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unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

2 Corinthians

Introduction to 2 Corinthians

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 2 Corinthians

Paul thanks God for the Corinthian Christians (1:1-11)

Paul explains his conduct and his ministry (1:12-7:16)

Paul speaks about contributing money for the Jerusalem church (8:1-9:15)

Paul defends his authority as an apostle (10:1-13:10)

Paul gives final greetings and encouragement (13:11-14)

Who wrote the Book of 2 Corinthians?

Paul was the author. He was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

Paul started the church in Corinth. He was staying in the city of Ephesus when he wrote this letter.

What is the Book of 2 Corinthians about?

In 2 Corinthians, Paul continued to write about the conflicts among the Christians in the city of Corinth. It is clear in this letter that the Corinthians had obeyed his previous instructions to them. In 2 Corinthians, Paul encouraged them to live in a way that would please God.

Paul also wrote to assure them that Jesus Christ sent him as an apostle to preach the Gospel. Paul wanted them to understand this, because a group of Jewish Christians opposed what he was doing. They claimed Paul was not sent by God and he was teaching a false message. This group of Jewish Christians wanted Gentile Christians to obey the law of Moses.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Second Corinthians." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Second Letter to the Church in Corinth." (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was the city of Corinth like?

Corinth was a major city located in ancient Greece. Because it was near the Mediterranean Sea, many travelers and traders came to buy and sell goods there. This resulted in the city having people from many different cultures. The city was famous for having people who lived in immoral ways. The people worshipped Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love. As part of the ceremonies honoring Aphrodite, her worshipers had sexual intercourse with temple prostitutes.

What did Paul mean by “false apostles” (11:13)?

These were Jewish Christians. They taught that Gentile Christians had to obey the law of Moses in order to follow Christ. Christian leaders had met in Jerusalem and decided on the matter (See: Acts 15). However, it is clear that there were still some groups that disagreed with what the leaders in Jerusalem decided.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Singular and plural “you”

In this book, the word “I” refers to Paul. Also, the word “you” is almost always plural and refers to the believers in Corinth. There are two exceptions to this: 6:2 and 12:9. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#) and [Forms of You](#))

How are the ideas of “holy” and “sanctify” represented in 2 Corinthians in the ULT?

The scriptures use such words to indicate any one of various ideas. For this reason, it is often difficult for translators to represent them well in their versions. In translating into English, the ULT uses the following principles: * Sometimes the meaning in a passage implies moral holiness. Especially important for understanding the gospel is the fact that God considers Christians to be sinless because they are united to Jesus Christ. Another related fact is that God is perfect and faultless. A third fact is that Christians are to conduct themselves in a blameless, faultless manner in life. In these cases, the ULT uses “holy,” “holy God,” “holy ones,” or “holy people.” * The meaning in most passages in 2 Corinthians is a simple reference to Christians without implying any particular role filled by them. In these cases, the ULT uses “believer” or “believers.” (See: 1:1; 8:4; 9:1, 12; 13:13) * Sometimes the meaning in the passage implies the idea of someone or something set apart for God alone. In these cases, the ULT uses “set apart,” “dedicated to,” “reserved for,” or “sanctified.”

The UST will often be helpful as translators think about how to represent these ideas in their own versions.

What did Paul mean by expressions like “in Christ” and “in the Lord”?

This kind of expression occurs in 1:19, 20; 2:12, 17; 3:14; 5:17, 19, 21; 10:17; 12:2, 19; and 13:4. Paul meant to express the idea of a very close union with Christ and the believers. At the same time, he often intended other meanings as well. See, for example, “A door was opened for me in the Lord,” (2:12) where Paul specifically meant that a door was opened for Paul by the Lord.

Please see the introduction to the Book of Romans for more details about this kind of expression.

What does it mean to be a “new creation” in Christ (5:17)?

Paul’s message was that God makes Christians part of a “new world” when a person believes in Christ. God gives a new world of holiness, peace, and joy. In this new world, believers have a new nature that has been given them by the Holy Spirit. Translators should try to express this idea.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of 2 Corinthians?

- “and in your love for us” (8:7). Many versions, including the ULT and UST, read this way. However, many other versions read, “and in our love for you.” There is strong evidence that each reading is original. Translators should probably follow the reading preferred by other versions in their region.

(See: [Textual Variants](#))

2 Corinthians 1

2 Corinthians 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The first paragraph reflects a common way to begin a letter in the ancient Near East.

Special Concepts

Paul's integrity

People were criticizing Paul and saying he was not sincere. He refutes them by explaining his motives for what he was doing.

Comfort

Comfort is a major theme of this chapter. The Holy Spirit comforts Christians. The Corinthians probably were afflicted and needed to be comforted.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical question

Paul uses two rhetorical questions to defend himself against a charge of not being sincere. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

We

Paul uses the pronoun "we". This likely represents at least Timothy and himself. It may also include other people.

Guarantee

Paul says the Holy Spirit is the guarantee, which means pledge or down-payment, of a Christian's eternal life. Christians are securely saved. But they will not experience all of God's given promises until after they die. The Holy Spirit is a personal guarantee that this will happen. This idea comes from a business term. A person gives some valuable item to another person as a "guarantee" that they will repay money. (See: [eternity](#), [everlasting](#), [eternal](#), [forever](#) and [save](#), [saved](#), [safe](#), [salvation](#))

2 Corinthians 1:1

General Information:

After Paul's greeting to the church in Corinth, he writes about suffering and comfort through Jesus Christ. Timothy is with him as well. The word "you" throughout this letter refers to the people of the church in Corinth and to the rest of the Christians in that area. Possibly Timothy writes on parchment paper the words that Paul says.

ULT

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy {our} brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, and to all the saints who are in all of Achaia.

Paul ... to the church of God that is in Corinth

Your language may have a particular way of introducing the author of a letter and its intended audience. Alternate translation: "I, Paul ... wrote this letter to you, the church of God that is in Corinth"

Timothy {our} brother (ULT)

This indicates that both Paul and the Corinthians knew **Timothy** and considered him to be their spiritual **brother**.

of Achaia (ULT)

Achaia is the name of a Roman province in the southern part of modern-day Greece. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

2 Corinthians 1:2

Grace to you and peace (ULT)

This is a common greeting that Paul uses in his letters.

ULT

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 1:3

Blessed {be} the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "May we always praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

³ Blessed {be} the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort,

the God and Father (ULT)

Alternate translation: "God, who is the Father"

the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort (ULT)

These two phrases express the same idea in two different ways. Both phrases refer to God. (See: [Parallelism](#))

the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort (ULT)

This could mean: (1) the words **mercies** and **all comfort** describe the character of **Father** and **God**. (2) the words **Father** and **God** refer to one who is the source of **mercies** and **all comfort**.

2 Corinthians 1:4

who comforts us in all our affliction (ULT)

Here, **us** and **our** include the Corinthians. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

ULT

⁴ the one who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we are able to comfort those {who are} in every kind of affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

2 Corinthians 1:5

For just as the sufferings of Christ abound toward us (ULT)

Paul speaks of the **sufferings of Christ** as if they were objects that could increase in number. Alternate translation: "For just as Christ suffered greatly for our sake" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁵ For just as the sufferings of Christ abound toward us, in the same way also our comfort abounds through Christ.

the sufferings of Christ (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) the **sufferings** that Paul and Timothy experience because they preach the message about Christ. (2) the **sufferings** that Christ experienced on their behalf.

abounds...our comfort (ULT)

Paul speaks of **comfort** as if it were an object that could increase in size. (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 1:6

But if we are afflicted (ULT)

Here the word **we** refers to Paul and Timothy, but not to the Corinthians. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

But if we are afflicted (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "But if people afflict us" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

if we are comforted (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "if God comforts us" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

your comfort that results

Alternate translation: "you experience effective comfort"

ULT

⁶ But if we are afflicted, {it is} for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, {it is} for your comfort, that is working in the patient endurance of the same sufferings that we also suffer.

2 Corinthians 1:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁷ And our hope concerning you {is} firm, knowing that as you are partakers of the sufferings, in the same way also of the comfort.

2 Corinthians 1:8

not...we do...want you to be uninformed (ULT)

You can state this in positive terms. Alternate translation: “we want you to know” (See: [Litotes](#))

that we were burdened excessively, beyond {our} strength (ULT)

Paul and Timothy refer to their emotions of despair being like a heavy weight they have to carry. (See: [Metaphor](#))

excessively...we were burdened (ULT)

The word **burdened** refers to the feeling of despair. You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “We were in complete despair” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁸ For we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond {our} strength, so that we despaired even of life.

2 Corinthians 1:9

we have the sentence of death on us (ULT)

Paul and Timothy are comparing their feeling of despair to that of someone condemned to die. Alternate translation: “we were in despair like someone who is condemned to die” (See: [Metaphor](#))

but in God (ULT)

The words “be putting our trust” are left out of this phrase. Alternate translation: “but instead, be putting our trust in God” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

who raises the dead (ULT)

Here to raise is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: “who causes the dead to live again” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁹ Indeed, we have the sentence of death on us so that we would not be trusting in ourselves, but in God, who raises the dead,

2 Corinthians 1:10

a deadly peril (ULT)

Paul compares his feeling of despair as a result of the troubles that they experienced to a **deadly peril** or terrible danger. Alternate translation: “despair” (See: [Metaphor](#))

and he will rescue us...continue to (ULT)

Alternate translation: “he also will continue to rescue us”

ULT

10 who rescued us from so great a deadly peril, and he will rescue us—on whom we have set our hope that he also will continue to deliver us,

2 Corinthians 1:11

you also joining together in prayer on our behalf (ULT)

Alternate translation: "God will rescue us from danger as you, the people of the church of Corinth, also help us by praying with us"

for the gracious favor to us (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "the gracious favor which God has given to us" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

11 you also joining together in prayer on our behalf—so that thanks may be given through many on our behalf for the gracious favor to us by many faces.

2 Corinthians 1:12

General Information:

In these verses Paul uses the words **we**, **our**, **ourselves**, and **us** to refer to himself and Timothy and possibly others who served with them. These words do not include the people he was writing to. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

For our boasting is this (ULT)

The word **boasting** here is used in the positive sense of feeling great satisfaction and joy in something.

the testimony of our conscience (ULT)

Paul speaks of not being guilty as if his **conscience** were a person that could testify. Alternate translation: “we know by our conscience” (See: [Personification](#))

not in fleshly wisdom, but in the grace of God (ULT)

Here, **fleshly** represents human. Alternate translation: “We have not relied on human wisdom but on the grace of God” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

12 For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience, that we have conducted ourselves in the world in holiness and sincerity of God, and not in fleshly wisdom, but in the grace of God, and all the more toward you.

2 Corinthians 1:13

For we write no other things to you but that which you read or also understand (ULT)

You can state this in positive terms. Alternate translation: “You can read and understand everything we write to you” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

ULT

¹³ For we write no other things to you but that which you read or also understand. But now I hope that you will understand completely—

2 Corinthians 1:14

your boasting (ULT)

The word **boasting** here is used in the positive sense of feeling great satisfaction and joy in something.

ULT

14 just as you also have understood us in part—so that we are your boasting on the day of our Lord Jesus, just as you also {will be} ours.

2 Corinthians 1:15

General Information:

Paul wrote at least 3 letters to the Corinthians. Only 2 letters to Corinth are recorded in the Bible.

Connecting Statement:

Paul explains his sincere expectation with pure motives to come see the believers in Corinth after his first letter.

with this confidence (ULT)

The word **this** refers to Paul's previous comments about the Corinthians.

you might have a second blessing (ULT)

Alternate translation: "you might benefit from me visiting you twice"

ULT

15 And with this confidence, I intended to come to you before so that you might have a second blessing,

2 Corinthians 1:16

**you into...to be sent on my way...Judea by
(ULT)**

Alternate translation: "to assist me to continue on to Judea"

ULT

¹⁶ and to pass through you into Macedonia and to come to you again from Macedonia and to be sent on my way to Judea by you.

2 Corinthians 1:17

I did not then take it lightly, did I (ULT)

Paul uses this question to emphasize he was sure about his decision to visit the Corinthians. The expected answer to the question is “no”. Alternate translation: “I was not hesitating.” or “I was confident in my decision.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

17 Therefore, when I was planning this, I did not then take it lightly, did I? Or {was} what I planned according to fleshly planning, so that there would be with me “Yes, yes” and “No, no”?

Or {was} what I planned according to fleshly planning, so that there would be with me “Yes, yes” and “No, no (ULT)

Paul uses this question to emphasize that his plans to visit the Corinthians were sincere. Alternate translation: “I do not plan things according to human standards, so that I would say “Yes, yes” and “No, no” at the same time.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Or {was} what I planned according to fleshly planning, so that there would be with me “Yes, yes” and “No, no (ULT)

This means that Paul did not say both that he would visit and that he would not visit at the same time. Alternate translation: “I do not plan things according to fleshly planning, so that I say ‘Yes, I will certainly visit’ and ‘No, I will definitely not visit’ at the same time!” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

so that there would be with me “Yes, yes” and “No, no (ULT)

The words **yes** and **no** are repeated for emphasis. (See: [Doublet](#))

2 Corinthians 1:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹⁸ But God {is} faithful, so that our word to you is not “Yes” and “No.”

2 Corinthians 1:19

For the Son of God, Jesus Christ...was not “Yes” and “No,” but it has become “Yes” in him (ULT)

Jesus says “Yes” concerning the promises of God, which means that he guarantees that they are true. Alternate translation: “For the Son of God, Jesus Christ ... does not say ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ concerning God’s promises. Instead, he always says ‘Yes.’” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the...of God...Son (ULT)

Son of God is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

ULT

¹⁹ For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the one who was proclaimed among you by us—by me and Silvanus and Timothy—was not “Yes” and “No,” but it has become “Yes” in him.

2 Corinthians 1:20

all...the promises of God {are} "Yes" in him (ULT)

This means that Jesus guarantees all of the **promises of God**.
Alternate translation: "all the promises of God are guaranteed in Jesus Christ" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

are} "Yes" in him...through him (ULT)

Both occurrences of the word **him** refer to Jesus Christ.

ULT

²⁰ For all the promises of God {are} "Yes" in him. So also through him the "Amen" {is} through us to God for {his} glory.

2 Corinthians 1:21

Now God is the one who establishes us with you

This could mean: (1) Paul is saying that **God** confirms the relationship of him and his team with each other because they are **in Christ**. (2) Paul is saying that **God** confirms the relationship of him and his team, and the Corinthians, with **Christ**.

ULT

²¹ Now God {is} the one who establishes us with you in Christ, and he anointed us,

us...he anointed (ULT)

This could mean: (1) he sent us to preach the gospel. (2) he chose us to be his people.

2 Corinthians 1:22

the one who also sealed us (ULT)

Paul speaks of God showing that we belong to him as if God had put a mark on us as a sign that we belong to him. Alternate translation: “he has put his mark of ownership on us” or “he has shown that we belong to him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

²² the one who also sealed us and gave us the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.

gave us the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts (ULT)

Here the word **hearts** refers to the innermost part of a person. Alternate translation: “gave us the Spirit to live within each of us” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the pledge of the Spirit (ULT)

The **Spirit** is spoken of as if he was a partial downpayment toward eternal life. (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 1:23

Now I call God as a witness to my soul (ULT)

Here, to be **a witness** refers to a person telling what they have seen or heard in order to settle an argument. Alternate translation: “I ask God to show what I say is true”

that sparing you (ULT)

Alternate translation: “so that I might not cause you more suffering”

ULT

23 Now I call God as a witness to my soul that sparing you—I have not yet come to Corinth.

2 Corinthians 1:24

**your faith...we are fellow workers...for...joy
(ULT)**

Alternate translation: "we are working with you so that you may have joy"

ULT

²⁴ Not that we are ruling over your faith, but we are fellow workers for your joy, for you stand firm in the faith.

the...you stand firm in...faith (ULT)

Here, **stand firm** can refer to something that does not change. Alternate translation: "remain firm in your faith" (See: [Idiom](#))

2 Corinthians 2

2 Corinthians 2 General Notes

Special Concepts

Harsh writing

In this chapter, Paul refers to a letter he previously wrote to the Corinthians. That letter had a harsh and corrective tone. Paul probably wrote it after the letter known as First Corinthians and before this letter. He implies that the church had to rebuke an erring member. Paul is now encouraging them to be gracious to that person. (See: [grace](#), [gracious](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Aroma

A sweet aroma is a pleasing smell. Scripture often describes things that are pleasing to God as having a pleasing aroma.

2 Corinthians 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Because of his great love for them, Paul makes it clear that his rebuke in his first letter to them (the rebuke of their acceptance of the sin of immorality) caused him pain as well as pain to the church people in Corinth and the immoral man.

in sorrow (ULT)

Alternate translation: "in circumstances that would cause you pain"

ULT

¹ For I decided this for myself, that I not would come to you again in sorrow.

2 Corinthians 2:2

For if I cause you sorrow, then who {is} the one who cheers me up, except the one who was hurt by me (ULT)

Paul uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that neither he nor they would benefit if his coming to them would cause them pain.

Alternate translation: "If I caused you pain, the only ones who could cheer me up would be the very ones whom I had hurt." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

² For if I cause you sorrow, then who {is} the one who cheers me up, except the one who was hurt by me?

the one who was hurt by me (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "the very one whom I had hurt" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 2:3

I wrote this same thing (ULT)

Paul is referring to another letter that he had written to the Corinthian Christians, but which no longer exists. Alternate translation: "I wrote as I did in my previous letter" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

not...I might...have sorrow from those over whom I should rejoice (ULT)

Paul is speaking about the behavior of certain Corinthian believers who caused him emotional pain. You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "those who should have made me rejoice might not hurt me" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

my joy is {the joy} of all of you (ULT)

Alternate translation: "what gives me joy is what gives you joy, too"

ULT

³ And I wrote this same thing so that, having come, I might not have sorrow from those over whom I should rejoice, having confidence in all of you that my joy is {the joy} of all of you.

2 Corinthians 2:4

For...from great affliction (ULT)

Here the word **affliction** refers to emotional pain.

anguish of heart (ULT)

Here the word **heart** refers to the location of the emotions. Alternate translation: "with extreme sorrow" (See: [Metonymy](#))

through many tears (ULT)

Alternate translation: "with much crying"

ULT

⁴ For I wrote to you from great affliction and anguish of heart, through many tears, not so that you would be grieved, but so that you might know the love that I have all the more for you.

2 Corinthians 2:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁵ But if anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved {only} me, but in some measure—in order not to put it too harshly—all of you.

2 Corinthians 2:6

This punishment on such a one—which {is} by the majority—{is} enough (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “The punishment that the majority gave that person is sufficient” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁶ This punishment on such a one— which {is} by the majority—{is} enough,

This punishment on such a one—which {is} by the majority—{is} enough (ULT)

The word **punishment** can be translated using a verb. Alternate translation: “The way that the majority has punished that person is enough” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

is} enough (ULT)

Alternate translation: “is sufficient”

2 Corinthians 2:7

Otherwise, such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow (ULT)

This means to have a strong emotional response of too much sorrow. You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "We do not want too much sorrow to overwhelm him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁷ so that, on the contrary, you should rather forgive and comfort him.
Otherwise, such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.

2 Corinthians 2:8

Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages the church in Corinth to show love and to forgive the person they have punished. He writes that he, also, has forgiven him.

ULT

⁸ So I encourage you to affirm {your} love for him.

to affirm {your} love for him (ULT)

This means that they are to confirm their **love** for this man in the presence of all of the believers.

2 Corinthians 2:9

you are obedient in everything (ULT)

This could mean: (1) the Corinthians **are obedient** to God **in everything**. (2) the Corinthians **are obedient in everything** that Paul has taught them. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁹ Indeed, I also wrote for this reason: so that I might know your proof, whether you are obedient in everything.

2 Corinthians 2:10

is} for your sake (ULT)

This could mean: (1) they are forgiven out of Paul's love for them. (2) they are forgiven for their benefit.

ULT

10 Now to whomever you forgive anything, I also {forgive}—for indeed the one whom I have forgiven (if I have forgiven anything), {is} for your sake in the presence of Christ,

2 Corinthians 2:11

for we are not ignorant of his schemes (ULT)

Paul uses a negative expression to emphasize the opposite.

Alternate translation: "For we know his plans well" (See: [Litotes](#))

ULT

11 so that we would not be taken advantage of by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

2 Corinthians 2:12

Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages the believers in Corinth by telling them of the opportunities he has had to preach the gospel in Troas and Macedonia.

ULT

12 Now having come to Troas, indeed a door for the gospel of Christ was opened to me in the Lord.

indeed a door for the gospel of Christ was opened to me in the Lord (ULT)

Paul speaks of his opportunity to preach the **gospel** as if it were a **door** through which he was allowed to walk. (See: [Metaphor](#))

indeed a door for the gospel of Christ was opened to me in the Lord (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “The Lord indeed opened a door to me to preach the gospel of Christ” or “The Lord gave me the opportunity to preach the gospel of Christ” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 2:13

I had no relief in my spirit (ULT)

Alternate translation: "My mind was troubled" or "I was worried"

my...brother Titus (ULT)

Paul speaks of **Titus** as his spiritual **brother**.

So having left them (ULT)

Alternate translation: "So I left the people of Troas"

ULT

13 I had no relief in my spirit, as I did not find my brother Titus there. So having left them, I went on to Macedonia.

2 Corinthians 2:14

to God...to God...who always leads us in triumph in Christ (ULT)

Paul speaks of God as if he were a victorious general leading a victory parade and of himself and his coworkers as those who take part in that parade. This could mean: (1) God, who in Christ always causes us to share in his triumph. (2) God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph as those over whom he has gained victory. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁴ But thanks {be} to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ and makes known through us the aroma of the knowledge of him in every place.

makes known through us the aroma of the knowledge of him in every place (ULT)

Paul speaks of the **knowledge** of Christ as if it were incense that has a pleasing smell. Alternate translation: “He causes the knowledge of Christ to spread to everyone who hears us, just as the sweet smell of burning incense spreads to everyone near it” (See: [Metaphor](#))

makes known...in...every place (ULT)

Alternate translation: “he spreads ... everywhere we go”

2 Corinthians 2:15

we are a fragrance of Christ to God (ULT)

Paul speaks of his ministry as if it were a burnt offering that someone offers to **God**. (See: [Metaphor](#))

we are a fragrance of Christ to God (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) the sweet aroma which is the knowledge of **Christ**. (2) the sweet aroma that **Christ** offers.

those who are being saved (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “those whom God is saving” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

15 For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing—

2 Corinthians 2:16

an aroma (ULT)

“the knowledge of Christ is an aroma.” This refers back to [2 Corinthians 2:14](#), where Paul speaks of the knowledge of Christ as if it were incense that has a pleasing smell. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

16 to one indeed, an aroma from death to death, but to the other, an aroma from life to life. And in regard to these things, who {is} worthy?

an aroma from death to death (ULT)

This could mean: (1) the word **death** is repeated for emphasis and the phrase means “an aroma that causes death.” (2) this refers to an **aroma** of **death** that causes people to die. (See: [Doublet](#))

to one (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “to the ones whom God is saving” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

an aroma from life to life (ULT)

This could mean: (1) the word **life** is repeated for emphasis and the phrase means “an aroma that gives life.” (2) this refers to an **aroma** of life that gives people **life**. (See: [Doublet](#))

in regard to these things, who {is} worthy (ULT)

Paul uses this question to emphasize that no one is worthy to do the ministry that God has called them to do. Alternate translation: “No one is worthy of these things!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

2 Corinthians 2:17

who are selling the word of God for profit (ULT)

Here, **word** is a metonym for “message.” Alternate translation: “who sell God’s message to make money” (See: [Metonymy](#))

sincerity (ULT)

Alternate translation: “pure motives”

of God...we speak before...in Christ (ULT)

Alternate translation: “we speak as people who are joined to Christ” or “we speak with the authority of Christ”

before God (ULT)

Paul and his coworkers preach the gospel with the awareness that **God** is watching them. Alternate translation: “we speak in the presence of God” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

ULT

¹⁷ For we are not like the many who are selling the word of God for profit, but instead, as from sincerity—even as from God—we speak before God in Christ.

2 Corinthians 3

2 Corinthians 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul continues his defense. Paul views the Corinthian Christians as the proof of his work.

Special concepts in this chapter

Law of Moses

Paul alludes to God giving the Ten Commandments on stone tablets. This represents the law of Moses. The law was good because it came from God. But God punished the Israelites because they disobeyed it. This chapter may be difficult for translators to understand if the Old Testament has not yet been translated. (See: [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#) and [covenant](#) and [reveal](#), [revealed](#), [revelation](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Paul uses many metaphors used in this chapter to explain complex spiritual truths. It is unclear whether this makes Paul's teachings easier or more difficult to understand. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

“This is a covenant not of the letter but of the Spirit.”

