

# St. Mark's Blueprint Academy

## Reading the Bible

January 28, 2023

## **Bible Translations**

### **Literal Bible translations (examples - KJV, NKJV, NRSV, Amplified)**

Literal translations are often the closest English form of the Hebrew or Greek word. In this process, translators painstakingly review every single word to ensure they are as accurate as possible, called formal equivalence. This form of translation is extremely helpful for **academic study** and works well with interlinear Bibles. However, the biggest drawback to word-for-word translations is that modern readers might misunderstand figures of speech, literary devices, and cultural references.

### **Dynamic translations (Examples – CEB, NIV, NLT)**

Need more context? Looking for an easier read? Dynamic translations place a higher emphasis on summing up the biblical authors' thoughts while still respecting the text. These thought-for-thought translations balance accuracy with approachability, **perfect for light reading or a devotion**. After all, the Bible is for the common fellow. The drawback though is that every tweak in the name of understandability is a step toward someone else's textual interpretation. But if you want to draw your own conclusions about every matter, stick with the 'literal' category.

### **Paraphrased Bible translations (Examples - The Message, Good News, TLB)**

In your mind, paraphrased translations might already have a bad reputation; we would argue that there is a time and place for every type of Bible out there. Paraphrased Bibles focus on getting the general idea across with clear language, **useful for those new to the Faith or new to reading**. Sometimes, a paraphrase is nice because it's an interpretation; you can use it to **gain a fresh perspective** on a passage you're reading. Typically, Bible paraphrases aren't necessarily meant to stand alone, so keep that in mind.

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**Note:** When it comes to United Methodist teaching resources published by The United Methodist Publishing House in English, the **Common English Bible** (CEB) and the **New Revised Standard Version** (NRSV) are the preferred texts for curriculum, largely because these are the preferred versions of many of our pastors and teachers in the US.

## Literary Genres

- **History or Narrative:** There are stories and the epics and include Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Jonah, and Acts.
- **Law:** These are the instructions and precepts of God given to us through Moses, such as Leviticus and Deuteronomy.
- **Wisdom:** These are the literature of maxims and sayings such as Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.
- **Poetry:** These are the prose and rhymes such as Psalms, Song of Solomon, and Lamentations.
- **Prophecy:** These include both major and minor prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.
- **Apocalyptic:** These are combinations of narrative and prose written in vivid imagery and poetic phrases that are intended to exaggerate for a purpose such as Daniel and most of Revelation.

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- **Parable:** These are the sayings of Jesus that are narrative and instructional, contained in the Gospels.
- **Epistle:** These are the letters written to a specific audience that are practical for us today such as Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, Peter, John, and the first three chapters of Revelation.
- **Romance:** These are narrative, written also as love stories, such as Ruth and Song of Solomon.
- **Gospel:** Gospels have clear theological agendas and can be best described as historical-theological documents.
- **Sermon:** A speech delivered to a group of supporters.

### Books on Reading the Bible

- Skip Heitzig *How to Study the Bible and Enjoy It*  
[https://www.amazon.com/Study-Bible-Enjoy-Skip-Heitzig/dp/0842337237/ref=sxsts\\_entity\\_rec\\_bsx\\_s\\_def\\_r00\\_t\\_auf1?content-id=amzn1.sym.a36c3969-f821-4d5b-a8e8-be129cf4aa4a%3Aamzn1.sym.a36c3969-f821-4d5b-a8e8-be129cf4aa4a&cv\\_ct\\_cx=skip+heitzig+books&keywords=skip+heitzig+books&pd\\_rd\\_i=0842337237&pd\\_rd\\_r=83b4db08-4da8-4ba0-accf-5f96e3c6b97d&pd\\_rd\\_w=1O643&pd\\_rd\\_wg=lqHdk&pf\\_rd\\_p=a36c3969-f821-4d5b-a8e8-be129cf4aa4a&pf\\_rd\\_r=K3SNQ3VS767DV24R4E95&qid=1675189473&s=books&sprefix=heitzig+%2Cstripbooks%2C74&sr=1-4-ef9bfdb7-b507-43a0-b887-27e2a8414df0](https://www.amazon.com/Study-Bible-Enjoy-Skip-Heitzig/dp/0842337237/ref=sxsts_entity_rec_bsx_s_def_r00_t_auf1?content-id=amzn1.sym.a36c3969-f821-4d5b-a8e8-be129cf4aa4a%3Aamzn1.sym.a36c3969-f821-4d5b-a8e8-be129cf4aa4a&cv_ct_cx=skip+heitzig+books&keywords=skip+heitzig+books&pd_rd_i=0842337237&pd_rd_r=83b4db08-4da8-4ba0-accf-5f96e3c6b97d&pd_rd_w=1O643&pd_rd_wg=lqHdk&pf_rd_p=a36c3969-f821-4d5b-a8e8-be129cf4aa4a&pf_rd_r=K3SNQ3VS767DV24R4E95&qid=1675189473&s=books&sprefix=heitzig+%2Cstripbooks%2C74&sr=1-4-ef9bfdb7-b507-43a0-b887-27e2a8414df0)
- Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*  
[https://www.amazon.com/How-Read-Bible-All-Worth/dp/0310517826/ref=tmm\\_pap\\_swatch\\_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1675189504&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/How-Read-Bible-All-Worth/dp/0310517826/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1675189504&sr=1-1)

