



1 John

translationNotes

v8

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translationNotes

Introduction to 1 John

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 1 John

1. Introduction (1:1-4)
2. Christian living (1:5-3:10)
3. The command to love one another (3:11-5:12)
4. Conclusion (5:13-21)

What is the Book of 1 John about?

John wrote this letter to Christians at a time when the church was having trouble with people who denied the basic doctrines of the Christian faith. John's purpose in writing this letter was to prevent believers from sinning, to protect believers from false teaching, and to assure believers that they are saved. This, John explains, would make his joy complete. (See: [faith](#))

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "1 John" or "First John." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "The First Letter From John" or "The First Letter John Wrote." (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Who wrote the Book of 1 John?

The letter of 1 John was written by the Apostle John, probably near the end of his life. John does not identify himself as the author, but the first chapter shows that he was an eyewitness to the life and resurrection of Jesus.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Who were the people that John spoke against?

It is possible that the people John spoke against were those who would eventually become known as Gnostics. These people believed that Jesus was God, but that he was not really a human with a physical body on earth. The reason for their belief was their view that the physical world was evil. John writes this letter to assure his readers that he was a true eyewitness to the life of Jesus. (See: [evil, wicked, wickedness](#))

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Why are the many references in 1 John to “remaining” and “reside” important?

This language often expresses the idea of people residing somewhere, or often of something existing in a certain place. Jesus’ words are said to “remain” in Christians; Christians are said to “remain” in Christ and in God, and also in Jesus’ love. The Father is said to “remain” in the Son, and the Son is said to “remain” in the Father and also in the believers. The Holy Spirit is also said to “remain” in the believers.

Many translators will find it impossible to represent these ideas in their languages in exactly the same way. John intends to express the idea of the Christian being spiritually together with Jesus. For example, “He who says he remains in God” (1 John 2:6) often must be expressed in a different manner. The UDB says, “If we say that we are in union with God,” but translators will often have to find other expressions that communicate well.

In the passage, “the word of God remains in you” (1 John 2:13), the UDB expresses this idea as, “you continue to obey what God commands.” Many translators will find it possible to use this translation as a model.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of 1 John?

The following are the most significant textual issues in the Book of 1 John:

- “And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.” (1:4) The ULB, UDB, and most modern versions have this reading. Some older versions have, “And we are writing these things to you so that your joy may be complete.”
- “And you all know the truth.” (2:20) The ULB, UDB, and most modern versions have either this reading or the following reading: “And you all have knowledge.” Some older versions have, “and you know all things.”
- “and this is what we are!” (3:1). The ULB, UDB, and most modern versions have this reading. Some older manuscripts omit this phrase.
- “and every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not of God.” (4:3) The ULB, UDB, and most modern versions have this reading. Some older manuscripts read, “and every spirit that does not acknowledge that Jesus has come in the flesh is not of God.”
- “For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three are as one.” (5:7-8). The ULB, UDB, and most other versions do not have this reading. Translators are advised not to translate this material. However, if older Bible versions exist in their region have it, it is not wrong to translate it. If it is translated, it should be put inside square brackets ([]) to indicate that it is not original to the Book of 1 John.

(See: [Textual Variants](#))

1 John 01 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This letter does not begin in the way letters in the ancient Near East traditionally began. Instead, it begins in a similar way to the Gospel of John. Both do not really have an introduction of any kind. John appears to almost begin in the middle of an idea.

Special concepts in this chapter

Christians and sin

This chapter teaches that all Christians remain sinners after they come to faith in Jesus. Despite this, God still forgives a Christian's sins. (See: [sin](#), [sins](#), [sinned](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#), [faith](#) and [forgive](#), [forgives](#), [forgiven](#), [forgiveness](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

There are many metaphors in this chapter, all of which are commonly used in Scripture. Light is always used in a positive way to describe righteousness. Darkness is always used in a negative way to describe unrighteousness. The Christian life is also described as a walk. (See: [Metaphor](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#) and [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#))

Links:

- [1 John 01:01 Notes](#)
- [1 John intro](#)

1 John 1:1-2

UDB:

¹ I, John, am writing to you about the one who existed before there was anything else. He is the one whom we apostles listened to as he taught us. We saw him. We ourselves looked at him and touched him. He is the one who taught us the message about eternal life. ² (Because he came here to the earth and we have seen him, we proclaim to you clearly that the one whom we have seen is the one who has always lived. He was previously with his Father in heaven, but he came to live among us.)

ULB:

¹ That which was from the beginning—which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at, and our hands have touched—it is about the Word of life. ² Also, the life was made known, and we have seen it, and we bear witness to it. We are announcing to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and which has been made known to us.

translationNotes

General Information:

The apostle John wrote this letter to believers. All instances of “you,” “your,” and “yours” include all believers and are plural. Here the words “we” and “us” refer to John and those who had been with Jesus. (See: [Forms of You](#) and [Exclusive and Inclusive “We”](#))

General Information:

Verse 1 is a partial sentence. If you need to have a complete sentence, you can begin the sentence with verse 1, treat verse 2 as a parenthesis, as the UDB does, and complete the sentence with [1 John 1:3](#).

General Information:

In verses 1-2 many pronouns like “that,” “which,” and “it” are used. They refer to “the Word of life” and “the eternal life.” But, since these are names for Jesus, you can use pronouns that refer to a person like “who,” “whom” or “he.” (See: [Pronouns](#))

That which was from the beginning

The phrase “That which was from the beginning” refers to Jesus, who existed before everything was made. AT: “We are writing to you about the one who existed before the creation of all things”

the beginning

“the beginning of all things” or “the creation of the world”

which we have heard

“which we have heard him teach”

which we have seen ... we have looked at

This is repeated for emphasis. AT: “which we ourselves have seen” (See: [Parallelism](#))

the Word of life

The “Word of life” is Jesus. AT: “Jesus, the one who causes people to live forever” (See: [Metonymy](#))

life

The word “life” throughout this letter refers to more than physical life. It stands here for Jesus, the eternal life. (See: [Metonymy](#))

the life was made known

This can be stated in active form. AT: “God made the eternal life known to us” or “God made us able to know him, who is eternal life” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

we have seen it

“we have seen him”

we bear witness to it

“we solemnly tell others about him”

the eternal life

Here, “the eternal life” refers to the one who gives that life, Jesus. AT: “the one who enables us to live forever” (See: [Metonymy](#))

which was with the Father

“who was with God the Father”

and which has been made known to us

This was when he lived on earth. AT: “and he came to live among us” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

translationWords

- word, words
- life, live, lived, lives, living, alive
- witness, witnesses, eyewitness, eyewitnesses
- everlasting, eternal, eternity
- God the Father, heavenly Father, Father

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 01 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 1 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 1:3-4**UDB:**

³ We are proclaiming to you the message about Jesus, the one whom we saw and heard, in order that you may join together with us. The ones with whom we have joined are God our Father and his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ I am writing to you about these things so that you will be convinced that they are true, and that as a result we may be completely joyful.

ULB:

³ That which we have seen and heard we declare also to you, so you also will have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ Also, we are writing these things to you so that our joy will be complete. ^[1]

1:4 ^[1]Some older versions read, *And we are writing these things to you so that your joy will be complete.*

translationNotes**General Information:**

Here the words “we,” “us,” and “our” refer to John and those who had been with Jesus. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive “We”](#))

That which we have seen and heard we declare also to you

“We say to you also what we have seen and heard”

have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with the Father

“be our close friends. We are friends with God the Father”

Our fellowship

It is not clear if John is including or excluding his readers. You may translate this either way.

Father ... Son

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

so that our joy will be complete

“to make our joy complete” or “to make ourselves completely happy”

translationWords

- fellowship
- God the Father, heavenly Father, Father
- Son of God, Son
- Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus
- joy, joyful

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 01 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 1 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 1:5-7**UDB:**

⁵ The message that we heard from God and that we are proclaiming to you is this: He never sins. He is like a brilliant light that has no darkness at all. ⁶ If we claim to have joined together with God, but if we conduct our lives in an impure manner, that is like living in evil darkness. We are lying. We are not conducting our lives according to God's true message. ⁷ But living in a pure manner, as God is living in a pure manner in every way, is like living in God's light. If we do that, we can join together with each other, and God forgives us and accepts us because Jesus died for us.

ULB:

⁵ This is the message that we have heard from him and are announcing to you: God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we are lying and are not practicing the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from every sin.

translationNotes**Connecting Statement:**

From here into the next chapter, John writes about fellowship—close relationships with God and other believers.

General Information:

Here the words “we” and “us” refer to all believers, including the people to whom John was writing. Unless otherwise stated, that is the meaning for the remainder of this book. (See: **Inclusive “We”**)

God is light

This means that God is perfectly pure and holy. Cultures that associate goodness with light may be able to keep the idea of light without explaining the metaphor. AT: “God is purely righteous like pure light” (See: **Metonymy**)

in him there is no darkness at all

This means that God never sins and is not evil in any way. Cultures that associate evil with darkness may be able to keep the idea of darkness without explaining the metaphor. AT: “in him there is no darkness of sin” (See: **Metaphor**)

walk in darkness

This means “practice evil” or “do evil.” (See: **Metaphor**)

walk in the light

This means “practice goodness” or “do what is good.” (See: [Metaphor](#))

the blood of Jesus

This refers to the death of Jesus. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

translationWords

- [God](#)
- [light](#)
- [darkness](#)
- [fellowship](#)
- [walk, walks, walked, walking](#)
- [true, truth, truths](#)
- [blood](#)
- [Son of God, Son](#)
- [clean, cleans, cleaned, cleanse, cleansed, cleansing, wash, washing, washed, washes](#)
- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 01 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 1 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 1:8-10**UDB:**

⁸ Those who say that they have never sinned are deceiving themselves and are refusing to believe what God says about them. ⁹ But God always does what he says he will do, and what he does is always right. So if we admit to him that we have sinned, he will forgive us for our sins and will free us from the guilt of everything we have done wrong. Because of that, we should admit to him that we have sinned. ¹⁰ Because God says that everyone has sinned, those who say that they have never sinned talk as though God lies! They reject what God says about us!

ULB:

⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar, and his word is not in us.

translationNotes**General Information:**

Here the words “he,” “him,” and “his” refer to God. (See: [1 John 1:5](#))

have no sin

“never sin”

are deceiving

“are tricking” or “lying to”

the truth is not in us

The truth is spoken of as if it were an object that could be inside believers. AT: “we do not believe what God says is true” (See: [Metaphor](#))

to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. John uses them to emphasize that God will surely forgive our sins. AT: “and will completely forgive us of what we have done wrong” (See: [Parallelism](#))

we make him out to be a liar

It is implied that a person who claims to be without sin would be calling God a liar since he said that everyone is a sinner. AT: “it is the same as calling him a liar, because he said we have all sinned” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

his word is not in us

Obeying and honoring God’s word is spoken of as if his word were inside the believers. AT: “we do not understand God’s word nor obey what he says” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)
- [deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive](#)
- [true, truth, truths](#)
- [confess, confessed, confesses, confession](#)
- [faithful, faithfulness](#)
- [forgive, forgives, forgiven, forgiveness](#)
- [clean, cleans, cleaned, cleanse, cleansed, cleansing, wash, washing, washed, washes](#)
- [unrighteous, unrighteousness](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 01 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 1 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 02 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

New and old commandments

The old commandments are contained in the law of Moses. The new commandments are those given to the church after the death and resurrection of Jesus. (See: [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God's law](#), [law of Yahweh](#) and [resurrection](#))

Antichrist

This chapter refers to both a specific Antichrist and many different antichrists. The word “antichrist” means “opposed to Christ.” The Antichrist is a person who will come in the last days and imitate the ministry of Jesus for evil. Before this person comes, there will be many different people who work against the cause of Christ and are referred to as “antichrists” because they are working against Jesus. (See: [antichrist](#), [antichrists](#) and [last day](#), [last days](#), [latter days](#) and [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metonymy

There are many different metonymies used in this chapter. They are used to teach and to give instructions that are generic and can be applied in many different circumstances. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

“By this we know that we know him: if we keep his commandments.”

This appears to contradict John's earlier statement that Christians do not always keep God's commandments. John has just stated that all Christians sin. John explains that the desire to serve God is born from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the new life or nature given to Christians. The word “know” can be understood in many different ways and this range of meaning can cause confusion here.

Links:

- [1 John 02:01 Notes](#)

1 John 2:1-3

UDB:

¹ You who are as dear to me as my own children, I am writing this to you to keep you from sinning. But if any of you believers does sin, remember that Jesus Christ, the righteous one, pleads with the Father for him to forgive us. ² Jesus Christ voluntarily sacrificed his own life for us, so that as a result God forgives our sins. Yes, God is able to forgive our sins, but not only ours. He is also able to forgive the sins of people everywhere!

³ I will tell you how we can be sure that we know God. If we obey what he commands us to do, that shows us that we are joined together with him.

ULB:

¹ Children, I am writing these things to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the one who is righteous. ² He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. ³ We know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments.

translationNotes

Connecting Statement:

John continues to write about fellowship and shows that it is possible because Jesus goes between believers and the Father.

General Information:

Here the words “we” and “us” refer to John and all believers. The words “him” and “his” could refer to God the Father or to Jesus. (See: [Inclusive “We”](#))

Children

John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. AT: “My dear children in Christ” or “You who are as dear to me as my own children” (See: [Metaphor](#))

I am writing these things

“I am writing this letter”

But if anyone sins

“But when anyone sins.” This is something that is likely to happen.

we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the one who is righteous

The word “advocate” here refers to Jesus. AT: “we have Jesus Christ, the one who is righteous, who speaks to the Father and asks him to forgive us” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

He is the propitiation for our sins

“God is no longer angry with us, because Jesus sacrificed his own life for our sins” or “Jesus is the one who sacrificed his life for our sins, so God is no longer angry with us for our sins”

We know that we have come to know him

“We know that we know him” or “We know that we have a good relationship with him”

if we keep his commandments

“if we obey what he commands”

translationWords

- [children, child](#)
- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)
- [God the Father, heavenly Father, Father](#)
- [Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus](#)
- [righteous, righteousness](#)
- [propitiation](#)
- [world, worldly](#)
- [command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 2:4-6**UDB:**

⁴ Those who say, “We know God,” and do not obey what God commands us to do, are liars. They are not conducting their lives according to God’s true message. ⁵ But those who obey what God commands them to do are the people who love God in every way. This is how we can be sure that we are joined with God. ⁶ If we say that we are in union with God, we should conduct our lives as Christ did.

ULB:

⁴ The one who says, “I know God,” but does not keep his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But whoever keeps his word, truly, in him truly the love of God has been perfected. By this we know that we are in him: ⁶ whoever says that he remains in God should himself also walk just as he walked.

translationNotes**The one who says**

“Anyone who says” or “The person who says”

I know God

“I have a good relationship with God”

does not keep

“does not obey” or “disobeys”

his commandments

“what God tells him to do”

the truth is not in him

The truth is spoken of as if it were an object that could be inside the believers. AT: “he does not believe what God says is true” (See: [Metaphor](#))

keeps his word

“obeys what God tells him to do”

it is in that person that the love of God has been perfected

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) “the love of God” refers to a person loving God, and “perfected” represents completely or fully. AT: “it is that person who loves God completely” or 2) “the love of God” refers to God loving people, and “perfected” represents completing its purpose. AT: “God’s love has achieved its purpose in that person’s life” (See: [Possession](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

By this we know that we are in him

The phrase “we are in him” means that the believer has fellowship with God. AT: “When we obey what God says, we can be certain that we have fellowship with him” or “By this we know that are joined to God” (See: [Metaphor](#))

remains in God

To remain in God means to continue to have fellowship with God. AT: “continues to have fellowship with God” or “stays joined to God” (See: [Metaphor](#))

should himself also walk just as Jesus Christ walked

Conducting one’s life is spoken of as if it were walking. AT: “must live as Jesus Christ lived” or “should also obey God just as Jesus Christ did” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [God](#)
- [command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments](#)
- [true, truth, truths](#)
- [word, words](#)
- [love, loves, loving, loved](#)
- [perfect](#)
- [in Christ, in Jesus, in the Lord, in him](#)
- [walk, walks, walked, walking](#)
- [Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 2:7-8**UDB:**

⁷ Dear friends, I am not writing that you must do something new. Instead, I am writing something that you have known to do since you first believed in Christ. This is part of the message that you have always heard. ⁸ But I will say something again to you on this same topic: I can say that I am telling you to do something new. It is new because what Christ did was new, and what you are doing is new. This is because you are ceasing to do evil and you are doing more and more good. It is like when night passes away and day dawns, the true day of Christ.

ULB:

⁷ Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment that you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you heard. ⁸ Yet I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Christ and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.

translationNotes**Connecting Statement:**

John gives believers basic principles of fellowship—obedience and love.

Beloved

“You people whom I love” or “Dear friends”

I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment

“I write to you to love one other, which is not a new thing to do but an old commandment that you had heard.” John refers to Jesus’ command to love one another.

from the beginning

Here, “beginning” refers to when they decided to follow Christ. AT: “from when you first believed in Christ” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Yet I am writing a new commandment to you

“But in one way the commandment I write to you is a new commandment”

which is true in Christ and in you

“which is true, as shown in Christ’s deeds and your deeds”

the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining

Here “darkness” refers to evil and “light” refers to goodness. AT: “because you are ceasing to do evil and you are doing more and more good” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [beloved](#)
- [command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments](#)
- [word, words](#)
- [darkness](#)
- [true, truth, truths](#)
- [light](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 2:9-11**UDB:**

⁹ Those who claim that they are like people who live in the light, but who hate any of their fellow believers, are still like people who live in darkness. ¹⁰ But those who love their fellow believers behave like people who are living in the light; they have no reason to sin. ¹¹ Those who hate any of their fellow believers are still like people who are living in darkness, unaware of what is true about God.

ULB:

⁹ The one who says that he is in the light and hates his brother is in the darkness until now. ¹⁰ The one who loves his brother remains in the light and there is no occasion for stumbling in him. ¹¹ But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

translationNotes**General Information:**

Here the word “brother” refers to a fellow Christian.

The one who says

“Anyone who says” or “Someone who claims.” This does not refer to a specific person.

he is in the light

This is a picture of living right. When people do what is right, they can do it in the light and not hide in the dark. AT: “he does what is right” (See: [Metaphor](#))

is in the darkness

This is a picture of living sinfully. When people do what is wrong, they like to hide in the dark. AT: “is in the darkness, doing what is evil” (See: [Metaphor](#))

there is no occasion for stumbling in him

“nothing will cause him to stumble.” The word “stumbling” is a metaphor that means to fail spiritually or morally. AT: “nothing will cause him to sin” or “he will not fail to do what is pleasing to God” (See: [Metaphor](#))

is in the darkness and walks in the darkness

This same idea is said twice to bring attention to how evil it is to hate a fellow believer. AT: “is living in darkness” or “is living in the darkness of sin” (See: [Parallelism](#))

he does not know where he is going

This is a picture of the believer who is not living as a Christian should be living. AT: “he does not know what he should do” (See: [Metaphor](#))

the darkness has blinded his eyes

“the darkness has made him unable to see.” Darkness is a metaphor for sin or evil. AT: “sin has made it impossible for him to understand the truth” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [light](#)
- [brother, brothers](#)
- [darkness](#)
- [love, loves, loving, loved](#)
- [walk, walks, walked, walking](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 2:12-14**UDB:**

¹² I am writing this to you whom I love as though you were my own children. God has forgiven your sins because of what Christ has done for you. ¹³ I am writing to you believers who are older than the others. You have known Christ, who has always lived. I am also writing to you young men; you have defeated Satan, the evil one. And I am writing to you little children, because you know God the Father. ¹⁴ I will say it again: I am writing this to you older men because you have come to know Christ, the one who has always existed. And I am writing to you young men, because you are strong and you continue to obey what God commands, and because you have defeated Satan, the evil one.

ULB:

¹² I am writing to you, dear children, because your sins are forgiven because of his name. ¹³ I am writing to you, fathers, because you know the one who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, little children, because you know the Father. ¹⁴ I have written to you, fathers, because you know the one who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God remains in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

translationNotes**General Information:**

John explains why he is writing his letter either to different age groups or to believers with differences in maturity. Try to use similar wording for these sentences, as they are written poetically.

you, dear children

John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1](#). AT: “you, my dear children in Christ” or “you who are as dear to me as my own children” (See: [Metaphor](#))

your sins are forgiven

This can be stated in active form. AT: “God forgives your sins” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

because of his name

“his name” refers to Christ and who he is. AT: “because of what Christ has done for you” (See: [Metonymy](#))

I am writing to you, fathers

The word “fathers” here is possibly a metaphor referring to mature believers. AT: “I am writing to you, mature believers” (See: [Metaphor](#))

you know

“you have a relationship with”

the one who is from the beginning

“the one who has always lived” or “the one who has always existed.” It refers either to “Jesus” or to “God the Father.”

young men

This possibly refers to those who are no longer new believers but are growing in spiritual maturity. AT: “young believers” (See: [Metaphor](#))

you are strong

Here “strong” refers not to believers’ physical strength, but to their faithfulness to Christ. (See: [Metaphor](#))

the word of God remains in you

The writer refers to the believers’ increased faithfulness to Christ and knowledge of him as if he were speaking of God’s word existing in them. AT: “you know the word of God” (See: [Metaphor](#))

overcome

The writer is speaking of the believers’ refusal to follow Satan and of their frustrating his plans as if it were a matter of conquering him. (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [children, child](#)
- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)
- [forgive, forgives, forgiven, forgiveness](#)
- [name, names, named](#)
- [Satan, devil, evil one](#)
- [God the Father, heavenly Father, Father](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [word of God, words of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, scripture, scriptures](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 2:15-17**UDB:**

¹⁵ Do not behave like the people in the world who do not honor God. Do not desire the things they want to have. If anyone lives like they live, they are proving they do not love God our Father. ¹⁶ I am writing this, because all the wrong things that people do, all the things that people see and try to obtain for themselves, and all the things that they boast about—all these things have nothing to do with our Father in heaven. They belong to the world. ¹⁷ The people in the world who do not honor God, along with everything that they desire, will disappear. But those who do what God wants them to do will live forever!

ULB:

¹⁵ Do not love the world nor the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For everything that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the arrogance of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ The world and its desire are passing away. But whoever does the will of God will remain forever.

translationNotes**Do not love the world nor**

In 2:15-17 the word “world” refers to all the things people want to do that do not honor God. AT: “Do not behave like the people in the world who do not honor God, and do not love” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the things that are in the world

“the things that those who dishonor God want”

If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him

A person cannot love this world and all that dishonors God and love the Father at the same time. (See: [Metaphor](#))

the love of the Father is not in him

“he does not love the Father”

the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the arrogance of life

This is a list of some of the things in the world. It explains what is meant by “everything that is in the world” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the lust of the flesh

“the strong desire to have sinful physical pleasure”

the lust of the eyes

“the strong desire to have things that we see”

the arrogance of life

“pride of life.” This could imply both possessions and attitudes. AT: “the bragging about what a person has or does” or “the pride people feel because of their things and what he does”

is not from the Father

“does not come from the Father” or “is not how the Father teaches us to live”

are passing away

“pass away” or “will one day not be here”

translationWords

- [love, loves, loving, loved](#)
- [world, worldly](#)
- [God the Father, heavenly Father, Father](#)
- [lust](#)
- [flesh](#)
- [will of God](#)
- [everlasting, eternal, eternity](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 2:18-19**UDB:**

¹⁸ You who are very dear to me, it is now just before Jesus returns to earth. You have already heard that the person who will pretend to be Christ is coming; actually, many such persons have already arrived—but they are all against Christ. Because of this, we know that Christ will return very soon. ¹⁹ These people refused to remain in our congregations, but they never really belonged with us in the first place. When they left us, we clearly saw that they had never joined with us.

ULB:

¹⁸ Little children, it is the last hour. Just as you heard that the antichrist is coming, now many antichrists have come. By this we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not from us. For if they had been from us they would have remained with us. But when they went out, that showed they were not from us.

translationNotes**Connecting Statement:**

John warns about those who are against Christ.

Little children

“Immature Christians.” See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1](#).

it is the last hour

The phrase “the last hour” refers to the time just before Jesus returns. AT: “Jesus will return soon” (See: [Metonymy](#))

many antichrists have come

“there are many people who are against Christ”

have come. By this we know

“have come, and because of this we know” or “have come, and because many antichrists have come, we know”

They went out from us

“They left us”

but they were not from us

“but they did not really belong to us anyway” or “but they were not really part of our group in the first place.” The reason they were not really part of the group is that they were not believers in Jesus.

For if they had been from us they would have remained with us

“We know this because they would not have left us if they really had been believers”

translationWords

- [children, child](#)
- [antichrist, antichrists](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 2:20-21**UDB:**

²⁰ But as for you, Christ, the one who is holy, has given you his Spirit; it is his Spirit who teaches you all the truth. ²¹ I am writing this letter to you, not because you do not know the truth about God, but because you do know what it is. You also know that God teaches us nothing that is false; instead, he teaches us only what is true.

ULB:

²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know the truth. ^[1] Some older versions read, ²¹ I did not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it and because no lie is from the truth.

2:20 ^[1]Some other modern versions read, *and you have all knowledge. and you know all things.*

translationNotes**General Information:**

In the Old Testament the word “anointing” referred to pouring oil on a person to set him apart to serve God.

But you have an anointing from the Holy One

John speaks of the Holy Spirit as if he were “an anointing” that the people have received from Jesus. The abstract noun “anointing” can be translated with a verbal phrase. AT: “But the Holy One has anointed you” or “But Jesus Christ, the Holy One, has given you his Spirit” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Abstract Nouns](#))

the Holy One

This refers to Jesus. AT: “Jesus, the Holy One” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the truth ... no lie is from the truth

The abstract noun “truth” can be translated as an adjective. AT: “what is true ... no lie comes from what is true” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

translationWords

- [anoint, anointed, anointing](#)
- [Holy One](#)
- [true, truth, truths](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 2:22-23**UDB:**

²² The worst liars are the ones who deny that Jesus is the Christ. All who do this are against Christ, because they refuse to believe in the Father and the Son. ²³ Those who refuse to acknowledge that Jesus is God's Son are in no way joined with the Father, but those who acknowledge that Christ is the Son of God are also joined with Father.

ULB:

²² Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? That person is the antichrist, since he denies the Father and the Son. ²³ No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever acknowledges the Son also has the Father.

translationNotes**Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ?**

“Who is the liar? Anyone who denies that Jesus is the Christ.” John used a question to emphasize who liars are. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

denies that Jesus is the Christ

“refuses to say that Jesus is the Christ” or “says that Jesus is not the Messiah”

denies the Father and the Son

“refuses to say the truth about the Father and the Son” or “rejects the Father and the Son.”

Father ... Son

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

has the Father

“belongs to the Father”

acknowledges the Son

“speaks the truth about the Son”

has the Father

“belongs to the Father”

translationWords

- [Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus](#)
- [Christ, Messiah](#)
- [antichrist, antichrists](#)
- [God the Father, heavenly Father, Father](#)
- [Son of God, Son](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 2:24-26**UDB:**

²⁴ So, as for you, you must continue to believe the truth about Jesus Christ that you first heard, and to live according to it. If you do that, you will stay joined to the Son and the Father. ²⁵ And what God told us is that he will cause us to live forever!

²⁶ I have written this to you to warn you about those who want to deceive you concerning the truth about Christ.

ULB:

²⁴ As for you, let what you have heard from the beginning remain in you. If what you heard from the beginning remains in you, you will also remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ This is the promise he gave to us—eternal life. ²⁶ I have written these things to you about those who would lead you astray.

translationNotes**Connecting Statement:**

John reminds believers to continue in what they have first heard.

General Information:

Here the word “you” is plural and refers to the people to whom John wrote as well as all believers. The word “he” is emphatic and refers to Christ. (See: [Forms of You](#))

As for you

This marks John’s telling them how they should live as followers of Jesus instead of how those against Christ live.

let what you have heard from the beginning remain in you

“remember and believe what you have heard from the beginning.” How they heard it, what they heard, and what “the beginning” means can be made explicit: AT: “continue to trust what we have taught you about Jesus just as you have trusted since you first became believers” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

what you have heard from the beginning

“what we taught you about Jesus when you first became believers”

If what you heard from the beginning remains in you

The word “remains” is talking about relationship, not salvation. AT: “If you continue to trust what we first taught you”

also remain in the Son and in the Father

“also have a relationship with the Son and with the Father.” See how this was translated in [1 John 2:5-6](#).

This is the promise he gave to us—eternal life.

“This is what he promised to give us—eternal life” or “He has promised to cause us to live forever”

life

The word “life” throughout this letter refers to more than physical life. It stands here for Jesus, the eternal life. See how you translated this in [1 John 1:1-2](#). (See: [Metonymy](#))

would lead you astray

“want to lead you astray.” Leading people astray represents deceiving them. AT: “want to deceive you” or “want to make you believe lies about Jesus Christ” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [everlasting, eternal, eternity](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 2:27-29**UDB:**

²⁷ As for you, God's Spirit, whom you received from Christ, remains in you. So you do not need anyone else to be your teacher. God's Spirit is teaching you everything that you need to know. He always teaches the truth and never says anything that is false. So continue to live in the way that he has taught you, and remain joined with him.

²⁸ Now, my dear ones, I urge you to continue to remain joined with Christ. We need to do that in order that we may be confident that he will accept us when he comes back again. If we do that, we will not be ashamed when we stand before him when he comes. ²⁹ Since you know that Christ always does what is right, you know that all those who continue doing what is right are the ones who have become God's children.

ULB:

²⁷ As for you, the anointing that you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you everything and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, remain in him.

²⁸ Now, dear children, remain in him, so that when he appears, we will have boldness and not be ashamed before him at his coming. ²⁹ If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born from him.

translationNotes**Connecting Statement:**

Starting in verse 29, John introduces the idea of being born into God's family. The previous verses show that believers continue to sin; this part shows that believers also have the new nature, which cannot sin. It continues to show how believers can recognize each other.

As for you

This marks John's telling them something else about how they should live as followers of Jesus instead of following those who are against Christ.

the anointing

This refers to "God's Spirit." See the note about "anointing" in [1 John 2:20](#).

as his anointing teaches you everything

Here the word "everything" is a generalization. AT: "because his anointing teaches you everything that you need to know" (See: [Hyperbole and Generalization](#))

remain in him

To remain in someone means to continue to have fellowship with him. See how you translated “remains in God” in [1 John 2:5-6](#). AT: “continue to have fellowship with him” or “stay joined with him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the letter.

dear children

John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1](#). AT: “my dear children in Christ” or “you who are as dear to me as my own children” (See: [Metaphor](#))

he appears

“we see him”

boldness

“confidence”

not be ashamed before him

“not be ashamed in his presence”

at his coming

“when he comes again”

has been born from him

“has been born of God” or “is God’s child”

translationWords

- [anoint, anointed, anointing](#)
- [children, child](#)
- [bold, boldly, boldness](#)
- [righteous, righteousness](#)
- [born again, born of God, new birth](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 03 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Children of God

The author, John, was a Jew, but he did not become a child of God until after he came to faith in Jesus. (See: [faith](#))

Cain

Cain was a son of the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve. He murdered his brother out of jealousy or envy. This reference is difficult to understand if Genesis has not yet been translated. Additional explanation may be necessary.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

“To know”

The verb “to know” is used in a way that means “to understand.” It is a type of knowledge based on one’s experiences. Care should be taken when translating this word because it is not the primary definition of the term.

Keeps sinning and doing righteousness

There are many instructions in this chapter that will change their meaning if they are translated as happening continually or in another way. This passage is especially difficult in light of the fact that the first chapter teaches that Christians inevitably sin. (See: [sin](#), [sins](#), [sinned](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#)).

“He who keeps God’s commandments remains in him, and God remains in him”

Many scholars believe this is about remaining in the will of God and is not a reference to a person’s eternal salvation. (See: [everlasting](#), [eternal](#), [eternity](#) and [save](#), [saves](#), [saved](#), [safe](#)).

Links:

- [1 John 03:01 Notes](#)

1 John 3:1-3**UDB:**

¹ Think about how much our Father loves us: He allows us to say that we are his children. And this is indeed true. But people who are unbelievers have not understood who God is. So they do not understand who we are, that we are God's children. ² Dear friends, even though at present we are God's children, he has not yet shown us what we will be like in the future. However, we know that when Christ comes back again, we will become like him, because we will see him face to face. ³ So all those who confidently expect to see Christ face to face, will keep themselves from sinning, just like Christ, who never sins.

ULB:

¹ See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God, and this is what we are. For this reason, the world does not know us, because it did not know him. ^[1] ² Beloved, we are now children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we will be. We know that when Christ appears, we will be like him, for we will see him just as he is. ³ Everyone who has this hope fixed on him purifies himself just as he is pure.

3:1 ^[1] Some older versions leave out, *and this is what we are.*

translationNotes**Connecting Statement:**

In this part John tells the believers about their new nature, which cannot sin.

See what kind of love the Father has given to us

“Think about how our Father loves us so much”

we should be called children of God

“the Father called us his children”

children of God

Here this means people who belong to God through faith in Jesus.

For this reason, the world does not know us, because it did not know him

Possible meanings are 1) “Because we are the children of God and because the world did not know God, it does not know us” or 2) “Because the world did not know God, it does not know us.”

the world does not know us, because it did not know him

Here “the world” refers to people who do not honor God. What the world did not know can be made explicit: AT: “those who do not honor God do not know that we belong to God, because they did not know God” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Beloved

“You people whom I love” or “Dear friends.” See how you translated this in [1 John 2:7](#).

it has not yet been revealed

This can be stated in active form: AT: “God has not yet revealed” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

revealed

This can mean here either “told,” “demonstrated,” or “shown.”

Everyone who has this confidence about the future fixed on him purifies himself just as he is pure

“Everyone who confidently expects to see Christ as he really is will keep himself pure because Christ is pure”

translationWords

- [love, loves, loving, loved](#)
- [God the Father, heavenly Father, Father](#)
- [children, child](#)
- [world, worldly](#)
- [beloved](#)
- [reveal, reveals, revealed, revelation](#)
- [Christ, Messiah](#)
- [confidence, confident](#)
- [pure, purify, purification](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 03 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 3 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 3:4-6

UDB:

⁴ But everyone who continues to sin is refusing to obey God's laws, because that is what sin is, refusing to obey God's laws. ⁵ You know that Christ came in order to completely remove the guilt of our sins. You know also that he never sinned. ⁶ Those who continue doing what Christ wants them to do, do not continue sinning repeatedly. But those who repeatedly sin have not understood who Christ is, nor have they truly joined with him.

ULB:

⁴ Everyone who sins is committing acts of lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. ⁵ You know that Christ was revealed in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. ⁶ No one who remains in him will keep on sinning. No one who continues to sin has seen him or known him.

translationNotes

Christ was revealed

This can be stated in active form. AT: "Christ appeared" or "the Father revealed Christ" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

remains in him

"has a relationship with God." See how this was translated in [1 John 2:5-6](#).

No one ... has seen him or known him

John uses the words "seen" and "known" to say that the person who sins has never met Christ in a spiritual sense. A person behaving according to his sinful nature cannot know Christ. AT: "No one ... has ever truly believed in him" (See: [Doublet](#))

translationWords

- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)
- [lawless, lawlessness](#)
- [Christ, Messiah](#)
- [reveal, reveals, revealed, revelation](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 03 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 3 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 3:7-8**UDB:**

⁷ So I urge you who are very dear to me, do not let anyone deceive you by telling you that it is all right to sin. If you continue doing what is right, you are righteous, just like Christ is righteous. ⁸ But anyone who continues to sin repeatedly is like the devil, because the devil has always been sinning since the world began. And the reason why God's Son became a human being was to destroy what the devil has done.

