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The University of Southern Mississippi

Understanding the
English Bible: A Comparative
Analysis of Four Bible Versions

by

Michael Coats

A Thesis
Submitted to the Honors College of
The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my father, who instead of telling me what a word means would point me to a dictionary and tell me to look it up and learn for myself.

Acknowledgments

I would like to offer my utmost thanks to Dr. Jameela Lares for advising this thesis. Without her helpful comments on my often late and poorly written drafts, as well as her recommendations for research, I would never have gotten this far.

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations.....	vii
Introduction.....	1
Literature Review.....	4
About the Bible.....	8
Translation History.....	11
Translation Philosophy.....	14
Translation Styles.....	19
Analysis of Genesis 1:1, 2, and 7.....	23
Analysis of the Lord’s Prayer.....	28
Analysis of I Corinthians 13:1-3.....	31
Appendix.....	35
Works Cited.....	40

List of Abbreviations

CEB	Contemporary English Bible
ESV	English Standard Version
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible
KJV	King James Version
MSG	Message Bible
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NKJV	New King James Version
TLB	The Living Bible
TND	Tyndale's Bible

Introduction

Scholarship pertaining to the Bible accounts for a great deal of research. A search for “the Bible” on just the University of Southern Mississippi Libraries website archive results in 549,075 hits, and specifying “English Bible versions” only reduces those results to 70,000. My largest difficulty in discussing the Bible lies not in finding a conversation but in finding which part of the conversation to enter. In the past fifty years, one of the largest emphases has been on using the best translation style for the Bible, a topic that has dominated the field of biblical scholarship (Ryken, *Understanding* 15). I believe, however, that translation preference is likely the result of a greater issue that has been a constant motivation working in the background. For example, Eugene Nida, father of the dynamic equivalence theory to be further discussed below, argues that “This underlying issue is the desire to understand the Bible. When there are inadequate equivalents in the formal patterning of sentences (i.e., mistakes in syntax), we generally recognize such faults as once and either excuse them, or at least are able to discount them in trying to ascertain the meaning” (31). F. F. Bruce also advocates Nida’s position on translation, reasoning that “the needs of the present day . . . require . . . a completely new translation based on the most accurate and up-to-date findings” in translation theory (235). Leland Ryken, however, argues that any accurate understanding of the Bible is only possible through literal translations. His view is that dynamic equivalence fails to “render the Bible understandable to modern readers” and becomes a hindrance that “shields them [the readers] from encountering what the original text says.” Advocates for both sides of this translation debate desire a clear understanding of the Bible, but they disagree about the means for finding it. And this desire to understand is not limited to these biblical

scholars. Publishers often laud their translations by claiming they have been written for the clearest understanding. The preface of the New Oxford Annotated Bible praises the Revised Standard Version's translation for its "contribution to the understanding of the Bible" (i). The introduction to the New International Readers Version¹ concludes that much difficulty pervades other Bibles, so its translators have intentionally employed a smaller vocabulary so as to "use words that are easy to understand" (vii), while the foreword to New American Standard Bible justifies varying translation styles between dynamic and formal equivalence throughout because that strategy functions better for "assisting the reader's comprehension" (v). Each and every one of these assertions concerns the reader's being able to better understand the Bible, and that is where I come into the conversation. I follow one particular Bible tradition from its source to its most recent version, I analyze parallel portions, and I offer my understanding of each text in relation to the others. The practical result of this exercise shows that gaining a true and well-rounded understanding of the Bible will not be as easy as merely buying the newest version and reading it. By comparing the versions I chose according to my method, I present a practical and replicable template for any Bible reader to use in comparing English Bibles in order to gather the best understanding of the text in question.

¹Though it is affiliated with the NIV, the NIRV preface states that "The NIV Committee on Bible Translation didn't produce the NIRV" (vii). This Bible is not so much a translation as it is a remodeling of the translated text of the NIV. The NIRV was designed for easy readability with less effort on accuracy. This goal is why the design committee used the smallest and most repetitious vocabulary possible.

One problem with finding sources to quote in the comparison of Bible versions section is that the authorities tend to prefer one version or style of translation that they subsequently present as better as or more accurate than others. Eugene Nida is famous for theorizing dynamic equivalence and also advocating the use of Bibles translated in this style. Leland Ryken even began writing *The Word of God in English* as merely a literary comparison of Bible versions before making it a defense of what is termed “essentially literal translation.” Rather than make my study of English Bibles into a competition as well, I compare the results of close readings of select verses in four versions. These results are for the purpose of discovering differences in the texts and better understanding through a comparison of other versions. In order to compare versions as impartially as possible, I look for sources that will shed light on the method of translation or to provide historical background on the Bible. Every author has a bias, myself included, but to reduce its effect, I work to keep my perspective unhindered by avoiding others’ opinions on the Bibles and only use the text of the Bibles. Lest I appear to be thereby uninformed, let me clarify my method by explaining that I have certainly read and considered several arguments about the theological and literary implications of different word choice or missing/added text, from which I have learned the significance of small details, but the specific examples, details, and understanding of the results in this paper are only my own understanding. For example, in results linked to comparing Bible versions I often came across John 7:8, 10, an apparently controversial passage for some. Some Bibles, like the English Revised Version, include a translation of verse eight as Jesus saying “Go ye up unto the feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; because my time is not yet fulfilled,” and then after verse nine explains that Jesus stayed behind, the translation in verse ten has,

“But when his brethren were gone up unto the feast, then went he also up, not publicly, but as it were in secret.” The key word in verse eight is the first *yet*, but some other translations, such as the New International Version, read, “You go to the festival. I am not going up to this festival, because my time has not yet fully come,” and for verse 10 read, “However, after his brothers had left for the festival, he went also, not publicly, but in secret.” From a certain theological standpoint, translations of John 7:8 such as that of the New International Version indicate that Jesus told a lie and therefore committed sin. From that standpoint of translation types, this passage would also be a prime example for Leland Ryken’s argument that essentially literal versions like the English Revised Version are more accurate and reliable than other versions like the New International Version. While I understand the importance in including *yet* rather than excluding it in John 7:8, my aim is alternatively focused on how contrasting examples like these would affect how one understands the Bible as a whole.

