of the relative merits and demerits of each approach as well as to damp down on some of the overselling, I will be satisfied. I hope we can agree that each approach is useful and that perhaps more helpful are the questions: 1) for what target audience is this translation aimed, and 2) to what uses will it be put? If we can reach that point, I will be happy.

Defining Terms

What do we mean by formal and functional[2] equivalence? In a *formally equivalent*[3] translation, a translator seeks to preserve, as much

[2] In many writings the expression "dynamic" equivalence is used instead. Both were coined by Eugene Nida. In 1986 he substituted functional equivalence for his previous term "dynamic equivalence." He made the change because he was concerned that the earlier term had been misunderstood. He felt that functional equivalence was better since it "served to highlight the communicative functions of translating." Jan DeWaard and Eugene A. Nida, *From One Language to Another: Functional Equivalence in Bible Translation*, 1st ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1986), vii–viii.

[3] Also called the "formal correspondence" (FC) approach. When abbreviating, I will call this approach FC to distinguish it from the abbreviation FE, which I will use exclusively for functional equivalence.

as he can, the structure of the original. This approach seeks to achieve consistency in translating the same Greek or Hebrew word with the same target-language word, as much as this is possible. It aims to make the original text transparent to the target reader, in some cases even to the point of preserving the word order and syntax of the original.[4] A *functionally equivalent* translation, by contrast, seeks to communicate above all the meaning of the original, using the most natural forms, words, structures, and idioms of the target language. It aims for the same communicative impact in the target context that the source text had upon the original readers and hearers. Success is achieved when the translation "doesn't sound like a translation."[5]

Although the above terminology is fairly new, the two different approaches to translation are not. In popular English people generally refer to a formally equivalent translation as being "word for word" or "literal" while a functionally equivalent translation is "meaning-based," or "sense for sense." Just becoming more aware of the long history of this debate will serve, I believe, to temper overstatements. As we discuss these matters we ought to be aware that we are taking part in a conversation that has spanned millennia. If a definitive solution has eluded others for centuries, it is unlikely that we will hit upon one.

The Translator's Warrant

The first question to be asked is: Do we even have a right to translate a sacred text? A question like this may seem obvious. A brief glance at the history of translation makes it clear that the answer is anything

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[4] Adapted from Kenneth A. Cherney, "On Bible Translation and Choosing a Bible," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 108, no. 2 (March 1, 2011): 111–128.

[5] Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation: With Special Reference to Bible Translating*, reprint (Leiden: Brill Academic Pub., 1982), 12. It should be mentioned that there are very few "pure" examples of either type. The best example of a formally equivalent translation of the Bible in English would probably be a Greek or Hebrew interlinear. After that would come Young's Literal Translation. The best example of functionally equivalent translations might be the Good News Bible or the Common English Bible. Most popular translations mix the two methods. The NIV, for example, is more word for word in some passages than is the ESV. In a programmatic statement found on their webpage, the translators say, "Our aim is to translate the NIV in such a way as to provide the optimum combination of transparency to the original documents and ease of understanding in every verse" (<http://www.niv-cbt.org/questions/>, accessed Sept 16, 2012). The ESV—which advertises itself as "an essentially literal" translation, admits, "Every translation is at many points a trade-off between literal precision and readability, between 'formal equivalence' in expression and 'functional equivalence' in communication, and the ESV is no exception" (ESV Classic Reference Bible [Wheaton: Crossway, 2001], preface).

but. Even today many a faithful Muslim would answer such a question regarding the Quran with the following:

> Muslims regard the Quran as untranslatable; the language in which it was revealed—Arabic—is inseparable from its message and Muslims everywhere, no matter what their native tongue, must learn Arabic to read the Sacred Book and to perform their worship. The Quran of course is available in many languages, but these versions are regarded as interpretations rather than translations - partly because the Arabic language, extraordinarily concise and allusive, is impossible to translate in a mechanical, word for word way. The inimitability of the Quran has crystallized in the Muslim view of *i'jaz* or "impossibility," which holds that the style of the Quran, being divine, cannot be imitated: any attempt to do so is doomed to failure.[6]

Nor is this an isolated case: Iamblichus, a Greek writer of the second century AD, was reluctant to endorse the translation of religious texts because

> in translation, words do not preserve exactly the same sense: each people has characteristics impossible to transfer from one language to another; thus, even though one can translate these words, they still do not preserve the same force.[7]

A few centuries earlier, Ben Sira's grandson made the same observation. He speaks of the weaknesses of his own translation work when compared to his grandfather's original. As an excuse, he points to similar failings in the Septuagint:

> Things originally spoken in Hebrew have not the same force in them when they are translated into another tongue: and not only these, but the Law itself, and the Prophecies, and the rest of the books, have no small difference when they are spoken in their original form.[8]

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[6] From <http://www.islamicity.com/mosque/ihame/Ref1.htm>. Accessed September 16, 2012.

[7] As quoted in Sebastian Brock, "Aspects of Translation Technique in Antiquity," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 20, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 76.

[8] *Apocrypha of the Old Testament*, 2004 (R. H. Charles, Ed.) (Sir 10). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

But whereas Ben Sira's grandson used this acknowledged weakness to ask for pardon and acceptance of his own work of translation, Iamblichus came to an entirely different conclusion. According to him only the originals could be valid:

> The words of the ancient prayers should be kept exactly as they are, as though they were holy sanctuaries: nothing should be removed from them, and nothing added.[9]

This consciousness of the "overriding importance" of the original sacred text formed at least part of the impulse that lay behind those who—like Theodotian, Aquila, and Symmachus—revised the Septuagint with renderings that were far more word for word in translational approach.[10] Another part of their motivation was their weariness of having what they considered to be the "falsified" renderings of the Septuagint continually quoted against them by Christian apologetes. Later on in antiquity, rabbinic Judaism rejected the translational enterprise completely. R. Judah b. Ilai at the end of the second century wrote, "He who translates literally is a falsifier, while he who adds anything (by way of paraphrase) is a blasphemer."[11]

So when, around 250 BC, those legendary seventy translated the Torah[12] for the Greek-speaking Jews of Alexandria, one cannot underestimate the magnitude of this achievement! This is true on two levels, first that it was attempted at all, and secondly, that it was received by Jews and later by Christians as the Word of God.[13] "The Septuagint is… a unique linguistic monument without analogy in Greek literature of antiquity. No other work of this scale was translated into Greek from a foreign language."[14]

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[9] Brock, 76.

[10] For more see Martin Hengel, *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture: Its Prehistory and the Problem of Its Canon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 82–83, and Brock, 77. Origen described Aquila's method as δουλεύων τῇ Ἑβραικῇ λέξει—in service to the Hebrew way of speaking (Orig. Ep. 1.2).

[11] As quoted in Brock, 77.

[12] The other books of the Septuagint were translated later. Most estimates of the entire process range from 350 to 400 years, with the final books being translated in the early 2nd century AD. For more on the subject, see Hengel, 19ff. and 83ff., and David G. Burke, "The First Versions: The Septuagint, the Targums, and the Latin," in *History Of Bible Translation*, ed. Phil Noss (New York: American Bible Society, 2007), 59–89.

[13] Indeed, as we will discuss later when we look at St. Jerome's debate with St. Augustine, the Septuagint had achieved inspired status among many.

[14] Hengel, xi.

But all questions of history aside, what biblical warrant do we have for translating the sacred text? Why have Lutheran Christians consistently referred to translations as the Word of God even though they know that translations are not on a par with the original and that the doctrines of inspiration and inerrancy apply in their fullest sense to what God inspired the original authors to write?

As an answer, our Lutheran dogmaticians point us to 1 Peter 1:23–25:

> For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For,
>
> "*All men are like grass,*
> *and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;*
> *the grass withers and the flowers fall,*
> *but the word of the Lord stands forever.*"
>
> And this is the word that was preached to you.

From this they argue that the *essence* of the Word of God cannot be "the syllables, the sounds, and the words." If it were otherwise, "Scripture would contradict itself, since according to Scripture itself, words, syllables, and letters can be destroyed (Je 36:27). [This passage and others rather assert] that God's Word… is eternal."[15] What makes this New Testament quotation so apt is that Peter is citing the Septuagint translation of Isaiah 40:6 and 8. Clearly he treats the text as authoritative, even though the original Hebrew words and syllables are not present. For this reason, we consider the divine meaning to be the essential quality that "makes" a particular writing to be the Word of God, whether it is the meaning as it is conveyed by the original tongues, or the meaning as conveyed by a faithful translation of them.[16]

This then is the warrant of the translator.

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[15] Adolf Hoenecke, *Evangelical Lutheran Dogmatics* vol. 4 (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1999), 5.

[16] Gerhard and Quenstedt said similar things. See Gerhard's *Loci Theologici* I.14, and Quenstedt as quoted by Hoenecke: "When used with regard to the essence, the name 'Holy Scripture' is used for the divine meaning indicated by the words…the matter of Scripture is the letters, words, and writing" (5–6). Consider, too, the differences in the Words of Institution as reported in the Synoptics and by the Apostle Paul. Lutherans have never been troubled by the thought that there are slight variations in what Jesus is reported to have said. We affirm that, in every case, the holy writer is preserving the sense of what Jesus said, the divinely intended meaning.

Translational Characteristics of the Septuagint

The question of whether a "sense for sense" or a "word for word" translation is to be preferred arises already when one considers the translational characteristics of the Septuagint (LXX). The translation of the Torah—the first section of the Septuagint that was completed—generally follows the Masoretic text. It tends to be more "word for word" in its approach. Decisions made by these early translators on how to handle certain words had a great influence on the vocabulary of the rest of the books.

> Their decisions must have been difficult, but choices such as using *dikaios* for *tsaddiq* "righteous" and *doxa* for *kabod* "glory" proved well made. On the other hand, choices such as *alētheia* "truth, not hidden" for *'emet* "trust" or *kalos* "good" for *tob* "good, beautiful" were only partially synonymous. Much worse, the choices involving *nomos* "law" for *torah* "instruction, teaching"… were fateful and seriously constricted or changed the meaning of those important Hebrew terms.[17]

One of the limitations of word for word translations is well illustrated here. Words in one language are often difficult to match up in another. Even when you find a close equivalent, it rarely occupies the exact same semantic domain (that is to say, has the exact same range of meanings) of the word in the original. Nuances will be lost. Distortions can creep in. Consider the word *logos*. As every first-year Greek student knows, the English gloss for *logos* is "word." But even more formally equivalent translations like the ESV find it impossible to use a single English expression to render it. Depending on the context, the ESV translators also use "message," "saying," "news," "account," and even "question" to handle it.

In the Septuagint, another clear example of this limitation might be in the way the Greek word *eirēnē* "peace" was substituted for the Hebrew word *shalom* "health, wholeness, well-being."

Again this is not to say that that the forms of the original are unimportant. Indeed, Quenstedt can affirm that the "external essence" of Scripture is the character of the speech, the style and the idioms of Hebrew and Greek. Lutherans revere the fact that God inspired his eternal Word originally in the forms and idioms of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Translations must be governed by the original and their accuracy assessed by their faithfulness to the original's meaning.

[17] Burke, 66.

> [In] Second Samuel 11:7… when Uriah comes before David, the king asks "how the war prospered." The Hebrew is *welishlom hammilhamah*, which… means "[he asked] into the well-being of the war." But the limited range of *eirēnē* makes the Greek awkward: *eis eirēnēn tou polomou,* which is… "[he asked] into the peace of the war."[18]

I would say that Prof. Burke is being too kind here. It's more than awkward; it's gobbledygook!

As a whole, the Septuagint demonstrates both word for word and meaning-oriented approaches. The more word for word books include Judges (B text), Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles. Among the more meaning-oriented we find Job, Proverbs, Isaiah, Daniel, and Esther. "The remaining books range between these poles."[19]

Also germane to the discussion is the widely noted fact that the Septuagint demonstrates a "noticeable concern" to reduce anthropomorphisms. Psalms 28 (LXX 27) and 31 (LXX 30) provide examples. In both instances, the metaphor *tsur* "rock" is avoided in the Greek. In the first instance where David addresses God as "my rock," the Septuagint substitutes *kurie* "O Lord." In the second instance (Psalm 31:3), David says to God, *Heyeh li letsur ma'oz* "Be(come) for me as a rock of refuge." In the Septuagint, "Be(come) for me as God, Protector." It is likely that this approach was followed in the interests of better communication, that is, to forestall misunderstanding in a translation that would be used in an idolatrous context.[20]

From the Septuagint, then, one would have a difficult time establishing the thesis that a word for word approach is more "biblical" than sense for sense. Clearly the early Christians' Bible demonstrated a mixture of approaches. Furthermore, the New Testament alludes to or quotes from the Septuagint over eighty percent of the time. While one would hesitate to infer from this that the New Testament therefore "sanctifies" both approaches, one can at least say that, from the writings of the apostles, a person cannot justify a claim that a word for word approach is the only right way. To bear this out it might be helpful briefly to consider a few examples from the New Testament.

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18 Ibid.

19 Ibid., 68.

20 For more see Burke, 67, and Hengel, 16.

Three New Testament Examples

An area of great interest in hermeneutics these days is the whole question of the use of the Old Testament in the New. It would take us too far afield to tackle a topic so complex. But for the matter at hand, it might be useful to point out three concrete examples of how New Testament authors quoted the Old Testament. The first is John 10:34–35, where Jesus cites Psalm 82:6 (LXX), "I said, you are gods," and then bases his entire argument on a single word, adding "and the Scripture cannot be broken." While the meaning is certainly the most important factor, there are times when (to paraphrase Luther) the whole sense of a passage hangs upon a single word. Jesus himself reminds us of that.

The second example is a little more complex and is most helpful if one has knowledge of the original languages. I will try to remove the difficulties by supplying my own word for word translation for the originals as well as put a number key beside places where I intend to make translational or exegetical points.

The passage under discussion is Psalm 32:1–2 as Paul quotes it from the Septuagint in Romans 4:4–8. First let's consider a word for word rendering of the Hebrew original:

> O the blessings of the one whose (sing. masc.①) rebellion is taken away,
> whose (sing. masc.①) sin is covered!
> O the blessings of the man (Hbr: *Adam* ②) to whom the LORD does not credit/calculate guilt.

This raises the question: how should a person handle the words in this passage that are masculine in gender? Some might say that the single word "Adam" should settle the matter for us. "Man is man, Adam is Adam—don't distort the truth when translating," they would argue. But it is not so simple. Quite apart from the fact that there is never a perfect overlap between the word maps of different languages, linguists and grammarians have long recognized the truth that Professor Moo summarizes for us in the following:

> There are, of course, some words in both Greek and Hebrew that undeniably refer to either a man (or men) or a woman (or women). But many of the most common words can function either exclusively (men as opposed to women) or inclusively

> (men and women equally). The actual words and the form of the words do not tell us which it is.[21]

This will become more clear, I hope, as we examine the passage as it appears in Romans. Since Paul's lead up to the passage is also very helpful, allow me to bring those verses into the discussion as well. Again, a word for word rendering follows:

> To the one who is working (sing. masc. + generic article ③), the wage is not credited/calculated by way of gift, but by way of debt. To the one who is not working but believing in him (sing. masc. + generic article ③) who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited/calculated as righteousness. Just as David, too, speaks of the blessed state of the person (Gk: *anthrōpos* ④) to whom God credits/calculates righteousness apart from works:
>
> O the blessings of those whose (pl. masc ⑤) lawlessnesses have been forgiven
> whose sins (pl. masc ⑤) have been covered.
> O the blessing of the man (Gk: *anēr* ⑥) whose sin the Lord will never calculate/credit.

What's so interesting about this example is the rather free, yet entirely appropriate, way both the Septuagint and Paul handle the Hebrew original, especially with respect to grammatical gender. Paul's treatment also has implications for how he understood the word *Adam/anēr/* man—whether as an inclusive or as an exclusive term. This is worth careful observation on our parts because some have detected important theological truths embedded in grammatical gender.[22] They furthermore

[21] In *Which Bible Translation Should I Use?: A Comparison of 4 Major Recent Versions*, Andreas J. Köstenberger and David A. Croteau, eds. (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group; Kindle Edition [Kindle Locations 1918–1921]).

[22] Grammatical gender is a feature of some languages (such as French, German, ancient Greek, and ancient Hebrew) whereby gender is assigned to nouns in a rather arbitrary way, not because there is necessarily any intrinsic maleness or femaleness involved with the nouns as such. The grammatical gender rather serves to signal agreement between the noun and words that are linked to it, such as adjectives and pronouns. "Confusion," for example is masculine in Greek, whereas "tranquility" is feminine. A "spirit" in Hebrew is feminine, but neuter in Greek. Why this should be so is for reasons of grammatical agreement, not because the peoples in question perceived a male characteristic in the idea of confusion, or a female quality in "spirit."

believe that a serious loss of meaning occurs whenever a singular masculine pronoun is translated with a plural.[23]

It's quite clear in context that David is making a generalizing introductory statement based upon his own experience, the details of which will follow. The point he wishes to emphasize is that God's forgiving of our sins is the only way that any human being can enjoy the blessed state of being righteous before God. To put it another way, the Hebrew begins with two generic[24] masculine singulars (①) which the Septuagint renders with plurals "those who" (⑤). Paul quotes it without change, thus indicating that the Septuagint gives a perfectly appropriate translation of the Hebrew.

David clearly does not mean to restrict this blessedness to males, or even to the male as the representative head of both genders. To bring in such ideas here is to introduce concepts utterly foreign to the context and line of thought. Rather, *Adam* is defined by its usage in context as an individualizing reference to the entire human race.[25] That is, David

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[23] For one example, see the CTCR's staff statement on the NIV 2011 found at <http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=1935>, accessed September 22, 2012, where the writers consider the substitution of singular masculine nouns with plural forms to be a "serious theological weakness" (4). The most pithy rejoinder I have seen to this point is that of Prof. Joel Fredrich of New Ulm who once wrote, "Grammatical details within a language help to make clear connections between words in that language, but they have no theological significance by themselves. There is no reason for us to turn English into Heblish or Greeklish or Heeklish." From "Some gender issues in translating the Bible into English," a paper delivered at Monroe, Michigan, January 16, 2012.