Paul contrasts the old and new covenants. The new covenant is not a system of rules and regulations. Here, **Spirit** probably refers to the Holy Spirit. It may also refer to the new covenant being “spiritual” in nature. (See: [spirit](#), [wind](#), [breath](#))

2 Corinthians 3:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds them that he is not boasting as he tells them about what he has done through Christ.

Are we beginning to praise ourselves again (ULT)

Paul uses this question to emphasize that they are not bragging about themselves. Alternate translation: “We are not beginning to praise ourselves again!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Or we do not need, like some, letters of recommendation to you or from you, do we (ULT)

Paul says this to express that the Corinthians already know about Paul and Timothy’s good reputation. The question prompts a negative answer. Alternate translation: “We certainly do not need letters of recommendation to you or from you, like some people do!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

letters of recommendation (ULT)

This refers to **letters** that people write to introduce and give their approval of someone else.

ULT

¹ Are we beginning to praise ourselves again? Or we do not need, like some, letters of recommendation to you or from you, do we?

2 Corinthians 3:2

You yourselves are our letter (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Corinthians as if they are a **letter** of recommendation. That they have become believers serves to validate Paul's ministry to others. Alternate translation: "You yourselves are like our letter of recommendation" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

² You yourselves are our letter written in our hearts, known and read by all men,

written in our hearts (ULT)

Here the word **hearts** refers to their thoughts and emotions. This could mean: (1) Paul and his coworkers are sure about the Corinthians being their letter of recommendation. (2) Paul and his coworkers care very deeply for the Corinthians. (See: [Metonymy](#))

written in our hearts (ULT)

You can state this in active form with "Christ" as the implied subject. Alternate translation: "which Christ has written on our hearts" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

known and read by all men (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "that all people can know and read" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 3:3

you are a letter of Christ (ULT)

Paul clarifies that Christ is the one who has written the **letter**.
Alternate translation: “you are a letter that Christ has written” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

cared for by us (ULT)

Alternate translation: “brought by us”

ULT

³ revealing that you are a letter of Christ cared for by us, not written with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of hearts of flesh.

It was written not with ink ... on tablets of human hearts

Paul clarifies that the Corinthians are like a spiritual letter, not like a letter that humans write with physical objects.

not written with ink but with the Spirit of the living God (ULT)

The verb “written” is implied in the second phrase. Alternate translation: “not written with ink, but written with the Spirit of the living God” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

not written with ink but with the Spirit of the living God (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “not a letter that people wrote with ink but a letter that the Spirit of the living God wrote” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

not on tablets of stone but on tablets of hearts of flesh (ULT)

The verb “written” is implied from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: “not a letter that was written on stone tablets, but a letter that was written on tablets of human hearts” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

not on tablets of stone but on tablets of hearts of flesh (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “not a letter that people engraved on stone tablets but a letter that the Spirit of the living God wrote on tablets of human hearts” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

tablets of hearts of flesh (ULT)

Paul speaks of their **hearts** as if they are flat pieces of stone or clay upon which people engraved letters. (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 3:4

Now we have such confidence (ULT)

This refers to what Paul has just said. His **confidence** comes from knowing that the Corinthians are the validation of his ministry before God.

ULT

⁴ Now we have such confidence through Christ toward God.

2 Corinthians 3:5

competent from ourselves (ULT)

Alternate translation: “qualified in ourselves” or “sufficient in ourselves”

to consider anything as from ourselves (ULT)

Here the word **anything** refers to anything pertaining to Paul’s apostolic ministry. Alternate translation: “to claim that anything we have done in ministry comes from our own efforts” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

our competence {is} from God (ULT)

Alternate translation: “God gives us our sufficiency”

ULT

⁵ Not that we are competent from ourselves to consider anything as from ourselves. Instead, our competence {is} from God,

2 Corinthians 3:6

of a new covenant, not of the letter (ULT)

Here the word **letter** means letters of the alphabet and refers to words that people write down. Alternate translation: “a covenant not based on commands that men have written” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

⁶ who indeed made us competent as ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

not of the letter (ULT)

The phrase **the letter** alludes to the Old Testament law. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

but of the Spirit (ULT)

The Holy **Spirit** is the one who establishes God’s covenant with people. Alternate translation: “but a covenant based on what the Spirit does” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

the...letter kills (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Old Testament law as a person who **kills**. (See: [Personification](#))

the...letter kills (ULT)

Following that law leads to spiritual death. Alternate translation: “the written law leads to death” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

2 Corinthians 3:7

Connecting Statement:

Paul contrasts the fading glory of the old covenant with the superiority and freedom of the new covenant. He contrasts the veil of Moses with the clarity of present revelation. The time of Moses was a less clear picture of what is now revealed.

Now if the ministry of death...came in such glory that (ULT)

Paul emphasizes that although the law leads to **death**, it was still very glorious. (See: [Irony](#))

the ministry of death (ULT)

Here, **the ministry of death** refers to the Old Testament law that God gave through Moses. Alternate translation: “the ministry that causes death because it is based on the law” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

engraved in letters on stones (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “that God carved into stone with letters” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

in...such glory that (ULT)

Alternate translation: “in so much glory that”

ULT

⁷ Now if the ministry of death—
engraved in letters on stones—came in
such glory that the sons of Israel were
not able to look directly at the face of
Mose because of the glory of his face,
which was fading,

2 Corinthians 3:8

how will the ministry of the Spirit not be with much more glory (ULT)

Paul uses this question to emphasize that the **ministry of the Spirit** does must be more glorious than “the ministry of death” because it leads to life. Alternate translation: “So the service that the Spirit does must be even more glorious!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁸ how will the ministry of the Spirit not be with much more glory?

the ministry of the Spirit (ULT)

Here, **the ministry of the Spirit** refers to the new covenant, of which Paul is a minister. Alternate translation: “the ministry that gives life because it is based on the Spirit” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

2 Corinthians 3:9

the ministry of condemnation (ULT)

Here, **the ministry of condemnation** refers to the Old Testament law. Alternate translation: “the ministry that condemns people because it is based on the law” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁹ For if the ministry of condemnation {was} glory, the ministry of righteousness abounds much more in glory!

the ministry of righteousness abounds much more in glory (ULT)

Here the phrase **much more** marks this phrase as an exclamation, not as a question. Alternate translation: “then the service of righteousness must abound in so much more glory” (See: [Exclamations](#))

the ministry of righteousness abounds much more in glory (ULT)

Paul speaks of **the ministry of righteousness** as if it were an object that could produce or multiply another object. He means that this ministry is far more glorious than the law, which also had **glory**. (See: [Metaphor](#))

the ministry of righteousness (ULT)

Here, **the ministry of righteousness** refers to the new covenant, of which Paul is a minister. Alternate translation: “the ministry that makes people righteous because it is based on the Spirit” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

2 Corinthians 3:10

For indeed, that which was glorious is not glorious...because of the glory that exceeds it (ULT)

The Old Testament law no longer appears **glorious** when compared with the new covenant, which is much more glorious.

ULT

¹⁰ For indeed, that which was glorious is not glorious in this respect, because of the glory that exceeds it.

that which was glorious (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "the law which God once made glorious" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

in this respect (ULT)

Alternate translation: "in this way"

2 Corinthians 3:11

that which is fading away (ULT)

This refers to “the ministry of condemnation,” which Paul speaks of as if it were an object capable of disappearing. Alternate translation: “that which was becoming useless” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

11 For if that which is fading away {was} with glory, much more {is} that which remains with glory!

2 Corinthians 3:12

Therefore, having such a hope (ULT)

The word **Therefore** refers to what Paul has just said. His **hope** comes from knowing that the new covenant has an eternal glory.

such a hope (ULT)

Alternate translation: "such confidence"

ULT

¹² Therefore, having such a hope, we act with much boldness,

2 Corinthians 3:13

the end of that which was fading away (ULT)

The refers to the glory that shined on Moses' face. Alternate translation: "the glory on Moses' face as it faded away completely" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

¹³ and not like Moses putting a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel would not look directly at the end of that which was fading away.

2 Corinthians 3:14

But their minds were hardened (ULT)

Paul speaks of the **minds** of the Israelite people as objects that could be closed or made hard. This expression means that they were unable to understand what they saw. Alternate translation: “But the Israelites could not understand what they saw” (See: [Metaphor](#))

for until the present day (ULT)

Here, **the present day** refers to the time at which Paul was writing to the Corinthians.

the same veil remains at the reading of the old covenant (ULT)

Just as the Israelites could not see the glory on Moses’ face because he covered his face with a **veil**, there is a spiritual veil that prevents people from understanding when they read the **old covenant**. (See: [Metaphor](#))

the...at the reading of...old covenant (ULT)

Alternate translation: “when they hear someone read the old covenant”

not being lifted, because in Christ is it fading away (ULT)

Here, **it** refers to “the same veil.” You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “no one removes the veil, because only in Christ does God remove it” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

14 But their minds were hardened, for until the present day, the same veil remains at the reading of the old covenant, not being lifted, because in Christ is it fading away.

2 Corinthians 3:15

But until today (ULT)

Here the word **today** refers to the time at which Paul was writing to the Corinthians.

ULT

15 But until today, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart,

whenever Moses is read (ULT)

Here the word **Moses** refers to the Old Testament law that Moses wrote down. (See: [Metonymy](#))

whenever Moses is read (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “whenever someone reads the Mosaic law” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

a veil lies over their heart (ULT)

Here the word **heart** represents what people think. Alternate translation: “a veil prevents them from understanding” (See: [Metonymy](#))

a veil lies over their heart (ULT)

Here the people being unable to understand the old covenant is spoken of as if they have **a veil** that covers **their heart** the way a physical veil would cover their eyes. Alternate translation: “they are unable to understand what they are hearing” (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 3:16

whenever...whenever...one might turn to the Lord (ULT)

Here, **turn to** is a metaphor that means to become loyal to someone. Alternate translation: “when a person starts to worship the Lord” or “when a person starts to trust in the Lord” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁶ but whenever one might turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

the veil is taken away (ULT)

God gives them the ability to understand. You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “God lifts the veil away” or “God gives them the ability to understand” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 3:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord {is}, {there is} freedom.

2 Corinthians 3:18

Now we all (ULT)

Here the word **we** refers to all believers, including Paul and the Corinthians. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

with unveiled face, seeing as a reflection the glory of the Lord (ULT)

Unlike the Israelites who could not see God's glory reflected on Moses' face because he had covered it with a veil, there is nothing to prevent believers from seeing and understanding God's **glory**. (See: [Metaphor](#))

are being transformed into the same image (ULT)

The Spirit is changing believers to be glorious like Jesus. You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "The Lord is transforming us into his same glorious likeness" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

glory...from glory to (ULT)

"from one amount of glory to another amount of glory." This means that the Spirit is constantly increasing the **glory** of believers.

of the Lord...from...just as (ULT)

Alternate translation: "just as this comes from the Lord"

ULT

18 Now we all, with unveiled face, seeing as a reflection the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 4

2 Corinthians 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins with the word “therefore.” This connects it to what the previous chapter teaches. How these chapters are divided may be confusing to the reader.

Special concepts in this chapter

Ministry

Paul ministers to people by telling them about Christ. He does not try to trick people into believing. If they do not understand the gospel, it is because the problem is ultimately spiritual. (See: [spirit](#), [wind](#), [breath](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#))

Life and death

Paul does not refer here to physical life and death. Life represents the new life a Christian has in Jesus. Death represents the old way of living before believing in Jesus. (See: [life](#), [live](#), [living](#), [alive](#) and [die](#), [dead](#), [deadly](#), [death](#) and [faith](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Hope

Paul uses a repeated pattern in a purposeful way. He makes a statement. Then he denies a seemingly opposite or contradictory statement or gives an exception. Together these give the reader hope in difficult circumstances. (See: [hope](#), [hoped](#))

2 Corinthians 4:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul writes that he is honest in his ministry by preaching Christ, not praising himself. He shows the death and the life of Jesus in how he lives so that life can work in the Corinthian believers.

ULT

¹ Therefore, having this ministry, just as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.

we have received mercy, we do not lose heart (ULT)

Both occurrences of the word **we** refers to Paul and his coworker, but not to the Corinthians. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

just as we have received mercy (ULT)

This phrase explains how Paul and his coworkers have “this ministry.” It is a gift that God has given to them through his **mercy**. Alternate translation: “because God has shown us mercy” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

2 Corinthians 4:2

we have rejected the shameful hidden things (ULT)

This means that Paul and his coworkers refused to do “secret and shameful” things. It does not mean that they had done these things in the past.

the shameful hidden things (ULT)

The word **hidden** describes the things that people do secretly. Things that are **shameful** should cause people who do them to feel ashamed. Alternate translation: “the things that people do secretly because they cause shame” (See: [Hendiadys](#))

walking in craftiness (ULT)

Alternate translation: “living by deception”

nor distorting the word of God (ULT)

Here, **word of God** is a metonym for the message from God. Alternate translation: “we do not mishandle God’s message” (See: [Metonymy](#))

nor distorting the word of God (ULT)

This phrase uses two negative thoughts to express a positive thought. Alternate translation: “we use the word of God correctly” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

commending ourselves to every man’s conscience (ULT)

This means that they provide enough evidence for each person who hears them to decide whether they are right or wrong.

before God (ULT)

Here, **before God** refers to God’s presence. God’s understanding and approval of Paul’s truthfulness is referred to as God being able to see them. Alternate translation: “with God as witness” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

² Instead, we have rejected the shameful hidden things, not walking in craftiness, nor distorting the word of God, but by the presentation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man’s conscience before God.

2 Corinthians 4:3

But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing (ULT)

This refers back to what Paul said starting in [2 Corinthians 3:14](#).

There Paul explained that there is a spiritual **veil** that prevents people from understanding when they read the old covenant. In the same way, people are not able to understand the **gospel**. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

³ But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

if...our gospel is veiled...it is veiled (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "if a veil covers our gospel, that veil covers it" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

our gospel (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the gospel that we preach"

2 Corinthians 4:4

the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelieving (ULT)

Paul speaks of the **minds** of unbelievers as if they had eyes, and their inability to understand as their minds being unable to see. Alternate translation: “the god of this world has prevented unbelievers from understanding” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁴ in whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, so that they do not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

the god of this age (ULT)

“the god who rules this world.” This phrase refers to Satan.

they do not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ (ULT)

As the Israelites could not see God’s **glory** that shined on Moses’ face because he covered it with a veil ([2 Corinthians 3:13](#)), unbelievers are not able to see Christ’s glory that shines in **the gospel**. This means that they are unable to understand “the gospel of the glory of Christ” (See: [Metaphor](#))

of...age...the light of...gospel (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the light that comes from the gospel”

the gospel of the glory of Christ

Alternate translation: “the gospel about the Christ’s glory”

2 Corinthians 4:5

but Christ Jesus {as} Lord, and ourselves {as} your servants (ULT)

You can supply the verb for these phrases. Alternate translation: "but we proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord, and we proclaim ourselves as your servants" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Jesus...for...sake (ULT)

Alternate translation: "because of Jesus"

ULT

⁵ For we do not proclaim ourselves, but Christ Jesus {as} Lord, and ourselves {as} your servants for Jesus' sake.

2 Corinthians 4:6

Let light shine out of darkness (ULT)

With this sentence, Paul refers to God creating **light**, as described in the book of Genesis.

is} the one who shined...to illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God (ULT)

Here, the illumination from the light represents the ability to understand. Just as God created light, he also creates understanding for believers. Alternate translation: “the one who caused light to shine ... to enable us to understand the glory of God” (See: [Metaphor](#))

in our hearts (ULT)

Here the word **hearts** refers to the mind and thoughts. Alternate translation: “in our minds” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the light of the knowledge of the glory of God

Alternate translation: “to show us the knowledge of the glory of God”

the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (ULT)

Just as God’s **glory** shone upon Moses’ face ([2 Corinthians 3:7](#)), it also shines upon **the face of Jesus**. This means that when Paul preaches the gospel, people are able to see and understand the message about God’s glory. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

6 For God who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” {is} the one who shined in our hearts to illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:7

But we have (ULT)

Here the word **we** refers to Paul and his coworkers, but not to the Corinthians. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

we have...this treasure in jars of clay (ULT)

Paul speaks of the gospel as if it were a* *treasure** and their bodies as if they were breakable **jars** made out of **clay**. This emphasizes that they are of little value compared to the worth of the gospel that they preach. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay, so that the surpassing power might be from God and not from us;

2 Corinthians 4:8

in every way being afflicted (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "People afflict us in every way" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁸ in every way being afflicted, but not being overwhelmed; being perplexed, but not despairing;

2 Corinthians 4:9

being persecuted, but not being forsaken (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “people persecute us but God does not forsake us” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁹ being persecuted, but not being forsaken; being struck down, but not perishing;

being struck down, but not perishing (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “people strike us down but do not destroy us” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 4:10

always carrying in {our} body the death of Jesus (ULT)

Paul speaks of his sufferings as if they are an experience of **the death of Jesus**. Alternate translation: “we are often in danger of dying, as Jesus died” or “we always suffer in such a way that we experience the death of Jesus” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁰ always carrying in {our} body the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus also may be shown in our body;

the life of Jesus also may be shown in our body (ULT)

This could mean: (1) our bodies will live again, because **Jesus** is alive. (2) the spiritual **life** that **Jesus** gives also may be shown in our bodies.

the life of Jesus also may be shown in our body (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “other people may also see the life of Jesus in our bodies” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 4:11

for we who are alive are always being handed over to death for the sake of Jesus (ULT)

Here, **being handed over to death** represents being in danger of dying because of being loyal to Jesus. Alternate translation: “for those of us who are alive, God is always leading us to face death because we are joined to Jesus” or “for people are always causing us who are alive to be in danger of dying because we are joined to Jesus” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹¹ for we who are alive are always being handed over to death for the sake of Jesus so that also the life of Jesus may be shown in our mortal flesh.

so that also the life of Jesus may be shown in our mortal flesh (ULT)

God wants Jesus' **life** to **be shown** in us. This could mean: (1) our bodies will live again, because Jesus is alive. (2) the spiritual life that Jesus gives also may be shown in our bodies. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Corinthians 4:10](#).

so that also the life of Jesus may be shown in our mortal flesh (ULT)

You can state this in active form. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Corinthians 4:10](#). Alternate translation: “so other people may see the life of Jesus in our body” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 4:12

death is at work in us, but life in you (ULT)

Paul speaks of **death** and **life** as if they are persons who can **work**. This means that they are always in danger of physical death so that the Corinthians can have spiritual life. (See: [Personification](#))

ULT

12 So then, death is at work in us, but life in you.

2 Corinthians 4:13

the same spirit of faith (ULT)

Here the word **spirit** refers a person's attitude and temperament.
Alternate translation: "the same attitude of faith"

according to that which was written (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "as the one who wrote these words" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

I believed; therefore I spoke (ULT)

This is a quote from the Psalms.

ULT

13 But having the same spirit of faith according to that which was written: "I believed; therefore I spoke," we also believe; therefore we also speak,

2 Corinthians 4:14

the one who raised Jesus...also...will...raise (ULT)

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: “the one who caused the Lord Jesus to live again will also raise” or “God, who raised the Lord Jesus, will also raise” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

¹⁴ knowing that the one who raised Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you.

2 Corinthians 4:15

For all these things {are} for your sake (ULT)

Here, **all these things** refers to all of the sufferings that Paul has described in previous verses.

the grace, having abounded to more and more (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “as God spreads his grace to many more people, it” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

may cause thanksgiving to increase (ULT)

Paul speaks of **thanksgiving** as if it were an object that could become larger by itself. Alternate translation: “more and more people may give thanks” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

15 For all these things {are} for your sake, so that the grace, having abounded to more and more, may cause thanksgiving to increase to the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 4:16

Connecting Statement:

Paul writes that the Corinthian difficulties are minor and do not last long when compared to the unseen eternal things.

So we do not become discouraged (ULT)

You can state this as a positive. Alternate translation: “So we remain confident” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

our outer man is wasting away (ULT)

This refers to their physical bodies decaying and dying. Alternate translation: “our physical bodies are getting weak and dying” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

inwardly we are being renewed day by day

This refers to their inward, spiritual lives getting stronger. Alternate translation: “our spiritual beings are being strengthened day by day” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

inwardly we are being renewed day by day

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “God is renewing our inward being more each day” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

16 So we do not become discouraged. Rather, even if our outer man is wasting away, yet our inner {man} is being renewed day by day.

2 Corinthians 4:17

For our momentary, light affliction...is producing in us an eternal weight of glory (ULT)

Paul speaks of his sufferings and the **glory** that God will give him as if they were objects that can be weighed. The glory far outweighs the suffering. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁷ For our momentary, light affliction is producing in us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison.

far beyond all comparison (ULT)

The glory that Paul will experience is so heavy that no one can measure it. Alternate translation: “that cannot be measured” (See: [Metaphor](#))

far beyond all comparison (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “that no one can measure” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 4:18

the things that are seen, but the things that are not seen (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “things that we can see, but not the things that we cannot see” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

but the things that are not seen (ULT)

You can supply the verb for this phrase. Alternate translation: “but we are watching for things that are unseen” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

ULT

¹⁸ We are not watching the things that are seen, but the things that are not seen. For the things that are seen {are} temporary, but the things that are not seen {are} eternal.

2 Corinthians 5

2 Corinthians 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

New bodies in heaven

Paul knows that when he dies he will receive a much better body. Because of this, he is not afraid of being killed for preaching the gospel. So he tells others that they too can be reconciled to God. Christ will take away their sin and give them his righteousness. (See: [good news, gospel](#), [reconcile, reconciled, reconciliation](#) and [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning](#) and [righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness](#))

New creation

The old and new creation probably refers to how Paul illustrates the old and new self. These concepts are also the same as the old and new man. The term “old” probably does not refer to the sinful nature with which a person is born. It refers to the old way of living or the Christian formerly being bound to sin. The “new creation” is the new nature or new life that God gives a person after they come to believe in Christ. (See: [faith](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Home

The Christian’s home is no longer in the world. A Christian’s real home is in heaven. By using this metaphor, Paul emphasizes that the Christian’s circumstances in this world are temporary. It gives hope to those who are suffering. (See: [heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly](#) and [Metaphor](#) and [hope, hoped](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

“The message of reconciliation”

This refers to the gospel. Paul calls for people who are hostile to God to repent and be reconciled to him. (See: [repent, repentance](#) and [reconcile, reconciled, reconciliation](#))

2 Corinthians 5:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues by contrasting believers' earthly bodies to the heavenly ones God will give.

if our earthly dwelling—this tent—would be destroyed, we have a building from God (ULT)

ULT

¹ For we know that if our earthly dwelling—this tent—would be destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in the heavens, not made by human hands.

Here a temporary **earthly dwelling** is a metaphor for a person's physical body. Here a permanent "building from God" is a metaphor for the new body that God will give believers after they die. (See: [Metaphor](#))

if our earthly dwelling—this tent—would be destroyed (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "if people destroy the earthly dwelling that we live in" or "if people kill our bodies" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

an eternal house in the heavens, not made by human hands (ULT)

Here, **house** means the same thing as "building from God." Here, **hands** is a synecdoche that represents the human as a whole. Alternate translation: "It is a house in heaven, not made by humans" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

an eternal house in the heavens, not made by human hands (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "It is a house in heaven that humans did not make" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 5:2

in this we groan (ULT)

Here, **this** means the same thing as “the earthly dwelling that we live in.” The word **groan** is a sound that a person makes when they eagerly desire to have something that is good.

ULT

² For indeed, in this we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling that {is} from heaven,

longing to be clothed with our dwelling that {is} from heaven (ULT)

The words **our dwelling that is from heaven** means the same thing as “a building from God.” Paul speaks of the new body that believers receive after they die as if it were both a building and a piece of clothing that a person can put on. (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 5:3

we have put it on (ULT)

Alternate translation: "by putting on our heavenly dwelling"

we will not be found naked (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "we will not be naked" or "God will not find us naked" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

³ and if indeed we have put it on, we will not be found naked.

2 Corinthians 5:4

we who are in this tent (ULT)

Paul speaks of the physical body as if it were a **tent**. (See: [Metaphor](#))

in this tent groan (ULT)

The word **tent** refers to “the earthly dwelling that we live in.” The word **groan** is a sound that a person makes when they eagerly desire to have something that is good. See how you translated this in [2 Corinthians 5:2](#).