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- J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays *Grasping God's Word*  
[https://www.amazon.com/Grasping-Gods-Word-Fourth-Hands/dp/0310109175/ref=sr\\_1\\_1\\_sspa?crid=7KVKSJYCX989&keywords=grasping+god%27s+word&qid=1675189529&s=books&sprefix=grasping+god%27s+word%2Cstripbooks%2C70&sr=1-1-spons&psc=1&spLa=ZW5jcnlwdGVkUXVhbGlmaWVyPUEzREo5T1dUME05TVhZJmVuY3J5cHRIZElkPUEzREo5T1dUME05TVhZJmVuY3J5cHRIZEFkSWQ9QTA0NTc4ODUxRkpRS1NZVkpBSUkyJndpZGldE5hbWU9c3BfYXRmJmFjdGlvbj1jbGlja1JIZGlyZWV0JmRvTm90TG9nQ2xpY2s9dHJ1ZQ==](https://www.amazon.com/Grasping-Gods-Word-Fourth-Hands/dp/0310109175/ref=sr_1_1_sspa?crid=7KVKSJYCX989&keywords=grasping+god%27s+word&qid=1675189529&s=books&sprefix=grasping+god%27s+word%2Cstripbooks%2C70&sr=1-1-spons&psc=1&spLa=ZW5jcnlwdGVkUXVhbGlmaWVyPUEzREo5T1dUME05TVhZJmVuY3J5cHRIZElkPUEzREo5T1dUME05TVhZJmVuY3J5cHRIZEFkSWQ9QTA0NTc4ODUxRkpRS1NZVkpBSUkyJndpZGldE5hbWU9c3BfYXRmJmFjdGlvbj1jbGlja1JIZGlyZWV0JmRvTm90TG9nQ2xpY2s9dHJ1ZQ==)

## Resources

- Study Bibles - Study Bibles are loaded with insights and commentary to help you dig deeper. They include maps, graphs, concordances, and charts that shed light on biblical times.
  - *The Original African Heritage Study Bible*  
[https://www.amazon.com/Original-African-Heritage-Study-Bible-KJV/dp/0817015116/ref=asc\\_df\\_0817015116/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=312115051380&hvpos=&hvetw=g&hvrnd=5260656631559447335&hvpon=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmld=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9009985&hvtargid=pla-457617514052&psc=1&region\\_id=674469](https://www.amazon.com/Original-African-Heritage-Study-Bible-KJV/dp/0817015116/ref=asc_df_0817015116/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=312115051380&hvpos=&hvetw=g&hvrnd=5260656631559447335&hvpon=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmld=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9009985&hvtargid=pla-457617514052&psc=1&region_id=674469)
  - *Master Builders Bible for Men*  
[https://www.amazon.com/Master-Builders-Bible-Men-Serenity/dp/1574941526/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=1WVC0HB6ZPA8H&keywords=master+builders+bible&qid=1675189298&s=books&sprefix=master+builders+bible%2Cstripbooks%2C88&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Master-Builders-Bible-Men-Serenity/dp/1574941526/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1WVC0HB6ZPA8H&keywords=master+builders+bible&qid=1675189298&s=books&sprefix=master+builders+bible%2Cstripbooks%2C88&sr=1-1)
  - *Women of Color Study Bible*  
[https://www.amazon.com/New-Women-Color-Study-Bible/dp/1958779032/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=34GXR5BGHXJ3Q&keywords=women+of+color+study+bible&qid=1675189333&s=bo](https://www.amazon.com/New-Women-Color-Study-Bible/dp/1958779032/ref=sr_1_1?crid=34GXR5BGHXJ3Q&keywords=women+of+color+study+bible&qid=1675189333&s=bo)

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[oks&sprefix=women+of+color+study+bible%2Cstripbooks%2C88&sr=1-1](#)