[24] When I use the term *generic*, I am referring to another grammatical feature by which one class of things is distinguished from other classes. A generic would be used to distinguish a human being from an animal, a Greek from a Jew, or even males as a class from females. The point here is to distinguish those people who—as a class—enjoy the blessed state of forgiveness. See Daniel Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 227ff. Again, different languages express this in different ways. The Greek often signals a generic expression by using the definite article. In English, more often than not, we express this same idea with an indefinite article—a feature which Greek lacks. The Greek article—though masculine in gender—does not have an inherently male component of meaning.

[25] Commenting on Psalm 1 where there are similar issues, Prof. Moo says, "Advocates of the translation 'man' sometimes argue that the original text refers to a 'blessed' male, who then becomes representative of all people. So 'man' should be kept in Psalm 1: 1 even though the verse ultimately includes men and women equally. The problem with this approach is twofold. First, how do we know the original author was referring to a male? As we have seen, the Hebrew word does not tell us this, and nothing in the context makes this clear." Kostenberger and Croteau, (Kindle Locations 2000–2003).

means to say not, "Oh the blessings of every *Adam*…" or even so much, "Oh the blessings of mankind…," but, "Oh the blessings of any human being."

Just like David, Paul wishes to illustrate the truth that justification by faith is the only way for anyone to receive the righteousness of God. So he quotes David's well-known words. Notice the way Paul precedes his quotation by three participles, all attributive with generic articles (③), "To the one who works… to the one who does not work but believes." Note too how Paul sets up the quotation by using *anthrōpos* ④ (a word which all agree is generic in its reference "person, human being"). These are all lined up as synonymous in meaning with the two generic plurals of the Septuagint (⑤). As a final parallel, observe how Paul employs the Septuagint's rendering of *Adam* with *anēr* (⑥), thus signaling again *anēr's* generic quality in this context. Just like *Adam*, it is best translated in English with "a person" or "a human being," or even as "someone."[26]

The final New Testament example approaches even more closely, perhaps, to the techniques of a functionally equivalent translation. I have in mind here Matthew 2:5–6, where we hear the chief priests and scholars quoting from Micah 5:1. A word for word rendering of the Hebrew runs as follows:

> And you, Bethlehem, Ephratha, little for being among the thousands of Judah
> From you he will go out for me to become ruler in Israel.

The Septuagint translation is quite literal here. But not the translation in Matthew. There we read:

> And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
> By no means are you least among Judah's rulers!
> For from you will go out a ruler.

And then the Jerusalem scholars added and adapted a verse from Samuel (2 Samuel 5:2):

> He will shepherd my people Israel.

[26] Our standard Greek dictionary tells us, "[This is] an equivalent to the M/F form τις." See BDAG 2 or (if you prefer a dictionary written before the feminist debate) BAGD 6.

This is the sort of translation, I suppose, that could make someone question the accuracy of Old Testament quotations in the New Testament. If a person operates with the notion that only a literal translation is acceptable, then one encounters some difficulty in justifying this verse. But if one simply says, "Here the scholars in Jerusalem are accurately conveying the divinely intended meaning of the original"—even if they do it in almost the manner of a paraphrase[27]—then the problems fall away.

To sum up this section, when everything hangs upon a particular word or phrase in the original, we observe the New Testament following a word for word approach. But we can also see that the New Testament has no problem with sense for sense renderings when the words accurately represent the divinely intended meaning of the original.

The Gourd and the Ivy: Jerome's Vulgate Translation

Jerome is contested ground. Some see him as the undisputed champion of a word for word approach in translating Scripture.[28] Others, notably Eugene Nida, claim him for the sense for sense school.[29] This is hardly surprising because Jerome made programmatic statements on both sides of the issue. In his widely quoted *Letter #57: To Pammachius*, he writes:

> I not only admit, I freely proclaim that in translating from the Greek—except in the case of the Holy Scriptures where even the order of the words is a mystery—I render sense for sense, not word for word.... I need only mention [as others who have done the same] Hilary the Confessor who translated... from Greek to Latin. But he refused to stick to the drowsiness of the letter and chain himself with stale and vulgar literalism.

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27 Clarifying "Ephratha" with "the land of Judah" and paraphrasing the words "are little" with, "are by no means least." This, of course, is the ultimate thrust of the passage since Bethlehem, though little, would know the distinct honor as the place where Messiah would be born.

28 See Michael Marlowe's article at <http://www.bible-researcher.com/vulgate4.html>, accessed September 23, 2012. I must say, while he accuses Nida of "shoddy scholarship," his own airy assumptions and casual brushing away of evidence does not impress.

29 See Jan DeWaard and Eugene A. Nida, *From One Language to Another: Functional Equivalence in Bible Translation* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986), 183.

> Like a conqueror, he led away captive into his own language the meaning of the originals.[30]

It almost seems as if Jerome is contradicting himself!

To untie the knot, some have pointed out that his main point in this section is to give a defense of a rather free translation he had made of *a papal letter*, but that he explicitly disavows this approach in translating *the Scriptures* "where even the order of the words is a mystery." This does not solve the problem, however, since later in the same letter he asserts that the translator of Scripture, too, has to be faithful to the sense (*Epistulae* 57:10): "*Non verba in Scripturis consideranda sed sensus*—with Scripture, it's not the words that must be taken into account, but the meaning." It's as if he hasn't quite made up his mind and so wants to express himself cautiously.

Jerome certainly had reason to exercise caution when it came to Bible translation, not only because of the nature of the Scriptures themselves, but also because of the context in which he was translating them. First of all, the practice of allegorizing the meaning(s) of the Scripture was a widely accepted interpretative strategy. That meant people were paying close attention to scriptural items like incongruities in word order, Hebrew place names, difficult phrases, and repeated expressions. Interpreters often sought to "unpack" the mystic meanings that they thought lay concealed under these striking word formations.[31] Besides this, Jerome would be sailing against the winds of a translational tradition. No wonder he displayed some initial reluctance in accepting the commission of Pope Damasus to revise the Latin versions of the gospels:[32]

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[30] As quoted and translated in William Arrowsmith, "Jerome on Translation: A Breviary," *Arion* 2, no. 3 (January 1, 1975): 358–367.

[31] I have written elsewhere on this subject in "Is Allegorizing a Legitimate Manner of Biblical Interpretation?" *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 103, no. 3 (September 2006).

[32] Prior to Jerome's version, there were a plethora of older Latin versions. As Augustine put it, "Qui enim scripturas ex Hebraea lingua in Graecam verterunt, numerari possunt, Latini autem interpretes nullo modo. Ut enim cuique primis fidei temporibus in manus venit codex Graecus, etaliquantulum facultatis sibi utriusque linguae habere videbatur, ausus est interpretari—One can at least count those who translated the Scriptures from Hebrew to Greek. Such is by no means the case with Latin. In early Christian times, whenever a Greek manuscript came into someone's hands he was rash enough to translate it, however little facility he had in either language." *De Doctrina Christiana* 2. 11.

> You urge me to revise the Old Latin version and, as it were, to sit in judgment on copies of the Scriptures that are now scattered throughout the world.... The labor is one of love, but at the same time presumptuous, for in judging others I must be content to be judged. Is there anyone learned or unlearned who, when he takes the volume in his hands and perceives that what he reads does not suit his settled tastes, will not break out immediately into violent language and call me a forger and profane person for having the audacity to add anything to the ancient books, or make any changes or corrections in them?[33]

His fears were not unfounded. When he came out with a new translation of Jonah, the substitution of the single word "ivy" for "gourd" caused a riot in a North African church![34]

As to his overall approach to translating the Scriptures, judging from the evidence of the translation itself, I am content to remain with Benjamin Kedar's fairly cautious assessment, "Jerome's translation displays an unevenness… the Psalter and Prophets exhibit adherence to the linguistic structure of the source language, while Joshua and Judges, Ruth and Esther abound in free renderings."[35] Does this reflect an evolving view towards the translation methodology most appropriate for the Scriptures? Kedar thinks so. He concludes:

> It can hardly be a coincidence that [the Psalter and the Prophets] were the early products of Jerome's labor, [Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and Esther] constitute the concluding part: step by step, as Jerome grew more and more assured and practiced, he turned his attention to the sense of the complete statement, leaving aside its linguistic constituents.[36]

It might help to give some specific examples. As we examine them, we will want to bear in mind that a Hebrew writer has no qualms about repeating words and phrases; Latin prefers to use different synonyms to relieve the monotony. Latin adores subordinate clauses. It abhors the

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[33] *Epistula ad Damasum*, as quoted in Bruce Metzger, "Important Early Translations of the Bible," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 150 (July–March, 1993): 47.

[34] For more on the story, see Justo L. Gonzalez, *Story of Christianity: Volume 1, The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), 238ff.

[35] Benjamin Kedar, "The Latin Translations," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading & Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism & Early Christianity*, ed. M. J. Mulder and Harry Sysling (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005), 326.

[36] Ibid., 326.

paratactic structure (and… and… and) so favored by Hebrew. These examples will make clear that, in some places, Jerome adheres closely to the original. In others, he does not:[37]

Jonah 1:5–6:[38]

And the sailors were afraid, and they cried out, each (*'ish* distributive) to his own god, and they cast the cargo (*kēlim*—vessels, articles, utensils, stuff) which was in the ship [merchant ship] into the sea to lighten [it] from upon them. And Jonah went down into the far reaches of the ship [one with a deck], and he lay down and fell into a deep sleep (word for word Hebrew).

Old Latin	Old Latin Translation	Vulgate	Vulgate Translation
Et timuerunt nautae	And the sailors were afraid	Et timuerunt nautae timore magno	And the sailors feared with a great fear
et procla-maverunt	and they cried out	et clamaverunt	and the men cried out
unusquisque ad dominum suum	each to his own master	viri ad deum suum	to their own god
et iactum fece-runt vasorum	and they made a casting overboard of the vessels	et miserunt vasa	and they threw off the vessels
quae erant in navi	which were on the ship	quae erant in navi	which were on the ship
in mare ut aleviarentur ab eis	upon the sea that it might be lightened of them (i.e. that the ship be freed from its weight)	in mare ut aleviarentur ab eis	upon the sea that it might be lightened of them (i.e. that the ship be freed from its weight)
Ionas autem discenderat	But Jonah had gone down	et Ionas descendit	and Jonah went down

37 For more, see J.N.D Kelly, *Jerome, His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 162–163; and Burke, 88–89.

38 I am dependent on Kedar, 314–315 and 326–327, for these examples.

in ventrem navis	into the belly of the ship	ad interiora navis	to the inner part of the ship
et dormiebat et stertebat	and he was sleeping and snoring	et dormiebat sopore gravi	and he was sleeping with a very deep sleep

Here we see a mostly word for word translation in both versions. Jerome has not introduced any major changes in the style of the original. For one thing, Jerome and the Old Latin preserve the paratactic style of the narrative. He does, however, smooth out the awkward way the Greek had handled the Hebrew Hiphil (also reflected by the Old Latin), "They made a casting overboard." He also shows a better understanding for the underlying Hebrew vocabulary than did the Septuagint (again, reflected in the Old Latin), substituting "god" for "master," "inner part" for "belly," "sleep with a very deep sleep" for "sleeping and snoring."

Now for an example where he shows a willingness to restructure the original for the sake of the target language:

Genesis 37:34

And Jacob tore his outer garment and he put sackcloth on his loins and he mourned for his son many days (word for word Hebrew).

Old Latin	Old Latin Translation	Vulgate	Vulgate Translation
Et conscidit Iacob vestimenta sua	And Jacob tore his garments in pieces	scissisque vestibus	And when he had torn his clothes
et posuit saccum super lumbrum suum	and he put sackcloth on his loins	indutus est cilicio	he dressed in sackcloth,
et flebat filium suum	and he wept for his son	lugens filium	grieving for his son
diebus multis	for many days	multo tempore	for a long time

Jerome's Latin removes the parataxis, actually sounding quite elegant in comparison with the Old Latin's repeated "ands." He replaces the Old Latin's rather wooden "he put sackcloth upon his loins" with a far more idiomatic expression. Finally, he recasts the time reference from "for many days" into "for a long time"—again a more idiomatic Latin

expression. In this section he is translating the Hebrew sense for sense and not word for word.

Probably the most lasting impact Jerome had on the world of translation was his insistence on translating *iuxta Hebraicem veritatem*—according the Hebrew verity. While such an approach may seem fairly obvious to us today, it was hardly so in late antiquity. The Septuagint translation had served as the Christian's Old Testament for centuries. All the old Latin versions had used it as their base text. What is more, many influential churchmen had been insisting for quite some time that the Septuagint was—in itself—an inspired and even a prophetic work.[39] Early on in his translational career, Jerome himself might have agreed.

> [But] his intensive biblical studies…had finally convinced him that, however revolutionary it might seem and whatever hostility it might provoke, the only ultimately satisfying Bible for Christians was one which reproduced the Hebrew original.[40]

He had clearly come a long way from his original commission to harmonize and update the gospels! This conviction influenced his view on the Old Testament canon as well. Many centuries would have to pass, however, before his beliefs on that score could come to full flower in the Reformation.

A Learned Fellow: Martin Luther's Approach to Translation

With genuine humility, Martin Luther said of his greatest linguistic achievement:

> I have undertaken to translate the Bible into German. This was good for me; otherwise I might have died in the mistaken notion that I was a learned fellow.[41]

Writers and historians run out of superlatives in their assessment of Luther's translation. They celebrate his language, his creativity, and his vigorous style. They rightly call him the father of the German language. We simply do not have time to delve into these matters, however

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[39] Including Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Jerome's influential younger contemporary, Augustine of Hippo.

[40] Kelly, 159.

[41] Ewald M. Plass, *What Luther Says: An Anthology* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972), 105.

pleasant it might be to do so.[42] Our concern remains the great debate between formal and functional equivalence. Where does the great reformer stand on the question?

Some have argued that Luther was a thoroughgoing literalist. They point to such passages as:

> In translation I always hold to this rule that one should not do violence to the grammar. And whoever understands this [i.e., the grammar] correctly, that one will recognize that the letter gives [the correct sense], not the spirit.[43]

Here I think it might be helpful to point out the senses in which Luther uses the words "grammar" and "the letter/literal," which are almost synonymous in this passage. Regarding "grammar" we should not understand Luther to mean that he wants to preserve the Hebrew and Greek grammar in such a way that it is slavishly mirrored in his translation. There are simply too many places where Luther does *not* do this. I will give further evidence of this later. Furthermore, there are many times when Luther positively rails against what he considered to be "rabbinical" renderings into German by a wooden adherence to the Hebrew grammar.[44]

Luther uses the word "literal" (or: the letter) in two senses. The first is in opposition to the fourfold sense of Scripture known to medieval interpreters. Luther is saying, "The literal (or we might say: the historical grammatical) meaning[45] is the correct meaning of the text. Don't look behind it, above it, or below it or engage in flights of allegoristic fantasy!" At other times he uses it when he has concluded, out of respect for doctrine, to preserve a more word for word translation of the source languages, saying, "We should keep such words, accustom ourselves to them, and so give place to the [original] language where it does a better job than our German."[46] Again, we will have opportunity to give

[42] I could point you to the following books and essays, which represent just a sampling: Heinz Bluhm, *Martin Luther, Creative Translator* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965); M. Reu, *Luther's German Bible* (Columbus: The Lutheran Book Concern, 1934); Arnold Koelpin, "Preparing a New Bible Translation in Luther's Day," essay delivered at the 1977 WELS Synod Convention; and Ernst Wendland, "Martin Luther—Father of Confessional, Functional-Equivalence Bible Translation (Parts 1 & 2)," *Notes on Translation* 9, nos. 1 and 2 (1995): 16–36; 47–60.

[43] As quoted in Daniel Deutschlander, "Luther and Translating" (essay delivered at Monroe, Michigan, 2012), 5.

[44] See Koelpin, 7.

[45] I.e., the first of the fourfold senses.

[46] LW 35:261; cf Koelpin, 8–10.

examples of where he does this later. In this passage, Luther has the former sense in mind. Luther wanted at all times to stick to the plain meaning of the text. Allegoristic interpretations had no place in translating the Bible. In that sense Luther was a literalist.

I will attempt to distill Luther's translational "method" into three statements:

A. He saw the message of Christ as central to the entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments.
B. He scrupulously held to "the exact wording" translation of the original (even when this might "do violence to the German language") when "everything turn[ed] on those very words" i.e. when a richer meaning or a doctrinal point were at stake.[47]
C. He was committed to communicating the Word of God to his German people in a common language version that was readily understandable to them. "Good translating means adapting the statement to the spirit of the [receptor] language."[48]

Christ at the Center of the Testaments

The implications for this in translation are obvious: *Qui non intelligit res non potest ex verbis sensum elicere*—Anyone who does not understand the subject matter will not be able to draw meaning from the words (Luther). Often it was Luther's understanding of the subject matter—drawn from the wider and narrower contexts of Scripture—that liberated him from a merely word for word translation or from scrupulously adhering to the grammatical opinions and analysis of the rabbis.[49] Because he was so firm in his belief that Christ was the center of the inspired text of Scripture, he once said, "I hold that a false Christian or a sectarian spirit is unable to give a faithful translation."[50] Without these presuppositions of faith, one cannot understand—much less translate—the sacred texts.

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[47] LW 35:194; 216.

[48] As quoted in Reu, 267.

[49] As quoted in Martin H. Franzmann, "Seven Theses on Reformation Hermeneutics," Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (1969), <www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=308>. He often expressed himself on this subject. For more, see Reu, 263ff. One more example: "Whoever wants to study Hebrew should first of all possess a proper New Testament and confidently commend himself to Christ as the sun, light, and guide." Reu, 265.

[50] As quoted in Plass, 105.