ULB:

⁷ Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does righteousness is righteous, just as Christ is righteous. ⁸ The one who commits sin is from the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this reason the Son of God was revealed, so that he would destroy the devil's works.

translationNotes**Dear children**

John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1](#). AT: "My dear children in Christ" or "You who are as dear to me as my own children" (See: [Metaphor](#))

do not let anyone lead you astray

Being persuaded to disobey Christ is spoken of as if one were led off the right path to follow. AT: "do not let anyone fool you" or "do not let anyone deceive you" (See: [Metaphor](#))

The one who does righteousness is righteous, just as Christ is righteous

"He who does what is right is pleasing to God just as Christ is pleasing to God."

is from the devil

"belongs to the devil" or "is like the devil"

from the beginning

This refers to the very earliest time of creation before humans first sinned. AT: "since the earliest time of creation" (See: [Metonymy](#))

the Son of God was revealed

This can be stated in active form. AT: “God revealed his Son” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

translationWords

- [children, child](#)
- [astray, go astray, led astray, stray](#)
- [righteous, righteousness](#)
- [Christ, Messiah](#)
- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)
- [Satan, devil, evil one](#)
- [Son of God, Son](#)
- [reveal, reveals, revealed, revelation](#)
- [works, deeds, work, acts](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 03 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 3 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 3:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ People do not continue sinning repeatedly if they have become children of God. They cannot continually sin because God has made them his children, and he has put into them what he himself is like. ¹⁰ Those who are God's children are clearly different from those who are the devil's children. The way that we can know who are Satan's children is this: Those who do not do what is right are not God's children. And those who do not love their fellow believers are not God's children.

ULB:

⁹ Whoever has been born from God does not continue to sin because God's seed remains in him. He cannot continue to sin because he has been born of God. ¹⁰ In this the children of God and children of the devil are revealed: Whoever does not do what is righteous is not from God, neither is the one who does not love his brother.

translationNotes**Connecting Statement:**

For now John ends this section on the new birth and the new nature which cannot sin.

Whoever has been born from God

This can be stated in active form. AT: "Whoever God has made his child" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

God's seed

This speaks of the Holy Spirit, whom God gives to believers and who makes them able to resist sin and do what pleases God as if he were a physical seed that is planted in the earth and grows. This is sometimes referred to as the new nature. AT: "the Holy Spirit" (See: [Metaphor](#))

he has been born of God

This can be stated in active form. AT: "God has given him new spiritual life" or "he is a child of God" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

In this the children of God and children of the devil are revealed

This can be stated in active form. AT: "This is how we know the children of God and the children of the devil" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

whoever does not do what is righteous is not from God, neither is the one who does not love his brother

The words “from God” are understood in the second part of the sentence. This can also be stated in positive form. AT: “whoever does not do what is righteous is not from God; whoever does not love his brother is also not from God” or “those who do what is righteous are from God, and those who love their brothers are from God” (See: [Double Negatives](#) and [Ellipsis](#))

his brother

Here “brother” means fellow Christians.

translationWords

- [born again, born of God, new birth](#)
- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)
- [seed, semen](#)
- [children, child](#)
- [Satan, devil, evil one](#)
- [righteous, righteousness](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 03 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 3 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 3:11-12

UDB:

¹¹ The message that you heard when you first believed in Christ is that we should love each other.

¹² We should not hate others as did Adam's son, Cain, who belonged to Satan, the evil one. Because Cain hated his younger brother, he murdered him. I will tell you about why he murdered his brother. It was because Cain habitually behaved in an evil way, and he hated his younger brother because his younger brother behaved in the right way.

ULB:

¹¹ For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another. ¹²

We should not be like Cain, who was from the evil one and murdered his brother. Why did he kill him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.

translationNotes

Connecting Statement:

Here John teaches believers how they can recognize each other by the way they live; he teaches his readers to love each other.

General Information:

Cain and Abel were the first sons of Adam and Eve, the first man and woman.

We should not be like Cain

"We should not do as Cain did"

brother

This refers to Cain's younger brother Abel.

Why did he kill him? Because

John uses a question to teach his audience. This can be translated as a statement. AT: "He killed him because" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

his works were evil and his brother's righteous

The words "works were" are also understood in the second phrase. AT: "Cain's works were evil and his brother's works were righteous" or "Cain did evil things and his brother did what was right" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

translationWords

- [love, loves, loving, loved](#)
- [Cain](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)
- [works, deeds, work, acts](#)
- [righteous, righteousness](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 03 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 3 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 3:13-15**UDB:**

¹³ You should not be amazed when unbelievers hate you. ¹⁴ Because we love our fellow believers, we know that God has made us to live forever with him. But God regards anyone who does not love their fellow believer as a person who is not living in life but is living under the power of death. ¹⁵ God treats anyone who hates their fellow believers as though they had done something just as bad as committing murder. Anyone who does not love his brother is living for death, not life.

ULB:

¹³ Do not be amazed, my brothers, if the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵ Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer. You know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.

translationNotes**brothers**

“fellow believers”

if the world hates you

Here the word “world” refers to the people who do not honor God. AT: “if those who do not honor God hate you who do honor God” (See: [Metonymy](#))

we have passed out of death into life

The conditions of living and of being dead are spoken of as if they were physical locations from which a person could leave and go to. The abstract nouns “life” and “death” can be translated with verbal phrases. AT: “we are no longer spiritually dead but are spiritually alive” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Abstract Nouns](#))

life

The word “life” throughout this letter refers to more than physical life. It stands here for Jesus, the eternal life. See how you translated this in [1 John 1:1-2](#). (See: [Metonymy](#))

remains in death

“is still spiritually dead”

Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer

John speaks of a person who hates another believer as if he were a murderer. Since people commit murder because they hate other people, God considers anyone who hates to be as guilty as someone who kills a person. AT: “Whoever hates another believer is as guilty as someone who kills a person” (See: [Metaphor](#))

no murderer has eternal life residing in him

“Eternal life” is something God gives believers after they die, but it is also the power God gives believers in this life to help them to stop sinning and to do what please him. Here eternal life is spoken of as if it were a person that could live in someone. AT: “a murderer does not have the power of spiritual life” (See: [Personification](#))

translationWords

- [marvel, wonder, amazed, astonished](#)
- [brother, brothers](#)
- [world, worldly](#)
- [death, die, dead](#)
- [life, live, lived, lives, living, alive](#)
- [everlasting, eternal, eternity](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 03 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 3 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 3:16-18**UDB:**

¹⁶ The way that we now know how to truly love our fellow believers is by remembering that Christ died for us of his own free will. So in the same way, we should do anything for our fellow believers, even die for them. ¹⁷ Many of us have the things that are necessary for us to live in this world. If we become aware that any of our fellow believers do not have what they need and if we refuse to provide for them, it is clear that we do not love God as we claim to do. ¹⁸ I am saying to you whom I love dearly, let us not merely say we love each other; let us love each other by helping each other.

ULB:

¹⁶ By this we know love, because Christ laid down his life for us. We also ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ¹⁷ But whoever has the world's goods, sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart of compassion from him, how does the love of God remain in him? ¹⁸ My dear children, let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in actions and truth.

translationNotes**Christ laid down his life for us**

This expression means “Christ willingly gave his life for us” or “Christ willingly died for us” (See: [Idiom](#))

the world's goods

material possessions like money, food, or clothing

sees his brother in need

“realizes a fellow believer needs help”

and shuts up his heart of compassion from him

The phrase “shuts up his heart of compassion” is a metaphor. AT: “and does not show him compassion” or “and does not willingly help him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

how does the love of God remain in him?

John uses a question to teach his audience. AT: “God's love is not in him” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

My dear children

John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1](#). AT: “My dear children in Christ” or “You who are as dear to me as my own children” (See: [Metaphor](#))

let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in actions and truth

The phrases “in word” and “in tongue” both refer to what a person says. The word “love” is understood in the second part of the sentence. AT: “do not just say that you love people, but show that you truly love people by helping them” (See: [Doublet](#) and [Metonymy](#) and [Ellipsis](#))

translationWords

- [love, loves, loving, loved](#)
- [Christ, Messiah](#)
- [heart, hearts](#)
- [compassion, compassionate](#)
- [word, words](#)
- [tongue](#)
- [true, truth, truths](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 03 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 3 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 3:19-22**UDB:**

¹⁹ If we truly love our fellow believers, we can be sure that we are living according to the true message about Christ. As a result, we will not feel guilty in the presence of God. ²⁰ We can pray confidently, because although we might feel guilty because we have done wrong, God deserves for us to trust him. He knows everything about us. ²¹ Dear friends, if our minds do not accuse us of having sinned, then we can pray confidently to God. ²² When we confidently pray to him and request something from him, we receive it because we do what he commands us to do, and because we do what pleases him.

ULB:

¹⁹ It is by this we know that we are from the truth, and we assure our hearts before him. ²⁰ For if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and he knows all things. ²¹ Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. ²² Whatever we ask we will receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing before him.

translationNotes**Connecting Statement:**

Here John probably means that believers' ability to love God and each other sincerely (See: [1 John 3:18](#)) is a sign that their new life has indeed originated from the truth about Christ.

we are from the truth

“we belong to the truth” or AT: “we are living according the way Jesus taught us”

we assure our hearts

The word “heart” here refers to feelings. AT: “we do not feel guilty” (See: [Metonymy](#))

if our hearts condemn us

This is a metaphor. AT: “if we know that we have sinned and as a result feel guilty” (See: [Metaphor](#))

God is greater than our hearts

God knows more than a person and judges better. The effect of this truth is probably that God is more merciful than our consciences would suppose. This quality of God is expressed by the term “greater.” AT: “God knows more than we do” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Beloved

“You people whom I love” or “Dear friends.” See how you translated this in [1 John 2:7](#).

do the things that are pleasing before him

God’s opinion is spoken of as if it depends on what he sees happen in front of himself. AT: “we do what pleases him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- true, truth, truths
- heart, hearts
- condemn, condemns, condemned, condemnation
- God
- beloved
- confidence, confident
- command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 03 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 3 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 3:23-24**UDB:**

²³ I will tell you what he commands us to do: We must believe that Jesus Christ is his Son. We must also love each other, just as God commanded us to do. ²⁴ Those who do what God commands are those who are joined with God, and God is joined with them. And it is because we have his Spirit, whom he gave to us, that we can be sure that God is joined with us.

ULB:

²³ This is his commandment: that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he gave us this commandment. ²⁴ The one who keeps God's commandments remains in him, and God remains in him. By this we know that he remains in us, by the Spirit whom he gave to us.

translationNotes**This is his commandment: that we should believe ... just as he gave us this commandment**

The abstract noun "commandment" can be stated as "command." AT: "This is what God commands us to do: Believe ... just as he commanded us to do" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

remains in him, and God remains in him

The close union of believers is expressed by the terms "remains in him." See how "remains in God" was translated in [1 John 2:5-6](#). (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments](#)
- [believe, believes, believed, belief](#)
- [name, names, named](#)
- [Son of God, Son](#)
- [Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus](#)
- [love, loves, loving, loved](#)
- [Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 03 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 3 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 04 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Spirit

This single word is used in many different ways in this chapter. It is used to reference non-physical things, specifically “spirits” who bear witness in some way in “spiritual” or religious matters. The “Spirit of God” is God. The “spirit” of the antichrist is that which is typical of the Antichrist. This is the same way it is used in the phrases the “spirit of truth” and the “spirit of error.” (See: [antichrist](#), [antichrists](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Loving God

If people love God, their love should be displayed in the way they live their lives and the way they treat other people. It is not necessary to conclude the Christian’s salvation is dependent upon these behaviors. (See: [save](#), [saves](#), [saved](#), [safe](#))

Links:

- [1 John 04:01 Notes](#)

1 John 4:1-3**UDB:**

¹ Dear friends, many people who have a false message are teaching it to people. But you must think carefully about what you hear them teach, so that you may know whether they are teaching the truth that comes from God or not. ² I will tell you how to know whether someone is teaching truth that comes from the Spirit of God. Those who affirm that Jesus Christ came from God to become a human like us are teaching a message that is from God. ³ But those who do not affirm that truth about Jesus are not teaching a message from God. They are teachers who oppose Christ. You have heard that people like that are coming among us. Even now they are already here.

ULB:

¹ Beloved, do not believe every spirit. Instead, test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you will know the Spirit of God—every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ and every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now is already in the world. ^[1]

4:3 ^[1]Some older versions read, *and every spirit that does not acknowledge that Jesus has come in the flesh is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now is already in the world.*

translationNotes**General Information:**

John gives a warning against false teachers who teach against Christ's having had a human body and teachers who talk the way those who love the world talk.

Beloved

“You people whom I love” or “Dear friends.” See how you translated this in [1 John 2:7](#).

do not believe every spirit

Here, the word “spirit” refers to a spiritual power or being that gives a person a message or prophecy. AT: “do not trust every prophet who claims to have a message from a spirit” (See: [Metonymy](#))

test the spirits

Here, the word “spirits” refers to a spiritual power or being that gives a person a message or prophecy. AT: “think carefully about what the prophet says” (See: [Metonymy](#))

has come in the flesh

Here “flesh” represents the human body. AT: “has come as a human being” or “has come in a physical body” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now is already in the world

“These are prophets opposed to Christ, whom you have heard are coming, and now are already in the world”

translationWords

- [beloved](#)
- [believe, believes, believed, belief](#)
- [spirit, spirits, spiritual](#)
- [test, tests, tested](#)
- [false prophet](#)
- [Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit](#)
- [flesh](#)
- [antichrist, antichrists](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 04 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 4 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 4:4-6**UDB:**

⁴ As for you who are very dear to me, you belong to God, and you have refused to believe what those people teach, because God, who enables you to do what he wants, is greater. ⁵ As for those who are teaching what is false, they belong with all the people in the world who refuse to honor God. That is why what they say comes from those same people, and those same people listen to them. ⁶ As for us, we belong to God. Whoever knows God listens to what we teach, but whoever does not belong to God does not listen to what we teach. This is how we can distinguish between people who teach truth about God, and those who deceive others.

ULB:

⁴ You are from God, dear children, and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. ⁵ They are from the world; therefore what they say is from the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God. Anyone who knows God listens to us. He who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

translationNotes**dear children**

John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1](#). AT: “my dear children in Christ” or “you who are as dear to me as my own children” (See: [Metaphor](#))

have overcome them

“have not believed the false teachers”

the one who is in you is

“God, who is in you, is”

the one who is in the world

Two possible meanings are 1) this refers to Satan. AT: “Satan, who is in the world” or “Satan, who works through those who do not obey God” or 2) this refers to worldly teachers. AT: “worldly teachers” (See: [Metonymy](#))

They are from the world

The words “are from” are a metaphor for “receive their power and authority.” “The world” is a metonym ultimately for “the one who is in the world,” Satan, though it is also a metonym for sinful people who gladly listen to them and so also give them authority. (See: [Metonymy](#))

therefore what they say is from the world

“The world” is a metonym ultimately for “the one who is in the world,” Satan, though it is also a metonym for sinful people who gladly listen to them and so also give them authority. AT: “therefore they teach what they have learned from sinful people” (See: [Metonymy](#))

and the world listens to them

The words “the world” are a metonym for people who do not obey God. AT: “so the people who do not obey God listen to them” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- [God](#)
- [children, child](#)
- [world, worldly](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 04 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 4 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 4:7-8**UDB:**

⁷ Dear friends, we must love each other, because God enables us to love each other, and because those who love their fellow believers have become God's children and know him. ⁸ God shows his love to people. So those who do not love their fellow believers do not know God.

ULB:

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God. ⁸ The person who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

translationNotes**General Information:**

John continues to teach about the new nature. He teaches his readers about God's love and loving one another.

Beloved

"You people whom I love" or "Dear friends." See how you translated this in [1 John 2:7](#).

let us love one another

"believers are to love other believers"

and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God

"and because those who love their fellow believers have become God's children and know him"

for love is from God

"because God causes us to love each other"

born from God

This is a metaphor which means someone has a relationship to God like a child to his father. (See: [Metaphor](#))

The person who does not love does not know God, for God is love

The phrase “God is love” a metaphor which means “the character of God is love.” AT: “Those who do not love their fellow believers do not know God because the character of God is to love people” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [beloved](#)
- [love, loves, loving, loved](#)
- [born again, born of God, new birth](#)
- [God](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 04 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 4 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 4:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ I will tell you how God has shown us that he loves us: He sent his only Son to live on the earth to enable us to live eternally because of him. ¹⁰ And God has shown us what it means to truly love another person: It does not mean that we loved God, but that God loved us. So he sent his Son to sacrifice himself, in order that he—God—may forgive us when we sin.

ULB:

⁹ Because of this the love of God was revealed among us, that God has sent his only Son into the world so that we would live because of him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and that he sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

translationNotes**Because of this ... among us, that God has sent his only Son**

“Because of this ... among us: God has sent his only Son.” The phrase “Because of this” refers to the phrase “that God has sent his only Son.”

the love of God was revealed among us

The noun “love” can be translated as a verb. This phrase can be made active. AT: “God showed that he loves us” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

so that we would live because of him

“to enable us to live eternally because of what Jesus did”

In this is love

“God showed us what real love is”

he sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins

Here “propitiation” refers to Jesus’ death on the cross appeasing God’s wrath against sin. The word can be translated with a verbal phrase. AT: “he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that appeased his wrath against our sins” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

translationWords

- [Son of God, Son](#)
- [propitiation](#)
- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 04 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 4 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 4:11-14**UDB:**

¹¹ Dear friends, since God loves us like that, we certainly ought to love each other!

¹² No one has ever seen God. Nevertheless, if we love each other, it is clear that God lives within us and that we love others just like he intends us to do. ¹³ I will tell you how we can be sure that we are joined with God and that God is joined with us: He has put his Spirit within us. ¹⁴ We apostles have seen God's Son, and we solemnly tell others that the Father sent him to save the people in the world from suffering eternally for their sins.

ULB:

¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also should love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we remain in him and he in us, because he has given us some of his Spirit. ¹⁴ Also, we have seen and have borne witness that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

translationNotes**Beloved**

“You people whom I love” or “Dear friends.” See how you translated this in [1 John 2:7](#).

if God so loved us

“since God loved us in this way”

we also should love one another

“believers are to love other believers”

God remains in us ... we remain in him and he in us

To remain in someone means to continue to have fellowship with him. See how you translated “remains in God” in [1 John 2:5-6](#). AT: “God continues to have fellowship with us ... we continue to have fellowship with God and he continues to have fellowship with us” or “God stays joined to us ... we stay joined to God and he stays joined to us” (See: [Metaphor](#))

and he in us

The word “remains” is understood from the previous phrase. AT: “and he remains in us” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

his love is perfected in us

“God’s love is complete in us”

By this we know ... us, because he has given

Your translation may be clearer if you omit either “by this” or “because.” AT: “We know ... us because he gave” or “By this we know ... us: he gave”

because he has given us some of his Spirit

“because he gave us his Spirit” or “because he has put his Holy Spirit in us.” This phrase, however, does not imply that God has less of his Spirit after he has given us some.

Also, we have seen and have borne witness that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world

“And we apostles have seen the Son of God and tell everyone that God the Father has sent his Son to save people on this earth”

Father ... Son

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

translationWords

- [beloved](#)
- [Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit](#)
- [witness, witnesses, eyewitness, eyewitnesses](#)
- [Savior, savior](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 04 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 4 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 4:15-16**UDB:**

¹⁵ So God remains joined with those who say the truth about Jesus. They say, “He is the Son of God.” And so they remain joined with God. ¹⁶ We have experienced how God loves us and we believe that he loves us. As a result, we love others. Because God’s nature is to love people, those who continue to love others are joined with God, and God is joined with them.

ULB:

¹⁵ Whoever acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. ¹⁶ Also, we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and the one who remains in this love remains in God, and God remains in him.

translationNotes**Whoever acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God**

“Anyone who says the truth about Jesus, that he is the Son of God”

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

God remains in him and he in God

To remain in someone means to continue to have fellowship with him. See how you translated “remains in God” in [1 John 2:5-6](#). AT: “God continues to have fellowship with him and he continues to have fellowship with God” or “God stays joined to him and he stays joined to God (See: [Metaphor](#))

and he in God

The word “remains” is understood from the previous phrase. AT: “and he remains in God” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

God is love

This is a metaphor which means “the character of God is love.” See how you translated this in [1 John 4:8](#). (See: [Metaphor](#))

the one who remains in this love

“those who continue to love others”

remains in God, and God remains in him

To remain in someone means to continue to have fellowship with him. See how you translated “remains in God” in [1 John 2:5-6](#). AT: “continues to have fellowship with God, and God continues to have fellowship with him” or “stays joined with God, and God stays joined with him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus](#)
- [Son of God, Son](#)
- [believe, believes, believed, belief](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 04 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 4 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 4:17-18**UDB:**

¹⁷ We should love others completely. And if we do that, when the time comes for God to judge us, we will be confident that he will not condemn us. We will be confident of that because we are living in this world joined to God, as Christ himself is joined to God. ¹⁸ We will not be afraid of God if we truly love him, because those who love God completely cannot possibly be afraid of him. We would be afraid only if we thought that he would punish us. So those who are afraid of God certainly are not loving God completely.

ULB:

¹⁷ Because of this, this love has been made perfect among us, so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because as he is, just so are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love. Instead, perfect love throws out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. But the one who fears has not been made perfect in love.

translationNotes**Because of this, this love has been made perfect among us, so that we will have confidence**

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) “Because of this” refers back to **1 John 4:16**. AT: “Because whoever lives in love is in God and God is in him, God has made his love for us complete, and so we may have complete confidence” or 2) “Because of this” refers to “we may have confidence.” AT: “We are confident that God will accept us on the day he judges everyone, so we know he has made his love for us complete” (See: **Active or Passive**)

this love has been made perfect among us

This can be stated in active form. AT: “God has made his love for us complete” (See: **Active or Passive**)

because as he is, just so are we in this world

“because the relationship that Jesus has with God is the same relationship we have with God in this world”

Instead, perfect love throws out fear

Here “love” is described as a person with the power to remove fear. God’s love is perfect. AT: “But when our love is complete, we are no longer afraid” (See: **Personification**)

because fear has to do with punishment

“because we would be afraid only if we thought that he would punish us”

But the one who fears has not been made perfect in love

This can be stated in active form. AT: “But when a person is afraid that God will punish him, his love is not complete” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

translationWords

- [love, loves, loving, loved](#)
- [perfect](#)
- [confidence, confident](#)
- [day of the Lord, day of Yahweh](#)
- [fear, fears, afraid](#)
- [punish, punishment](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 04 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 4 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 4:19-21**UDB:**

¹⁹ We love God and our fellow believers because God loved us first. ²⁰ So those who say “I love God” but hate a fellow believer are lying. Those who do not love one of their fellow believers, whom they have seen, certainly cannot be loving God, whom they have not seen. ²¹ Keep in mind that this is what God has commanded us: If we love him, we must also love our fellow believers.

ULB:

¹⁹ We love because God first loved us. ²⁰ If anyone says, “I love God” but hates his brother, he is a liar. For the one who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. ²¹ Also, this is the commandment we have from him: Whoever loves God must also love his own brother.

translationNotes**hates his brother**

“hates a fellow believer”

the one who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen

If two negative statements in a row are confusing, this can be translated differently. AT: “the one who hates his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

translationWords

- [God](#)
- [command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 04 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 4 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 05 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Christian living

There is a close connection in this chapter between Christians' confession of faith in Jesus and the way they live their lives. Believing in Jesus requires one to live a godly life. (See: [faith](#), [believe](#), [believes](#), [believed](#), [belief](#) and [godly](#), [godliness](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Death

John's usage of death in this chapter always references physical death. (See: [death](#), [die](#), [dead](#))

"We know that we are from God, and we know that the whole world lies in the evil one."

Satan, the evil one, is the ruler of this world, but ultimately God is in control over everything. Scripture describes Satan as the "prince" of this world and God as the "king" of all of creation. (See: [Satan](#), [devil](#), [evil one](#))

Links:

- [1 John 05:01 Notes](#)

1 John 5:1-3**UDB:**

¹ All those who believe that Jesus is the Christ are children of God, born from God. And whoever loves anyone who is a father certainly loves his child also. ² We can be sure that we truly love God's children when we love God and do what he commands us to do. ³ I am saying this because what loving God really means is that we do what he commands. Also, it is not difficult to do what he commands.

ULB:

¹ Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born from God, and whoever loves a father also loves the child born from him. ² Because of this we know that we love God's children, when we love God and do his commandments. ³ For this is love for God: that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

translationNotes**General Information:**

John continues to teach his readers about God's love and the love believers are to have because they have this new nature from God.

is born from God

“is a child of God”

Because of this we know that we love God's children, when we love God and do his commandments.

“When we love God and do what he commands, then we know that we love his children”

For this is love for God: that we keep his commandments

“Because when we do what he commands, that is true love for God”

his commandments are not burdensome

“what he commands is not difficult”

burdensome

“heavy” or “crushing” or “difficult”

translationWords

- [believe, believes, believed, belief](#)
- [Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus](#)
- [Christ, Messiah](#)
- [love, loves, loving, loved](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [children, child](#)
- [command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 5 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 5:4-5**UDB:**

⁴ All of us whom God has caused to become his children have been able to refuse to do what unbelievers want us to do. We are stronger than everything that is against God. We are able to refuse to do wrong because we trust in Christ. ⁵ Who is the person who is stronger than everything that is against God? It is anyone who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

ULB:

⁴ For everyone who is born from God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵ Who is the one who overcomes the world? The one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

translationNotes**everyone who is born from God overcomes**

“all children of God overcome”

overcomes the world

“has victory over the world,” “succeeds against the world,” or “refuses to do the evil things unbelievers do”

the world

This passage uses “the world” to refer to all the sinful people and the evil systems in the world. AT: “everything in the world that is against God” (See: [Metonymy](#))

And this is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith

“And this is what gives us the power to resist whatever would lead us to sin against God: our faith” or “And it is our faith that gives us the power to resist whatever would lead us to sin against God”

Who is the one who overcomes the world?

John used this question to introduce something he wanted to teach. AT: “I will tell you who overcomes the world:” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

The one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God

This does not refer to a specific person but to anyone who believes this. AT: “Anyone who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.”

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

translationWords

- [born again, born of God, new birth](#)
- [world, worldly](#)
- [Son of God, Son](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 5 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 5:6-8**UDB:**

⁶ Think about Jesus Christ. He is the one who came to earth from God. God showed that he had truly sent Jesus when John baptized Jesus in water, but also when Jesus' blood flowed from his body when he died. And God's Spirit declares truthfully that Jesus Christ came from God. ⁷ These three are like three witnesses who give testimony: ⁸ God's Spirit, the water and the blood. These three all tell us the same thing.

ULB:

⁶ This is the one who came by water and blood: Jesus Christ. He came not only by water, but also by water and blood. ⁷ For there are three who bear witness: ⁸ the Spirit, the water, and the blood. These three are in agreement. ^[1] However, the best copies do not have this reading.

5:8 ^[1]Some older versions read, *For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one; and there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three are as one.*

translationNotes**Connecting Statement:**

John teaches about Jesus Christ and what God said about him.

This is the one who came by water and blood: Jesus Christ

“Jesus Christ is the one who came by water and blood.” Here “water” is probably a metonym for the baptism of Jesus, and “blood” stands for Jesus' death on the cross. AT: “God showed that Jesus Christ is his son at Jesus' baptism and his death on the cross” (See: [Metonymy](#))

He came not only by water, but by water and blood

Here “water” is probably a metonym for the baptism of Jesus, and “blood” stands for Jesus' death on the cross. AT: “God did not show us Jesus was his son just through his baptism, but through his baptism and his death on the cross” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- [blood](#)
- [Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus](#)
- [witness, witnesses, eyewitness, eyewitnesses](#)
- [Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 5 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 5:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ We usually believe what other people tell us. But we can certainly trust much more in what God says. And he has certainly testified about his Son. ¹⁰ Those who trust in the Son of God know within their inner beings what is true about him. But those who do not believe what God says call him a liar, because they have refused to believe what God has testified about his Son.

ULB:

⁹ If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. For the testimony of God is this, that he has borne witness concerning his Son. ¹⁰ Anyone who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the witness that God has given concerning his Son.

translationNotes**If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater**

The translator can state more clearly the implied reason about why we should believe what God says: AT: “If we believe what people say, then we should believe what God says because he always tells the truth” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

receive the witness of men

The idiom to “receive the witness” means to believe what another person testifies concerning something that he has seen. The abstract noun “witness” can be translated with a verbal phrase. AT: “believe what men testify” or “believe what men say about what they have seen” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Abstract Nouns](#))

the witness of God is greater

the witness of God is more important and more reliable

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

Anyone who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself

“Whoever believes in Jesus knows for sure Jesus is the Son of God”

has made him out to be a liar

“has called God a liar”

because he has not believed the witness that God has given concerning his Son

“because he has not believed that God has told the truth about his Son”

translationWords

- [receive](#)
- [witness, witnesses, eyewitness, eyewitnesses](#)
- [testimony, testify](#)
- [Son of God, Son](#)
- [believe, believes, believed, belief](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 5 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 5:11-12**UDB:**

¹¹ This is what God says to us: “I have given you eternal life.” We will live forever if we are joined with his Son. ¹² Those who are joined with God’s Son will live forever with God. Those who are not joined with him will not live forever.

ULB:

¹¹ And the witness is this: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² The one who has the Son has life. The one who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

translationNotes**And the witness is this**

“This is what God says”

life

Here “life” stands for the right to live forever by God’s grace and love. See how you translated this in [1 John 1:1-2](#). (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

this life is in his Son

“this life is through his Son” or “we will live forever if we are joined with his Son” or “we will live forever if we are united with his Son”

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

The one who has the Son has life. The one who does not have the Son of God does not have life

Being in a close relationship to the Son is spoken of as having the Son. AT: “He who believes in the Son of God has eternal life. He who does not believe in the Son of God does not have eternal life” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [everlasting, eternal, eternity](#)
- [Son of God, Son](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 5 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 5:13-15**UDB:**

¹³ I have written this letter to you who believe that Jesus is the Son of God, in order that you may know that you will live forever. ¹⁴ Because we are joined with him, we are very confident that he hears us when we ask him to do anything he approves of. ¹⁵ Also, if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—then we can be sure that we will receive whatever we asked from him.

ULB:

¹³ I have written to you these things so that you will know that you have eternal life—to you who believe in the name of the Son of God. ¹⁴ Also, this is the confidence we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. ¹⁵ Also, if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask of him—we know that we have whatever we have asked of him.

translationNotes**General Information:**

This begins the end of John's letter. He tells his readers the last purpose for his letter and gives them some final teachings.

these things

“this letter”

to you who believe in the name of the Son of God

Here “name” is a metonym for the Son of God. AT: “to you who trust in the Son of God” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

life

Here “life” stands for the right to live forever by God's grace and love. See how you translated this in [1 John 1:1-2](#). (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

this is the confidence we have before him, that

The abstract noun “confidence” can be stated as “confident.” AT: “we are confident in God’s presence because we know that” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

if we ask anything according to his will

“if we ask for the things that God desires”

we know that we have whatever we have asked of him

“we know that we will receive that for which we have asked God”

translationWords

- [written](#)
- [everlasting, eternal, eternity](#)
- [believe, believes, believed, belief](#)
- [name, names, named](#)
- [Son of God, Son](#)
- [confidence, confident](#)
- [will of God](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 5 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 5:16-17**UDB:**

¹⁶ Suppose you see one of our fellow believers sinning in a way that would not separate them from God, and when you see sinning, you should ask God and pray that God will give that person life—that is, to that person who is not committing a sin that would separate him from God. But there are some people who sin in a way that causes them to be separated from God forever. I am not saying you should ask God to help people who sin in that way. ¹⁷ Everything that is wrong is a sin against God, but not every bad thing we do can separate us from God forever.

ULB:

¹⁶ If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not result in death, he must pray, and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not result in death. There is a sin that results in death; I am not saying that he should pray about that. ¹⁷ All unrighteousness is sin, but there is sin that does not result in death.

translationNotes**brother**

“fellow believer”

life

Here “life” stands for the right to live forever by God’s grace and love. See how you translated this in [1 John 1:1-2](#). (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

death

This refers to eternal death, that is, eternity spent away from God’s presence.

translationWords

- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)
- [death, die, dead](#)
- [pray, prayer, prayers, prayed](#)
- [unrighteous, unrighteousness](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 5 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 5:18-19

UDB:

¹⁸ We know that if a person is a child of God, he does not keep sinning again and again. Instead, the Son of God protects him so that Satan, the evil one, does not harm him. ¹⁹ We know that we belong to God, and we know that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.

ULB:

¹⁸ We know that whoever is born from God does not sin. But the one who was born from God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him. ¹⁹ We know that we are from God, and we know that the whole world lies in the evil one.

translationNotes

Connecting Statement:

John closes his letter, reviewing what he has said about the new nature of believers, which cannot sin, and reminds them to keep themselves from idols.

the whole world

Here “world” is a way in which some biblical writers refer to the people living in the world who are in rebellion against God and to the world system that is affected in every way by the corrupting power of sin. (See: [Metonymy](#))

lies in the evil one

Here “evil one” represents the power of the evil one. AT: “is in the power of the evil one” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- [born again, born of God, new birth](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)
- [world, worldly](#)
- [Satan, devil, evil one](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 5 translationQuestions](#)

1 John 5:20-21**UDB:**

²⁰ We also know that the Son of God has come among us and has enabled us to understand the truth; we are joined to him who is true, God's Son Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is truly God, and he is the one who enables us to have eternal life.

²¹ I say to you who are very dear to me, guard yourselves from worshiping gods that have no real power.

ULB:

²⁰ But we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we know the one who is true. Also, we are in the one who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. ²¹ Children, keep yourselves from idols.

translationNotes**General Information:**

The word "He" refers to Jesus Christ.

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

has given us understanding

"has enabled us to understand the truth"

life

Here "life" stands for the right to live forever by God's grace and love. See how you translated this in [1 John 1:1-2](#). (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

He is the true God

"Jesus is truly God"

He is ... eternal life

This stands for the thought that Christ gives us eternal life. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Children

John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1](#). AT: “My dear children in Christ” or “You who are as dear to me as my own children” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [Son of God, Son](#)
- [Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus](#)
- [everlasting, eternal, eternity](#)
- [children, child](#)
- [idol, idolatrous](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 5 translationQuestions](#)

translationQuestions

1 John 1

What does John say was from the beginning?

John says the Word of life was from the beginning. [1:1]

By what means did John know about the Word of life?

John had heard, seen, contemplated, and handled the Word of life. [1:1]

Where was the Word of life before it was manifested to John?

The Word of life was with the Father before it was manifested to John. [1:2]

Why is John declaring what he has seen and heard?

John is declaring what he has seen and heard so that others may also have fellowship with him. [1:3]

With whom does John already have fellowship?

John already has fellowship with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. [1:3]

What message from God is John announcing to his readers?

John is announcing the message that God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. [1:5]

What does John say about a person who says he has fellowship with God, but walks in darkness?

John says that such a person is a liar and does not practice the truth. [1:6]

For those walking in the light, what cleanses them from all sin?

The blood of Jesus cleanses them from all sin. [1:7]

What does John say about a person who says they have no sin?

John says that such a person deceives himself and the truth is not in him. [1:8]

What will God do for those who confess their sins?

For those who confess their sins, God will forgive their sins and cleanse them from all unrighteousness. [1:9]

1 John 2

For whose sins is Jesus Christ the sacrifice for?

Jesus Christ is the sacrifice for the sins for the whole world. [2:2]

How do we know if we know Jesus Christ?

We know if we know Jesus Christ if we keep his commandments. [2:3]

What kind of person is someone who says they know God, but does not keep God's commandments?

Someone who says they know God, but does not keep God's commandments, is a liar. [2:4]

How should a believer walk?

A believer should walk even as Jesus Christ walked. [2:6]

What is the spiritual condition of someone who says he is in the light, but hates his brother?

Someone who says he is in the light, but hates his brother, is in the darkness. [2:9]

What is the spiritual condition of someone who says he is in the light, but hates his brother?

Someone who says he is in the light, but hates his brother, is in the darkness. [2:11]

Why does God forgive the sins of believers?

God forgives the sins of believers for Christ's name's sake. [2:12]

What does John say a believer's attitude toward the things of the world must be?

He says the believer must not love the world nor the things of the world. [2:15]

What are the three things in the world that John names as being not of the Father?

He names the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vain glory of life as being in the world and not of the Father. [2:16]

How does John say he knows it is the last hour?

He says he knows it is the last hour because many antichrists have come. [2:18]

Who does John say is coming?

He says that the antichrist is coming. [2:18]

What will the antichrist do that will enable us to recognize him?

The antichrist denies the Father and the Son. [2:22]

Can someone who denies the Son have the Father?

No, someone who denies the Son cannot have the Father. [2:23]

What does John tell the believers to do in order to remain in the Son and in the Father?

John tells the believers to remain in what they have heard from the beginning. [2:24]

What promise has been given the believers by God?

God has promised the believers eternal life. [2:25]

What attitudes will those who remain in the Son have when Christ appears at his coming?

Those who remain in the Son will have boldness and will not be ashamed when Christ appears at his coming. [2:28]

1 John 3

What has the Father bestowed on believers because of his love?

The Father has bestowed on them the name children of God. [3:1]

What has the Father bestowed on believers because of his love?