ULT

⁴ For indeed, we who are in this tent groan, being burdened because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, so that the mortal may be swallowed up by life.

being burdened (ULT)

Paul refers to the difficulties that the physical body experiences as if they were heavy objects that are difficult to carry. (See: [Metaphor](#))

we do not want to be unclothed...to be clothed (ULT)

Paul speaks of the body as if it were clothing for our spirit. Here, **to be unclothed** refers to the death of the physical body; “to be clothed” refers to having the resurrection body that God will give. (See: [Metaphor](#))

to be unclothed (ULT)

Alternate translation: “to be without clothes” or “to be naked”

so that the mortal may be swallowed up by life (ULT)

Paul speaks of **life** as if it were an animal that eats **the mortal**. The physical body that will die will be replaced by a resurrection body that will live forever. (See: [Metaphor](#))

so that the mortal may be swallowed up by life (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “so that life may swallow up what is mortal” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 5:5

who gave us the Spirit {as} the down payment (ULT)

The **Spirit** is spoken of as if he were a partial **down payment** toward eternal life. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Corinthians 1:22](#). (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁵ Now the one who prepared us for this very thing {is} God, who gave us the Spirit {as} the down payment.

2 Corinthians 5:6

Connecting Statement:

Because believers will have a new body and have the Holy Spirit as a pledge, Paul reminds them to live by faith that they may please the Lord. He continues by reminding them to persuade others because: (1) Believers will appear at the judgment seat of Christ. (2) Christ who died for believers in love.

ULT

⁶ Therefore, always being confident and knowing that being at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord—

being at home in the body (ULT)

Paul speaks of the physical **body** as if it were a place where a person dwells. Alternate translation: “while we are living in this earthly body” (See: [Metaphor](#))

we are absent from the Lord (ULT)

Alternate translation: “we are not at home with the Lord” or “we are not in heaven with the Lord”

2 Corinthians 5:7

by faith...we walk...not by sight (ULT)

Here, **walk** is a metaphor for “live” or “behave.” Alternate translation: “we live according to faith, not according to what we see” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁷ for we walk by faith, not by sight.

2 Corinthians 5:8

would prefer rather to be absent from the body (ULT)

Here the word **body** refers to the physical body.

at home with the Lord (ULT)

Alternate translation: "at home with the Lord in heaven"

ULT

⁸ Now we are confident and would prefer rather to be absent from the body and at home with the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:9

whether being at home or being away (ULT)

The phrases “with the Lord” and “from the Lord” may be supplied from the previous verses. Alternate translation: “whether we are at home with the Lord or away from the Lord” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

to be pleasing to him (ULT)

Alternate translation: “to please the Lord”

ULT

⁹ And therefore we strive, whether being at home or being away, to be pleasing to him.

2 Corinthians 5:10

before the judgment seat of Christ

Alternate translation: "before Christ to be judged"

each one may receive back (ULT)

Alternate translation: "each person may receive what he deserves for"

the things {done} in the body (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "the things he has done in the physical body" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

whether for good or for bad

Alternate translation: "whether those things were good or bad"

ULT

¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one may receive back the things {done} in the body, according to what he did, whether good or evil.

2 Corinthians 5:11

knowing...the fear of the Lord (ULT)

Alternate translation: "knowing what it means to fear the Lord"

we persuade men (ULT)

This could mean: (1) **we persuade** people of the truth of the gospel.

(2) **we persuade** people that we are legitimate apostles. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

by God...we are clearly known (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "God clearly sees what kind of people we are" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

also to be clearly known in your consciences (ULT)

Alternate translation: "that you are also convinced of it"

ULT

11 Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men. But we are clearly known by God, and I hope also to be clearly known in your consciences.

2 Corinthians 5:12

so that you may have {an answer (ULT)}

Alternate translation: "so you may have something to say to"

those who boast about the face and not about the heart (ULT)

Here the word **face** refers to outward expressions of things like ability and status. The word **heart** refers to the inward character of a person. Alternate translation: "those who praise their own actions, but do not care about what they really are in their inner being" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

¹² We are not again commending ourselves to you but are giving you an opportunity to boast on our behalf, so that you may have {an answer} for those who boast about the face and not about the heart.

2 Corinthians 5:13

if...we are out of our minds...if we are in our right minds (ULT)

Paul is speaking about the way others think of him and his coworkers. Alternate translation: "if people think we are crazy ... if people think we are sane" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

¹³ For if we are out of our minds, {it is} for God; if we are in our right minds, {it is} for you.

2 Corinthians 5:14

For the love of Christ (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) our **love** for **Christ**. (2) Christ's **love** for us.

died for all (ULT)

Alternate translation: "died for all people"

ULT

14 For the love of Christ compels us, having concluded this: that one died for all; therefore, all died.

2 Corinthians 5:15

And...for...for the one who died...them...was raised (ULT)

Alternate translation: “for him who for their sake died and whom God caused to live again” or “for Christ, who died for their sake and whom God raised”

ULT

¹⁵ And he died for all so that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for the one who died for them and was raised.

And...for...for the one who died...them...was raised (ULT)

Here, **for the one** could refer: (1) only to **who died**. (2) to both **who died** and **was raised**.

2 Corinthians 5:16

Connecting Statement:

Because of Christ's love and death, we are not to judge by human standards. We are appointed to teach others how to be united with and have peace with God through Christ's death and receive God's righteousness through Christ.

Therefore (ULT)

Here, **Therefore** refers to what Paul has just said about living for Christ instead of living for self.

ULT

16 Therefore, from now on we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we regarded Christ according to the flesh, yet now we no longer regard him {that way}.

2 Corinthians 5:17

he is} a new creation (ULT)

Paul speaks of the person who believes in Christ as if God had created **a new** person. Alternate translation: “he is a new person” (See: [Metaphor](#))

The old things have passed away (ULT)

Here, **The old things** refers to the things that characterized a person before they trusted in Christ.

behold (ULT)

The word **Behold** here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

ULT

17 Therefore, if anyone {is} in Christ, {he is} a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have become new.

2 Corinthians 5:18

these things...all (ULT)

Here, **all these things** refers to what Paul has just said in the previous verse about new things replacing old things.

the ministry of reconciliation (ULT)

You can translate this with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “the ministry of reconciling people to him” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

18 Now all these things {are} from God, the one who reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

2 Corinthians 5:19

in Christ was reconciling the world to himself (ULT)

Here, **the world** refers to the people in the world. Alternate translation: "in Christ, God was reconciling mankind to himself" (See: [Metonymy](#))

in...having committed...us the word of reconciliation (ULT)

God has given Paul the responsibility to spread the message that God is reconciling people to himself.

the word of reconciliation (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the message about reconciliation"

ULT

¹⁹ just as God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them and having committed to us the word of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:20

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "God has appointed us as Christ's representatives" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

for Christ...we are ambassadors (ULT)

Alternate translation: "we are those who speak for Christ"

Be reconciled to God (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "Let God reconcile you to himself" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as God is appealing through us: We plead with you on behalf of Christ: "Be reconciled to God!"

2 Corinthians 5:21

The one who did not know sin, he made sin for us

Alternate translation: "God made Christ become the sacrifice for our sin"

us...we (ULT)

Here the words **us** and **we** are inclusive and refer to all believers. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

The one who did not know sin (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Christ, the one who never sinned"

so that we might become the righteousness of God in him (ULT)

The phrase **the righteousness of God** refers to the righteousness that God requires and which comes from God.
Alternate translation: "so that we might have God's righteousness in us through Christ" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

²¹ The one who did not know sin he made sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

2 Corinthians 6

2 Corinthians 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with verses 2 and 16-18, which are words from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Servants

Paul refers to Christians as servants of God. God calls Christians to serve him in all circumstances. Paul describes some of the difficult circumstances in which he and his companions served God.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Contrasts

Paul uses four pairs of contrasts: righteousness versus lawlessness, light versus darkness, Christ versus Satan, and the temple of God versus idols. These contrasts show a difference between Christians and non-Christians. (See: [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#) and [light](#), [luminary](#), [shine](#), [brighten](#), [enlighten](#) and [darkness](#))

Light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#))

Rhetorical questions

Paul uses a series of rhetorical questions to teach his readers. All of these questions make essentially the same point: Christians should not intimately fellowship with those who live in sin. Paul repeats these questions for emphasis. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

We

Paul likely uses the pronoun “we” to represent at least Timothy and himself. It may also include other people.

2 Corinthians 6:1

General Information:

In verse 2, Paul quotes a portion from the prophet Isaiah.

Connecting Statement:

Paul summarizes how working together for God is supposed to be.

working together with him (ULT)

Paul is implying that he and Timothy are working with God. Alternate translation: “working together with God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain (ULT)

Paul pleads with the Corinthians to allow the **grace of God** to be effective in their lives. You can state this in positive terms. Alternate translation: “we beg you to make use of the grace that you have received from God” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

ULT

¹ Now working together with him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain—

2 Corinthians 6:2

for he says (ULT)

This introduces a quotation from the prophet Isaiah. Alternate translation: “for God says in scripture” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Behold (ULT)

The word **Behold** here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

ULT

² for he says, “In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I helped you.” Behold, now {is} the favorable time. Look, now {is} the day of salvation—

2 Corinthians 6:3

placing no stumbling block in anything (ULT)

Paul speaks of anything that would prevent a person from trusting in Christ as if it were a physical object over which that person trips and falls. Alternate translation: “we do not want to do anything that will prevent people from believing our message” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

³ placing no stumbling block in anything, so that {our} ministry might not be discredited,

our} ministry might not be discredited (ULT)

The word **discredited** refers to people speaking badly about Paul’s ministry, and working against the message he proclaims. You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “no one will be able to speak badly about our ministry” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 6:4

General Information:

When Paul uses **we** here, he is referring to himself and Timothy.
(See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

we commend ourselves in everything as God's servants (ULT)

Alternate translation: "we prove that we are God's servants by all that we do"

God's servants; in much endurance, affliction, distress, hardship

Paul mentions various difficult situations in which they proved that they are **God's servants**.

ULT

⁴ instead, we commend ourselves in everything as God's servants; in great endurance, in affliction, in distress, in hardship,

2 Corinthians 6:5

**beatings, imprisonments, riots, in hard work,
in sleepless nights, in hunger**

Paul continues to mention various difficult situations in which they proved that they are God's servants.

ULT

⁵ in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots,
in hard work, in sleeplessness, in
hunger,

2 Corinthians 6:6

in purity...in...genuine love (ULT)

Paul lists several moral virtues that they maintained in difficult situations that proved that they are God's servants.

ULT

⁶ in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in genuine love,

2 Corinthians 6:7

in the word of truth, in the power of God

Their dedication to preach the gospel **in the power of God** proves that they are God's servants.

in the word of truth (ULT)

Alternate translation: "by speaking God's message about truth" or "by speaking God's true message"

in...the power of God (ULT)

Alternate translation: "by showing God's power to people"

through the weapons of righteousness {for} the right hand and the left (ULT)

Paul speaks of their **righteousness** as if it is **weapons** that they use to fight spiritual battles. (See: [Metaphor](#))

the weapons of righteousness (ULT)

Alternate translation: "righteousness as our armor" or "righteousness as our weapons"

the...for...right hand and the left (ULT)

This could mean: (1) there is a weapon in one hand and a shield in the other. (2) they are completely equipped for battle, able to fend off attacks from any direction.

ULT

⁷ in the word of truth, in the power of God; through the weapons of righteousness {for} the right hand and the left,

2 Corinthians 6:8

General Information:

Paul lists several extremes of how people think about him and his ministry. (See: [Merism](#))

as imposters (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “people accuse us of being deceitful” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁸ through honor and dishonor, through bad report and good report; as imposters, yet true;

2 Corinthians 6:9

as being unknown, yet well known (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “as if people did not know us and yet people still know us well” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁹ as being unknown, yet well known; as dying yet—behold!—living; as being disciplined, yet not being killed;

as being disciplined, yet not being killed (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “we work as if people are punishing us for our actions but not as if they have condemned us to death” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 6:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹⁰ as being sorrowful, but always rejoicing; as poor, but making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.

2 Corinthians 6:11

Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages the believers at Corinth to be separated from idols and live clean lives for God.

Our mouth has been opened to you (ULT)

Alternate translation: "We have spoken honestly to you"

our heart has been opened wide (ULT)

Paul speaks of his great affection for the Corinthians as having a **heart** that is open. Alternate translation: "we love you very much" (See: [Metaphor](#))

our heart has been opened wide (ULT)

Here, **heart** is a metonym for a person's emotions. (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

11 Our mouth has been opened to you, Corinthians; our heart has been opened wide.

2 Corinthians 6:12

You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your inner parts (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Corinthians lack of love for him as if their **inward parts** were squeezed into a tight space. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹² You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your inner parts;

You are not restrained by us (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “We have not restrained you” or “We have not given you any reason to stop loving us” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

but you are restrained in your inner parts (ULT)

Here, **inward parts** is a metonym for a person’s emotions. (See: [Metonymy](#))

but you are restrained in your inner parts (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “but your own hearts are restraining you” or “but you have stopped loving us for your own reasons” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

2 Corinthians 6:13

open yourselves wide also (ULT)

Paul urges the Corinthians to love him as he has loved them.
Alternate translation: “love us back” or “love us much as we have loved you” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹³ and in similar exchange—I speak as to children—open yourselves wide also.

2 Corinthians 6:14

General Information:

In verse 16, Paul paraphrases portions from several Old Testament prophets: Moses, Zechariah, Amos, and possibly others.

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers (ULT)

You can state this in positive terms. Alternate translation: “Only be tied together with believers” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

Do not be yoked together (ULT)

Paul speaks of working together toward a common purpose as if it were two animals tied together to pull a plow or cart. Alternate translation: “Do not team up” or “Do not have a close relationship” (See: [Metaphor](#))

for what partnership {does} righteousness and lawlessness {have} (ULT)

This is a rhetorical question that anticipates a negative answer. Alternate translation: “For righteousness can have no association with lawlessness.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Or what fellowship {does} light {have} with darkness (ULT)

Paul asks this question to emphasize that **light** and **darkness** cannot coexist since light dispels darkness. Alternate translation: “And light can have no fellowship with darkness!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Or what fellowship {does} light {have} with darkness (ULT)

The words **light** and **darkness** refer to the moral and spiritual qualities of believers and unbelievers. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers, for what partnership {does} righteousness and lawlessness {have}? Or what fellowship {does} light {have} with darkness?

2 Corinthians 6:15

And what agreement {does} Christ {have} with Beliar (ULT)

This is a rhetorical question that anticipates a negative answer.
Alternate translation: "There is no agreement between Christ and Beliar!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

¹⁵ And what agreement {does} Christ {have} with Beliar? Or what share {does} a believer {have} with an unbeliever?

Beliar (ULT)

Beliar is another name for the devil. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Or what share {does} a believer {have} with an unbeliever (ULT)

This is a rhetorical question that anticipates a negative answer. Alternate translation: "And a believer shares nothing in common with an unbeliever!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

2 Corinthians 6:16

And what agreement {does} the temple of God {have} with idols (ULT)

This is a rhetorical question that anticipates a negative answer. Alternate translation: “And there is no agreement between the temple of God and idols!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

¹⁶ And what agreement {does} the temple of God {have} with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, just as God said: “I will dwell among them, and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

For we are the temple of the living God (ULT)

Here, **we** refers not only to Paul and his associates, but includes all Christians. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

For we are the temple of the living God (ULT)

Paul speaks of Christians as forming a **temple** for **God** to dwell in. Alternate translation: “we are like the temple where the living God dwells” (See: [Metaphor](#))

I will dwell among them, and walk among them (ULT)

This is an Old Testament quotation that speaks of God being with the people in two different ways that mean the same thing. (See: [Parallelism](#))

I will dwell among them, and walk among them (ULT)

The words **dwell among** speak of living where others live, while the words **walk among** speak of being with them as they go about their lives. Alternate translation: “I will be with them and help them” (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 6:17

General Information:

Paul quotes portions from the Old Testament prophets, Isaiah and Ezekiel.

be separate (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “set yourselves apart” or “allow me to set you apart” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

touch no unclean thing (ULT)

You can state this in positive terms. Alternate translation: “touch only things that are clean” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

ULT

17 Therefore, “Come out from among them, and be separate,” says the Lord, “and touch no unclean thing,” “and I will receive you.”

2 Corinthians 6:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

18 “And I will be to you as a Father, and you will be to me as sons and daughters,” says the Lord Almighty.

2 Corinthians 7

2 Corinthians 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In verses 2-4, Paul finishes his defense. He then writes about Titus' return and the comfort it brought.

Special concepts in this chapter

Clean and unclean

Christians are "clean" in the sense that God has cleansed them from sin. They do not need to be concerned with being clean according to the law of Moses. Ungodly living can still make a Christian unclean. (See: [clean](#), [wash](#) and [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#))

Sadness and sorrow

The words "sad" and "sorrow" in this chapter indicate that the Corinthians were upset to the point of repenting. (See: [repent](#), [repentance](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

We

Paul likely uses the pronoun "we" to represent at least Timothy and himself. It may also include other people.

Original situation

This chapter discusses in detail a previous situation. We can figure out some aspects of this situation from the information in this chapter. But it is best not to include this type of implicit information in a translation. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

2 Corinthians 7:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind them to be separated from sin and to seek holiness purposefully.

beloved (ULT)

Alternate translation: “you whom I love” or “dear friends”

let us cleanse ourselves (ULT)

Here Paul is saying to stay away from any form of sin that would affect one’s relationship with God.

perfecting holiness (ULT)

Alternate translation: “striving to be holy”

in the fear of God (ULT)

Alternate translation: “out of deep respect for God”

ULT

¹ Therefore, beloved, having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Corinthians 7:2

Connecting Statement:

Having already warned the people of Corinth about other leaders who were striving to get these Corinthian believers to follow them, Paul reminds the people of the way he feels about them.

ULT

² Make room for us! We have wronged no one; we have harmed no one; we have exploited no one.

Make room for us (ULT)

This refers back to what Paul said starting in [2 Corinthians 6:11](#) about them opening their hearts to him. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Make room for us (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Corinthians loving him as if they were opening their hearts to him. Alternate translation: “Make room for us in your hearts” or “Love us and accept us” (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 7:3

I do not speak for {your} condemnation (ULT)

Here, Paul refers back to what he has just said about not having wronged anyone. Alternate translation: "I do not say this to accuse you of having done wrong."

you are in our hearts (ULT)

Paul speaks of his and his associates' great love for the Corinthians as if they held them in their hearts. Alternate translation: "you are very dear to us" (See: [Metaphor](#))

to die together and to live together (ULT)

This means that Paul and his associates will continue to love the Corinthians no matter what happens. Alternate translation: "whether we live or whether we die" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

³ I do not speak for {your} condemnation; for I have already said that you are in our hearts to die together and to live together.

2 Corinthians 7:4

I am filled with encouragement (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "You fill me with comfort" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

I overflow with joy (ULT)

Paul speaks of **joy** as if it is a liquid that fills him until he overflows. Alternate translation: "I am extremely joyful" (See: [Metaphor](#))

with encouragement...in all our...afflictions (ULT)

Alternate translation: "despite all our hardships"

ULT

⁴ Great {is} my confidence in you; great {is} my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with encouragement. I overflow with joy in all our afflictions.

2 Corinthians 7:5

when we had come to Macedonia (ULT)

Here the word **we** refers to Paul and Timothy but not to the Corinthians or Titus. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

our flesh had no rest (ULT)

Here, **our flesh** refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: “we had no rest” or “we were very tired” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

we were troubled in every way (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “we experienced every kind of trouble” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

conflicts without, fears within (ULT)

Here, **without** could mean: (1) “outside of our bodies.” (2) “outside of the church.” The word **within** refers to their inward emotions. Alternate translation: “by conflicts with other people and by fears within ourselves” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁵ For even when we had come to Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled in every way— conflicts without, fears within.

2 Corinthians 7:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁶ But God, the one who comforts the humble, comforted us by the arrival of Titus,

2 Corinthians 7:7

by the comfort with which he had been comforted by you (ULT)

Paul received **comfort** from knowing that the Corinthians had **comforted** Titus. Alternate translation: “by learning about the comfort that Titus had received from you” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁷ and not only by his arrival, but also by the comfort with which he had been comforted by you, reporting to us your longing, your mourning, {and} your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.

2 Corinthians 7:8

General Information:

This refers to Paul's previous letter to these Corinthian believers where he rebuked them for their acceptance of a believer's sexual immorality with his father's wife.

Connecting Statement:

Paul praises them for their godly sorrow, their zeal to do right, and the joy that it brought him and Titus.

For...seeing...that letter (ULT)

Alternate translation: "when I learned that my letter"

ULT

⁸ For even if I grieved you in the letter, I do not regret it (even though I did regret it, seeing that that letter grieved you, if only for an hour).

2 Corinthians 7:9

not that you were grieved (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “not because what I said in my letter distressed you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

you would not suffer loss in anything through us (ULT)

This means that although the letter caused them sorrow, they eventually benefited from the letter because it led them to repentance. Alternate translation: “so that we did not harm you in any way” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁹ Now I rejoice, not that you were grieved, but that you were grieved to the point of repentance. For you were grieved with respect to God, so that you would not suffer loss in anything through us.

2 Corinthians 7:10

For the sorrow with respect to God... repentance towards salvation...works (ULT)

The word **repentance** may be repeated to clarify its relationship to what precedes it and what follows it. Alternate translation: "For godly sorrow produces repentance, and repentance leads to salvation" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

ULT

¹⁰ For the sorrow with respect to God works repentance towards salvation without regret. But the sorrow of the world produces death.

without regret (ULT)

This could mean: (1) Paul has no **regret** that he caused them sorrow because that sorrow led to their repentance and salvation. (2) the Corinthians will not **regret** experiencing sorrow because it led to their repentance and salvation.

But the sorrow of the world produces death (ULT)

This kind of **sorrow** leads to **death** instead of salvation because it does not produce repentance. Alternate translation: "Worldly sorrow, however, leads to spiritual death" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

2 Corinthians 7:11

what eagerness to defend yourselves (ULT)

Here the word **what** makes this statement an exclamation. Alternate translation: "your determination to prove you were innocent was very great!" (See: [Exclamations](#))

and} what avenging of wrong (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "that someone should carry out justice" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

11 For behold how much earnestness this very same thing has produced in you, this sorrow with respect to God: what eagerness to defend yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, {and} what avenging of wrong! In everything you have proved yourselves to be pure in this matter.

2 Corinthians 7:12

your earnestness which {is} on our behalf might be revealed to you before God (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “so that you would know that your good will toward us is sincere” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the one...before...God (ULT)

Here, **before God** refers to God’s presence. See how you translated this in [2 Corinthians 4:2](#).

ULT

¹² So even though I wrote to you, {it was} not for the sake of the one who did wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but so that your earnestness which {is} on our behalf might be revealed to you before God.

2 Corinthians 7:13

For this reason we are encouraged (ULT)

Here the phrase **this reason** refers to the way the Corinthians responded to Paul's previous letter, as he described in the previous verse. You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "This is what encourages us" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

his spirit had been refreshed by all of you (ULT)

Here the word **spirit** refers to a person's temperament and disposition. You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "all of you refreshed his spirit" or "all of you made him stop worrying" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

13 For this reason we are encouraged. Now in addition to our own comfort, we rejoiced even more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit had been refreshed by all of you.

2 Corinthians 7:14

For if I had boasted anything to him about you (ULT)

Alternate translation: "For although I boasted to him about you"

I was not ashamed (ULT)

Alternate translation: "you did not disappoint me"

our boasting about you to Titus proved to be true

Alternate translation: "you proved to Titus that our boasting about you was true"

ULT

¹⁴ For if I had boasted anything to him about you, I was not ashamed, but as we have spoken everything to you in truth, in the same way also our boasting became the truth to Titus.

2 Corinthians 7:15

the obedience of all of you (ULT)

You can state this noun **obedience** with a verb, “obey.” Alternate translation: “how all of you obeyed” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

you received him with fear and trembling (ULT)

Here, **fear** and **trembling** share similar meanings and emphasize the intensity of fear. Alternate translation: “you welcomed him with great reverence” (See: [Doublet](#))

And...with fear...trembling (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) great reverence for God. (2) great reverence for Titus.

ULT

15 And his affections towards you are even greater, remembering the obedience of all of you, how you received him with fear and trembling.

2 Corinthians 7:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

16 I rejoice that in everything I am
confident in you.

2 Corinthians 8

2 Corinthians 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapters 8 and 9 begin a new section. Paul writes about how churches in Greece helped needy believers in Jerusalem.

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULT does this with the quoted words of verse 15.

Special concepts in this chapter

Gift to the church in Jerusalem

The church in Corinth started preparing to give money to the poor believers in Jerusalem. The churches in Macedonia also had given generously. Paul sends Titus and two other believers to Corinth to encourage the Corinthians to give generously. Paul and the others will carry the money to Jerusalem. They want people to know it is being done honestly.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

We

Paul likely uses the pronoun “we” to represent at least Timothy and himself. It may also include other people.