When Words Matter

In a few key places, Luther would abandon his general practice of bringing the text closer to the reader and require the reader to come closer to the original text. He knew very well when a certain passage did not sound like good German because it was too literal. But if he felt that key theological terms were at stake or that a more idiomatic German rendering would keep the reader from acquiring a richer meaning implied by the Hebrew words, he would leave in place a more literal translation. He himself gives an excellent example of this in his *Defense of the Translation of the Psalms:*

> On the other hand we have at times also translated quite literally—even though we could have rendered the meaning more clearly another way—because everything turns on these very words. For example, here in [Psalm 68] verse 18, "Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive," it would have been good German to say, "Thou hast set the captives free." But this is too weak, and does not convey the fine, rich meaning of the Hebrew, which says literally, "Thou hast led captivity captive." This does not imply merely that Christ freed the captives, but also that he captured and led away the captivity itself, so that it never again could or would take us captive again; thus it is really an eternal redemption [Heb. 9:12]…. On every hand St. Paul propagates such rich, glorious, and comforting doctrine (cf Ro 8:3; 1 Co 15:54; Ga 2:19; 2 Ti 1:10). Therefore out of respect for such doctrine, and for the comforting of our conscience, we should keep such words, accustom ourselves to them, and so give place to the Hebrew language where it does a better job than our German.[51]

Ernst Wendland sums up the significance of this passage for translators, "The preceding…illustrates the importance of maintaining intertextual 'resonance,' that is, the accumulated significance of certain important expressions that recur in a number of places, especially in New Testament quotations of the Old."[52]

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[51] LW 35:216.

[52] Wendland, 28.

Communicating the Word of God

In terms of our great debate, however, there can be no question that Luther favored a sense for sense approach over a more literal one. I don't wish to bore you with endless quotations in which he expresses himself quite clearly on the matter. To do so would not be at all difficult. I will content myself with only a few, ones which I feel best convey his understanding that translation involves far more than simply a matter of transposing one word for another, but a task in which the translator endeavors to communicate the meaning of God's Word clearly to people in their own heart's tongue and voice. Following this I will illustrate his method by considering one or two passages in which we see it on display.

First let Luther speak in his own inimitable way. As to the matter of seeking a common language for his version rather than speaking a form of Biblish, he wrote:

> I wanted to speak German, not Latin or Greek, since it was German I had undertaken to speak in the translation…. We do not have to inquire of the literal Latin, how we are to speak German, as these asses do. Rather we must inquire about this of the mother in the home, the children on the street, the common man in the marketplace. We must be guided by their language, the way they speak, and do our translating accordingly. That way they will understand it and recognize that we are speaking German to them.[53]

Concerning the subject of a scrupulous adherence to the words over the sense, he said:

> But what is the point of needlessly adhering so scrupulously and stubbornly to words which one cannot understand anyway? Whoever would speak German must not use Hebrew style. Rather he must see to it—once he understands the Hebrew author—that he concentrates on the sense of the text, asking himself, "Pray tell, what do the Germans say in such a situation?" Once he has the German words to serve the purpose, let him drop the Hebrew words and express the meaning freely in the best German he knows.[54]

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[53] LW 35:188–189.

[54] LW 35: 213–214.

He recognizes that the individual words in a source text sometimes occupy a rather broad semantic domain, a breadth that cannot be reproduced consistently by a single word in the target text. He also knows that different languages have different word maps, and that the poverty of words in one language makes it impossible to reproduce the wealth of words in another:

> It is impossible to give all the words just as they are in the Hebrew because each language has its own idioms. One word often has so many meanings (*latum*) that it is impossible to reproduce it adequately (with one word).[55]

> The Hebrew language is so rich that no other can compare with it. It possesses many words for singing, praising, glorifying, honoring, rejoicing, sorrowing, etc., for which we have but one.[56]

> If [Job] were translated everywhere word for word…and not for the most part according to the sense, no one would understand it.[57]

Finally, as to the matter of seeking meaning as the supreme goal governing all the rest, he declared:

> *Sententia et phrasis dominator super omnes leges et praecepta grammatica*—meaning and expression hold sway over all laws and grammatical precepts.[58]

> *Grammatica quidem necessaria est in declinando, conjugando, et construendo, sed in oratione sententiae et res considerandae, non grammatica, denn die grammatica soll nicht regieren super sententias*—Grammar is indeed necessary for declining, conjugating, and figuring out the syntax, but in a longer discourse, the meanings and subject matter must be taken into account, not grammatical points, for grammatical points ought not to hold sway over the meaning.[59]

[55] *Tischreden* 5521, as quoted in Reu, 268.
[56] As quoted in Koelpin, 6.
[57] LW 35:252.
[58] *Tischreden* 4764, as quoted in Reu, 269.
[59] *Tischreden* 3794, as quoted in Reu, 269.

These remarks illustrate Luther's linguistic depth of insight. He seems years ahead of his time. I say this because many even today still locate meaning primarily at the level of individual words. In their minds, then, the failure to transpose a single word from the source text into the target text lays the translator open to the charge of falsifying the meaning. It is also felt by some that the doctrine of verbal plenary inspiration requires that we retain—as much as possible—the word order and syntax of the original.[60]

Luther does not discount the words and syntax of the inspired text. But words and grammar serve the meaning, not vice versa. As a competent linguist he knows that words take on their exact meanings from their place in the context of a sentence, and sentences take on their meanings from their situation within the larger discourse. And all of it is governed by the basic subject matter under discussion.

How did these principles play out in Luther's actual translational practice? I'll leave out of the discussion Luther's famous defense of his insertion of "*allein*" into the German text at Romans 3:28.[61] But it's at least worth a mention since it provides an example of how Luther could also be non-literal in a crucial doctrinal passage. A better example might be the one Luther himself cites in his *Defense of the Translation of the Psalms:*

> Again, Psalm 92[:14], says, "Even when they grow old, they will nevertheless bloom, and be fruitful and flourishing." We know, of course, that [translated] word for word the text says this, "When their hair is gray they will still bloom and be fat and green." But what does this mean? The psalm had been comparing the righteous to trees, to palm trees and cedars [verse 14], which have no "gray hair," neither are they "fat" (by which a German means an oily or greasy substance [schmaltz], and thinks of a hefty paunch). But the prophet here intends to say that the righteous are such trees, which bloom and are fruitful and flourishing even when they grow old. They must abide forever, for the word of God which they teach abides forever [I Pet. 1:25]. Psalm 1[:3] says, "His leaf shall not wither," for the longer the righteous live, the more they gain both in the word and in life. But all other trees finally die away when they grow

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[60] This attitude seems to be most prevalent among the conservative Evangelicals or Calvinists. *Young's Literal Translation* has its advocates today. See Y*oung's Preface to the Revised Edition*.

[61] I simply refer you to *On Translating: An Open Letter* LW 35:187ff.

> old, especially those factious spirits whom God has not planted, as Christ declares, "Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted, must be rooted up" [Matt. 15:13].[62]

There are a number of things here worth attending to closely. Luther is willing to find more general terms for the picturesque words "in their gray-hair" and "fat" since he believes these Hebrew idioms would clash with the image of trees in German parlance. The governing metaphor (righteous = trees), however, cannot be lost because of its intertextual "resonance" (to use Dr. Wendland's terminology) with similar images in the wider context of Scripture. So gray heads become a general reference to old age, and fat trees become trees that bloom.

Luther is rather more daring than even his explication suggests, though. His vigorous German switches the word order of the original, which reads:

> Still do they bear fruit in gray-hair//Fat and flourishing will they be.

> But in the German:

> Und wenn sie gleich alt werden, werden sie dennoch blühen, fruchtbar und frisch sein.

> And even though they grow old, they will nevertheless bloom and be fruitful and lively.

Note that Luther frontshifts the time reference, and, following good German idiom, balances the *wenn... gleich* of the first clause with the corresponding *dennoch* of the second: *even though... yet*. All this he does to reflect a single Hebrew word *ʿōd*, placed as it is in emphatic position at the head of entire sentence. Note, too, the rhythmic way the sentence ends with a closing cadence:

blühen, fruchtbar und Frisch sein
/ ‿ / ‿ ‿ / ‿
[long short, long short, short, long short]

Luther is clearly aiming for the ear of the reader. His words sing. More on this later.

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[62] LW 35:218–219.

Another representative passage that well illustrates Luther's desire to translate in an idiomatic way occurs in Mark 15:29–30. Here we are dealing with direct speech, an area that presents difficulties all its own in moving from one language to another.

Mark is depicting the reaction of the casual passers-by when they saw Jesus on the cross. He classifies their speech as ridicule and disrespect (ἐβλασφήμουν). Their "body English" as well demonstrates their contempt for Jesus (wagging their heads—κινοῦντες τὰς κεφαλάς). The Greek text reads:

> Οὐὰ ὁ καταλύων τὸν ναὸν καὶ οἰκοδομῶν ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις, σῶσον σεαυτὸν καταβὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ.
>
> [Greek literal translation] Aha,[63] you who destroy the temple and build in three days, save yourself [by] coming down from the cross!
>
> [Luther] Pfui dich, wie fein zerbrichst du den Tempel und baust ihn in drei Tagen! Hilf dir nun selber und steig herab vom Kreuz!
>
> Shame on you! Look how well you destroy the temple and build it in three days! Now help yourself and get down from the cross!

Masterfully Luther captures the sneering tone of the crowd. No major translation captures so clearly the contempt packed into the οὐά as does Luther's "Pfui dich."[64] Note the clear sarcasm in "wie fein." Notice, too, how he removes the rather awkward, "You who…" phrase and replaces it with main verbs in their own clause. Finally, observe the way he breaks up the longer sentence into two, yet still closely connecting them by allowing the idiomatic "nun" push off the time reference in the previous clause "drei Tagen." With such German, Luther puts his listeners themselves under the cross. It was no doubt a translational approach such as this that led Roland Bainton to exclaim:

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[63] BDAG suggests the interjection denotes amazement, scornful wonder, or even joy.

[64] NIV's "So!" does a better job than ESV's "Aha!" but not so good as the HCSB's "Ha!" Yet all of them fail to capture it as well as Luther does.

> Palestine has moved west. And this is what happened to a degree in Luther's rendering. Judea was transplanted to Saxony, and the road from Jericho to Jerusalem led through the Thuringian forest.[65]

This brings up one final point with respect to Luther's desire to communicate the Word of God. In translating for the ear as well as the eye, he demonstrated a pastoral heart. He knew that the place where most of his people would encounter the translation most of the time was in public worship. The readability of his text was therefore a matter he kept continuously in mind:

> While Luther was translating the Bible, he constantly read his sentences aloud, testing the accents and cadences, the vowels and consonants for their melodic flow. He did this because German was really a language (Sprache). It was meant to be spoken aloud by the tongue (lingua), not written; heard, not read; for a word has sound and tone. By Luther's own description, "The soul of the word lies in the voice." Thus Luther constructed his translation with a view to the public reading of the book. By means of sentence structure and meaningful punctuation, he makes the Bible a book to be heard.[66]

The effect all this had on Germany and, more specifically, on German Lutherans was, as we have said, profound. But it may be of particular interest for us in this discussion to read the concerns August Pieper expressed when the church of his day was confronted with the necessity of transitioning from German into English. This of course

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[65] Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther,* first ed. (New York: Signet, 1955), 256–267. This can, of course, be pushed too far—and in fact illustrates one of the limitations of a radical application of functional equivalence in translation. Translators must respect the historical nature of the Scriptures. An ancient document can be idiomatic in the form of its language, and yet reflect the fact that it comes from a world that, in geography and history, in custom and culture, is different from our own. In this respect, a translator ought not to aspire to produce a "translation that doesn't sound like a translation."

[66] Koelpin, 10–11. At times the Translation Evaluation of Committee of WELS has come under criticism for emphasizing readability as if it were the *sine qua non* of translation. In reply, we point people to our statements that speak of the vital need for translators to respect the *nature* and the *purpose* of God's inspired Word. This is of first importance. But while readability is not the *whole* thing, or even the *most important* thing, it is *a* thing to be considered.

meant for them the adoption of the *King James Version* and its language in worship:

> We might trace the deficiencies of the English Bible (and that applies also to the RV) back to two great points: (1) It is on the whole a too literal translation and therefore in spite of universal beauty of language, the characteristic expressions and phrases of the original text become un-English and thus difficult and unintelligible to the people…(2) It misses all too much the life, the freshness, and the power of the original Hebrew and Greek. This in large part is because of its all too wooden literalness….
>
> Here we have a phenomenon unique to the English in the whole world, that they have one language in their Bible, in worship, and prayer, and another in daily, secular life; the one develops further and changes daily, while the other remains really stereotyped in the old viewpoint and consequently always moves farther from the people…. If a people is not to come to such a dangerous fading away of religion, then religion dare not be isolated from other life. However the separation of the language of religion from the language of daily life contributes a good deal to this isolation.[67]

The comment regarding the dangers of putting an artificial distance between the language of worship and the language of daily life is a point worth considering. Most of the high praise I have heard for the sonorous beauty of the King James I can readily agree with. I grew up on its cadences myself. But it still raises the question: did the Greek or the Hebrew sound as lofty of diction, as archaic of language, and as far removed from every day speech to the original listeners as does the language of the King James (and, it must be said, the language of many versions that wish to follow in the Great Tradition)?[68] Pieper's

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[67] August Pieper, "Our Transition into English." The quotation comes from a personal copy of Prof. John Jeske's translation of the entire German original, *"Unser Übergang ins Englische."* The article originally appeared in the *Theologische Quartalschrift* in the 1918–19 issue. It was reprinted in an abbreviated form in *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 100, no. 2 (March 1, 2003): 85–106. The words do not appear in the abbreviated version.

[68] This is not to say that translations attempting to express the truth of the Bible in more contemporary idioms ought to forsake all concern for the literary beauties of the original which, in many books and sections of the Scripture, are considerable. Beauty of style is something to which a translator also must pay heed. Many translations in

comments also might help others to understand why it is perhaps more in the DNA of WELS to prefer a more sense for sense version of Scripture.

Leave the Author in Peace—Friedrich Schleiermacher

One might think that after Jerome and Luther, the question of which was the better translation philosophy might have been settled, at least among heirs of the Reformation. This was far from true, however, for English speakers. Here, the King James or Authorized Version dominated the field like a colossus since the mid-1650s. Whether it is more literal in translational approach than Luther I leave for others to judge. It's clear enough where Prof. Pieper stood on that subject, and he was intimately familiar with both versions in a way few today can be. In any case, as a translation the KJV was essentially frozen in its diction for over 250 years. Inevitably, its language began to sound more distant from contemporary spoken and written English as usages continued to change.[69]

Most new translations that were made during the great mission century (1800s) were missionary-driven, that is to say, they were projects in which the missionaries would learn the local language and then do the best job they could of translating the Bible for those they were trying to reach. The products of most of these efforts were uneven, and usually quite literal. This is not to discount the immensity of their achievement. In many cases they encountered peoples for whom there was no alphabet and no written language. But it must be said "Faithfulness to the source text was considered more important than respect for the genius of the target language."[70]

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contemporary English achieve high standards of beauty and are hardly to be considered "colloquial" as some seem to think.

[69] One may consult word lists such as can be found at <http://www.preservedwords.com/wordlist.htm> or <http://www.kjvonly.org/robert/joyner_obsolete_words_1.html>. In my own copy of the King James, I have a list of glosses for archaic words or words that have changed in meaning, including: kine, lunatic, liquor, meat, naughty, occupy, removed woman, etc. In the ESV—looking only within the gospel of John, I have noted archaic expressions such as "even" (for a parallel, synonymous expression, or an explanatory και—e.g. 1.27; 12:13), "behold" (1:29; 1:36; 1:47; 12:15; 16:32; 19:5; 19:14; 19:26; 19:27), "manifested" (2:11; 14:21; 14:22; 17:6), "marvel" (3:7; 4:27; 5:20; 5:28; 7:15; 7:21), "at hand" (2:13; 6:4; 7:2; 11:55; 19:42), "house of trade" (2:16), "depart out of this world" (13:1), "morsel of bread" (13:26). My point in all this is not to say that archaisms cannot enhance a version's beauty in some people's eyes. Those who have been raised on the RSV or KJV likely find much beauty there.

[70] Paul Ellingworth, "From Martin Luther to the English Revised Version" in *History Of Bible Translation*, ed. Phil Noss (New York: American Bible Society, 2007),

If there was any theory behind this approach, it is represented by Friedrich Schleiermacher. In our circles, he may not be held in generally high favor. But he was certainly an influential Christian writer and thinker of the times, and his views on translation are still held in high regard by some today.[71] Permit me to summarize them by one key quotation from his famous lecture "On the Different Ways of Translation":

> One cannot put forth as a rule for translation that it must think how the author himself would have written just the same thing in the translator's tongue.... Indeed, what objection can be made if a translator says to his reader: Here I bring you the book as the man would have written it had he written it in German; and the reader responds: I am just as obliged to you as if you had brought me the picture of a man the way he would look if his mother had conceived him by a different father?[72]

What Schleiermacher is dealing with is the problem of the cultural distortion or loss that inevitably occurs whenever thoughts expressed in the words of one language are transposed into another. His advice is, "Keep it at the barest of minimums, even at the expense of clear communication." He clearly sees that the translator has a choice:

> Either [he] leaves the author in peace as much as possible and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer towards him. These two paths are…very different from one another.[73]

"Leave the author in peace!" would be his counsel. That his point is a valid one can be seen when one examines paraphrases of the Scripture which so distort the cultural original that one could almost believe that it was a Good Yankee travelling from Houston to Galveston, rather than a Samaritan on his way to Jericho from Jerusalem. The gospel is not an ahistorical philosophy, but our God working to save in the warp and woof of specific human times and days.

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[71] Notably, translation theorists like Lawrence Venuti. For a brief study of how his views contrast with Nida's, see Wenfen Yang, "Brief Study on Domestication and Foreignization in Translation," *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 1, no. 1 (January 2010): 77–80. More on Venuti later.

[72] Freidrich Schleiermacher, "On the Different Methods of Translation," trans. Susan Bernofsky, in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2012), 59.

[73] Ibid., 49.

At the same time, however, critics of more functionally equivalent translations need to bear in mind that the mere act of taking something once said in Hebrew and putting it into English distorts the source text's culture—even if one is following a word for word approach. A measure of cultural loss and/or distortion is an inevitable by-product of the work of translation. The question is: What losses are acceptable, and what measure of distortion can we tolerate? Here, I believe, some will draw the line in one place and others in another. I doubt very much whether Luther and Schleiermacher would have drawn the line in the same place. With Eugene Nida, the "dynamic" shifts again.