Literature Review

My most helpful source has been the aforementioned Leland Ryken, a professor of English whose publications include *The Word of God in English*, *Understanding English Bible Translation*, and *Words of Delight: A Literary Introduction to the Bible*. Ryken’s approach to defining, comparing, and advocating translations in *The Word of God in English* responds to a relatively recent change in public opinion toward Bible translation methods. While translators somehow managed to translate texts into English for centuries with little worry about conflicting philosophies of translation, a trend in the past fifty years that began with Eugene Nida’s theories of translation has led to the idea that a good translation has to follow a certain style and be amenable to categorization as

either a literal translation or a paraphrase. By explaining the history of these translation styles, Ryken's argument in *The Word of God in English* for essentially literal style helps me understand the intended and actual purposes of each different translation style.

Ryken's *Understanding English Bible Translation* is somewhat similar to my thesis in that he also compares Bible versions by the English text only and conveys how some verses read differently and provide different understandings; however, his purpose in comparison is to show that a better understanding comes through a Bible's translation method. Ryken compares Bible verses in different styles of translations and concludes that dynamic equivalence is inaccurate in comparison to essentially literal translations. And in fact, I agree with his conclusions. Essentially literal Bibles do provide the most straightforward information. That being said, even Bibles translated in the same style differ in areas, and to best understand these differences, I take the process of comparing Bible passages a step further by comparing my verses in four versions that are all from essentially literal translations. Ryken's *Words of Delight* spends little time on Bible versions and focuses on the Bible as literature. His discussion of the translated Bible as a work of English literature has helped me to see that comparing English Bible versions is possible without knowing the original languages of the manuscripts and also to see that one can look past the purely theological aspects of the text in order to focus on understanding and analyzing the Bible as literature. One of Ryken's highest honors is having served on the English Standard Version translation committee; however, he also highly favors the English Standard Version when he compares Bibles, and understandably so. My purpose in comparing different versions is to gain a better understanding of the Bible. Rather than looking at which types of Bibles give the best

understanding or noting his arguments for the ESV's superiority, I use Ryken's material that pertains directly to Bible versions and translations.

In addition to researching types of Bible translations, I learned much about the history of Bible translations. F. F. Bruce's report in the *History of the Bible in English* encompasses close to five hundred years of Bible translations into Modern English. His book has provided me with excellent historical context in which to understand the English behind Bible versions. The author, F. F. Bruce (1910-1990), published over forty books and was Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis at Manchester University, the home to the John Rylands Library, one of the top collections of Bibles in the world. Bruce is more than qualified to offer an accurate, relevant understanding of the Bible's journey through English. This book details Bible translations from excerpts of the Bible in Old English to a survey of translations from the seventies.

David Norton's *The King James Bible: A Short History from Tyndale to Today* is also an excellent historical reference that aids and supplements my overall understanding of the Bible's path through English. As the title indicates, the primary focus is on the King James Version, which is helpful since no other English Bible made a significant impact on the public for nearly three hundred years. Because of his outstanding knowledge on and publication of works about the King James Bible, Norton was given the prestigious honor of reediting the Cambridge King James Version.² As with Ryken's connection to the English Standard Version, Norton's specialty in the area of the King

² Gordon Campbell holds a similar honor. Having written a catalogued history of misprints in KJV editions 1611-2011, he was rightly chosen to organize the Oxford 400th anniversary reprint of King James Bible.

James Version makes his work seem somewhat unbalanced in favor of the King James Version when talking about it in comparison with any other version, but as with Ryken's text, I am using all that I can from the background information of the Bible and using little of the commentary about the value of that translation.

The Oxford Companion to the Bible, written by over two hundred and fifty scholars under the editorship of Bruce Metzger and Michael Coogan, has been a tremendous help in explaining and defining concepts of biblical criticism heretofore unfamiliar to me. Without it, I would not have been able to quickly cross-reference and understand all of the related terms in other materials I had to research. With reliable explanations of such varied topics as people and places in the Bible and explanations of source texts and translation styles, the *Oxford Companion* has been invaluable to me. It is probably impossible to do any serious research on the Bible without coming across this book or someone who quotes from it.

While I do not quote from yet another source, Baugh and Cable's *A History of the English Language* is an influential textbook that has helped me better understand the development of and changes in English through time. From this book I know that current linguistic changes in English occur slowly and are not significant enough to affect the understanding of the language in any short amount of time. Too often, misinformed or generic claims arise on the matter of language change impacting Bible translations. Accurately understanding how English has developed and continues to progress allows me to be better suited for discussing differences in Bible versions.

Any definition or etymology of a word that I use comes from the *Oxford English Dictionary*. As the most authoritative dictionary in English, one that lists every known

word in the language in use since 1150 CE, the *OED* needs little introduction or defense. With few exceptions, this dictionary presents the most thoroughly detailed information on any word, including its earliest mention in writing, all known usages and definitions, and an etymology to trace that word's entry into English.

While I do reference a few other secondary sources, such as Nida's book of translation theory or the Tyndale website that lists Bible versions, I only incorporate some of their material for statistics and brief comments. The texts I have identified above are the most significant sources for my research.

About the Bible

As one of the most influential works in English, the Bible is the subject of much scholarship. One reason biblical scholarship can become confusing at times is because the English Bible does not appear in one form or translation but has a different style and vocabulary in each version. The Oxford World's Classics' Bible even begins by stating "Bibles are, by their very nature, partisan. As that plural suggests, there are many bibles, even in English, and each is the product of a particular interest group—whether religious, commercial, or, increasingly nowadays, both" (v). The etymology behind the word for Bible comes from the Greek *βιβλος* and originally meant *paper* or *scroll* before becoming associated with "book" (OED). The "Bible" is an abstract term that does not necessarily refer to a specific and tangible item but to an idea that can be manifest in quite a range of translations, from Young's Literal Translation to the paraphrased Good News Bible.³ The

³ I have even come across a few passages in what is called the Emoji Bible (though I hesitantly use "translation" when referring to it, especially since I am unable to find more

Tyndale Archives website lists over one hundred known versions of the Bible in English alone, and only fifteen of them were published before the twentieth century ("Index of 100+" n.p.). Furthermore, these translations are predominantly produced by American committees and not aimed toward different dialects of World English. Regardless of the different styles of content inside Bibles, many perceive each version to be "The Bible," on the basis that the Bible is the word of God.⁴ Naturally, with so many versions of the Bible, overemphasizing the full scope of their differences is easy, but the opposite extreme, believing that all English Bibles say the same thing in slightly altered ways, is not completely true. If all versions truly say the same thing, then sensible questions arise as to why on earth so many have been published, and why even more continue to be. Clearly some factor in language or culture must be prevalent and influential enough for committees, predominantly American, to justify making new translations and updated revisions despite those already in existence.

