

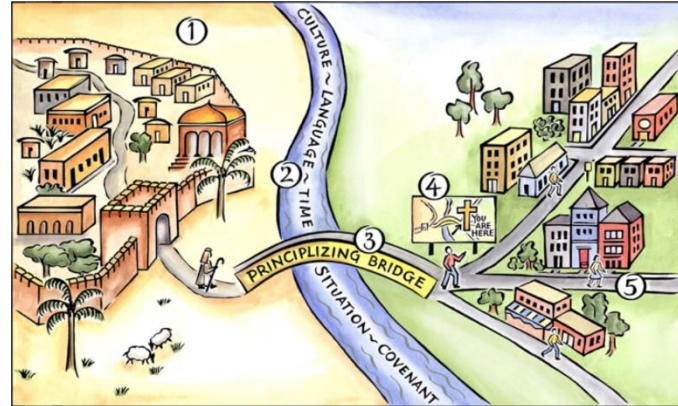
# Grasping God's Word

## Bible Translations

### 11/03/2019 Sunday AM

#### Introduction

- This morning we are going to begin a short series titled: **Grasping God's Word**.
- God's Word is the most important text that we have available in the world, yet as we have discussed before, biblical literacy is in a steady decline.
- There is no doubt that the Bible is a unique text and is not always the easiest to understand, that is why over the next several weeks we will be learning tools to help us read, interpret, and apply God's Word.
- Grasping God's Word requires us to take a journey, and that journey is illustrated in the picture below:
- We will take 5 interpretive steps from grasping the text in "their town" to grasping the text in "our town."
- In order to get from step 1 to 5, we must cross the river of "culture, language, time, situation, and covenant."
- We cross the river using the "Principlizing Bridge" as we take the principles of the text understood by the original audience, to us today.
- We will begin this series looking at **Bible Translations**.
- Take a moment and look at the version or translation of the Bible that you are currently using. (KJV, NKJV, NASB, ESV, NIV...)
- Write what version of the Bible you are currently using:



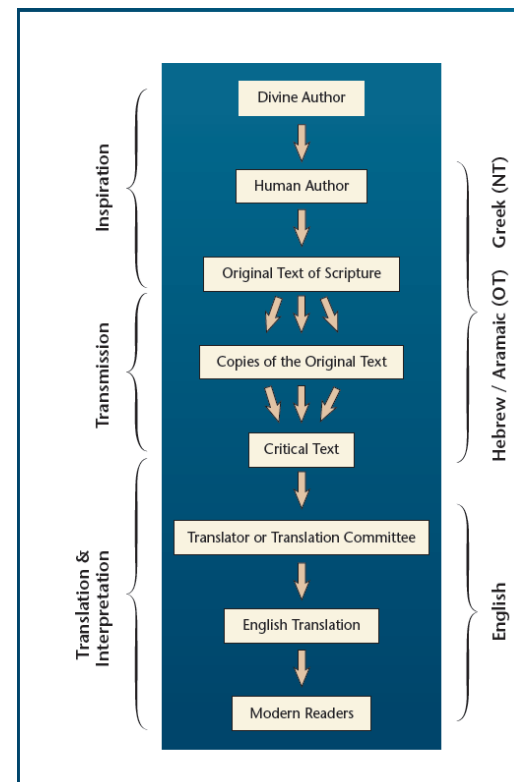
- Choosing a Bible translation is one of the single most important steps you will take to prepare for your interpretive journey. Why is this?
- **Can anyone tell me what this says?** נִרְאֶה לְרִגְלִי דְבָרָךְ וְאֹר לְנִתְיָבְתִּי
- **What about this?** σπουδάσον σεαυτὸν δόκιμον παραστήσαι τῷ θεῷ ἐργάτην ἀνεπαίσχυντον ὀρθοτομοῦντα τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας
- Most folks would not have any idea what either of these say because they cannot read Hebrew or Greek.