Father of Functional Equivalence—Eugene Nida

To call Eugene Nida merely the modern champion of sense for sense translation is to condemn him with far too faint praise. His contributions to modern translation theory are legion. More than anyone else in the modern era, Nida has stimulated the broad study and discussion of translation we see all around us. Statham's assessment is no exaggeration:

> In terms of consolidating, mediating, and explicating along the way many of the most relevant and helpful insights of the plethora of intellectual disciplines which bear on Bible translation, Nida's contribution in this area is without peer—especially in the area of understanding translation as a communicative event. In terms of original contribution, it cannot be gainsaid that Nida was *the* pioneer of 20th century progress in meaning-based translation.[74]

It must be borne in mind that Nida began his life's work in a context where the King James Version and other essentially literal translations still dominated, not only in the English-speaking world but also on mission fields (see above). The limitations of these versions were becoming more and more apparent. His initial motive, therefore, was a missiological one, involving as it did the question, "How can we communicate God's enduring truth to people in a language that they can understand?" With the following bulleted points, Mojola and Wendland summarize Nida's new approach in his *Theory and Practice of Translation* (TAPOT):

[74] Nigel Statham, "Nida and 'Functional Equivalence,'" *The Bible Translator* 56, no. 1 (January 2005): 39.

- Each language has its own genius.
- To communicate effectively one must respect the genius of each language.
- Anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, unless the form is an essential element of the message.
- To preserve the content of the message, the form must be changed.
- The languages of the Bible are subject to the same limitations as any other natural language.
- The writers of the biblical books expected to be understood.
- The translator must attempt to reproduce the meaning of a passage as understood by the writer.[75]

One can see Nida's desire to preserve for target readers—as far as possible—the communicative power that the source text possessed for its original readers. To do this the forms of the original could be sacrificed for naturalness of language as perceived by the target readers. Note that the overarching value is to preserve the meaning intended by the original author. Bearing this in mind helps us better understand what Nida meant in what became his most misunderstood statement. In writing about the goal of a translation which aimed for "dynamic equivalence," he said:

> [In such a translation] the message of the original text has been transported into the receptor language in such a way that the RESPONSE of the RECEPTOR is essentially that of the original receptors. Frequently, the form of the original text is changed; but…the message is preserved and the translation is faithful.[76]

Some, like Charles Kraft, argued from this that translations could aim for an equivalence of effect, that is, to evoke the same behavioral responses from their target readers that had been achieved by the original authors with their readers. Thus Kraft advocated "transculturations" under certain circumstances. These were works in which "the impression might be given that Jesus walked the streets of Berkeley or London or

[75] Aloo Osotsi Mojola and Ernst Wendland, "Scripture Translation in the Era of Translation Studies," in *Bible Translation: Frames of Reference*, ed. Timothy Wilt (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2002), 2.

[76] Nida and Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, 200.

Nairobi."[77] As many pointed out, such an approach "obliterated the very biblical cultures which Nida's ideas on translation were designed to illuminate for contemporary hearers and readers."[78]

In their second major work on translation, *From One Language to Another: Functional Equivalence in Bible Translation* (FOLTA), Taber and Nida tried to put an end to this type of misapplication of their ideas. They renamed their approach "functional equivalence," admitting, "the expression 'dynamic equivalence' has…led to some confusion…[having] been understood merely in terms of something which has impact and appeal."[79] By contrast, in seeking "functional equivalence," "The translator must seek to employ a functionally equivalent set of forms which in so far as possible will *match the meaning of the original source-language text"* (emphasis mine).[80]

The reader will observe in that statement a shift in emphasis from the response of the receptor to functionally equivalent forms of language, specifically, to language that clearly conveys and preserves the meaning of the original text. In the same work, Taber and Nida, reflecting more recent linguistic studies, identified a wider variety of language functions than had been the case in TAPOT.[81] Finally the authors spoke about the importance of considering the larger units of discourse in translation. They recognized that meaning lay beyond the mere word, phrase, and sentence levels, levels which had appeared to receive the lion's share of the discussion in TAPOT.[82]

"Resist Domestication;" "Preserve Otherness"—Vanuti and Van Leeuwen

At one point in his career, D.A. Carson had written about "The Limits of Dynamic Equivalence." In the article, he pointed out some of the practical and theological problems involved with an overzealous application of Nida's principles. Later, he felt compelled to update and expand the essay, adding to his title the phrase, "And Other Limits,

[77] As quoted in Carson, "The Limits of Functional Equivalence in Bible Translation," in *The Challenge of Bible Translation: Communicating God's Word to the World*, ed. Scorgie, Strauss, and Voth (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 94–95.

[78] Statham, 38.

[79] Nida and Taber, *From One Language to Another: Functional Equivalence in Bible Translation* (FOLTA), 1st ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1986), viii.

[80] Nida, 25.

[81] TAPOT had identified informative, expressive, and imperative as the primary functions of language. FOLTA expanded this list to eight: expressive, cognitive, interpersonal, informative, imperative, performative, and aesthetic.

[82] Mojola and Wendland, 5. See FOLTA, chapters 5 & 6.

Too."[83] He was moved to do this because of what he saw as some of the practical and theological problems involved with what he termed, "the rise of linguistic conservatism."[84] This movement might be generally understood as a reaction to Nida and as a return to putting greater emphasis on preserving the forms of the original text in one's translation. By now we should be getting pretty accustomed to riding this see-saw.

But political labels like "conservative" and "radical" do not always translate well into a religious context. This is most certainly true in this case. I found it bewildering to read men with a high view of the Holy Scriptures like Van Leeuwen making the case for a more formally equivalent approach alongside Vanuti, someone I can only consider to be a thoroughgoing postmodernist.

Like most postmodernists, Lawrence Vanuti locates meaning in individual cultures and resists as naïve Nida's notions of being able to transfer meaning from one culture into another. "Readers," a good postmodern would say, "have no access to the pure original, or to the pure thought of the original author. They interpret texts through the lens of language, their experience, belief system, circumstances, interests, needs, and agendas."[85] In Vanuti's own words:

> Meaning is a plural and contingent relation, not an unchanging unified essence, and therefore a translation cannot be judged according to mathematics-based concepts of semantic equivalence or one to one correspondence…. Canons of accuracy in translation, notions of "fidelity" and "freedom" are historically determined categories…the viability of a translation is established by its relationship to the cultural and social conditions under which it is produced and read.[86]

While we cannot argue with the fact that our own presuppositions and culture have a great impact on how we read and translate texts, to make meaning as historically and culturally situated as this is to despair of all hope for objective truth. In any case, Vanuti decries the effort to produce fluent translations that read naturally in the target language. These convey a mere "illusion of transparency" and in fact "domesticate" the original so much that one can no longer detect the utter foreignness

[83] Carson, 65.
[84] Ibid., 67.
[85] Mojola and Wendland, 8.
[86] As quoted in Mojola and Wendland, 8.

of it all. Worse, it is an attempt to make the target text submit to the ideology of Anglo-American culture in a translational act of "ethnocentric violence." Far better to have "foreignizing" translations in which one can truly experience the otherness of the biblical culture.

Raymond C. Van Leeuwen is clearly coming from a different place altogether. His desire is to preserve the truth of the original. Even so it is striking to see how he adopts and employs much of Vanuti's vocabulary in arguing his case:

> Functional-equivalence translations often change the language, images, and metaphors of Scripture to make understanding easier. But for serious study readers need a translation that is more transparent to the "otherness" of Scripture. We need a translation that allows the Bible to say what it says, even if it seems strange and odd to readers at first glance. If God is "other" than we are, we should be willing to work at the "otherness" of the Bible.... The purpose of the Bible is not to make Jesus like us, but to make us like Christ.... We need translations for people who are eager and willing to make the effort to overcome the difficulty of reading a book that is in fact foreign to us.... The danger of FE translations is that they shape the Bible too much to fit our world and our expectations. There is a danger that the Bible gets silenced because we have tamed and domesticated it.[87]

Let's leave aside for the minute that Van Leeuwen confuses the foreignness of the biblical language with the "otherness" of God.[88] Let's also leave aside what seems to be part of his ideological framework in making this comment, namely, the Reformed notion that *finitum non capax infiniti*—the finite is an inadequate vehicle for the infinite. There is validity in much of what he says. Of course one should not willfully distort the historical and cultural realities of the original in an effort to make it more palatable for the modern world. The whole matter of cultural distortion is an important and indeed an inescapable discussion (see above).

But does it follow that a more functionally equivalent translation—in an effort to communicate clearly—must give the impression that it does not speak of far off historical events in far distant cultures? Further, does a meaning based translation always become—for that very

[87] As quoted in Carson, 67–68.

[88] Carson (67–68) points this out.

reason—more tamed and domesticated to our way of thinking rather than God's? Here I have in mind Mark Twain's famous statement, "It ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it is the parts that I do understand."

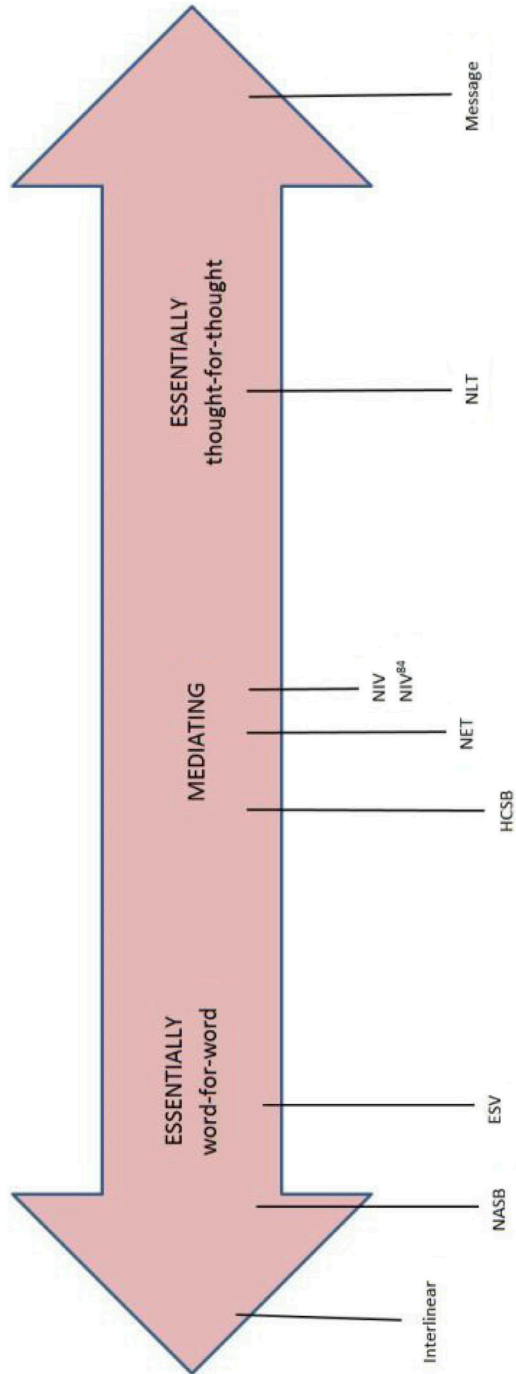
The greatest difficulty with Van Leeuwen's approach, however, remains the fact that he makes use of theological axioms to justify (or reprove) a particular approach to translation. Once a person does this, the discussion has ceased to revolve around what is the best way to translate and shifted to the question of who is or is not orthodox.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Each Approach

It is the thesis of this writer that both formal correspondence (FC) and functional equivalence (FE) have their place in Bible translation. I hope it is clear by now that when we engage in debating the relative merits of each, we are indeed taking part in a discussion that has stretched over the millennia with no easy resolution in sight. In my view, it is better to talk about the strengths and weaknesses of each approach rather than hold up either as the only right way to do things.

For my examples of the weaknesses of FC, I am going to be using the ESV. For those of FE, the NIV will be used. Please remember, the ESV is no more a "pure type" of FC than the NIV is of FE. Both combine features of each approach in varying degrees. But since the NIV is a more functionally equivalent translation, it serves to illustrate that approach, just as the ESV serves to illustrate formal correspondence since it occupies a position closer to that end of the spectrum. One more caveat: in none of the examples I cite do I wish to be understood as saying that the translations are unusable.

The chart below serves as a kind of rough estimate of where the various translations are located between the poles of FC and FE:


ESSENTIALLY
word-for-word
MEDIATING
ESSENTIALLY
thought-for-thought
Interlinear
NASB
ESV
HCSB
NET
NIV
NIV84
NLT
Message

General Discussion of the Advantages and Limits of Formal Correspondence

The great strength of a formally equivalent translation is the sense of foreignness that it conveys to the average reader. One has the distinct impression of being immersed in a world that is different from our own and in a language that we do not normally speak. Faithfulness to the source culture is, as we have mentioned, an important consideration when translating the Bible. In addition, when there is a greater effort expended in seeking a word for word correspondence, concordance and allusions become easier to detect, both within the thread of a discourse and between one section of Scripture and another. What is more, to the educated lay reader and biblical scholar, the effort to preserve in translation the constructions of the original will result in a greater transparency to the Hebrew/Greek idioms and expressions that lie beneath the English text.

One cannot lightly dismiss, either, the social context in which a particular translation appears. Written English has a long history and within that history, there is a received tradition of how a Bible translation is supposed to sound. This is not true of every language. Generally speaking, the Authorized Version is a more word for word translation than many of its modern successors. Like Shakespeare, the KJV has had a tremendous impact on both written and spoken English during the years when its reign was undisputed. People have come to perceive great literary beauty in its rhythms, cadences, and forms of speech. To those who have been raised in that tradition, a functionally equivalent translation may well sound as if one is trivializing God and dumbing down Christianity—even if the modern English version seeks to maintain high standards of literary beauty.[89]

Finally, to those who equate the idea of literalness with faithfulness, such a translation will recommend itself as being more faithful, and therefore superior to a functionally equivalent translation where words are seemingly "changed" or "added" or "subtracted." But it is right here—the equation of literalness with accuracy and faithfulness—where we must begin to touch on one of the greatest weaknesses displayed

[89] I am reminded in this connection of a conversation I had with my father many years ago when I was starting out in pastoral ministry. Dad always used the prayer language of the KJV, replete with "thee's" and "thou's" and archaic verbal forms. To him, that was the language of his heart in speaking to God. I was unable to reproduce it, and he told me once that it seemed to him—even though he knew better—that I was disrespecting God in the language that I used.

by those who argue for formal correspondence. I do not have in mind the translational approach as such, but what I view as the overheated remarks I read people making in "selling" it. Some have said:

> Not only does a translation that reproduces the very words of the original text have logic on its side (translation of ideas rather than words being an illogical notion); it is also the only type of translation that respects and obeys other important principles regarding the Bible. Since I have already discussed these further principles at length in earlier chapters, I will only list them here: Translating the words of the original takes seriously the doctrines of verbal inspiration and plenary inspiration, whereas "thought for thought" translators, no matter how reverential they are toward the Bible, operate as though they do not believe that the very words themselves are inspired by God and therefore something to be retained in translation.[90]

This is such a misleading statement that one hardly knows where to begin, by addressing its faulty linguistics or bad theology. Linguistically, such a statement seems to assume that meaning resides at the level of words, rather than at the phrase, sentence, and paragraph levels (and even higher, when one takes in the whole scriptural context). In short, it ignores what Lutherans have known ever since Luther! Furthermore, one might ask, just how many of the "very words themselves" *are* retained in translation? The answer is, zero!

Of course the individual inspired words are important, but their meanings become clear only as they occur in specific contexts and with other words. The meaning of the Hebrew word *ruaḇ* is really uncertain, taken by itself. It can mean spirit, wind, or breath. When used with other words—such as in "Holy Spirit"—its meaning becomes clear. Further, the insistence on "reproduc[ing] the very words of the original text" must ultimately lead to the conclusion that the books of the Bible are essentially untranslatable, since English is not Hebrew or Greek.

Similarly in his theology Ryken has confused the outer form (the words) with the inner essence (the meaning). This leads him to malign the actions, if not the motives of those who, as Luther advised, "drop the Hebrew words and express the meaning freely in the best German [or Dutch, or English] he knows." People who do this, Ryken suggests,

[90] Leland Ryken, *The Word of God in English: Criteria for Excellence in Bible Translation* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002), 217–218.

don't take seriously the doctrine of verbal plenary inspiration, an accusation which is simply absurd on the face of it.

The most heated debate of course revolves around the use of gender in translation, specifically, how to translate masculine words and pronouns from Hebrew and Greek into English—especially the generic masculine. There are those who believe that something essential is lost if these words are rendered with more gender inclusive terms. Hence they will be strong advocates for a formal correspondence approach in translating them. Consider what Vern Poythress and Wayne Grudem have to say about the generic "he":

> The issue is whether a Bible translation systematically excludes male components of meaning that are there in the original text…. Because the Bible is the very Word of God and because it conveys meaning that is amazingly rich, complex, and multi-layered, in the context of doing Bible translation we ought to convey in the translation *as much of the meaning of the original as we can*. Therefore, with respect to changing generic "he" to some other form of expression, we ought not to tolerate these losses of meaning as long as a way exists of avoiding the losses. And of course a way does exist—namely, continuing to use the generic "he."[91]

Anything less they consider to be "distortions,"[92] seeking to make Scripture palatable to modern culture,[93] and sliding down the slippery slope of a complete cave-in to a feminist ideology.[94] Their chief concern is a laudable one. They wish to preserve the doctrine of male headship and they believe that preserving the "nuance" of maleness in words like *'adam* as well as in generic masculines is vital for preserving the truth of God's Word. While I share their concern for preserving the doctrine of male headship, I don't think that making arguments of a dubious linguistic and theological nature is a good way to get there.

Let us focus on their main thesis: that there is an intrinsic sense of maleness in every occurrence of a generic masculine "he" or in a generic use of male words like '*adam,'ish, anēr, adelphoi.*' To prove this,

91 Vern S. Poythress and Wayne A. Grudem, *The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy: Muting the Masculinity of God's Words* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 116–117.