One issue to remember is that no Bible that is under copyright can legally say the same thing as any other Bible, with or without a copyright. According to US Code title 17, "To be copyrightable, a derivative work [in this case, a Bible translation] must be

than three verses) that connects a few words with Emojis. For Genesis 1:3, it reads "God 🗨️ said, 'Let there be 🐝 light 💡,' and there was 💡 light."

⁴ One notable exception to this belief that different versions of the Bible are still technically the Bible is a movement known as the King James Only-ism. King James Only-ism is the belief that the King James Bible is the only perfect English translation of the Bible and that any other versions are counterfeit translations. (See Campbell, chapter 13 for in depth discussion of this movement).

different enough from the original to be regarded as a 'new work' or must contain a substantial amount of new material. Making minor changes or additions of little substance to a pre-existing work will not qualify the work as a new version for copyright purposes” (U.S. Copyright Office). Because of such a large and ever increasing number of English versions, *the Bible*, in relation to Christian writings, is a generic term that applies to any translation of a more or less agreed upon source text of sacred writings.⁵

Some linguists, such as Nida, believe that updated terminology is indispensable in understanding the Bible, and the claims made by some modern Bibles perpetuates this idea that as language changes with each generation (or so it is claimed), the Bible must change with it for each generation. The Holman Christian Standard Bible offers a specific, numbered list of reasons for why its translation was necessary. The very first point of this list claims that “each generation needs a fresh translation of the Bible in its own language” (iv). The English Standard Version’s intent is to make sure that “archaic language has been brought to current usage” (xv). The New American Standard Bible relates that their updating of the American Standard Version from fifty-eight years earlier is to “render [the Hebrew and Greek] into more current English” (iv). The New King James Version mentions that its translation is necessary since English, “like all living languages, has undergone profound changes” (vi). This idea that the English language has become outdated and requires constant updating for modern audiences appears to be a common justification for publishing a new Bible translation or version. If, however,

⁵Even the source texts of translations become the subject of debate when dealing with the Majority Text’s inconsistencies with two influential codices, Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, which also differ significantly with each other (Burton 14).

constant change is truly the reason, then the English language has changed so drastically that no fewer than *fifty* different Bibles (not counting revisions) have been published in the last century to keep up. The truth is that aside from pronunciation, spelling, and a few new words, English today is almost identical to English from a hundred years ago. Bibles that are rapidly updated and revised for a slowly shifting language raise the question of what the differences are among them. Attempting to determine if the textual changes are necessary is a moot point, since the discovery will not affect the Bible publishers' decisions to continue producing updated Bible versions. Answering where the changes are, however, and how those variations affect the understanding of text itself is a more practical question, the answer to which will help Bible readers who would otherwise just take any Bible from the shelf.

The English versions of the Bible are more significant versions of the Scripture than many might think. Realistically, only seven million living people are currently fluent in Hebrew: five million in Israel plus two million over elsewhere in the world (UCLA). Many others are doubtless familiar with ancient Greek, but only a small number of people outside of the scholarly community even know the alphabet in order, and that is only because they belong to a fraternity or sorority. Since the vast majority of modern English-speaking Bible readers do not know ancient Greek or Hebrew, their most relevant issue is not what the Greek *might* say, but what the English *does* say. I am unable to say much at all about the underlying languages (Hebrew, Chaldee, Greek, or Aramaic) of the translated manuscripts because that field of study and research requires far more information to even introduce the complexity in each of the languages than any one paper could hold. Additionally, I am linguistically unqualified to comment on how

accurately any text is translated. Fortunately, I and other native English speakers have the capability and resources to read and compare as many English Bibles as time allows-- even ones from over fifty years ago in that horrid, “outdated” language.

Current scholarship has already found, argued, and written about the differences in ancient manuscripts, but a more practical exercise for everyday English-speaking Bible readers is to compare English Bible versions. Commentaries, dictionaries, atlases, and the like each have value; however, an understanding of the Bible is primarily limited by the amount of effort put into comparing the different versions of it. Since all English Bible copyrighted versions must by law “be different” to an extent, then certain questions should arise in the mind of the careful reader, namely, what type of differences appear, where these differences are appearing, and to what extent these differences affect the meaning of the text. I will compare and contrast well-known scripture passages from four notable Bible versions in order to display and better explain the existence and importance of their differences, all in an effort to demonstrate ways to understand the results. My comparison is oriented to finding variations, no matter how seemingly insignificant, identifying them, and analyzing how those differences affect an understanding of the text. As I explained earlier, this process is not for the purpose of ranking some English translations as better or worse than others, nor is the intent to argue as to which translation is more or less literal than others. This comparison is rather to explore variations in Bible versions and explain their significance. My results should help support my contention that despite the over-abundance of Bible versions, each one provides a specific understanding that allows for a larger overall understanding of the Bible.

Given that there are 1,189 chapters in most Protestant Bibles,⁶ comparing every single verse in even two translations would be an impossible task. And with the large list of translation options to choose from, intentionally picking a handful of Bible translations that all record conflicting accounts in one or two verses could be easily found. For example, the last twelve verses of Mark are not found in the Greek texts of Codex Sinaiticus or Codex Vaticanus, and Bibles that rely heavily on these source manuscripts typically do not include verses nine through twenty.⁷ Often, even when manuscripts are the same, translation philosophy can affect how a text is translated. In the text of Acts 26:14 in the ESV, Paul recounts hearing the voice of God in Hebrew, but in the NIV, the language he hears is Aramaic. The word being translated, Ἑβραϊῶνι (*Hebraiōi*), is the same in both, but the more literal ESV faithfully translates what is in the text while the dynamic-oriented NIV takes the liberty of ignoring the word that means “Hebrew” and substitutes “Aramaic” as the language, because they presume that choice to be more historically accurate—it was the language spoken commonly by Jews at the time—though not translationally accurate. For the sake of saving time and avoiding confusion with too much translation philosophy, I limit my study to examining differences in four

⁶ Protestant Bibles differ from Catholic Bibles in that they do not include some material that the Catholic versions do. Protestants believe that only sixty-six books are part of the biblical cannon, and that anything else is apocryphal. Since Protestantism has dominated English-speaking Christianity since the Reformation, I am using Protestant Bibles as the model.

⁷ Some versions add the section in brackets or in a footnote, clearly noting that the passage is not part of the biblical text, but is included for tradition’s sake.