The Father has bestowed on them the name children of God. [3:2]

What will happen to believers when Christ appears?

When Christ appears, believers will be like Christ, and will see him as he is. [3:2]

What does every believer who hopes in Christ do concerning himself?

Every believer who hopes in Christ purifies himself. [3:3]

What does Christ not have in himself?

Christ has no sin in himself. [3:5]

What relationship to God does someone have who continues in sin?

Whoever continues in sin has neither seen Christ, nor known him. [3:6]

For what reason was the Son of God revealed?

The Son of God was revealed to destroy the works of the devil. [3:8]

How are the children of God and the children of the devil each revealed?

The children of God are revealed as they do righteousness, and the children of the devil are revealed as they sin. [3:9]

How are the children of God and the children of the devil each revealed?

The children of God are revealed as they do righteousness, and the children of the devil are revealed as they sin. [3:10]

What attitude toward the believers demonstrates that someone is a child of God?

The attitude of love toward the believers demonstrates that someone is a child of God. [3:10]

What attitude toward the believers demonstrates that someone is a child of God?

The attitude of love toward the believers demonstrates that someone is a child of God. [3:11]

How did Cain demonstrate that he was a child of the evil one?

Cain demonstrated that he was a child of the evil one when he murdered his brother. [3:12]

At what does John say the believers should not marvel?

John says the believers should not marvel that the world hates them. [3:13]

What attitude toward the believers demonstrates that someone is a child of God?

The attitude of love toward the believers demonstrates that someone is a child of God. [3:14]

How do we know what love is?

We know what love is because Christ laid down his life for us. [3:16]

When there is a brother in need, how does a believer demonstrate the love of God?

When there is a brother in need, a believer demonstrates the love of God by helping him with this world's goods. [3:17]

When there is a brother in need, how does a believer demonstrate the love of God?

When there is a brother in need, a believer demonstrates the love of God by helping him with this world's goods. [3:18]

When a believer demonstrates the love of God in deed and truth, what does he obtain for himself?

When a believer demonstrates the love of God in deed and truth, he obtains for himself assurance and confidence toward God. [3:19]

When a believer demonstrates the love of God in deed and truth, what does he obtain for himself?

When a believer demonstrates the love of God in deed and truth, he obtains for himself assurance and confidence toward God. [3:21]

Of what commandment from God does John remind the believers?

John reminds the believers of God's commandment to believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and to love one another. [3:23]

What has God given believers so that they know God remains in them?

God has given believers the Spirit so that they know God remains in them. [3:24]

1 John 4

Why does John warn the believers to not believe every spirit?

John warns the believers because there are many false prophets that have gone out into the world. [4:1]

How can you know if the Spirit of God is speaking?

Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God. [4:2]

What spirit does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh?

The spirit of an antichrist does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. [4:3]

Who does John say is the greater spirit?

The greater spirit is the one in believers, greater than the spirits of the world. [4:4]

Who does John say is the greater spirit?

The greater spirit is the one in believers, greater than the spirits of the world. [4:5]

What do believers do, which shows they know God, and to be like he is?

Believers love one another, which shows they know God, because God is love. [4:7]

What do believers do, which shows they know God, and to be like he is?

Believers love one another, which shows they know God, because God is love. [4:8]

How did God reveal his love for us?

God revealed his love for us by sending his only begotten Son into the world. [4:9]

For what purpose did the Father send his Son?

The Father sent his Son that we might live through him. [4:9]

What do true believers confess about Jesus?

True believers confess that Jesus is the Son of God. [4:15]

Those who remain in love and in God will have what attitude on the day of judgment?

Those who remain in love and in God will have confidence on the day of judgment. [4:17]

How are we able to love?

We love because God first loved us. [4:19]

What relationship with God does someone have who hates his brother?

Someone who hates his brother cannot love God. [4:20]

Those who love God must also love whom?

Those who love God must also love their brother. [4:21]

1 John 5

How do we demonstrate that we love God?

We demonstrate that we love God when we keep his commandments. [5:3]

What is the victory that has overcome the world?

The victory that has overcome the world is our faith. [5:4]

By what two things did Jesus Christ come?

Jesus Christ came by water and by blood. [5:6]

Which three things bear witness to Jesus Christ?

The Spirit, the water, and the blood all bear witness to Jesus Christ. [5:7]

Which three things bear witness to Jesus Christ?

The Spirit, the water, and the blood all bear witness to Jesus Christ. [5:8]

What does anyone who does not believe the testimony of God concerning his Son, make God?

Anyone who does not believe the testimony of God concerning his Son makes God a liar. [5:9]

What does anyone who does not believe the testimony of God concerning his Son, make God?

Anyone who does not believe the testimony of God concerning his Son makes God a liar. [5:10]

What has God given us in his Son?

God has given us eternal life in his Son. [5:11]

What confidence do believers have before God?

Believers have confidence that if they ask anything according to God's will, he hears them. [5:14]

What must a believer do who sees his brother committing a sin not to death?

A believer who sees his brother committing a sin not to death must pray that God will give his brother life. [5:16]

What is all unrighteousness?

All unrighteousness is sin. [5:17]

Where does the whole world lie?

The whole world lies in the evil one. [5:19]

Who is the true God?

The true God is the Father of Jesus Christ. [5:20]

From what must believers keep themselves?

Believers must keep themselves from idols. [5:21]

translationWords

ancestor, father, forefather

Definition:

When used literally, the term “father” refers to a person’s male parent. There are also several figurative uses of this term.

- The terms “father” and “forefather” are often used to refer to the male ancestors of a certain person or people group. This could also be translated a “ancestor” or “ancestral father.”
- The expression “the father of” can figuratively refer to a person who is the leader a group of related people or the source of something. For example, in Genesis 4 “the father of all who live in tents” could mean, “the first clan leader of the first people who ever lived in tents.”
- The apostle Paul figuratively called himself the “father” of those he had helped to become Christians through sharing the gospel with them.

Translation Suggestions

- When talking about a father and his literal son, this term should be translated using the usual term to refer to a father in the language.
- “God the Father” should also be translated using the usual, common word for “father.”
- When referring to forefathers, this term could be translated as “ancestors” or “ancestral fathers.”
- When Paul refers to himself figuratively as a father to believers in Christ, this could be translated as “spiritual father” or “father in Christ.”
- Sometimes the word “father” can be translated as “clan leader.”
- The phrase “father of all lies” could be translated as “source of all lies” or “the one from whom all lies come.”

(See also: [God the Father](#), son, [Son of God](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 07:1-3
- Acts 07:31-32
- Acts 07:44-46
- Acts 22:3-5
- Genesis 31:29-30
- Genesis 31:41-42
- Genesis 31:51-53
- Hebrews 07:4-6
- John 04:11-12

- Joshua 24:3-4
- Malachi 03:6-7
- Mark 10:7-9
- Matthew 01:7-8
- Matthew 03:7-9
- Matthew 10:21-23
- Matthew 18:12-14
- Romans 04:11-12

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1, H2, H25, H369, H539, H1121, H1730, H1733, H2524, H3205, H3490, H4940, H5971, H7223, G256, G540, G1080, G2495, G3737, G3962, G3964, G3966, G3967, G3970, G3971, G3995, G4245, G4269, G4613

Uses:

- [1 John 2:12-14](#)
- [1 John 5:1-3](#)

anoint, anointed, anointing

Definition:

The term “anoint” means to rub or pour oil on a person or object. Sometimes the oil was mixed with spices, giving it a sweet, perfumed smell. The term is also used figuratively to refer to the Holy Spirit choosing and empowering someone.

- In the Old Testament, priests, kings, and prophets were anointed with oil to set them apart for special service to God.
- Objects such as altars or the tabernacle were also anointed with oil to show that they were to be used to worship and glorify God.
- In the New Testament, sick people were anointed with oil for their healing.
- The New Testament records two times that Jesus was anointed with perfumed oil by a woman, as an act of worship. One time Jesus commented that in doing this she was preparing him for his future burial.
- After Jesus died, his friends prepared his body for burial by anointing it with oils and spices.
- The titles “Messiah” (Hebrew) and “Christ” (Greek) mean “the Anointed (One).”
- Jesus the Messiah is the one who was chosen and anointed as a Prophet, High Priest, and King.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “anoint” could be translated as “pour oil on” or “put oil on” or “consecrate by pouring perfumed oil on.”
- To “be anointed” could be translated as “be consecrated with oil.” or “be appointed” or “be consecrated.”
- In some contexts the term “anoint” could be translated as “appoint.”
- A phrase like “the anointed priest,” could be translated as “the priest who was consecrated with oil” or “the priest who was set apart by the pouring on of oil.”

(See also: [Christ](#), consecrate, high priest, King of the Jews, priest, prophet)

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:20-21](#)
- [1 John 02:27-29](#)
- 1 Samuel 16:2-3
- Acts 04:27-28
- Amos 06:5-6
- Exodus 29:5-7
- James 05:13-15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H47, H430, H4397, H4398, H8136, G32, G743, H1101, H1878, H3323, H4473, H4886, H4888, H4899, H5480, G218, G1472, G2025, G3462, G5545, G5548

Uses:

- 1 John 2:20-21
- 1 John 2:27-29

antichrist, antichrists

Definition:

The term “antichrist” refers to a person or teaching that is against Jesus Christ and his work. There are many antichrists in the world.

- The apostle John wrote that a person is the antichrist if he deceives people by saying that Jesus is not the Messiah or if he denies that Jesus is both God and human.
- The Bible also teaches that there is a general spirit of antichrist in the world which opposes Jesus’ work.
- The New Testament book of Revelation explains that there will be a man called “the antichrist” who will be revealed in the end times. This man will attempt to destroy God’s people, but he will be defeated by Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate this term could include a word or phrase that means “Christ-opposer” or “enemy of Christ” or “person who is against Christ.”
- The phrase “spirit of the antichrist” could also be translated as “spirit that is against Christ” or “(someone) teaching lies about Christ” or “attitude of believing lies about Christ” or “spirit that teaches lies about Christ.”
- Also consider how this term is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: [Christ](#), [reveal](#), tribulation)

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:18-19](#)
- [1 John 04:1-3](#)
- [2 John 01:7-8](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G500

Uses:

- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2:18-19](#)
- [1 John 2:22-23](#)
- [1 John 04 General Notes](#)

- 1 John 4:1-3

astray, go astray, led astray, stray

Definition:

The terms “stray” and “go astray” mean to disobey God’s will. People who are “led astray” have allowed other people or circumstances to influence them to disobey God.

- The word “astray” gives a picture of leaving a clear path or a place of safety to go down a wrong and dangerous path.
- Sheep who leave the pasture of their shepherd have “strayed.” God compares sinful people to sheep who have left him and “gone astray.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “go astray” could be translated as “go away from God” or “take a wrong path away from God’s will” or “stop obeying God” or “live in a way that goes away from God.”
- To “lead someone astray” could be translated as “cause someone to disobey God” or “influence someone to stop obeying God” or “cause someone to follow you down a wrong path.”

(See also: disobey, shepherd)

Bible References:

- [1 John 03:7-8](#)
- 2 Timothy 03:10-13
- Exodus 23:4-5
- Ezekiel 48:10-12
- Matthew 18:12-14
- Matthew 24:3-5
- Psalms 058:3-5
- Psalms 119:109-110

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5080, H7683, H7686, H8582, G4105

Uses:

- [1 John 3:7-8](#)

believe, believes, believed, belief

Definition:

The terms “believe” and “believe in” are closely related, but have slightly different meanings:

1. believe

- To believe something is to accept or trust that it is true.
- To believe someone is to acknowledge that what that person has said is true.

2. believe in

- To “believe in” someone means to “trust in” that person. It means to trust that the person is who he says he is, that he always speaks the truth, and that he will do what he has promised to do.
- When a person truly believes in something, he will act in such a way that shows that belief.
- The phrase “have faith in” usually has the same meaning as “believe in.”
- To “believe in Jesus” means to believe that he is the Son of God, that he is God himself who also became human and who died as a sacrifice to pay for our sins. It means to trust him as Savior and live in a way that honors him.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “believe” could be translated as to “know to be true” or “know to be right.”
- To “believe in” could be translated as “trust completely” or “trust and obey” or “completely rely on and follow.”

(See also: [faith](#), believer)

Bible References:

- [1 John 03:23-24](#)
- Acts 09:40-43
- Acts 28:23-24
- Genesis 15:6-8
- Genesis 45:24-26
- Habakkuk 01:5-7
- Job 09:16-18
- John 01:12-13
- Mark 01:14-15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **03:04** Noah warned the people about the coming flood and told them to turn to God, but they did not **believe** him.
- **04:08** Abram **believed** God's promise. God declared that Abram was righteous because he **believed** God's promise.
- **11:02** God provided a way to save the firstborn of anyone who **believed in** him.
- **11:06** But the Egyptians did not **believe** God or obey his commands.
- **37:05** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever **believes in** me will live, even though he dies. Everyone who **believes in** me will never die. Do you **believe** this?"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H539, H540, G544, G569, G571, G3982, G4100, G4102, G4103, G4135

Uses:

- 1 John 3:23-24
- 1 John 4:1-3
- 1 John 4:15-16
- 1 John 05 General Notes
- 1 John 5:1-3
- 1 John 5:9-10
- 1 John 5:13-15

beloved

Definition:

The term “beloved” is an expression of affection that describes someone who is loved and dear to someone else.

- The term “beloved” literally means “loved (one)” or “(who is) loved.”
- God refers to Jesus as his “beloved Son.”
- In their letters to Christian churches, the apostles frequently address their fellow believers as “beloved.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “loved” or “loved one” or “well-loved,” or “very dear.”
- In the context of talking about a close friend, this could be translated as “my dear friend” or “my close friend.” In English it is natural to say “my dear friend, Paul” or “Paul, who is my dear friend.” Other languages may find it more natural to order this in a different way.
- Note that the word “beloved” comes from the word for God’s love, which is unconditional, unselfish, and sacrificial.

(See also: [love](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 04:14-16
- [1 John 03:1-3](#)
- [1 John 04:7-8](#)
- Mark 01:9-11
- Mark 12:6-7
- [Revelation 20:9-10](#)
- Romans 16:6-8
- Song of Solomon 01:12-14

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H157, H1730, H2532, H3033, H3039, H4261, G25, G27, G5207

Uses:

- [1 John 2:7-8](#)
- [1 John 3:1-3](#)
- [1 John 3:19-22](#)

- 1 John 4:1-3
- 1 John 4:7-8
- 1 John 4:11-14

blood

Definition:

The term “blood” refers to the red liquid that comes out of a person’s skin when there is an injury or wound. Blood brings life-giving nutrients to a person’s entire body.

- Blood symbolizes life and when it is shed or poured out, it symbolizes the loss of life, or death.
- When people made sacrifices to God, they killed an animal and poured its blood on the altar. This symbolized the sacrifice of the animal’s life to pay for people’s sins.
- Through his death on the cross, Jesus’ blood symbolically cleanses people from their sins and pays for the punishment they deserve for those sins.
- The expression “flesh and blood” refers to human beings.
- The expression “own flesh and blood” refers to people who are biologically related.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term should be translated with the term that is used for blood in the target language.
- The expression “flesh and blood” could be translated as “people” or “human beings.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “my own flesh and blood” could be translated as “my own family” or “my own relatives” or “my own people.”
- If there is an expression in the target language that is used with this meaning, that expression could be used to translate “flesh and blood.”

(See also: [flesh](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:5-7](#)
- 1 Samuel 14:31-32
- Acts 02:20-21
- Acts 05:26-28
- Colossians 01:18-20
- Galatians 01:15-17
- Genesis 04:10-12
- Psalms 016:4
- Psalms 105:28-30

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **08:03** Before Joseph’s brothers returned home, they tore Joseph’s robe and dipped it in goat’s **blood**.
- **10:03** God turned the Nile River into **blood**, but Pharaoh still would not let the Israelites go.

- **11:05** All the houses of the Israelites had **blood** around the doors, so God passed over those houses and everyone inside was safe. They were saved because of the lamb's **blood**.
- **13:09** The **blood** of the animal that was sacrificed covered the person's sin and made that person clean in God's sight.
- **38:05** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my **blood** of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of sins.
- **48:10** When anyone believes in Jesus, the **blood** of Jesus takes away that person's sin, and God's punishment passes over him.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1818, H5332, G129, G130, G131, G1420

Uses:

- [1 John 1:5-7](#)
- [1 John 5:6-8](#)

bold, boldly, boldness

Definition:

These terms all refer to having courage and confidence to speak the truth and do the right thing even when it is difficult or dangerous.

- A “bold” person is not afraid to say and do what is good and right, including defending people who are being mistreated. This could be translated as “courageous” or “fearless.”
- In the New Testament, the disciples continued to “boldly” preach about Christ in public places, in spite of the danger of being put in jail or killed. This could be translated as “confidently” or “with strong courage” or “courageously.”
- The “boldness” of these early disciples in speaking the good news of Christ’s redeeming death on the cross resulted in the gospel being spread throughout Israel and nearby countries and finally, to the rest of the world. “Boldness” could also be translated as “confident courage.”

(See also: [confidence](#), good news, redeem)

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:27-29](#)
- 1 Thessalonians 02:1-2
- 2 Corinthians 03:12-13
- Acts 04:13-14

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H982, H983, H4834, H5797, G662, G2292, G3618, G3954, G3955, G5111, G5112

Uses:

- [1 John 2:27-29](#)

born again, born of God, new birth

Definition:

The term “born again” was first used by Jesus to describe what it means for God to change a person from being dead spiritually to being alive spiritually. The terms “born of God” and “born of the Spirit” also refer to a person being given new spiritual life.

- All humans are born spiritually dead and are given a “new birth” when they accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- At the moment of the spiritual new birth, God’s Holy Spirit begins to live in the new believer and empowers him to produce good spiritual fruit in his life.
- It is God’s work to cause a person to be born again and become his child.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “born again” could include “born anew” or “born spiritually.”
- It is best to translate this term literally and use the normal word in the language that would be used for being born.
- The term “new birth” might be translated as “spiritual birth.”
- The phrase “born of God” could be translated as “caused by God to have new life like a newborn baby” or “given new life by God.”
- In the same way, “born of the Spirit” could be translated as “given new life by the Holy Spirit” or “empowered by the Holy Spirit to become God’s child” or “caused by the Spirit to have new life like a newborn baby.”

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), salvation)

Bible References:

- [1 John 03:9-10](#)
- [1 Peter 01:3-5](#)
- [1 Peter 01:22-23](#)
- [John 03:3-4](#)
- [John 03:7-8](#)
- [Titus 03:4-5](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G313, G509, G1080, G3824

Uses:

- 1 John 2:27-29
- 1 John 3:9-10
- 1 John 4:7-8
- 1 John 5:4-5
- 1 John 5:18-19

brother, brothers

Definition:

The term “brother” usually refers to a male person who shares at least one biological parent with another person.

- In the Old Testament, the term “brothers” is also used as a general reference to relatives, such as members of the same tribe, clan, or people group.
- In the New Testament, the apostles often used “brothers” to refer to fellow Christians, including both men and women, since all believers in Christ are members of one spiritual family, with God as their heavenly Father.
- A few times in the New Testament, the apostles used the term “sister” when referring specifically to a fellow Christian who was a woman, or to emphasize that both men and women are being included. For example, James emphasizes that he is talking about all believers when he refers to “a brother or sister who is in need of food or clothing.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term with the literal word that is used in the target language to refer to a natural or biological brother, unless this would give wrong meaning.
- In the Old Testament especially, when “brothers” is used very generally to refer to members of the same family, clan, or people group, possible translations could include “relatives” or “clan members” or “fellow Israelites.”
- In the context of referring to a fellow believer in Christ, this term could be translated as “brother in Christ” or “spiritual brother.”
- If both males and females are being referred to and “brother” would give a wrong meaning, then a more general kinship term could be used that would include both males and females.
- Other ways to translate this term so that it refers to both male and female believers could be “fellow believers” or “Christian brothers and sisters.”
- Make sure to check the context to determine whether only men are being referred to, or whether both men and women are included.

(See also: [apostle](#), [God the Father](#), [sister](#), [spirit](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 07:26-28
- Genesis 29:9-10
- Leviticus 19:17-18
- Nehemiah 03:1-2
- Philippians 04:21-23
- [Revelation 01:9-11](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H251, H252, H264, H1730, H2992, H2993, H2994, H7453, G80, G81, G2385, G2455, G2500, G4613, G5360, G5569

Uses:

- [1 John 2:9-11](#)
- [1 John 3:13-15](#)

Cain

Facts:

Cain and his younger brother Abel were the first sons of Adam and Eve mentioned in the Bible.

- Cain was a farmer who produced food crops while Abel was a sheep herder.
- Cain killed his brother Abel in a fit of jealousy because God had accepted Abel's sacrifice but had not accepted Cain's sacrifice.
- As punishment, God sent him away from Eden and told him that the land would no longer yield crops for him.
- God put a mark on Cain's forehead as a sign that God would protect him from being killed by other people as he wandered.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: Adam, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- [1 John 03:11-12](#)
- Genesis 04:1-2
- Genesis 04:8-9
- Genesis 04:13-15
- Hebrews 11:4
- [Jude 01:9-11](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7014, G2535

Uses:

- [1 John 3:11-12](#)

children, child

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “child” is often used to generally refer to someone who is young in age, including an infant. The term “children” is the plural form and it also has several figurative uses.

- In the Bible, disciples or followers are sometimes called “children.”
- Often the term “children” is used to refer to a person’s descendants.
- The phrase “children of” can refer to being characterized by something. Some examples of this would be:
 - children of the light
 - children of obedience
 - children of the devil
- This term can also refer to people who are like spiritual children. For example, “children of God” refers to people who belong to God through faith in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “children” could be translated as “descendants” when it is referring to a person’s great-grandchildren or great-great-grandchildren, etc.
- Depending on the context, “children of” could be translated as, “people who have the characteristics of” or “people who behave like.”
- If possible, the phrase, “children of God” should be translated literally since an important biblical theme is that God is our heavenly Father. A possible translation alternate would be, “people who belong to God” or “God’s spiritual children.”
- When Jesus calls his disciples “children,” this could also be translated as, “dear friends” or “my beloved disciples.”
- When Paul and John refer to believers in Jesus as “children,” this could also be translated as “dear fellow believers.”
- The phrase, “children of the promise” could be translated as, “people who have received what God promised them.”

(See also: descendant, promise, son, [spirit](#), believer, [beloved](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:27-29](#)
- [3 John 01:1-4](#)
- Galatians 04:19-20
- Genesis 45:9-11
- Joshua 08:34-35
- Nehemiah 05:4-5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1069, H1121, H1123, H1129, H1323, H1397, H1580, H2029, H2030, H2056, H2138, H2145, H2233, H2945, H3173, H3205, H3206, H3208, H3211, H3243, H3490, H4392, H5271, H5288, H5290, H5759, H5764, H5768, H5953, H6185, H7908, H7909, H7921, G730, G815, G1025, G1064, G1471, G3439, G3515, G3516, G3808, G3812, G3813, G3816, G5040, G5041, G5042, G5043, G5044, G5206, G5207, G5388

Uses:

- 1 John 2:1-3
- 1 John 2:12-14
- 1 John 2:18-19
- 1 John 2:27-29
- 1 John 3:1-3
- 1 John 3:7-8
- 1 John 3:9-10
- 1 John 4:4-6
- 1 John 5:1-3
- 1 John 5:20-21

Christ, Messiah

Facts:

The terms “Messiah” and “Christ” mean “Anointed One” and refer to Jesus, God’s Son.

- Both “Messiah” and “Christ” are used in the New Testament to refer to God’s Son, whom God the Father appointed to rule as king over his people, and to save them from sin and death.
- In the Old Testament, the prophets wrote prophecies about the Messiah hundreds of years before he came to earth.
- Often a word meaning “anointed (one)” is used in the Old Testament to refer to the Messiah who would come.
- Jesus fulfilled many of these prophecies and did many miraculous works that proves he is the Messiah; the rest of these prophecies will be fulfilled when he returns.
- The word “Christ” is often used as a title, as in “the Christ” and “Christ Jesus.”
- “Christ” also came to be used as part of his name, as in “Jesus Christ.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated using its meaning, “the Anointed One” or “God’s Anointed Savior.”
- Many languages use a transliterated word that looks or sounds like “Christ” or “Messiah.” (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))
- The transliterated word could be followed by the definition of the term as in, “Christ, the Anointed One.”
- Be consistent in how this is translated throughout the Bible so that it is clear that the same term is being referred to.
- Make sure the translations of “Messiah” and “Christ” work well in contexts where both terms occur in the same verse (such as John 1:41).

(See also: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Son of God](#), [David](#), [Jesus](#), [anoint](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 05:1-3](#)
- [Acts 02:34-36](#)
- [Acts 05:40-42](#)
- [John 01:40-42](#)
- [John 03:27-28](#)
- [John 04:25-26](#)
- [Luke 02:10-12](#)
- [Matthew 01:15-17](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:07** The **Messiah** was God's Chosen One who would save the people of the world from sin.
- **17:08** As it happened, the Israelites would have to wait a long time before the **Messiah** came, almost 1,000 years.
- **21:01** From the very beginning, God planned to send the **Messiah**.
- **21:04** God promised King David that the **Messiah** would be one of David's own descendants.
- **21:05** The **Messiah** would start the New Covenant.
- **21:06** God's prophets also said that the **Messiah** would be a prophet, a priest, and a king.
- **21:09** The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the **Messiah** would be born from a virgin.
- **43:07** "But God raised him to life again to fulfill the prophecy which says, 'You will not let your **Holy One** rot in the grave.'"
- **43:09** "But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both Lord and **Messiah!**"
- **43:11** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus **Christ** so that God will forgive your sins."
- **46:06** Saul reasoned with the Jews, proving that Jesus was the **Messiah**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4899, G3323, G5547

Uses:

- 1 John 2:22-23
- 1 John 3:1-3
- 1 John 3:4-6
- 1 John 3:7-8
- 1 John 3:16-18
- 1 John 5:1-3

clean, cleans, cleaned, cleanse, cleansed, cleansing, wash, washing, washed, washes

Definition:

The term “clean” literally means to not have any dirt or stain. In the Bible, it is often used figuratively to mean, “pure,” “holy,” or “free from sin.”

- “Cleanse” is the process of making something “clean.” It could also be translated as “wash” or “purify.”
- In the Old Testament, God told the Israelites which animals he had specified as ritually “clean” and which ones were “unclean.” Only the clean animals were permitted to be used for eating or for sacrifice. In this context, the term “clean” means that the animal was acceptable to God for use as a sacrifice.
- A person who had certain skin diseases would be unclean until the skin was healed enough to no longer be contagious. Instructions for cleansing the skin had to be obeyed in order for that person to be declared “clean” again.
- Sometimes “clean” is used figuratively to refer to moral purity.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated with the common word for “clean” or “pure” (in the sense of being not dirty).
- Other ways to translate this could include, “ritually clean” or “acceptable to God.”
- “Cleanse” could be translated by “wash” or “purify.”
- Make sure that the words used for “clean” and “cleanse” can also be understood in a figurative sense.

(See also: holy, unclean, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 12:15-16
- Ezekiel 24:13
- Genesis 07:1-3
- Genesis 07:8-10
- James 04:8-10
- Luke 05:12-13
- Proverbs 20:29-30
- Psalms 051:7-9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1249, H1252, H1305, H2134, H2135, H2141, H2398, H2548, H2834, H2889, H2890, H2891, H2893, H3001, H3722, H5352, H5355, H5356, H6565, H6663, H8552, H8562, G2511, G2512, G2513, G3689

Uses:

- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 1:8-10

command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments

Definition:

The term “to command” means to order someone to do something. A “command” or “commandment” is what the person was ordered to do.

- Although these terms have basically the same meaning, “commandment” often refers to certain commands of God which are more formal and permanent, such as the “Ten Commandments.”
- A command can be positive (“Honor your parents”) or negative (“Do not steal”).
- To “take command” means to “take control” or “take charge” of something or someone.

Translation Suggestions

- It is best to translate this term differently from the term, “law.” Also compare with the definitions of “decree” and “statute.”
- Some translators may prefer to translate “command” and “commandment” with the same word in their language.
- Others may prefer to use a special word for commandment that refers to lasting, formal commands that God has made.

(See decree, statute, law, Ten Commandments)

Bible References:

- Luke 01:5-7
- Matthew 01:24-25
- Matthew 22:37-38
- Matthew 28:20
- Numbers 01:17-19
- Romans 07:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H559, H560, H565, H1696, H1697, H1881, H2706, H2708, H2710, H2941, H2942, H2951, H3027, H3982, H3983, H4406, H4662, H4687, H4929, H4931, H4941, H5057, H5713, H5749, H6213, H6310, H6346, H6490, H6673, H6680, H7101, H7218, H7227, H7262, H7761, H7970, H8269, G1263, G1291, G1296, G1297, G1299, G1690, G1778, G1781, G1785, G2003, G2004, G2008, G2036, G2753, G3056, G3726, G3852, G3853, G4367, G4483, G4487, G5506

Uses:

- 1 John 2:1-3
- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 2:7-8
- 1 John 3:19-22
- 1 John 3:23-24
- 1 John 4:19-21
- 1 John 5:1-3

compassion, compassionate

Definition:

The term “compassion” refers to a feeling of concern for people, especially for those who are suffering. A “compassionate” person cares about other people and helps them.

- The word “compassion” usually includes caring about people in need, as well as taking action to help them.
- The Bible says that God is compassionate, that is, he is full of love and mercy.
- In Paul’s letter to the Colossians, he tells them to “clothe themselves with compassion.” He is instructing them to care about people and to actively help others who are in need.

Translation Suggestions:

- The literal meaning of “compassion” is “bowels of mercy.” This is an expression that means “mercy” or “pity.” Other languages may have their own expression that means this.
- Ways of translating “compassion” could include, “a deep caring for” or “helpful mercy.”
- The term “compassionate” could also be translated as, “caring and helpful” or “deeply loving and merciful.”

Bible References:

- Daniel 01:8-10
- Hosea 13:14
- James 05:9-11
- Jonah 04:1-3
- Mark 01:40-42
- Romans 09:14-16

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2550, H7349, H7355, H7356, G1653, G3356, G3627, G4697, G4834, G4835

Uses:

- [1 John 3:16-18](#)

condemn, condemns, condemned, condemnation

Definition:

The terms “condemn” and “condemnation” refer to judging someone for doing something wrong.

- Often the word “condemn” includes punishing that person for what they did wrong.
- Sometimes “condemn” means to falsely accuse someone or to judge someone harshly.
- The term “condemnation” refers to the act of condemning or accusing someone.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated as “harshly judge” or “criticize falsely.”
- The phrase “condemn him” could be translated as, “judge that he is guilty” or “state that he must be punished for his sin.”
- The term “condemnation” could be translated as, “harsh judging” or “declaring to be guilty” or “punishment of guilt.”

(See also: judge, [punish](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 03:19-22](#)
- Job 09:27-29
- John 05:24
- Luke 06:37
- Matthew 12:7-8
- Proverbs 17:15-16
- Psalms 034:21-22
- Romans 05:16-17

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6064, H7034, H7561, H8199, G176, G843, G2607, G2613, G2631, G2632, G2633, G2917, G2919, G2920, G5272, G6048

Uses:

- [1 John 3:19-22](#)

confess, confessed, confesses, confession

Definition:

To confess means to admit or assert that something is true. A “confession” is a statement or admission that something is true.

- The term “confess” can refer to boldly stating the truth about God. It can also refer to admitting that we have sinned.
- The Bible says that if people confess their sins to God, he will forgive them.
- James the apostle wrote in his letter that when believers confess their sins to each other, this brings spiritual healing.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians that someday everyone will confess or declare that Jesus is Lord.
- Paul also said that if people confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead, they will be saved.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “confess” could include, “admit” or “testify” or “declare” or “acknowledge” or “affirm.”
- Different ways to translate “confession” could be, “declaration” or “testimony” or “statement about what we believe” or “admitting sin.”

(See also: [faith](#), [testimony](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:8-10](#)
- [2 John 01:7-8](#)
- James 05:16-18
- Leviticus 05:5-6
- Matthew 03:4-6
- Nehemiah 01:6-7
- Philippians 02:9-11
- Psalms 038:17-18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3034, H8426, G1843, G3670, G3671

Uses:

- 1 John 1:8-10

confidence, confident

Definition:

The term “confidence” refers to being sure that something is true or certain to happen.

- In the Bible, the term “hope” often means to wait expectantly for something that is sure to happen. The ULB often translates this as “confidence” or “confidence for the future” or “future confidence” especially when it means to be assured of receiving what God has promised to believers in Jesus.
- Often the term “confidence” refers especially to the certainty that believers in Jesus have that they will someday be with God forever in heaven.
- The phrase, “have confidence in God” means to fully expect to receive and experience what God has promised.
- Being “confident” means believing in God’s promises and acting with the assurance that God will do what he has said. This term can also have the meaning of acting boldly and courageously.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “confident” could be translated as “assured” or “very sure.”
- The phrase “be confident” could also be translated as “trust completely” or “be completely sure about” or “know for certain.”
- The term “confidently” could also be translated as “boldly” or “with certainty.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate “confidence” could include, “complete assurance” or “sure expectation” or “certainty.”

(See also: [believe](#), [believer](#), [bold](#), [faithful](#), [hope](#), [trust](#))

Bible References:

{{topic>confidence&nocomments}}

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H982, H983, H985, H986, H3689, H3690, H4009, G1340, G2292, G3954, G3982, G4006, G5287

Uses:

- [1 John 3:1-3](#)
- [1 John 3:19-22](#)
- [1 John 4:17-18](#)

- 1 John 5:13-15

darkness

Definition:

The term “darkness” literally means an absence of light. There are also several figurative meanings of this term:

- As a metaphor, “darkness” means “impurity” or “evil” or “spiritual blindness.”
- It also refers to anything related to sin and moral corruption.
- The expression “dominion of darkness” refers to all that is evil and ruled by Satan.
- The term “darkness” can also be used as a metaphor for death. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- People who do not know God are said to be “living in darkness,” which means they do not understand or practice righteousness.
- God is light (righteousness) and the darkness (evil) cannot overcome that light.
- The place of punishment for those who reject God is sometimes referred to as “outer darkness.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term literally, with a word in the project language that refers to the absence of light. This could also be a term that refers to the darkness of a room with no light or to the time of day when there is no light.
- For the figurative uses, it is also important to keep the image of darkness in contrast to light, as a way to describe evil and deception in contrast to goodness and truth.
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could be, “darkness of night” (as opposed to “light of day”) or “not seeing anything, like at night” or “evil, like a dark place”.

(See also: corrupt, dominion, kingdom, [light](#), redeem, [righteous](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:5-7](#)
- [1 John 02:7-8](#)
- 1 Thessalonians 05:4-7
- 2 Samuel 22:10-12
- Colossians 01:13-14
- Isaiah 05:29-30
- Jeremiah 13:15-17
- Joshua 24:7
- Matthew 08:11-13

Word Data:

- Strong's: H652, H653, H2816, H2821, H2822, H2825, H3990, H3991, H4285, H5890, H6205, G2217, G4652, G4653, G4655, G4656

Uses:

- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 2:7-8
- 1 John 2:9-11

day of the Lord, day of Yahweh

Description:

The Old Testament term “day of Yahweh” is used to refer to a specific time(s) when God would punish people for their sin.

- The New Testament term “day of the Lord” usually refers to the day or time when the Lord Jesus will come back to judge people at the end of time.
- This final, future time of judgment and resurrection is also sometimes referred to as the “last day.” This time will begin when the Lord Jesus comes back to judge sinners and will permanently establish his rule.
- The word “day” in these phrases may sometimes refer to a literal day or it may refer to a “time” or “occasion” that is longer than a day.
- Sometimes the punishment is referred to as a “pouring out of God’s wrath” upon those who do not believe.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “day of Yahweh” could include “time of Yahweh” or “time when Yahweh will punish his enemies” or “time of Yahweh’s wrath.”
- Other ways to translate “day of the Lord” could include “time of the Lord’s judgment” or “time when the Lord Jesus will return to judge people.”

(See also: day, judgment day, Lord, [resurrection](#), Yahweh)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 05:3-5
- 1 Thessalonians 05:1-3
- 2 Peter 03:10
- 2 Thessalonians 02:1-2
- Acts 02:20-21
- Philippians 01:9-11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3068, H3117, G2250, G2962

Uses:

- [1 John 4:17-18](#)

death, die, dead

Definition:

This term is used to refer to both physical and spiritual death. Physically, it refers to when the physical body of a person stops living. Spiritually, it refers to sinners being separated from a holy God because of their sin.