Paradox

A “paradox” is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. These words in verse 2 are a paradox: “the abundance of their joy and the extremity of their poverty have produced great riches of generosity.” In verse 3 Paul explains how their poverty produced riches. Paul also uses riches and poverty in other paradoxes. ([2 Corinthians 8:2](#))

2 Corinthians 8:1

Connecting Statement:

Having explained his changed plans and his ministry direction, Paul talks about giving.

the grace of God that has been given in the churches of Macedonia (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “the grace that God has given to the churches of Macedonia” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

¹ Now we make known to you, brothers, the grace of God that has been given in the churches of Macedonia,

2 Corinthians 8:2

the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty overflowed into the riches of their generosity (ULT)

Paul speaks of **joy** and **poverty** as if they were living things that can produce generosity. Alternate translation: “because of the people’s great joy and extreme poverty, they have become very generous” (See: [Personification](#))

ULT

² that during a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty overflowed into the riches of their generosity.

the abundance of their joy (ULT)

Paul speaks of **joy** as if it were a physical object that could increase in size or quantity. (See: [Metaphor](#))

the...their...deep...poverty...of their joy...the riches...of...generosity (ULT)

Though the churches of Macedonia have suffered testings of affliction and **poverty**, by God’s grace, they have been able to collect money for the believers in Jerusalem.

of their joy...the riches...of...generosity (ULT)

“a very great generosity.” The word **riches** emphasizes the greatness of their generosity.

2 Corinthians 8:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³ For I testify that {they gave} according to {their} ability, and beyond {their} ability, voluntarily,

2 Corinthians 8:4

of this ministry that {is} to the saints (ULT)

Paul is referring to providing money to the believers in Jerusalem.
Alternate translation: "this ministry of providing for the believers in Jerusalem" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁴ with much urging, they pleaded with us for the blessing and the fellowship of this ministry that {is} to the saints.

2 Corinthians 8:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁵ And not as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and then to us, by the will of God.

2 Corinthians 8:6

just as he had begun (ULT)

Paul is referring to the collection of money from the Corinthians for the believers in Jerusalem.

he would also complete among you this act of grace as well (ULT)

Titus was to help the Corinthians to complete the collection of money. Alternate translation: “he should encourage you to finish collecting and giving your generous gift” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁶ So we urged Titus that, just as he had begun, in the same way he would also complete among you this act of grace as well.

2 Corinthians 8:7

you should abound in this act of grace (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Corinthian believers as if they should produce physical goods. Alternate translation: “make sure you do well in giving for the believers in Jerusalem” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁷ But even as you abound in everything—in faith and in speech and in knowledge and in all diligence and in our love from you, ^[1] so also you should abound in this act of grace.

2 Corinthians 8:8

through the diligence of others...testing the sincerity of your love (ULT)

Paul is encouraging the Corinthians to give generously by comparing them with the generosity of the Macedonian churches. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁸ I say this not according to a command but also testing the sincerity of your love through the diligence of others.

2 Corinthians 8:9

the grace of our Lord (ULT)

In this context, the word **grace** emphasizes the generosity with which Jesus had blessed the Corinthians.

he became poor for your sake, {though} being rich (ULT)

Paul speaks of Jesus before his incarnation as **being rich**, and of his becoming human as becoming **poor**. (See: [Metaphor](#))

through} his poverty you might become rich (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Corinthians becoming spiritually {rich} as a result of Jesus becoming human. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he became poor for your sake, {though} being rich, so that {through} his poverty you might become rich.

2 Corinthians 8:10

in this (ULT)

Here the word **this** refers to Corinthians collecting money to give to the believers in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: “with regard to the collection” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

10 And I give {my} opinion in this, for this is profitable for you who not only began to do this a year ago, but also desired to do it.

2 Corinthians 8:11

just as {there was} the readiness of the desire (ULT)

You can state this with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "just as you were eager and desired to do it" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

also...doing it...completion (ULT)

Alternate translation: "complete it" or "finish it"

ULT

¹¹ But now also finish doing it, so that just as {there was} the readiness of the desire, so also there may be the completion, from that which you have.

2 Corinthians 8:12

according to whatever one might have (ULT)

Alternate translation: "if it is proportional to what the person giving has"

ULT

¹² For if the readiness is present, {it is} acceptable according to whatever one might have, not according to what he does not have.

2 Corinthians 8:13

For this

This verse refers back to collecting money for the believers in Jerusalem.

for the ease of others {and} your affliction (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “that you may relieve others and burden yourselves” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

for equality (ULT)

Alternate translation: “so that there would be equality”

ULT

¹³ For {this is} not for the ease of others {and} your affliction, but for equality.

2 Corinthians 8:14

This is also so that their abundance may supply your need

Since the Corinthians are acting in the present time, it is implied that the believers in Jerusalem will also help them at some time in the future. Alternate translation: "this is also so that in the future their abundance may supply your need"

ULT

¹⁴ At the present time, your abundance {is} for their need, so that also their abundance may be for your need, so that there may be equality,

2 Corinthians 8:15

just as it is written (ULT)

Here Paul quotes from Exodus. You can state this in active form.
Alternate translation: "as Moses wrote" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

did not have too little (ULT)

You can state this positively. Alternate translation: "had all he needed" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

ULT

¹⁵ just as it is written: "The one with much did not have too much, and the one with little did not have too little."

2 Corinthians 8:16

the one who put the same earnestness on your behalf into the heart of Titus (ULT)

Here, **heart** refers to the emotions. This means that God caused Titus to love them. Alternate translation: “the one who made Titus care for you as much as I do” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

¹⁶ But thanks {be} to God, the one who put the same earnestness on your behalf into the heart of Titus.

the same earnestness (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the same enthusiasm” or “same deep concern”

2 Corinthians 8:17

For he not only accepted {our} appeal (ULT)

Paul is referring to his asking Titus to return to Corinth and complete the collection. Alternate translation: "For he not only agreed to our request that he help you with the collection" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

17 For he not only accepted {our} appeal, but being very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord.

2 Corinthians 8:18

with him (ULT)

Alternate translation: "with Titus"

the brother who {is} praised...among all of the churches (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "the brother whom believers among all of the churches praise" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

18 Now we have sent with him the brother who {is} praised among all of the churches in the gospel.

2 Corinthians 8:19

not only {this} (ULT)

Alternate translation: "not only do believers among all of the churches praise him"

he also was chosen by the churches (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "the churches also selected him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

¹⁹ And not only {this}, but he also was chosen by the churches as our traveling companion, along with this act of grace which is being administered by us to the glory of the Lord, and {to show} our readiness.

along with this act of grace which is being administered by us

"to carry out this act of generosity." This refers to taking the offering to Jerusalem.

our...readiness (ULT)

Alternate translation: "our eagerness to help"

2 Corinthians 8:20

concerning the administration by us of this generous gift (ULT)

This refers to taking the offering to Jerusalem. The abstract noun **administration** can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "concerning the way we are handling this generous gift" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

²⁰ We took this precaution, {so that} no one might blame us concerning the administration by us of this generous gift.

2 Corinthians 8:21

For we considered beforehand {what is} good (ULT)

Alternate translation: "We are careful to handle this gift in an honorable way"

before the Lord...before...men (ULT)

Alternate translation: "in the Lord's opinion ... in people's opinion"

ULT

²¹ For we considered beforehand {what is} good, not only before the Lord, but also before men.

2 Corinthians 8:22

with them (ULT)

The word **them** refers to Titus and the previously mentioned brother.

ULT

²² Now we sent our brother with them, whom we have tested in many ways {and} often being eager. But now he is even more eager because of {his} great confidence that {is} in you.

2 Corinthians 8:23

he is} my partner and fellow worker for you (ULT)

Alternate translation: "he is my partner who works with me to help you"

our brothers (ULT)

This refers to the two other men who will accompany Titus.

they are} messengers of the churches (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "the churches have sent them" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

a glory of Christ (ULT)

You can state this with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "they will cause people to honor Christ" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

²³ As for Titus, {he is} my partner and fellow worker for you. As {for} our brothers, {they are} messengers of the churches, a glory of Christ.

2 Corinthians 8:24

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁴ Therefore, prove to them to the faces
of the churches the proof of your love
and of our boasting about you.

2 Corinthians 9

2 Corinthians 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with verse 9, which is quoted from the Old Testament.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Paul uses three agricultural metaphors. He uses them to teach about giving to needy believers. The metaphors help Paul explain that God will reward those who give generously. Paul does not say how or when God will reward them. (See: [Metaphor](#) and [reward, prize, deserve](#))

2 Corinthians 9:1

General Information:

When Paul refers to Achaia, he is talking about a Roman province located in southern Greece where Corinth is located. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

¹ For concerning the ministry that {is} to the saints, it is unnecessary for me to write to you.

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues on the subject of giving. He wants to make sure that the collection of their offering for the needy believers in Jerusalem takes place before he comes so that it does not seem as though he takes advantage of them. He talks about how giving blesses the giver and glorifies God.

the ministry that {is} to the saints (ULT)

This refers to the collection of money to give to the believers in Jerusalem. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: “the ministry for the believers in Jerusalem” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

2 Corinthians 9:2

Achaia has been ready (ULT)

Here the word **Achaia** refers to the people who live in this province, and specifically to the people of the church in Corinth. Alternate translation: “the people of Achaia have been preparing” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

² For I know your readiness, of which I boasted to the Macedonians concerning you, that Achaia has been ready since last year, and your zeal has stirred up most of them.

2 Corinthians 9:3

the brothers (ULT)

This refers to Titus and the two men who accompany him.

our boasting about you may not be futile

Paul does not want others to think that the things that he had boasted about the Corinthians were false.

ULT

³ But I have sent the brothers so that our boasting which {is} about you might not be futile in this matter, so that you might be ready, as I was saying.

2 Corinthians 9:4

might find you unprepared (ULT)

Alternate translation: "find you unprepared to give"

ULT

⁴ Otherwise, if Macedonians might come with me and might find you unprepared, we would be ashamed—in order not to speak of you—in this confidence.

2 Corinthians 9:5

the brothers that they would go to you beforehand (ULT)

From Paul's perspective, the brothers are going. Alternate translation: "the brothers to go to you beforehand" (See: [Go and Come](#))

not as something forced (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "not as something that we forced you to give" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁵ So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers that they would go to you beforehand and prepare in advance this promised gift of yours, to be ready in this way as a blessing and not as something forced.

2 Corinthians 9:6

the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows with blessings will also reap with blessings (ULT)

Paul uses the image of a farmer sowing seeds to describe the results of giving. As a farmer's harvest is based on how much he **sows**, so will God's **blessings** be little or much based on how generously the Corinthians give. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁶ Now this {I say}: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows with blessings will also reap with blessings.

2 Corinthians 9:7

just as he has decided in {his} heart (ULT)

Here, **heart** refers to the thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "just as he has determined" (See: [Metonymy](#))

not from sorrow or from compulsion (ULT)

You can translate this phrase with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "not because he feels guilty or because someone is compelling him" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

for God loves a cheerful giver (ULT)

God wants people to give gladly to help provide for fellow believers.

ULT

⁷ {Let} each one {give} just as he has decided in {his} heart, not from sorrow or from compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:8

And God is able to make all grace abound to you (ULT)

Here, **grace** is spoken of as if it were a physical object of which a person can have more than he can use. As a person gives financially to other believers, **God** also gives to the giver everything he needs. Alternate translation: "God is able to give you more than you need" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things, always, having all you need, you may abound in every good work.

grace (ULT)

Here, **grace** refers to the physical things a Christian needs, not to the need for God to save him from his sins.

to...you may abound...every good work (ULT)

Alternate translation: "so that you may be able to do more and more good deeds"

2 Corinthians 9:9

Just as it is written (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "This is just as the writer wrote" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁹ Just as it is written: "He scattered widely, he gave to the poor, his righteousness endures to eternity."

2 Corinthians 9:10

the one...who supplies (ULT)

Alternate translation: "God who supplies"

bread for food (ULT)

Here the word **bread** refers to **food** in general. Alternate translation: "food to eat" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

¹⁰ Now the one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and will increase the fruits of your righteousness,

will supply and multiply your seed for sowing (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Corinthians' possessions as if they are seeds and of giving to others as if they were **sowing** seeds. Alternate translation: "will also supply and multiply your possessions so that you can sow them by giving them to others" (See: [Metaphor](#))

will increase the fruits of your righteousness (ULT)

Paul compares the benefits that the Corinthians will receive from their generosity to that of a harvest. Alternate translation: "God will bless you even more for your righteousness" (See: [Metaphor](#))

your...the fruits of...righteousness (ULT)

Here, **righteousness** refers to the righteous actions of the Corinthians in giving their resources to the believers in Jerusalem.

2 Corinthians 9:11

enriching you (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "God will enrich you" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

which produces thanksgiving to God through us (ULT)

The word **which** refers to the Corinthian's generosity. Alternate translation: "Because of your generosity, those who receive the gifts we bring them will thank God" or "and when we give your gifts to those who need them, they will give thanks to God" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

11 in every way enriching you for all generosity, which produces thanksgiving to God through us.

2 Corinthians 9:12

For the ministry of this service (ULT)

Here, **service** refers to Paul and his companions bringing the contribution to the believers in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: “For our carrying out this service for the believers in Jerusalem” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

but is also overflowing with many thanksgivings to God (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Corinthian believers’ act of service as if it were a liquid of which there is more than a container can hold. Alternate translation: “It also causes many deeds for which people will thank God” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

12 For the ministry of this service not only is fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing with many thanksgivings to God.

2 Corinthians 9:13

Because of the proof of this ministry (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "Because this service has tested and proven you" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

they glorify God for your obedience ... the generosity of your sharing with them and with everyone

Paul says that the Corinthians will glorify God both by being faithful to Jesus and by giving generously to other believers who have need.

ULT

13 Because of the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for {your} obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ and the generosity of {your} fellowship with them and with everyone.

2 Corinthians 9:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

14 And their prayers {are} for you,
longing for you because of the
surpassing grace of God upon you.

2 Corinthians 9:15

for his indescribable gift (ULT)

This **gift** could refer to: (1) “the very great grace” that God has given to the Corinthians, which has led them to be so generous. (2) Jesus Christ, whom God gave to all believers.

ULT

15 Thanks {be} to God for his indescribable gift!

2 Corinthians 10

2 Corinthians 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULT does this with the quoted words of verse 17.

In this chapter, Paul returns to defending his authority. He also compares the way he speaks and the way he writes.

Special concepts in this chapter

Boasting

“Boasting” is often thought of as bragging, which is not good. But in this letter “boasting” means confidently exulting or rejoicing.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

In verses 3-6, Paul uses many metaphors from war. He probably uses them as part of a larger metaphor about Christians being spiritually at war. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Flesh

“Flesh” is possibly a metaphor for a person’s sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that our physical bodies are sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that as long as Christians are alive (“in the flesh”), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. (See: [flesh](#))

2 Corinthians 10:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul shifts the subject from giving to affirming his authority to teach as he does.

by the meekness and gentleness of Christ (ULT)

The word **meekness** and **gentleness** are abstract nouns, and can be expressed in another way. Alternate translation: "I am humble and gentle as I do so, because Christ has made me that way" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

¹ Now I, Paul, myself who {am} meek according to face among you, but being absent, am bold toward you, appeal to you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:2

of those who regard us (ULT)

Alternate translation: "who think of us"

as walking according to the flesh (ULT)

Here, **flesh** is a metonym for sinful human nature. Alternate translation: "are acting from human motives" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

² Now I beg of you that, being present, I will not need to be bold with the confidence with which I plan to be courageous against some of those who regard us as walking according to the flesh.

2 Corinthians 10:3

in the flesh...walking (ULT)

Here, **walking** is a metaphor for “living.” Alternate translation: “we live our lives in the flesh” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

³ For walking in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh.

in the flesh...walking (ULT)

Here, **flesh** is a metonym for physical life. Alternate translation: “we live our lives in physical bodies” (See: [Metonymy](#))

not...we do...wage war (ULT)

Paul speaks of his trying to persuade the Corinthians to believe him and not the false teachers as if he were fighting a physical **war**. These words should be translated literally. (See: [Metaphor](#))

we do not wage war according to the flesh (ULT)

The word **flesh** is: (1) a metonym for physical life. Alternate translation: “fight against our enemies using physical weapons” (2) a metonym for sinful human nature. Alternate translation: “wage war in sinful ways” (See: [Metonymy](#))

2 Corinthians 10:4

the...weapons of our warfare {are} not fleshly, but {are} divinely powerful for the destruction of strongholds {and} pulling down arguments (ULT)

Paul speaks of godly wisdom showing human wisdom to be false as if it were a weapon with which he was destroying an enemy stronghold. Alternate translation: “the weapons we fight with ... show people that what our enemies say is completely wrong” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁴ For the weapons of our warfare {are} not fleshly, but {are} divinely powerful for the destruction of strongholds {and} pulling down arguments

are} not fleshly (ULT)

The word **fleshly** is: (1) a metonym for merely physical. Alternate translation: “are not physical” (2) a metonym for sinful human nature. Alternate translation: “are not sinful” or “do not enable us to do wrong” (See: [Metonymy](#))

2 Corinthians 10:5

every high thing that rises up (ULT)

Paul is still speaking with the metaphor of a war, as if “the knowledge of God” were an army and **every high thing** were a wall that people had made to keep the army out. Alternate translation: “every false argument that proud people think of to protect themselves”

ULT

⁵ and every high thing that rises up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive into obedience of Christ.

every high thing (ULT)

Alternate translation: “everything that proud people do”

that rises up against the knowledge of God (ULT)

Paul speaks of arguments as if they were a wall standing high against an army. The phrase **rises up** mean “stands tall,” not that the “high thing” is floating up into the air. Alternate translation: “people use so they will not have to know who God is” (See: [Metaphor](#))

we take every thought captive into obedience of Christ (ULT)

Paul speaks of people’s thoughts as if they were enemy soldiers whom he captures in battle. Alternate translation: “we show how all the false ideas those people have are wrong and teach the people to obey Christ” (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 10:6

to avenge every act of disobedience (ULT)

Here, **act of disobedience** is a metonym for the people who commit those acts. Alternate translation: “punish every one of you who disobey us” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁶ And we have readiness to avenge every act of disobedience, when your obedience would be complete.

2 Corinthians 10:7

You are looking at the things according to face (ULT)

This could be: (1) a command. (2) a statement. Alternate translation: "You are looking only at what you can see with your eyes." Some think this is a rhetorical question that may also be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Are you looking at what is clearly in front of you?" or "You seem unable to see what is clearly in front of you." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁷ You are looking at the things according to face. If anyone is convinced that he is Christ's, let him consider this again within himself: that just as he {is} Christ's, so also {are} we.

let him consider this again within himself (ULT)

Alternate translation: "he needs to remember"

Christ's...just as he...so also {are} we (ULT)

Alternate translation: "we belong to Christ just as much as he does"

2 Corinthians 10:8

to building up and not for your destruction (ULT)

Paul speaks of helping the Corinthians to know Christ better as if he were constructing a building. Alternate translation: “to help you become better followers of Christ and not to discourage you so you stop following him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁸ For even if I might boast somewhat further about our authority, which the Lord gave us to building up and not for your destruction, I will not be ashamed,

2 Corinthians 10:9

I would terrify you (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I am trying to frighten you"

ULT

⁹ so it would not appear as if I would terrify you through {my} letters.

2 Corinthians 10:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹⁰ Indeed, someone says, “{His} letters {are} weighty and forceful, but {his} bodily presence {is} weak, and {his} speech is worthless.”

2 Corinthians 10:11

Let such a one consider this (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I want such people to be aware"

what we are in the words of our letters when we are absent is what we will be in our actions when we are there

Alternate translation: "we will do the same things when we are there with you that we have written about in our letters while we have been away from you"

we are (ULT)

Both instances of **we** refer to Paul's ministry team but not to the Corinthians. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

ULT

11 Let such a one consider this, that what we are in word through letters being absent, that {we are} also in deed being present.

2 Corinthians 10:12

to group or compare ourselves with some (ULT)

Alternate translation: “to say we are as good as some”

these—who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves (ULT)

Both of these clauses mean essentially the same thing. (See: [Parallelism](#))

these—who measure themselves by themselves (ULT)

Paul is speaking of goodness as though it were something whose length people could **measure**. Alternate translation: “they look at each other and try to see who is better” (See: [Metaphor](#))

not...do...understand (ULT)

Alternate translation: “show everyone that they do not know anything”

ULT

¹² For we do not dare to group or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves. But these—who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves—do not understand.

2 Corinthians 10:13

General Information:

Paul speaks of the authority he has as if it were a land over which he rules, those things over which he has authority as being within the borders or “limits” of his land, and those things not under his authority as being beyond the “limits.” (See: [Metaphor](#))

will not boast about the things beyond measure (ULT)

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: “will not boast about things over which we have no authority” or “will boast only about things over which we have authority” (See: [Idiom](#))

according to the measure of the area that God has assigned to us (ULT)

Alternate translation: “about things under the authority that God has given us to do”

a measure that reached even as far as you (ULT)

Paul speaks of the authority he has as if it were a land over which he rules. Alternate translation: “and you are within the border of our authority” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

13 We, however, will not boast about the things beyond measure, but according to the measure of the area that God has assigned to us, a measure that reached even as far as you.

2 Corinthians 10:14

not...we are...overextending ourselves (ULT)

Alternate translation: "we did not go beyond our borders"

ULT

14 For we are not overextending ourselves, as though we did not reach to you, for we came even as far as to you with the gospel of Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:15

Neither do we boast beyond limits (ULT)

This is an idiom. See how similar words were translated in [2 Corinthians 10:13](#). Alternate translation: "And we have not boasted about things over which we have no authority" or "We have not boasted only about things over which we have authority" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

15 Neither do we boast beyond limits in the labors of others, but having hope that as your faith continues to grow, our area among you will greatly expand

2 Corinthians 10:16

another's area (ULT)

Alternate translation: "an area that God has assigned to someone else"

ULT

16 to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you—not to boast about the things accomplished in another's area.

2 Corinthians 10:17

let...boast in the Lord (ULT)

Alternate translation: "let ... boast about what the Lord has done"

ULT

17 "But let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

2 Corinthians 10:18

who commends himself (ULT)

This means that he provides enough evidence for each person who hears him to decide whether he is right or wrong. See how “recommend ourselves” is translated in [2 Corinthians 4:2](#).

ULT

18 For that one who commends himself is not approved, but whom the Lord commends.

not...is...approved (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “is not whom the Lord approves” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

whom the Lord commends (ULT)

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: “the one whom the Lord recommends is the one of whom the Lord approves” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

2 Corinthians 11

2 Corinthians 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, Paul continues defending his authority.

Special concepts in this chapter

False teaching

The Corinthians were quick to accept false teachers. They taught things about Jesus and the gospel that were different and not true. Unlike these false teachers, Paul sacrificially served the Corinthians. (See: [good news](#), [gospel](#))

Light

Light is commonly used in the New Testament as a metaphor. Paul here uses light to indicate the revealing of God and his righteousness. Darkness describes sin. Sin seeks to remain hidden from God. (See: [light](#), [luminary](#), [shine](#), [brighten](#), [enlighten](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#) and [darkness](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Paul begins this chapter with an extended metaphor. He compares himself to the father of a bride who is giving a pure, virgin bride to her bridegroom. Wedding practices change depending on the cultural background. But the idea of helping to present someone as a grown and holy child is explicitly pictured in this passage. (See: [Metaphor](#) and [holy](#), [holiness](#), [unholy](#), [sacred](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Irony

This chapter is full of irony. Paul is hoping to shame the Corinthian believers with his irony.

“You tolerate these things well enough!” Paul thinks that they should not tolerate the way the false apostles treated them. Paul does not think they are really apostles at all.

The statement, “For you gladly put up with fools. You are wise yourselves!” means that the Corinthian believers think they were very wise but Paul does not agree.

“I will say to our shame that we were too weak to do that.” Paul is speaking about behavior he thinks is very wrong in order to avoid it. He is speaking as if he thinks he is wrong for not doing it. He uses a rhetorical question also as irony. “Did I sin by humbling myself so you might be exalted?” (See: [Irony](#) and [apostle](#), [apostleship](#) and [Rhetorical Question](#))

Rhetorical questions

In refuting the false apostles claiming to be superior, Paul uses a series of rhetorical questions. Each question is coupled with an answer: “Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as though I were out of my mind.) I am more.”

He also uses a series of rhetorical questions to empathize with his converts: “Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who has caused another to fall into sin, and I do not burn within?”

“Are they servants of Christ?”