92 Ibid., 117.

93 Ibid., 185.

94 Ibid., 186–187. Yes I know, I mixed a metaphor. It seemed justifiable in this case.

one would have to prove that the Hebrew and Greek readers "heard" generics this way, as expressive of their belief in male headship. This is difficult to do. In fact, there is at least some evidence to suggest that they did *not* "hear" generics this way. For example Romans 4 (discussed above) illustrates the difficulty. In addition to using the word *anēr* (man) in parallel to *anthrōpos* (person), Paul seems untroubled by the apparent loss of vital "nuances" of meaning in shifting from the singular to the generic plural as he does. How can one account exegetically for such mixing and matching if indeed the male component of meaning were everywhere felt to be present?[95]

Many have also pointed out that the insistence upon a male component of meaning in every instance of '*adam,'ish, anēr, adelphoi,*' etc. demonstrates a number of linguistic fallacies, namely, that meaning lies at the level of individual words, that words have basic, irreducible meanings,[96] and that what a word means in one place it must mean in every place. This latter notion James Barr identified long ago as the linguistic fallacy of "illegitimate totality transfer."[97] Now no one would dispute that a male component of meaning is undoubtedly "there" in many places where these words are used. But the issue is whether or not that component of meaning is found in every place. On this is built the further assertion that a failure to translate a generic masculine in the source text with a generic masculine in the target text constitutes a distortion, and results in an unacceptable loss of the original's meaning.

Here's where an argument from other languages comes in. There are some languages where it is impossible to render a generic masculine with another generic masculine because the target language simply does not have any form that corresponds. One may object[98] that we are talking about English translations here and should confine our discussions to what the resources of the English language may do. But at issue is not what is possible in English, but *what must be preserved* in transferring meaning from one language to another. If the male "nuance" is seen as a necessary one, the loss of which constitutes an intolerable distortion

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[95] A more in depth discussion of this matter can be found in Kenneth Cherney, "Gender-Neutral Language, with Special Reference to NIV 2011," Translation Evaluation Committee, n.d. <http://www.wels.net/sites/wels/files/gender-neutral%20NIV%202011%20article%20edited.pdf>, 16ff.

[96] What irreducible meaning do you find in the word "board" in this sentence: The governing *board boarded* up the ship before crossing the *board* to go on *board* where they received free room and *board*? Adapted from Carson, 75.

[97] For more discussion of this point, see Carson, 75ff., as well as Cherney, 11ff.

[98] As Poythress and Grudem do: 201–202.

of the Word of God, then the argument has gone well beyond English usage or a desire to preserve the source text's culture. Such sweeping statements must be true not only of English but of translation into other languages as well.

So I may say, "A Tonga translation must necessarily involve unacceptable distortions, given the fact that it does not differentiate gender in the third person singular the way Greek or English does.[99] I cannot, therefore, recommend it as a faithful and accurate translation!" But if someone is unwilling to go this far, then perhaps one should also hesitate before slapping a similar label onto an English translation.

The fact is, every modern translation (e.g., ESV, NIV, HCSB) I know of makes at least some use of gender neutral or gender inclusive

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[99] A even more striking example can be found in the following illustration from my own experience:

When my first child was born in Zambia, I happily used my 3rd-grade Tonga to tell all my friends: "Batumbu bwangu bakazhalwa mwana!—My wife has given birth to a child!"

They replied, "Mwananzi—musimbi, na musankwa?"—What sort of child, boy or girl?"

"Musimbi!"—Girl!

"Ohhh….sorree!"—Oh, sorry!

My point is not to illustrate the apparent sexism of the worldview, but to show that the only word that Tonga has for "child" is "mwana." They really have no word for "son" or "daughter." The only way you can say "son" in Tonga is to say, "Mwana musankwa—a child, male one." The third person pronoun—both singular and plural—is likewise sexless. Only the context can reveal if the referent is naturally male or female.

If then the "maleness" component of meaning in words like "son" contain something vital that needs to be carried over, then the translator is in a world of hurt. He can say, for example:

"Bana basankwa ba Israeli"—the male children of Israel. But this is full of problems besides the fact that it is cumbersome. It is a case of overtranslation that conveys something not there in the original. While it preserves the male notion, it makes it impossible to understand the expression as referring to anyone other than the men. Women are definitely not included. Probably in this case the preferred translation would be "bantu ba Israeli"—people of Israel, since "bana" will likely raise the question, "While the children were making bricks, what were the adults doing?"

Now for another one: How do you suppose the Tonga translators handled, "The Son of God," or "The Son of Man"? Only one way possible, I'm afraid: Mwana a Leza; Mwana a Muntu—the Child of God; Child of a Person. The translator must hope, in this case, that the context will make it clear enough that an adult is being referred to, as well as a male, since the word simply means "child." But again, to specify Mwana musankwa a Leza; or Mwana musankwa a Muntu is not only unnatural, but it also introduces ideas foreign to the thought in the original.

Translation= choices, choices. And not always easy ones at that!

language.[100] This alone would suggest that the issue is one of degree more than principle. They do not all draw the lines in the same places. Some do it more broadly; others less so. But when people representing one translation make the charge that where other translators draw the line in the matter of generic masculines is unacceptable, then the argument has veered into the ditch of name calling. Acceptable and non-acceptable categories of gender inclusivity appear to be arbitrary. "*Sic volo, sic iubeo; sit pro ratione voluntas*!—don't ask me for reasons, just do what I say!"

Finally there is a bit of sketchy hermeneutics going on here. Lutheran theology is a theology of certainty. We do not major in minors. We know what we know. We know what we don't know. And we know the difference between the two. Our doctrinal teachings rest on clear Scripture passages or *sedes doctrinae*.[101] One does not draw doctrine from inferences about the theological significance of grammatical features or by treating words as if they were overarching or general concepts. To do so is to introduce a hermeneutic of speculation into the church.

In all this I do not mean to suggest that there is anything wrong with a formally equivalent translation seeking to preserve in English those features of the source text they prefer—including the masculine generics. Translation is all about making such choices. One should realize, however, that in choosing one option, others often have to be let go. A formally equivalent translation that communicates easily and well to one audience may not do so well in a different circumstance. Here I'm thinking of areas of the country where the generic "man" is generally heard as a term that excludes women. This is simply one of the limits of the formally equivalent approach.

There are other limits as well, chief among which are readability and ease of understanding. Even strong proponents of formal equivalence implicitly admit the truth of this,[102] although there are some who might still contest it. Consider, for example, the opening of Ephesians. Paul's thanksgiving—verses 3–10—is essentially one long sentence.

[100] Although Poythress and Grudem try to define their way out of the problem, calling some use of gender inclusive terms "permissible" and others "unacceptable"—see their chapter 5.

[101] One of the first tasks the WELS Translation Evaluation Committee worked on was to carry out a systematic review of the key *sedes doctrinae* in the NIV 2011. We were looking for problems that would make the truth of God unclear. We found the NIV in this respect acceptable.

[102] For example, Van Leeuwen who says (as noted above), "We need translations for people who are eager and willing to make the effort to overcome the difficulty of reading a book that is in fact foreign to us" (emphasis mine).

While somewhat unusual even for Paul, it is not outside the realm of Greek periodic style. The ESV breaks up the paragraph up into only three fairly long English sentences. The HCSB uses four and the NIV 2011 five. The ESV is closer to the Greek in that it preserves a more periodic style. The NIV is further away from the Greek in that it breaks the message up into shorter sentences. But I think the fair minded person would agree that the average English reader would find shorter sentences easier to comprehend.

The ESV translators, in following their "essentially literal" approach, often preserve Hebrew or Greek idioms which take quite a bit of effort for English speakers to understand. For example:

Genesis 27:39: Away from the fatness of the earth shall your dwelling be.

Joshua 10:21: Not a man moved his tongue against any of the people of Israel.

Amos 4:6: I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities and lack of bread in all your places.

Psalm 69:23: Make their loins tremble continually.

Mark 1:2: Behold I send my messenger before your face.

John 9:27: Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.

Again one may fairly argue that a greater transparency to the original has been achieved. But the cost has been ease of understanding. I might also add that, in some cases, the cost may be even higher. The reader may be left with no understanding or even the wrong understanding. In John 9:27, the idiom, "Give glory to God," is a formula by which the Jewish leaders are putting the man born blind under oath. It is very likely, however, that the average reader would understand the phrase as the Jews urging the man to praise God for his healing!

This is of course beside the point if you are making a translation for people who are eager to overcome the difficulty of reading a foreign sounding book. If this is your goal, then in every case cited above you would find no cause for complaint. But this immediately raises the question: How easily understood should the Bible be? It seems likely that some passages in Job would have posed problems for many Israelites and Paul's letters, as we know, contain some things that are hard to understand. Still one wonders, did the expressions cited above sound so difficult to the original audience? Even more broadly, does God in general intend for his Word to sound dark and obscure? It is here where

the proponents of functional equivalence have a legitimate point to make.

General Discussion of the Advantages and Limits of Functional Equivalence

Before we look at the major strengths and weaknesses of FE, I would like to make one observation. On the whole, the proponents of FE seem more open to self-criticism than the proponents of FC. One gets the impression in reading the formal correspondence literature that there is something a little bit sinister going on in the realm of FE, while all is bright and sunny in the land of FC. Yet when FE writers speak of Nida and his legacy, they themselves recognize and seek to overcome a number of matters they identify as weaknesses.

Mark Strauss summarizes many of those problem areas in making the following prescriptions:

> (1) Translators seeking functional equivalence should not depart from the meaning of the text in its original cultural and historical context in the pursuit of contemporary relevance. While eliminating *linguistic* distance…they should retain *historical* distance.[103] (2) Translators should seek to retain the literary style and sophistication of the biblical authors, rather than leveling the text to a single remedial style.[104] (3) They should seek inasmuch as possible to retain verbal and literary allusions when these allusions were important to the meaning of the text.[105] (4) They should retain ambiguity if and when the original author was intentionally ambiguous.[106] (5) They should reproduce metaphors and metaphorical idioms in cases where

[103] This one of course is aimed at Charles Kraft and those like him who at times translated text as if he were engaged in midrash.

[104] This "fault" might be seen in *Today's English Version*, a common language translation; also, it must be said, in Beck's *AAT* (An American Translation). This was long noted by Nida himself as a problem area. For this reason, Ernst Wendland advocates a LiFE (literary functional equivalence) approach, as detailed in "A Literary Approach to Biblical Text Analysis and Translation" in Wilt, 179–230.

[105] To the extent the NIV translators always succeeded in this respect, we will examine below.

[106] I believe he sets the bar too high here. It is very difficult to prove sometimes when the author intended to be ambiguous. But there are quite a few times when, due to our own deficiencies in understanding, an author simply is ambiguous, that is, he could be interpreted in different ways.

> those metaphors were "live"—that is, where they retained their conceptual imagery for the original readers.[107]

Mojola and Wendland, writers with sympathy towards a functionally equivalent approach, would add to the list Nida's early focus on linguistics at the sentence level and below, his inadequate linguistic model for text analysis (the so-called conduit metaphor), and indeed the whole idea of seeing formal correspondence and functional equivalence as a rigid dichotomy. Such an attitude, they feel, does not properly reflect the complexities of language and translation.[108]

Carson discusses a propensity among some of FE's practitioners to be excessive in their desire to smooth out a more difficult original in the interests of comprehensibility. In his opinion, there are also times when an FE approach downplays the need for translators to have a strong grasp of the original's grammar and syntax. This tendency is especially dangerous when a translation project puts too much confidence in those who are merely good stylists in the receptor language. When this happens, the ideal of communicative fluency can trump the actual message that needs to be communicated. Finally Carson speaks a word of caution against the thought that a translation should be able do it all, as if it went out into a world in which dedicated pastors and evangelists were non-existent.[109]

These are all legitimate criticisms and indicate areas where FE needs to recognize its limitations. Nevertheless FE's greatest strength lies in the fact that it seeks above all to communicate. Nida believed that the biblical writers meant to be understood. I agree with this thesis. The greatest weakness for formal correspondence is found in exactly the same place where functional equivalence shows its greatest strength. It produces translations which are highly readable and which, since they are written in language that is natural and current, can be understood without needless difficulty. In a recent survey of over 100 WELS pastors, the NIV11 was chosen as best in its overall English style by

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[107] This too often comes down to a matter of judgment. Would we agree that the Hebraistic "walk" for the walk of life is always a dead metaphor and that it can therefore be rendered "live" as does the NIV? Mark Strauss, "Form, Function, and the 'Literal Meaning' Fallacy in English Bible Translation," *The Bible Translator* 56, no. 3 (July 2005): 156–157.

[108] For an expansion on these points, read Mojola and Wendland, 5–10.

[109] For more, see Carson, 93–105.

more than 90% of the participants—this in a side-by-side comparison with the ESV and the HCSB.[110]

Yet perhaps somewhat paradoxically, decisions made in the interest of good communication can also be the very same ones that are most easily criticized. What I mean is, at times the desire to communicate becomes a weakness, especially in those places where a genuine ambiguity has been resolved unnecessarily, or where a rendering prevents a reader from seeing other options in the text, or where you feel the translator just plain got it wrong.[111] Just as one can rightly point out the weaknesses of the ESV in handling idioms or in preserving archaic or unEnglish ways of speaking, so I believe there are many places in the NIV where one can point to an overzealous "smoothing out" of the original.

Naturally the NIV's gender sensitive approach comes to mind here. Let me stipulate at the outset that I have no quarrel with the NIV's using a gender inclusive term 1) when the original intent is to use a term that would have been understood by the original audience to include both men and women and 2) when the English term that formally corresponds to it (man, he, etc.) is widely understood by many today to be exclusive (man, *not* woman). Obviously this includes generic masculines, and even the word "brother," for example, as it is used in the opening verses of Romans. Not only do have I no quarrel with this approach, I believe it is the right way to go in many places, provided one

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[110] Readability is not, of course, the only factor in assessing a translation and, in the case of false doctrine, not even the most important factor. But it is, as mentioned before, a factor to be considered. The exact figures from the study are:

Voted best for English style or tied for best: NIV11 – 91%; HCSB – 22%; ESV – 2%

Voted best for English style with ties counting as one half: NIV11 – 84%; HCSB – 15%; ESV – 1%

[111] It is here that the naïve demand that translators not "interpret" the text makes at least some sense. On the one hand, it is impossible for translators not to interpret the text. They have to understand what the original says in order to render it into the target language. That means they have to interpret. But there are times when functionally equivalent translators foreclose on options that might well be viable, even preferable, to what they put in the text. One could call this "overtranslation" just as in some places I get the feeling that one who adopts a formal correspondence approach may "undertranslate." Choices have to be made, naturally, and not everyone can be satisfied with all the choices that a given translation makes. I also recognize that this is another complex issue that involves the practice of whether or not to employ explicitation, a translational device that makes *explicit* information that is *implicit* in the text. For example, to audiences not familiar at all with the geography of Palestine, one might translate "Jerusalem" with "*the city of* Jerusalem."

wishes to follow a more functionally equivalent approach. Frankly, I find much of the criticism of the NIV on this score to be overwrought.

That being said, I must also confess that there are times when I feel that gender inclusive terminology has become somewhat routinized in its use by the NIV translators and employed in places where a more careful consideration of the original vocabulary or the original context might have led them to retain the formally correspondent term:

> Acts 1:16 where *andres adelphoi* is translated "brothers and sisters" when the issue of choosing a successor to Judas is being brought up before the congregation; similarly in 6:3.

> Philippians 1:14 (in a context of preaching) *adelphoi* is rendered "brothers and sisters."

Many trees have already been felled in discussing the gender neutral translation of Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2. I don't intend to add to their pile. Suffice it to say that the translators might have worked a little harder on preserving concordance between the two passages, in my opinion. I appreciate the fact that they put singular masculines in the footnotes. I would have preferred it if the footnotes had made it into the text. It would make it easier for the reader to grasp the literary allusion and interpret the passage as pointing to Christ. While their decision is open to criticism, for the sake of fairness I hasten to add that the CTCR's assertion that the use of plurals "*vitiates* the Messianic meaning" of the psalm is really a gross exaggeration.[112]

The following passages are only intended to serve as representative examples of other places in the NIV where I believe the translators were overzealous in their methods. The list is by no means exhaustive:

> Numbers 16:30: …they go down alive into *the realm of the dead*…(for sheōl).
>
> This could conjure up the notion that the Hebrews shared with Greeks and Romans the concept of a shadowy afterlife where all the dead go, as in Hades.

112 CTCR, 4.

Jeremiah 23:6: This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteous *Savior*.

I would have preferred they left the abstract noun rather than to replace it with a concrete noun as they did here. The punning with Zedekiah's name is also somewhat obscured with this rendering.

John 6:63: The words I have spoken to you—they are *full of* the Spirit and life.

While this is not an incorrect way to handle nouns in the predicate, I would still have preferred the more direct and (in my opinion) more powerful "they *are* Spirit and life."

John 17:12: None has been lost except the one *doomed to* destruction.

The Hebrew idiom "son of…something" simply means that a person shares in a quality or thing, or is worthy of it. "Doomed" raises thoughts of determinism that are contrary to the wider context of Scripture. "The one worthy of destruction" would have been a perfectly adequate translation to convey the thought.

Romans 3:27: …the law *that requires* works? No, *because of* the law *that requires* faith.

I don't see the need, first of all, for handling the *dia* + *gen.* construction with the English preposition "because." A simple "through" or "by" would have been sufficient. I also am not best pleased with the handling of the genitive pisteōs as "that requires." I would not go so far as to say that this is an incorrect way of handling the Greek genitive in English. It is one possibility. I do think it forecloses on other possibilities, however. I believe, in view of the context of Romans and in the wider context of Scripture, handling it as a simple descriptive genitive is better. "Works principle" and "faith principle" might be a good FE way of getting the idea across in the matched word pairs. I recognize that you are losing some concordance with the Greek word νόμος. Choices, choices!

> Romans 7:3: So then, *if she has sexual relations with another man*….
>
> I'm still thinking this one over. Contextually it makes sense, but there are other possibilities for the phrase "if she belongs to another man" including a second marriage or even living together. In short, the Greek is less explicit than the English here.

The NIV's translation of 1 Timothy 2:12 is also worth including on the list of NIV translations that could be improved. Since I have discussed it more fully in another place,[113] I don't intend to spend any more time on it here.