1. Physical death

- To “die” means to stop living. Death is the end of physical life.
- A person’s spirit leaves his body when he dies.
- When Adam and Eve sinned, physical death came into the world.
- The expression “put to death” refers to killing or murdering someone, especially when a king or other ruler gives an order for someone to be killed.

2. Spiritual death

- Spiritual death is the separation of a person from God.
- Adam died spiritually when he disobeyed God. His relationship with God was broken. He became ashamed and tried to hide from God.
- Every descendant of Adam is a sinner, and is spiritually dead. God makes us spiritually alive again when we have faith in Jesus Christ.

Translation Suggestions:

- To translate this term, it is best to use the everyday, natural word or expression in the target language that refers to death.
- In some languages, “to die” may be expressed as “to not live.” The term “dead” may be translated as “not alive” or “not having any life” or “not living.”
- Many languages use figurative expressions to describe death, such as “to pass away” in English. However, in the Bible it is best to use the most direct term for death that is used in everyday language.
- In the Bible, physical life and death are often compared to spiritual life and death. It is important in a translation to use the same word or phrase for both physical death and spiritual death.
- In some languages it may be more clear to say “spiritual death” when the context requires that meaning. Some translators may also feel it is best to say “physical death” in contexts where it is being contrasted to spiritual death.
- The expression “the dead” is a nominal adjective that refers to people who have died. Some languages will translate this as “dead people” or “people who have died.” (See: nominal adjective)

- The expression “put to death” could also be translated as “kill” or “murder” or “execute.”

(See also: [believe](#), [faith](#), [life](#), [spirit](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 15:20-21
- 1 Thessalonians 04:16-18
- Acts 10:42-43
- Acts 14:19-20
- Colossians 02:13-15
- Colossians 02:20-23
- Genesis 02:15-17
- Genesis 34:27-29
- Matthew 16:27-28
- Romans 05:10-11
- Romans 05:12-13
- Romans 06:10-11

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **01:11** God told Adam that he could eat from any tree in the garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If he ate from this tree, he would **die**.
- **02:11** “Then you will **die**, and your body will return to dirt.”
- **07:10** Then Isaac **died**, and Jacob and Esau buried him.
- **37:05** “Jesus replied, ”I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he **dies**. Everyone who believes in me will never **die**.”
- **40:08** Through his **death**, Jesus opened a way for people to come to God.
- **43:07** “Although Jesus **died**, God raised him from the dead.”
- **48:02** Because they sinned, everyone on earth gets sick and everyone **dies**.
- **50:17** He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or **death**. *

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1478, H4191, H4191, H4192, H4193, H4194, H4194, H4463, H5038, H5315, H6297, H6757, H7496, H7523, H8546, G336, G337, G520, G581, G599, G599, G615, G684, G1935, G2079, G2253, G2286, G2287, G2288, G2289, G2348, G2837, G3498, G3499, G3500, G4430, G4880, G5053, G5054

Uses:

- [1 John 3:13-15](#)

- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 5:16-17](#)

deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive

Definition:

The term “deceive” means to cause someone to believe something that is not true. The act of deceiving someone is called “deceit.”

- Another term “deception” also refers to the act of causing someone to believe something that is not true.
- Someone who causes others to believe something false is a “deceiver.” For example, Satan is called a “deceiver.” The evil spirits that he controls are also deceivers.
- A person, action, or message that is not truthful can be described as “deceptive.”
- The terms “deceit” and “deception” have the same meaning, but there are some small differences in how they are used.
- The descriptive terms “deceitful” and “deceptive” have the same meaning and are used in the same contexts.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “deceive” could include “lie to” or “cause to have a false belief” or “cause someone to think something that is not true.”
- The term “deceived” could also be translated as “caused to think something false” or “lied to” or “tricked” or “fooled” or “misled.”
- “Deceiver” could be translated as “liar” or “one who misleads” or “someone who deceives.”
- Depending on the context, the terms “deception” or “deceit” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “falsehood” or “lying” or “trickery” or “dishonesty.”
- The terms “deceptive” or “deceitful” could be translated as “untruthful” or “misleading” or “lying” to describe a person who speaks or acts in a way that causes other people to believe things that are not true.

(See also: [true](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:8-10](#)
- [1 Timothy 02:13-15](#)
- [2 Thessalonians 02:3-4](#)
- [Genesis 03:12-13](#)
- [Genesis 31:26-28](#)
- [Leviticus 19:11-12](#)
- [Matthew 27:62-64](#)
- [Micah 06:11-12](#)

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Word Data:

- Strong's: H898, H2048, H3577, H3584, H4123, H4820, H4860, H5230, H5377, H6121, H6231, H6280, H6601, H7411, H7423, H7683, H7686, H7952, H8267, H8496, H8501, H8582, H8591, H8649, G538, G539, G1386, G1387, G1388, G1389, G1818, G3884, G4105, G4106, G4108, G5422, G5423

Uses:

- [1 John 1:8-10](#)

everlasting, eternal, eternity

Definition:

The terms “everlasting” and “eternal” have very similar meanings and refer to something that will always exist or that lasts forever.

- The term “eternity” refers to a state of being that has no beginning or end. It can also refer to life that never ends.
- After this present life on earth, humans will spend eternity either in heaven with God or in hell apart from God.
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” are used in the New Testament to refer to living forever with God in heaven.
- The phrase “forever and ever” has the idea of time that never ends and expresses what eternity or eternal life is like.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “eternal” or “everlasting” could include “unending” or “never stopping” or “always continuing.”
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” could also be translated as “life that never ends” or “life that continues without stopping” or “the raising up of our bodies to live forever.”
- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “eternity” could include “existing outside of time” or “unending life” or “life in heaven.”
- Also consider how this word is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: forever, [life](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:1-2](#)
- [1 John 05:11-12](#)
- Acts 13:46-47
- Genesis 17:7-8
- Genesis 48:3-4
- Isaiah 09:6-7
- Isaiah 40:27-28
- Luke 18:18-21
- Romans 05:20-21

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:01** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit **eternal life**?"
- **28:01** One day, a rich young ruler came up to Jesus and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to have **eternal life**?" Jesus said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only One who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have **eternal life**, obey God's laws."
- **28:10** Jesus answered, "Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or property for my name's sake, will receive 100 times more and will also receive **eternal life**."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5703, H5769, H5957, H6924, G126, G165, G166

Uses:

- 1 John 1:1-2
- 1 John 2:15-17
- 1 John 2:24-26
- 1 John 03 General Notes
- 1 John 3:13-15
- 1 John 5:11-12
- 1 John 5:13-15
- 1 John 5:20-21

evil, wicked, wickedness

Definition:

The terms “evil” and “wicked” both refer to anything that is opposed to God’s holy character and will.

- While “evil” may describe a person’s character, “wicked” may refer more to a person’s behavior. However, both terms are very similar in meaning.
- The term “wickedness” refers to the state of being that exists when people do wicked things.
- The results of evil are clearly shown in how people mistreat others by killing, stealing, slandering and being cruel and unkind.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the terms “evil” and “wicked” can be translated as “bad” or “sinful” or “immoral.”
- Other ways to translate these could include “not good” or “not righteous” or “not moral.”
- Make sure the words or phrases that are used to translate these terms fit the context that is natural in the target language.

(See also: disobey, [sin](#), good, [righteous](#), demon)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 24:10-11
- 1 Timothy 06:9-10
- [3 John 01:9-10](#)
- Genesis 02:15-17
- Genesis 06:5-6
- Job 01:1-3
- Job 08:19-20
- Judges 09:55-57
- Luke 06:22-23
- Matthew 07:11-12
- Proverbs 03:7-8
- Psalms 022:16-17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [02:04](#) ”God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand good and **evil** like he does.”

- **03:01** After a long time, many people were living in the world. They had become very **wicked** and violent.
- **03:02** But Noah found favor with God. He was a righteous man living among **wicked** people.
- **04:02** God saw that if they all kept working together to do **evil**, they could do many more sinful things.
- **08:12** "You tried to do **evil** when you sold me as a slave, but God used the **evil** for good!"
- **14:02** They (Canaanites) worshiped false gods and did many **evil** things.
- **17:01** But then he (Saul) became a **wicked** man who did not obey God, so God chose a different man who would one day be king in his place.
- **18:11** In the new kingdom of Israel, all the kings were **evil**.
- **29:08** The king was so angry that he threw the **wicked** servant into prison until he could pay back all of his debt.
- **45:02** They said, "We heard him (Stephen) speak **evil** things about Moses and God!"
- **50:17** He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, **evil**, pain, or death.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H205, H605, H1100, H1681, H1942, H2154, H2162, H2617, H3415, H4209, H4849, H5753, H5766, H5767, H5999, H6001, H6090, H7451, H7455, H7489, H7561, H7562, H7563, H7564, G92, G113, G459, G932, G987, G988, G1426, G2549, G2551, G2554, G2555, G2556, G2557, G2559, G2560, G2635, G2636, G4151, G4189, G4190, G4191, G5337

Uses:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 3:11-12](#)
- [1 John 5:18-19](#)

faith

Definition:

In general, the term “faith” refers to a belief, trust or confidence in someone or something.

- To “have faith” in someone is to believe that what he says and does is true and trustworthy.
- To “have faith in Jesus” means to believe all of God’s teachings about Jesus. It especially means that people trust in Jesus and his sacrifice to cleanse them from their sin and to rescue them from the punishment they deserve because of their sin.
- True faith or belief in Jesus will cause a person to produce good spiritual fruits or behaviors because the Holy Spirit is living in him.
- Sometimes “faith” refers generally to all the teachings about Jesus, as in the expression “the truths of the faith.”
- In contexts such as “keep the faith” or “abandon the faith,” the term “faith” refers to the state or condition of believing all the teachings about Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, “faith” can be translated as “belief” or “conviction” or “confidence” or “trust.”
- For some languages these terms will be translated using forms of the verb “believe.” (See: [abstractnouns](#))
- The expression “keep the faith” could be translated by “keep believing in Jesus” or “continue to believe in Jesus.”
- The sentence “they must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith” could be translated by “they must keep believing all the true things about Jesus that they have been taught.”
- The expression “my true son in the faith” could be translated by something like “who is like a son to me because I taught him to believe in Jesus” or “my true spiritual son, who believes in Jesus.”

(See also: [believe](#), [faithful](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 04:6-8
- Acts 06:7
- Galatians 02:20-21
- James 02:18-20

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **05:06** When Isaac was a young man, God tested Abraham’s **faith** by saying, “Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me.”

- **31:07** Then he (Jesus) said to Peter, "You man of little **faith**, why did you doubt?"
- **32:16** Jesus said to her, "Your **faith** has healed you. Go in peace."
- **38:09** Then Jesus said to Peter, "Satan wants to have all of you, but I have prayed for you, Peter, that your **faith** will not fail.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H529, H530, G1680, G3640, G4102, G6066

Uses:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)
- [1 John 01 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 03 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)

faithful, faithfulness

Definition:

To be “faithful” to God means to consistently live according to God’s teachings. It means to be loyal to him by obeying him. The state or condition of being faithful is “faithfulness.”

- A person who is faithful can be trusted to always keep his promises and to always fulfill his responsibilities to other people.
- A faithful person perseveres in doing a task, even when it is long and difficult.
- Faithfulness to God is the consistent practice of doing what God wants us to do.

Translation Suggestions:

- In many contexts, “faithful” can be translated as “loyal” or “dedicated” or “dependable.”
- In other contexts, “faithful” can be translated by a word or phrase that means “continuing to believe” or “persevering in believing and obeying God.”
- Ways that “faithfulness” could be translated could include “persevering in believing” or “loyalty” or “trustworthiness” or “believing and obeying God.”

(See also: [faith](#), [believe](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 02:9
- 1 Thessalonians 05:23-24
- [3 John 01:5-8](#)
- Colossians 01:7-8
- Genesis 24:49
- Isaiah 01:26
- Joshua 02:14
- Luke 16:10-12
- Numbers 12:6-8
- Proverbs 11:12-13
- Psalm 012:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [08:05](#) Even in prison, Joseph remained **faithful** to God, and God blessed him.
- [14:12](#) Even so, God was still **faithful** to His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- [15:13](#) The people promised to remain **faithful** to God and follow his laws.
- [17:09](#) David ruled with justice and **faithfulness** for many years, and God blessed him. However, toward the end of his life he sinned terribly against God.

- **18:04** God was angry with Solomon and, as a punishment for Solomon's **unfaithfulness**, he promised to divide the nation of Israel into two kingdoms after Solomon's death.
- **35:12** "The older son said to his father, 'All these years I have worked **faithfully** for you!"
- **49:17** But God is **faithful** and says that if you confess your sins, he will forgive you.
- **50:04** If you remain **faithful** to me to the end, then God will save you."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H529, H530, H539, H540, H571, G4103

Uses:

- **1 John 1:8-10**

false prophet

Definition:

A false prophet is a person who wrongly claims that his message comes from God.

- The prophecies of false prophets are not usually fulfilled. That is, they do not come true.
- False prophets teach messages that partially or totally contradict what the Bible says.
- This term could also be translated as “person who falsely claims to be God’s spokesman” or “someone who falsely claims to speak God’s words.”
- The New Testament teaches that in the end times there will be many false prophets who will try to deceive people into thinking that they come from God.

(See also: fulfill, prophet, [true](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 04:1-3](#)
- [2 Peter 02:1-3](#)
- [Acts 13:6-8](#)
- [Luke 06:26](#)
- [Matthew 07:15-17](#)
- [Matthew 24:23-25](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G5578

Uses:

- [1 John 4:1-3](#)

fear, fears, afraid

Definition:

The terms “fear” and “afraid” refer to the unpleasant feeling a person has when there is a threat of harm to himself or others.

- The term “fear” can also refer to a deep respect and awe for a person in authority.
- The phrase “fear of Yahweh,” as well as related terms “fear of God” and “fear of the Lord,” refer to a deep respect of God and the showing of that respect by obeying him. This fear is motivated by knowing that God is holy and hates sin.
- The Bible teaches that a person who fears Yahweh will become wise.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “to fear” can be translated as “to be afraid” or “to deeply respect” or “to revere” or “to be in awe of.”
- The term “afraid” could be translated as “terrified” or “scared” or “fearful.”
- The sentence “The fear of God fell on all of them” could be translated as “Suddenly they all felt a deep awe and respect for God” or “Immediately, they all felt very amazed and revered God deeply” or “Right then, they all felt very afraid of God (because of his great power).”
- The phrase “fear not” could also be translated as “do not be afraid” or “stop being afraid.”
- Note that the phrase “fear of Yahweh” does not occur in the New Testament. The phrase “fear of the Lord” or “fear of the Lord God” is used instead.

(See also: [marvel](#), awe, Lord, power, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- [1 John 04:17-18](#)
- Acts 02:43-45
- Acts 19:15-17
- Genesis 50:18-21
- Isaiah 11:3-5
- Job 06:14-17
- Jonah 01:8-10
- Luke 12:4-5
- Matthew 10:28-31
- Proverbs 10:24-25

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H367, H926, H1204, H1481, H1672, H1674, H1763, H2119, H2296, H2727, H2729, H2730, H2731, H2844, H2849, H2865, H3016, H3025, H3068, H3372, H3373, H3374, H4032,

H4034, H4035, H4116, H4172, H6206, H6342, H6343, H6345, H6427, H7264, H7267, H7297, H7374, H7461, H7493, H8175, G870, G1167, G1168, G1169, G1630, G1719, G2124, G2125, G2962, G5398, G5399, G5400, G5401

Uses:

- [1 John 4:17-18](#)

fellowship

Definition:

In general, the term “fellowship” refers to friendly interactions between members of a group of people who share similar interests and experiences.

- In the Bible, the term “fellowship” usually refers to the unity of believers in Christ.
- Christian fellowship is a shared relationship that believers have with one another through their relationship with Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- The early Christians expressed their fellowship through listening to the teaching of God’s Word and praying together, through the sharing of their belongings, and through eating meals together.
- Christians also have fellowship with God through their faith in Jesus and his sacrificial death on the cross which removed the barrier between God and people.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “fellowship” could include “a sharing together” or “relationship” or “companionship” or “Christian community.”

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:3-4](#)
- Acts 02:40-42
- Philippians 01:3-6
- Philippians 02:1-2
- Philippians 03:8-11
- Psalms 055:12-14

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2266, H8667, G2842, G2844, G3352, G4790

Uses:

- [1 John 1:3-4](#)
- [1 John 1:5-7](#)

flesh

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “flesh” literally refers to the soft tissue of the physical body of a human being or animal.

- The Bible also uses the term “flesh” in a figurative way to refer to all human beings or all living creatures.
- In the New Testament, the term “flesh” is used to refer to the sinful nature of human beings. This is often used in contrast to their spiritual nature.
- The expression “own flesh and blood” refers to someone who is biologically related to another person, such as a parent, sibling, child, or grandchild.
- The expression “flesh and blood” can also refer to a person’s ancestors or descendants.
- The expression “one flesh” refers to the physical uniting of a man and woman in marriage.

Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of an animal’s body, “flesh” could be translated as “body” or “skin” or “meat.”
- When it is used to refer generally to all living creatures, this term could be translated as “living beings” or “everything that is alive.”
- When referring in general to all people, this term could be translated as “people” or “human beings” or “everyone who lives.”
- The expression “flesh and blood” could also be translated as “relatives” or “family” or “kin-folk” or “family clan.” There may be contexts where it could be translated as “ancestors” or “descendants.”
- Some languages may have an expression that is similar in meaning to “flesh and blood.”
- The expression “become one flesh” could be translated as “unite sexually” or “become as one body” or “become like one person in body and spirit.” The translation of this expression should be checked to make sure it is acceptable in the project language and culture. (See: euphemism). It should also be understood that this is figurative, and does not mean that a man and a woman who “become one flesh” literally become one person.

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:15-17](#)
- [2 John 01:7-8](#)
- Ephesians 06:12-13
- Galatians 01:15-17
- Genesis 02:24-25
- John 01:14-15
- Matthew 16:17-18
- Romans 08:6-8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H829, H1320, H1321, H2878, H3894, H4207, H7607, H7683, G2907, G4559, G4560, G4561

Uses:

- 1 John 2:15-17
- 1 John 4:1-3

forgive, forgives, forgiven, forgiveness

Definition:

To forgive someone means to not hold a grudge against that person even though they did something hurtful. “Forgiveness” is the act of forgiving someone.

- Forgiving someone often means not punishing that person for something he has done wrong.
- This term can be used figuratively to mean “cancel,” as in the expression “forgive a debt.”
- When people confess their sins, God forgives them based on Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross.
- Jesus taught his disciples to forgive others as he has forgiven them.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “forgive” could be translated as “pardon” or “cancel” or “release” or “not hold against” (someone).
- The term “forgiveness” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “practice of not resenting” or “declaring (someone) as not guilty” or “the act of pardoning.”

(See also: guilt)

Bible References:

- **1 John 02:12-14**
- Acts 08:20-23
- Colossians 03:12-14
- Ephesians 04:31-32
- Genesis 50:15-17
- Isaiah 55:6-7
- Joshua 24:19-20
- Luke 05:20-21
- Numbers 14:17-19
- Psalms 025:17-19

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **07:10** But Esau had already **forgiven** Jacob, and they were happy to see each other again.
- **13:15** Then Moses climbed the mountain again and prayed that God would **forgive** the people. God listened to Moses and **forgave** them.
- **17:13** David repented of his sin and God **forgave** him.
- **21:05** In the New Covenant, God would write his law on the people’s hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would **forgive** their sins.

- **29:01** One day Peter asked Jesus, "Master, how many times should I **forgive** my brother when he sins against me?"
- **29:08** I **forgave** your debt because you begged me.
- **38:05** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the **forgiveness** of sins.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3722, H5375, H5545, H5546, H5547, G859, G863, G5483

Uses:

- [1 John 01 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 1:8-10](#)
- [1 John 2:12-14](#)

God

Facts:

In the Bible, the term “God” refers to the eternal being who created the universe out of nothing. God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God’s personal name is “Yahweh.”

- God has always existed; he existed before anything else existed, and he will continue to exist forever.
- He is the only true God and has authority over everything in the universe.
- God is perfectly righteous, infinitely wise, holy, sinless, just, merciful, and loving.
- He is a covenant-keeping God, who always fulfills his promises.
- People were created to worship God and he is the only one they should worship.
- God revealed his name as “Yahweh,” which means “he is” or “I am” or “the One who (always) exists.”
- The Bible also teaches about false “gods,” which are nonliving idols that people wrongly worship.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “God” could include “Deity” or “Creator” or “Supreme Being.”
- Other ways to translate “God” could be “Supreme Creator” or “Infinite Sovereign Lord” or “Eternal Supreme Being.”
- Consider how God is referred to in a local or national language. There may also already be a word for “God” in the language being translated. If so, it is important to make sure that this word fits the characteristics of the one true God as described above.
- Many languages capitalize the first letter of the word for the one true God, to distinguish it from the word for a false god.
- Another way to make this distinction would be to use different terms for “God” and “god.”
- The phrase “I will be their God and they will be my people” could also be translated as “I, God, will rule over these people and they will worship me.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: create, false god, [God the Father](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [idol](#), [Son of God](#), Yahweh)

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:5-7](#)
- 1 Samuel 10:7-8
- 1 Timothy 04:9-10
- Colossians 01:15-17
- Deuteronomy 29:14-16
- Ezra 03:1-2

- Genesis 01:1-2
- Hosea 04:11-12
- Isaiah 36:6-7
- James 02:18-20
- Jeremiah 05:4-6
- John 01:1-3
- Joshua 03:9-11
- Lamentations 03:40-43
- Micah 04:4-5
- Philippians 02:5-8
- Proverbs 24:11-12
- Psalms 047:8-9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **01:01 God** created the universe and everything in it in six days.
- **01:15 God** made man and woman in his own image.
- **05:03** "I am **God** Almighty. I will make a covenant with you."
- **09:14 God** said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am Yahweh, the **God** of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"
- **10:02** Through these plagues, **God** showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's gods.
- **16:01** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the true **God**.
- **22:07** You, my son, will be called the prophet of the **Most High God** who will prepare the people to receive the Messiah!"
- **24:09** There is only one **God**. But John heard **God** the Father speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.
- **25:07** "Worship only the Lord your **God** and only serve him."
- **28:01** "There is only one who is good, and that is **God**."
- **49:09** But **God** loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with **God** forever.
- **50:16** But some day **God** will create a new heaven and a new earth that will be perfect.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H136, H305, H410, H426, H430, H433, H2486, H2623, H3068, H3069, H3863, H4136, H6697, G112, G516, G932, G935, G1096, G1140, G2098, G2124, G2128, G2150, G2152, G2153, G2299, G2304, G2305, G2312, G2313, G2314, G2315, G2316, G2317, G2318, G2319, G2320, G3361, G3785, G4151, G5207, G5377, G5463, G5537, G5538

Uses:

- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 3:19-22
- 1 John 4:4-6
- 1 John 4:7-8
- 1 John 4:19-21

God the Father, heavenly Father, Father

Facts:

The terms “God the Father” and “heavenly Father” refer to Yahweh, the one true God. Another term with the same meaning is “Father,” used most often when Jesus was referring to him.

- God exists as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each one is fully God, and yet they are only one God. This is a mystery that mere humans cannot fully understand.
- God the Father sent God the Son (Jesus) into the world and he sends the Holy Spirit to his people.
- Anyone who believes in God the Son becomes a child of God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit comes to live in that person. This is another mystery that human beings cannot fully understand.

Translation Suggestions:

- In translating the phrase “God the Father,” it is best to translate “Father” with the same word that the language naturally uses to refer to a human father.
- The term “heavenly Father” could be translated by “Father who lives in heaven” or “Father God who lives in heaven” or “God our Father from heaven.”
- Usually “Father” is capitalized when it, refers to God.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [ancestor](#), [God](#), [heaven](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Jesus](#), [Son of God](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 08:4-6
- [1 John 02:1-3](#)
- [1 John 02:22-23](#)
- [1 John 03:1-3](#)
- Colossians 01:1-3
- Ephesians 05:18-21
- Luke 10:22
- Matthew 05:15-16
- Matthew 23:8-10

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [24:09](#) There is only one God. But John heard **God the Father** speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.

- **29:09** Then Jesus said, "This is what my **heavenly Father** will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."
- **37:09** Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "**Father**, thank you for hearing me."
- **40:07** Then Jesus cried out, "It is finished! **Father**, I give my spirit into your hands."
- **42:10** "So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of **the Father**, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
- **43:08** "Jesus is now exalted to the right hand of **God the Father**."
- **50:10** "Then the righteous ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of **God their Father**."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1, H2, G3962

Uses:

- 1 John 1:1-2
- 1 John 1:3-4
- 1 John 2:1-3
- 1 John 2:12-14
- 1 John 2:15-17
- 1 John 2:22-23
- 1 John 3:1-3

godly, godliness

Definition:

The term “godly” is used to describe a person who acts in a way that honors God and shows what God is like. “Godliness” is the character quality of honoring God by doing his will.

- A person who has godly character will show the fruits of the Holy Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and self control.
- The quality of godliness shows that a person has the Holy Spirit and is obeying him.

Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “the godly” could be translated as “godly people” or “people who obey God.” (See: nominaladj)
- The adjective “godly” could be translated as “obedient to God” or “righteous” or “pleasing to God.”
- The phrase “in a godly manner” could be translated as “in a way that obeys God” or “with actions and words that please God.”
- Ways to translate “godliness” could include “acting in a way that pleases God” or “obeying God” or “living in a righteous manner.”

(See also honor, obey, [righteous](#), ungodly, [unrighteous](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 04:6-8
- 2 Timothy 03:10-13
- Acts 03:11-12
- Hebrews 11:7

Word Data:

- Strong's: H430, H2623, G516, G2124, G2150, G2152, G2153, G2316, G2317

Uses:

- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)

heart, hearts

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “heart” is often used figuratively to refer to a person’s thoughts, emotions, desires, or will.

- To have a “hard heart” is a common expression that means a person stubbornly refuses to obey God.
- The expressions “with all my heart” or “with my whole heart” mean to do something with no holding back, with complete commitment and willingness.
- The expression “take it to heart” means to treat something seriously and apply it to one’s life.
- The term “brokenhearted” describes a person who is very sad. That person has been deeply hurt emotionally.

Translation Suggestions

- Some languages use a different body part such as “stomach” or “liver” to refer to these ideas.
- Other languages may use one word to express some of these concepts and another word to express others.
- If “heart” or other body part does not have this meaning, some languages may need to express this literally with terms such as “thoughts” or “emotions” or “desires.”
- Depending on the context, “with all my heart” or “with my whole heart” could be translated as “with all my energy” or “with complete dedication” or “completely” or “with total commitment.”
- The expression “take it to heart” could be translated as “treat it seriously” or “carefully think about it.”
- The expression “hard-hearted” could also be translated as “stubbornly rebellious” or “refusing to obey” or “continually disobeying God.”
- Ways to translate “brokenhearted” could include “very sad” or “feeling deeply hurt.”

(See also: hard)

Bible References:

- **1 John 03:16-18**
- 1 Thessalonians 02:3-4
- 2 Thessalonians 03:13-15
- Acts 08:20-23
- Acts 15:7-9
- Luke 08:14-15
- Mark 02:5-7
- Matthew 05:5-8
- Matthew 22:37-38

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- 1 John 3:16-18
- 1 John 3:19-22

Holy One

Definition:

The term “Holy One” is a title in the Bible that almost always refers to God.

- In the Old Testament, this title often occurs in the phrase “Holy One of Israel.”
- In the New Testament, Jesus is also referred to as the “Holy One.”
- The term “holy one” is sometimes used in the Bible to refer to an angel.

Translation Suggestions:

- The literal term is “the Holy” (with “One” being implied.) Many languages (like English) will translate this with the implied noun included (such as “One” or “God”).
- This term could also be translated as “God, who is holy” or “the Set Apart One.”
- The phrase “the Holy One of Israel” could be translated as “the Holy God whom Israel worships” or “the Holy One who rules Israel.”
- It is best to translate this term using the same word or phrase that is used to translate “holy.”

(See also: holy, [God](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:20-21](#)
- [2 Kings 19:20-22](#)
- [Acts 02:27-28](#)
- [Acts 03:13-14](#)
- [Isaiah 05:15-17](#)
- [Isaiah 41:14-15](#)
- [Luke 04:33-34](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2623, H376, H6918, G40, G3741

Uses:

- [1 John 2:20-21](#)

Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit

Facts:

These terms all refer to the Holy Spirit, who is God. The one true God exists eternally as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit is also referred to as “the Spirit” and “Spirit of Yahweh” and “Spirit of truth.”
- Because the Holy Spirit is God, he is absolutely holy, infinitely pure, and morally perfect in all his nature and in everything he does.
- Along with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit was active in creating the world.
- When God’s Son, Jesus, returned to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit to his people to lead them, teach them, comfort them, and enable them to do God’s will.
- The Holy Spirit guided Jesus and he guides those who believe in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could simply be translated with the words used to translate “holy” and “spirit.”
- Ways to translate this term could also include “Pure Spirit” or “Spirit who is Holy” or “God the Spirit.”

(See also: holy, [spirit](#), [God](#), Lord, [God the Father](#), [Son of God](#), gift)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 10:9-10
- 1 Thessalonians 04:7-8
- Acts 08:14-17
- Galatians 05:25-26
- Genesis 01:1-2
- Isaiah 63:10
- Job 33:4-5
- Matthew 12:31-32
- Matthew 28:18-19
- Psalms 051:10-11

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **01:01** But **God’s Spirit** was there over the water.
- **24:08** When Jesus came up out of the water after being baptized, **the Spirit of God** appeared in the form of a dove and came down and rested on him.
- **26:01** After overcoming Satan’s temptations, Jesus returned in the power of **the Holy Spirit** to the region of Galilee where he lived.

- **26:03** Jesus read, "God has given me **his Spirit** so that I can proclaim good news to the poor, freedom to captives, recovery of sight for the blind, and release to the oppressed."
- **42:10** "So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and **the Holy Spirit** and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
- **43:03** They were all filled with the **Holy Spirit** and they began to speak in other languages.
- **43:08** "And Jesus has sent the **Holy Spirit** just as he promised he would do. The **Holy Spirit** is causing the things that you are now seeing and hearing."
- **43:11** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your sins. Then he will also give you the gift of the **Holy Spirit**."
- **45:01** He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the **Holy Spirit** and of wisdom.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3068, H6944, H7307, G40, G4151

Uses:

- **1 John 3:23-24**
- **1 John 4:1-3**
- **1 John 4:11-14**
- **1 John 5:6-8**

idol, idolatrous

Definition:

An idol is an object that people make so they can worship it. Something is described as “idolatrous” if it involves giving honor to something other than the one true God.

- People make idols to represent the false gods that they worship.
- These false gods do not exist; there is no God besides Yahweh.
- Sometimes demons work through an idol to make it seem like it has power, even though it does not.
- Idols are often made of valuable materials like gold, silver, bronze, or expensive wood.
- An “idolatrous kingdom” means a “kingdom of people who worship idols” or a “kingdom of people who worship earthly things.”
- The term “idolatrous figure” is another word for a “carved image” or an “idol.”

(See also: false god, image, kingdom, worship)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 01:8-10
- Acts 07:41-42
- Acts 15:19-21
- Colossians 03:5-8
- Exodus 32:1-2
- Galatians 05:19-21
- Psalm 031:5-7
- Romans 02:21-22

Examples from the Bible stories:

***13:05** ”Do not make **idols** or worship them, because I, Yahweh, am a jealous God.” ***13:12** Aaron made a golden **idol** in the shape of a calf. The people began to wildly worship the **idol** and make sacrifices to it! ***14:03** ”You must completely destroy all of their **idols**. If you do not obey me, you will worship their **idols** instead of me.” ***18:12** All of the kings and most of the people of the kingdom of Israel worshiped **idols**. This kind of worship often included sexual immorality and sometimes even child sacrifice. ***19:16** They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshipping **idols** and to start showing justice and mercy to others.

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- 1 John 5:20-21

in Christ, in Jesus, in the Lord, in him

Definition:

The phrase “in Christ” and related terms refer to the state or condition of being in relationship with Jesus Christ through faith in him.

- Other related terms include “in Christ Jesus, in Jesus Christ, in the Lord Jesus, in the Lord Jesus Christ.”
- Possible meanings for the term “in Christ” could include “because you belong to Christ” or “through the relationship you have with Christ” or “based on your faith in Christ.”
- These related terms all have the same meaning of being in a state of believing in Jesus and being his disciple.
- Note: Sometimes the word “in” belongs with the verb. For example, “share in Christ” means to “share in” the benefits that come from knowing Christ. To “glory in” Christ means to be glad and give praise to God for who Jesus is and what he has done. To “believe in” Christ means to trust him as Savior and know him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “in Christ” and “in the Lord” (and related phrases) could include:
- “who belong to Christ”
- “because you believe in Christ”
- “because Christ has saved us”
- “in service to the Lord”
- “relying on the Lord”
- “because of what the Lord has done.”
- People who “believe in” Christ or who “have faith in” Christ believe what Jesus taught and are trusting him to save them because of his sacrifice on the cross that paid the penalty for their sins. Some languages may have one word that translates verbs like “believe in” or “share in” or “trust in.”

(See also: [Christ](#), [Lord](#), [Jesus](#), [believe](#), [faith](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:4-6](#)
- [2 Corinthians 02:16-17](#)
- [2 Timothy 01:1-2](#)
- [Galatians 01:21-24](#)
- [Galatians 02:17-19](#)
- [Philemon 01:4-7](#)
- [Revelation 01:9-11](#)

- Romans 09:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong's: G1519, G2962, G5547

Uses:

- 1 John 2:4-6

Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus

Facts:

Jesus is God's Son. The name "Jesus" means "Yahweh saves." The term "Christ" is a title that means "anointed one" and is another word for Messiah.

- The two names are often combined as "Jesus Christ" or "Christ Jesus." These names emphasize that God's Son is the Messiah, who came to save people from being punished eternally for their sins.
- In a miraculous way, the Holy Spirit caused the eternal Son of God to be born as a human being. His mother was told by an angel to call him "Jesus" because he was destined to save people from their sins.
- Jesus did many miracles that revealed that he is God and that he is the Christ, or the Messiah.

Translation Suggestions:

- In many languages "Jesus" and "Christ" are spelled in a way that keeps the sounds or spelling as close to the original as possible. For example, "Jesucristo," "Jezus Christus," "Yesus Kristus", and "Hesukristo" are some of the ways that these names are translated into different languages.
- For the term "Christ," some translators may prefer to use only some form of the term "Messiah" throughout.
- Also consider how these names are spelled in a nearby local or national language.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Christ](#), [God](#), [God the Father](#), high priest, kingdom of God, Mary, [Savior](#), [Son of God](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 06:9-11
- [1 John 02:1-3](#)
- [1 John 04:15-16](#)
- 1 Timothy 01:1-2
- 2 Peter 01:1-2
- 2 Thessalonians 02:13-15
- 2 Timothy 01:8-11
- Acts 02:22-24
- Acts 05:29-32
- Acts 10:36-38
- Hebrews 09:13-15
- Hebrews 10:19-22
- Luke 24:19-20

- Matthew 01:20-21
- Matthew 04:1-4
- Philippians 02:5-8
- Philippians 02:9-11
- Philippians 04:21-23
- Revelation 01:4-6

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **22:04** The angel said, "You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You are to name him **Jesus** and he will be the Messiah."
- **23:02** "Name him **Jesus** (which means, 'Yahweh saves'), because he will save the people from their sins."
- **24:07** So John baptized him (Jesus), even though **Jesus** had never sinned.
- **24:09** There is only one God. But John heard God the Father speak, and saw **Jesus** the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized **Jesus**.
- **25:08** **Jesus** did not give in to Satan's temptations, so Satan left him.
- **26:08** Then **Jesus** went throughout the region of Galilee, and large crowds came to him. They brought many people who were sick or handicapped, including those who could not see, walk, hear, or speak, and **Jesus** healed them.
- **31:03** Then **Jesus** finished praying and went to the disciples. He walked on top of the water across the lake toward their boat!
- **38:02** He (Judas) knew that the Jewish leaders denied that **Jesus** was the Messiah and that they were plotting to kill him.
- **40:08** Through his death, **Jesus** opened a way for people to come to God.
- **42:11** Then **Jesus** was taken up to heaven, and a cloud hid him from their sight. **Jesus** sat down at the right hand of God to rule over all things.
- **50:17** **Jesus** and his people will live on the new earth, and he will reign forever over everything that exists. He will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or death. **Jesus** will rule his kingdom with peace and justice, and he will be with his people forever.