Bibles related through the same line of manuscripts and translated in an essentially literal style (further discussed in the translation philosophy section). These four versions are Tyndale's Bible (1535), the King James Version (1611), the Revised Version (1885), and the English Standard Version (2016). The history of these versions and their relation to each other is integral to appreciating the full significance of their differences. While separated by gaps of time, the Bibles on this list are closely related in that they are based on previous one(s), making each later version dependent on its line of predecessors. My reason for choosing these similar, related Bibles is to emphasize how important changes among them can be. If four Bibles from the same stream and translation style appear nearly identical yet differ significantly in some places, then certainly any Bibles from other sources and translation styles that already noticeably read far from the same should also provide a difference in understanding.

Translation History

The first complete English translation is the Wycliffe Bible from the fourteenth century; however, this Bible was translated into Middle English from the Latin Vulgate (itself a translation), whereas later Bibles went back to the original languages. Since the Wycliffe Bible comes from a different base text and was translated into a pre-modern variety of English, its comparison would be out of place in the context of this particular study. Modern English Bible translations begins with William Tyndale (1492-1536). After publishing his finished New Testament in 1526, at a time when translating the Bible into a modern language was a crime punishable by death, Tyndale attempted to complete his Bible, but was martyred in 1536 before he could finish translating the Old Testament. Tyndale died at the stake within a few years of revising his New Testament

and translating the Pentateuch or five books of Moses (i.e., Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), Joshua through Chronicles, and Jonah (Norton 8). As Tyndale's Bible is the first in Modern English, it is unaffected by earlier translations and even sets a standard for later Bibles, though not always for the best. Tyndale's New Testament had hardly been published before his "former associate" George Joye began changing parts of the New Testament⁸ while still passing it off as Tyndale's (Bruce 42). Tyndale was not opposed to alterations of his Bible; however, he was adamant that his name only be attached to his own version. In the preface of his revised New Testament of 1534, he expresses his wish for any readers to "Take my translations and labours, and change and alter, and correct and corrupt at their pleasures, and call it their own translation, and put their own names, and not play bo-peep after George Joye's manner" (Bruce 43).⁹ Tyndale invites other scholars to compare his Bible to the originals and alter it accordingly on the condition that they put their name on it and not his, as did Joye. These instructions are indeed what the King James, Revised, and English Standard Versions follow. Each later version uses the completed labors of former translations as references to build from. Other Bibles, such as the Living Translation or the Message, are doubtless influenced by Tyndale's Bible, but they are new translations directly into English with no reference to the renderings of previous versions.

⁸ One significant change Joye makes in his New Testament is using "life after life" instead of "resurrection" (Bruce 44).

⁹ The OED cites this passage as the first recorded usage of *bo-peep*. To "play bo-peep" in modern terms is to "play peek-a-boo." Since the game is for infants, the term connotes childishness.

Several Bibles of importance came out after Tyndale's, the most historically significant being the Authorized or King James Version (1611). In 1604, the political conditions under a new monarch and the divided religious atmosphere between Anglicans and Puritans created the perfect environment for a new Bible. This version united the kingdom, so to speak, which was split between the people's Geneva Bible (1560) and the church's Bishop's Bible (1568) (Norton 81). Forty-seven scholars¹⁰ were separated into six committees for the purpose of having each team translate a section of the Bible. After a group translated its designated portions, they would review and correct the translated sections from the other groups until an agreement could be reached. These men, however, were not tasked with merely translating a new Bible. The preface to the King James Version includes the following statement from the translators: "we never thought from the beginning, that we should need to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one . . . but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one." The translators of the King James Version were in the process of translating a Bible from Greek and Hebrew manuscripts and then comparing that Bible to other English versions. Tyndale's Bible influences a large portion of the finished Authorized Version, both directly from his version and indirectly through other English versions that were partially based on Tyndale's (Norton 86). Thus, the King James Version is not solely a new translation but also an update and revision of Tyndale's Bible. This version became so popular and influential, that despite the arrivals of a few other

¹⁰ Fifty-four "learned men" of different backgrounds were supposed to have been involved, but conflicts in timing and death prevented some from taking part (Norton 54, 60).

translations, such as Thomson's Translation, the Quaker's Bible, or Noah Webster's revision of the King James Bible, it remained unopposed as the authoritative version until the late nineteenth century (Norton 138).

Then, in 1870, the English bishop Samuel Wilberforce (1805-1873) requested that a revision committee be appointed to update the King James Version. This was not a revision of the King James Version to correct printing errors or spelling updates like those that had been done before.¹¹ Like the goals of its original, the goal of this version was not to make a completely new translation. The translators of the Revised Version were to “limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the Authorized and earlier English versions” (Bruce 137). This Revised Version was to try to retain the text of the King James Version as much as possible unless a phrasing from an earlier English version would be more accurate. The New Testament was finished and published in 1881, with the complete Revised Version of the Bible coming out in 1885. The first edition of this version was not much of a success with the general public, but its creation served as an important milestone, ending the period of translational silence that followed the King James Version and leading ultimately to the number of Bible versions today. The Revised Version follows in the Tyndale legacy by producing another revision-based translation, and it serves to bridge the gap between more modern Bible versions and older ones.

The English Standard Version traces its roots though the Revised and King James Versions all the way back to Tyndale's, making it the most recent branch to this particular tree. In fact, the English Standard Version is the current update and revision of

¹¹ For information about such revisions, see Norton 161-184.

the RV from 1885. The Revised Version became the Revised Standard Version, which later became the New Revised Standard Version. Its American edition, the American Standard Version, became the New American Standard Version, now called the English Standard Version. As a derivative of the Revised Version, the English Standard Version functions as an updated revision of a revision of an updated translation. The English Standard Version under its current name has gone through three editions, the latest one from 2016 making this version the most recent link to Tyndale's Bible. The preface maintains that despite these numerous editions and versions, "The words and phrases themselves grow out of the Tyndale-King James legacy" (xv). In a way, the English Standard Version is a sort of great-great-great-[etc.]- grand-version of Tyndale's Bible, functioning as a derivative revised translation instead of as a completely new one.

Translation Styles

Any number of Bible versions, of course, could claim to stem from Tyndale's or the King James Bible. What truly separates these four Bible versions from the rest is their combination of translation style and base text. *Formal equivalence* and *dynamic equivalence*, terms I began to introduce above, are the names for two primary goals of Bible translation. Dynamic equivalence does not worry about translating individual words or idioms into English but instead focuses on imparting to the reader the same thought or effect that the source material would convey to a native speaker of that language. Formal equivalence involves keeping the translated text as faithful as coherently possible to the precise word choice and order of the base text in order to give an accurate understanding of what the original source meant. Other translation styles fall somewhere between these two methods, incorporating some expressions word for word

and other expressions as words or idioms assumed to be equivalent. A formal translation renders Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (ESV). A dynamic equivalent version displays “First this: God created the Heavens and Earth—all you see, all you don’t see” (MSG). A bible that combines both styles reads “When God began creating the heavens and the earth” (TLB).

