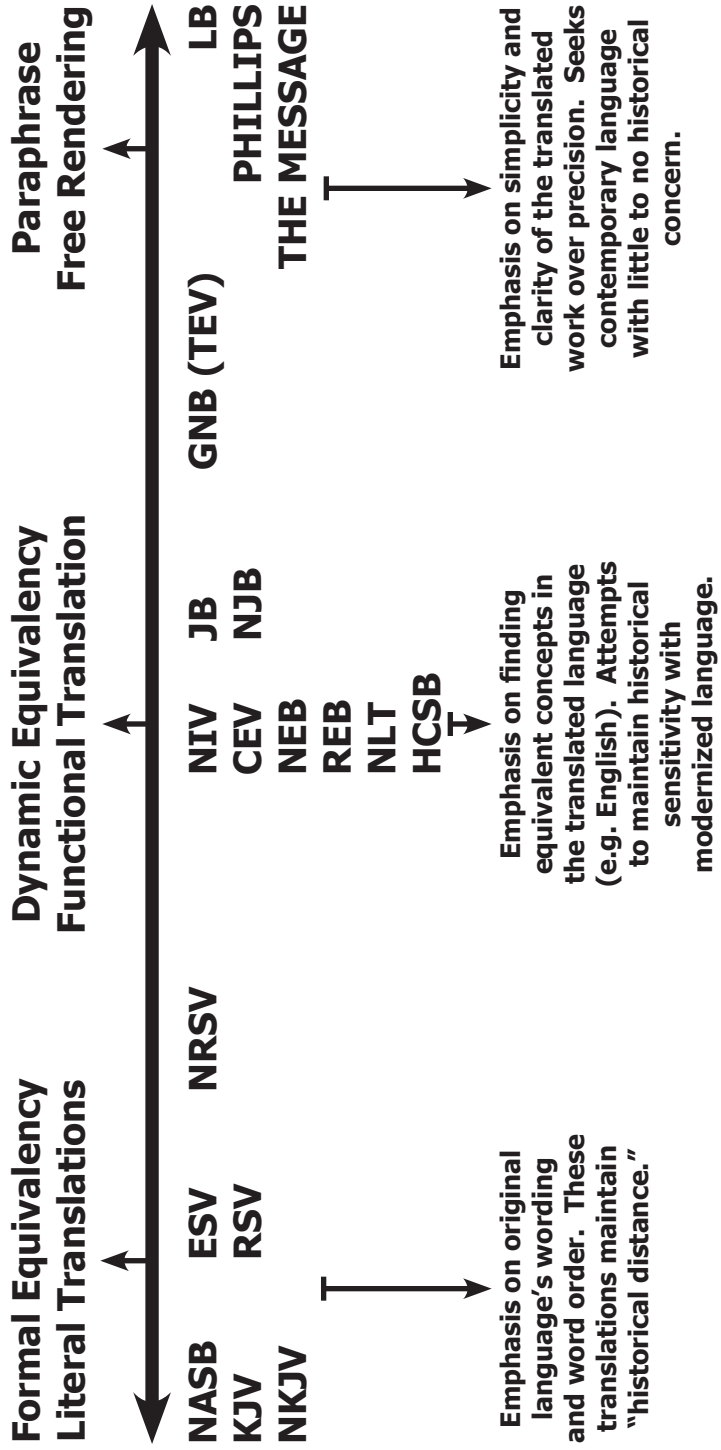


# The Translation Spectrum



I am indebted to Dr. Walt Russell, NT Professor @ Talbot School of Theology, as the primary source for the layout and content of this chart.

# Bible Versions: Which Is Best?

Long Beach Alliance Church • January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**BE DILIGENT TO PRESENT YOURSELF APPROVED TO GOD AS A WORKMAN WHO DOES NOT NEED TO BE ASHAMED, ACCURATELY HANDLING THE WORD OF TRUTH. BUT AVOID WORLDLY AND EMPTY CHATTER, FOR IT WILL LEAD TO FURTHER UNGODLINESS, AND THEIR TALK WILL SPREAD LIKE GANGRENE....**

**~2<sup>ND</sup> TIMOTHY 2:15-17A (NASB)**

## 1) The Bigger Picture Of The Bible

- A) Scripture is written as a grand story. The overall purpose is not found in selected verses (cf. Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 3:28 vs. James 2:24), but in the larger context of how each story leads to the next.
- B) Each section of the Bible is a narrative piece which reveals more and more about God.
- C) An understanding of God and how He has chosen to reveal Himself to mankind, from creation to Christ to consummation can only be appreciated when the entire grand meta-narrative of Scripture is ingested (Hebrews 1:1-14).

D) When we begin to experience God in the midst of the grand meta-narrative of Scripture, we begin to see our own place in the self-revelation of God. Our lives become a part of the story, another narrative in which God is revealing Himself for the redemption of mankind (Hebrews 8:10, Jeremiah 31:33).

E) While this provides followers of Christ with a purpose through context (where we've been, where we are, where we are headed), it still begs the question -- WHY?

## 2) Why Should I Read The Bible?

A) Bible study pleases God. Study is defined as "the devotion of time and attention to acquiring knowledge on a given subject." All followers of Christ are called to study the Bible (2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:15).

B) Bible study helps us to learn and grow authentically as followers of Christ. Just as a baby needs mother's milk (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:2), each of us need the nourishment of God's Word (Hebrews 6:1-3). Being part of a church is not enough! Authentic followers of Christ study the Bible!

C) You will develop spiritual discernment. The way to know if others are speaking the truth is to know the truth yourself. When the apostle Paul stopped at a church in Berea, he found believers there studying diligently (Acts 17:11).

D) You will be able to answer the questions of others. Studying the Bible will transform your heart and help you to embody Christ for others. In addition, you will be able to give authentic answers to those who ask you questions about Jesus Christ (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:15; 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:16).

## 3) What About Bible Versions? Which Version Is Best?

A) There are dozens of popular Bible versions which are readily available at your local Christian bookstore. So many, it boggles the mind! In addition, many of these versions come with detailed study notes for almost every kind of person!

B) The Bible has been translated from three original languages, Hebrew and Aramaic (Old Testament), and Greek (New Testament). These languages have been translated into many modern Bible versions which fit into one of three translation categories/styles.

(s) sigma ←  
(a) alpha ←  
(r) rho ←  
(x) xsi ←

σάρξ ~ sarx

flesh, the body, the symbol of what is external, human nature, a human being

C) **Formal Equivalency or Literal.** These are word-for-word translations which preserve both literal wording and word order. These translations pass along the "difficulty" of the text to the reader.

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, **in my flesh**; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good *is not*.  
~Romans 7:18 (NASB)

ii) **Dynamic Equivalence or Functional.** These are thought-for-thought translations which communicate equivalent concepts within English. These translations remove most of the difficulty of the text for the reader.

I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, **in my sinful nature**. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ~Romans 7:18 (NIV)

iii) **Paraphrase or Free.** Not genuinely translations, these Bibles communicate the interpreted intent through the eyes of an author. Paraphrases are the easiest Bibles to understand and are often "styled" for modern readers.

**I realize that I don't have what it takes.** I can will it, but I can't do it. ~Romans 7:18 (The Message)