Word Data:

- Strong's: G2424, G5547

Uses:

- 1 John 1:3-4
- 1 John 2:1-3
- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 2:22-23

- [1 John 3:23-24](#)
- [1 John 4:15-16](#)
- [1 John 5:1-3](#)
- [1 John 5:6-8](#)
- [1 John 5:20-21](#)

joy, joyful

Definition:

Joy is a feeling of delight or deep satisfaction that comes from God. The related term “joyful” describes a person who feels very glad and is full of deep happiness.

- A person feels joy when he has a deep sense that what he is experiencing is very good.
- God is the one who gives true joy to people.
- Having joy does not depend on pleasant circumstances. God can give people joy even when very difficult things are happening in their lives.
- Sometimes places are described as joyful, such as houses or cities. This means that the people who live there are joyful.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “joy” could also be translated as “gladness” or “delight” or “great happiness.”
- The phrase, “be joyful” could be translated as “rejoice” or “be very glad” or it could be translated “be very happy in God’s goodness.”
- A person who is joyful could be described as “very happy” or “delighted” or “deeply glad.”
- A phrase such as “make a joyful shout” could be translated as “shout in a way that shows you are very happy.”
- A “joyful city” or “joyful house” could be translated as “city where joyful people live” or “house full of joyful people” or “city whose people are very happy.” (See: [metonymy](#))

(See also: rejoice)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 01:6-7
- [3 John 01:1-4](#)
- Galatians 05:22-24
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- James 01:1-3
- Jeremiah 15:15-16
- Matthew 02:9-10
- Nehemiah 08:9-10
- Philemon 01:4-7
- Psalm 048:1-3
- Romans 15:30-32

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [33:07](#) “The rocky ground is a person who hears God’s word and accepts it with **joy**.”

- **34:04** "The kingdom of God is also like hidden treasure that someone hid in a field.. Another man found the treasure and then buried it again. He was so filled with **joy**, that he went and sold everything he had and used the money to buy that field."
- **41:07** The women were full of fear and great **joy**. They ran to tell the disciples the good news.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1523, H1524, H1525, H1750, H2304, H2305, H2898, H4885, H5937, H5947, H5970, H7440, H7442, H7444, H7445, H7797, H8055, H8056, H8057, H8342, H8643, G20, G21, G2167, G2744, G3685, G4640, G5463, G5479

Uses:

- **1 John 1:3-4**

last day, last days, latter days

Definition:

The term “last days” or “latter days” refers generally to the time period at the end of the current age.

- This time period will have an unknown duration.
- The “last days” are a time of judgment upon those who have turned away from God.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “last days” can also be translated as “final days” or “end times.”
- In some contexts, this could be translated as “end of the world” or “when this world ends.”

(See also: [day of the Lord](#), judge, turn, [world](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 03:3-4
- Daniel 10:14-15
- Hebrews 01:1-3
- Isaiah 02:1-2
- James 05:1-3
- Jeremiah 23:19-20
- John 11:24-26
- Micah 04:1

Word Data:

- Strong's: H319, H3117, G2078, G2250

Uses:

- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)

law, law of Moses, God's law, law of Yahweh

Definition:

All these terms refer to the commandments and instructions that God gave Moses for the Israelites to obey. The terms “law” and “God’s law” are also used more generally to refer to everything God wants his people to obey.

- Depending on the context, the “law” can refer to:
- the Ten Commandments that God wrote on stone tablets for the Israelites
- all the laws given to Moses
- the first five books of the Old Testament
- the entire Old Testament (also referred to as “scriptures” in the New Testament).
- all of God’s instructions and will
- The phrase “the law and the prophets” is used in the New Testament to refer to the Hebrew scriptures (or “Old Testament”)

Translation Suggestions:

- These terms could be translated using the plural, “laws,” since they refer to many instructions.
- The “law of Moses” could be translated as “the laws that God told Moses to give to the Israelites.”
- Depending on the context, “the law of Moses” could also be translated as “the law that God told to Moses” or “God’s laws that Moses wrote down” or “the laws that God told Moses to give to the Israelites.”
- Ways to translate “the law” or “law of God” or “God’s laws” could include “laws from God” or “God’s commands” or “laws that God gave” or “everything that God commands” or “all of God’s instructions.”
- The phrase “law of Yahweh” could also be translated as “Yahweh’s laws” or “laws that Yahweh said to obey” or “laws from Yahweh” or “things Yahweh commanded.”

(See also: instruct, Moses, Ten Commandments, lawful, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- Acts 15:5-6
- Daniel 09:12-14
- Exodus 28:42-43
- Ezra 07:25-26
- Galatians 02:15-16
- Luke 24:44
- Matthew 05:17-18
- Nehemiah 10:28-29

- Romans 03:19-20

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:07** God also gave many other **laws** and rules to follow. If the people obeyed these **laws**, God promised that he would bless and protect them. If they disobeyed them, God would punish them.\
- **13:09** Anyone who disobeyed **God's law** could bring an animal to the altar in front of the Tent of Meeting as a sacrifice to God.\
- **15:13** Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the covenant that God had made with the Israelites at Sinai. The people promised to remain faithful to God and follow **his laws**.\
- **16:01** After Joshua died, the Israelites disobeyed God and did not drive out the rest of the Canaanites or obey **God's laws**.\
- **21:05** In the New Covenant, God would write **his law** on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would forgive their sins.\
- **27:01** Jesus answered, "What is written in **God's law**?"\
- **28:01** Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me 'good?' There is only one who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have eternal life, obey **God's laws**."\<

Word Data:

- Strong's: H430, H1881, H1882, H2706, H2710, H3068, H4687, H4872, H4941, H8451, G2316, G3551, G3565

Uses:

- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)

lawless, lawlessness

Definition:

The term “lawless” describes a person who does not obey laws or rules. When a country or group of people are in a state of “lawlessness,” there is widespread disobedience, rebellion, or immorality.

- A lawless person is rebellious and does not obey God’s laws.
- The apostle Paul wrote that in the last days there will be a “man of lawlessness,” or a “lawless one,” who will be influenced by Satan to do evil things.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “lawless” could also be translated as “rebellious” or “disobedient” or “law-defying”.
- The term “lawlessness” could be translated as “not obeying any laws” or “rebellion (against God’s laws).”
- The phrase “man of lawlessness” could be translated as “man who does not obey any laws” or “man who rebels against God’s laws.”
- It is important to keep the concept of “law” in this term, if possible.
- Note that the term “unlawful” has a different meaning from this term.

(See also: law, lawful, [law](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 03:4-6](#)
- 2 Thessalonians 02:3-4
- Acts 02:22-24
- Matthew 07:21-23
- Titus 02:14

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [1 John 3:4-6](#)

life, live, lived, lives, living, alive

Definition:

All these terms refer to being physically alive, not dead. They are also used figuratively to refer to being alive spiritually. The following discusses what is meant by “physical life” and “spiritual life.”

1. Physical life

- Physical life is the presence of the spirit in the body. God breathed life into Adam’s body, and he became a living being.
- A “life” can also refer to an individual person as in “a life was saved”.
- Sometimes the word “life” refers to the experience of living as in, “his life was enjoyable.”
- It can also refer to a person’s lifespan, as in the expression, “the end of his life.”
- The term “living” may refer to being physically alive, as in “my mother is still living.” It may also refer to dwelling somewhere as in, “they were living in the city.”
- In the Bible, the concept of “life” is often contrasted with the concept of “death.”

2. Spiritual life

- A person has spiritual life when he believes in Jesus with God gives that person a transformed life with the Holy Spirit living in him.
- This life is also called “eternal life” to indicate that it does not end.
- The opposite of spiritual life is spiritual death, which means being separated from God and experiencing eternal punishment.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “life” can be translated as “existence” or “person” or “soul” or “being” or “experience.”
- The term “live” could be translated by “dwell” or “reside” or “exist.”
- The expression “end of his life” could be translated as “when he stopped living.”
- The expression “spared their lives’ could be translated as “allowed them to live” or “did not kill them.”
- The expression “they risked their lives” could be translated as “they put themselves in danger” or “they did something that could have killed them.”
- When the Bible text talks about being alive spiritually, “life” could be translated as “spiritual life” or “eternal life,” depending on the context.
- The concept of “spiritual life” could also be translated as “God making us alive in our spirits” or “new life by God’s Spirit” or “being made alive in our inner self.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “give life” could also be translated as “cause to live” or “give eternal life” or “cause to live eternally.”

(See also: [death](#), [everlasting](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 01:3-4
- Acts 10:42-43
- Genesis 02:7-8
- Genesis 07:21-22
- Hebrews 10:19-22
- Jeremiah 44:1-3
- John 01:4-5
- Judges 02:18-19
- Luke 12:22-23
- Matthew 07:13-14

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **01:10** So God took some dirt, formed it into a man, and breathed **life** into him.
- **03:01** After a long time, many people were **living** in the world.
- **08:13** When Joseph's brothers returned home and told their father, Jacob, that Joseph was still **alive**, he was very happy.
- **17:09** However, toward the end of his [David's] **life** he sinned terribly before God.
- **27:01** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal **life**?"
- **35:05** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the **Life**."
- **44:05** "You are the ones who told the Roman governor to kill Jesus. You killed the author of **life**, but God raised him from the dead."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1934, H2416, H2417, H2421, H2425, H5315, G198, G222, G227, G806, G590

Uses:

- [1 John 1:1-2](#)
- [1 John 3:13-15](#)

light

Definition:

There are several figurative uses of the term “light” in the Bible. It is often used as a metaphor for righteousness, holiness, and truth. (See: [Metaphor](#))

- Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” to express that he brings God’s true message to the world and rescues people from the darkness of their sin.
- Christians are commanded to “walk in the light,” which means they should be living the way God wants them to and avoiding evil.
- The apostle John stated that “God is light” and in him there is no darkness at all.
- Light and darkness are complete opposites. Darkness is the absence of all light.
- Jesus said that he was “the light of the world” and that his followers should shine like lights in the world by living in a way that clearly shows how great God is.
- “Walking in the light” represents living in a way that pleases God, doing what is good and right. Walking in darkness represents living in rebellion against God, doing evil things.

Translation Suggestions:

- When translating, it is important to keep the literal terms “light” and “darkness” even when they are used figuratively.
- It may be necessary to explain the comparison in the text. For example, “walk as children of light” could be translated as, “live openly righteous lives, like someone who walks in bright sunlight.”
- Make sure that the translation of “light” does not refer to an object that gives light, such as a lamp. The translation of this term should refer to the light itself.

(See also: [darkness](#), holy, [righteous](#), [true](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:5-7](#)
- [1 John 02:7-8](#)
- 2 Corinthians 04:5-6
- Acts 26:15-18
- Isaiah 02:5-6
- John 01:4-5
- Matthew 05:15-16
- Matthew 06:22-24
- Nehemiah 09:12-13
- [Revelation 18:23-24](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H216, H217, H3313, H3974, H4237, H5051, H5094, H5105, H5216, H6348, H7052, H7837, G681, G796, G1645, G2985, G3088, G5338, G5457, G5458, G5460, G5462

Uses:

- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 2:7-8
- 1 John 2:9-11

love, loves, loving, loved

Definition:

To love another person is to care for that person and do things that will benefit him. There are different meanings for “love” some languages may express using different words:

1. The kind of love that comes from God is focused on the good of others even when it doesn't benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do. God himself is love and is the source of true love.
2. Jesus showed this kind of love by sacrificing his life in order to rescue us from sin and death. He also taught his followers to love others sacrificially.
3. When people love others with this kind of love, they act in ways that show they are thinking of what will cause the others to thrive. This kind of love especially includes forgiving others.
4. In the ULB, the word “love” refers to this kind of sacrificial love, unless a Translation Note indicates a different meaning.
5. Another word in the New Testament refers to brotherly love, or love for a friend or family member.
6. This term refers to natural human love between friends or relatives.
7. The term can also be used in such contexts as, “They love to sit in the most important seats at a banquet.” This means that they “like very much” or “greatly desire” to do that.
8. The word “love” can also refer to romantic love between a man and a woman.
9. In the figurative expression “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated,” the term “loved” refers to God's choosing of Jacob to be in a covenant relationship with him. This could also be translated as “chosen.” Although Esau was also blessed by God, he wasn't given the privilege of being in the covenant. The term “hated” is used figuratively here to mean “rejected” or “not chosen.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Unless indicated otherwise in a Translation Note, the word “love” in the ULB refers to the kind of sacrificial love that comes from God.
- Some languages may have a special word for the kind of unselfish, sacrificial love that God has. Ways to translate this might include, “devoted, faithful caring” or “care for unselfishly” or “love from God.” Make sure that the word used to translate God's love can include giving up one's own interests to benefit others and loving others no matter what they do.
- Sometimes the English word “love” describes the deep caring that people have for friends and family members. Some languages might translate this with a word or phrase that means, “like very much” or “care for” or “have strong affection for.”
- In contexts where the word “love” is used to express a strong preference for something, this could be translated by “strongly prefer” or “like very much” or “greatly desire.”
- Some languages may also have a separate word that refers to romantic or sexual love between a husband and wife.

- Many languages must express “love” as an action. So for example, they might translate “love is patient, love is kind” as, “when a person loves someone, he is patient with him and kind to him.”

(See also: covenant, **death**, sacrifice, **save**, **sin**)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
- **1 John 03:1-3**
- 1 Thessalonians 04:9-12
- Galatians 05:22-24
- Genesis 29:15-18
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- Jeremiah 02:1-3
- John 03:16-18
- Matthew 10:37-39
- Nehemiah 09:32-34
- Philippians 01:9-11
- Song of Solomon 01:1-4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:02** The law expert replied that God’s law says, “**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. And **love** your neighbor as yourself.”
- **33:08** “The thorny ground is a person who hears God’s word, but, as time passes, the cares, riches, and pleasures of life choke out his **love** for God.”
- **36:05** As Peter was talking, a bright cloud came down on top of them and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son whom I **love**.”
- **39:10** “Everyone who **loves** the truth listens to me.”
- **47:01** She (Lydia) **loved** and worshiped God.
- **48:01** When God created the world, everything was perfect. There was no sin. Adam and Eve **loved** each other, and they **loved** God.
- **49:03** He (Jesus) taught that you need to **love** other people the same way you love yourself.
- **49:04** He (Jesus) also taught that you need to **love** God more than you **love** anything else, including your wealth.
- **49:07** Jesus taught that God **loves** sinners very much.
- **49:09** But God **loved** everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.
- **49:13** God **loves** you and wants you to believe in Jesus so he can have a close relationship with you.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H157, H158, H159, H160, H2245, H2617, H2836, H3039, H4261, H5689, H5690, H5691, H7355, H7356, H7453, H7474, G25, G26, G5360, G5361, G5362, G5363, G5365, G5367, G5368, G5369, G5377, G5381, G5382, G5383, G5388

Uses:

- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 2:9-11
- 1 John 2:15-17
- 1 John 3:1-3
- 1 John 3:11-12
- 1 John 3:16-18
- 1 John 3:23-24
- 1 John 4:7-8
- 1 John 4:17-18
- 1 John 5:1-3

lust

Definition:

Lust is a very strong desire, usually in the context of wanting something sinful or immoral. To lust is to have lust.

- In the Bible, “lust” usually referred to sexual desire for someone other than one’s own spouse.
- Sometimes this term was used in a figurative sense to refer to worshiping idols.
- Depending on the context, “lust” could be translated as “wrong desire” or “strong desire” or “wrongful sexual desire” or “strong immoral desire” or “to strongly desire to sin.”
- The phrase “to lust after” could be translated as “to wrongly desire” or “to think immorally about” or “to immorally desire.”

(See also: adultery, [idol](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:15-17](#)
- [2 Timothy 02:22-23](#)
- [Galatians 05:16-18](#)
- [Galatians 05:19-21](#)
- [Genesis 39:7-9](#)
- [Matthew 05:27-28](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [1 John 2:15-17](#)

marvel, wonder, amazed, astonished

Definition:

All these terms refer to being very surprised because of something extraordinary that happened.

- Some of these words are translations of Greek expressions that mean “struck with amazement” or “standing outside of (oneself).” These expressions show how very surprised or shocked the person was feeling. Other languages might also have ways to express this.
- Usually the event that caused the wonder and amazement was a miracle, something only God could do.
- The meaning of these terms can also include feelings of confusion because what happened was totally unexpected.
- Other ways to translate these words could be “extremely surprised” or “very shocked.”
- Related words include “marvelous” (amazing, wonderful), “amazement,” and “astonishment.”
- In general, these terms are positive and express that the people were happy about what had happened.

(See also: miracle, sign)

Bible References:

- Acts 08:9-11
- Acts 09:20-22
- Galatians 01:6-7
- Mark 02:10-12
- Matthew 07:28-29
- Matthew 15:29-31
- Matthew 19:25-27

Word Data:

- Strong's: H926, H2865, H3820, H4159, H4923, H5953, H6313, H6381, H6382, H6383, H6395, H7583, H8047, H8074, H8078, H8429, H8539, H8540, H8541, H8653, G639, G1568, G1569, G1605, G1611, G1839, G2284, G2285, G2296, G2297, G2298, G3167, G4023, G4423, G4592, G5059

Uses:

- [1 John 3:13-15](#)

name, names, named

Definition:

In the Bible, the word “name” was used in several figurative ways.

- In some contexts, “name” could refer to a person’s reputation, as in “let us make a name for ourselves.”
- The term “name” could also refer to the memory of something. For example, “cut off the names of the idols” means to destroy those idols so that they are no longer remembered or worshiped.
- Speaking “in the name of God” meant speaking with his power and authority, or as his representative.
- The “name” of someone could refer to the entire person, as in “there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.” (See: [metonymy](#))

Translation Suggestions:

- An expression like “his good name” could be translated as “his good reputation.”
- Doing something “in the name of” could be translated as “with the authority of” or “with the permission of” or “as the representative of” that person.
- The expression “make a name for ourselves” could be translated “cause many people to know about us” or “make people think we are very important.”
- The expression “call his name” could be translated as “name him” or “give him the name.”
- The expression “those who love your name” could be translated as “those who love you.”
- The expression “cut off the names of idols” could be translated as “get rid of pagan idols so that they are not even remembered” or “cause people to stop worshiping false gods” or “completely destroy all idols so that people no longer even think about them.”

(See also: call)

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:12-14](#)
- [2 Timothy 02:19-21](#)
- [Acts 04:5-7](#)
- [Acts 04:11-12](#)
- [Acts 09:26-27](#)
- [Genesis 12:1-3](#)
- [Genesis 35:9-10](#)
- [Matthew 18:4-6](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5344, H7121, H7761, H8034, H8036, G2564, G3686, G3687, G5122

Uses:

- 1 John 2:12-14
- 1 John 3:23-24
- 1 John 5:13-15

perfect

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “perfect” means to be mature in our Christian life. To perfect something means to work at it until it is excellent and without flaws.

- Being perfect and mature means that a Christian is obedient, not sinless.
- The term “perfect” also has the meaning of being “complete” or “whole.”
- The New Testament Book of James states that persevering through trials will produce completeness and maturity in the believer.
- When Christians study the Bible and obey it, they will become more spiritually perfect and mature because they will be more like Christ in their character.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “without flaw” or “without error” or “flawless” or “without fault” or “not having any faults.”

Bible References:

- Hebrews 12:1-3
- James 03:1-2
- Matthew 05:46-48
- Psalms 019:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H724, H998, H1584, H1585, H3632, H3634, H4357, H4359, H4512, H8003, H8502, H8503, H8535, H8537, H8549, H8552, G195, G197, G199, G739, G1295, G2005, G2675, G2676, G2677, G3647, G5046, G5047, G5048, G5050, G5052

Uses:

- [1 John 2:4-6](#)
- [1 John 4:17-18](#)

pray, prayer, prayers, prayed

Definition:

The terms “pray” and “prayer” refer to talking with God. These terms are used to refer to people trying to talk to a false god.

- People can pray silently, talking to God with their thoughts, or they can pray aloud, speaking to God with their voice. Sometimes prayers are written down, such as when David wrote his prayers in the Book of Psalms.
- Prayer can include asking God for mercy, for help with a problem, and for wisdom in making decisions.
- Often people ask God to heal people who are sick or who need his help in other ways.
- People also thank and praise God when they are praying to him.
- Praying includes confessing our sins to God and asking him to forgive us.
- Talking to God is sometimes called “communing” with him as our spirit communicates with his spirit, sharing our emotions and enjoying his presence.
- This term could be translated as “talking to God” or “communicating with God.” The translation of this term should be able to include praying that is silent.

(See also: false god, [forgive](#), praise)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 03:8-10
- Acts 08:24
- Acts 14:23-26
- Colossians 04:2-4
- John 17:9-11
- Luke 11:1
- Matthew 05:43-45
- Matthew 14:22-24

Examples from the Bible stories:

***06:05** Isaac **prayed** for Rebekah, and God allowed her to get pregnant with twins. ***13:12** But Moses **prayed** for them, and God listened to his **prayer** and did not destroy them. ***19:08** Then the prophets of Baal **prayed** to Baal, “Hear us, O Baal!” ***21:07** Priests also **prayed** to God for the people. ***38:11** Jesus told his disciples to **pray** that they would not enter into temptation. ***43:13** The disciples continually listened to the teaching of the apostles, spent time together, ate together, and **prayed** with each other. ***49:18** God tells you to **pray**, to study his word, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [1 John 5:16-17](#)

propitiation

Definition:

The term “propitiation” refers to a sacrifice that is made to satisfy or fulfill the justice of God and to appease his wrath.

- The offering of the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ is the propitiation to God for mankind’s sins.
- Jesus’ death on the cross appeased God’s wrath against sin. This provided a way for God to look on people with favor and offer them eternal life.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “appeasement” or “causing God to forgive sins and grant favor to people.”
- The word “atonement” is close in meaning to “propitiation.” It is important to compare how these two terms are used.

(See also: atonement, [everlasting](#), [forgive](#), sacrifice)

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:1-3](#)
- [1 John 04:9-10](#)
- Romans 03:25-26

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G2434, G2435

Uses:

- [1 John 2:1-3](#)
- [1 John 4:9-10](#)

punish, punishment

Definition:

The term “punish” means to cause someone to suffer a negative consequence for doing something wrong. The term “punishment” refers to the negative consequence that is given as a result of that wrong behavior.

- Often punishment is intended to motivate a person to stop sinning.
- God punished the Israelites when they disobeyed him, especially when they worshiped false gods. Because of their sin, God allowed their enemies to attack and capture them.
- God is righteous and just, so he has to punish sin. Every human being has sinned against God and deserves punishment.
- Jesus was punished for all the evil things that every person has ever done. He received each person’s punishment on himself even though he did nothing wrong and did not deserve that punishment.
- The expressions “go unpunished” and “leave unpunished” mean to decide not to punish people for their wrongdoing. God often allows sin to go unpunished as he waits for people to repent.

(See also: just, repent, [righteous](#), [sin](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 04:17-18](#)
- [2 Thessalonians 01:9-10](#)
- [Acts 04:21-22](#)
- [Acts 07:59-60](#)
- [Genesis 04:13-15](#)
- [Luke 23:15-17](#)
- [Matthew 25:44-46](#)

their

Examples from the Bible stories:

***13:07** God also gave many other laws and rules to follow. If the people obeyed these laws, God promised that he would bless and protect them. If they disobeyed them, God would **punish** them. ***16:02** Because the Israelites kept disobeying God, he **punished** them by allowing their enemies to defeat them. ***19:16** The prophets warned the people that if they did not stop doing evil and start obeying God, then God would judge them as guilty, and he would **punish** them. ***48:06** Jesus was the perfect high priest because he took the **punishment** for every sin that anyone has ever committed. ***48:10** When anyone believes in Jesus, the blood of Jesus takes away that person’s sin, and God’s **punishment** passes over him. ***49:09** But God loved everyone in the world so much that

he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be **punished** for his sins, but will live with God forever. *49:11 Jesus never sinned, but he chose to be **punished** and die as the perfect sacrifice to take away your sins and the sins of every person in the world.

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- 1 John 4:17-18

pure, purify, purification

Definition:

To be “pure” means to have no flaw or to have nothing mixed in that is not supposed to be there. To purify something is to cleanse it and remove anything that contaminates or pollutes it.

- In regard to Old Testament laws, “purify” and “purification” refer mainly to the cleansing from things that make an object or a person ritually unclean, such as disease, body fluids, or childbirth.
- The Old Testament also had laws telling people how to be purified from sin, usually by the sacrifice of an animal. This was only temporary and the sacrifices had to be repeated over and over again.
- In the New Testament, to be purified often refers to being cleansed from sin.
- The only way that people can be completely and permanently purified from sin is through repenting and receiving God’s forgiveness, through trusting in Jesus and his sacrifice.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “purify” could be translated as “make pure” or “cleanse” or “cleanse from all contamination” or “get rid of all sin.”
- A phrase such as “when the time for their purification was over” could be translated as “when they had purified themselves by waiting the required number of days.”
- The phrase “provided purification for sins” could be translated as “provided a way for people to be completely cleansed from their sin.”
- Other ways to translate “purification” could include “cleansing” or “spiritual washing” or “becoming ritually clean.”

(See also: atonement, [clean](#), [spirit](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 01:5-8
- Exodus 31:6-9
- Hebrews 09:13-15
- James 04:8-10
- Luke 02:22-24
- [Revelation 14:3-5](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1249, H1252, H1253, H1305, H1865, H2134, H2135, H2141, H2212, H2398, H2403, H2561, H2889, H2890, H2891, H2892, H2893, H3795, H3800, H4795, H5343, H5462, H6337, H6884, H6942, H8562, G48, G49, G53, G54, G1506, G2511, G2512, G2513, G2514

Uses:

- 1 John 3:1-3

receive

Definition:

The term “receive” generally means to get or accept something that is given, offered, or presented.

- To “receive” can also mean to suffer or experience something, as in “he received punishment for what he did.”
- There is also a special sense in which we can “receive” a person. For example, to “receive” guests or visitors means to welcome them and treat them with honor in order to build a relationship with them.
- To “receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” means we are given the Holy Spirit and welcome him to work in and through our lives.
- To “receive Jesus” means to accept God’s offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- When a blind person “receives his sight” means that God has healed him and enabled him to see.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “receive” could be translated as “accept” or “welcome” or “experience” or “be given.”
- The expression “you will receive power” could be translated as “you will be given power” or “God will give you power” or “power will be given to you (by God)” or “God will cause the Holy Spirit to work powerfully in you.”
- The phrase “received his sight” could be translated as “was able to see” or “became able to see again” or “was healed by God so that he was able to see.”

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), [Jesus](#), lord, [save](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 05:9-10](#)
- 1 Thessalonians 01:6-7
- 1 Thessalonians 04:1-2
- Acts 08:14-17
- Jeremiah 32:33-35
- Luke 09:5-6
- Malachi 03:10-12
- Psalms 049:14-15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:13** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no sin. He would die to **receive** the punishment for other people’s sin. His punishment would bring peace

between God and people.

- **45:05** As Stephen was dying, he cried out, "Jesus, **receive** my spirit."
- **49:06** He (Jesus) taught that some people will receive him and be saved, but others will not.
- **49:10** When Jesus died on the cross, he **received** your punishment.
- **49:13** God will save everyone who believes in Jesus and **receives** him as their Master.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1878, H2505, H3557, H3947, H6901, H6902, H8254, G308, G324, G353, G354, G568, G588, G618, G1183, G1209, G1523, G1653, G1926, G2210, G2865, G2983, G3028, G3335, G3336, G3549, G3858, G3880, G3970, G4327, G4355, G4356, G4687, G4732, G5264, G5274, G5562

Uses:

- **1 John 5:9-10**

resurrection

Definition:

The term “resurrection” refers to the act of becoming alive again after having died.

- To resurrect someone means to bring that person back to life again. Only God has the power to do this.
- The word “resurrection” often refers to Jesus’ coming back to life after he died.
- When Jesus said, “I am the Resurrection and the Life” he meant that he is the source of resurrection, and the one who causes people to come back to life.

Translation Suggestions:

- A person’s “resurrection” could be translated as his “coming back to life” or his “becoming alive again after being dead.”
- The literal meaning of this word is “a rising up” or “the act of being raised (from the dead).” These would be other possible ways to translate this term.

(See also: [life](#), [death](#), raise)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 15:12-14
- 1 Peter 03:21-22
- Hebrews 11:35-38
- John 05:28-29
- Luke 20:27-28
- Luke 20:34-36
- Matthew 22:23-24
- Matthew 22:29-30
- Philippians 03:8-11

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:14** Through the Messiah’s death and **resurrection**, God would accomplish his plan to save sinners and start the New Covenant.
- **37:05** Jesus replied, ”I am the **Resurrection** and the Life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G386, G1454, G1815

Uses:

- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)

reveal, reveals, revealed, revelation

Definition:

The term “reveal” means to cause something to be known. A “revelation” is something that has been made known.

- God has revealed himself through everything he has created and through his communication with people by spoken and written messages.
- God also reveals himself through dreams or visions.
- When Paul said that he received the gospel by “revelation from Jesus Christ,” he means that Jesus himself explained the gospel to him.
- In the New Testament book “Revelation” is about God revealed events that will happen in the end times. He revealed them to the apostle John through visions.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “reveal” could include “make known” or “disclose” or “show clearly.”
- Depending on the context, possible ways to translate “revelation” could be “communication from God” or “things that God has revealed” or “teachings about God.” It is best to keep the meaning of “reveal” in the translation.
- The phrase “where there is no revelation” could be translated as “when God is not revealing himself to people” or “when God is not speaking to people” or “among people whom God has not communicating.”

(See also: good news, good news, dream, vision)

Bible References:

- Daniel 11:1-2
- Ephesians 03:3-5
- Galatians 01:11-12
- Lamentations 02:13-14
- Matthew 10:26-27
- Philippians 03:15-16
- [Revelation 01:1-3](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H241, H1540, H1541, G601, G602, G5537

Uses:

- 1 John 3:1-3
- 1 John 3:4-6
- 1 John 3:7-8

righteous, righteousness

Definition:

The term “righteousness” refers to God’s absolute goodness, justice, faithfulness, and love. Having these qualities makes God “righteous.” Because God is righteous, he must condemn sin.

- These terms are also often used to describe a person who obeys God and is morally good. However, because all people have sinned, no one except God is completely righteous.
- Examples of people the Bible who were called “righteous” include Noah, Job, Abraham, Zachariah, and Elisabeth.
- When people trust in Jesus to save them, God cleanses them from their sins and declares them to be righteous because of Jesus’ righteousness.

Translation Suggestions:

- When it describes God, the term “righteous” could be translated as “perfectly good and just” or “always acting rightly.”
- God’s “righteousness” could also be translated as “perfect faithfulness and goodness.”
- When it describes people who are obedient to God, the term “righteous” could also be translated as “morally good” or “just” or “living a God-pleasing life.”
- The phrase “the righteous” could also be translated as “righteous people” or “God-fearing people.”
- Depending on the context, “righteousness” could also be translated with a word or phrase that means “goodness” or “being perfect before God” or “acting in a right way by obeying God” or “doing perfectly good
- Sometimes “the righteous” was used figuratively and referred to “people who think they are good” or “people who seem to be righteous.”

(See also: good, holy, *evil*, just, *faithful*)

Bible References:

- *1 John 01:8-10*
- *2 Timothy 03:16-17*
- *Acts 03:13-14*
- *Ezekiel 33:12-13*
- *Galatians 03:6-9*
- *Isaiah 48:1-2*
- *Matthew 06:1-2*
- *Psalms 037:28-30*

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **03:02** But Noah found favor with God. He was a **righteous** man, living among wicked people.
- **04:08** God declared that Abram was **righteous** because he believed in God's promise.
- **17:02** David was a humble and **righteous** man who trusted and obeyed God.
- **23:01** Joseph, the man Mary was engaged to, was a **righteous** man.
- **50:10** Then the **righteous** ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God their Father.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3072, H3477, H4334, H4339, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6665, H6666, G1341, G1342, G1343, G1344, G1345, G1346, G2118

Uses:

- [1 John 01 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2:1-3](#)
- [1 John 2:27-29](#)
- [1 John 3:7-8](#)
- [1 John 3:9-10](#)
- [1 John 3:11-12](#)

Satan, devil, evil one

Facts:

Although the devil is a spirit being that God created, he rebelled against God and became God's enemy. The devil is also called "Satan" and "the evil one."

- The devil hates God and all that God created because he wants to take the place of God and be worshiped as God.
- Satan tempts people to rebel against God.
- God sent his Son, Jesus, to rescue people from Satan's control.
- The name "Satan" means "adversary" or "enemy."
- The word "devil" means "accuser."

Translation Suggestions:

- The word "devil" could also be translated as "the accuser" or "the evil one" or "the king of evil spirits" or "the chief evil spirit."
- "Satan" could be translated as "Opponent" or "Adversary" or some other name that shows that he is the devil.
- These terms should be translated differently from demon and evil spirit.
- Consider how these terms are translated in a local or national language.

(See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: demon, [evil](#), kingdom of God, tempt)

Bible References:

- [1 John 03:7-8](#)
- 1 Thessalonians 02:17-20
- 1 Timothy 05:14-16
- Acts 13:9-10
- Job 01:6-8
- Mark 08:33-34
- Zechariah 03:1-3

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:01** The snake who deceived Eve was **Satan**. The promise meant that the Messiah who would come would defeat **Satan** completely.
- **25:06** Then **Satan** showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and all their glory and said, "I will give you all this if you bow down and worship me."

- **25:08** Jesus did not give in to **Satan's** temptations, so **Satan** left him.
- **33:06** So Jesus explained, "The seed is the word of God. The path is a person who hears God's word, but does not understand it, and the **devil** takes the word from him."
- **38:07** After Judas took the bread, **Satan** entered into him.
- **48:04** God promised that one of Eve's descendants would crush **Satan's** head, and **Satan** would wound his heel. This meant that **Satan** would kill the Messiah, but God would raise him to life again, and then the Messiah will crush the power of **Satan** forever.
- **49:15** God has taken you out of **Satan's** kingdom of darkness and put you into God's kingdom of light.
- **50:09** "The weeds represent the people who belong to the **evil one**. The enemy who planted the weeds represents the **devil**."
- **50:10** "When the world ends, the angels will gather together all the people who belong to the **devil** and throw them into a raging fire, where they will cry and grind their teeth in terrible suffering."
- **50:15** When Jesus returns, he will completely destroy **Satan** and his kingdom. He will throw **Satan** into hell where he will burn forever, along with everyone who chose to follow him rather than to obey God.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7700, H7854, H8163, G1139, G1140, G1141, G1142, G1228, G4190, G4566, G4567

Uses:

- [1 John 2:12-14](#)
- [1 John 3:7-8](#)
- [1 John 3:9-10](#)
- [1 John 05 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 5:18-19](#)

save, saves, saved, safe

Definition:

The term “save” refers to keeping someone from experiencing something bad or harmful. To “be safe” means to be protected from harm or danger.

- In a physical sense, people can be saved or rescued from harm, danger, or death.
- In a spiritual sense, if a person has been “saved,” then God, through Jesus’ death on the cross, has forgiven him and rescued him from being punished in hell for his sin.
- People can save or rescue people from danger, but only God can save people from being punished eternally for their sins.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “save” could include “deliver” or “keep from harm” or “take out of harm’s way” or “keep from dying.”
- In the expression “whoever would save his life,” the term “save” could also be translated as “preserve” or “protect.”
- The term “safe” could be translated as “protected from danger” or “in a place where nothing can harm.”

(See also: cross, deliver, [punish](#), salvation, [sin](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 01:15-17
- Acts 02:20-21
- Genesis 47:25-26
- Jeremiah 16:19-21
- Luke 08:36-37
- Micah 06:3-5
- Psalm 080:1-3
- Romans 10:8-10

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **09:08** Moses tried to **save** his fellow Israelite.
- **11:02** God provided a way to **save** the firstborn son of anyone who believed in him.
- **12:05** Moses told the Israelites, “Stop being afraid! God will fight for you today and **save** you.”
- **12:13** The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to praise God because he **saved** them from the Egyptian army.