This is sarcasm, a special type of irony used to mock or insult. Paul does not believe these false teachers actually serve Christ, only that they pretend to do so.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A “paradox” is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. This sentence in verse 30 is a paradox: “If I must boast, I will boast about what shows my weaknesses.” Paul does not explain why he would boast in his weakness until 2 Corinthians 12:9. ([2 Corinthians 11:30](#))

2 Corinthians 11:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to affirm his apostleship.

you would bear with me in a little bit of foolishness (ULT)

Alternate translation: "you would allow me allow me to act like a fool"

ULT

¹ I wish that you would bear with me in a little bit of foolishness, but you are indeed bearing with me!

2 Corinthians 11:2

I am jealous...for you with a godly jealousy (ULT)

These words speak of a good, strong desire that the Corinthians be faithful to Christ, and that no one should persuade them to leave him.

ULT

² For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy, for I promised you in marriage to one husband, to present you {as} a pure virgin to Christ.

for I promised you in marriage to one husband, to present you {as} a pure virgin to Christ (ULT)

Paul speaks of his care for the Corinthian believers as if he had **promised** another man that he would prepare his daughter to marry him and he is most concerned that he be able to keep his promise to the man. Alternate translation: "for I was like a father who promised to present his daughter to one husband. I promised to keep you as a pure virgin so I could give you to Christ" (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 11:3

But I am afraid that somehow ... the sincerity and the purity that are in Christ

Alternate translation: "But I am afraid that somehow your thoughts might be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ just as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness"

your thoughts might be led astray (ULT)

Paul speaks of **thoughts** as if they were animals that people could lead along the wrong path. Alternate translation: "someone might cause you to believe lies" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

³ But I am afraid lest, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts might be led astray from the sincerity and the purity that {are} in Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:4

For if one who comes

Alternate translation: "When anyone comes and"

or you receive a different spirit which you did not receive, or you receive a different gospel which you did not accept

Alternate translation: "a different spirit than the Holy Spirit, or a different gospel than you received from us"

you are bearing with it well (ULT)

"you are dealing correctly with these things." See how these words were translated in [2 Corinthians 11:1](#).

ULT

⁴ For if one who comes proclaims another Jesus whom we did not proclaim, or you receive a different spirit which you did not receive or a different gospel which you did not accept, you are bearing with it well!

2 Corinthians 11:5

to the “super-apostles (ULT)

Paul uses irony here to show that those teachers are less important than people say there are. Alternate translation: “those teachers whom some think are better than anyone else” (See: [Irony](#))

ULT

⁵ For I consider myself not inferior to the “super-apostles.”

2 Corinthians 11:6

not in knowledge (ULT)

This negative phrase emphasizes the positive truth that he is trained in knowledge. Alternate translation: "I am certainly trained in knowledge" (See: [Litotes](#))

not in knowledge (ULT)

The abstract noun "knowledge" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "I am trained to know what they know" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

⁶ But even if I am untrained in speech, yet not in knowledge. But in every way we have made this clear to you in all things.

2 Corinthians 11:7

Or did I commit a sin, humbling myself so that you might be exalted (ULT)

Paul is beginning to claim that he treated the Corinthians well. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement, if necessary.
Alternate translation: "I think we agree that I did not sin by humbling myself so you might be exalted" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁷ Or did I commit a sin, humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I freely preached the gospel of God to you?

I freely preached the gospel of God to you (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I preached the gospel of God to you without expecting anything from you in return"

2 Corinthians 11:8

I robbed other churches (ULT)

This is an exaggeration to emphasize that Paul received money from **churches** who were not obligated to give to him. Alternate translation: "I accepted money from other churches" (See: [Irony](#) and [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

⁸ I robbed other churches, having accepted wages for the ministry to you.

the ministry to you (ULT)

The full meaning of this can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "I could serve you at no cost" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

2 Corinthians 11:9

the brothers who came (ULT)

These “brothers” were probably all male.

in everything, I kept and will continue to keep myself from being a burden to you (ULT)

Paul speaks of someone for whom one has to spend money as if they were heavy items that people have to carry. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁹ And being present with you—and I being in need—I did not burden anyone. For the brothers who came from Macedonia completely met my need, and in everything, I kept and will continue to keep myself from being a burden to you.

in everything, I kept and will continue to keep myself from being a burden to you (ULT)

The full meaning of this can be made explicit. Alternate translation: “I have done all I can to make sure you do not have to spend money so that I can be with you” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

myself from being a burden...And...I kept...will continue to keep (ULT)

Alternate translation: “I never will be a burden to you”

2 Corinthians 11:10

The truth of Christ is in me (ULT)

Paul is emphasizing that because his readers know that he tells the **truth** about **Christ**, they can know that he is telling the truth here. "As surely as you know that I truly know and proclaim the truth about Christ, you can know that what I am about to say is true"

ULT

10 The truth of Christ is in me, so that this boasting of mine will not be silenced in the regions of Achaia.

this boasting of mine will not be silenced (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will be able to make me stop boasting and stay silent" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

this boasting...of mine (ULT)

This refers to what Paul spoke about starting in ([2 Corinthians 11:7](#)).

2 Corinthians 11:11

Why? Because I do not love you (ULT)

Paul uses rhetorical questions to emphasize love for the Corinthians. These questions can be combined or made into a statement.

Alternate translation: "Is it because I do not love you that I do not want to be a burden to you?" or "I will continue to keep you from paying for my needs because this shows others that I love you" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows {I do}!

God knows {I do (ULT)

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "God knows I love you" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

2 Corinthians 11:12

Connecting Statement:

As Paul continues to affirm his apostleship, he talks about false apostles.

so that I may take away the opportunity of those who desire an opportunity, so that they may be regarded in what they are boasting about just as we also {are (ULT)}

Paul speaks of a false claim that his enemies state as if it were something that he can carry away. Alternate translation: “so that I might make it impossible for those who are trying to get people to regard them as highly as they respect us” (See: [Metaphor](#))

they may be regarded (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “people will think highly of them” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

12 And what I do I will also keep doing so that I may take away the opportunity of those who desire an opportunity, so that they may be regarded in what they are boasting about just as we also {are}.

2 Corinthians 11:13

For these of such kind (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I do what I do because people like them"

deceitful workers (ULT)

Alternate translation: "dishonest workers"

disguising themselves as apostles (ULT)

Alternate translation: "are not apostles, but they try to make themselves look like apostles"

ULT

13 For these of such kind {are} false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:14

no wonder (ULT)

By stating this in a negative form Paul is emphasizing that the Corinthians should expect to meet many “false apostles” (2 Corinthians 11:13). Alternate translation: “we should expect this” (See: [Litotes](#))

ULT

14 And no wonder, for Satan himself disguises himself as an angel of light.

himself...Satan...disguises himself as an angel of light (ULT)

Alternate translation: “Satan is not an angel of light, but he tries to make himself look like an angel of light”

an angel of light (ULT)

Here, **light** is a metaphor for righteousness. Alternate translation: “an angel of righteousness” (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 11:15

it is} no great thing...if (ULT)

By stating this in a negative form Paul is emphasizing that the Corinthians should expect to meet many “false apostles” ([2 Corinthians 11:13](#)). Alternate translation: “we should certainly expect to see” (See: [Litotes](#))

ULT

15 Therefore, {it is} no great thing if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness

Alternate translation: “his servants are not servants of righteousness, but they try to make themselves look like servants of righteousness”

2 Corinthians 11:16

**me...a fool...receive...even as...so that I too
may boast a little bit (ULT)**

Alternate translation: "receive me as you would receive a fool: let me talk, and consider my boasting the words of a fool"

ULT

¹⁶ I say again: Let not anyone think me to be a fool. But if not, receive me even as a fool so that I too may boast a little bit.

2 Corinthians 11:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹⁷ What I am saying, I am not saying according to the Lord, but as in foolishness, in this boastful confidence.

2 Corinthians 11:18

according to the flesh (ULT)

Here the metonym **flesh** refers to man in his sinful nature and his achievements. Alternate translation: “about their own human achievements” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

18 Since many boast according to the flesh, I will also boast.

2 Corinthians 11:19

you...put up with the foolish (ULT)

“you ... accept me when I act like a fool.” See how a similar phrase was translated in [2 Corinthians 11:1](#).

being wise (ULT)

Paul is shaming the Corinthians by using irony. Alternate translation: “thinking that you are wise, even through you are not” (See: [Irony](#))

ULT

19 For you, being wise, gladly put up with the foolish.

2 Corinthians 11:20

if anyone enslaves you, if anyone consumes you (ULT)

Paul is using exaggeration when he speaks of some people forcing others to obey rules as if they were forcing them to be slaves or devouring them. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

enslaves you (ULT)

Paul speaks of people forcing others to obey rules as if they were forcing them to be slaves. Alternate translation: “makes you follow rules they have thought of” (See: [Metaphor](#))

consumes you (ULT)

Paul speaks of the super-apostles’ taking people’s material resources as if they were eating the people themselves. Alternate translation: “takes all your property” (See: [Metaphor](#))

takes advantage of you (ULT)

A person **takes advantage of** another person by knowing things that the other person does not and using that knowledge to help himself and harm the other person.

ULT

²⁰ For you put up with it if anyone enslaves you, if anyone consumes you, if anyone takes advantage of you, if anyone exalts himself, if anyone slaps you in the face.

2 Corinthians 11:21

According to dishonor, I say that with respect to that, we were weak (ULT)

Paul is using irony to tell the Corinthians that it was not because he was **weak** that he treated them well. Alternate translation: "I am not ashamed to say that we had the power to harm you, but we treated you well" (See: [Irony](#))

ULT

²¹ According to dishonor, I say that with respect to that, we were weak! However, in whatever anyone might dare to boast—I am speaking in foolishness—I too dare to boast.

in whatever...anyone might dare to boast...I too dare to boast (ULT)

Alternate translation: "in whatever anyone boasts about ... I will dare to boast about it also"

2 Corinthians 11:22

Connecting Statement:

As Paul continues to confirm his apostleship, he states specific things that have happened to him since he became a believer.

Are they Hebrews? ... Are they Israelites? ... Are they descendants of Abraham?

Paul is asking and answering questions the Corinthians might be asking to emphasize that he is as much a Jew as the super-apostles are. You should keep the question-and-answer form if possible. Alternate translation: "They want you to think they are important and to believe what they say because they are Hebrews and Israelites and descendants of Abraham. Well, so am I!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

22 Are they Hebrews? I {am} also. Are they Israelites? I {am} also. Are they descendants of Abraham? I {am} also.

2 Corinthians 11:23

Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as out of my mind.) I {am} more so (ULT)

Paul continues asking and answering questions the Corinthians might be asking to emphasize that he is as much a Jew as the super-apostles are. You should keep the question-and-answer form if possible. Alternate translation: “They say they are servants of Christ—I speak as though I were out of my mind—but I am more” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

²³ Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as out of my mind.) I {am} more so: in even more hard work, in far more imprisonments, in beatings beyond measure, often in danger of death.

I speak as out of my mind (ULT)

Alternate translation: “I speak as though I were unable to think well”

I {am} more so (ULT)

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: “I am more a servant of Christ than they are” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

in even more hard work (ULT)

Alternate translation: “I have worked harder”

in even more...imprisonments (ULT)

Alternate translation: “I have been in prisons more often”

in beatings beyond measure (ULT)

Here, **beyond measure** is an idiom that means he had been beaten many, many times. Alternate translation: “I have been beaten very many times” (See: [Idiom](#))

in beatings beyond measure (ULT)

This is exaggerated to emphasize that he had been beaten many, many times. Alternate translation: “I have been beaten too many times to bother counting” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

in...often...danger of death (ULT)

Alternate translation: “and I have almost died many times”

2 Corinthians 11:24

40 {lashes} minus one (ULT)

This was a common expression for being whipped 39 times. In Jewish law the most they were allowed to whip a person at one time was forty lashes. So they commonly whipped a person thirty-nine times so that they would be guilty of whipping someone too many times if the accidentally counted wrong.

ULT

²⁴ Five times I received from Jews 40 {lashes} minus one.

2 Corinthians 11:25

I was beaten with rods (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “people beat me with wooden rods” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

I was stoned (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “people threw stones at me until they thought I was dead” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

I have spent a night and a day in the deep (ULT)

Paul was referring to floating in the water after the ship he was on sank.

ULT

²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. I have spent a night and a day in the deep;

2 Corinthians 11:26

in danger from false brothers (ULT)

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: “and in danger from people who claimed to be brothers in Christ, but who betrayed us” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

²⁶ in frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, in danger from robbers, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from the Gentiles, in danger in the city, in danger in the wilderness, in danger at sea, in danger from false brothers;

2 Corinthians 11:27

nakedness (ULT)

Here Paul exaggerates to show his need of clothing. Alternate translation: “without enough clothing to keep me warm” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

²⁷ in hard work and hardship, in many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often in fasting, in cold and nakedness;

2 Corinthians 11:28

there is} the pressure on me of the daily concern for all the churches (ULT)

Paul knows that God will hold him responsible for how well the **churches** obey God and speaks of that knowledge as if it were a heavy object pushing him down. Alternate translation: "I know that God will hold me accountable for the spiritual growth of all the churches, and so I always feel like a heavy object is pushing me down" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

²⁸ apart from these external things, {there is} the pressure on me of the daily concern for all the churches.

2 Corinthians 11:29

Who is weak, and I am not weak (ULT)

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Whenever anyone is weak, I feel that weakness also." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

²⁹ Who is weak, and I am not weak?
Who has been caused to stumble, and I
do not burn?

Who is weak, and I am not weak (ULT)

The word **weak** is probably a metaphor for a spiritual condition, but no one is sure what Paul is speaking of, so it is best to use the same word here. Alternate translation: "I am weak whenever anyone else is weak." (See: [Metaphor](#))

Who has been caused to stumble, and I do not burn (ULT)

Here Paul's anger is spoken of as a burning inside him. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Who has been caused to stumble, and I do not burn (ULT)

Paul uses this question to express his anger when a fellow believer is caused to sin. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Whenever anyone causes a brother to sin, I am angry." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

has been caused to stumble (ULT)

Paul speaks of sin as if it were tripping over something and then falling. Alternate translation: "has been led to sin" or "has thought that God would permit him to sin because of something that someone else did" (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 11:30

the things of {my} weakness (ULT)

Alternate translation: "what shows how weak I am"

ULT

³⁰ If it is necessary to boast, I will boast about the things of {my} weakness.

2 Corinthians 11:31

I am not lying (ULT)

Paul is using litotes to emphasize that he is telling the truth.

Alternate translation: "I am telling the absolute truth" (See: [Litotes](#))

ULT

³¹ The God and Father of the Lord Jesus,
the one who is blessed to eternity,
knows that I am not lying!

2 Corinthians 11:32

the governor of Aretas the king was guarding the city (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the governor whom King Aretas had appointed had told men to guard the city"

to arrest me (ULT)

Alternate translation: "so that they might catch and arrest me"

ULT

³² in Damascus, the governor of Aretas the king was guarding the city of Damascus to arrest me.

2 Corinthians 11:33

I was lowered in a basket (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “some people put me in a basket and lowered me to the ground” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

his hands (ULT)

Paul uses the governor’s **hands** as metonymy for the governor. Alternate translation: “from the governor” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

33 But I was lowered in a basket through a window through the wall, and I escaped from his hands.

2 Corinthians 12

2 Corinthians 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul continues defending his authority in this chapter.

When Paul was with the Corinthians, he proved himself to be an apostle by his powerful deeds. He had not ever taken anything from them. Now that he is coming for the third time, he will still not take anything. He hopes that when he visits, he will not need to be harsh with them. (See: [apostle](#), [apostleship](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Paul's vision

Paul now defends his authority by telling about a wonderful vision of heaven. Although he speaks in the third person in verses 2-5, verse 7 indicates that he was the person who experienced the vision. It was so great, God gave him a physical handicap to keep him humble. (See: [heaven](#), [sky](#), [heavens](#), [heavenly](#))

Third heaven

Many scholars believe the "third" heaven is the dwelling place of God. This is because Scripture also uses "heaven" to refer to the sky (the "first" heaven) and the universe (the "second" heaven).

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Paul uses many rhetorical questions as he defends himself against his enemies who accused him: "For how were you less important than the rest of the churches, except that I was not a burden to you?" "Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same way? Did we not walk in the same steps?" and "Do you think all of this time we have been defending ourselves to you?" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Sarcasm

Paul uses sarcasm, a special type of irony, when he reminds them how he had helped them at no cost. He says, "Forgive me for this wrong!" He also uses regular irony when he says: "But, since I am so crafty, I am the one who caught you by deceit." He uses it to introduce his defense against this accusation by showing how impossible it was to be true. (See: [Irony](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A "paradox" is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. This sentence in verse 5 is a paradox: "I will not boast, except about my weaknesses." Most people do not boast about being weak. This

sentence in verse 10 is also a paradox: "For whenever I am weak, then I am strong." In verse 9, Paul explains why both of these statements are true. ([2 Corinthians 12:5](#))

2 Corinthians 12:1

Connecting Statement:

In defending his apostleship from God, Paul continues to state specific things that have happened to him since he became a believer.

I will go on...to (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I will continue talking, but now about"

visions and revelations of the Lord (ULT)

This could mean: (1) Paul uses the words **visions** and **revelations** to mean the same thing in hendiadys for emphasis. Alternate translation: "things that the Lord has allowed only me to see" (2) Paul is speaking of two different things. Alternate translation: "secret things that the Lord has let me see with my eyes and other secrets that he has told me about" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

ULT

¹ It is necessary to boast, {though} not profitable. But I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 Corinthians 12:2

I know a man in Christ (ULT)

Paul is actually speaking of himself as if he were speaking of someone else, but this should be translated literally if possible.

whether in the body, I do not know, or out of the body, I do not know

Paul continues to describe himself as if this happened to another person. "I do not know if this man was in his physical body or in his spiritual body"

the third heaven (ULT)

Here, the **third heaven** refers to the dwelling place of God rather than the sky or outer space (the planets, stars, and the universe).

ULT

² I know a man in Christ who, 14 years ago—whether in the body, I do not know, or out of the body, I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up as far as the third heaven.

2 Corinthians 12:3

General Information:

Paul continues to speak of himself as though he were speaking of someone else.

ULT

³ And I know that such a man—whether in the body, or out of the body, I do not know, God knows—

2 Corinthians 12:4

he was caught up into paradise (ULT)

Paul continues his account of what happened to “this man” (verse 3). You can state this in active form. This could mean: (1) God took this man into **paradise**. (2) an angel took this man into **paradise**. If possible, it would be best not to name the one who took the man: “someone took him up to paradise” or “they took him up to paradise.”

ULT

⁴ that he was caught up into paradise and heard inexpressible words which are not permitted for a man to speak.

he was caught up (ULT)

suddenly and forcefully held and taken

paradise (ULT)

Here, **paradise** could refer to: (1) heaven. (2) the third heaven. (3) a special place in heaven.

2 Corinthians 12:5

such a one (ULT)

Alternate translation: "of that person"

I will boast...not...except about {my} weaknesses (ULT)

You can state this in positive form. Alternate translation: "I will boast only of my weaknesses"

ULT

⁵ On behalf of such a one I will boast.
But on behalf of myself I will not boast,
except about {my} weaknesses.

2 Corinthians 12:6

Connecting Statement:

As Paul defends his apostleship from God, he tells of the weakness that God gave him to keep him humble.

so that} no one might think more of me than what he sees in me or hears from me (ULT)

ULT

⁶ For even if I desire to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from this, {so that} no one might think more of me than what he sees in me or hears from me.

Alternate translation: "no one will give me more credit than what he sees in me or hears from me"

2 Corinthians 12:7

General Information:

This verse reveals that Paul was speaking about himself beginning in [2 Corinthians 12:2](#).

by the surpassing greatness of the revelations (ULT)

Alternate translation: “because those revelations were so much greater than anything anyone else had ever seen”

a thorn in the flesh was given to me (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “God gave me a thorn in the flesh” or “God allowed me to have a thorn in the flesh” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

a thorn in the flesh (ULT)

Here Paul’s physical problems are compared to a **thorn** piercing his **flesh**. Alternate translation: “an affliction” or “a physical problem” (See: [Metaphor](#))

a messenger from Satan (ULT)

Alternate translation: “a servant of Satan”

I would not become arrogant (ULT)

Alternate translation: “I would not become too proud”

ULT

⁷ And therefore, so that I would not become arrogant by the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me—a messenger from Satan—so that he might torment me, so that I would not become arrogant.

2 Corinthians 12:8

Three times (ULT)

Paul put these words at the beginning of the sentence to emphasize that he had prayed many times about his “thorn” (2 Corinthians 12:7).

ULT

⁸ Three times I begged the Lord about this, that it would depart from me.

about this (ULT)

Alternate translation: “about this thorn in the flesh,” or “about this affliction”

2 Corinthians 12:9

My grace is enough for you (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I will be kind to you, and that is all you need"

grace...for...power...is made perfect in weakness (ULT)

Alternate translation: "for my power works best when you are weak"

the power of Christ might reside on me (ULT)

Paul speaks of the **power of Christ** as if it were a tent built over him. This could mean: (1) people might see that Paul has the power of Christ" (2) Paul truly has the power of Christ. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁹ But he said to me, "My grace is enough for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So I will rather gladly boast in my weakness so that the power of Christ might reside on me.

2 Corinthians 12:10

I am content for Christ's sake in weaknesses, in insults, in troubles, in persecutions and distressing situations

This could mean: (1) Paul is **content** in **weaknesses, insults, troubles, persecutions, and distressing situations** if these things come because I belong to Christ. (2) Paul is content in weakness if these things cause more people to know Christ.

ULT

¹⁰ Therefore I am content for Christ's sake in weaknesses, in insults, in troubles, in persecutions and distressing situations; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

in weaknesses (ULT)

Alternate translation: "when I am weak"

in...insults (ULT)

Alternate translation: "when people try to make me angry by saying that I am a bad person"

in...troubles (ULT)

Alternate translation: "when I am suffering"

distressing situations (ULT)

Alternate translation: "when there is trouble"

for when I am weak, then I am strong (ULT)

Paul is saying that when he is no longer **strong** enough to do what needs to be done, Christ, who is more powerful than Paul could ever be, will work through Paul to do what needs to be done. However, it would be best to translate these words literally, if your language allows.

2 Corinthians 12:11

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the believers in Corinth of the true signs of an apostle and of his humility before them to strengthen them.

I have become a fool (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I am acting like a fool"

You forced me to this (ULT)

Alternate translation: "You forced me to talk this way"

I...should have been commended by you (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "you should have praised me" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

been commended (ULT)

"been praised" ([2 Corinthians 3:1](#)) or "been recommended" ([2 Corinthians 4:2](#)).

for I was not at all inferior (ULT)

By using the negative form, Paul is saying strongly that those Corinthians who think that he is **inferior** are wrong. Alternate translation: "For I am just as good as" (See: [Litotes](#))

to the "super-apostles (ULT)

Paul uses irony here to show that those teachers are less important than people say they are. See how this is translated in [2 Corinthians 11:5](#). Alternate translation: "those teachers whom some think are better than anyone else" (See: [Irony](#))

ULT

11 I have become a fool! You forced me to this, for I should have been commended by you, for I was not at all inferior to the "super-apostles," even though I am nothing.

2 Corinthians 12:12

Indeed, the signs of an apostle were performed (ULT)

You can state this in active form, with emphasis on the **signs**.
Alternate translation: "it is the true signs of an apostle that I performed" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

¹² Indeed, the signs of an apostle were performed among you with all perseverance—signs and wonders and miracles.

signs and wonders and mighty deeds

These are the "signs of an apostle" that Paul performed "with all perseverance."

2 Corinthians 12:13

For in what respect is it that you were treated worse than the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not burden you (ULT)

Paul is emphasizing that the Corinthians are wrong to accuse him of wanting to do them harm. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I treated you the same way I treated all the other churches, except that I myself did not burden you." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

¹³ For in what respect is it that you were treated worse than the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong!

I myself did not burden you (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I did not ask you for money or other things I needed"

Forgive me this wrong (ULT)

Paul is being ironic to shame the Corinthians. Both he and they know that he has done them no wrong, but they have been treating him as though he has wronged them. (See: [Irony](#))

this wrong (ULT)

Here, **this wrong** refers to not asking them for money and other things he needed.

2 Corinthians 12:14

but you (ULT)

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "but what I want is that you love and accept me" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

children should not save up for the parents

Young **children** are not responsible for saving money or other goods to give to their healthy **parents**.