In a way overtranslation can be seen as an inevitable by-product of the functionally equivalent approach. If you are seeking to communicate, you want to resolve all the ambiguities you possibly can. The more you leave "as is," the more difficult the text becomes to understand. Similarly, undertranslation can be seen as an inevitable by-product of the method of formal correspondence. The more closely you adhere to the forms and idioms of the original, the more difficult the text will be to understand. I see no easy way to resolve this tension. The choice of which kind of translation you want will lead to these kinds of results. Simply using words like "accuracy," "precision," and "faithfulness" to resolve this tension do not help that much, as we will see.

Faithful to What?

Except for the radical postmodernists who are not too much interested in the notion of objective meaning, every translator with a high view of Scripture wants to convey the meaning of the inspired texts *accurately*. They want to be *faithful* to what God has moved the holy writers and prophets to say. "Purity of heart," said Kierkegaard, "is to will one thing." Unfortunately, faithfulness in translation is not one thing, but many things, and being faithful to one thing often means that the translator cannot be faithful to something else. Let me explain.

Translators are faced with a dizzying array of decisions that they have to make. Do I want to render the same Hebrew word with the same English word every time? If not, how flexible can I be in expressing the word's range of meanings with different English words? The more flexible I am, the more of the original's concordance is lost. Or what

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[113] Evaluating the NIV 2011 translation of 1 Timothy 2:12, accessible at: <http://www.wels.net/sites/wels/ files/Evaluating%20the%20NIV11.pdf>.

about sentence length? Coordination and subordination? Different languages, as we have seen, have different levels of tolerance for these things. Hebrew loves its “ands”;[114] Greek does not. Greek prefers long sentences; English does not.

With the use of repetition, connecting particles, rhetorical questions, demonstrative pronouns, synonymous phrases, and syntactical patterns, I can see how the Apostle Paul causes his letter to the Romans to hang together conceptually and flow well from one section to the next (coherence and cohesion).[115] How much of this *must* I preserve? How much of it *can* I preserve especially if different languages have different ways of achieving these same goals?

What about the matter of language register? Some books in the New Testament, like the gospel of Mark and the gospel of John, are written in fairly simple Greek, with a relatively low incidence of unusual vocabulary. Other books are decidedly more complex in their use of language. Paul’s letter to the Romans comes to mind or the elegant Greek we see in 1 Peter and Hebrews. Should the translation reflect this, using a more difficult and complex English for the more difficult books and easier English for the easier books? I would answer, “Yes,” but I know that not all would agree.

What about the sheer beauty of the Scriptures: the rhythms of the Psalms, the poetic genius of Isaiah, the rhetorical power of Paul? Many times we can see things “going on” in the Greek or the Hebrew that we cannot reproduce in English (like the plosive “p” in Philippians 1:3–5; or the Hebrew penchant for wordplay and puns). But we feel somewhat disloyal all the same because we know the English reader is going to miss out on some of the power and punch of the original.

What I mean to say is that words like accuracy and faithfulness are not scientific terms that are easily definable and effortlessly reflected in translation. Decisions are inevitable. There will be losses, even if we agree that the conveying of cognitive meaning is paramount.[116] I know how much a good and faithful translator mourns those losses and wishes it were otherwise. More than anything, this discussion points to the need

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[114] This was one of the reasons why St. Augustine characterized the Bible as possessing a *vox humilis*—a humble manner of speaking. It lacked the participles and the subordination he was used to from his training in Latin rhetoric.

[115] See Wendland, “Literary Approach” in Wilt, 182.

[116] “It is in fact impossible to convey the full semantic and pragmatic value of the original text in any translation…a choice must be made [regarding] which aspects of the text the translators will at least attempt to convey in the target language and which elements they admit will probably be lost in translation.” Mojola and Wendland, 17.

for translators to agree on some common guidelines before they translate a single word. It also points to the need for translators (and readers) to specify what they expect in a translation and for what purposes they intend to use it. Finally, it should put to rest the notion that there is a perfect way of translating if we can only find it.

For Whom and To Do What With?[117]

Translation studies and theories have come a long way since Nida. It is outside the scope of this paper to trace all the developments.[118] For our purpose it is enough to point out that translators are moving away from prescriptivist ("only right way") approaches to more practical and pragmatic ones. The sunny-eyed optimism of believing that "anything that can be said in one language can be said in another" has yielded to more modest dreams.

A functionalist like Christiane Nord suggests we approach[119] the work of translation by asking two basic questions: 1) for whom is this translation intended; and 2) what does the audience want to do with it? To begin with, one might want to issue an obvious caveat: if a translation shifts its focus from the source text to the target audience, this approach can easily degenerate into a philosophy of "just give the people what they want." I do not believe that is Nord's intention. Rather, her desire is that "translators justify their decisions in order to make others…understand what was done and why."[120] Nevertheless the danger is there and functionalist translators must bear in mind that, with Scripture, they are working with a sacred and inspired text. This has to command our highest loyalty.

Operating, however, in a context in which a high view of Scripture prevails, I can see great value in asking these questions. For one thing, it allows for latitude in making decisions on which translation a congregation or synod should use. On the basis of those questions, I might say, "It depends!" If a congregation has long been accustomed to the KJV or the RSV, yet wants to use a more "contemporary" version, why shouldn't they use the ESV if they wish? If, on the other hand, a congregation has used the old NIV for many years, the new NIV might be the best choice, causing the fewest disruptions.

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[117] I am indebted to Prof. Ken Cherney for this pithy phrase.

[118] Although you might consult Mojola and Wendland, "Scripture Translation in the Era of Translation Studies," esp. 10–25; and Cherney.

[119] As represented by Christiane Nord in *Translating as a Purposeful Activity: Functionalist Approaches Explained* (Manchester: St. Jerome, 1997).

[120] Ibid., 91.

Also within congregational life, I can see the usefulness of different versions in different settings. In a Bible class, I would not only allow but encourage the use of an FC version—side by side with one that is more FE in its approach. I would personally encourage the use of an FE version in public reading, in personal reading, and in memorization. But for careful study and close reading of the text, I would advocate the use of an FC version. I realize that my pastoral opinions on these matters may not be shared by all. To me that's fine: one size does not have to fit all. Let us not speak ill of another's good.

In this connection I might just mention a cultural difference between the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), viewed as target audiences. It is my impression that the NIV never had the kind of broad support in the ELS that it enjoys in WELS. For quite some time, many in the ELS have been accustomed to using more formally equivalent versions, like the KJV, the NASB, and the NKJV. I can readily see that, in such a setting, moving to the NIV—especially considering the gender inclusive matter—might not be the preferred option. For WELS it is different. Even if we didn't have August Pieper ringing in our ears, we've been using the NIV almost exclusively for more than thirty years. The ESV simply sounds strange to most of us and hard to understand. Our dilemma has always been, "If not the NIV, what?"

That being said, from my experiences on the WELS Translation Evaluation Committee, I have reached the tentative conclusion that the days are over in which one version like the NIV can retain the overwhelming preeminence among us that it once enjoyed. While it may still be used by the majority, I believe that a significant minority would prefer something else. Judging from the comments I have heard and the things I have read, this minority also has a distinct preference for a version that is more formally than functionally equivalent. As a synod we have in the past approved a single version for use in our publishing house. From this flowed the version's widespread adoption by pastors and congregations. I wonder whether Northwestern Publishing House will still be able to follow such a "single version" policy in the future. Perhaps it is just as well to acknowledge the fact that we live in the age of eclecticism.

Above All—Charity!

Whether we prefer functional equivalence or formal correspondence in our translation, my earnest prayer and fervent hope is that

we can live with one another in peace, without passing judgment on each other's preferences. What has troubled me the most about some of the things I have read and heard during the past two years is the way laypeople, especially, can be affected by the heat of the discussion. Some don't know what to think. For others, the discussion has driven a wedge between them and their Bibles. "How can I trust what is in there?" they wonder. Some—hearing the discussion on the NIV—have become suspicious of all functional equivalence in translation. I do not think we serve God's people by ginning up their fears.

No translation is perfect. No translational approach is either. One thing is sure. Old translations will pass away. New ones will come to take their place. All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. A translation—to the extent that it is a product of human skill and effort—is also one of those flowers. It springs up, is lovely for a time, but in the end it, too, must wither and fall. Let us rather rest our hearts *on* and point our people *to* this one unshakable truth: the Word of our God endures forever! LSQ

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The Decline and Collapse of the Synodical Conference: A Timeline

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THE SYNODICAL CONFERENCE WAS FOUNDED on the basis of agreement on the doctrine of church fellowship, and foundered on disagreement in the same.

Dissolution of the Synodical Conference[1]

As the Synodical Conference was founded on the basis of a particular understanding of the doctrine of church fellowship, it also dissolved over disagreement on the doctrine of church fellowship. Although the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), along with many in the Missouri Synod, had made specific charges of doctrinal error against certain teachings tolerated in the Missouri Synod, particularly regarding the doctrine of Scripture, it was over a disagreement on the doctrine of church fellowship—the nature of confessional subscription and discipline according to the doctrinal standard—that the disruption of the Synodical Conference took place. The ELS and WELS left the Conference in 1963, and the conference lived on with the Missouri and the Slovak synods as the only members until 1967 when the Conference was dissolved and both joined with LCA and ALC in the Lutheran Council in the USA.

[1] Adapted by the author from "Church Fellowship In the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America," *The Pieper Lectures: Church Fellowship*, ed. Chris Christophersen Boshoven (St. Louis: The Concordia Historical Institute and Crestwood, MO: The Luther Academy, 1998), 95ff.

It is not so easy to fix when the divergence on the doctrine of church fellowship began in the Synodical Conference. But the rough spots certainly were visible in 1938 when it appeared that the Missouri Synod declared that the doctrinal differences which had previously divided it from the American Lutheran Church (ALC-1930) to be non-divisive. As early as 1916, conferences of the German synods in the midwest met together and discussed the doctrines which had divided them since the 1860s. Before 1920, the Buffalo, Iowa, Ohio, Missouri, and Wisconsin synods had appointed an Intersynodical Committee which attempted to work out a set of theses which could be the basis for church fellowship. In 1925, a set of theses, called the Chicago Theses or the Intersynodical Theses, was formulated, but it did not find approval in the synods, and in 1929, Missouri rejected the theses and a new committee in Missouri was appointed, which included Dr. Pieper. The result of its deliberations was the *Brief Statement,* which was to be the basis for any further Missouri negotiations. The Buffalo, Ohio, and Iowa synods, by then merged into the ALC, responded to the *Brief Statement* with the *Declaration* which was supposed to clarify points on which the *Brief Statement* was not so clear, but which, in the view of many in the Synodical Conference, emasculated them. In 1938, Missouri adopted the *Declaration,* but no fellowship could be declared until there was consultation with the other members of the Synodical Conference. When the *Declaration* was opposed there, it was set aside, and in 1941, Missouri called for a single document of agreement.

The debate in the Synodical Conference intensified during the 1940s, exacerbated by the Statement of the Forty-Four in 1945, which, among other things, rejected the exegesis of Romans 16:17 which had been standard in the Synodical Conference and also raised questions about prayer fellowship.

In answer to Missouri's call for a single doctrinal statement which could be agreed to by both parties—ALC and Missouri—the *Doctrinal Affirmation* was produced, which in Wolf's words, was an "attempt to adjust the differences between the *Brief Statement* and the *Declaration*,"[2] but it failed to gain acceptance in Missouri. In the Synodical Conference, the *Doctrinal Affirmation* was regarded as a weakening of the *Brief Statement,* and in the ALC, it was regarded as giving away too much to Synodical Conference dogmatism, so it was dead by 1947. However, commissions between ALC and Missouri continued to work, and by

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[2] Richard C. Wolf, *Documents of Lutheran Unity in America* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 158.

1950 had produced a document called *Common Confession*. Part I of this document was accepted by the ALC in 1950, and Missouri stated that in it they found nothing that contradicted Scripture. The ELS and WELS, however, objected that the *Common Confession* could not be considered an agreement because nothing was said about the issues that had always separated the churches of the ALC (which especially included the Iowa and Buffalo synods). Ohio had broken with Missouri over the doctrine of election; Iowa could never unite with Missouri because of the issue of Open Questions; and with Buffalo, it was the doctrine of the ministry. Confessional integrity could not operate with a principle of letting bygones be bygones. Issues that divided in the past had to be confronted and dealt with head-on. When Part II of the *Common Confession* was presented, it became unclear if Part I was to be read in the light of Part II, or otherwise.

It was, of course, in the Synodical Conference that the issue of the *Common Confession* had to be dealt with. At that convention, a floor committee, with representatives of all the synods of the conference, came to the floor with a resolution finding the *Common Confession* to be inadequate as a settlement of the previous doctrinal disagreements. But that report was tabled by a majority of the delegates, cutting off discussion of the resolution.[3] As a result, the Wisconsin Synod declared itself to be *in statu confessionis*. From that point on, the relationships in the Synodical Conference deteriorated, with occasional signs of hope. The basic question was not simply a quarrel over the issue of prayer fellowship, but rather about the adequacy of doctrinal, confessional agreements. In 1955, the ELS suspended fellowship with Missouri, though remaining in the Synodical Conference. During the next years, the ELS and WELS also were nearly torn apart by internal disputes as to when to leave the Synodical Conference, and that did result in the formation of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC).

In 1962 the CLC published a doctrinal statement on church fellowship, which is very thorough, and which represents most clearly, I believe, the doctrine of church fellowship on which the Synodical Conference was founded.[4] To say that does not imply approval of the way that doctrine has been applied in the CLC, but in spite of one or two [major!] exegetical issues which arise, it seems to me to be quite

[3] The Synodical Conference was so constructed that all voting was proportional; that meant that the Missouri Synod delegates could outvote all of the others. In this case, the floor committee was represented by all of the synods and came with a recommendation, which was tabled by the majority, thus avoiding discussion of it.

[4] See *Logia* V:1 (Epiphany 1996): 41–52.

clear that the doctrine of church fellowship expressed there is that of the Synodical Conference. Whether or not that understanding was faithful to the teaching of Scripture is the question in need of dogmatic and exegetical investigation. I believe it was, but it is not clear that the question ever got a fair hearing.

It is clear that the issue on which the Synodical Conference foundered was the doctrine of church fellowship, not on anything else. It would be easy to point to some specific issues, which did become, in varying degrees, bones of contention—chiefly the distinction between prayer fellowship and joint prayer, military chaplaincy, Boy Scouts, and sundry other things. But I seriously doubt that any or a number of those issues, including the prayer distinction, standing by themselves would have done the Synodical Conference in. Rather, the issue had to do with the nature of doctrinal, confessional statements—whether past disagreements had to be addressed directly in a polemical way, with condemnations and antitheses, or if affirmative statements were sufficient; and whether fellowship can be established on the basis of parallel documents. A serious question was whether complete doctrinal unanimity was necessary to establish church fellowship, and what the nature of that unanimity might be. Equally serious was how the church is to deal with doctrinal disunity which arises amongst those who have previously been agreed. As much as anything else, the disruption of the Conference noted the failure of the original agreement between Missouri and Wisconsin:

> If in one synod or in the other an error in doctrine should appear, each synod shall be held to remove such error by all means at its disposal. And as long as this is being done, the orthodoxy of the respective synod shall not be questioned.[5]

No longer was the Synodical Conference what it had called itself in Article II of its constitution, "The external expression of the spiritual unity of the respective synods."

A Timeline

1818	Resolution to form General Synod *(Plan Entwurf)*
1820	General Synod Organized – Pennsylvania, N. Carolina, Maryland-Virginia + New York
1823	Pennsylvania defects from General Synod

[5] 1868 Agreement between Missouri and Wisconsin Synods, Wolf, 182.

1826 S. S. Schmucker becomes president of Gettysburg Seminary;
—"American Lutheranism" vs. rising tide of "Confessionalism"

1855 Definite Platform[6]

1866 Pennsylvania withdraws from General Synod
—Invitation to convention at Reading, Pa (Attendees included Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Norwegian Synods)[7]

1867 General Council formed (Missouri, Norwegian, Ohio, Illinois synods declined, but Wisc, Minn & Mich joined; Wisc withdrew 1869 followed by Minn & later Mich.)

1871 *Denkschrift* (Memorial: Apologia for Norw., Missouri, Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin & Minnesota Synods, written by F. A. Schmidt)[8]

1872 Synodical Conference organized – Mo, NS, Ohio, Ill, Wisc, Minn[9]
—Discussed & Adopted Fellowship theses by Wilhelm Sihler the first several meetings[10]

1903-05 Free Conferences — Missouri, Ohio, and Iowa[11]

1917-19 National Lutheran Council formed—grew out of the National Lutheran Commission for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare.[12] After its formation, the Chicago Theses were prepared by the presidents of the bodies involved to ascertain their agreement!—Not to be confused with the Intersynodical (Chicago) Theses.[13] (NLCA –Norwegian Lutheran Church in America, later ELC– participation was the catalyst for S.C. Ylvisaker's departure from the Norw. Merger.)

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[6] Wolf, 44.

[7] Ibid., 61ff.

[8] Ibid., 87; Erling Teigen, "Church Fellowship In the Evangelical Synodical Conference of North America" (2nd Annual Pieper Lectures, 1997), 85f.

[9] Wolf, 88.

[10] Teigen, 89f.

[11] S.C. Ylvisaker, "In The Interest of Truth," *Lutheran Sentinel* 26:16 (27 August 1943, special edition): 245.

[12] Wolf, 131ff.

[13] Ibid., 133.

1917 ff. Representatives of Missouri, Wisconsin, Ohio, Buffalo, Iowa, met in closed sessions to reach agreement, resulting in the "Intersynodical (Chicago) Theses" of 1925.[14]

1925 Intersynodical (Chicago) Theses were presented to the Buffalo, Iowa, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin Synods.
—Minneapolis Theses (Ohio, Buffalo, Iowa, & NLCA),[15] based on the 1919 Chicago theses.

