

WBC BIBLE TRANSLATION USAGE

March 8, 2009

Our Goal

Because our faith is based on the hearing of the Word of God (Rom 10:17), understanding the Bible as it is read and taught is of utmost importance (Acts 8:30–35). Our church is built on the teaching ministry of the Word of God in obedience to Jesus Christ (Matt 28:18–20) and for the edification of His Church (Eph 4:11–16). Our ultimate goal is to obey the Bible, not merely hear it (Jas 1:22). In order to attain this goal, we must not only hear but understand the Word of God. Since God breathed out His Word using human language (2 Tim 3:16), a vehicle which He created (Gen 11:7–8), we must translate the Bible into English so we can read, understand, and obey it. A translation should strive to clearly and accurately convey the meaning of the words of the Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic originals into English.

Our History

Westerville Bible Church has never considered English Bible versions a test of fellowship. We have used the King James Version, not by conscious choice or determination, but simply because the King James was the only widespread English language version available when our church began in 1963. We do not denigrate the King James Version or its significant place in history, but we do acknowledge that neither the King James Version nor any version is a perfect rendering of the original. All translations have shortcomings (as the translators of the King James Version themselves recognized).

Yet for all that, as nothing is begun and perfected at the same time, and the later thoughts are thought to be the wiser: so, if we building upon their foundation that went before us, and being holpen by their labours, do endeavor to make that better which they left so good; no man, we are sure, hath cause to dislike us; they, we persuade ourselves, if they were alive, would thank us (from the Preface to the King James Version).

Those who attend Westerville Bible Church are encouraged to carry and read any translation that is faithful to the original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts.

Our Current Situation

The language and syntax of the King James Version has made God's Word more difficult to read and understand for many people. The Session has investigated the English Standard Version of the Bible and has found it to be a literal translation that provides both greater accuracy and better readability.

Our Plan

Therefore, Westerville Bible Church will use the English Standard Version as the pulpit text for public preaching, teaching, and reading beginning Sunday, March 22, 2009. ESV Bibles will be provided in the pew rack. Visiting pastors and speakers may use the ESV or King James Version at their discretion. Sunday School classes and youth groups from sixth grade down may memorize from either the ESV or the KJV at the teacher's discretion. The church will make a free ESV Bible available to each family.