The four Bibles in this study are all translated in a method that Ryken calls “essentially literal,” a process that leans toward formal equivalence. He defines this term as “a translation that strives to translate the exact words of the original-language text but not in such a way as to violate the normal rules of language and syntax in the receptor language” (Ryken, *Understanding* 19-20). While translation style is an issue today, Bible translation had worked in a uniform method of preserving as much as possible the word order and exact meaning of each word until Eugene Nida introduced new concepts in the mid-twentieth century, one being the theory of dynamic equivalence (Ryken, *Understanding* 20-21). Translation philosophy is even the primary cause of most differences between translated Bible texts (Ryken, *Understanding* 76). The reason that The New Living Translation reports Psalm 73:7 as “These fat cats have everything,” while the English Standard Version translates it as “Their eyes swell out through fatness,” is not because the two use different base texts, but because the New Living Translation is in dynamic equivalence, and the English Standard Version is in the essentially literal formal equivalence.

While translational style makes up the most significant changes between versions, the underlying text also has an effect on the understanding in its final product. Footnotes in any given Bible may be misleading by their speaking of the *original manuscripts* as if

they still exist. Scholars can only speculate on what the *autographs* might have said because of the various readings that disagree among surviving manuscript copies. The standard source material for the Old Testament is usually the Masoretic text (in Hebrew)¹² or the Septuagint (in Greek),¹³ while the textual base for the New Testament comes for the most part from either the Received Text¹⁴ or the Alexandrian Text.¹⁵ The

¹² The Masoretic texts are collections of the Hebrew Old Testament “endorsed by and copied by the central stream of Judaism” in response to the decentralized religious structure that followed from the destruction of the second temple in AD 70 (Sanders, “Masoretic Text”). These texts were transcribed and passed down through the generations, eventually reaching the Masoretes in the Middle Ages who added the standardized vocal marks for vowels.

¹³ The Septuagint is a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament dated to 245 BC. According to legend, seventy-two Hebrew scholars translated this text into Greek in seventy-two days in Alexandria, Egypt, at the request of Ptolemy II (Coogan, “Septuagint”).

¹⁴ The Received Text, often called by its Latin title of *Textus Receptus*, is the end result of a group of manuscripts compared to each other and put together into a uniform text. The Received Text is the base text of a large number of Bibles translated during the Protestant Reformation.

¹⁵ The Alexandrian Text is another name for the Westcott-Hort Text compiled in the late nineteenth century by English bishop, biblical scholar, and theologian Brooke Foss Westcott (1825-1901) and Irish theologian and editor Fenton John Anthony Hort (1828-

editors of the NKJV (New King James Version) say that despite any English differences, “85 percent of the New Testament text [from both sources] is the same” (ix). Many modern Bibles do not use one text source exclusively but instead use certain readings from different sources based on the translation committee’s preference. These multiple sources are the reason why some Bibles will use a verse with a footnote that adds “some manuscripts add [or are missing] this verse.” While fifteen percent may seem a large percentage of error, the same NKJV preface also confirms that “the most important differences . . . are due, not to manuscript divergence, but to the way the translators view the task of translation” (viii). The four Bibles I have chosen fall into the same translational method, with the Revised Version and English Standard Version both adding the Westcott-Hort Text to their collection of sources.

For an English speaker to consult concordances or lexicons to justify one rendering over another is only practical to a certain extent. Anyone unfamiliar with the biblical languages must take one concordance’s word against another as to which meaning a word should actually have in English. That process of textual criticism may work for translating and revising, but the entire ordeal is unnecessary in the process I propose for understanding, *not evaluating*, English Bibles through comparisons. The issue here is not the accuracy of the translations from their source texts. Rather, the key issue is understanding the Bible better through a comparison of English translations. Thus, instead of my debating the textual or translational foundations of these Bibles, I just take them as they are.

1892), both translators of the Revised Version. They drew on older manuscripts thought to come from Alexandria, Egypt.

While reading a certain passage in one version of the Bible will doubtless lend to a level of understanding for that passage, an even better sense of that passage will result from examining that passage in several translations. While I cannot compare long passages, or compare even a tenth of the total number of English Bible versions, I can provide a template which can be used to compare other areas of scripture.

Genesis 1:1, 2, and 7.¹⁶

In order to best show how comparing just a few similar versions aids in understanding the Bible, I have chosen a few well-known Bible passages that most English readers are already familiar with. My reasoning for this decision is to show that even the most common Bible stories can be understood better when compared in multiple versions. In fact, with accounts so familiar, any details that differ among the texts will stand out more than they would with an unfamiliar passage, like one of the visions of Zechariah. My first area of comparison analyzes three of the early verses from the familiar creation account in the Old Testament book Genesis.

All four versions begin exactly the same way in 1:1 with “In the beginning;” however, this harmony is short lived. In TND¹⁷ (Tyndale’s Version) *heaven and earth* have no definite article to precede them, whereas the KJV (King James Version) and RV (Revised Version) produce them as *the* heaven and *the* earth. The ESV (English Standard

¹⁶ All portions of cross analyzed scriptures are listed in the appendix.

¹⁷ Most Bible versions are acronymized for brevity, and Tyndale’s Version is often shortened to just Tyndale or TV. In order to use only acronyms but to avoid an acronym that most commonly means *television*, I use TND in this thesis.

Version) also uses the definite article; however, it alters *heaven*, reading in the plural: *heavens*.

While the lack of a definite article in TND barely affects *earth*, the word *heaven* by itself is thereby ambiguous because it can be plural or singular depending on its context. According to the Bible, three heavens exist: the earth's atmosphere, outer space, and the abode of God.¹⁸ If *heaven* in TND is a collective use of the three heavens, then all levels of heaven are created during the beginning in verse one and then shaped and designed (and separated by water) later in the week just like earth. If *heaven* in TND is singular, then it likely refers to only the third heaven, leaving outer space and the earth's atmosphere to be created in verse six.

While the KJV, RV, and ESV each use *the* before *heaven(s)* and *earth*, it sounds unnatural to put two *the*'s, one in front of *heaven* and one in front of *earth*, since placing only one definite article at the beginning would work just as well. The added emphasis here on *earth* provides an image of heaven and earth as two separate realms rather than nearby or connected creations. This separation also serves to foreshadow the fall in Eden (Gen. 3) that separates God, a heavenly being, from man, an earthly being.