#### How Did We Get Our English Bible?

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** says, “<sup>16</sup>All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

- **Inspiration:** God is the Divine Author of the Bible and he used Human Authors to created the Original Text of Scripture.
- **Transmission:** The original manuscripts were then copied for widespread distribution.
- **Translation and Interpretation:** Copies of the original text were gathered and combined into what is called the Critical Text. The Critical Text is what the Translator or Translation Committee uses as their source text to begin the translation process. You then get the Bible translated into English and thus at last, God's Word is available to Modern Readers.
- The Old Testament of the Bible was written in Hebrew and the New Testament was written in Greek. Unless you can read these two languages, you must use a Bible translated into English, which is what you have in your hand or on your electronic device today.
- Now you can read what the two verses said earlier.

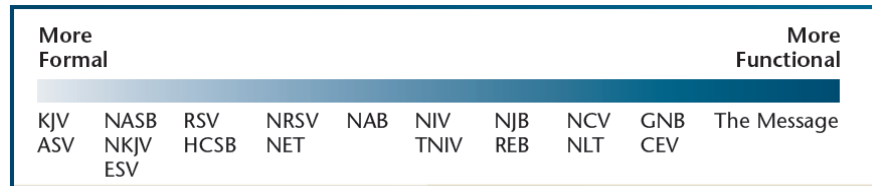
**Psalms 119:105**, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.”



**2 Timothy 2:15**, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”

## Brief Overview of English Translations

- Since English is our primary language, we will spend our time looking at English translations.
- Again, I will state, choosing a Bible translation is one of the single most important steps you can take to prepare you for your interpretive journey.
- However, choosing an English translation can be quite confusing because there are literally dozens to choose from.
- Translations differ one to the other mainly on their approaches to translating. Circle your translation below:



- As you can see, translations vary as to whether they are “More Formal” meaning they take a more word-for-word approach to translating, or a “More Functional” approach meaning that they take a more thought-for-thought approach.
- This is the major difference that you will see in 99% of the translations that we use today.
- However, the King James Version and the New King James Version are two exceptions.
- The King James Version was written in 1611 and used a critical text called the Textus Receptus which only contained a few copies of the ancient manuscripts available to translators in 1611.
- Since 1611, we have uncovered over 5000 ancient manuscripts of the New Testament as well as the Dead Sea Scrolls.
- The Textus Receptus is no longer used today. Now the GNT or Novum Testamentum Graece are used.
- This difference in the critical texts that are used as well as changes in the English language over the past 400 years differentiates the KJV and the NKJV from the rest of Bible translations available to English readers today.
- Look at the following verses and see if you can easily understand what they are saying in the KJV:
  - **1 Samuel 5:12:** “And the men that died not were smitten with the emerods: and the cry of the city went up to heaven.”
  - **Psalms 5:6:** “Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing.”
  - **James 5:11:** “...The Lord is very pitiful.”
- Now read these same verses in the NIV and see if you understand what they are saying:
  - **1 Samuel 5:12:** “Those who did not die were afflicted with tumors, and the outcry of the city went up to heaven.
  - **Psalms 5:6:** “You destroy those who tell lies; bloodthirsty and deceitful men the LORD abhors.”
  - **James 5:11:** “...The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.”

## Choosing a Translation

- Choose a translation that uses modern English. The whole point of making a translation is to move the message of the original text to a language you can understand.
- History teaches us that languages change over time, and English is no exception. The English of John Wycliffe’s day or of 1611 or even of the late 1700s is simply not the same as the English of the twenty-first century. There is little to be gained by translating a Greek or Hebrew text into a kind of English that you no longer use and can no longer comprehend.
- Give preference to a translation by a committee over against a translation by an individual. Translating requires an enormous amount of knowledge and skill. A group of qualified translators will certainly possess more expertise than any one translator possibly could. In addition, a group of scholars will usually guard against the tendency of individual scholars to read their own personal biases into their translation.
- Do not just use one translation of the Bible to study with. Pick several from the spectrum of approaches and pick some that are old and some that are newer.
- Last, but certainly not least, allow the Holy Spirit to lead you in our study and pursuit of God’s word. He will not lead you astray!

## Wednesday Night Bible Study:

The Children of Adam and Eve – Part Two - Genesis 4:17-26