- **16:17** This pattern repeated many times: the Israelites would sin, God would punish them, they would repent, and God would send a deliverer to **save** them.
- **44:08** "You crucified Jesus, but God raised him to life again! You rejected him, but there is no other way to be **saved** except through the power of Jesus!"
- **47:11** The jailer trembled as he came to Paul and Silas and asked, "What must I do to be **saved**?" Paul answered, "Believe in Jesus, the Master, and you and your family will be **saved**."
- **49:12** Good works cannot **save** you.
- **49:13** God will **save** everyone who believes in Jesus and receives him as their Master. But he will not **save** anyone who does not believe in him.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H983, H2421, H3444, H3467, H3468, H4422, H4931, H6403, H7682, H7951, H7965, H8104, H8668, G803, G804, G806, G1295, G1508, G4982, G4991, G5198

Uses:

- [1 John 03 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 04 General Notes](#)

Savior, savior

Facts:

The term “savior” refers to a person who saves or rescues others from danger. It can also refer to someone who gives strength to others or provides for them.

- In the Old Testament, God is referred to as Israel’s Savior because he often rescued them from their enemies, gave them strength, and provided them with what they needed to live.
- In the New Testament, “Savior” is used as a description or title for Jesus Christ because he saves people from being eternally punished for their sin. He also saves them from being controlled by their sin.

Translation Suggestions:

- If possible, “Savior” should be translated with a word that is related to the words “save” and “salvation.”
- Ways to translate this term could include “the One who saves” or “God, who saves” or “who delivers from danger” or “who rescues from enemies” or “Jesus, the one who rescues (people) from sin.”

(See also: deliver, [Jesus](#), salvation, [save](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 04:9-10
- 2 Peter 02:20-22
- Acts 05:29-32
- Isaiah 60:15-16
- Luke 01:46-47
- Psalms 106:19-21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3467, G4990

Uses:

- [1 John 4:11-14](#)

seed, semen**Definition:**

A seed is the part of a plant that gets planted in the ground to reproduce more of the same kind of plant. It also has several figurative meanings.

- The term “seed” is used figuratively and euphemistically to refer to the tiny cells inside a man that combine with cells of a woman to cause a baby to grow inside her. A collection of these is called semen.
- Related to this, “seed” is also used to refer to a person’s offspring or descendants.
- This word often has a plural meaning, referring to more than one seed grain or more than one descendant.
- In the parable of the farmer planting seeds, Jesus compared his seeds to the Word of God, which is planted in people’s hearts in order to produce good spiritual fruit.
- The apostle Paul also uses the term “seed” to refer to the Word of God.

Translation Suggestions:

- For a literal seed, it is best to use the literal term for “seed” that is used in the target language for what a farmer plants in his field.
- The literal term should also be used in contexts where it refers figuratively to God’s Word.
- For the figurative use that refers to people who are of the same family line, it may be more clear to use the word “descendant” or “descendants” instead of seed. Some languages may have a word that means “children and grandchildren.”
- For a man or woman’s “seed,” consider how the target expresses this in a way that will not offend or embarrass people. (See: euphemism)

(See also: descendant, offspring)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:30-32
- Genesis 01:11-13
- Jeremiah 02:20-22
- Matthew 13:7-9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2232, H2233, H2234, H3610, H6507, G4615, G4687, G4690, G4701, G4703

Uses:

- [1 John 3:9-10](#)

sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning

Definition:

The term “sin” refers to actions, thoughts, and words that are against God’s will and laws. Sin can also refer to not doing something that God wants us to do.

- Sin includes anything we do that does not obey or please God, even things that other people don’t know about.
- Thoughts and actions that disobey God’s will are called “sinful.”
- Because Adam sinned, all human beings are born with a “sinful nature,” a nature that that controls them and causes them to sin.
- A “sinner” is someone who sins, so every human being is a sinner.
- Sometimes the word “sinners” was used by religious people like the Pharisees to refer to people who didn’t keep the law as well as the Pharisees thought they should.
- The term “sinner” was also used for people who were considered to be worse sinners than other people. For example, this label was given to tax collectors and prostitutes.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “sin” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “disobedience to God” or “going against God’s will” or “evil behavior and thoughts” or “wrongdoing.”
- “To sin” could also be translated as “to disobey God” or “to do wrong.”
- Depending on the context “sinful” could be translated as “full of wrongdoing” or “wicked” or “immoral” or “evil” or “rebellious against God.”
- Depending on the context the term “sinner” could be translated with a word or phrase that means, “person who sins” or “person who does wrong things” or “person who disobeys God” or “person who disobeys the law.”
- The term “sinners” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “very sinful people” or “people considered to be very sinful” or “immoral people.”
- Ways to translate “tax collectors and sinners” could include “people who collect money for the government, and other very sinful people” or “very sinful people, including (even) tax collectors.”
- In expressions like “slaves to sin” or “ruled by sin,” the term “sin” could be translated as “disobedience” or “evil desires and actions.”
- Make sure the translation of this term can include sinful behavior and thoughts, even those that other people don’t see or know about.
- The term “sin” should be general, and different from the terms for “wickedness” and “evil.”

(See also: disobey, [evil](#), [flesh](#), tax collector)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 09:1-3

- 1 John 01:8-10
- 1 John 02:1-3
- 2 Samuel 07:12-14
- Acts 03:19-20
- Daniel 09:24-25
- Genesis 04:6-7
- Hebrews 12:1-3
- Isaiah 53:10-11
- Jeremiah 18:21-23
- Leviticus 04:13-15
- Luke 15:17-19
- Matthew 12:31-32
- Romans 06:22-23
- Romans 08:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **03:15** God said, "I promise I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are **sinful** from the time they are children."
- **13:12** God was very angry with them because of their **sin** and planned to destroy them.
- **20:01** The kingdoms of Israel and Judah both **sinned** against God. They broke the covenant that God made with them at Sinai.
- **21:13** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no **sin**. He would die to receive the punishment for other people's **sin**.
- **35:01** One day, Jesus was teaching many tax collectors and other **sinner**s who had gathered to hear him.
- **38:05** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of **sins**."
- **43:11** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your **sins**."
- **48:08** We all deserve to die for our **sins**!
- **49:17** Even though you are a Christian, you will still be tempted to **sin**. But God is faithful and says that if you confess your **sins**, he will forgive you. He will give you strength to fight against **sin**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H817, H819, H2398, H2399, H2400, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2408, H2409, H5771, H6588, H7683, H7686, G264, G265, G266, G268, G361, G3781, G3900, G4258

Uses:

- 1 John 01 General Notes
- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 1:8-10
- 1 John 2:1-3
- 1 John 2:12-14
- 1 John 03 General Notes
- 1 John 3:4-6
- 1 John 3:7-8
- 1 John 3:9-10
- 1 John 4:9-10
- 1 John 5:16-17

Son of God, Son

Facts:

The term “Son of God” refers to Jesus, the Word of God, who came into the world as a human being. He is also often referred to as “the Son.”

- The Son of God has the same nature as God the Father, and is fully God.
- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are all of one essence.
- Unlike human sons, the Son of God has always existed.
- In the beginning, the Son of God was active in creating the world, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Because Jesus is God’s Son, he loves and obeys his Father, and his Father loves him.

Translation Suggestions:

- For the term “Son of God,” it is best to translate “Son” with the same word the language would naturally use to refer to a human son.
- Make sure the word used to translate “son” fits with the word used to translate “father” and that these words are the most natural ones used to express a true father-son relationship in the project language.
- Using a capital letter to begin “Son” may help show that this is talking about God.
- The phrase “the Son” is a shortened form of “the Son of God,” especially when it occurs in the same context as “the Father.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Christ](#), [ancestor](#), [God](#), [God the Father](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Jesus](#), [son](#), [sons of God](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 04:9-10](#)
- Acts 09:20-22
- Colossians 01:15-17
- Galatians 02:20-21
- Hebrews 04:14-16
- John 03:16-18
- Luke 10:22
- Matthew 11:25-27
- [Revelation 02:18-19](#)
- Romans 08:28-30

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **22:05** The angel explained, "The Holy Spirit will come to you, and the power of God will overshadow you. So the baby will be holy, the **Son of God.**"
- **24:09** God had told John, "The Holy Spirit will come down and rest on someone you baptize. That person is **the Son of God.**"?
- **31:08** The disciples were amazed. They worshiped Jesus, saying to him, "Truly, you are **the Son of God.**"
- **37:05** Martha answered, "Yes, Master! I believe you are the Messiah, the **Son of God.**"
- **42:10** So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of the Father, **the Son**, and the Holy Spirit, and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
- **46:06** Right away, Saul began preaching to the Jews in Damascus, saying, "Jesus is the **Son of God!**"
- **49:09** But God loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only **Son** so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H426, H430, H1121, H1247, G2316, G5207

Uses:

- 1 John 1:3-4
- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 2:22-23
- 1 John 3:7-8
- 1 John 3:23-24
- 1 John 4:9-10
- 1 John 4:15-16
- 1 John 5:4-5
- 1 John 5:9-10
- 1 John 5:11-12
- 1 John 5:13-15
- 1 John 5:20-21

spirit, spirits, spiritual

Definition:

The term “spirit” refers to the non-physical part of people which cannot be seen. When a person dies, his spirit leaves his body. “Spirit” can also refer to an attitude or emotional state.

- The term “spirit” can refer to a being that does not have a physical body, especially an evil spirit.
- A person’s spirit is the part of him that can know God and believe in him.
- In general, the term “spiritual” describes anything in the non-physical world.
- In the Bible, it especially refers to anything that relates to God, specifically to the Holy Spirit.
- For example, “spiritual food” refers to God’s teachings, which give nourishment to a person’s spirit, and “spiritual wisdom” refers to the knowledge and righteous behavior that come from the power of the Holy Spirit.
- God is a spirit and he created other spirit beings, who do not have physical bodies.
- Angels are spirit beings, including those who rebelled against God and became evil spirits.
- The term “spirit of” can also mean “having the characteristics of,” such as in “spirit of wisdom” or “in the spirit of Elijah.”
- Examples of “spirit” as an attitude or emotion would include “spirit of fear” and “spirit of jealousy.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, some ways to translate “spirit” might include “non-physical being” or “inside part” or “inner being.”
- In some contexts, the term “spirit” could be translated as “evil spirit” or “evil spirit being.”
- Sometimes the term “spirit” is used to express the feelings of a person, as in “my spirit was grieved in my inmost being.” This could also be translated as “I felt grieved in my spirit” or “I felt deeply grieved.”
- The phrase “spirit of” could be translated as “character of” or “influence of” or “attitude of” or “thinking (that is) characterized by.”
- Depending on the context, “spiritual” could be translated as “non-physical” or “from the Holy Spirit” or “God’s” or “part of the non-physical world.”
- The figurative expression “spiritual milk” could also be translated as “basic teachings from God” or “God’s teachings that nourish the spirit (like milk does).”
- The phrase “spiritual maturity” could be translated as “godly behavior that shows obedience to the Holy Spirit.”
- The term “spiritual gift” could be translated as “special ability that the Holy Spirit gives

(See also: angel, demon, [Holy Spirit](#), soul)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 05:3-5
- 1 John 04:1-3
- 1 Thessalonians 05:23-24
- Acts 05:9-11
- Colossians 01:9-10
- Ephesians 04:23-24
- Genesis 07:21-22
- Isaiah 04:3-4
- Mark 01:23-26
- Matthew 26:39-41
- Philippians 01:25-27

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:03** Three days later, after the people had prepared themselves **spiritually**, God came down on top of Mount Sinai with thunder, lightning, smoke, and a loud trumpet blast.
- **40:07** Then Jesus cried out, "It is finished! Father, I give my **spirit** into your hands." Then he bowed his head and gave up his **spirit**.
- **45:05** As Stephen was dying, he cried out, "Jesus, receive my **spirit**."
- **48:07** All the people groups are blessed through him, because everyone who believes in Jesus is saved from sin, and becomes a **spiritual** descendant of Abraham.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H178, H1172, H5397, H7307, H7308, G4151, G4152, G4153, G5326, G5427

Uses:

- 1 John 4:1-3

test, tests, tested

Definition:

The term “test” refers to a difficult or painful experience that reveals a person’s strengths and weaknesses.

- God tests people, but he does not tempt them to sin. Satan, however, tempts people to sin.
- God sometimes uses tests to expose people’s sin. A test helps a person to turn away from sin and to draw closer to God.
- Gold and other metals are tested with fire to find out how pure and strong they are. This is a picture of how God uses painful circumstances to test his people.
- To “put to the test” can mean, “challenge something or someone to prove its value.”
- In the context of putting God to the test, it means to try to make him do a miracle for us, taking advantage of his mercy.
- Jesus told Satan that it is wrong to put God to the test. He is the almighty, holy God who is above everything and everyone.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “to test” could also be translated as, “to challenge” or “to cause to experience difficulties” or “to prove.”
- Ways to translate “a test” could be, “a challenge” or “a difficult experience.”
- To “put to the test” could be translated as “to test” or “to set up a challenge” or “to force to prove oneself.”
- In the context of testing God, this could be translated as, “trying to force God to prove his love.”
- In some contexts, when God is not the subject, the term “test” can mean “tempt.”

(See also: tempt)

Bible References:

- [1 John 04:1-3](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 05:19-22](#)
- [Acts 15:10-11](#)
- [Genesis 22:1-3](#)
- [Isaiah 07:13-15](#)
- [James 01:12-13](#)
- [Lamentations 03:40-43](#)
- [Malachi 03:10-12](#)
- [Philippians 01:9-11](#)
- [Psalm 026:1-3](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G1242, G1263, G1303, G1957, G3140, G3141, G3142, G3143, G4303, G4828, G6020

Uses:

- 1 John 4:1-3

testimony, testify

Definition:

When a person gives “testimony” he makes a statement about something he knows, claiming that the statement is true. To “testify” is to give “testimony.”

- Often a person “testifies” about something he has experienced directly.
- A witness who gives “false testimony” does not tell the truth about what happened.
- Sometimes the term “testimony” refers to a prophecy that a prophet has stated.
- In the New Testament, this term was often used to refer to how Jesus’ followers testified about the events of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “testify” or “give testimony” could also be translated as, “tell the facts” or “tell what was seen or heard” or “tell from personal experience” or “give evidence” or “tell what happened.”
- Ways to translate “testimony” could include, “report of what happened” or “statement of what is true” or “evidence” or “what has been said” or “prophecy.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony to them” could be translated as, “to show them what is true” or “to prove to them what is true.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony against them” could be translated as, “which will show them their sin” or “exposing their hypocrisy” or “which will prove that they are wrong.”
- To “give false testimony” could be translated as “say false things about” or “state things that are not true.”

(See also: ark of the covenant, prophet, [witness](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 01:8-11
- [3 John 01:11-12](#)
- Acts 04:32-33
- Acts 07:44-46
- John 03:31-33
- Mark 01:43-44
- Matthew 26:59-61
- Micah 06:3-5
- [Revelation 12:11-12](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G1263, G1957, G3140, G3141, G3142, G3143, G4303, G4828, G6020

Uses:

- [1 John 5:9-10](#)

tongue

Definition:

There are several figurative meanings of “tongue” in the Bible.

- In the Bible, the most common figurative meaning for this term is “language” or “speech.”
- Sometimes “tongue” may refer to a human language spoken by a certain people group.
- Other times it refers to a supernatural language that the Holy Spirit gives believers in Christ as one of the “gifts of the Spirit.”
- The expression “tongues” of fire refers to “flames” of fire.
- In the expression “my tongue rejoices,” the term “tongue” refers to the whole person. (See: [synecdoche](#))
- The phrase “lying tongue” refers to a person’s voice or speech. (See: [metonymy](#))

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “tongue” can be translated by “language” or “spiritual language.” If it is not clear which one it is referring to, it is better to translate it as “language.”
- When referring to fire, this term could be translated as “flames.”
- The expression “my tongue rejoices” could be translated as “I rejoice and praise God” or “I am joyfully praising God.”
- The phrase, “tongue that lies” could be translated as “person who tell lies” or “people who lie.”
- Phrases such as “with their tongues” could be translated as “with what they say” or “by their words.”

(See also: [gift](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [joy](#), [praise](#), [rejoice](#), [spirit](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 12:9-11
- [1 John 03:16-18](#)
- 2 Samuel 23:1-2
- Acts 02:25-26
- Ezekiel 36:1-3
- Philippians 02:9-11

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- 1 John 3:16-18

true, truth, truths

Definition:

The term “truth” refers to one or more concepts that are facts, events that actually happened, and statements that were actually said. Such concepts are said to be “true.”

- True things are real, genuine, actual, rightful, legitimate, and factual.
- The truth is an understanding, belief, fact, or statement that is true.
- To say that a prophecy “came true” or “will come true” mean that it actually happened as predicted or that it will happen that way.
- Truth includes the concept of acting in a way that is reliable and faithful.
- Jesus revealed God’s truth in the words that he spoke.
- God’s word is truth. It tells about things that actually happened and teaches what is true about God and about everything he has made.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context and what is being described, the term “true” could also be translated by “real” or “factual” or “correct” or “right” or “certain” or “genuine.”
- Ways to translate the term “truth” could include “what is true” or “fact” or “certainty” or “principle.”
- The expression “come true” could also be translated as “actually happen” or “be fulfilled” or “happen as predicted.”
- The expression “tell the truth” or “speak the truth” could also be translated as “say what is true” or “tell what really happened” or “say things that are reliable.”
- To “accept the truth” could be translated as “believe what is true about God.”
- In an expression such as “worship God in spirit and in truth,” the expression “in truth” could also be translated by “faithfully obeying what God has taught us.”

(See also: [believe](#), [faithful](#), fulfill, obey, prophet, understand)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 05:6-8
- [1 John 01:5-7](#)
- [1 John 02:7-8](#)
- [3 John 01:5-8](#)
- Acts 26:24-26
- Colossians 01:4-6
- Genesis 47:29-31
- James 01:17-18
- James 03:13-14
- James 05:19-20

- Jeremiah 04:1-3
- John 01:9
- John 01:16-18
- John 01:49-51
- John 03:31-33
- Joshua 07:19-21
- Lamentations 05:19-22
- Matthew 08:8-10
- Matthew 12:15-17
- Psalm 026:1-3
- Revelation 01:19-20
- Revelation 15:3-4

Examples from the Bible stories:

***02:04** The snake responded to the woman, "That is not **true**! You will not die." ***14:06** Immediately Caleb and Joshua, the other two spies, said, "It is **true** that the people of Canaan are tall and strong, but we can certainly defeat them!" ***16:01** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the **true** God. ***31:08** They worshiped Jesus, saying to him, "**Truly**, you are the Son of God." ***39:10** "I have come to earth to tell the **truth** about God. Everyone who loves the **truth** listens to me." Pilate said, "What is **truth**?"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H199, H389, H403, H529, H530, H543, H544, H551, H571, H935, H3321, H3330, H6237, H6656, H6965, H7187, H7189, G225, G226, G227, G228, G230, G1103, G3303, G3483, G3689, G4103, G4137

Uses:

- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 1:8-10
- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 2:7-8
- 1 John 2:20-21
- 1 John 3:16-18
- 1 John 3:19-22

unrighteous, unrighteousness

Definition:

The term “unrighteous” means to be sinful and morally corrupt. “Unrighteousness” refers to sin or the condition of being sinful.

- These terms especially refer to living in a way that disobeys God’s teachings and commands.
- Unrighteous people are immoral in their thoughts and actions.
- Sometimes “the unrighteous” refers specifically to people who do not believe in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could simply be translated as “not righteous.”
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could include “wicked” or “immoral” or “people who rebel against God” or “sinful.”
- The phrase “the unrighteous” could be translated as “unrighteous people.”
- The term “unrighteousness” could be translated as “sin” or “evil thoughts and actions” or “wickedness.”
- If possible, it is best to translate this in a way that shows its relationship to “righteous, righteousness.”

(See also: [righteous](#), unjust, [sin](#), unlawful)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 06:9-11
- [1 John 01:8-10](#)
- [1 John 05:16-17](#)
- 1 Peter 03:18-20
- 2 Thessalonians 02:8-10
- Colossians 03:22-25
- Deuteronomy 19:15-16
- Malachi 02:5-7
- Romans 01:29-31

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H205, H2555, H5765, H5766, H5767, H6664, G93, G94, G458

Uses:

- [1 John 01 General Notes](#)

- 1 John 1:8-10
- 1 John 5:16-17

walk, walks, walked, walking

Definition:

The term “walk” is often used in a figurative sense to mean “live.”

- “Enoch walked with God” means that Enoch lived in a close relationship with God.
- To “walk by the Spirit” means to be guided by the Holy Spirit so that we do things that please and honor God.
- To “walk in” God’s commands or God’s ways means to “live in obedience to” his commands, that is, to “obey his commands” or “do his will.”
- When God says he will “walk among” his people, it means that he is living among them or closely interacting with them.
- To “walk contrary to” means to live or behave in a way that is against something or someone.
- To “walk after” means to seek or pursue someone or something. It can also mean to act in the same way as someone else.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate “walk” literally, as long as the correct meaning will be understood.
- Otherwise, figurative uses of “walk” could also be translated by “live” or “act” or “behave.”
- The phrase “walk by the Spirit” could be translated by, “live in obedience to the Holy Spirit” or “behave in a way that is pleasing to the Holy Spirit” or “do things that are pleasing to God as the Holy Spirit guides you.”
- To “walk in God’s commands” could be translated by “live by God’s commands” or “obey God’s commands.”
- The phrase “walked with God” could be translated as, “lived in close relationship with God by obeying and honoring him.”

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), honor)

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:5-7](#)
- [1 Kings 02:1-4](#)
- [Colossians 02:6-7](#)
- [Galatians 05:25-26](#)
- [Genesis 17:1-2](#)
- [Isaiah 02:5-6](#)
- [Jeremiah 13:8-11](#)
- [Micah 04:2-3](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1869, H1979, H1980, H1981, H3212, H4108, H4109, G1330, G1704, G3716, G4043, G4198, G4748

Uses:

- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 2:9-11

will of God

Definition:

The “will of God” refers to God’s desires and plans.

- God’s will especially relates to his interactions with people and how he wants people to respond to him.
- It also refers to his plans or desires for the rest of his creation.
- The term “to will” means “to determine” or “to desire.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The “will of God” could also be translated as “what God desires” or “what God has planned” or “God’s purpose” or “what is pleasing to God.”

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:15-17](#)
- 1 Thessalonians 04:3-6
- Colossians 04:12-14
- Ephesians 01:1-2
- John 05:30-32
- Mark 03:33-35
- Matthew 06:8-10
- Psalms 103:20-22

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6310, H6634, H7522, G1012, G1013, G2307, G2308, G2309, G2596

Uses:

- [1 John 2:15-17](#)
- [1 John 5:13-15](#)

witness, witnesses, eyewitness, eyewitnesses

Definition:

The term “witness” refers to a person who has personally experienced something that happened. Usually a witness is also someone who testifies about what they know is true. The term “eyewitness” emphasizes that the person was actually there and saw what happened.

- “To witness” something means to see it happen.
- At a trial, a witness “gives witness” or “bears witness.” This has the same meaning as “testify.”
- Witnesses are expected to tell the truth about what they have seen or heard.
- A witness who does not tell the truth about what happened is called a “false witness.” He is said to “give false witness” or to “bear false witness.”
- The expression “be a witness between” means that something or someone will be evidence that a contract has been made. The witness will make sure each person does what he has promised to do.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “witness” or “eyewitness” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “person seeing it” or “the one who saw it happen” or “those who saw and heard (those things).”
- Something that is “a witness” could be translated as “guarantee” or “sign of our promise” or “something that testifies that this is true.”
- The phrase “you will be my witnesses” could also be translated as “you will tell other people about me” or “you will teach people the truth that I taught you” or “you will tell people what you have seen me do and heard me teach.”
- “To witness to” could be translated as “to tell what was seen” or “to testify” or “to state what happened.”
- “To witness” something could be translated as “to see something” or “to experience something happen.”

(See also: [guilt](#), [judge](#), [true](#), [testimony](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 05:6-8](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 02:10-12](#)
- [1 Timothy 05:19-20](#)
- [2 Peter 01:16-18](#)
- [Acts 13:30-31](#)
- [Deuteronomy 31:27-29](#)
- [John 01:6-8](#)
- [Romans 01:8-10](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **39:02** Inside the house, the Jewish leaders put Jesus on trial. They brought many **false witnesses** who lied about him.
- **39:04** The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted, "We do not need any more **witnesses**. You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your judgment?"
- **42:08** "It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all people groups everywhere. You are **witnesses** of these things."
- **43:07** "We are **witnesses** to the fact that God raised Jesus to life again."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5707, H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, G267, G1263, G2649, G3140, G3141, G3142, G3144, G4828, G4901, G5575, G5576, G5577

Uses:

- 1 John 1:1-2
- 1 John 4:11-14
- 1 John 5:6-8
- 1 John 5:9-10

word of God, words of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, scripture, scriptures

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “word of God” refers to anything that God has communicated to people. This includes spoken and written messages. Jesus is also called “the Word of God.”

- The term “scriptures” means “writings.” It is only used in the New Testament and refers to the Hebrew scriptures, which is the Old Testament. These writings were God’s message that he had told people to write down so that many years in the future people could still read it.
- The related terms “word of Yahweh” and “word of the Lord” often refer to a specific message from God that was given to a prophet or other person in the Bible.
- Sometimes this term occurs as simply “the word” or “my word” or “your word” (when talking about God’s word).
- In the New Testament, Jesus is called “the Word” and “the Word of God.” These titles mean that Jesus fully reveals who God is, because he is God himself.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “the message of Yahweh” or “God’s message” or “the teachings from God.”
- It may be more natural in some languages to make this term plural and say “God’s words” or “the words of Yahweh.”
- The expression “the word of Yahweh came” is often used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. This could be translated as “Yahweh spoke this message” or “Yahweh spoke these words.”
- The term “scripture” or “scriptures” could be translated as “the writings” or “the written message from God.” This term should be translated differently from the translation of the term “word.”
- When “word” occurs alone and it refers to God’s word, it could be translated as “the message” or “God’s word” or “the teachings.” Also consider the alternate translations suggested above.
- When the Bible refers to Jesus as “the Word,” this term could be translated as “the Message” or “the Truth.”

(See also: prophet, [word](#), Yahweh)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 13:1-3
- 2 Timothy 03:16-17
- Acts 06:2-4
- Acts 12:24-25

- Genesis 15:1-3
- James 02:8-9
- Jeremiah 36:1-3
- John 05:39-40
- Luke 08:11-13
- Romans 01:1-3

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:07** In **God's word** he commands his people, 'Worship only the Lord your God and only serve him.'
- **33:06** So Jesus explained, 'The seed is the **word of God**.'
- **42:03** Then Jesus explained to them what **God's word** says about the Messiah.
- **42:07** Jesus said, 'I told you that everything written about me in **God's word** must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds so they could understand **God's word**.
- **45:10** Philip also used other **scriptures** to tell him the good news of Jesus.
- **48:12** But Jesus is the greatest prophet of all. He is the **Word of God**.
- **49:18** God tells you to pray, to study his **word**, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H561, H565, H1697, H3068, G3056, G4487

Uses:

- **1 John 2:12-14**

word, words

Definition:

A “word” refers to something that someone has said.

- An example of this would be when the angel told Zechariah, “You did not believe my words,” which means, “You did not believe what I said.”
- This term almost always refers to an entire message, not just one word.
- Sometimes “word” refers to speech in general, such as “powerful in word and deed” which means “powerful in speech and behavior.”
- Often in the Bible “the word” refers to everything God has said or commanded, as in “the word of God” or “the word of truth.”
- A very special use of this term is when Jesus is called “the Word.” For these last two meanings, see [word of God](#)

Translation Suggestions:

- Different ways of translating “word” or “words” include “teaching” or “message” or “news” or “a saying” or “what was said.”

(See also: [word of God](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 04:1-2
- Acts 08:4-5
- Colossians 04:2-4
- James 01:17-18
- Jeremiah 27:1-4
- John 01:1-3
- John 01:14-15
- Luke 08:14-15
- Matthew 02:7-8
- Matthew 07:26-27

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H561, H562, H565, H1697, H1703, H3983, H4405, H4406, H6310, H6600, G518, G1024, G3050, G3054, G3055, G3056, G4086, G4487, G4935, G5023, G5542

Uses:

- 1 John 1:1-2
- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 2:7-8
- 1 John 3:16-18

works, deeds, work, acts

Definition:

In the Bible, the terms “works,” “deeds,” and “acts” are used to refer generally to things that God or people do.

- The term “work” refers to doing labor or anything that is done to serve other people.
- God’s “works” and the “work of his hands” are expressions that refer to all the things he does or has done, including creating the world, saving sinners, providing for the needs of all creation and keeping the entire universe in place. The terms “deeds” and “acts” are also used to refer to God’s miracles in expressions such as “mighty acts” or “marvelous deeds.”
- The works or deeds that a person does can be either good or evil.
- The Holy Spirit empowers believers to do good works, which are also called “good fruit.”
- People are not saved by their good works; they are saved through faith in Jesus.
- A person’s “work” can be what he does to earn a living or to serve God. The Bible also refers to God as “working.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “works” or “deeds” could be “actions” or “things that are done.”
- When referring to God’s “works” or “deeds” and the “work of his hands,” these expressions could also be translated as “miracles” or “mighty acts” or “amazing things he does.”
- The expression “the work of God” could be translated as “the things that God is doing” or “the miracles God does” or “the amazing things that God does” or “everything God has accomplished.”
- The term “work” can just be the singular of “works” as in “every good work” or “every good deed.”
- The term “work” can also have the broader meaning of “service” or “ministry.” For example, the expression “your work in the Lord” could also be translated as, “what you do for the Lord.”
- The expression “examine your own work” could also be translated as “make sure what you are doing is God’s will” or “make sure that what you are doing pleases God.”
- The expression “the work of the Holy Spirit” could be translated as “the empowering of the Holy Spirit” or “the ministry of the Holy Spirit” or “the things that the Holy Spirit does.”

(See also: fruit, [Holy Spirit](#), miracle)

Bible References:

- [1 John 03:11-12](#)
- Acts 02:8-11
- Daniel 04:36-37
- Exodus 34:10-11

- Galatians 02:15-16
- James 02:14-17
- Matthew 16:27-28
- Micah 02:6-8
- Romans 03:27-28
- Titus 03:4-5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4566, H4567, H4611, H4659, H5949, G2041

Uses:

- 1 John 3:7-8
- 1 John 3:11-12

world, worldly

Definition:

The term “world” usually refers to the part of the universe where people live: the earth. The term “worldly” describes the evil values and behaviors of people living in this world.

- In its most general sense, the term “world” refers to the heavens and the earth, as well as everything in them.
- In many contexts, “world” actually means “people in the world.”
- Sometimes it is implied that this refers to the evil people on earth or the people who do not obey God.
- The apostles also used “world” to refer to the selfish behaviors and corrupt values of the people living in this world. This can include self-righteous religious practices which are based on human efforts.
- People and things characterized by these values are said to be “worldly.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “world” could also be translated as “universe” or “people of this world” or “corrupt things in the world” or “evil attitudes of people in the world.”
- The phrase “all the world” often means “many people” and refers to the people living in a certain region. For example, “all the world came to Egypt” could be translated as “many people from the surrounding countries came to Egypt” or “people from all the countries surrounding Egypt came there.”
- Another way to translate “all the world went to their hometown to be registered in the Roman census” would be “many of the people living in regions ruled by the Roman empire went...”
- Depending on the context, the term “worldly” could be translated as, “evil” or “sinful” or “selfish” or “ungodly” or “corrupt” or “influenced by the corrupt values of people in this world.”
- The phrase “saying these things in the world” can be translated as “saying these things to the people of the world.”
- In other contexts, “in the world” could also be translated as “living among the people of the world” or “living among ungodly people.”

(See also: corrupt, heaven, Rome, ungodly)

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:15-17](#)
- [1 John 04:4-6](#)
- [1 John 05:4-5](#)
- [John 01:29-31](#)
- [Matthew 13:36-39](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H776, H2309, H2465, H5769, H8398, G1093, G2886, G2889, G3625

Uses:

- 1 John 2:1-3
- 1 John 2:15-17
- 1 John 3:1-3
- 1 John 3:13-15
- 1 John 4:4-6
- 1 John 5:4-5
- 1 John 5:18-19

written

Definition:

The phrase “as it is written” or “what is written” occurs frequently in the New Testament and usually refers to commands or prophecies that were written in the Hebrew scriptures.

- Sometimes “as it is written” refers to what was written in the Law of Moses.
- Other times it is a quote from what one of the prophets wrote in the Old Testament.
- This could be translated “as it is written in the Law of Moses” or “as the prophets wrote long ago” or “what it says in God’s laws that Moses wrote down long ago”.
- Another option is to keep “It is written” and give a footnote that explains what this means.

(See also: [command](#), [law](#), [prophet](#), [word of God](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 05:13-15](#)
- Acts 13:28-29
- Exodus 32:15-16
- John 21:24-25
- Luke 03:4
- Mark 09:11-13
- Matthew 04:5-6
- [Revelation 01:1-3](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [1 John 5:13-15](#)

translationAcademy

Abstract Nouns

This page answers the question: *What are abstract nouns and how do I deal with them in my translation?*

Abstract nouns are nouns that refer to attitudes, qualities, events, situations, or even to relationships among these ideas. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as happiness, weight, injury, unity, friendship, health, and reason. This is a translation issue because some languages may express a certain idea with an abstract noun, while others would need a different way to express it. For example, "What is its weight?" could be expressed as "How much does it weigh?" or "How heavy is it?"

Description

Remember that nouns are words that refer to a person, place, thing, or idea. **Abstract Nouns** are the nouns that refer to ideas. These can be attitudes, qualities, events, situations, or even relationships among these ideas. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as joy, peace, creation, goodness, contentment, justice, truth, freedom, vengeance, slowness, length, and weight.

Using abstract nouns allows people to express thoughts about ideas in fewer words than if they did not have those nouns. It is a way of giving names to actions or qualities so that people can talk about them as though they were things. It is like a short-cut in language. For example, in languages that use abstract nouns, people can say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sin." But if the language did not have the two abstract nouns "forgiveness" and "sin," then they would have to make a longer sentence to express the same meaning. They would have to say, for example, "I believe that God is willing to forgive people after they have sinned," using verb phrases instead of nouns for those ideas.

Reason this is a translation issue

The Bible that you translate from may use abstract nouns to express certain ideas. Your language might not use abstract nouns for some of those ideas; instead, it might use phrases to express those ideas. Those phrases will use other kinds of words such as adjectives, verbs, or adverbs to express the meaning of the abstract noun.

Examples from the Bible

...from childhood you have known the sacred writings ... (2 Timothy 3:15 ULB)

The abstract noun "childhood" refers to when someone is a child.

But godliness with contentment is great gain. (1 Timothy 6:6 ULB)

The abstract nouns “godliness” and “contentment” refer to being godly and content. The abstract noun “gain” refers to something that benefits or helps someone.

Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. (Luke 19:9 ULB)

The abstract noun “salvation” here refers to being saved.

The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider slowness to be (2 Peter 3:9 ULB)

The abstract noun “slowness” refers how slowly something is done.

He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the purposes of the heart. (1 Corinthians 4:5 ULB)

The abstract noun “purposes” refers to the things that people want to do and the reasons they want to do them.

Translation Strategies

If an abstract noun would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

1. Reword the sentence with a phrase that expresses the meaning of the abstract noun. Instead of a noun, the new phrase will use a verb, an adverb, or an adjective to express the idea of the abstract noun..

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Reword the sentence with a phrase that expresses the meaning of the abstract noun. Instead of a noun, the new phrase will use a verb, an adverb, or an adjective to express the idea of the abstract noun.
 - **... from childhood you have known the sacred writings ...** (2 Timothy 3:15 ULB)
 - Ever since you were a child you have known the sacred writings.
 - **But godliness with contentment is great gain.** (1 Timothy 6:6 ULB)
 - But being godly and content is very beneficial.
 - But we benefit greatly when we are godly and content.
 - But we benefit greatly when we honor and obey God and when we are happy with what we have.
 - **Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham.** (Luke 19:9 ULB)
 - Today the people in this house have been saved...
 - Today God has saved the people in this house...
 - **The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider slowness to be.** (2 Peter 3:9 ULB)

- The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider moving slowly to be.
- **He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the purposes of the heart.** (1 Corinthians 4:5 ULB)
 - He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the things that people want to do and the reasons they want to do them.