The ESV's *heavens* creates its own understanding of the reading. A plural here can indicate, as does TND, a possibility that God created all three heavens at the same time to further shape them later, but a plural combined with a definite article makes this verse a summary of creation rather than its first step, similarly to Genesis 2:1, which concludes all of creation. The KJV and ESV in 2:1 read, "Thus the heavens and the earth

¹⁸ "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago . . . such an one caught up to the *third heaven*" (II Corinthians 12:2 KJV, emphasis added).

were finished, and all the host of them.” While the KJV uses the singular in 1:1 and plural in 2:1, ESV uses plural for both, indicating that both verses act as an introduction and conclusion that summarize creation. Since God makes a *firmament* or *expanse* in 1:6, five verses after already making *the heavens*, the most likely scenario for ESV is that 1:1 functions as a brief introductory summary of creation that is elaborated on in the verses that follow, just as 2:1 is a closing summary of the creation account.

The TND mentions in 1:2 that the earth “*was void and empty*,” the KJV reads that it “*was without form, and void*,” the RV refers to it as “*waste and void*,” and the ESV has the earth “*without form and void*,” reading the same, but using no comma where the KJV does. Darkness *was upon* in TND and the KJV while it *was covering* in the RV and ESV. The *deep* and *water* is just so in TND, while the KJV, RV, and ESV use *the face of the deep* and *the face of the water*. The spirit of God *moved* in TND, KJV, and RV, and it *was hovering* in the ESV.

Clearly the earth was understood to be *void*, a term that usually refers to an unfilled position, but the versions disagree on what else the earth was at this point. The *OED* defines *empty* in this case as a place having “very few inhabitants; deserted, desolate.” The *OED* also defines *form* as “shape, arrangement of parts,” and *waste* as “uninhabited (or sparsely inhabited) and uncultivated country; a wild and desolate region, a desert, wilderness.” TND’s usage of *empty* reads interestingly because the word itself suggests not shape, but rather the state of having been full before being emptied or of

being inhabited before being deserted. This wording supports any number of gap theory¹⁹ readings as possible interpretations. The *Earth without form*, as in the KJV and ESV, promotes a bizarre image of a liquid shapelessness to the planet rather than its being a solid sphere. The KJV's use of a comma signifies a vocal pause and separates two distinct aspects of earth as "without form" as well as "void." The ESV's lack of a comma could suggest that *without* has double object, with an understood "without form and *without* void." Is it rather likely, however, as Dr. Lares has pointed out to me, that the modern comma marks grammatical units rather than pauses, whereas the commas in the KJV are to aid its being "read in churches," as the note just after its title page tells us. Rephrasing ESV to remove ambiguity, *void and without form*, would on the other hand destroy its poetic effect. The RV's *waste* promotes an image of a dry wilderness, which is strange since according to later verses, dry land has yet to appeal, leaving only the water to be desolate.

Upon primarily means "on the surface," whereas *covered* mostly refers to "putting something over . . . enclosing" (*OED*). In TND, *upon* adds little to the text since the shape of the earth is not mentioned. In the KJV, the earth is referred to as *without form*, providing a two-dimensional, and seemingly paradoxical, feel to the darkness's being on the surface of something without a shape. On the other hand, the ESV also speaks of earth *without form*, but with darkness *covering* it. This wording displays a three-dimensional shape to the formless blob of the earth. The RV makes no mention of the

¹⁹ Versions of this theory suppose that a large gap of time exists between The Beginning and the First Day, during which any number of things could have happened, including former inhabitants of earth before Adam or Eve.

shape of earth; its choice of *waste* shows the earth to have always been round with darkness completely enclosing it.

Only TND uses *deep* and *water*, both terms adding a lifeless feel to the massy ocean currently called *earth*. The KJV, RV, and ESV each personify the water by adding to it the human feature of a face. In a sense, even before plant or animal life, the earth is lifelike.

One final differentiation in 1:2 is between the actions of the Spirit of God on the water. All but the ESV indicate that the Spirit of God *moved* upon the water. *Spirit* in English comes from a word for breath, as in *inspire*, to breathe in; *expire*, to breathe out; or *conspire*, to breathe with. This moving breath provides life to earth as it moves and foreshadows the creation of Adam, into whose nostrils God breathes the breath of life. The ESV mentions the Spirit was *hovering*, a verb that usually means floating in the same spot rather than moving about. This sharp contrast sticks out especially in the verb types. *Moved* is in the past perfect, showing that the spirit's action happened and was completed in the past. *Was hovering* is in the past progressive, meaning that the floating action continued for an unspecified amount of time.

TND, the KJV, and the RV each include *firmament* three times in 1:7 in reference to the sky/space, the ESV using *expanse* for each instance instead. Additionally, God “parted” the waters in TND, “divided” the waters in the KJV and RV, and “separated” the waters in the ESV.

“Expanse” and “firmament” offer a similar understanding, yet the usage of each word implies its own understanding of the process of creation. According to the *OED* etymology, *firmament* arrives in English from “classical Latin [where] the word means

‘something which strengthens or supports,’ but in . . . Syriac the verb means ‘to condense, make firm or solid,’ whence the Greek and Latin renderings.” As the nominal root indicates, *firmament* refers to something firm and compressed. In contrast, the *OED*’s etymology of “expanse” reveals its origin to come from “Latin *expandere*, *ex-* + *pandere* to spread. Compare Old French *espanre*, modern French *épandre* to diffuse, scatter.” TND, the KJV, and the RV each imply by the use of *expanse* that God created the full, truly infinite universe immediately and then somehow condensed it down into what it now is. The ESV’s mention of an “expanse” takes a more evolutionistic/Big Bang view that the universe began from a single point and then spread outward from there.

Clearly God did something to the waters, and each version supplies its own image as to what that action might be. TND’s rendering of “parted” waters shows a supernatural influence which is mimicked in Exodus when God “parts” the Red Sea. Within this context of the Red Sea, parting the waters of heaven may be a temporary action, like a cloud that forms and evaporates from other water. The KJV and RV’s use of “divided,” as clearly seen in the *di-* prefix, reveals that the waters split into two separate spaces with no implications of the reconnection that TND suggests. The ESV’s “separated” waters include a more active, hands-on view of God in that the word etymologically means “to pull apart” (*OED*).

Within only three verses of Genesis 1, these four Bible versions, all from the same stream and translational method, offer several alternate details, though not necessarily conflicting reports. In either case, the variations in these accounts provide plenty of examples to emphasize how effective the process of comparing Bibles is to its understanding.