ULT

14 Behold! I am ready to come to you this third time, and I will not burden you. For I do not seek what {is} yours, but you. For the children should not save up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

2 Corinthians 12:15

I...will most gladly spend and be completely spent (ULT)

Paul speaks of his work and his physical life as if it were money that he or God could **spend**. Alternate translation: “I will gladly do any work and gladly allow God to permit people to kill me” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁵ Now I will most gladly spend and be completely spent for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less?

for your souls (ULT)

The word **souls** is a metonym for the people themselves. Alternate translation: “for you” or “so you will live well” (See: [Metonymy](#))

If I love you more, am I to be loved less (ULT)

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: “If I love you so much, you should not love me so little.” or “If I love you so much, you should love me more than you do.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

more (ULT)

It is not clear what it is that Paul’s love is **more** than. It is probably best to use “very much” or a “so much” that can be compared to “so little” later in the sentence.

2 Corinthians 12:16

but, being a crafty person, I caught you by deceit (ULT)

Paul uses irony to shame the Corinthians who think he lied to them even if he did not ask them for money. Alternate translation: “but others think I was deceptive and used trickery” (See: [Irony](#))

ULT

¹⁶ But be that as it may, I did not burden you, but, being a crafty person, I caught you by deceit.

2 Corinthians 12:17

I did not take advantage of you by any of those whom I sent to you, did I (ULT)

Both Paul and the Corinthians know the answer is no. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: “No one that I sent to you has taken advantage of you!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

¹⁷ I did not take advantage of you by any of those whom I sent to you, did I?

2 Corinthians 12:18

Titus did not take advantage of you, did he (ULT)

Both Paul and the Corinthians know the answer is no. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Titus certainly did not take advantage of you!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

¹⁸ I urged Titus {to go} and sent the {other} brother with him. Titus did not take advantage of you, did he? Did we not walk in the same spirit? {Did we} not {walk} in the same steps?

Did we not walk in the same spirit (ULT)

Paul speaks of living as if it were walking on a road. Alternate translation: "We all walk in the same spirit." (See: [Metaphor](#))

Did we not walk in the same spirit (ULT)

Both Paul and the Corinthians know the answer to the question is yes. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We all have the same attitude and live alike." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Did we} not {walk} in the same steps (ULT)

Both Paul and the Corinthians know the answer to the question is yes. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We all walk in the same steps." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Did we} not {walk} in the same steps (ULT)

Paul speaks of living as if it were walking on a road. Alternate translation: "We all do things the same way." (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 12:19

Do you think all of this time that we have been defending ourselves to you (ULT)

Paul uses this question to acknowledge something that the people may have been thinking. He does this so that he can assure them that it is not true. Alternate translation: "Perhaps you think that all of this time we have been defending ourselves to you." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

¹⁹ Do you think all of this time that we have been defending ourselves to you? Before God in Christ we are speaking, but all these things, beloved, {are} for your strengthening.

Before God (ULT)

Paul speaks of **God** knowing everything Paul does as if God were physically present and observed everything Paul said and did. Alternate translation: "With God as witness" or "In the presence of God" (See: [Metaphor](#))

are} for your strengthening (ULT)

Paul speaks of knowing how to obey God and desiring to obey him as if it were physical growth. Alternate translation: "so that you would know God and obey him better" (See: [Metaphor](#))

2 Corinthians 12:20

I may not find you such as I wish (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I may not like what I find" or "I may not like what I see you doing"

and I may not be found by you such as you wish (ULT)

Alternate translation: "you might not like what you see in me"

ULT

²⁰ For I fear that perhaps when I come I may not find you such as I wish, and I may not be found by you such as you wish; perhaps {there may be} quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, rivalries, slander, gossip, arrogance, {and} disorder,

perhaps {there may be} quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, rivalries, slander, gossip, arrogance, {and} disorder (ULT)

The abstract nouns **quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, rivalries, slander, gossip, arrogance, and disorder** can be translated using verbs. This could mean: (1) some of you will be arguing with us, jealous of us, suddenly becoming very angry with us, trying to take our places as leaders, speaking falsely about us, telling about our private lives, being proud, and opposing us as we try to lead you. (2) some of you will be arguing with each other, jealous of each other, suddenly becoming very angry with each other, quarreling with each other over who will be the leader, speaking falsely about each other, telling about each other's private lives, being proud, and opposing those whom God has chosen to lead you. (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

2 Corinthians 12:21

I would be grieved by many of those who have sinned (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I will be grieved because many of them have not given up their old sins"

who have not repented of the impurity and sexual immorality and lustful indulgence (ULT)

This could mean: (1) Paul is saying almost the same thing three times for emphasis. Alternate translation: "did not stop committing the sexual sins that they practiced" (2) Paul is speaking of three different sins. (See: [Parallelism](#))

of the impurity (ULT)

The abstract noun **impurity** can be translated as "things that do not please God." Alternate translation: "of secretly thinking about and desiring things that do not please God" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

sexual immorality (ULT)

The abstract noun **sexual immorality** can be translated as "immoral deeds." Alternate translation: "of doing sexually immoral deeds" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

lustful indulgence (ULT)

The abstract noun **lustful indulgence** can be translated using a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "doing things that satisfy immoral sexual desire" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

²¹ lest having come to you again, my God might humble me before you, and I would be grieved by many of those who have sinned and who have not repented of the impurity and sexual immorality and lustful indulgence that they practiced.

2 Corinthians 13

2 Corinthians 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, Paul finishes defending his authority. He then concludes the letter with a final greeting and blessing.

Special concepts in this chapter

Preparation

Paul instructs the Corinthians as he prepares to visit them. He is hoping to avoid needing to discipline anyone in the church so he can visit them joyfully. (See: [disciple](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Power and weakness

Paul repeatedly uses the contrasting words “power” and “weakness” in this chapter. The translator should use words that are understood to be opposites of each other.

“Examine yourselves to see if you are in the faith. Test yourselves.”

Scholars are divided over what these sentences mean. Some scholars say that Christians are to test themselves to see whether their actions align with their Christian faith. The context favors this understanding. Others say these sentences mean that Christians should look at their actions and question whether they are genuinely saved. (See: [faith](#) and [save, saved, safe, salvation](#))

2 Corinthians 13:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul establishes that Christ is speaking through him and that Paul is wanting to restore them, encourage them, and unify them.

Every matter must be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses (ULT)

You can state this as active. Alternate translation: "Believe that someone has done something wrong only after two or three people have said the same thing" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

¹ This {is} the third time that I am coming to you. "Every matter must be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses."

2 Corinthians 13:2

those...all...rest (ULT)

Alternate translation: "all you other people"

ULT

² I have already warned when being present the second time, and now even though being absent, I warn those who sinned before and all the rest, that if I would come to them again, I will not spare anyone,

2 Corinthians 13:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³ since you are seeking proof of the Christ speaking in me, who is not weak toward you but is powerful among you.

2 Corinthians 13:4

indeed...he was...crucified (ULT)

This can be made active. Alternate translation: “they crucified him”
(See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁴ For he was indeed crucified in weakness, but he lives by God’s power. For we also are weak in him, but we will live with him by God’s power toward you.

2 Corinthians 13:5

in...you (ULT)

Here, **in you** could mean: (1) Jesus is living inside each individual. (2) Jesus is living among them, part of and the most important member of the group.

ULT

⁵ Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ {is} in you—unless you are unapproved?

2 Corinthians 13:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁶ And I hope that you will realize that we are not unapproved.

2 Corinthians 13:7

you may not do anything wrong (ULT)

Paul is emphasizing the opposite with his statement. Alternate translation: "you will do everything right" (See: [Litotes](#))

approved (ULT)

Alternate translation: "to be great teachers and live the truth"

ULT

⁷ Now we pray to God that you may not do anything wrong, not so that we might appear approved, but so that you might do what {is} good, even if we {might seem} to be unapproved.

2 Corinthians 13:8

not...we are...able to do anything against the truth (ULT)

Alternate translation: "we are not able to keep people from learning the truth"

ULT

⁸ For we are not able to do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.

2 Corinthians 13:9

for your perfection (ULT)

Alternate translation: "that you may become spiritually mature"

ULT

⁹ For we rejoice whenever we are weak, but you are strong. We also pray this: for your perfection.

2 Corinthians 13:10

for building up and not for tearing down (ULT)

Paul speaks of helping the Corinthians to know Christ better as if he were constructing a building. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Corinthians 10:8](#). Alternate translation: “to help you become better followers of Christ and not to discourage you so you stop following him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

10 Therefore, I write these things while being absent so that when I am present, I would not treat you harshly according to the authority which the Lord gave to me for building up and not for tearing down.

2 Corinthians 13:11

Connecting Statement:

Paul closes his letter to the Corinthian believers.

Be restored (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Work toward maturity"

be of the same mind (ULT)

Alternate translation: "live in harmony with one another"

ULT

11 Finally, brothers, rejoice! Be restored, be encouraged, be of the same mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

2 Corinthians 13:12

with a holy kiss (ULT)

Alternate translation: "with Christian love"

of the saints (ULT)

Alternate translation: "those whom God has set apart for himself"

ULT

¹² Greet each other with a holy kiss. All of the saints greet you. ^[1]

2 Corinthians 13:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God and the fellowship
of the Holy Spirit {be} with all of you. ^[2]

2 Corinthians 13:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT



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Version 25

Abstract Nouns

Description

Abstract nouns are nouns that refer to attitudes, qualities, events, or situations. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as happiness, weight, unity, friendship, health, and reason. This is a translation issue because some languages may express a certain idea with an abstract noun, while others would need a different way to express it.

This page answers the question: *What are abstract nouns and how do I deal with them in my translation?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences]]

Remember that nouns are words that refer to a person, place, thing, or idea. Abstract nouns are the nouns that refer to ideas. These can be attitudes, qualities, events, situations, or even relationships between those ideas. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as joy, peace, creation, goodness, contentment, justice, truth, freedom, vengeance, slowness, length, weight, and many, many more.

Some languages, such as Biblical Greek and English, use abstract nouns a lot. They provide a way of giving names to actions or qualities. With names, people who speak these languages can talk about the concepts as though they were things. For example, in languages that use abstract nouns, people can say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sin."

But some languages do not use abstract nouns very much. In these languages, speakers may not have the two abstract nouns "forgiveness" and "sin," but they would express the same meaning in other ways. For example, they would express, "I believe that God is willing to forgive people after they have sinned," by using verb phrases instead of nouns for those ideas.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

The Bible that you translate from may use abstract nouns to express certain ideas. Your language might not use abstract nouns for some of those ideas. Instead, it might use phrases to express those ideas. Those phrases will use other kinds of words such as adjectives, verbs, or adverbs to express the meaning of the abstract noun. For example, "What is its **weight**?" could be expressed as "How much does it **weigh**?" or "How **heavy** is it?"

Examples From the Bible

From **childhood** you have known the sacred writings ... (2 Timothy 3:15a ULT)

The abstract noun "childhood" refers to when someone was a child.

But **godliness** with **contentment** is great **gain**. (1 Timothy 6:6 ULT)

The abstract nouns "godliness" and "contentment" refer to being godly and content. The abstract noun "gain" refers to something that benefits or helps someone.

Today **salvation** has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. (Luke 19:9 ULT)

The abstract noun "salvation" here refers to being saved.

The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider **slowness** to be (2 Peter 3:9a ULT)

The abstract noun "slowness" refers to the lack of speed with which something is done.

He will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the **purposes** of the heart. (1 Corinthians 4:5b ULT)

The abstract noun “purposes” refers to the things that people want to do and the reasons they want to do them.

Translation Strategies

If an abstract noun would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

(1) Reword the sentence with a phrase that expresses the meaning of the abstract noun. Instead of a noun, the new phrase will use a verb, an adverb, or an adjective to express the idea of the abstract noun.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Reword the sentence with a phrase that expresses the meaning of the abstract noun. Instead of a noun, the new phrase will use a verb, an adverb, or an adjective to express the idea of the abstract noun. Alternative translations are indented below the Scripture example.

... from **childhood** you have known the sacred writings ... (2 Timothy 3:15a ULT)

Ever since **you were a child** you have known the sacred writings.

But **godliness** with **contentment** is great **gain**. (1 Timothy 6:6 ULT)

But **being godly** and **content** is very **beneficial**. But we **benefit** greatly when we **are godly** and **content**. But we **benefit** greatly when we **honor and obey God** and when we are **happy with what we have**.

Today **salvation** has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. (Luke 19:9 ULT)

Today the people in this house **have been saved** ... Today God **has saved** the people in this house ...

The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider **slowness** to be. (2 Peter 3:9a ULT)

The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider **moving slowly** to be.

He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the **purposes** of the heart. (1 Corinthians 4:5b ULT)

He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal **the things that people want to do and the reasons that they want to do them**.

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 2:6](#); [5:18](#); [7:15](#); [8:11](#); [8:20](#); [8:23](#); [9:7](#); [10:1](#); [11:6](#); [12:20](#); [12:21](#))

Active or Passive

Some languages use both active and passive sentences. In active sentences, the subject does the action. In passive sentences, the subject is the one that receives the action. Here are some examples with their subjects bolded:

- Active: **My father** built the house in 2010.
- Passive: **The house** was built in 2010.

Translators whose languages do not use passive sentences will need to know how they can translate passive sentences that they find in the Bible. Other translators will need to decide when to use a passive sentence and when to use the active form.

This page answers the question: *What do active and passive mean, and how do I translate passive sentences?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs\]\]](#)

Description

Some languages have both active and passive forms of sentences.

- In the active form, the subject does the action and is always mentioned.
- In the passive form, the action is done to the subject, and the one who does the action is not always mentioned.

In the examples of active and passive sentences below, we have bolded the subject.

- active: **My father** built the house in 2010.
- passive: **The house** was built by my father in 2010.
- passive: **The house** was built in 2010. (This does not tell who did the action.)

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

All languages use active forms. Some languages use passive forms, and some do not. Some languages use passive forms only for certain purposes, and the passive form is not used for the same purposes in all of the languages that use it.

Purposes for the Passive

- The speaker is talking about the person or thing the action was done to, not about the person who did the action.
- The speaker does not want to tell who did the action.
- The speaker does not know who did the action.

Translation Principles Regarding the Passive

- Translators whose language does not use passive forms will need to find another way to express the idea.
- Translators whose language has passive forms will need to understand why the passive is used in a particular sentence in the Bible and decide whether or not to use a passive form for that purpose in his translation of the sentence.

Examples From the Bible

Then their shooters shot at your soldiers from off the wall, and some of the king's servants **were killed**, and your servant Uriah the Hittite **was killed** too. (2 Samuel 11:24 ULT)

This means that the enemy's shooters shot and killed some of the king's servants, including Uriah. The point is what happened to the king's servants and Uriah, not who shot them. The purpose of the passive form here is to keep the focus on the king's servants and Uriah.

When the men of the city arose early in the morning, and see, the altar of Baal **was torn down**. (Judges 6:28a ULT)

The men of the town saw what had happened to the altar of Baal, but they did not know who broke it down. The purpose of the passive form here is to communicate this event from the perspective of the men of the town.

It would be better for him if a millstone **were put** around his neck and he **were thrown** into the sea. (Luke 17:2a ULT)

This describes a situation in which a person ends up in the sea with a millstone around his neck. The purpose of the passive form here is to keep the focus on what happens to this person. Who does these things to the person is not important.

Translation Strategies

If your language would use a passive form for the same purpose as in the passage that you are translating, then use a passive form. If you decide that it is better to translate without a passive form, here are some strategies that you might consider.

- (1) Use the same verb in an active sentence and tell who or what did the action. If you do this, try to keep the focus on the person receiving the action.
- (2) Use the same verb in an active sentence, and do not tell who or what did the action. Instead, use a generic expression like "they" or "people" or "someone."
- (3) Use a different verb.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the same verb in an active sentence and tell who did the action. If you do this, try to keep the focus on the person receiving the action.

A loaf of bread **was given** him every day from the street of the bakers. (Jeremiah 37:21b ULT)

The king's servants gave Jeremiah a loaf of bread every day from the street of the bakers.

- (2) Use the same verb in an active sentence, and do not tell who did the action. Instead, use a generic expression like "they" or "people" or "someone."

It would be better for him if a millstone **were put** around his neck and he **were thrown** into the sea. (Luke 17:2a ULT)

It would be better for him if **they were to put** a millstone around his neck and **throw** him into the sea.

It would be better for him if **someone were to put** a heavy stone around his neck and **throw** him into the sea.

- (3) Use a different verb in an active sentence.

A loaf of bread **was given** him every day from the street of the bakers. (Jeremiah 37:21 ULT)

He **received** a loaf of bread every day from the street of the bakers.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Abstract Nouns](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-order]]

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:3; 1:6; 1:8; 1:11; 2:2; 2:3; 2:6; 2:7; 2:12; 2:15; 2:16; 3:2; 3:3; 3:7; 3:10; 3:14; 3:15; 3:16; 3:18; 4:3; 4:8; 4:9; 4:10; 4:11; 4:13; 4:15; 4:16; 4:17; 4:18; 5:1; 5:3; 5:4; 5:10; 5:11; 5:20; 6:3; 6:8; 6:9; 6:12; 6:17; 7:4; 7:5; 7:9; 7:11; 7:12; 7:13; 8:1; 8:13; 8:15; 8:18; 8:19; 8:23; 9:5; 9:9; 9:11; 9:13; 10:18; 11:10; 11:12; 11:25; 11:33; 12:7; 12:11; 12:12; 13:1; 13:4](#))

Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Assumed knowledge is whatever a speaker assumes his audience knows before he speaks and gives them some kind of information. The speaker does not give the audience this information because he believes that they already know it.

This page answers the question: *How can I be sure that my translation communicates the assumed knowledge and implicit information along with the explicit information of the original message?*

When the speaker does give the audience information, he can do so in two ways. The speaker gives explicit information in what he states directly. Implicit Information is what the speaker does not state directly because he expects his audience to be able to learn it from other things he says.

Description

When someone speaks or writes, he has something specific that he wants people to know or do or think about. He normally states this directly. This is explicit information.

The speaker assumes that his audience already knows certain things that they will need to think about in order to understand this information. Normally he does not tell people these things, because they already know them. This is called assumed knowledge.

The speaker does not always directly state everything that he expects his audience to learn from what he says. Implicit information is information that he expects people to learn from what he says even though he does not state it directly.

Often, the audience understands this implicit information by combining what they already know (assumed knowledge) with the explicit information that the speaker tells them directly.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

All three kinds of information are part of the speaker's message. If one of these kinds of information is missing, then the audience will not understand the message. Because the target translation is in a language that is very different from the biblical languages and is made for an audience that lives in a very different time and place than the people in the Bible, many times the assumed knowledge or the implicit information is missing from the message. In other words, modern readers do not know everything that the original speakers and hearers in the Bible knew. When these things are important for understanding the message, it is helpful if you include this information in the text or in a footnote.

Examples From the Bible

Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes**, and the birds of the sky **have nests**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:19-20 ULT)

Jesus did not say what foxes and birds use holes and nests for, because he assumed that the scribe would have known that foxes sleep in holes in the ground and birds sleep in their nests. This is **assumed knowledge**.

Jesus did not directly say here "I am the Son of Man" but, if the scribe did not already know it, then that fact would be **implicit information** that he could learn because Jesus referred to himself that way. Also, Jesus did not state explicitly that he travelled a lot and did not have a house that he slept in every night. That is **implicit information** that the scribe could learn when Jesus said that he had nowhere to lay his head.

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty deeds had been done in **Tyre and Sidon** which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But

I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the **day of judgment** than for you.
(Matthew 11:21-22 ULT)

Jesus assumed that the people he was speaking to knew that Tyre and Sidon were very wicked, and that the day of judgment is a time when God will judge every person. Jesus also knew that the people he was talking to believed that they were good and did not need to repent. Jesus did not need to tell them these things. This is all **assumed knowledge**.

An important piece of **implicit information** here is that the people he was speaking to would be judged more severely than the people of Tyre and Sidon would be judged **because** they did not repent.

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For **they do not wash their hands when they eat bread**. (Matthew 15:2 ULT)

One of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating. People thought that in order to be righteous, they had to follow all the traditions of the elders. This was **assumed knowledge** that the Pharisees who were speaking to Jesus expected him to know. By saying this, they were accusing his disciples of not following the traditions, and thus not being righteous. This is **implicit information** that they wanted him to understand from what they said.

Translation Strategies

If readers have enough assumed knowledge to be able to understand the message, along with any important implicit information that goes with the explicit information, then it is good to leave that knowledge unstated and leave the implicit information implicit. If the readers do not understand the message because one of these is missing for them, then follow these strategies:

(1) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not have certain assumed knowledge, then provide that knowledge as explicit information.

(2) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not know certain implicit information, then state that information clearly, but try to do it in a way that does not imply that the information was new to the original audience.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not have certain assumed knowledge, then provide that knowledge as explicit information.

Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes**, and the birds of the sky **have nests**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:20 ULT)

The assumed knowledge was that the foxes slept in their holes and birds slept in their nests.

Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes to live in**, and the birds of the sky **have nests to live in**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head and sleep."

It will be more tolerable for **Tyre and Sidon** at the day of judgment than for you (Matthew 11:22 ULT)

The assumed knowledge was that the people of Tyre and Sidon were very, very wicked. This can be stated explicitly.

>

At the day of judgment, it will be more tolerable for **those cities of Tyre and Sidon, whose people were very wicked**, than it will be for you. or At

the day of judgment, It will be more tolerable for those **wicked cities, Tyre and Sidon**, than for you.

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For **they do not wash their hands** when they eat bread. (Matthew 15:2 ULT)

The assumed knowledge was that one of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating, which they must do to be righteous. It was not to remove germs from their hands to avoid sickness, as a modern reader might think.

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For **they do not go through the ceremonial handwashing ritual of righteousness** when they eat bread.

(2) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not know certain implicit information, then state that information clearly, but try to do it in a way that does not imply that the information was new to the original audience.

Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:19-20 ULT)

The implicit information is that Jesus himself is the Son of Man. Other implicit information is that if the scribe wanted to follow Jesus, then, like Jesus, he would have to live without a house.

Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but **I, the Son of Man**, have **no home to rest in. If you want to follow me, you will live as I live.**"

It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you (Matthew 11:22 ULT)

The implicit information is that God would not only judge the people; he would punish them. This can be made explicit.

At the day of judgment, God will **punish Tyre and Sidon**, cities whose people were very wicked, **less severely than he will punish you.**
or:
At the day of judgment, God will **punish you more severely** than Tyre and Sidon, cities whose people were very wicked.

Modern readers may not know some of the things that the people in the Bible and the people who first read it knew. This can make it hard for them to understand what a speaker or writer says, and to learn things that the speaker left implicit. Translators may need to state some things explicitly in the translation that the original speaker or writer left unstated or implicit.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-explicitinfo\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:17](#); [1:19](#); [1:20](#); [Notes](#); [2:3](#); [2:9](#); [3:3](#); [3:5](#); [3:6](#); [3:7](#); [3:8](#); [3:9](#); [3:13](#); [4:1](#); [4:16](#); [5:11](#); [5:21](#); [6:1](#); [6:2](#); [Notes](#); [7:2](#); [7:5](#); [7:7](#); [7:10](#); [8:4](#); [8:6](#); [8:8](#); [8:10](#); [8:17](#); [9:1](#); [9:11](#); [9:12](#); [Notes](#); [11:8](#); [11:9](#); [11:26](#); [12:14](#))

Double Negatives

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each express the meaning of “not.” Double negatives mean very different things in different languages. To translate sentences that have double negatives accurately and clearly, you need to know what a double negative means in the Bible and how to express this idea in your language.

This page answers the question: *What are double negatives?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences\]\]](#)

Description

Negative words are words that have in them the meaning “not.” Examples in English are “no,” “not,” “none,” “no one,” “nothing,” “nowhere,” “never,” “nor,” “neither,” and “without.” Also, some words have prefixes or suffixes that mean “not,” such as the bolded parts of these words: “**un**happy,” “**im**possible,” and “**useless**.” Some other kinds of words also have a negative meaning, such as “lack” or “reject,” or even “fight” or “evil.”

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each have a negative meaning.

We did this **not** because we have **no** authority ... (2 Thessalonians 3:9a ULT)

And this was **not** done **without** an oath! (Hebrews 7:20a ULT)

Be sure of this—the wicked person will **not** go **un**punished. (Proverbs 11:21a ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

- In some languages, such as Spanish, a double negative emphasizes the negative. The Spanish sentence, “No vi a nadie,” literally says “I did not see no one.” It has both the word ‘no’ next to the verb and ‘nadie,’ which means “no one.” The two negatives are seen as in agreement with each other, and the sentence means, “I did not see anyone.”
- In some languages, a second negative cancels the first one, creating a positive sentence. So, “He is not unintelligent” means “He is intelligent.”
- In some languages the double negative creates a positive sentence, but it is a weak statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” means, “He is somewhat intelligent.”
- In some languages, such as the languages of the Bible, the double negative can create a positive sentence, and often strengthens the statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” can mean “He is intelligent” or “He is very intelligent.”