1929 By 1929, only Buffalo had accepted the Intersynodical Theses.[16]
—Missouri rejected Intersynodical Theses for various reasons, especially because "we must begin with the *status controversiae*." Reservations expressed regarding conversion and election, and the Norwegian *Opgjør*.[17]

1930 American Lutheran Church (ALC) Merger: Ohio, Buffalo, Iowa)
—American Lutheran Conference was formed to be a "middle way" in opposition to Synodical Conference: NLCA, Augustana, United Danish, Lutheran Free Church and American Lutheran Church (ALC) on the basis of the Chicago Theses of 1919.[18] (Iowa had continued in GC, but when it appeared GS, GC, & USS would merge, Iowa left GC and drew closer to Ohio and Buffalo. That Union nearly fell apart when Iowa rejected "inerrant" in the Intersynodical theses.[19])

1932 Brief Statement-Committee members: F. Pieper, W. Wenger, E. A. Mayer, L. Heerboth, Th. Engelder) adopted by 1932 Convention. The statement was drawn up as a result of the Intersynodical Statement, and in order to provide a clear basis to be used in any further doctrinal discussions.[20]

1932-35 Discussion of Organic Union in Synodical Conference churches[21]

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[14] Ylvisaker, 245; Wolf, 360.
[15] Wolf, 339.
[16] Ibid., 151.
[17] Ibid., 361.
[18] Ibid., 293; see also Wolf, 331.
[19] Ibid., 331.
[20] Ibid., 158.
[21] Ibid., 159; Ylvisaker had a paper opposing it.

1936 *Unity, Union, and Unionism*—Norw. Synod.[22] UUU cautioned against doctrinal negotiations between church bodies not in full agreement carried on by committee, recalling the experience of the Norw. Synod and suggesting that the negotiations being carried on by Missouri with ALC were falling into the same pattern.[23]

1938 Sandusky Declaration – by ALC — response to Brief Statement[24]

—Missouri accepts Declaration to stand alongside of Brief Statement—but delayed fellowship until *full* agreement could be reached.

—Followed by objections from within Missouri, and from other SC churches: "To yoke it [Declaration] with the 'Brief Statement' was too much like the forbidden plowing 'with an ox and an ass together.'"[25]

1939 *A Letter to The Pastors and Professors of the Missouri Synod.* Norw. Synod (signed by Chr. Anderson, N. A. Madson, H.M. Tjernagel, & S.C. Ylvisaker) sent with *Union, Unity, and Unionism* as a response to Missouri's acceptance of Sandusky Declaration alongside of Brief Statement.

1940 Missouri expresses reservations.[26] For one thing, Missouri noted that ALC was not willing to give up its membership in Am. Luth. Conference: "…with respect to prayer-fellowship it seems that in the American Lutheran Church a more liberal practice is followed than … in the Missouri Synod. … ordinarily prayer fellowship involves church fellowship. …"[27]

—ALC rejects fellowship with Missouri: "We are still convinced that prayer-fellowship is wider than church-fellowship, but we do not consider this difference as

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[22] Evangelical Lutheran Synod, *Synod Report* 1936 (Mankato, MN); Pamphlet 1938.

[23] See below, 1939.

[24] Wolf, 160.

[25] *Our Relations with the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod* (Union Committee of the Norwegian Synod, 1954), 5.

[26] Wolf, 164.

[27] Ibid., 406.

church divisive and believe in the course of time it will be overcome completely."[28]

1941 Missouri decides to continue ALC discussions.[29]

1943 In the Interest of the Truth (S. C. Ylvisaker)
—Norw. Synod appeals to Missouri to revoke resolutions of 1938.

1944 Joint Committee of ALC and Missouri produced a single document, *Doctrinal Affirmations.*[30]
—NS – an improvement over Declaration, but weakens Brief Statement;
—Wisc: not all previous errors are excluded;
—ALC: Affirmation gave preference to Brief Statement[31]
—In Missouri: Theo. Diercks: "Much ambiguity, weakness of confession, insufficient rejection of error, compromising statements."
—Missouri, Saginaw convention officially adopts the distinction between Joint Prayer and Prayer Fellowship.[32]

1945 Statement of the Forty-Four (Also Called "Chicago Statement.")[33]

1949 Common Confession[34]
—1949 Part I
—1952 Part II[35]

1950 S. C. Ylvisaker address at Synodical Conference meeting (Delivered as 2nd V.P. in the absence of the President)[36]

1952 ALC adopted *United Testimony on Faith and Life,* produced by the Union Committee of the Am. Luth. Conference which became the basis for the 1960 Union of ALC, ELC, UELC, LFC.[37]

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[28] Ibid., 165.
[29] Ibid., 166.
[30] Wolf, 381; Armin Schuetze, *The Synodical Conference Ecumenical Endeavor*, 278.
[31] Schuetze, 279.
[32] *Synod Report* 1955: 43; Wolf, 168.
[33] *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* (November 1970): 150.
[34] Wolf, 167.
[35] See T. Aaberg, *City Set on A Hill*, 173ff. re: Common Confession.
[36] 1950 Synodical Conference Proceedings.
[37] Wolf, 490.

1953 Missouri Statement on Prayer Fellowship (which institutionalized and authenticated the position of the Forty-four): Whereas, Such prayer at intersynodical meetings does not pretend that doctrinal unity exists where it does not exist, nor intimate that doctrinal differences are unimportant, but rather implores God, from whom true unity in the spirit must come, for his blessing, in order that unity may be achieved in those things where it is lacking; be it therefore *Resolved*, That Synod declare that it does not consider Joint Prayer at intersynodical meetings unionistic and sinful, "provided such prayer does not imply denial of truth or support of error."[38]

1954 First effort in Norw. Synod to break fellowship with Missouri, which failed: Memorial:[39] "Resolved that for reasons stated in the Pamphlet, 'Our Relations with the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod,' a) we suspend fellowship with the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. b) We do not hereby suspend fellowship with those in the Missouri Synod, who voice agreement with our position as described in that pamphlet, or with the Synodical Conference as such. Signed: J. G. Anderson, Arthur Wold, Lenwick Hoyord, Peter Forseth, J.A.O. Preus, R. Preus, D.L. Pfeiffer." Action of the Synod: "That this resolution be referred to the next convention of our Synod, whether special or regular."

1955 Wisconsin Synod Protest[40] ("to hold judgment in abeyance")
—Norw. synod suspension of fellowship with Missouri[41]

1956 Missouri agrees not to enter into further negotiations without informing sister churches.[42]
—ELS reaffirms suspension.[43]

1957 January. Meeting of the Synodical Conference Joint Union Committee

[38] Ibid., 429.
[39] *Synod Report* 1954: 91.
[40] Wolf, 169, 174; Schuetze, 331.
[41] Wolf, 170; *Synod Report* 1955; Schuetze 319ff.
[42] Wolf, 171, 173; Schuetze, 330ff.
[43] Wolf, 175: more time needed to study recent Missouri actions.

1959 The committee held three day meetings three times a year, and the ELS resolved in 1957, 1958, and 1959 to continue the Joint Union Committee meetings of the Synodical Conference, with protests coming from within the ELS. Protest against the 1959 vote began the exodus of pastors who later formed the CLC.

—ELS President M.E. Tweit called for a special meeting of the pastoral conference to deal with the dissension. See notes on Lillegard paper.[44]

1960 Organization of the CLC[45]

—*Theology of Fellowship* presented by Missouri. Part I contained matters on which there was no disagreement; Part II dealt with the problem of Prayer Fellowship. Issues: Joint Prayer vs. Prayer Fellowship, and the "Unit Concept."[46]

—ELS Convention resolves to discontinue meeting with the SC Joint Union Committee.

—Wisconsin, at May 1961 Union Committee declared an impasse so that no more joint committee meetings would be held.

—1960 Recessed Convention: SC membership was not resolved, but the process was begun to leave. Resolved that since 1955, the ELS had *not* been in fellowship with Missouri Synod, and that continued membership in SC attempting to restore doctrinal agreement with Missouri did *not* constitute unionism, nor was it a violation of Romans 16:17.

1959-62 Overseas brethren made presentations on fellowship at San Francisco and Thiensville, and in individual meetings with Missouri, ELS, & WELS.[47]

1961 August: WELS suspended fellowship with Missouri.

1962 —June 20-29 Cleveland Convention; see T. N. Teigen review in LSQ, Sept. 1962.

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[44] Aaberg, 217.

[45] Wolf, 177 ff. See especially David Lau, *Out of Necessity : A History of the Church of the Lutheran Confession* (Eau Claire, WI: CLC Board of Education and Publications, 2009).

[46] Aaberg, 227ff; Schuetze, 356.

[47] Aaberg, 231ff; Schuetze, 359.

	—August ELS convention – reaffirmed its 1961 memorial to dissolve SC[48]
	—November WELS special convention New Ulm memorialized Conference to take steps to dissolve the SC.[49]
	—November SC meeting in Chicago. ELS & WELS held separate devotions & had a communion at St. Paul's, ELS, North Ave.
	—Majority of SC voted not to dissolve but to continue and expand the SC.
1963	June: ELS Resolves to leave Synodical Conference[50] —August WELS[51]
1964	SC meets at Ann Arbor —invited overseas churches in fellowship with LCMS to join SC; urged ELS & WELS to reconsider. —Beginning in 1962, Missouri had been involved in the process leading to the organization of LCUSA – Lutheran Council in the USA, and approved the constitution in 1965.[52]
1965	LCMS invited SELC (Slovak Synod) either to continue SC or to join Missouri.
1967	LCMS Convention, with later concurrence of SELC, resolved to dissolve SC. — Lutheran Council in the USA (LCUSA) process begun in 1962, with Missouri participation. Constitution presented in 1964, approved by ALC in 1964, LCMS and SELC in 1965, and LCA in 1966.[53]
1969	LCMS declares fellowship with ALC–1960.
1977	LCMS breaks fellowship with ALC.
1988	ELCA (ALC, LCA, AELC) LSQ

[48] *Synod Report* 1962: 45.

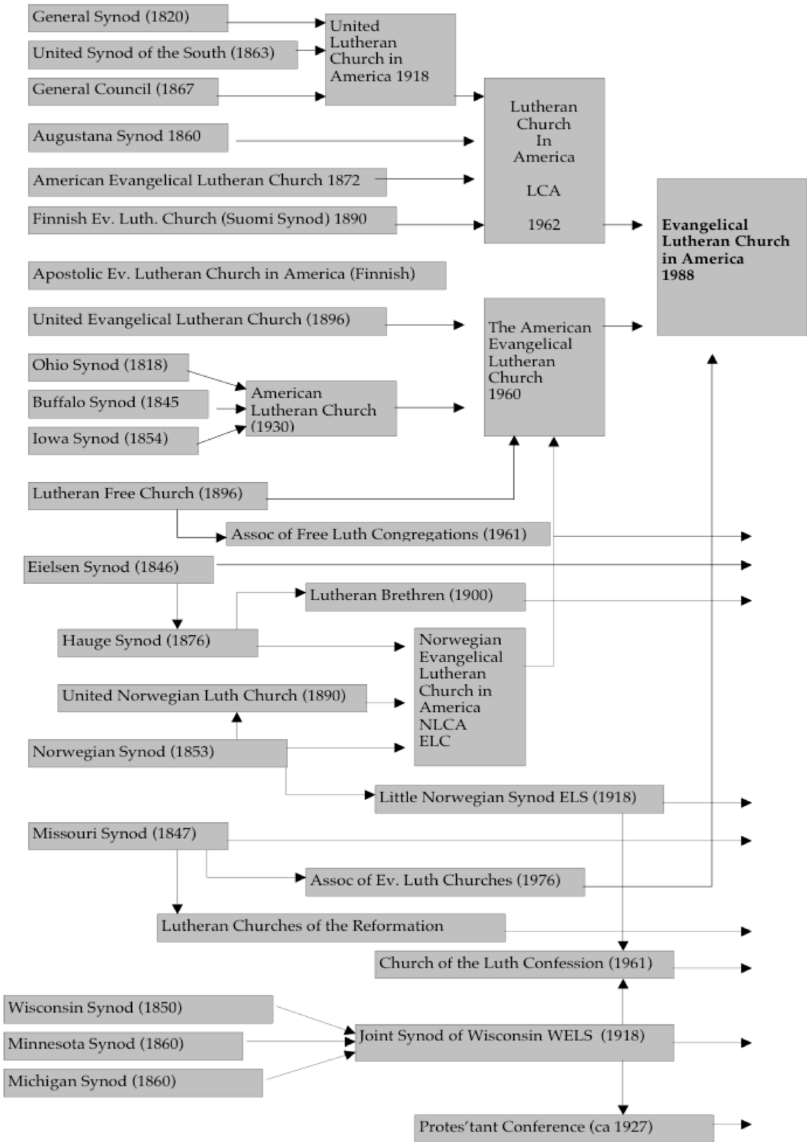
[49] Schuetze, 387.

[50] *Synod Report* 1963: 48.

[51] Schuetze, 392.

[52] See Wolf, 614.

[53] Wolf, 245ff.



The Lutheran Churches in North America
General Synod (1820)
United Synod of the South (1863)
General Council (1867
United Lutheran Church in America 1918
Augustana Synod 1860
American Evangelical Lutheran Church 1872
Finnish Ev. Luth. Church (Suomi Synod) 1890
Lutheran Church In America LCA 1962
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 1988
Apostolic Ev. Lutheran Church in America (Finnish)
United Evangelical Lutheran Church (1896)
The American Evangelical Lutheran Church 1960
Ohio Synod (1818)
Buffalo Synod (1845
Iowa Synod (1854)
American Lutheran Church (1930)
Lutheran Free Church (1896)
Assoc of Free Luth Congregations (1961)
Eielsen Synod (1846)
Lutheran Brethren (1900)
Hauge Synod (1876)
Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America NLCA ELC
United Norwegian Luth Church (1890)
Norwegian Synod (1853)
Little Norwegian Synod ELS (1918)
Missouri Synod (1847)
Assoc of Ev. Luth Churches (1976)
Lutheran Churches of the Reformation
Church of the Luth Confession (1961)
Wisconsin Synod (1850)
Minnesota Synod (1860)
Michigan Synod (1860)
Joint Synod of Wisconsin WELS (1918)
Protes'tant Conference (ca 1927)

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Wolf (*Documents of Lutheran Unity in America* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966]) contains most of the documents referred to here, some complete, others selected. Three monographs deal with the dissolution of the Synodical Conference: Theodore Aaberg, Armin Schuetze, and Mark E. Braun. Braun (*A Tale of Two Synods: Events that Led to the Split between Wisconsin and Missouri* [Milwaukee, NPH, 2003]) records the events, but almost completely a view from within the WELS. Aaberg (*City Set on a Hill* [Mankato: ELS Board of Publications, 1968]), presents an *apologia* for the ELS in the dissolution of the Conference, but treats ELS and WELS as acting in concord and reports WELS actions alongside ELS. (Aaberg is seriously marred by lack of an index). Schuetze (*The Synodical Conference Lutherans: Ecumenical Endeavor* [Milwaukee: NPH, 2000]) presents the most complete history of the events, documented in endnotes, and with a very useable index. I inherited from the library of my father, Torald N. Teigen, an extensive collection of pamphlets, official and unofficial, as well as papers, mimeographed and dittoed, from the period of about 1935 to 1967.

Ludvig Mathias Lindeman (1812–87): The Man Who Taught the Norwegian People to Sing

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LUDVIG MATHIAS LINDEMAN HAD SUCH a profound influence on the hymnody of the Norwegian Lutheran Church that it has been said that he is the man who taught the Norwegian people to sing. This past year marked the bicentennial of his birth.

Christianity had been introduced to Norway before the year 1,000 and Norway had been a Lutheran nation since 1537. As a part of the United Kingdom of Denmark and Norway, the Divine Service for both countries followed the Ordinance of 1537 and the Ritual of 1685. Identical hymn books were used in both countries. A distinct Norwegian hymnody began to come into existence after Norway again received her own constitution on May 17, 1814 (which is known to the Norwegian people as "Syttende Mai"). As Norway reassumed an independent identity, she also developed an independent hymnody within the church.

Foremost among the authors was Magus Brostrup Landstad (1802-1880). He was born in Finmarken, Norway and ordained as a Lutheran pastor. He was asked to prepare a national hymnbook (hymn texts only) for the Church of Norway. The book (*Kirkesalmebog*) was authorized for use in 1869 and quickly was adopted by the congregations. Concerning the hymn selections, Landstad wrote:

> If we are to get a new hymnal, we must meet on the common ground of faith in love. We must not cling to our preconceived

> notions; not let ourselves be influenced too strongly by our own tastes, not by our own desires, as tho we were the only ones entitled to a hearing.... But the sickly subjectivity, which "rests" in the varying moods of pious feelings and godly longings, and yet does not possess any of the boldness and power of true faith—such as we find in Luther's and Kingo's hymns—this type of church hymn must be excluded.[1]

Seven of Landstad's original hymns appear in the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary*.

Foremost among the composers was Ludvig Mathias Lindeman. He was born two hundred years ago, on November 28, 1812, in Trondheim, Norway as the seventh of ten children. His father, Ole A. Lindeman, was the organist at Our Lady's Church in Trondheim and the editor of the first Norwegian chorale book (hymn tunes only) in 1835. This book contained strictly regular even-note melodies. This was a departure from the original Reformation-era rhythmic melodies and precipitated a controversy regarding the form of melodies which lasted for nearly four decades until his son, Ludvig, published a definitive edition of hymn tunes for the Church of Norway.[2]

At the age of twenty-four years, Ludvig M. Lindeman became a theological student at the University at Christiania (Oslo). He attended theological lectures, but his musical commitments demanded most of his time. In 1840 he succeeded his older brother as cantor and organist at the Church of Our Savior which, since 1950, has been known as the Oslo Cathedral. This position also included serving as choirmaster for the boys' chorus which led the singing during the services. He held this position for forty-seven years until his death. During these years he became a recognized organist throughout Europe and England. With his son, Peter, he founded the first music conservatory in Norway, which today is known as the Oslo Conservatory. Beginning in 1849, he also began to teach liturgics at the university's theological seminary.

These positions brought him into direct contact with many of the men who eventually would shape the Norwegian Synod in the United States. In additional to receiving instruction in the classroom lectures, theological students frequently attended services at the Church of Our Savior where Lindeman was organist. They heard his music and

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[1] John Dahle, *Library of Christian Hymns* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1925), 193-194.