Luke 11:2-4

Another well-known passage of scripture, even for those unfamiliar with most of the Bible, is the Lord's Prayer. The Lord's Prayer is often taught to small children and explicated by older theologians, and this prayer's familiarity can lead to a desensitizing to the passage. Comparing this prayer across these four Bible versions reveals many spots of potential misunderstanding. The Lord's Prayer—or *Paternoster* in the Latin, from the first two words *Our father* in the earlier language—is recorded in two of the four gospels, in Matthew 6 and in Luke 11. The version in Luke lacks the concluding reference to God's kingdom, power, and glory, so I have chosen the Lucan passage for analysis because its shorter length allows for a more thorough investigation of textual differences.

The Lord's preliminary instructions in verse two, “And he said (*un*)to them, when *you/ye* pray, say,” only diverge as I have italicized, that is, in the non-meaning-bearing function words of pronouns and prepositions. Only when the prayer actually begins do these verses show significant discrepancies. TND and the KJV are both noticeably longer by including a direct address to “Our father which art in heaven,” whereas the RV and ESV merely have “Father.” All four temporarily line up again for “hallowed be thy/your name. Thy/your kingdom come.” TND and the KJV again add more text, TND with “Thy will be fulfilled even in erth [sic] as it is in heaven,” and the KJV with “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.” The RV and ESV stop after “kingdom come.”

TND and the KJV both provide additional material in this case because the RV and ESV depend on the Westcott-Hort Text, which does not include the “*ο εν τοις ουρανοις*” phrase of the Received Text. Regardless of whether or not the longer version of the direct address is supposed to be in the Bible, the presence of this material has

potentially significant effects for understanding the rest of the passage. “Our father which art in heaven,” as opposed to just “father,” offers the details of whose father specifically is being addressed and where he resides. “Father” by itself, from the RV and ESV, could mean a number of things. The ESV in Luke 2:33 mentions, “His [Jesus’] father and his mother marveled at what was said about him.” From that context, *father* could refer to Joseph the earthly father of Jesus. This verse also functions as an exemplar prayer for the disciples, and *father* could possibly refer to petitioning a saint or ancestor like “Father Abraham” (Luke 16:24, KJV). Without the references to *our* father and to his being in heaven, the identity of this father is not necessarily clear. *Our* shows that this father is not just any father or just the father of Jesus; *our* shows that this father has many children, and that he is in heaven listening.

TND’s ending to the verse makes a request that “thy will be fulfilled even in earth as it is in heaven,” and the KJV’s ending to verse two similarly asks “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.” Both of these imply that the will of God is different in earth than it is in heaven. The wording in TND asks for the will of God to be the same in earth and heaven. The wording in the KJV is a subjunctive request that the will be done, with an added specification that the will to be done in earth should be modeled after the will to be done in heaven. Both the RV and ESV are silent on this part of the verse, again because of the difference in source text. However, they do offer a cross reference to Matthew’s account, which does include the missing phrase.

Verse three is the shortest in this passage, yet is by far the most interesting in terms of alternate readings. TND requests God to “Oure dayly bread geve vs evermore,”

the KJV and RV ask God to “Give us day by day our daily bread,”²⁰ and the ESV asks God to “give us each day our daily bread.” The word order in TND is different from the other versions in that it prominently displays bread at the beginning as the emphasis of the thought. The rest of the verse almost seems contradictory, since the prayer is asking for daily bread to be given for evermore. If the bread is *daily* bread, then the primary idea would appear to be having faith for there to be enough bread for that very day. In Matthew 6:34, in the same chapter that includes the other account of this prayer, Jesus commands “take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.” This verse might suggest that asking for daily bread “evermore” seems inconsistent. The RV and KJV emphasize the present aspect by using *day* or a cognate three times in a sentence of only eight words. They ask to be given *day* by *day* the *daily* bread. No concern for the future appears in this wording; the request is merely to be given the amount of bread that is sufficient for each day. The wording of the RV and KJV reflects Exodus’s account of an occasion when the Israelites ate the bread called *manna* in the wilderness: “And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating” (16:21). The ESV’s petition closely resembles that of the KJV and the RV, asking to be given each day the daily bread.

1 Corinthians 13:1–3

Ideally for a study like this, after giving examples of Old and New Testament comparisons, I could also explore a familiar psalm, such as the twenty-third. Since, however, Tyndale died before completely translating his Old Testament, I am unable to

²⁰ The more familiar “Give us this day our daily bread” is the wording of Matt. 6:11.

compare a psalm²¹ or even proverb from TND with the other versions. Instead, I will turn to what may be the next most well-known passage of the Bible aside from the Old Testament creation and the Lord's Prayer of the Gospels, and that is the "love chapter," the thirteenth chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians.

In verse one the most noticeable difference is in the first sentence's pattern. While most of this study has been on individual words and phrases, that is to say, vocabulary, *morphology* or word form and *syntax* or sentence structure help our understanding of the Bible as well. With TND and the KJV, the passage is in the indicative mood, while the RV and ESV are in the subjunctive. The difference between the two moods is that the indicative demonstrates a matter-of-fact cause and effect scenario (though I speak, I am become), while the subjunctive offers a conditional result (i.e., if . . . then). TND and KJV read somewhat pessimistically, taking for granted that love is absent. From this premise, they reach the conclusion that the speaker counts for nothing as a result. The RV and ESV appear to voice a warning, showing what the consequences will be if there is no love. The use of conjunctions in the first sentence also aids in setting a tone. While TND, the RV, and the ESV use the contrasting "yet" or "but" conjunctions to specify the performing of an action, but doing so without love, the KJV only uses "and," as if to nullify any good because the action was performed in the wrong way.

Another oddity in the KJV in comparison to the other three versions is the use of "charity" instead of love. I will not attempt to define *love* because its semantic range is too vast, but I can somewhat define *charity*. The word is not completely synonymous

²¹ I had contemplated using New Testament quotations of Psalms to get around this problem, but the lengths of quotes are too short to provide an effective cross-analysis.

with *love*: it is a specific type of love. In modern usage, *charity* only refers to money, goods, or aid given to the poor, either as the action itself of so giving or of an organization that aims to do so. The reason for this association is because charity is a type of love that prompts one to help his neighbor(s). From the number of people I hear who reference it, many are doubtless aware that the Greek in the New Testament uses multiple words for love, the highest or purest being *agape*. In much the same way, charity is the English equivalent to this highest form of Christian love. The etymology of charity lends little toward defining it, however the word comes from Latin *cāritāt-em*, and has “the general Latin senses of dearness (high price), fondness, [and] affection” (OED). Fortunately, the *OED* lists several definitions, the first three of which being “God's love to man,” “Man's love of God and his neighbour, commanded as the fulfilling of the Law, Matt. xxii. 37, 39,” and “The Christian love of one's fellow human beings; Christian benignity of disposition expressing itself in Christ-like conduct.” The *OED* also gives definitions of charity outside of a Christian context, beginning from the mid-thirteenth century; however, the earliest recorded instances of charity date back to the twelfth century and were all used in this religious sense. Given these authoritative, earlier definitions, *charity* no longer looks out of place in the early modern KJV but, in my understanding, works better than *love* does in describing what Paul speaks of.