To translate sentences with double negatives accurately and clearly in your language, you need to know what a double negative means in the Bible and how to express the same idea in your language.

Examples From the Bible

... in order **not** to be **un**fruitful. (Titus 3:14b ULT)

This means “so that they will be fruitful.”

All things were made through him and **without** him there was **not** one thing made that has been made. (John 1:3 ULT)

By using a double negative, John emphasized that the Son of God created absolutely everything. The double negative makes a stronger statement than the simple positive.

Translation Strategies

If double negatives are natural and are used to express the positive in your language, consider using them. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

- (1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is simply to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.
- (2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a strong positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives and put in a strengthening word or phrase such as “very” or “surely” or “absolutely.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is simply to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.

For we do **not** have a high priest who **cannot** feel sympathy for our weaknesses. (Hebrews 4:15a ULT)

“For we have a high priest who can feel sympathy for our weaknesses.”

... in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)

“... so that they may be fruitful.”

- (2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a strong positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives and put in a strengthening word or phrase such as “very” or “surely” or “absolutely.”

Be sure of this—the wicked person will **not** go **unpunished**. (Proverbs 11:21a ULT)

“Be sure of this—wicked people will **certainly** be punished.”

All things were made through him and **without** him there was **not** one thing made that has been made. (John 1:3 ULT)

“All things were made through him. He made **absolutely** everything that has been made.”

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:13](#); [4:2](#); [4:16](#); [6:1](#); [6:14](#); [6:17](#); [8:15](#))

Doublet

Description

We are using the word “doublet” to refer to two words or phrases that are used together and either mean the same thing or mean very close to the same thing. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Unlike [Hendiadys](#), in which one of the words modifies the other, in a doublet the two words or phrases are equal and are used to emphasize or intensify the one idea that is expressed by the two words or phrases.

This page answers the question: *What are doublets and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

A very similar issue is the repetition of the same word or phrase for emphasis, usually with no other words between them. Because these figures of speech are so similar and have the same effect, we will treat them here together.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In some languages people do not use doublets. Or they may use doublets, but only in certain situations, so a doublet might not make sense in their language in some verses. People might think that the verse is describing two ideas or actions, when it is only describing one. In this case, translators may need to find some other way to express the meaning expressed by the doublet.

Examples From the Bible

He has one people **scattered** and **dispersed** among the peoples (Esther 3:8 ULT)

The bolded words mean the same thing. Together they mean the people were spread out.

He attacked two men **more righteous** and **better** than himself. (1 Kings 2:32b ULT)

This means that they were “much more righteous” than he was.

You have decided to prepare **false** and **deceptive** words. (Daniel 2:9b ULT)

This means that they had decided to lie, which is another way of saying that they intended to deceive people.

... like of a lamb **without blemish** and **without spot**. (1 Peter 1:19b ULT)

This means that he was like a lamb that did not have any defect—not even one.

Then they approached {and} woke him up, saying, “**Master! Master!** We are perishing!” (Luke 8:24 ULT)

The repetition of “Master” means that the disciples called to Jesus urgently and continually.

Translation Strategies

If a doublet would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, consider these strategies.

(1) Translate only one of the words or phrases.

(2) If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words or phrases and add a word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”

(3) If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language's ways of doing that.

Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Translate only one of the words.

You have decided to prepare **false** and **deceptive** words. (Daniel 2:9b ULT)

"You have decided to prepare **false** things to say."

(2) If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as "very" or "great" or "many."

He has one people **scattered** and **dispersed** among the peoples (Esther 3:8 ULT)

"He has one people **very spread out**."

(3) If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language's ways of doing that.

... like a lamb **without blemish** and **without spot**. (1 Peter 1:19b ULT)

- English can emphasize this with "any" and "at all."

"... like a lamb **without any blemish at all**."

Then they approached {and} woke him up, saying, "**Master! Master!** We are perishing!" (Luke 8:24 ULT)

Then they approached {and} woke him up, **urgently shouting, "Master!**
We are perishing!"

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:17](#); [2:16](#); [7:15](#))

Ellipsis

Description

An ellipsis¹ occurs when a speaker or writer leaves out one or more words that normally should be in the sentence. The speaker or writer does this because he knows that the hearer or reader will understand the meaning of the sentence and supply the words in his mind when he hears or reads the words that are there. For example:

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, **nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.**
(Psalm 1:5 ULT)

There is ellipsis in the second part because “nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous” is not a complete sentence. The speaker assumes that the hearer will understand what it is that sinners will not do in the assembly of the righteous by filling in the action from the previous clause. With the action filled in, the complete sentence would read:

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor **will** sinners **stand** in the assembly of the righteous.

[¹] English has a punctuation symbol which is also called an ellipsis. It is a series of three dots (...) used to indicate an intentional omission of a word, phrase, sentence or more from text without altering its original meaning. This translationAcademy article is not about the punctuation mark, but about the concept of omission of words that normally should be in the sentence.

Two Types of Ellipsis

A Relative Ellipsis happens when the reader has to supply the omitted word or words from the context. Usually the word is in the previous sentence, as in the example above.

An Absolute Ellipsis happens when the omitted word or words are not in the context, but the phrases are common enough in the language that the reader is expected to supply what is missing from this common usage or from the nature of the situation.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers who see incomplete sentences or phrases may not know that there is information missing that the writer expects them to fill in. Or readers may understand that there is information missing, but they may not know what information is missing because they do not know the original biblical language, culture, or situation as the original readers did. In this case, they may fill in the wrong information. Or readers may misunderstand the ellipsis if they do not use ellipsis in the same way in their language.

Examples From the Bible

Relative Ellipsis

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf **and Sirion like a young ox.** (Psalm 29:6 ULT)

The writer wants his words to be few and to make good poetry. The full sentence with the information filled in would be:

This page answers the question: *What is ellipsis ?* ([^1])

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences]]

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and **he makes** Sirion **skip** like a young ox.

Watch carefully, therefore, how you walk—**not as unwise but as wise**. (Ephesians 5:15b ULT)

The information that the reader must understand in the second parts of these sentences can be filled in from the first parts:

Watch carefully, therefore, how you walk—**walk** not as unwise but **walk** as wise,

Absolute Ellipsis

Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight**.” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)

It seems that the man answered in an incomplete sentence because he wanted to be polite and not directly ask Jesus for healing. He knew that Jesus would understand that the only way he could receive his sight would be for Jesus to heal him. The complete sentence would be:

“Lord, **I want you to heal me so** that I might receive my sight.”

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. (Titus 1:4 ULT)

The writer assumes that the reader will recognize this common form of a blessing or wish, so he does not need to include the full sentence, which would be:

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. **May you receive** grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

Translation Strategies

If ellipsis would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

(1) Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor **sinner in the assembly** of the righteous. (Psalm 1:5 ULT)

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, and **sinner will not stand in the assembly** of the righteous.

Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight**.” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)

Then when the man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, **I want you to heal me** that I might receive my sight.”

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf **and Sirion like a young ox**. (Psalm 29:6 ULT)

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and **he makes** Sirion **skip** like a young ox.

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:9](#); [2:17](#); [3:3](#); [3:6](#); [4:5](#); [4:18](#); [5:9](#); [7:10](#); [10:18](#); [11:11](#); [11:23](#))

Exclamations

Description

Exclamations are words or sentences that show strong feeling such as surprise, joy, fear, or anger. In the ULT and UST, they usually have an exclamation mark (!) at the end. The mark shows that it is an exclamation. The situation and the meaning of what the people said helps us understand what feelings they were expressing. In the example below from Matthew 8, the speakers were terribly afraid. In the example from Matthew 9, the speakers were amazed, because something happened that they had never seen before.

This page answers the question: *What are ways of translating exclamations?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentencetypes\]\]](#)

Save us, Lord; we are about to die! (Matthew 8:25b ULT)

When the demon had been driven out, the mute man spoke. The crowds were astonished and said, "This has never been seen before in Israel!" (Matthew 9:33 ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages have different ways of showing that a sentence communicates strong emotion.

Examples From the Bible

Some exclamations have a word that shows feeling. The sentences below have "Oh" and "Ah." The word "oh" here shows the speaker's amazement.

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33 ULT)

The word "Alas" below shows that Gideon was very frightened.

When Gideon saw that he was the angel of Yahweh, Gideon lamented, "**Alas**, O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!" (Judges 6:22 ULT)

Some exclamations start with a question word such as "how" or "why," even though they are not questions. The sentence below shows that the speaker is amazed at how unsearchable God's judgments are.

How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

Some exclamations in the Bible do not have a main verb. The exclamation below shows that the speaker is disgusted with the person he is speaking to.

You worthless person! (Matthew 5:22b ULT)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is "is" or "are."
- (2) Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling.
- (3) Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.
- (4) Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.

(5) If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is “is” or “are.”

You worthless person! (Matthew 5:22b ULT)

“You **are** such a worthless person!”

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

“Oh, the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God **are** so deep!”

(2) Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling. In the first suggested translation below, the word “wow” shows that they were astonished. In the second suggested translation, the expression “Oh no” shows that something terrible or frightening has happened.

They were extremely astonished, saying, “He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.” (Mark 7:37 ULT)

“They were extremely astonished, saying, ‘**Wow!** He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.’”

Alas, oh my Lord Yahweh! For because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face! (Judges 6:22b ULT)

“**Oh no**, Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(3) Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.

“**Alas**, O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” (Judges 6:22 ULT)

“Lord Yahweh, **what will happen to me?** For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

“**Help**, Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(4) Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.

How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

“His judgments are **so** unsearchable and his ways are **far** beyond discovering!”

(5) If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

When Gideon saw that he was the angel of Yahweh, Gideon lamented, “**Alas**, O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” (Judges 6:22 ULT)

Gideon understood that this was the angel of Yahweh. **He was terrified** and said, “**Alas**, Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 3:9](#); [7:11](#))

Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Description

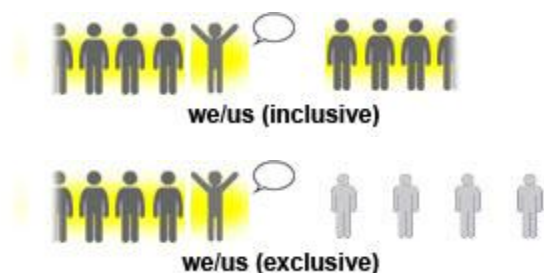
Some languages have more than one form of "we": an inclusive form that means "I and you" and an exclusive form that means "I and someone else but not you." The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also true for "us," "our," "ours," and "ourselves." Some languages have inclusive forms and exclusive forms for each of these. Translators whose language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms for these words will need to understand what the speaker meant so that they can decide which form to use.

This page answers the question: *What are the exclusive and inclusive forms of "we"?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

See the pictures. The people on the right are the people that the speaker is talking to. The yellow highlight shows who the inclusive "we" and the exclusive "we" refer to.



Reason This Is a Translation Issue

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. Like English, these languages do not have separate exclusive and inclusive forms for "we." If your language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms of "we," then you will need to understand what the speaker meant so that you can decide which form of "we" to use.

Examples From the Bible

Exclusive

They said, "There are not more than five loaves of bread and two fish with **us**—unless **we** go and buy food for all these people." (Luke 9:13 ULT)

In the second clause, the disciples are talking about some of them going to buy food. They were speaking to Jesus, but Jesus was not going to buy food. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" would use the **exclusive** form there.

We have seen it, and **we** bear witness to it. **We** are announcing to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and which has been made known to **us**. (1 John 1:2 ULT)

John is telling people who have not seen Jesus what he and the other apostles have seen. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" and "us" would use the **exclusive** forms in this verse.

Inclusive

The shepherds said one to each other, "Let **us** now go to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to **us**." (Luke 2:15b ULT)

The shepherds were speaking to one another. When they said "us," they were including the people they were speaking to, so languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" and "us" would use the **inclusive** form in this verse.

Now it happened that on one of those days, he indeed got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let **us** go over to the other side of the lake." So they set sail. (Luke 8:22 ULT)

When Jesus said "us," he was referring to himself and to the disciples he was speaking to, so languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" and "us" would use the **inclusive** form in this verse.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-gendernotations]]

(Go back to: [Introduction to 2 Corinthians](#); [2 Corinthians 1:4](#); [1:6](#); [1:12](#); [3:18](#); [4:1](#); [4:7](#); [5:21](#); [6:4](#); [6:16](#); [7:5](#); [10:11](#))

Forms of You

Singular, Dual, and Plural

Some languages have more than one word for “you” based on how many people the word “you” refers to. The **singular** form refers to one person, and the **plural** form refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a **dual** form which refers to two people, and some languages have other forms that refer to three or four people.

This page answers the question: *What are the different forms of you?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-yousingular]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-youdual]]

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_younum.

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses a singular form of “you” even though he is speaking to a crowd.

- Singular Pronouns that Refer to Groups

Formal and Informal

Some languages have more than one form of “you” based on the relationship between the speaker and the person he is talking to. People use the **formal** form of “you” when speaking to someone who is older, or has higher authority, or is someone they do not know very well. People use the **informal** form when speaking to someone who is not older, or does not have higher authority, or is a family member or close friend.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_youform.

For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- Forms of “You” — Formal or Informal

(Go back to: [Introduction to 2 Corinthians](#))

Go and Come

Description

This page answers the question: *What do I do if the word "go" or "come" is confusing in a certain sentence?*

Different languages have different ways of determining whether to use the words "go" or "come" and whether to use the words "take" or "bring" when talking about motion. For example, when saying that they are approaching a person who has called them, English speakers say "I'm coming," while Spanish speakers say "I'm going." You will need to study the context in order to understand what is meant by the words "go" and "come" (and also "take" and "bring"), and then translate those words in a way that your readers will understand which direction people are moving in.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of talking about motion. The biblical languages or your source language may use the words "go" and "come" or "take" and "bring" differently than your language uses them. If these words are not translated in the way that is natural in your language, your readers may be confused about which direction people are moving.

Examples From the Bible

Yahweh said to Noah, "**Come**, you and all your household, into the ark." (Genesis 7:1 ULT)

In some languages, this would lead people to think that Yahweh was in the ark.

But you will be free from my oath if you **come** to my relatives and they will not give her to you.
Then you will be free from my oath. (Genesis 24:41 ULT)

Abraham was speaking to his servant. Abraham's relatives lived far away from where he and his servant were standing and he wanted his servant to **go** to them, not **come** toward Abraham.

When you have **come** to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ... (Deuteronomy 17:14a ULT)

Moses is speaking to the people in the wilderness. They had not yet gone into the land that God was giving them. In some languages, it would make more sense to say, "When you have **gone** into the land ..."

They **brought** him up to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. (Luke 2:22b ULT)

In some languages, it might make more sense to say that they **took** or **carried** Jesus to the temple.

Then see, there was a man whose name was Jairus, and he was a leader of the synagogue. And falling at the feet of Jesus, he begged him to come to his house. (Luke 8:41 ULT)

The man was not at his house when he spoke to Jesus. He wanted Jesus to **go** with him to his house.

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

In some languages, it might make more sense to ask what did you come out to see.

Translation Strategies

If the word used in the ULT would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other strategies.

- (1) Use the word “go,” “come,” “take,” or “bring” that would be natural in your language.
- (2) Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the word “go,” “come,” “take,” or “bring” that would be natural in your language.

But you will be free from my oath if you **come** to my relatives and they will not give her to you. (Genesis 24:41 ULT)

But you will be free from my oath if you **go** to my relatives and they will not give her to you.

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

What did you come out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

- (2) Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

When you have **come** to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ... (Deuteronomy 17:14 ULT)

“When you have **arrived** in the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ...”

Yahweh said to Noah, “**Come**, you and all your household, into the ark ...” (Genesis 7:1 ULT)

Yahweh said to Noah, “**Enter**, you and all your household, into the ark ...”

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

What did you travel out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 9:5](#))

Hendiadys

Description

When a speaker expresses a single idea by using two words that are connected with “and,” it is called a hendiadys. In a hendiadys, the two words work together. Usually one of the words is the primary idea and the other word further describes the primary one.

This page answers the question: *What is hendiadys and how can I translate phrases that have it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech\]\]](#)

... his own **kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

Though “kingdom” and “glory” are both nouns, “glory” actually tells what kind of kingdom it is: it is a **kingdom of glory** or **a glorious kingdom**.

Two phrases connected by “and” can also be a hendiadys when they refer to a single person, thing, or event.

while we look forward to receiving **the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**. (Titus 2:13b ULT)

Titus 2:13 contains two hendiadyses. “The blessed hope” and “appearing of the glory” refer to the same thing and serve to strengthen the idea that the return of Jesus Christ is greatly anticipated and wonderful. Also, “our great God” and “Savior Jesus Christ” refer to one person, not two.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Often a hendiadys contains an abstract noun. Some languages may not have a noun with the same meaning.
- Many languages do not use the hendiadys, so people may not understand that the second word is further describing the first one.
- Many languages do not use the hendiadys, so people may not understand that only one person or thing is meant, not two.

Examples From the Bible

For I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** ... (Luke 21:15a ULT)

“A mouth” and “wisdom” are nouns, but in this figure of speech “wisdom” describes what comes from the mouth.

If you are willing and obedient ... (Isaiah 1:19a ULT)

“Willing” and “obedient” are adjectives, but “willing” describes “obedient.”

Translation Strategies

If the hendiadys would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Substitute the describing noun with an adjective that means the same thing.
- (2) Substitute the describing noun with a phrase that means the same thing.
- (3) Substitute the describing adjective with an adverb that means the same thing.

(4) Substitute other parts of speech that mean the same thing and show that one word or phrase describes the other.

(5) If it is unclear that only one thing is meant, change the phrase so that this is clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Substitute the describing noun with an adjective that means the same thing.

For I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** ... (Luke 21:15a ULT)

For I will give you **wise words** ...

Walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into **his own kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to **his own glorious kingdom**.

(2) Substitute the describing noun with a phrase that means the same thing.

For I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** ... (Luke 21:15a ULT)

for I will give you **words of wisdom**.

You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into **his own kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to **his own kingdom of glory**.

(3) Substitute the describing adjective with an adverb that means the same thing.

If you are willing and obedient ... (Isaiah 1:19a ULT)

If you are **willingly obedient** ...

(4) Substitute other parts of speech that mean the same thing and show that one word or phrase describes the other.

If you are willing and obedient ... (Isaiah 1:19a ULT)

The adjective “obedient” can be substituted with the verb “obey.”

if you **obey willingly** ...

(4) and (5) If it is unclear that only one thing is meant, change the phrase so that this is clear.

We look forward to receiving **the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**. (Titus 2:13b ULT)

The noun “glory” can be changed to the adjective “glorious” to make it clear that Jesus’ appearing is what we hope for. Also, “Jesus Christ” can be moved to the front of the phrase and “great God and Savior” put into a relative clause that describes the one person, Jesus Christ.

We look forward to receiving **what we are longing for, the blessed and glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, who is our great God and Savior**.

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 4:2; 12:1](#))

How to Translate Names

Description

The Bible contains the names of many people, groups of people, and places. Some of these names may sound strange and be hard to say. Sometimes readers may not know what a name refers to, and sometimes they may need to understand what a name means. This page will help you see how you can translate these names and how you can help people understand what they need to know about them.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate names that are new to my culture?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-unknown]]

Meaning of names

Most names in the Bible have meaning. Most of the time, names in the Bible are used simply to identify the people and places they refer to, but sometimes the meaning of a name is especially important.

For this **Melchizedek**, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, was the one who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. (Hebrews 7:1 ULT)

Here the writer uses the name “Melchizedek” primarily to refer to a man who had that name, and the title “king of Salem” tells us that he ruled over a certain city.

His name first indeed means “king of righteousness,” and then also “king of Salem,” that is, “king of peace.” (Hebrews 7:2b ULT)

Here the writer explains the meanings of Melchizedek’s name and title because those things tell us more about the person. Other times, the writer does not explain the meaning of a name because he expects the reader to already know the meaning. If the meaning of the name is important to understand the passage, you can include the meaning in the text or in a footnote.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Readers may not know some of the names in the Bible. They may not know whether a name refers to a person or place or something else.
- Readers may need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand the passage.
- Some names may have different sounds or combinations of sounds that are not used in your language or are unpleasant to say in your language. For strategies to address this problem, see Borrow Words.
- Some people and places in the Bible have two names. Readers may not realize that two names refer to the same person or place.

Examples From the Bible

Then you crossed over the **Jordan** and came to **Jericho**, and the men of Jericho, and the **Amorites** ... fought against you, but I gave them into your hand. (Joshua 24:11 ULT)

Readers might not know that “Jordan” is the name of a river, “Jericho” is the name of a city, and “Amorites” is the name of a group of people.

She said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore, the well was called **Beer Lahai Roi**. (Genesis 16:13b-14a ULT)

Readers may not understand the second sentence if they do not know that “Beer Lahai Roi” means “Well of the Living One who sees me.”

And she called his name **Moses** and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.” (Exodus 2:10b ULT)

Readers may not understand why she said this if they do not know that the name Moses sounds like the Hebrew words “pull out.”

Saul was in agreement with his execution. (Acts 8:1a ULT)

But when the apostles, Barnabas and **Paul**, heard of it, they tore their clothing. (Acts 14:14a ULT)

Readers may not know that the names Saul and Paul refer to the same person.

Translation Strategies

- (1) If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.
- (2) If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.
- (3) Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.
- (4) If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently.
- (5) Or if a person or place has two different names, then use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.

Then you crossed over the **Jordan** and came to **Jericho**, and the men of Jericho, and the **Amorites** ... fought against you, but I gave them into your hand. (Joshua 24:11 ULT)

You went over the **Jordan River** and came to the **city of Jericho**. The men of Jericho fought against you, along with **the tribe of the Amorites**.

At that hour, certain Pharisees approached, saying to him, “Leave and go away from here, because **Herod** wants to kill you.” (Luke 13:31 ULT)

At that hour, certain Pharisees approached, saying to him, “Go and leave here, because **King Herod** wants to kill you.”

- (2) If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.

And she called his name **Moses** and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.” (Exodus 2:10b ULT)

She called his name **Moses (which sounds like ‘drawn out’)**, and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.”

(3) Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.

She said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore, the well was called **Beer Lahai Roi**. (Genesis 16:13b-14a ULT)

She said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?”
Therefore, the well was called **Well of the Living One who sees me**.

(4) If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently. For example, Paul is called “Saul” before Acts 13 and “Paul” after Acts 13. You could translate his name as “Paul” all of the time, except in Acts 13:9 where it talks about him having both names.

... a young man named **Saul**. (Acts 7:58b ULT)

... a young man named **Paul** ¹

The footnote would look like:

^[1] Most versions say “Saul” here, but most of the time in the Bible he is called “Paul.”

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit; (Acts 13:9)

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit;

(5) Or if a person or place has two names, use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name. For example, you could write “Saul” where the source text has “Saul” and “Paul” where the source text has “Paul.”

a young man named **Saul** (Acts 7:58 ULT)

a young man named **Saul**

The footnote would look like:

^[1] This is the same man who is called Paul beginning in Acts 13.

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit; (Acts 13:9)

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit;

Then after the story has explained the name change, you could translate this way.

It came about in Iconium that **Paul** and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue (Acts 14:1 ULT)

It came about in Iconium that **Paul**¹ and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue

The footnote would look like:

[1] This is the same man who was called Saul before Acts 13.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-transliterate]]

(Go back to: [Introduction to 2 Corinthians](#); [2 Corinthians 1:1](#); [6:15](#); [9:1](#))

Hyperbole

Description

A speaker or writer can use exactly the same words to say something that he means as completely true, or as generally true, or as a hyperbole. This is why it can be hard to decide how to understand a statement. For example, the sentence below could mean three different things.

It rains here every night.

The speaker means this as literally true if he means that it really does rain here every night.

The speaker means this as a **generalization** if he means that it rains here most nights.

The speaker means this as a **hyperbole** if he wants to say that it rains more than it actually does, usually in order to express a strong attitude toward the amount or frequency of rain, such as being annoyed or being happy about it.

This page answers the question: *What are hyperboles? What are generalizations? How can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

Hyperbole

In hyperbole, a figure of speech that uses exaggeration, a speaker deliberately describes something with an extreme or even unreal statement, usually to show his strong feeling or opinion about it. He expects people to understand that he is exaggerating.

They will not leave **stone upon stone in you**. (Luke 19:44b ULT)

This is an exaggeration. It means that the enemies will completely destroy Jerusalem.