Uses:

- 1 John 2:20-21
- 1 John 2:20-21
- 1 John 3:13-15
- 1 John 3:23-24
- 1 John 4:9-10
- 1 John 4:9-10
- 1 John 5:9-10
- 1 John 5:11-12
- 1 John 5:13-15
- 1 John 5:13-15
- 1 John 5:16-17
- 1 John 5:20-21

Active or Passive

This page answers the question: *What do active and passive mean, and how do I translate passive sentences?*

Some languages have both active and passive sentences. In active sentences, the subject does the action. In passive sentences, the subject is the one that receives the action. Here are some examples with their subjects underlined:

- **ACTIVE:** My father built the house in 2010.
- **PASSIVE:** The house was built in 2010.

Translators whose languages do not have passive sentences will need to know how they can translate passive sentences that they find in the Bible. Other translators will need to decide when to use a passive sentence and when to use the active form.

Description

Some languages have both active and passive forms of sentences.

- In the **ACTIVE** form, the subject does the action and is always mentioned.
- In the **PASSIVE** form, the action is done to the subject, and the one who does the action is *not always* mentioned.

In the examples of active and passive sentences below, we have underlined the subject.

- **ACTIVE:** My father built the house in 2010.
- **PASSIVE:** The house was built by my father in 2010.
- **PASSIVE:** The house was built in 2010. (This does not tell who did the action.)

Reasons this is a translation issue

All languages have active forms. Some languages have passive forms, and some do not. The passive form is not used for the same purposes in all of the languages that have it.

Purposes for the passive

- The speaker is talking about the person or thing the action was done to, not about the person who did the action.
- The speaker does not want to tell who did the action.
- The speaker does not know who did the action.

Translation Principles Regarding the Passive

- Translators whose language does not use passive forms will need to find another way to express the idea.

- Translators whose language has passive forms will need to understand why the passive is used in a particular sentence in the Bible and decide whether or not to use a passive form for that purpose in his translation of the sentence.

Examples from the Bible

And their shooters shot at your soldiers from off the wall, and some of the king's servants were killed, and your servant Uriah the Hittite was killed too. (2 Samuel 11:24 ULB)

This means that the enemy's shooters shot and killed some of the king's servants, including Uriah. The point is what happened to the king's servants and Uriah, not who shot them. The purpose of the passive form here is to keep the focus on the king's servants and Uriah.

In the morning when the men of the town got up, the altar of Baal was broken down ... (Judges 6:28 ULB)

The men of the town saw what had happened to the altar of Baal, but they did not know who broke it down. The purpose of the passive form here is to communicate this event from the perspective of the men of the town.

It would be better for him if a millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea (Luke 17:2 ULB)

This describes a situation in which a person ends up in the sea with a millstone around his neck. The purpose of the passive form here is to keep the focus on what happens to this person. Who does these things to the person is not important.

Translation Strategies

If you decide that it is better to translate without a passive form, here are some strategies you might consider.

1. Use the same verb in an active sentence and tell who or what did the action. If you do this, try to keep the focus on the person receiving the action.
2. Use the same verb in an active sentence, and do not tell who or what did the action. Instead, use a generic expression like "they" or "people" or "someone."
3. Use a different verb.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use the same verb in an active sentence and tell who did the action. If you do this, try to keep the focus on the person receiving the action.

- **A loaf of bread was given him every day from the street of the bakers.** (Jeremiah 37:21 ULB)

- The king's servants gave Jeremiah a loaf of bread every day from the street of the bakers.
2. Use the same verb in an active sentence, and do not tell who did the action. Instead, use a generic expression like "they" or "people" or "someone."
- **It would be better for him if a millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.** (Luke 17:2 ULB)
 - It would be better for him if they were to put a millstone around his neck and throw him into the sea.
 - It would be better for him if someone were to put a heavy stone around his neck and throw him into the sea.
3. Use a different verb in an active sentence.
- **A loaf of bread was given him every day from the street of the bakers.** (Jeremiah 37:21 ULB)
 - He received a loaf of bread every day from the street of the bakers.

Uses:

- 1 John 1:1-2
- 1 John 1:1-2
- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 2:12-14
- 1 John 3:1-3
- 1 John 3:4-6
- 1 John 3:7-8
- 1 John 3:9-10
- 1 John 3:9-10
- 1 John 3:9-10
- 1 John 4:9-10
- 1 John 4:17-18
- 1 John 4:17-18
- 1 John 4:17-18

Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

This page answers the question: *How can I be sure that my translation communicates the assumed knowledge and implicit information along with the explicit information of the original message?*

- **Assumed knowledge** is whatever a speaker assumes his audience knows before he speaks and gives them some kind of information. The speaker gives the audience information in two ways:
- **Explicit information** is what the speaker states directly.
- **Implicit information** is what the speaker does not state directly because he expects his audience to be able to learn it from what he says.

Description

When someone speaks or writes, he has something specific that he wants people to know or do or think about. He normally states this directly. This is **explicit information**.

The speaker assumes that his audience already knows certain things that they will need to think about in order to understand this information. Normally he does not tell people these things, because they already know them. This is called **assumed knowledge**.

The speaker does not always directly state everything that he expects his audience to learn from what he says. Information that he expects people to learn from what he says even though he does not state it directly is **implicit information**.

Often, the audience understands this **implicit information** by combining what they already know (**assumed knowledge**) with the **explicit information** that the speaker tells them directly.

Reasons this is a translation issue

All three kinds of information are part of the speaker's message. If one of these kinds of information is missing, then the audience will not understand the message. Because the target translation is in a language that is very different than the biblical languages and made for an audience that lives in a very different time and place than the people in the Bible, many times the **assumed knowledge** or the **implicit information** is missing from the message. In other words, modern readers do not know everything that the original speakers and hearers in the Bible knew. When these things are important for understanding the message, you can include this information in the text or in a footnote.

Examples from the Bible

Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:20 ULB)

Jesus did not say what foxes and birds use holes and nests for, because he assumed that the scribe would have known that foxes sleep in holes in the ground and birds sleep in their nests. This is **assumed knowledge**.

Jesus did not directly say here “I am the Son of Man” but, if the scribe did not already know it, then that fact would be **implicit information** that he could learn because Jesus referred to himself that way. Also, Jesus did not state explicitly that he travelled a lot and did not have a house that he slept in every night. That is **implicit information** that the scribe could learn when Jesus said that he had nowhere to lay his head.

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty deeds had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you. (Matthew 11:21, 22 ULB)

Jesus assumed that the people he was speaking to knew that Tyre and Sidon were very wicked, and that the day of judgment is a time when God will judge every person. Jesus also knew that the people he was talking to believed that they were good and did not need to repent. Jesus did not need to tell them these things. This is all **assumed knowledge**.

An important piece of **implicit information** here is that because the people he was speaking to did not repent, they would be judged more severely than the people of Tyre and Sidon would be judged.

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat. (Matthew 15:2 ULB)

One of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating. People thought that in order to be righteous, they had to follow all the traditions of the elders. This was **assumed knowledge** that the Pharisees who were speaking to Jesus expected him to know. By saying this, they were accusing his disciples of not following the traditions, and thus not being righteous. This is **implicit information** that they wanted him to understand from what they said.

Translation Strategies

If readers have enough assumed knowledge to be able to understand the message, along with any important implicit information that goes with the explicit information, then it is good to leave that knowledge unstated and leave the implicit information implicit. If the readers do not understand the message because one of these is missing for them, then follow these strategies:

1. If readers cannot understand the message because they do not have certain assumed knowledge, then provide that knowledge as explicit information.
2. If readers cannot understand the message because they do not know certain implicit information, then state that information clearly, but try to do it in a way that does not imply that the information was new to the original audience.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If readers cannot understand the message because they do not have certain assumed knowledge, then provide that knowledge as explicit information.
 - **Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."** (Matthew 8:20 ULB) - Assumed knowledge was that the foxes slept in their holes and birds slept in their nests.
 - Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes to live in, and the birds of the sky have nests to live in, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head and sleep."
 - **it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you** (Matthew 11:22 ULB) - Assumed knowledge was that the people of Tyre and Sidon were very, very wicked. This can be stated explicitly.
 - ... it will be more tolerable for those cities Tyre and Sidon, whose people were very wicked, at the day of judgment than for you
 - ◇ Or:
 - ... it will be more tolerable for those wicked cities Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you
 - **Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat.** (Matthew 15:2 ULB) - Assumed knowledge was that one of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating, which they must do to be righteous. It was not to remove germs from their hands to avoid sickness, as a modern reader might think.
 - Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For they do not go through the ceremonial handwashing ritual of righteousness when they eat.
2. If readers cannot understand the message because they do not know certain implicit information, then state that information clearly, but try to do it in a way that does not imply that the information was new to the original audience.
 - **Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."** (Matthew 8:19, 20 ULB) - Implicit information is that Jesus himself is the Son of Man. Other implicit information is that if the scribe wanted to follow Jesus, he would have to live like Jesus without a house.
 - Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but I, the Son of Man, have no home to rest in. If you want to follow me, you will live as I live."
 - **it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you** (Matthew 11:22 ULB) - Implicit information is that God would not only judge the people; he would punish them. This can be made explicit.
 - At the day of judgment, God will punish Tyre and Sidon, cities whose people were very wicked, less severely than he will punish you

- At the day of judgment, God will punish you more severely than Tyre and Sidon, cities whose people were very wicked.

Modern readers may not know some of the things that the people in the Bible and the people who first read it knew. This can make it hard for them to understand what a speaker or writer says, and to learn things that the speaker left implicit. Translators may need to state some things explicitly in the translation that the original speaker or writer left unstated or implicit.### Uses:

- 1 John 1:8-10
- 1 John 2:1-3
- 1 John 2:7-8
- 1 John 2:20-21
- 1 John 2:24-26
- 1 John 3:1-3
- 1 John 5:9-10

Double Negatives

This page answers the question: *What are double negatives?*

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each express the meaning of “not.” Double negatives mean very different things in different languages. To translate sentences that have double negatives accurately and clearly, you need to know what a double negative means in the Bible and how to express this idea in your language.

Description

Negative words are words that have in them the meaning “not.” Examples are “no,” “not,” “none,” “no one,” “nothing,” “nowhere,” “never,” “nor,” “neither,” and “without.” Also, some words have prefixes or suffixes that mean “not” such as the underlined parts of these words: “unhappy,” “impossible,” and “useless.”

A double negative occurs when a sentence has two words that each express the meaning of “not.”

It is not that we do not have authority... (2 Thessalonians 3:9 ULB)

And this better confidence did not happen without the taking of an oath, ... (Hebrews 7:20 ULB.)

Be sure of this—wicked people will not go unpunished (Proverbs 11:21 ULB)

Reason this is a translation issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

- In some languages, such as Spanish, a double negative emphasizes the negative. The following Spanish sentence *No ví a nadie* is literally, “I did not see no one.” It has both the word ‘no’ next to the verb and ‘nadie,’ which means “no one.” The two negatives are seen as in agreement with each other, and the sentence means, “I did not see anyone.”
- In some languages, a second negative cancels the first one, creating a positive sentence. So, “He is not unintelligent” means “He is intelligent.”
- In some languages the double negative creates a positive sentence, but it is a weak statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” means, “He is somewhat intelligent.”
- In some languages, such as the languages of the Bible, the double negative can create a positive sentence, and often strengthens the statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” can mean “He is intelligent” or “He is very intelligent.”

To translate sentences with double negatives accurately and clearly in your language, you need to know both what a double negative means in the Bible and how to express the same idea in your language.

Examples from the Bible

... so that they may not be unfruitful. (Titus 3:14 ULB)

This means “so that they will be fruitful.”

All things were made through him and without him there was not one thing made that has been made. (John 1:3 ULB)

By using a double negative, John emphasized that the Son of God created absolutely everything.

Translation Strategies

If double negatives are natural and are used to express the positive in your language, consider using them. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

1. If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is simply to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.
2. If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a strong positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives and put in a strengthening word or phrase such as “very” or “surely.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is simply to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.
 - **For we do not have a high priest who cannot feel sympathy for our weaknesses.** (Hebrews 4:15 ULB)
 - “For we have a high priest who can feel sympathy for our weaknesses.”
 - **... so that they may not be unfruitful.** (Titus 3:14 ULB)
 - “... so that they may be fruitful.”
2. If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a strong positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives and put in a strengthening word or phrase such as “very” or “surely.”
 - **Be sure of this—wicked people will not go unpunished ...** (Proverbs 11:21 ULB)
 - “Be sure of this—wicked people will certainly be punished ...”
 - **All things were made through him and without him there was not one thing made that has been made.** (John 1:3 ULB)
 - “All things were made through him. He made absolutely everything that has been made.”

Uses:

- 1 John 3:9-10
- 1 John 4:19-21

Doublet

This page answers the question: *What are doublets and how can I translate them?*

Description

We are using the word “doublet” to refer to two words or very short phrases that mean the same thing or very close to the same thing and that are used together. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Often they are used to emphasize or intensify the idea expressed by the two words.

Reason this is a translation issue

In some languages people do not use doublets. Or they may use doublets, but only in certain situations, so a doublet might not make sense in their language in some verses. In either case, translators may need to find some other way to express the meaning expressed by the doublet.

Examples from the Bible

King David was old and advanced in years. (1 Kings 1:1 ULB)

The underlined words mean the same thing. Together they mean that he was “very old.”

... he attacked two men more righteous and better than himself ... (1 Kings 2:32 ULB)

This means that they were “much more righteous” than he was.

You have decided to prepare false and deceptive words (Daniel 2:9 ULB)

This means that they had prepared “many false things to say.”

... as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter 1:19 ULB)

This means that he was like a lamb that did not have any blemish—not even one.

Translation Strategies

If a doublet would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using one. If not, consider these strategies.

1. Translate only one of the words.
2. If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”
3. If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language’s ways of doing that.

Translation Strategies Applied

1. Translate only one of the words.
 - **You have decided to prepare false and deceptive words** (Daniel 2:9 ULB)
 - "You have decided to prepare false things to say."
2. If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as "very" or "great" or "many."
 - **King David was old and advanced in years.** (1 Kings 1:1 ULB)
 - "King David was very old."
3. If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language's ways of doing that.
 - **... a lamb without blemish and without spot...** (1 Peter 1:19 ULB) - English can emphasize this with "any" and "at all."
 - " ... a lamb without any blemish at all ..."

Uses:

- 1 John 3:4-6
- 1 John 3:16-18

Ellipsis

This page answers the question: *What is ellipsis?*

Description

Ellipsis is what happens when a speaker or writer leaves one or more words out of a sentence because he knows that the hearer or reader will understand the meaning of the sentence and fill in the words in his mind when he hears or reads the words that are there. The information that is omitted has usually already been stated in a preceding sentence or phrase.

... the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. (Psalm 1:5)

This is ellipsis because “sinners in the assembly of the righteous” is not a complete sentence. The speaker assumes that the hearer will understand what it is that sinners will not do in the assembly of the righteous by filling in the action from the previous clause.

Reason this is a translation issue

Readers who see incomplete sentences or phrases may not know what the missing information is if they do not use ellipsis in their language.

Examples from the Bible

... when the blind man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, that I might receive my sight.” (Luke 18:40-41 ULB)

The man answered in an incomplete sentence because he wanted to be polite and not directly ask Jesus for healing. He knew that Jesus would understand that the only way he could receive his sight would be for Jesus to heal him.

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a young ox. (Psalm 29:6 ULB)

The writer wants his words to be few and to make good poetry. He did not say that Yahweh makes Sirion skip like a young ox because he knew that his readers could fill in the information themselves.

Translation Strategies

If ellipsis would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

1. Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

- **... the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.** (Psalm 1:5)
 - ... the wicked will not stand in the judgment, and sinners will not stand in the assembly of the righteous
- **... when the blind man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, that I might receive my sight.”** (Luke 18:40-41)
 - ... when the blind man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, I want you to heal me that I might receive my sight.”
- **He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a young ox.** (Psalm 29:6)
 - He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and he makes Sirion skip like a young ox.

Uses:

- 1 John 3:9-10
- 1 John 3:11-12
- 1 John 3:16-18
- 1 John 4:11-14

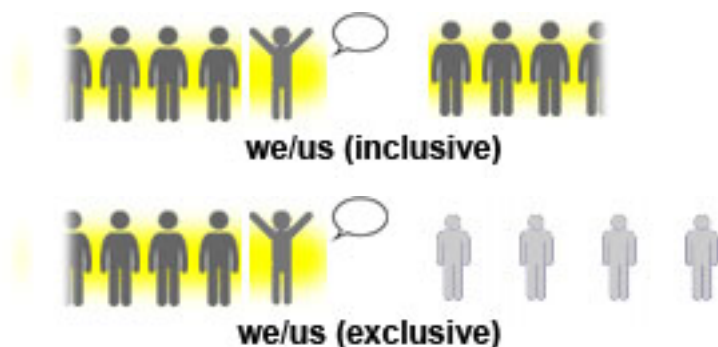
Exclusive and Inclusive “We”

This page answers the question: *What is exclusive and inclusive “we”?*

Description

Some languages have more than one form of “we:” an **inclusive** form that means “I and you” and an **exclusive** form that means “I and someone else but not you.” The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also true for “us,” “our,” “ours,” and “ourselves.” Some languages have inclusive forms and exclusive forms for each of these. Translators whose language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms for these words will need to understand what the speaker meant so that they can decide which form to use.

See the pictures. The people on the right are the people that the speaker is talking to. The yellow highlight shows who the inclusive “we” and the exclusive “we” refer to.



Reason this is a translation issue

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. Like English, these languages do not have separate exclusive and inclusive forms for “we.” Translators whose language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms of “we” will need to understand what the speaker meant so that they can decide which form of “we” to use.

Examples from the Bible

They said, “We have no more than five loaves of bread and two fish, unless we went and bought food for all this crowd of people.” (Luke 9:13 ULB)

In the first clause, the disciples are telling Jesus how much food they have among them, so this “we” could be the inclusive form or the exclusive form. In the second clause, the disciples are talking about some of them going to buy food, so that “we” would be the exclusive form, since Jesus would not go to buy food.

we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us (1 John 1:2 ULB)

John is telling people who have not seen Jesus what he and the other apostles have seen. So languages that have exclusive forms of "we" and "us" would use the exclusive forms in this verse.

... the shepherds said one to each other, "Let us now go to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." (Luke 2:15 ULB)

The shepherds were speaking to one another. When they said "us," they were including the people they were speaking to - one another.

Now it happened on one of those days that Jesus and his disciples entered into a boat, and he said to them, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." Then they set sail. (Luke 8:22 ULB)

When Jesus said "us," he was referring to himself and to the disciples he was speaking to, so this would be the inclusive form.

Uses:

- 1 John 1:1-2
- 1 John 1:3-4

Forms of You

This page answers the question: *What are the different forms of you?*

Singular, Dual, and Plural

Some languages have more than one word for “you” based on how many people the word “you” refers to. The **singular** form refers to one person, and the **plural** form refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a **dual** form which refers to two people, and some have other forms that refer to three or four people.

You may also want to watch the video at http://ufw.io/figs_younum.

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses a singular form of “you” even though he is speaking to a crowd.

- Singular Pronouns that Refer to Groups

Formal and Informal

Some languages have more than one form of “you” based on the relationship between the speaker and the person he is talking to. People use the **formal** form of “you” when speaking to someone who is older, or has higher authority, or is someone they do not know very well. People use the **informal** form when speaking to someone who is not older, or does not have higher authority, or is a family member or close friend.

You may also want to watch the video at http://ufw.io/figs_youform.

For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- Forms of “You” - Formal or Informal

Uses:

- [1 John 1:1-2](#)
- [1 John 2:24-26](#)

How to Translate Names

This page answers the question: *How can I translate names that are new to my culture?*

Description

The Bible has names of many people, groups of people, and places. Some of these names may sound strange and be hard to say. Sometimes readers may not know what a name refers to, and sometimes they may need to understand what a name means. This page will help you see how you can translate these names and how you can help people understand what they need to know about them.

Meaning of names

Most names in the Bible have meaning. Most of the time, names in the Bible are used simply to identify the people and places they refer to. But sometimes the meaning of a name is especially important.

It was this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. (Hebrews 7:1 ULB)

Here the writer uses the name “Melchizedek” primarily to refer to a man who had that name, and the title “king of Salem” tells us that he ruled over a certain city.

His name “Melchizedek” means “king of righteousness,” and also “king of Salem,” that is, “king of peace.” (Hebrews 7:2 ULB)

Here the writer explains the meanings of Melchizedek’s name and title, because those things tell us more about the person. Other times, the writer does not explain the meaning of a name because he expects the reader to already know the meaning. If the meaning of the name is important to understand the passage, you can include the meaning in the text or in a footnote.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Readers may not know some of the names in the Bible. They may not know whether a name refers to a person or place or something else.
- Readers may need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand the passage.
- Some names may have different sounds or combinations of sounds that are not used in your language or are unpleasant to say in your language. For strategies to address this problem, see Borrow Words.
- Some people and places in the Bible have two names. Readers may not realize that two names refer to the same person or place.

Examples from the Bible

You went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the Amorites (Joshua 24:11 ULB)

Readers might not know that “Jordan” is the name of a river, “Jericho” is the name of a city, and “Amorites” is the name of a group of people.

she said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; (Genesis 16:13-14 ULB)

Readers may not understand the second sentence if they do not know that “Beerlahairoi” means “Well of the Living One who sees me.”

She named him Moses and said, “Because I drew him from the water.” (Exodus 2:11 ULB)

Readers may not understand why she said this if they do not know that the name Moses sounds like the Hebrew words “pull out.”

Saul was in agreement with his death (Acts 8:1 ULB)

It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue (Acts 14:1 ULB)

Readers may not know that the names Saul and Paul refer to the same person.

Translation Strategies

1. If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.
2. If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.
3. Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.
4. If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently.
5. Or if a person or place has two different names, then use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.

- **You went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the Amorites** (Joshua 24:11 ULB)
 - You went over the Jordan River and came to the city of Jericho. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the tribe of the Amorites
 - **Shortly after, some Pharisees came and said to him, "Go and leave here because Herod wants to kill you."** (Luke 13:31 ULB)
 - Shortly after, some Pharisees came and said to him, "Go and leave here because King Herod wants to kill you."
2. If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.
- **She named him Moses and said, "Because I drew him from the water."** (Exodus 2:11 ULB)
 - She named him Moses, which sounds like 'drawn out,' and said, "Because I drew him from the water."
3. Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.
- **... she said, "Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?" Therefore the well was called Beerlahairoi;** (Genesis 16:13-14 ULB)
 - ... she said, "Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?" Therefore the well was called Well of the Living One who sees me;
4. If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently. For example, Paul is called "Saul" before Acts 13 and "Paul" after Acts 13. You could translate his name as "Paul" all of the time, except in Acts 13:9 where it talks about him having both names.
- **... a young man named Saul** (Acts 7:58 ULB)
 - ... a young man named Paul¹ The footnote would look like:
 - ◇ ^[1]Most versions say Saul here, but most of the time in the Bible he is called Paul.
 - **But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;** (Acts 13:9)
 - But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;
5. Or if a person or place has two names, use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name. For example, you could write "Saul" where the source text has "Saul" and "Paul" where the source text has "Paul."
- **a young man named Saul** (Acts 7:58 ULB)
 - a young man named Saul The footnote would look like:

- ◇ ^[1]This is the same man who is called Paul beginning in Acts 13.
- **But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;** (Acts 13:9)
 - But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;
- **It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue** (Acts 14:1 ULB)
 - It came about in Iconium that Paul¹ and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue The footnote would look like:
 - ◇ ^[1]This is the man that was called Saul before Acts 13.

Uses:

- **Introduction to 1 John**

Hyperbole and Generalization

This page answers the question: *What are hyperboles? What are generalizations?*

Description

A speaker or writer can use exactly the same words to say something he means as completely true, as generally true, or as a hyperbole. This is why it can be hard to decide how to understand a statement.

- It rains here every night.
- The speaker means this as literally true if he means that it really does rain here every night.
- The speaker means this as a generalization if he means that it rains here most nights.
- The speaker means this as a hyperbole if he wants to say it rains more than it actually does, usually in order to express a strong attitude toward the amount of rain, such as being annoyed or being happy.

Hyperbole: This is a figure of speech that uses **exaggeration**. A speaker deliberately describes something by an extreme or even unreal statement, usually to show his strong feeling or opinion about it. He expects people to understand that he is exaggerating.

They will not leave one stone upon another (Luke 19:44 ULB)

- This is an exaggeration. It means that the enemies will completely destroy Jerusalem.

Generalization: This is a statement that is true most of the time or in most situations that it could apply to.

The one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame, but honor will come to him who learns from correction. (Proverbs 13:18)

- These generalizations tell about what normally happens to people who ignore instruction and what normally happens to people who learn from correction.

And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. (Matthew 6:7)

- This generalization tells about what Gentiles were known for doing. Many Gentiles may have done this.

Even though a generalization may have a strong-sounding word like “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never,” it does not necessarily mean **exactly** “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never.” It simply means “most,” “most of the time,” “hardly any” or “rarely.”

Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians (Acts 7:22 ULB)

- This generalization means that he had learned much of what the Egyptians knew and taught.

Reason this is a translation issue

1. Readers need to be able to understand whether or not a statement is completely true.
2. If readers realize that a statement is not completely true, they need to be able to understand whether it is a hyperbole, a generalization, or a lie. (Though the Bible is completely true, it tells about people who did not always tell the truth.)

Examples from the Bible

Examples of Exaggeration

If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed... (Mark 9:43 ULB)

When Jesus said to cut off your hand, he meant that we should do whatever extreme things we need to do in order not to sin. He used this hyperbole to show how extremely important it is to try to stop sinning.

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: thirty thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and troops as numerous as the sand on the seashore. (1 Samuel 13:5 ULB)

The underlined phrase is an exaggeration. It means that there were many, many soldiers in the Philistine army.

Examples of Generalization

They found him, and they said to him, "Everyone is looking for you." (Mark 1:37 ULB)

The disciples told Jesus that everyone was looking looking for him. They probably did not mean that everyone in the city was looking for him, but that many people were looking for him, or that all of Jesus' closest friends there were looking for him.

But as his anointing teaches you about all things and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, remain in him. (1 John 2:27 ULB)

This is a generalization. God's Spirit teaches us about all things that we need to know, not about everything that is possible to know.

Caution

Do not assume that something is an exaggeration just because it seems to be impossible. God does miraculous things.

... they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat ... (John 6:19 ULB)

This is not hyperbole. Jesus really walked on the water. It is a literal statement.

Do not assume that the word “all” is always a generalization that means “most.”

Yahweh is righteous in all his ways and gracious in all he does. (Psalms 145:17 ULB)

Yahweh is always righteous. This is a completely true statement.

Translation Strategies

If the exaggeration or generalization would be natural and people would understand it and not think that it is a lie, consider using it. If not, here are other options.

1. Express the meaning without the exaggeration.
2. For a generalization, show that it is a generalization by using a phrase like “in general” or “in most cases.”
3. For a generalization, add a word like “most” or “almost” to show that the generalization is not exact.
4. For a generalization that has a word like “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never,” consider deleting that word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Express the meaning without the exaggeration.
 - **The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: thirty thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and troops as numerous as the sand on the seashore.** (1 Samuel 13:5 ULB)
 - The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: thirty thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and a great number of troops.
2. For a generalization, show that it is a generalization by using a phrase like “in general” or “in most cases.”
 - **The one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame ...** (Proverbs 13:18 ULB)
 - In general, the one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame
 - **And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words.** (Matthew 6:7)
 - “And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the Gentiles generally do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words.”
3. For a generalization, add a word like “most” or “almost” to show that the generalization is not exact.
 - **The whole country of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him.** (Mark 1:5 ULB)

- Almost all the country of Judea and almost all the people of Jerusalem went out to him.”
 - Most of the country of Judea and most of the people of Jerusalem went out to him.”
4. For a generalization that has a word like “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never,” consider deleting that word.
- **The whole country of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him.** (Mark 1:5 ULB)
 - The country of Judea and the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

Uses:

- [1 John 2:27-29](#)

Idiom

This page answers the question: *What are idioms and how can I translate them?*

An idiom is a figure of speech made up of a group of words that, as a whole, has a meaning that is different from what one would understand from the meanings of the individual words. Someone from outside of the culture usually cannot understand an idiom without someone inside the culture explaining its true meaning. Every language uses idioms. Some English examples are:

- You are pulling my leg (This means, “You are telling me a lie”)
- Do not push the envelope (This means, “Do not take a matter to its extreme”)
- This house is under water (This means, “The debt owed for this house is greater than its actual value”)
- We are painting the town red (This means, “We are going around town tonight celebrating very intensely”)

Description

An idiom is a phrase that has a special meaning to the people of the language or culture who use it. Its meaning is different than what a person would understand from the meanings of the individual words that form the phrase.

he resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:51 ULB)

The words “set his face” is an idiom that means “decided.”

Sometimes people may be able to understand an idiom from another culture, but it might sound like a strange way to express the meaning.

I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof. (Luke 7:6 ULB)

The phrase “enter under my roof” is an idiom that means “enter my house.”

Let these words go deeply into your ears. (Luke 9:44 ULB)

This idiom means “Listen carefully and remember what I say.”

Purpose: An idiom is created in a culture probably somewhat by accident when someone describes something in an unusual way. But, when that unusual way communicates the message powerfully and people understand it clearly, other people start to use it. After a while, it becomes a normal way of talking in that language.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- People can easily misunderstand idioms in the original languages of the Bible if they do not know the cultures that produced the Bible.
- People can easily misunderstand idioms that are in the source language Bibles if they do not know the cultures that made those translations.
- It is useless to translate idioms literally (according to the meaning of each word) when the target language audience will not understand what they mean.

Examples from the Bible

Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Look, we are your flesh and bone."
(1 Chronicles 11:1 ULB)

This means, "We and you belong to the same race, the same family."

the children of Israel went out with a high hand. (Exodus 14:8 ASV)

This means, "The Israelites went out defiantly."

the one who lifts up my head (Psalm 3:3 ULB)

This means, "the one who helps me."

Translation Strategies

If the idiom would be clearly understood in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

1. Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.
2. Use a different idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.
 - **Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Look, we are your flesh and bone."** (1 Chronicles 11:1 ULB)
 - ...Look, we all belong to the same nation.
 - **he resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem.** (Luke 9:51 ULB)
 - He started to travel to Jerusalem, determined to reach it.
 - **I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof.** (Luke 7:6 ULB)
 - I am not worthy that you should enter my house.
2. Use an idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.
 - **Let these words go deeply into your ears** (Luke 9:44 ULB)
 - Be all ears when I say these words to you.
 - **"My eyes grow dim from grief** (Psalm 6:7 ULB)
 - I am crying my eyes out

Uses:

- 1 John 3:16-18
- 1 John 5:9-10

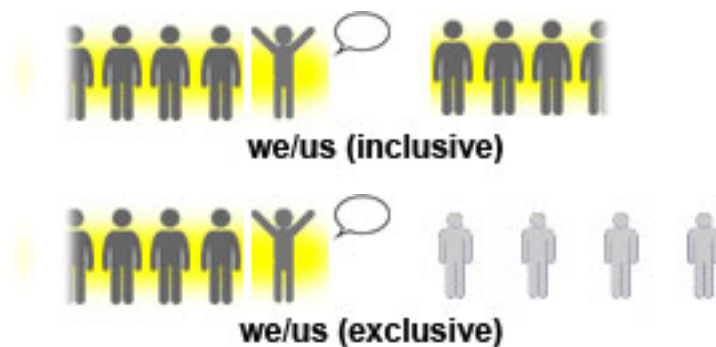
Inclusive “We”

This page answers the question: *What is inclusive “we”?*

Description

Some languages have more than one form of “we”: an **inclusive** form that means “I and you” and an **exclusive** form that means “I and someone else but not you.” The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also true for “us,” “our,” “ours,” and “ourselves.” Some languages have inclusive forms and exclusive forms for each of these.

See the pictures. The people on the right are the people that the speaker is talking to. The yellow highlight shows who the inclusive “we” and the exclusive “we” refer to.



Reason this is a translation issue - The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. Like English, these languages do not have separate exclusive and inclusive forms for “we.” Translators whose language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms of “we” will need to understand what the speaker meant so they can decide which form of “we” to use.

Examples from the Bible

... the shepherds said one to each other, “Let us now go to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” (Luke 2:15 ULB)

The shepherds were speaking to one another. When they said “us,” they were including the people they were speaking to - one another.

Now it happened on one of those days that Jesus and his disciples entered into a boat, and he said to them, “Let us go over to the other side of the lake.” Then they set sail. (Luke 8:22 ULB)

When Jesus said “us,” he was referring to himself and to the disciples he was speaking to.

Uses:

- [1 John 1:5-7](#)
- [1 John 2:1-3](#)

Metaphor

This page answers the question: *What is a metaphor and how can I translate a sentence that has one?*

Description

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which one concept (the “image”) stands for another concept (the “topic”). That is, the topic is spoken of as if it were the image. For example, someone might say,

- The girl I love is a red rose.

Here the topic is “the girl I love,” and the image is “a red rose.” The girl is spoken of as if she were a red rose.

Anything in a language can serve as a metaphor. For example, verb forms can be used in unusual ways, as in,

- The Apostle Paul tells us that Christians will rise to life again.

In this case, the English present tense form “tells” is a metaphor for the past tense form “told,” because the Apostle Paul lived long ago.

Sometimes speakers use metaphors that are very common in their language. However, sometimes speakers use metaphors that are uncommon, and even some metaphors that are unique.

Speakers most often use metaphors in order to strengthen their message, to express their feelings better, to say something that is hard to say in any other way, or to help people remember their message.

Kinds of Metaphors

There are several kinds of metaphors: “live” metaphors, “dead” metaphors, and patterned metaphors.

Live Metaphors

These are metaphors that people recognize as one concept standing for another concept. People also easily recognize them as giving strength and unusual qualities to the message. For this reason, people pay attention to these metaphors. For example,

For you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings.
(Malachi 4:2 ULB)

Here God speaks about his salvation as if it were the sun rising in order to shine its rays on the people whom he loves. He also speaks of the sun’s rays as if they were wings. Also, he speaks of these wings as if they were bringing medicine that would heal his people.

Here is another example: Jesus said, ‘Go and tell that fox...,’ where “that fox” refers to King Herod. The people listening to Jesus certainly understood that Jesus was referring to Herod either as a very evil, cunning person or as a king who was only pretending to be great.

Dead Metaphors

A dead metaphor is a metaphor that has been used so much in the language that its speakers no longer regard it as one concept standing for another. Examples in English are “table leg,” “family tree,” “leaf” meaning a page in a book, and “crane” meaning a large machine for lifting heavy loads. English speakers simply think of these words as having more than one meaning. Examples in Biblical Hebrew are probably “heal” meaning “repair,” and “sick” meaning “spiritually powerless because of sin.”

Patterned Pairs of Concepts acting as Metaphors

Many ways of metaphorical speaking depend on pairs of concepts, where one underlying concept frequently stands for a different underlying concept. For example, in English, the direction UP often stands for the concept of MORE. Because of this pair of underlying concepts, we can make sentences such as “The price of gasoline is going *up*,” “A *highly* intelligent man,” and also the opposite kind of idea: “The heat is going *down*,” and “The stock market *took a tumble*.”

Patterned pairs of concepts are constantly used for metaphorical purposes in the world’s languages, because they serve as convenient ways to organize thought. In general, people like to speak of abstract qualities, such as power, presence, emotions, and moral qualities, as if they were objects that could be seen or held, as if they were body parts, or as if they were events that could be watched as they happened.

When these metaphors are used in normal ways, it is rare that the speaker and audience regard them as figurative speech. Examples of metaphors in English that go unrecognized are:

- “Turn the heat *up*.” MORE is spoken of as UP.
- “Let us *go ahead* with our debate.” DOING WHAT WAS PLANNED is spoken of as WALKING or ADVANCING.
- “You *defend* your theory well.” ARGUMENT is spoken of as WAR.
- “A *flow* of words” WORDS are spoken of as LIQUIDS.

English speakers do not view them as unusual expressions, so it would be wrong to translate them into other languages in a way that would lead people to pay special attention to them as figurative speech.

For a description of important patterns of this kind of metaphor in biblical languages, please see Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns and the pages it will direct you to.

Parts of a Metaphor

When talking about metaphors, it can be helpful to talk about their parts. A metaphor has three parts.

1. **Topic** - The thing someone speaks of is called the topic.

2. **Image** - The thing he calls it is the image.
3. **Points of Comparison** - The ways in which the author claims that the topic and image are similar in some manner are their points of comparison.