Another significant difference between the versions is the treatment of prophecy in verse two. According to TND, the writer “could prophesy.” The KJV and RV mention him having “the gift of prophecy,” and the ESV simply references his having “prophetic powers.” These different depictions of prophecy are quite varied. TND portrays prophecy as a natural ability. The tone is fairly casual, “And though I could prophesy,” as if to

emphasize that without love something seemingly supernatural is diminished. The KJV and RV emphasize its holy origin by calling it “the gift of prophecy,” because this gift obviously had to be given. The wording indicates that God allows prophecy and, as such, wants it to only be used with charity/love. The ESV’s emphasis on “prophetic powers” implies that the prophet has a type of great power that goes beyond any ability or gift. This magnification of prophecy effectively contrasts with the nothing it becomes when used without love.

The account in verse three about giving to the poor remains mostly the same for TND, the KJV, and the RV, but the phrasing changes in the ESV. The first three read “I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,” whereas the ESV summarizes the thought by hypothesizing if “I give away all that I have.” The process in the first three versions is reminiscent of charity as it is known today: feeding the poor. Yet this passage clearly shows that the action of selling everything and donating it does not show love; the inner love that accompanies the action is what matters most. The ESV sheds a different light on the passage. Nowhere does it mention the purpose of giving away everything. The poor, the intended recipients of the given-away possessions, are not once referenced. This apparent neglect of mentioning the poor actually shows a different aspect of the lesson. Reasonably, the only sensible purpose for giving away everything is because of love. But if love is not the reason, then the alternative motive seems to be pride. That is, a prideful person is more likely to do something outwardly selfless if he thinks he can be on the front page of the newspaper or interviewed on television for doing it. My understanding here is that the focus of the verse is still the intention behind the action rather than the outward expression of it.

These comparisons are more than a child's "Spot the Five Differences" game. The process of taking portions of scripture and cross analyzing them is about more than finding differences in Bible versions. Finding differences is only the first step in this process. Once the differences are noted, the real work begins with discovering what those differences imply. If I had merely observed that one Bible mentions *expanse* and another incorporates *firmament*, I would have no more understanding than before. I had to contemplate both versions in order to better appreciate what the verse says. My examples are not only meant to be comparisons, they are also meant to be templates to be used for comparing other verses in other versions. For Example, the CEV (Contemporary English Version) translates Genesis 1:2 as "The earth was barren, with no form of life; it was under a roaring ocean covered with darkness. But the Spirit of God was moving over the water." This passage is obviously not essentially literal, but the process of understanding by comparison still works. The word *barren*, etymologically "son-less," or "unable to produce a son," personifies the earth as sterile and emphasizes the lifelessness mentioned a few words later. Additionally, the conjunction *but* is used in the CEB instead of the *and* in the versions previously discussed. The *but* here shows contrast between the two statements, as if the first half of the verse presents the problem of barrenness and the second half resolves the situation by showing the Spirit moving over the water.

By looking at only these brief and common scripture passages, the four Bible versions that should be the closest to each other are noticeably worded differently and thus potentially provide different types of understanding for those willing to look for it. According to Ryken's arguments for translation, these four versions of essentially literal translation should each be as accurate as the other, and while that claim of mutual

accuracy may be true, it does not mean that each Bible provides the same *type* or *level* of understanding. Comparing and analyzing the differences in Bible versions is helpful in gathering a better understanding the Bible. Without comparing and contrasting portions from multiple versions, missing details or aspects of the Bible is unavoidable. The best way to read a Bible is not to find the latest version in the most current translation style; the best way to read the Bible is to “prove/test all things” (I Thessalonians 5:21) by comparing them to each other.

Appendix A

Genesis 1:1, 2, 7 (Tyndale's Version, 1537)

(1) In the begynnyng God created heaven and erth.

(2) The erth was voyde and emptie ad darcknesse was vpon the depe and the spirite of god moved vpon the water.

(7) Than God made the fyrmament and parted the waters which were vnder the fyrmament from the waters that were above the fyrmament: And it was so.

Gen 1:1, 2, 7 (Authorized Version, 1611)

(1) In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

(2) And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters

(7) And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so.

Genesis 1:1, 2, 7 (Revised Version, 1885)

(1) In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

(2) And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

(7) And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

Genesis 1:1, 2, 7 (English Standard Version, 2016)

(1) In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

(2) The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

(7) And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so.

Luke 11:2-4 (Tyndale's Version)

(2) And he sayd vnto the: When ye praye saye: O oure father which arte in heave halowed be thy name. Thy kyngdome come. Thy will be fulfilled even in erth as it is in heaven.

(3) Oure dayly breed geve vs evermore.

(4) And forgeve vs oure synnes: For eve we forgeve every man yt treaspaseth vs. And ledde vs not into teptacio. But deliver vs fro evill.

Luke 11:2-4 (King James Version)

(2) And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

(3) Give us day by day our daily bread.

(4) And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

Luke 11:2-4 (Revised Version)

(2) And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Father, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.

(3) Give us day by day our daily bread.

(4) And forgive us our sins; for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And bring us not into temptation.

Luke 11:2-4 (English Standard Version)

(2) And he said to them, “When you pray, say: “Father, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.

(3) Give us each day our daily bread,

(4) and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.”

I Corinthians 13:1-3 (Tyndale’s Version)

(1) Though I spake with the tonges of me and angels and yet had no love I were eue as soundinge brasse: or as a tynklynge Cymball.

(2) And though I coulde prophesy and vnderstode all secretes and all knowledge: yee yf I had all fayth so that I coulde move moutayns oute of ther places and yet had no love I were nothyng.

(3) And though I bestowed all my gooddes to fede ye poore and though I gave my body even that I burned and yet had no love it profeteth me nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:1–3 (King James Version)

(1) Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

(2) And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

(3) And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:1–3 (Revised Version)

(1) If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.

(2) And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

(3) And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:1–3 (English Standard Version)

(1) If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

(2) And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

(3) If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

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