[2] Carl F. Schalk, *God's Song in a New Land* (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1995), 119.

listened to the choir which he directed. Among his likely students were H.A. Stub (1848), A.C. Preus (1848), N.O. Brandt (1851), G.F. Dietrichson (1851), H.A. Preus (1851), and J.A. Ottesen (1852). He also would have been the instructor for U.V. Koren (1853) and Laur. Larsen (1857).

At this time, in the mid-nineteenth century, there was a growing interest in the folk music of Norway. Lindeman demonstrated his interest in these folk melodies already in 1840 when he published *Norske Fjeld-Melodier* (*Norwegian Mountain Melodies*). In 1848, Lindeman received funding from the university to visit the Norwegian mountain villages and document "the people's hymn singing." His first trip was to Valdres. In 1851 and 1864, he made two additional trips to Telemark, Hordaland, Bergen, Hallingdal, and Gudbransdalen. In 1871 he made a short journey to Trøndelag.[3] On these journeys he collected the melodies from the elderly, the fiddlers, and the *klokkers* who led the singing in the churches. After recording more than 2,500 different melodies, Lindeman harmonized and published many of them along with some original compositions. His first collection, *Æeldre og Nyære Norske Fjeldmelodier* (*Older and Newer Norwegian Folkmelodies*) was published in 1853 at the same time as the organization of the Norwegian Synod.

Landstad's hymnbook had been authorized for use in 1869. Three years later, Lindeman's chorale-book (*Koralbog*) was published containing the musical tunes for Landstad's hymn book. Lindeman's *Koralbog*

> ... includes old chorales in use in the churches in Norway at the time together with many new melodies, mostly folktunes [sic] Lindeman had found. Although he did not favor the return to the original rhythmic forms of the chorale tunes, Lindeman put new life into the singing of hymns in the church by replacing the deadly uniform rhythms and slow tempos with dotted rhythms, more rapid tempos, and rests at the end of phrases rather than fermatas. The introduction of many new folk tunes was also important. His harmonizations were radical, which made for greater interest, but also led to criticism.[4]

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[3] Store Norske Leksikon, found at <http://snl.no/Ludvig_Mathias_Lindeman> accessed: 28 December 2012.

[4] Madus A. Egge, "Norway," in *Hymnal Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*, ed. Marilyn Kay Stulken (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 40.

As the romanticist of Norwegian church music, Lindeman promoted the folk tunes of the mountains and the valleys of Norway. He considered it inappropriate to change the tunes which currently were being sung by the people. "He made use of quarter, dotted quarter, and eighth notes (instead of the accustomed half-note style of notation) to restore life and rhythm to singing."[5] As such, hymns sung to his tunes incorporate a distinctive Norwegian "lilt."

Even though his tunes were the music of the people, the publication of his chorale-book was not readily received by the *klokkers* who led the singing in the churches in the mountains and valleys of Norway. Until this time, melodies were sung very differently from one locality to another. "Parishioners sang from memory, adding ornaments to the melody as each felt inspired. Organists, when there was an organ in the church, filled in the slow tempos with their own trills and interludes."[6] As the publication of the chorale-book standardized the tunes, it also limited the freedom and license of the local *klokker* to alter the melody. This may help to explain the reluctance of the Norwegian *klokker* to make significant use of the psalmodikon which was a one-stringed musical instrument designed to pick out a musical tune.

In Norway, Lindeman's chorale-book continued in use until the publication of a new hymnbook for the Church of Norway in the 1920s. Landstad's compositions also left a legacy in the United States. The early immigrants were accustomed to the hymn tunes known to them from Norway. The later emigrants were familiar with Landstad's hymnbook and Lindeman's tunes. This created a clash of preferences. There were those who favored the older rhythmic hymn tunes to the newer hymn tunes of Lindeman. U.V. Koren, who took a leading role in the publication of hymnbooks for the Norwegian Synod, advocated a return to the rhythmic tunes of the Reformation. However, twenty-five of Lindeman's tunes appeared in the 1913 *Lutheran Hymnary*. The 1996 *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* associates thirteen hymns with Lindeman's hymn tunes.

Two of Lindeman's three most popular tunes carry the words for the hymns "Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain" (*Naar mit Øie træt af Moie*) and "Alleluia! Jesus lives" (*Fred til Bod*). His most famous composition is associated with N.F.S. Grundtvig's hymn "Built on the Rock

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[5] C.T. Aufdemberge, *Christian Worship: Handbook* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Northwestern Publishing House, 1997), 679.

[6] Egge, 38.

the Church Doth Stand" (*Kirken den er et gammelt Hus*) and is still used by Scandinavian, German, and American congregations.

Ludvig Lindeman died on May 23, 1887. His influence on Norwegian hymnody was so great that at his funeral service it was said that he had taught the Norwegian people to sing. LSQ

Synod Convention Communion Sermon on Numbers 21:4–9

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Text: *Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread." So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived. (Numbers 21:4–9; NKJV)*

WHEN IT COMES TO CREATURE comforts, we have come a long way over the centuries and millennia. Knowledge has built upon knowledge, science upon science, technology upon technology. That is to say that the comforts we have are far greater than what Israel had in the wilderness. On a hot day, for example, we have air conditioning to keep this sanctuary, as well as our motel rooms, comfortable. We have running water in our homes to drink when we want it. We have refrigerators to keep a variety of food fresh for eating.

Imagine, then, what it was like for Israel in the wilderness without all these creature comforts. They had scant water to drink, let alone take a shower. They had no air conditioned motel to stay in. Instead they sought refuge from the sun under the shade of a tent. They had no variety of food. The food was the same old, same old, day in and day out, manna. How boring! When they would arrive at the Promised Land, life would be better. There was no doubt about it. After all, God promised it would be a "land flowing with milk and honey" (Exodus 3:8).

At the time of our lesson, Israel was knocking on the door to the Promised Land. Their forty-year wandering in the wilderness was nearly over. They just needed to pass through Edom. Much to their dismay, the king of Edom denied them passage. That meant Israel had to "go around the land of Edom." Their hopes and plans for settling down in the near future were frustrated.

We can identify with frustration. We set goals in life and in work, in the church and in the synod. We strategize, organize, and mobilize. Hopes run high. Wheels are churning. Then it happens. We hit upon a road block. The road block stands in the way, hindering our progress, slowing us down…and we feel frustrated.

It happens in our life. We have plans for career advancement, but then the company downsizes; plans to relocate, but the job market is bad; plans to retire, but the economy keeps faltering. We have hopes to make the team, but don't make the cut; hopes to befriend a classmate or coworker, but are hurt; hopes to be accepted by others, but feel excluded. We set a goal to be a better person, but keep tripping up; set a goal to get rid of a vice, only to have it replaced by another one.

It happens in the church. We raise our children in God's Word, but then one or more stray. It pains us to see it. We talk about the faith with a family or friend, a classmate or coworker, but they don't want to hear it. It puts up a wall. We have joy when we bring a new member into the church, only to learn that others have left by the back door. It saddens us.

To be sure, we suffer hard knocks in the church and in life. **When we suffer hard knocks, it frustrates us.**

When that happened to Israel, Israel was "very discouraged." They were "fed up." Fed up, they got "testy." So they gave vent to their feelings. They complained to Moses and God: "There is no food and no water." What's more, they were tired of the food they did have, they were tired of manna; tired of the gift God gave them from heaven.

Tired is an understatement. They "loathed" it. They "had it up to here"; "couldn't take any more." Day after day they had been fed with this gift from heaven; nourished by it, kept for the Promised Land by it. Still, it wasn't good enough for them. They wanted something more exciting, more stimulating, more thrilling.

It's how it is in life, isn't it? We have something good, but then we get tired of it. We get tired of the "same old same old." We start craving something new, something different, something in us…and we get restless.

We get restless in life. Frustrated by roadblocks and hard knocks, our sinful self looks somewhere else than the "same old same old" God gives us. It doesn't excite us anymore, and we want to feel some excitement, some thrill, some rush in life. So, our sinful self says, "If it feels right, do it. If the high of a forbidden pleasure makes me forget my sorrows, enjoy it. If the rush of envy and revenge bring me to life, go for it. If the passing off of my responsibility lets me pursue my thrills, act on it. After all, I deserve to be happy."

We get restless in the church. We get tired of the same old same old in it, too. It happens when we see the success of others who look within. They seem to have what it takes—some dynamic power, not in the Word, but in them. So, mimicking them, we feel that we have to be winsome, rather than trust God's Word to win some. We feel that we have to excite sinners to move their spirit, rather than trust God's Word to move the sinner from law to gospel. And, if we haven't mimicked those who look within, we still aren't off the hook. We aren't, because when we do have successes in the church our sinful self lets it get to our head. It feels pride–not in God's Word–but in our ability. When we don't have successes, we turn inward and feel self-pity.

That's what happens when our sinful self gets restless from frustration. **Frustrated, it looks within; it looks somewhere else than God's gifts to us.**

It's what Israel did by loathing God's gift of manna. So God gave them something to really loathe. He gave them a taste of their own medicine, you might say. He sent into the Israelite camp "fiery serpents."

The camp was filled with them. Everywhere the serpents were crawling and coiling, springing and stinging, and the venom did its deadly work. It caused muscles to collapse, stopping the heart; or it paralyzed the nervous system, shutting down the lungs; or it clotted the

blood, stopping its flow. However the poison worked, the masses were as good as dead.

In a very pointed way, this sends us back to the garden. In the garden, the serpent of old, Satan, sprung from his coil and stung humanity. Poisoned with sin, it has gone straight for the heart, the breath of life, the lifeblood. It has brought certain death. Sin brings death. No doubt about it, "We were dead in trespasses and sin" (Ephesians 2:1). We were like Israel on that desert floor—good as dead—all of us, all mankind.

When you are dead, you are dead. You cannot make a move toward God, cannot remedy death. It is not possible. To be sure, Israel may have tried human remedies, may have done first aid by cutting and sucking the bitten area…but to no avail.

So, also, our sinful self has tried its own remedies to cure Satan's sting: looked somewhere else than God's gifts, looked to something within us, but it is all just first aid, just a band-aid. The venom does not stop. It goes right for the heart, the nervous system, the blood, leaving us dead, destined for hell. There is no way out. It is hopeless. All human remedies fail. They do because **the sin within brings death, and that is something to really loathe.**

Israel loathed the serpents. After all, they were dying; and at the same time, as someone said, "Dying to live."[1] That's to say, Israel admitted they needed help from outside themselves, and God gave them help from outside. When he did, he didn't do it by taking away the serpents. No. He didn't. Instead of taking them away, he gave life in the midst of death. He did it in a way—no matter how you turn it over in your head—that must have seemed offensive. He told Moses to make the image of the very thing they loathed, the very thing crawling at their feet, coiling and stinging them, poisoning and killing them.

When you think about that image, it is rather startling, then, that Jesus makes this comparison in the Gospels: "Even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (John 3:14). So, what was Jesus' point in comparing himself to the lifting up of the serpent—the image of the thing the people loathed? Simply this: he would take on himself, in human flesh, the sin represented by the bronze serpent. "God made Jesus who had no sin to be sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21). The very thing killing us, the sin that coiled up and stung us—all that the serpent of old, Satan, brought into the

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[1] The title of Harold's Senkbeil's book, *Dying To Live.*

world—became his…and, lifted up on the cross, carrying the world's sin, Jesus crushed the serpent's head.

There, in this striking comparison, is grace—grace, not found within you, but outside of you. God in his grace gave your sin to his Son. Your sins are lifted from you—for they were laid on Jesus. He came to death, and for his death you get life: eternal life that was given to you in your baptism.

Your sinful self protests, "There must be some other way!" No. This is the way. "Can't we do something?" No. Jesus did it all for you. "How about some excitement in us?" No. Jesus' death is your life. "When we were dead in trespasses and sins, God made us alive in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:5). "By grace you are saved!" (Ephesians 2:8)

So, though you are dying, you are living. You are alive in Jesus; you are on the way to the Promised Land, heaven. To be sure, the way is long, full of bumps and frustrations, heartaches and hard knocks. Though your sinful self gets restless and wants more, it does not deliver life. It only delivers death. Jesus alone gives life. He gives life in the midst of death for you. He is your life!

No doubt, life is what those Israelites, who looked and lived, wanted for their family and friends. They saw them laying on the desert floor, writhing in pain, their life ebbing away before their very eyes. Something had to be done! Time was of the essence! So, you can imagine them showing mercy, taking their families and friends by the hand, lifting the heads of those too weak to lift and look, urging them to look and live.

You are on that desert floor. Family, friends, and neighbors, who are without Jesus, are dying on that same desert floor. Time doesn't wait. Take their hand, as it were. Engage them with Jesus. Talk to them in the language of the catechism. Bring those you can, young or old, to baptism. It's what you have been "created in Christ Jesus to do" (Ephesians 2:10). You have been, for at the cross **in the midst of sin and death God gives us all grace and life.**

In Israel's case, the Word was the key. It was the Word added to the bronze serpent: "It shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he shall live." That's to say, the bronze serpent had no curative powers in it. It had no magical power. When you get right down to it, it was just a plain old bronze statue. The saving power was not in the statue, then, but in God's Word. It was the Word that cured.

Tonight, God attaches his curative Word to bread and wine. It is simple bread and wine, to be sure. There is nothing supernatural in them

by themselves; nothing thrilling or exciting about them. They are just plain ordinary bread and wine, the "same old, same old." Yet, the Word puts Jesus in them: the Word is Jesus, and so the Word attaches himself to the elements.

In the bread and wine, blessed by the Word, then, is your cure. At the altar railing, look in the cup. There is the blood poured from his side for you. Look in the bread. There is his body broken by death for you. Jesus' body and blood cure you from your sin, creating you anew in Christ Jesus. They are the antidote to death, giving you eternal life. Take and eat. Take and drink. **Look and live!** LSQ

Wedding Sermon on Song of Solomon 8:6–7

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Text: *Set me as a seal upon your heart, As a seal upon your arm; For love is as strong as death, Jealousy as cruel as the grave; Its flames are flames of fire, A most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, Nor can the floods drown it. If a man would give for love All the wealth of his house, It would be utterly despised. (Song of Solomon 8:6–7; NKJV)*

KENNA, I'D LIKE TO THANK you for the chance I had recently to visit with you and learn a little more about your relationship as I prepared your wedding sermon. I started by asking, "How did you two meet?" The first thing you said was, "He was my manager." When we dug a little deeper, your story was a whole lot sweeter than it sounded at first.

Kenna, you even said to me, "I was past the point of thinking I'd find anyone." Brian, maybe you felt the same. Perhaps in a way it's like Adam in the garden, naming every creature God brought to him, two by two, but for him there was no one. Back then, there were no fish in the sea, so to speak. You couldn't get a job at Feature Films and find that special someone. Everything depends on God, and what He'll do next.

Marriage is God's. It's His plan. He takes one man and one woman, and unites them in one new life that He intends to last as long as you both shall live. He brings man and wife together.

So now comes the sweet part, where Brian, you overheard that Kenna was out of laundry soap and you bought some, you smoothie. You got chocolate strawberries. You liked the dog. Then you barbecued

for her family. Kenna, you said, "One taste of Brian's ribs and that was it." To hear her tell it, Brian, you did just about everything right.

But the truth is, you won't. Even in spite of your best intentions—I can say this to both of you—you won't. Something is going to get forgotten. Something is going to get neglected. If you're anything like most of us, something is going to be said you wish you could un-say. Something is going to be heard that you can't believe your spouse would say to you. Something that used to be endearing is going to make someone roll their eyes. You're marrying a sinner. That makes marriage hard. Even with your best intentions and every warm romantic feeling you have right now—those feelings come and go.

Amy Bloom said, "Love at first sight is easy to understand. It's when two people have been looking at each other for a lifetime that it becomes a miracle."

You're here today looking for a miracle. You've come to the right place. This is where orphan children of wrath and condemnation are washed clean of all their sin in the blood of Jesus and are born again as children of God. This is where blind people get sight and deaf people hear. This is where the lame walk and the mute speak plainly. The Lord Jesus is here, now, with His Word, the same Jesus who started His ministry to sinners by showing up at a wedding and performing a miracle when all the wine was gone.

This is where you learn what love is: from Jesus, who loved the unlovable. From Jesus who loved you even when you had nothing to offer Him. From Jesus who loved you—never mind all that it cost Him—when He went to the cross to suffer instead of you, to take your punishment for sin and spare you…. He took all that was yours, sin and death, to give you what was His: perfect life and eternal salvation. Love is what you receive and what you learn when love comes to you from the cross.

Christ makes you holy. He makes your married life holy. It's out of your hands. Brian, from now on you life is not yours, but hers. Kenna, your life is not yours but his. But then, you know you were not your own anyway, you were bought with a price…now to live, not as two, but one.

So if you should wake up married and wonder if you made a mistake, never mind it. The mistake wasn't yours to make. God gave you to each other. He wasn't wrong.

If you don't feel warm and squishy all the time—never mind it. Love is not a feeling. Love is a Person. He is your Jesus, who makes you one, *and* makes you holy.

If you're hurt and angered by the person next to you, what do you do? You love on. Because Christ who saves you gives you this to do, that you can be confident is well pleasing to Him. You love on because Christ is loving your spouse through you, and that's what, as a gift, He gives you.

When you find it hard, and you struggle, and the hours are long, and housework is endless and you don't feel appreciated, and all the *mystery* is gone, Jesus makes it beautiful still, and calls it blessed, and makes it brand new. He forgives you all your sins, against Him, and against each other. *He will make your marriage*. Hold it in reverent fear and rejoice in it—because it belongs to Jesus, and He loves it, and with it He loves you.

St. Paul said, "He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This *mystery* is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband" (Ephesians 5:28–33).

He is bringing you together, to save you together, so that in the end you inherit all that He won for you, with His complete, earnest, fervent, self-sacrificing, burning love—for you.

"Set me as a seal upon your heart, As a seal upon your arm; For love is as strong as death, Jealousy as cruel as the grave; Its flames are flames of fire, A most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, Nor can the floods drown it. If a man would give for love All the wealth of his house, It would be utterly despised" (Song of Solomon 8:6–7).

So go and live this new life, make your ribs, take care of the dog, and take care of each other and whatever children you may have together. And "Remain in Me," says Jesus, for He makes you the promise, "I will remain in you." LSQ

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