- o *New Interpreter's Study Bible*  
[https://www.amazon.com/New-Interpreters-Study-Bible-Apocrypha/dp/0687278325/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=FUUPXXYPN1TE&keywords=new+interpreter%27s+study+bible&qid=1675189435&s=books&sprefix=new+interpreter%27s+study+bible%2Cstripbooks%2C76&sr=1-1](#)
- Commentaries - aid in the study of Scripture by providing explanation and interpretation of Biblical text.
  - o *HarperCollins Bible Commentary*  
[https://www.amazon.com/HarperCollins-Bible-Commentary-James-Mays/dp/0060655488/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=harper+collins+bible+commentary&qid=1675189577&s=books&sprefix=harper+collins+bible+commen%2Cstripbooks%2C72&sr=1-1](#)
  - o *Life Application New Testament Commentary*  
[https://www.amazon.com/Life-Application-Testament-Commentary-Bible/dp/0842370668/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=life+application+new+testament+commentary&qid=1675189608&s=books&sprefix=life+application+new+test%2Cstripbooks%2C71&sr=1-1](#)
- Dictionary
  - o *Strong's Complete Dictionary*  
[https://www.amazon.com/Strongs-Complete-Dictionary-Bible-Words/dp/0785211470/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=strongs+complete+dictionary+of+bible+words&qid=1675189630&s=books&sprefix=strongs+complete+%2Cstripbooks%2C72&sr=1-1](#)
- Synopsis - **displays different passages of a text side by side for comparison (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)**
  - o *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*  
[https://www.amazon.com/Synopsis-Gospels-Revised-Stand](#)

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[ard-Version/dp/1585169420/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=synopsis+of+the+four+gospels%2C+revised+standard+version&qid=1675189658&s=books&sprefix=synopsis+of+the+four%2Cstripbooks%2C71&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Parallel-Comparing-translation-parallel-columns/dp/B000H6JM24/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=synopsis+of+the+four+gospels%2C+revised+standard+version&qid=1675189658&s=books&sprefix=synopsis+of+the+four%2Cstripbooks%2C71&sr=1-1)

- Parallel Bible – Displays Bible verses using different versions and translations
  - *The Layman's Parallel Bible*  
[https://www.amazon.com/Parallel-Comparing-translation-parallel-columns/dp/B000H6JM24/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crd=3OF0SAZBFYDT7&keywords=layman%27s+parallel+bible&qid=1675189685&s=books&sprefix=layman%27s+parallel+bible%2Cstripbooks%2C69&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Parallel-Comparing-translation-parallel-columns/dp/B000H6JM24/ref=sr_1_1?crd=3OF0SAZBFYDT7&keywords=layman%27s+parallel+bible&qid=1675189685&s=books&sprefix=layman%27s+parallel+bible%2Cstripbooks%2C69&sr=1-1)
- Concordance - an alphabetical listing of words and phrases found in the Holy Bible and shows where the terms occur throughout all books of Scripture
  - *The Analytical Concordance to the New Revised Standard Version of the New Testament*  
[https://www.amazon.com/Analytical-Concordance-Revised-Standard-Testament/dp/0195284437/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crd=3E34B1L3W2VBY&keywords=analytical+concordance+of+the+new+revised+standard+version&qid=1675189721&s=books&sprefix=analytical+concordance+of+the+new+revised+standard+version%2Cstripbooks%2C67&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Analytical-Concordance-Revised-Standard-Testament/dp/0195284437/ref=sr_1_1?crd=3E34B1L3W2VBY&keywords=analytical+concordance+of+the+new+revised+standard+version&qid=1675189721&s=books&sprefix=analytical+concordance+of+the+new+revised+standard+version%2Cstripbooks%2C67&sr=1-1)
- Lexicon - provides definitions and meaning of Biblical words found in the original New Testament Greek and Old Testament Hebrew languages of the Holy Bible
  - *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*  
[https://www.amazon.com/Complete-Word-Study-Dictionary-Testament/dp/0899576672/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crd=2GL12J6YJO842&keywords=the+complete+word+study+old+testament+dictionary&qid=1675189770&s=books&sprefix=the+complete+word+study+old%2Cstripbooks%2C68&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Complete-Word-Study-Dictionary-Testament/dp/0899576672/ref=sr_1_1?crd=2GL12J6YJO842&keywords=the+complete+word+study+old+testament+dictionary&qid=1675189770&s=books&sprefix=the+complete+word+study+old%2Cstripbooks%2C68&sr=1-1)

Shining Christ's

LOVE  
INSPIRE  
GIVE  
HELP  
TRANSFORM

on paths that lead all people to abundant  
life in Clanton Park and beyond.



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- o *The NKJV Greek English Interlinear New Testament*  
[https://www.amazon.com/New-Greek-English-Interlinear-N-T-Hardcover/dp/1496443985/ref=sr\\_1\\_4?crid=2X40O6IPGD0CT&keywords=the+nkiv+greek+new+testament&qid=1675189862&s=books&sprefix=the+nkiv+greek+new+testament%2Cstripbooks%2C77&sr=1-4](https://www.amazon.com/New-Greek-English-Interlinear-N-T-Hardcover/dp/1496443985/ref=sr_1_4?crid=2X40O6IPGD0CT&keywords=the+nkiv+greek+new+testament&qid=1675189862&s=books&sprefix=the+nkiv+greek+new+testament%2Cstripbooks%2C77&sr=1-4)
- Online Resources
  - o <https://www.biblestudytools.com>
  - o <https://www.biblegateway.com>
  - o <https://www.blueletterbible.org>
  - o <https://www.studylight.org>
  - o <https://biblehub.com>
  - o <https://enduringword.com>