In the metaphor below, the speaker describes the woman he loves as a red rose. The woman (his “love”) is the **topic**, and “red rose” is the **image**. Beauty and delicacy are the points of comparison that the speaker sees as similarities between both the topic and image. Note, however, that a rose’s beauty is not identical to a woman’s beauty. Neither are the two kinds of delicacy the same. So these points of comparison are not built upon identical characteristics, but rather upon characteristics that are seen by the writer as similar in some way.

- My love is a red, red rose.

Often, as in the metaphor above, the speaker explicitly states the **topic** and the **image**, but he does not state the points of comparison. The speaker leaves it to the hearer to think of those points of comparison. Because the hearers must do that, the speaker’s message tends to be more powerful.

Also in the Bible, normally the **topic** and the **image** are stated clearly, but not the points of comparison. The writer hopes that the audience will understand the points of comparison that are implied.

Jesus said to them. “I am the bread of life; he who comes to me will not be hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.” (John 6:35 ULB)

In this metaphor, Jesus called himself the bread of life. The **topic** is “I,” and the **image** is “bread.” Bread is a food that people ate all the time. The point of comparison between bread and Jesus is that people needed bread every day for nourishment. In a similar way, people need Jesus every day in order to live spiritually.

Note that this metaphor is really several metaphors. The first metaphor is that bread is used to represent Jesus. The second metaphor, which is inside the first one, is that physical life represents the spiritual life, which consists of living with God forever. The third metaphor is that eating bread represents benefitting from Jesus, who enables us to live with God forever.

Purposes of Metaphor

- One purpose of metaphor is to teach people about something that they do not know (the **topic**) by showing that it is like something that they already do know (the **image**).
- Another purpose is to emphasize that something has a particular quality or to show that it has that quality in an extreme way.
- Another purpose is to lead people to feel the same way about one thing as they would feel about the other.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- People may not recognize that something is a metaphor. In other words, they may mistake a metaphor for a literal statement, and thus misunderstand it.

- People may not be familiar with the thing that is used as an image, and so not be able to understand the metaphor.
- If the topic is not stated, people may not know what the topic is.
- People may not know the points of comparison that the speaker is thinking of and wants them to understand. If they fail to think of these points of comparison, they will not understand the metaphor.

Translation Principles

- Make the meaning of a metaphor as clear to the target audience as it was to the original audience.
- Do not make the meaning of a metaphor more clear to the target audience than you think it was to the original audience.

Examples from the Bible

Listen to this word, you cows of Bashan, (Amos 4:1 ULB)

In this metaphor Amos speaks to the upper-class women of Samaria (the topic is “you”) with as if they were cows (the image). Amos does not say what points of comparison between these women and the cows he has mind, but from the context it seems that he means that both the women and the cows are fat and interested only in eating.

Note, however, that Amos does not actually mean that the women are cows, for he speaks to them as human beings.

And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the clay. You are our potter; and we all are the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 ULB)

The example above has two related metaphors. The topics are “we” and “you,” and the images are “clay and ”potter.” The intended point of comparison between a potter and God is the fact that both make what they wish: the potter makes what he wishes out of the clay, and God makes what he wishes out of his people Israel. The point of comparison between the potter’s clay and “us” is that both the clay and the people of Israel are made into something different from what they were before.

Jesus said to them, ”Take heed and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” The disciples reasoned among themselves and said, “It is because we took no bread.” (Matthew 16:6-7 ULB)

Jesus used a metaphor here, but his disciples did not realize it. When he said “yeast,” they thought he was talking about bread, but “yeast” was the image in his metaphor, and the topic was the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Since the disciples (the original audience) did not understand what Jesus meant, it would not be good to state clearly here what Jesus meant.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the metaphor in the same way that the original readers probably understood it, go ahead and use it. Be sure to test the translation to make sure that people do understand it.

If people do not or would not understand it, here are some other strategies.

1. If the metaphor is a common expression of a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language, express the main idea in the simplest way preferred by your language. (See Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns for lists of some of these patterned pairs of concepts.)
2. If the metaphor seems to be a “live” metaphor, you can translate it literally if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor. If you do this, be sure to test it to make sure that the language community understands it correctly.
3. If the target audience does not realize that it is a metaphor, then change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding words such as “like” or “as.” See Simile.
4. If the target audience would not know the image, see Translate Unknowns for ideas on how to translate that image.
5. If the target audience would not use that image for that meaning, use an image from your own culture instead. Be sure that it is an image that could have been possible in Bible times.
6. If the target audience would not know what the topic is, then state the topic clearly. (However, do not do this if the original audience did not know what the topic was.)
7. If the target audience will not know the intended points of comparison between the image and topic, then state them clearly.
8. If none of these strategies is satisfactory, then simply state the idea plainly without using a metaphor.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If the metaphor is a common expression of a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language, express the main idea in the simplest way preferred by your language.
 - **Then one of the leaders of the synagogue, named Jairus, came, and when he saw him, fell at his feet.** (Mark 5:22 ULB)
 - Then one of the leaders of the synagogue, named Jairus, came, and when he saw him, immediately bowed down in front of him.
2. If the metaphor seems to be a “live” metaphor, you can translate it literally if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor. If you do this, be sure to test it to make sure that the language community understands it correctly.
 - **It was because of your hard hearts that he wrote you this law,** (Mark 10:5 ULB)
 - It was because of your hard hearts that he wrote you this law,

There is no change to this one - but it must be tested to make sure that the target audience correctly understands this metaphor.

1. If the target audience does not realize that it is a metaphor, then change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding words such as “like” or “as.”
 - **And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the clay. You are our potter; and we all are the work of your hand.** (Isaiah 64:8 ULB)
 - And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are like clay. You are like a potter; and we all are the work of your hand.
2. If the target audience would not know the **image**, see Translate Unknowns for ideas on how to translate that image.
 - **Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick a goad.** (Acts 26:14 ULB)
 - Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against a pointed stick.
3. If the target audience would not use that **image** for that meaning, use an image from your own culture instead. Be sure that it is an image that could have been possible in Bible times.
 - **And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the clay. You are our potter; and we all are the work of your hand.** (Isaiah 64:8 ULB)
 - “And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the wood. You are our carver; and we all are the work of your hand.”
 - “And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the string. You are the weaver; and we all are the work of your hand.”
4. If the target audience would not know what the **topic** is, then state the topic clearly. (However, do not do this if the original audience did not know what the topic was.)
 - **Yahweh lives; may my rock be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted.** (Psalm 18:46 ULB)
 - Yahweh lives; He is my rock. May he be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted.
5. If the target audience will not know the intended points of comparison between the image and the topic, then state them clearly.
 - **Yahweh lives; may my rock be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted.** (Psalm 18:46 ULB)
 - Yahweh lives; may he be praised because he is the rock under which I can hide from my enemies. May the God of my salvation be exalted.
 - **Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick a goad.** (Acts 26:14 ULB)
 - Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? You fight against me and hurt yourself like an ox that kicks against its owner’s pointed stick.
6. If none of these strategies are satisfactory, then simply state the idea plainly without using a metaphor.

- **I will make you become fishers of men.** (Mark 1:17 ULB)
 - I will make you become people who gather men.
 - Now you gather fish. I will make you gather people.

To learn more about specific metaphors read:

- Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns

Uses:

- 1 John 01 General Notes
- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 1:8-10
- 1 John 1:8-10
- 1 John 2:1-3
- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 2:4-6
- 1 John 2:7-8
- 1 John 2:9-11
- 1 John 2:9-11
- 1 John 2:9-11
- 1 John 2:9-11
- 1 John 2:9-11
- 1 John 2:12-14
- 1 John 2:12-14
- 1 John 2:12-14
- 1 John 2:12-14
- 1 John 2:12-14
- 1 John 2:12-14
- 1 John 2:15-17
- 1 John 2:20-21
- 1 John 2:24-26
- 1 John 2:27-29
- 1 John 2:27-29
- 1 John 3:7-8
- 1 John 3:7-8
- 1 John 3:9-10
- 1 John 3:13-15
- 1 John 3:13-15
- 1 John 3:16-18

- 1 John 3:16-18
- 1 John 3:19-22
- 1 John 3:19-22
- 1 John 3:19-22
- 1 John 3:23-24
- 1 John 4:4-6
- 1 John 4:7-8
- 1 John 4:7-8
- 1 John 4:11-14
- 1 John 4:15-16
- 1 John 4:15-16
- 1 John 4:15-16
- 1 John 5:11-12
- 1 John 5:20-21

Metonymy

This page answers the question: *What is a metonymy?*

Description

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which a thing or idea is called not by its own name, but by the name of something closely associated with it. A **metonym** is a word or phrase used as a substitute for something it is associated with.

and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7 ULB)

The blood represents Christ's death.

He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. (Luke 22:20 ULB)

The cup represents the wine that is in the cup.

Metonymy can be used

- to a shorter way of referring to something
- to make an abstract idea more meaningful by referring to it with the name of a physical object associated with it

Reason this is a translation issue

The Bible uses metonymy very often. Speakers of some languages are not used to metonymy and they may not recognize it when they read it in the Bible. If they do not recognize the metonymy, they will not understand the passage or, worse yet, they will get a wrong understanding of the passage. Whenever a metonym is used, people need to be able to understand what it represents.

Examples from the Bible

The Lord God will give him the throne of his father, David. (Luke 1:32 ULB)

A throne represents the authority of a king. "Throne" is a metonym for "kingly authority," "kingship" or "reign." This means that God would make him become the king that would follow King David.

Immediately his mouth was opened (Luke 1:64 ULB)

The mouth here represents the power to speak. This means that he was able to talk again.

... who warned you to flee from the wrath that is coming? (Luke 3:7 ULB)

The word "wrath" or "anger" is a metonym for "punishment." God was extremely angry with the people, and as a result, he would punish them.

Translation Strategies

If people would easily understand the metonym, consider using it. Otherwise, here are some options.

1. Use the metonym along with the name of the thing it represents.
2. Use only the name of the thing the metonym represents.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use the metonym along with the name of the thing it represents.
 - **He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.** (Luke 22:20 ULB)
 - "He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, "The wine in this cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."
2. Use the name of the thing the metonym represents.
 - **The Lord God will give him the throne of his father, David.** (Luke 1:32 ULB)
 - "The Lord God will give him the kingly authority of his father, David."
 - "The Lord God will make him king like his ancestor, King David."
 - **who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?** (Luke 3:7 ULB)
 - "who warned you to flee from God's coming punishment?"

To learn about some common metonymies, see [Biblical Imagery - Common Metonymies](#).### Uses:

- [1 John 1:1-2](#)
- [1 John 1:1-2](#)
- [1 John 1:1-2](#)
- [1 John 1:5-7](#)
- [1 John 1:5-7](#)
- [1 John 02 General Notes](#)
- [1 John 2:12-14](#)
- [1 John 2:15-17](#)
- [1 John 2:15-17](#)
- [1 John 2:18-19](#)
- [1 John 2:24-26](#)
- [1 John 3:1-3](#)
- [1 John 3:7-8](#)
- [1 John 3:13-15](#)
- [1 John 3:13-15](#)
- [1 John 3:16-18](#)
- [1 John 3:19-22](#)
- [1 John 4:1-3](#)
- [1 John 4:1-3](#)

- 1 John 4:4-6
- 1 John 4:4-6
- 1 John 4:4-6
- 1 John 4:4-6
- 1 John 5:4-5
- 1 John 5:6-8
- 1 John 5:6-8
- 1 John 5:13-15
- 1 John 5:18-19
- 1 John 5:18-19
- 1 John 5:20-21

Parallelism

This page answers the question: *What is parallelism?*

Description

In **parallelism** two phrases or clauses that are similar in structure or idea are used together. There are different kinds of parallelism. Some of them are the following:

1. The second clause or phrase means the same as the first. This is also called synonymous parallelism.
2. The second clarifies or strengthens the meaning of the first.
3. The second completes what is said in the first.
4. The second says something that contrasts with the first, but adds to the same idea.

Parallelism is most commonly found in Old Testament poetry, such as in the books of Psalms and Proverbs. It also occurs in Greek in the New Testament, both in the four gospels and in the apostles' letters.

Synonymous parallelism (the kind in which the two phrases mean the same thing) in the poetry of the original languages has several effects:

- It shows that something is very important by saying it more than once and in more than one way.
- It helps the hearer to think more deeply about the idea by saying it in different ways.
- It makes the language more beautiful and above the ordinary way of speaking.

Reason this is a translation issue

Some languages would not use synonymous parallelism. They would either think it odd that someone said the same thing twice, or they would think that the two phrases must have some difference in meaning. For them it is confusing, rather than beautiful.

Note: We use the term “synonymous parallelism” for long phrases or clauses that have the same meaning. We use the term **Doublet** for words or very short phrases that mean basically the same thing and are used together.

Examples from the Bible

The second clause or phrase means the same as the first.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105 ULB)

Both parts of the sentence are metaphors saying that God's word teaches people how to live.

You make him to rule over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:6 ULB)

Both lines say that God made man the ruler of everything.

The second clarifies or strengthens the meaning of the first.

The eyes of Yahweh are everywhere,
keeping watch over the evil and the good. (Proverbs 15:3 ULB)

The second line tells more specifically what Yahweh watches.

The second completes what is said in the first.

I lift up my voice to Yahweh,
and he answers me from his holy hill. (Psalm 3:4 ULB)

The second line tells what Yahweh does in response to what the person does in the first clause.

The second says something that contrasts with the first, but adds to the same idea.

For Yahweh approves of the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish. (Psalm 1:6 ULB)

This contrasts what happens to righteous people with what happens to wicked people.

A gentle answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger. (Proverbs 15:1 ULB)

This contrasts what happens when someone gives a gentle answer with what happens when someone says something harsh.

Translation Strategies

For most kinds of parallelism, it is good to translate both of the clauses or phrases. For synonymous parallelism, it is good to translate both clauses if people in your language understand that the purpose of saying something twice is to strengthen a single idea. But if your language does not use parallelism in this way, then consider using one of the following translation strategies.

1. Combine the ideas of both clauses into one.
2. If it appears that the clauses are used together to show that what they say is really true, you could include words that emphasize the truth such as “truly” or “certainly.”
3. If it appears that the clauses are used together to intensify an idea in them, you could use words like “very,” “completely” or “all.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Combine the ideas of both clauses into one.
 - **Until now you have deceived me and told me lies.** (Judges 16:13, ULB) - Delilah expressed this idea twice to emphasize that she was very upset.
 - “Until now you have deceived me with your lies.”

- **Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes.** (Proverbs 5:21 ULB) - The phrase “all the paths he takes” is a metaphor for “all he does.”
 - “Yahweh pays attention to everything a person does.”
 - **For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, and he will fight in court against Israel.** (Micah 6:2 ULB) - This parallelism describes one serious disagreement that Yahweh had with one group of people. If this is unclear, the phrases can be combined:
 - “For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, Israel.”
2. If it appears that the clauses are used together to show that what they say is really true, you could include words that emphasize the truth such as “truly” or “certainly.”
- **Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes.** (Proverbs 5:21 ULB)
 - “Yahweh truly sees everything a person does.”
3. If it appears that the clauses are used together to intensify an idea in them, you could use words like “very,” “completely” or “all.”
- **you have deceived me and told me lies.** (Judges 16:13 ULB)
 - “All you have done is lie to me.”
 - **Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes.** (Proverbs 5:21 ULB)
 - “Yahweh sees absolutely everything that a person does.”

Uses:

- 1 John 1:1-2
- 1 John 1:8-10
- 1 John 2:9-11

Personification

This page answers the question: *What is personification?*

Description

Personification is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of something as if it could do things that animals or people can do. People often do this because it makes it easier to talk about things that we cannot see:

Such as wisdom:

Does not Wisdom call out? (Proverbs 8:1 ULB)

Or sin:

sin crouches at the door (Genesis 4:7 ULB)

People also do this because it is sometimes easier to talk about people's relationships with non-human things, such as wealth, as if they were like relationships between people.

You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24 ULB)

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Some languages do not use personification.
- Some languages use personification only in certain situations.

Examples from the Bible

You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24 ULB)

Jesus speaks of wealth as if it were a master whom people might serve. Loving money and basing one's decisions on it is like serving it as a slave would serve his master.

Does not Wisdom call out? Does not Understanding raise her voice? (Proverbs 8:1 ULB)

The author speaks of wisdom and understanding as if they are a woman who calls out to teach people. This means that they are not something hidden, but something obvious that people should pay attention to.

Translation Strategies

If the personification would be understood clearly, consider using it. If it would not be understood, here are some other ways for translating it.

1. Add words or phrases to make it clear.
2. Use words such as "like" or "as" to show that the sentences is not to be understood literally.
3. Find a way to translate it without the personification.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Add words or phrases to make it clear.

- ... **sin crouches at the door** (Genesis 4:7 ULB) - God speaks of sin as a wild animal that is waiting for the chance to attack. This shows how dangerous sin is. An additional phrase can be added to make this danger clear.
 - ... sin is at your door, waiting to attack you

2. Use words such as “like” or “as” to show that the sentences is not to be understood literally.

- ... **sin crouches at the door** (Genesis 4:7 ULB) - This can be translated with the word “as.”
 - ... sin is crouching at the door, just as a wild animal does waiting to attack a person.

3. Find a way to translate it without the personification.

- ... **even the winds and the sea obey him** (Matthew 8:27 ULB) - The men speak of the “wind and the sea as if they are able to hear” and obey Jesus as people can. This could also be translated without the idea of obedience by speaking of Jesus controlling them.
 - He even controls the winds and the sea.

Note: We have broadened our definition of “personification” to include “zoomorphism” (speaking of other things as if they had animal characteristics) and “anthropomorphism” (speaking of non-human things as if they had human characteristics.)### Uses:

- 1 John 3:13-15
- 1 John 4:17-18

Possession

This page answers the question: *What is possession and how can I translate phrases that have it?*

Description

In common English, “possession” refers to having something, or to something that a person has. In English that grammatical relationship is shown with of, or an apostrophe and the letter s, or a possessive pronoun.

- the house of my grandfather
- my grandfather’s house
- his house

Possession is used in Hebrew, Greek, and English for a variety of situations. Here are a few common situations that it is used for.

- Ownership - Someone owns something.
 - My clothes - The clothes that I own
- Social relationship - Someone has some kind of social relationship with another.
 - my mother - the woman who gave birth to me, or the woman who cared for me
 - my teacher - the person who teaches me
- Contents - Something has something in it.
 - a bag of potatoes - a bag that has potatoes in it, or a bag that is full of potatoes
- Part and whole: One thing is part of another.
 - my head - the head that is part of my body
 - the roof of a house - the roof that is part of a house

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Translators need to understand the relationship between two ideas represented by the two nouns when one possesses the other.
- Some languages do not use possession for all of the situations that your source text Bible might use it for.

Examples from the Bible

Ownership - In the example below, the son owned the money.

... the younger son ... wasted his money with wildly extravagant living. (Luke 15:13)

Social Relationship - In the example below, the disciples were people who learned from John.

Then the disciples of John came to him ..., (Matthew 9:14 ULB)

Material - In the example below, the material used for making the crowns was gold.

On their heads were something like crowns of gold (Revelation 9:7)

Contents - In the example below, the cup has water in it.

Whoever gives you a cup of water to drink ... will not lose his reward. (Mark 9:41 ULB)

Part of a whole - In the example below, the door was a part of the palace.

But Uriah slept at the door of the king's palace (2 Samuel 11:9 ULB)

Part of a group - In the example below, "us" refers to the whole group and "each one" refers to the individual members.

To each one of us has been given a gift (Ephesians 4:7 ULB)

Events and Possession

Sometimes one or both of the nouns is an abstract noun that refers to an event or action. In the examples below, the abstract nouns are in **bold** print. These are just some of the relationships that are possible between two nouns when one of them refers to an event.

Subject - Sometimes the word after "of" tells who would do the action named by the first noun. In the example below, John baptized people.

The **baptism** of John, was it from heaven or from men? Answer me." (Mark 11:30)

In the example below, Christ loves us.

Who will separate us from the **love** of Christ? (Romans 3:35)

Object - Sometimes the word after "of" tells who or what something would happen to. In the example below, people love money.

For the **love** of money is a root of all kinds of evil. (1 Timothy 6:10 ULB)

Instrument - Sometimes the word after "of" tells how something would happen. In the example below, God would punish people by sending enemies to attack them with swords.

then be afraid of the sword, because wrath brings the **punishment** of the sword (Job 19:29 ULB)

Representation - In the example below, John was baptizing people who were repenting of their sins. They were being baptized to show that they were repenting. Their baptism represented their repentance.

As John came, he was baptizing in the wilderness and was preaching a **baptism** of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. (Mark 1:4 ULB)

Strategies for learning what the relationship is between the two nouns

1. Read the surrounding verses to see if they help you to understand the relationship between the two nouns.
2. Read the verse in the UDB. Sometimes it shows the relationship clearly.
3. See what the notes say about it.

Translation Strategies

If possession would be a natural way to show a particular relationship between two nouns, consider using it. If it would be strange or hard to understand, consider these.

1. Use an adjective to show that one describes the other.
2. Use a verb to show how the two are related.
3. If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use an adjective to show that one describes the other. The adjective below is in **bold** print.
 - **On their heads were something like crowns of gold** (Revelation 9:7)
 - "On their heads were **gold** crowns"
2. Use a verb to show how the two are related. In the example below, the added verb is in bold.
 - **... Whoever gives you a cup of water to drink ... will not lose his reward.** (Mark 9:41 ULB)
 - ... Whoever gives you a cup that **has** water in it to drink ... will not lose his reward.
 - **Wealth is worthless on the day of wrath** (Proverbs 11:4 ULB)
 - Wealth is worthless on the day when God **shows** his wrath.
 - Wealth is worthless on the day when God **punishes** people because of his wrath.
3. If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb. In the example below, that verb is in bold.
 - **Notice that I am not speaking to your children, who have not known or seen the punishment of Yahweh your God,** (Deuteronomy 11:2 ULB)
 - Notice that I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen how Yahweh your God **punished** the people of Egypt.
 - **You will only observe and see the punishment of the wicked.** (Psalms 91:8 ULB)
 - You will only observe and see how Yahweh **punishes** the wicked.
 - **... you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** (Acts 2:38 ULB)
 - ... you will receive the Holy Spirit, whom God will **give** to you.

Uses:

- 1 John 2:4-6

Pronouns

This page answers the question: *What are pronouns and what kinds of pronouns are in some languages?*

Description

Pronouns are words that people use in place of a noun to refer to someone or something. Some examples are I, you, he, it, this, that, himself, someone. The most common type of pronoun is personal.

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns refer to people or things and show if the speaker is referring to himself, the person he is speaking to, or someone or something else. The following are kinds of information that personal pronouns may give. Other types of pronouns may give some of this information, as well.

Person

- First Person - The speaker and possibly others (I, we)
 - Exclusive and Inclusive “We”
- Second Person - The person or people that the speaker is talking to and possibly others (you)
 - Forms of You
- Third Person - Someone or something other than the speaker and those he is talking to (he, she, it, they)

Number

- Singular - one (I, you, he, she, it)
- Plural - more than one (we, you, they)
 - Singular Pronouns that Refer to Groups
- Dual - two (Some languages have pronouns for specifically two people or two things.)

Gender

- Masculine - he
- Feminine - she
- Neuter - it

Relationship to other words in the sentence

- Subject of the verb: I, you, he, she, it, we, they
- Object of the verb or preposition: me, you, him, her, it, us, them
- Possessor with a noun: my, your, his, her, its, our, their
- Possessor without a noun: mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs

Other Types of pronouns

Reflexive Pronouns refer to another noun or pronoun in the same sentence: myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves.

- **John saw himself in the mirror.** - The word “himself” refers to John.

Interrogative Pronouns are used to make a question that needs more than just a yes or no for an answer: who, whom, whose, what, where, when, why, how

- **Who built the house?**

Relative Pronouns mark a relative clause. They tell more about a noun in the main part of the sentence: that, which, who, whom, where, when

- **I saw the house that John built.** The clause “that John built” tells which house I saw.
- **I saw the man who built the house.** The clause “who built the house” tells which man I saw.

Demonstrative Pronouns are used to draw attention to someone or something and to show distance from the speaker or something else: this, these, that, those.

- **Have you seen this here?**
- **Who is that over there?**

Indefinite pronouns are used when no particular noun is being referred to: any, anyone, someone, anything, something, some. Sometimes a personal pronoun is used in a generic way to do this: you, they, he or it.

- **He does not want to talk to anyone.**
- **Someone fixed it, but I do not know who.**
- **They say that you should not wake a sleeping dog.**

In the last example, “they” and “you” just refer to people in general.

Uses:

- **1 John 1:1-2**

Rhetorical Question

This page answers the question: *What are rhetorical questions and how can I translate them?*

A rhetorical question is a question that a speaker asks when he is more interested in expressing his attitude about something than in getting information about it. Speakers use rhetorical questions to express deep emotion or to encourage hearers to think deeply about something. The Bible contains many rhetorical questions, often to express surprise, to rebuke or scold the hearer, or to teach. Speakers of some languages use rhetorical questions for other purposes as well.

Description

A rhetorical question is a question that strongly expresses the speaker's attitude toward something. Often the speaker is not looking for information at all, but if he is asking for information, it is not usually the information that the question appears to ask for. The speaker is more interested in expressing his attitude than in getting information.

Those who stood by said, "Is this how you insult God's high priest?" (Acts 23:4 ULB)

The people who asked Paul this question were not asking about his way of insulting God's high priest. Rather they used their question to accuse Paul of insulting the high priest.

The Bible contains many rhetorical questions. Some of the purposes of these rhetorical questions are to express attitudes or feelings, to rebuke people, to teach something by reminding people of something they know and encouraging them to apply it to something new, and to introduce something they want to talk about.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Some languages do not use rhetorical questions; for them a question is always a request for information.
- Some languages use rhetorical questions, but for purposes that are more limited or different than in the Bible.
- Because of these differences between languages, some readers might misunderstand the purpose of a rhetorical question in the Bible.

Examples from the Bible

Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel? (1 Kings 21:7 ULB)

Jezebel used the question above to remind King Ahab of something he already knew: he still ruled the kingdom of Israel. The rhetorical question made her point more strongly than if she had merely stated it, because it forced Ahab to admit the point himself. She did this in order to rebuke him for being unwilling to take over a poor man's property. She was implying that since he was the king of Israel, he had the power to take the man's property.

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)

God used the question above to remind his people of something they already knew: a young woman would never forget her jewelry or a bride forget her veils. He then rebuked his people for forgetting him, who is so much greater than those things.

Why did I not die when I came out from the womb? (Job 3:11 ULB)

Job used the question above to show deep emotion. This rhetorical question expresses how sad he was that he did not die as soon as he was born. He wished that he had not lived.

And why has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (Luke 1:43 ULB)

Elizabeth used the question above to show how surprised and happy she was that the mother of her Lord came to her.

Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULB)

Jesus used the question above to remind the people of something they already knew: a good father would never give his son something bad to eat. By introducing this point, Jesus could go on to teach them about God with his next rhetorical question:

Therefore, if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give good things to those who ask him? (Matthew 7:11 ULB)

Jesus used this question to teach the people in an emphatic way that God gives good things to those who ask him.

What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed that a man took and threw into his garden... (Luke 13:18-19 ULB)

Jesus used the question above to introduce what he was going to talk about. He was going to compare the kingdom of God to something.

Translation Strategies

In order to translate a rhetorical question accurately, first be sure that the question you are translating truly is a rhetorical question and is not an information question. Ask yourself, "Does the person asking the question already know the answer to the question?" If so, it is a rhetorical question. Or, if no one answers the question, is the one who asked it bothered that he did not get an answer? If not, it is a rhetorical question.

When you are sure that the question is rhetorical, then be sure that you know what the purpose of the rhetorical question is. Is it to encourage or rebuke or shame the hearer? Is it to bring up a new topic? Is it to do something else?

When you know the purpose of the rhetorical question, then think of the most natural way to express that purpose in the target language. It might be as a question, or a statement, or an exclamation.

If using the rhetorical question would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing so. If not, here are other options:

1. Add the answer after the question.
2. Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.
3. Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.
4. Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Add the answer after the question.
 - **Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!** (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)
 - Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Of course not! Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!
 - **Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone?** (Matthew 7:9 ULB)
 - Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? None of you would do that!
2. Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.
 - **What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed...** (Luke 13:18-19 ULB)
 - This is what the kingdom of God is like. It is like a mustard seed..."
 - **Is this how you insult God's high priest?** (Acts 23:4 ULB)
 - You should not insult God's high priest!
 - **Why did I not die when I came out from the womb?** (Job 3:11 ULB)
 - I wish I had died when I came out from the womb!
 - **And why has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?** (Luke 1:43 ULB)
 - How wonderful it is that the mother of my Lord has come to me!
3. Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.
 - **Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel?** (1 Kings 21:7 ULB)
 - You still rule the kingdom of Israel, do you not?
4. Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

- **Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone?** (Matthew 7:9 ULB)
 - If your son asks you for a loaf of bread, would you give him a stone?
- **Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!** (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)
 - What virgin would forget her jewelry, and what bride would forget her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number

Uses:

- 1 John 2:22-23
- 1 John 3:11-12
- 1 John 3:16-18
- 1 John 5:4-5

Synecdoche

This page answers the question: *What does the word synecdoche mean?*

Description

Synecdoche is when a speaker uses a part of something to refer to the whole or uses the whole to refer to a part.

My soul exalts the Lord. (Luke 1:46 ULB)

Mary was very happy about what the Lord was doing, so she said “my soul,” which means the inner, emotional part of herself, to refer to her whole self.

the Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing something that is not lawful ...?”
(Mark 2:24 ULB)

The Pharisees who were standing there did not all say the same words at the same time. Instead, it is more likely that one man representing the group said those words.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Some readers may understand the words literally.
- Some readers may realize that they are not to understand the words literally, but they may not know what the meaning is.

Example from the Bible

I looked on all the deeds that my hands had accomplished (Ecclesiastes 2:11 ULB)

“My hands” is a synecdoche for the whole person, because clearly the arms and the rest of the body and the mind were also involved in the person’s accomplishments.

Translation Strategies

If the synecdoche would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

1. State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.
 - **”My soul exalts the Lord.”** (Luke 1:46 ULB)
 - ”I exalt the Lord.”
 - **...the Pharisees said to him** (Mark 2:24 ULB)

- ...a representative of the Pharisees said to him ...
- **... I looked on all the deeds that my hands had accomplished ...** (Ecclesiastes 2:11 ULB)
 - I looked on all the deeds that I had accomplished

Uses:

- 1 John 4:1-3

Textual Variants

This page answers the question: *Why does the ULB have missing or added verses, and should I translate them?*

Description

Thousands of years ago, people wrote the books of the Bible. Other people then copied them by hand and translated them. They did this work very carefully, and over the years many people made thousands of copies. However people who looked at them later saw that there were small differences between them. Some copiers accidentally left out some words, and some mistook a word for another that looked like it. Occasionally they added words or even whole sentences, either by accident, or because they wanted to explain something. Modern Bibles are translations of the old copies. Some modern Bibles have some of these sentences that were added. In the ULB, these added sentences are usually written in footnotes.

Bible scholars have read many old copies and compared them with each other. For each place in the Bible where there was a difference, they have figured out which wordings are most likely correct. The translators of the ULB based the ULB on wordings that scholars say are most likely correct. Because people who use the ULB may have access to Bibles that are based on other copies, the ULB translators included footnotes that tell about some of the differences between them.

Translators are encouraged to translate the text in the ULB and to write about added sentences in footnotes, as is done in the ULB. However, if the local church really wants those sentences to be included in the main text, translators may put them in the text and include a footnote about them.

Examples from the Bible

Matthew 18:10-11 ULB has a footnote about verse 11.

¹⁰See that you do not despise any of these little ones. For I say to you that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is in heaven. ¹¹[¹

[¹] Many authorities, some ancient, insert v. 11. *For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost.*

John 7:53-8:11 is not in the best earliest manuscripts. It has been included in the ULB, but it is marked off with square brackets ([]) at the beginning and end, and there is a footnote after verse 11.

⁵³[Then every man went to his own house.... ¹¹She said, “No one, Lord.” Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way; from now on sin no more.”]^[2]

[²]The best earliest manuscripts do not have John 7:53-8:11

Translation Strategies

When there is a textual variant, you may choose to follow the ULB or another version that you have access to.

1. Translate the verses that the ULB does and include the footnote that the ULB provides.
2. Translate the verses as another version does, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

The translation strategies are applied to Mark 7:14-16 ULB, which has a footnote about verse 16.

- ¹⁴He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. ¹⁵There is nothing from outside of a person that can defile him when it enters into him. It is what comes out of the person that defiles him." ¹⁶[1]
 - ^[1]The best ancient copies omit v. 16. *If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.*
- Translate the verses that the ULB does and include the footnote that the ULB provides.
 - ¹⁴He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. ¹⁵There is nothing from outside of a person that can defile him when it enters into him. It is what comes out of the person that defiles him." ¹⁶[1]
 - ◇ ^[1]The best ancient copies omit verse 16. *If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.*
- Translate the verses as another version does, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.
 - ¹⁴He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. ¹⁵There is nothing from outside of a person that can defile him when it enters into him. It is what comes out of the person that defiles him. ¹⁶If any man has ears to hear, let him hear." ^[1]
 - ◇ ^[1]Some ancient copies do not have verse 16.

Uses:

- [Introduction to 1 John](#)

Translating Son and Father

This page answers the question: *Why are these concepts important in referring to God?*

Door43 supports Bible translations that represent these concepts when they refer to God.

Biblical Witness

“Father” and “Son” are names that God calls himself in the Bible. The Bible shows that God called Jesus his Son:

After he was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water, and... a voice came out of the heavens saying, “This is my beloved Son. I am very pleased with him.” (Matthew 3:16-17 ULB)

The Bible shows that Jesus called God his Father:

Jesus said, “I praise you Father, Lord of heaven and earth,... no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son” (Matthew 11:25-27 ULB) (See also: John 6:26-57)

Christians have found that “Father” and “Son” are the ideas that most essentially describe the eternal relationship of the First and Second Persons of the Trinity to each other. The Bible indeed refers to them in various ways, but no other terms reflect the eternal love and intimacy between these Persons, nor the interdependent eternal relationship between them.

Jesus referred to God in the following terms:

Baptize them into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19 ULB)

The intimate, loving relationship between the Father and the Son is eternal, just as they are eternal.

The Father loves the Son. (John 3:35-36; 5:19-20 ULB)

I love the Father, I do what the Father commands me, just as he gave me the commandment. (John 14:31 ULB)

... no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son. (Luke 10:22 ULB)

The terms “Father” and “Son” also communicate that the Father and the Son are of the same essence; they are both eternal God.

Jesus said, “Father, glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you... I glorified you on the earth,... Now Father, glorify me... with the glory that I had with you before the world was created.” (John 17:1-5 ULB)

But in these last days, he [God the Father] has spoken to us through a Son, whom he appointed to be the heir of all things. It is through him that God also made the universe. He is the brightness of God’s glory, the very character of his essence. He even holds everything together by the word of his power. (Hebrews 1:2-3 ULB)

Jesus said to him, "I have been with you for so long and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? (John 14:9 ULB)

Human Relationships

Human fathers and sons are not perfect, but the Bible still uses those terms for the Father and Son, who are perfect.

Just as today, human father-son relationships during Bible times were never as loving or perfect as the relationship between Jesus and his Father. But this does not mean that the translator should avoid the concepts of father and son. The scriptures use these terms to refer to God, the perfect Father and Son, as well as to sinful human fathers and sons. In referring to God as Father and Son, choose words in your language that are widely used to refer to a human "father" and "son." In this way you will communicate that God the Father and God the Son are essentially the same (they are both God), just as a human father and son are essentially the same, both human and sharing the same characteristics.

Translation Strategies

1. Think through all the possibilities that your language has to translate the words "son" and "father." Determine which words in your language best represent the divine "Son" and "Father."
2. If your language has more than one word for "son," use the word that has the closest meaning to "only son" (or "first son" if necessary).
3. If your language has more than one word for "father," use the word that has the closest meaning to "birth father," rather than "adoptive father."

(See *God the Father* and *Son of God* pages in [translationWords](#) for help translating "Father" and "Son.")### Uses:

- [1 John 1:3-4](#)
- [1 John 1:5-7](#)
- [1 John 2:22-23](#)
- [1 John 3:7-8](#)
- [1 John 3:23-24](#)
- [1 John 4:11-14](#)
- [1 John 4:15-16](#)
- [1 John 5:4-5](#)
- [1 John 5:9-10](#)
- [1 John 5:11-12](#)
- [1 John 5:13-15](#)
- [1 John 5:20-21](#)