Moses was educated in **all the wisdom of the Egyptians**. (Acts 7:22a ULT)

This hyperbole means that he had learned everything an Egyptian education could offer.

Generalization

This is a statement that is true most of the time or in most situations that it could apply to.

The one who ignores instruction **will have poverty and shame**, but **honor will come** to him who learns from correction. (Proverbs 13:18)

These generalizations tell about what normally happens to people who ignore instruction and what normally happens to people who learn from correction. There may be some exceptions to these statements, but they are generally true.

And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as **the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words**. (Matthew 6:7)

This generalization tells about what Gentiles were known for doing. Many Gentiles did this. It does not matter if a few did not. The point was that the hearers should not join in this well-known practice.

Even though a hyperbole or a generalization may have a strong-sounding word like “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never,” it does not necessarily mean **exactly** “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never.” It simply means “most,” “most of the time,” “hardly any,” or “rarely.”

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers need to be able to understand whether or not a statement is literally true.

If readers realize that a statement is not literally true, they need to be able to understand whether it is a hyperbole, a generalization, or a lie. (Though the Bible is completely true, it tells about people who did not always tell the truth.)

Examples From the Bible

Examples of Hyperbole

If your hand causes you to stumble, **cut it off**. It is better for you to enter into life maimed ... (Mark 9:43a ULT)

When Jesus said to cut off your hand, he meant that we should **do whatever extreme things** we need to do in order not to sin. He used this hyperbole to show how extremely important it is to try to stop sinning.

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel with 3,000 chariots, 6,000 men to drive the chariots, and troops **as numerous as the sand on the seashore**. (1 Samuel 13:5a ULT)

The bolded phrase is an exaggeration for the purpose of expressing the emotion that the Philistine army was overwhelming in number. It means that there were **many, many** soldiers in the Philistine army.

But as his anointing teaches you **everything** and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, remain in him. (1 John 2:27b ULT)

This is a hyperbole. It expresses the assurance that God's Spirit teaches us about **all things that we need to know**. God's Spirit does not teach us about everything that it is possible to know.

When they found him, they also said to him, "**Everyone** is looking for you." (Mark 1:37 ULT)

The disciples probably did not mean that everyone in the city was looking for Jesus, but that **many people** were looking for him, or that all of Jesus' closest friends there were looking for him. This is an exaggeration for the purpose of expressing the emotion that they and many others were worried about him.

Examples of Generalization

Can **any good thing** come out of Nazareth? (John 1:46b ULT)

This rhetorical question is meant to express the generalization that there is nothing good in Nazareth. The people there had a reputation for being uneducated and not strictly religious. Of course, there were exceptions.

One of them, of their own prophets, has said, "**Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy bellies**." (Titus 1:12 ULT)

This is a generalization that means that Cretans had a reputation to be like this because, in general, this is how Cretans behaved. It is possible that there were exceptions.

A lazy hand causes a person to be poor, but the hand of the diligent person gains riches. (Proverbs 10:4 ULT)

This is generally true, and it reflects the experience of most people. It is possible that there are exceptions in some circumstances.

Caution

- Do not assume that something is an exaggeration just because it seems to be impossible. God does miraculous things.

They saw Jesus **walking on the sea** and coming near the boat. (John 6:19b ULT)

This is not hyperbole. Jesus really walked on the water. It is a literal statement.

- Do not assume that the word “all” is always a generalization that means “most.”

> Yahweh is righteous in **all** his ways

> and gracious in **all** he does. (Psalms 145:17 ULT)

Yahweh is always righteous. This is a completely true statement.

Translation Strategies

If the hyperbole or generalization would be natural and people would understand it and not think that it is a lie, consider using it. If not, here are other options.

- (1) Express the meaning without the exaggeration.
- (2) For a generalization, show that it is a generalization by using a phrase like “in general” or “in most cases.”
- (3) For a hyperbole or a generalization, add a word like “many” or “almost” to show that the hyperbole or generalization is not meant to be exact.
- (4) For a hyperbole or a generalization that has a word like “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never,” consider deleting that word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Express the meaning without the exaggeration.

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: 3,000 chariots, 6,000 men to drive the chariots, and troops **as numerous as the sand on the seashore**. (1 Samuel 13:5a ULT)

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: 3,000 chariots, 6,000 men to drive the chariots, and **a great number of troops**.

- (2) For a generalization, show that it is a generalization by using a phrase like “in general” or “in most cases.”

The one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame. (Proverbs 13:18a ULT)

In general, the one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame

When you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the **Gentiles do**, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. (Matthew 6:7 ULT)

And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the Gentiles **generally** do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words.

- (3) For a hyperbole or a generalization, add a word like “many” or “almost” to show that the hyperbole or generalization is not meant to be exact.

The **whole** country of Judea and **all** the people of Jerusalem went out to him. (Mark 1:5a ULT)

Almost all the country of Judea and **almost all** the people of Jerusalem went out to him.
or:

Many of the country of Judea and **many** of the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

(4) For a hyperbole or a generalization that has a word like “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never,” consider deleting that word.

The **whole** country of Judea and **all** the people of Jerusalem went out to him. (Mark 1:5a ULT)

The country of Judea and the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 11:8](#); [11:20](#); [11:23](#); [11:27](#))

Idiom

An idiom is a figure of speech made up of a group of words that, as a whole, has a meaning that is different from what one would understand from the meanings of the individual words. Someone from outside of the culture usually cannot understand an idiom without someone inside the culture explaining its true meaning. Every language uses idioms. Some English examples are:

- You are pulling my leg. (This means, “You are teasing me by telling me something that is not true.”)
- Do not push the envelope. (This means, “Do not take a matter to its extreme.”)
- This house is under water. (This means, “The debt owed for this house is greater than its actual value.”)
- We are painting the town red. (This means, “We are going around town tonight celebrating very intensely.”)

This page answers the question: *What are idioms and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

Description

An idiom is a phrase that has a special meaning to the people of the language or culture who use it. Its meaning is different than what a person would understand from the meanings of the individual words that form the phrase.

He **set his face** to go to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:51b ULT)

The words “set his face” is an idiom that means “decided.”

Sometimes people may be able to understand an idiom from another culture, but it might sound like a strange way to express the meaning.

I am not worthy that you would **come under my roof**. (Luke 7:6b ULT)

The phrase “come under my roof” is an idiom that means “enter my house.”

Put these words **into your ears**. (Luke 9:44a ULT)

This idiom means “Listen carefully and remember what I say.”

Purpose: An idiom is probably created in a culture somewhat by accident when someone describes something in an unusual way. But, when that unusual way communicates the message powerfully and people understand it clearly, other people start to use it. After a while, it becomes a normal way of talking in that language.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People can easily misunderstand idioms in the original languages of the Bible if they do not know the cultures that produced the Bible.
- People can easily misunderstand idioms that are in the source language Bibles if they do not know the cultures that made those translations.
- It is useless to translate idioms literally (according to the meaning of each word) when the target language audience will not understand what they mean.

Examples From the Bible

Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, “Look, we are your **flesh and bone**.” (1 Chronicles 11:1 ULT)

This means, “We and you belong to the same race, the same family.”

■ The children of Israel went out **with a high hand**. (Exodus 14:8b ASV)

This means, "The Israelites went out defiantly."

■ the one who **lifts up my head** (Psalm 3:3b ULT)

This means, "the one who helps me."

Translation Strategies

If the idiom would be clearly understood in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.
- (2) Use a different idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.

■ Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Look, we are your **flesh and bone**." (1 Chronicles 11:1 ULT)

■ Look, we all **belong to the same nation**.

■ Then he **set his face** to go to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:51b ULT)

■ He started to travel to Jerusalem, **determined to reach it**.

■ I am not worthy that you would come **under my roof**. (Luke 7:6b ULT)

■ I am not worthy that you should enter **my house**.

- (2) Use an idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.

■ Put these words **into your ears**. (Luke 9:44a ULT)

■ **Be all ears** when I say these words to you.

■ My **eyes grow dim** from grief. (Psalm 6:7a ULT)

■ I am crying my **eyes out**

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:9](#); [1:24](#); [4:14](#); [5:13](#); [7:3](#); [7:9](#); [10:13](#); [10:15](#); [11:23](#))

Irony

Description

Irony is a figure of speech in which the sense that the speaker intends to communicate is actually the opposite of the literal meaning of the words. Sometimes a person does this by using someone else's words, but in a way that communicates that he does not agree with them. People do this to emphasize how different something is from what it should be, or how someone else's belief about something is wrong or foolish. It is often humorous.

This page answers the question: *What is irony and how can I translate it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

Then Jesus answered and said to them, "People who are well do not have need of a physician, but those who have sickness. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."
(Luke 5:31-32 ULT)

When Jesus spoke of "righteous people," he was not referring to people who were truly righteous, but to people who wrongly believed that they were righteous. By using irony, Jesus communicated that they were wrong to think that they were better than others and did not need to repent.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

If someone does not realize that a speaker is using irony, he will think that the speaker actually believes what he is saying. He will understand the passage to mean the opposite of what it was intended to mean.

Examples From the Bible

How well you reject the commandment of God so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9b ULT)

Here Jesus praises the Pharisees for doing something that is obviously wrong. Through irony, he communicates the opposite of praise: He communicates that the Pharisees, who take great pride in keeping the commandments, are so far from God that they do not even recognize that their traditions are breaking God's commandments. The use of irony makes the Pharisee's sin more obvious and startling.

"Present your case," says Yahweh; "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. **"Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled."** (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULT)

People worshiped idols as if their idols had knowledge or power, and Yahweh was angry at them for doing that. So he used irony and challenged their idols to tell what would happen in the future. He knew that the idols could not do this, but by speaking as if they could, he mocked the idols, making their inability more obvious, and rebuked the people for worshiping them.

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?
Can you find the way back to their houses for them?
Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then; "the number of your days is so large!" (Job 38:20-21 ULT)

Job thought that he was wise. Yahweh used irony to show Job that he was not so wise. The two phrases in bold above are irony. They emphasize the opposite of what they say, because they are so obviously false. They

emphasize that Job could not possibly answer God's questions about the creation of light because Job was not born until many, many years later.

Already you are satisfied! Already you have become rich! **You began to reign** apart from us, and I wish you really did reign, so that we also might reign with you. (1 Corinthians 4:8 ULT)

The Corinthians considered themselves to be very wise, self-sufficient, and not in need of any instruction from the Apostle Paul. Paul used irony, speaking as if he agreed with them, to show how proudly they were acting and how far from being wise they really were.

Translation Strategies

If the irony would be understood correctly in your language, translate it as it is stated. If not, here are some other strategies.

- (1) Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.
- (2) The irony is **not** found in the literal words of the speaker, but instead the true meaning is found in the opposite of the literal meaning of the speaker's words.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.

How well you reject the commandment of God so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9a ULT)

You think that you are doing well when you reject God's commandment so you may keep your tradition!
You act like it is good to reject God's commandment so you may keep your tradition!

I did not come to call **the righteous**, but sinners to repentance. (Luke 5:32 ULT)

I did not come to call **people who think that they are righteous** to repentance, but to call sinners to repentance.

- (2) Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony.

How well you reject the commandment of God so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9a ULT)

You are doing a terrible thing when you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition!

"Present your case," says Yahweh; "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. **"Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled."** (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULT)

'Present your case,' says Yahweh; 'present your best arguments for your idols,' says the King of Jacob. Your idols **cannot bring us their own arguments or come forward to declare to us what will happen** so we may know these things well. We cannot hear them because **they cannot speak** to tell us their earlier predictive declarations, so we cannot reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?

Can you find the way back to their houses for them?

**Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then;
the number of your days is so large!** (Job 38:20-21 ULT)

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? **You act like you know how light and darkness were created, as if you were there; as if you are as old as creation, but you are not!**

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Litotes](#)

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 3:7](#); [Notes](#); [11:5](#); [11:8](#); [11:19](#); [11:21](#); [Notes](#); [12:11](#); [12:13](#); [12:16](#))

Litotes

Description

Litotes is a figure of speech in which the speaker expresses a strong positive meaning by using two negative words or a negative word with a word that means the opposite of the meaning he intends. A few examples of negative words are “no,” “not,” “none,” and “never.” The opposite of “good” is “bad.” Someone could say that something is “not bad” to mean that it is extremely good.

This page answers the question: *What is litotes?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not use litotes. People who speak those languages might not understand that a statement using litotes actually strengthens the positive meaning. Instead, they might think that it weakens or even cancels the positive meaning.

Examples From the Bible

For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was **not useless**, (1 Thessalonians 2:1 ULT)

By using litotes, Paul emphasized that his visit with them was **very** useful.

Now when it became day, there was **no small disturbance** among the soldiers over what therefore had happened to Peter. (Acts 12:18 ULT)

By using litotes, Luke emphasized that there was a **lot** of excitement or anxiety among the soldiers about what happened to Peter. (Peter had been in prison, and even though there were soldiers guarding him, he escaped when an angel let him out. So they were very agitated.)

But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are **not the least** among the leaders of Judah,
for from you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel. (Matthew 2:6 ULT)

By using litotes, the prophet emphasized that Bethlehem would be a **very important city**.

Translation Strategies

If the litotes would be understood correctly, consider using it.

(1) If the meaning with the negative would not be clear, give the **positive** meaning in a strong way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the meaning with the negative would not be clear, give the **positive** meaning in a strong way.

For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was **not useless**. (1 Thessalonians 2:1 ULT)

“For you yourselves know, brothers, our visit to you **did much good**.”

Now when it became day, there was **no small disturbance** among the soldiers over what therefore had happened to Peter. (Acts 12:18 ULT)

“Now when it became day, there was **great excitement** among the soldiers, regarding what had happened to Peter.”

or:

“Now when it became day, the soldiers were **very concerned** because of what had happened to Peter.”

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:8](#); [2:11](#); [11:6](#); [11:14](#); [11:15](#); [11:31](#); [12:11](#); [13:7](#))

Merism

Definition

Merism is a figure of speech in which a person refers to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it. By referring to the extreme parts, the speaker intends to include also everything in between those parts.

"I am **the alpha and the omega**," says the Lord God,
"the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8 ULT)

I am **the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end**.
(Revelation 22:13, ULT)

This page answers the question: *What does the word merism mean and how can I translate phrases that have it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

Alpha and omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. This is a merism that includes everything from the beginning to the end. It means eternal.

... I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth** ..., (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

Heaven and earth is a merism that includes everything that exists.

Reason This is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not use merism. The readers of those languages may think that the phrase only applies to the items mentioned. They may not realize that it refers to those two things and everything in between.

Examples From the Bible

From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh's name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)

This bolded phrase is a merism because it speaks of the east and the west and everywhere in between. It means "everywhere."

He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13)

The bolded phrase is merism because it speaks of old people and young people and everyone in between. It means "everyone."

Translation Strategies

If the merism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.
- (2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.

I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything**.

From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh's name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)

In all places, people should praise Yahweh's name.

(2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything, including both what is in heaven and what is on earth**.

He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13 ULT)

He will bless **all those** who honor him, regardless of whether they are **young or old**.

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 6:8](#))

Metaphor

Description

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of one thing as if it were a different thing because he wants people to think about how those two things are alike.

For example, someone might say, “The girl I love is a red rose.”

A girl and a rose are very different things, but the speaker considers that they are alike in some way. The hearer’s task is to understand in what way they are alike.

This page answers the question: *What is a metaphor and how can I translate a Bible passage that has one?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-simile\]\]](#)

The Parts of a Metaphor

The example above shows us that a metaphor has three parts. In this metaphor, the speaker is talking about “the girl I love.” This is the **Topic**. The speaker wants the hearer to think about what is similar between her and “a red rose.” The red rose is the **Image** to which he compares the girl. Most probably, he wants the hearer to consider that they are both beautiful. This is the **Idea** that the girl and the rose both share, and so we may also call it the **Point of Comparison**.

Every metaphor has three parts:

- The **Topic**, the item being immediately discussed by the writer/speaker.
- The **Image**, the physical item (object, event, action, etc.) which the speaker uses to describe the topic.
- The **Idea**, the abstract concept or quality that the physical **Image** brings to the mind of the hearer when he thinks of how the **Image** and the **Topic** are similar. Often, the **Idea** of a metaphor is not explicitly stated in the Bible, but it is only implied from the context. The hearer or reader usually needs to think of the **Idea** himself.

Using these terms, we can say that a metaphor is a figure of speech that uses a physical **Image** to apply an abstract **Idea** to the speaker’s **Topic**.

Usually, a writer or speaker uses a metaphor in order to express something about a **Topic**, with at least one **Point of Comparison (Idea)** between the **Topic** and the **Image**. Often in metaphors, the **Topic** and the **Image** are explicitly stated, but the **Idea** is only implied. The writer/speaker often uses a metaphor in order to invite the readers/listeners to think about the similarity between the **Topic** and the **Image** and to figure out for themselves the **Idea** that is being communicated.

Speakers often use metaphors in order to strengthen their message, to make their language more vivid, to express their feelings better, to say something that is hard to say in any other way, or to help people remember their message.

Sometimes speakers use metaphors that are very common in their language. However, sometimes speakers use metaphors that are uncommon, and even some metaphors that are unique. When a metaphor has become very common in a language, often it becomes a “passive” metaphor, in contrast to uncommon metaphors, which we describe as being “active.” Passive metaphors and active metaphors each present a different kind of translation problem, which we will discuss below.

Passive Metaphors

A passive metaphor is a metaphor that has been used so much in the language that its speakers no longer regard it as one concept standing for another. Linguists often call these “dead metaphors.” Passive metaphors are extremely common. Examples in English include the terms “table **leg**,” “family **tree**,” “book **leaf**” (meaning a page

in a book), or the word “crane” (meaning a large machine for lifting heavy loads). English speakers simply think of these words as having more than one meaning. Examples of passive metaphors in Biblical Hebrew include using the word “hand” to represent “power,” using the word “face” to represent “presence,” and speaking of emotions or moral qualities as if they were “clothing.”

Patterned Pairs of Concepts Acting as Metaphors

Many ways of metaphorical speaking depend on pairs of concepts, where one underlying concept frequently stands for a different underlying concept. For example, in English, the direction “up” (the Image) often represents the concepts of “more” or “better” (the Idea). Because of this pair of underlying concepts, we can make sentences such as “The price of gasoline is going **up**,” “A **highly** intelligent man,” and also the opposite kind of idea: “The temperature is going **down**,” and “I am feeling very **low**.”

Patterned pairs of concepts are constantly used for metaphorical purposes in the world’s languages because they serve as convenient ways to organize thought. In general, people like to speak of abstract qualities (such as power, presence, emotions, and moral qualities) as if they were body parts, or as if they were objects that could be seen or held, or as if they were events that could be watched as they happened.

When these metaphors are used in normal ways, it is rare that the speaker and audience regard them as figurative speech. Examples of metaphors in English that go unrecognized are:

- “Turn the heat **up**.” More is spoken of as up.
- “Let us **go ahead** with our debate.” Doing what was planned is spoken of as walking or advancing.
- “You **defend** your theory well.” Argument is spoken of as war.
- “A **flow** of words.” Words are spoken of as liquids.

English speakers do not view these as metaphorical expressions or figures of speech, so it would be wrong to translate them into other languages in a way that would lead people to pay special attention to them as figurative speech. For a description of important patterns of this kind of metaphor in biblical languages, please see Biblical Imagery — Common Patterns and the pages it will direct you to.

When translating something that is a passive metaphor into another language, do not treat it as a metaphor. Instead, just use the best expression for that thing or concept in the target language.

Active Metaphors

These are metaphors that people recognize as one concept standing for another concept, or one thing for another thing. Metaphors make people think about how the one thing is like the other thing, because in most ways the two things are very different. People also easily recognize these metaphors as giving strength and unusual qualities to the message. For this reason, people pay attention to these metaphors. For example,

But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings.
(Malachi 4:2a ULT)

Here, God speaks about his salvation as if it were the sun rising in order to shine its rays on the people whom he loves. He also speaks of the sun’s rays as if they were wings. Also, he speaks of these wings as if they were bringing medicine that would heal his people. Here is another example:

And he said to them, “Go and tell that fox ...” (Luke 13:32a ULT)

Here, “that fox” refers to King Herod. The people listening to Jesus certainly understood that Jesus was intending for them to apply certain characteristics of a fox to Herod. They probably understood that Jesus intended to communicate that Herod was evil, either in a cunning way or as someone who was destructive, murderous, or who took things that did not belong to him, or all of these.

Active metaphors require the translator's special care to make a correct translation. To do so, you need to understand the parts of a metaphor and how they work together to produce meaning.

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me will not be hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." (John 6:35 ULT)

In this metaphor, Jesus called himself the bread of life. The **Topic** is "I" (meaning Jesus himself) and the **Image** is "bread." Bread was the primary food that people ate in that place and time. The similarity between bread and Jesus is that people need both to live. Just as people need to eat food in order to have physical life, people need to trust in Jesus in order to have eternal life. The **Idea** of the metaphor is "life." In this case, Jesus stated the central Idea of the metaphor, but often the Idea is only implied.

Purposes of Metaphor

- One purpose of metaphor is to teach people about something that they do not know (the **Topic**) by showing that it is like something that they already do know (the **Image**).
- Another purpose is to emphasize that something (the **Topic**) has a particular quality (the **Idea**) or to show that it has that quality in an extreme way.
- Another purpose is to lead people to feel the same way about the **Topic** as they would feel about the **Image**.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People may not recognize that something is a metaphor. In other words, they may mistake a metaphor for a literal statement, and thus, misunderstand it.
- People may not be familiar with the thing that is used as an image, and so, not be able to understand the metaphor.
- If the topic is not stated, people may not know what the topic is.
- People may not know the points of comparison that the speaker wants them to understand. If they fail to think of these points of comparison, they will not understand the metaphor.
- People may think that they understand the metaphor, but they do not. This can happen when they apply points of comparison from their own culture, rather than from the biblical culture.

Translation Principles

- Make the meaning of a metaphor as clear to the target audience as it was to the original audience.
- Do not make the meaning of a metaphor more clear to the target audience than you think it was to the original audience.

Examples From the Bible

Listen to this word, **you cows of Bashan**, (Amos 4:1q ULT)

In this metaphor Amos speaks to the upper-class women of Samaria ("you," the Topic) as if they were cows (the Image). Amos does not say what similarity(s) he intends between these women and cows. He wants the reader to think of them, and he fully expects that readers from his culture will easily do so. From the context, we can see that he means that the women are like cows in that they are fat and interested only in feeding themselves. If we were to apply similarities from a different culture, such as that cows are sacred and should be worshiped, we would get the wrong meaning from this verse.

NOTE: Amos does not actually mean that the women are cows. He speaks to them as human beings.

Yet, Yahweh, you are our father; **we are the clay. You are our potter**; and we all are the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 ULT)

The example above has two related metaphors. The Topic(s) are “we” and “you,” and the Image(s) are “clay” and “potter.” The similarity between a potter and God is the fact that both make what they wish out of their material. The potter makes what he wishes out of the clay, and God makes what he wishes out of his people. The Idea being expressed by the comparison between the potter’s clay and “us” is that **neither the clay nor God’s people have a right to complain about what they are becoming**.

Jesus said to them, “Take heed and beware of **the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees**.” The disciples reasoned among themselves and said, “It is because we did not take bread.” (Matthew 16:6-7 ULT)

Jesus used a metaphor here, but his disciples did not realize it. When he said “yeast,” they thought he was talking about bread, but “yeast” was the Image in his metaphor, and the Topic was the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Since the disciples (the original audience) did not understand what Jesus meant, it would not be good to state clearly here what Jesus meant.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the metaphor in the same way that the original readers would have understood it, go ahead and use it. Be sure to test the translation to make sure that people do understand it in the right way.

If people do not or would not understand it, here are some other strategies.

- (1) If the metaphor is a common expression in the source language or expresses a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language (that is, it is a passive metaphor), then express the **Idea** in the simplest way preferred by your language.
- (2) If the metaphor seems to be an active metaphor, you can translate it literally **if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor in the same way to mean the same thing as in the Bible**. If you do this, be sure to test it to make sure that the language community understands it correctly.
- (3) If the target audience does not realize that it is a metaphor, then change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding words such as “like” or “as.” See Simile.
- (4) If the target audience would not know the **Image**, see Translate Unknowns for ideas on how to translate that image.
- (5) If the target audience would not use that **Image** for that meaning, use an image from your own culture instead. Be sure that it is an image that could have been possible in Bible times.
- (6) If the target audience would not know what the **Topic** is, then state the topic clearly. (However, do not do this if the original audience did not know what the Topic was.)
- (7) If the target audience would not know the intended similarity (the **Idea**) between the topic and the image, then state it clearly.
- (8) If none of these strategies is satisfactory, then simply state the **Idea** plainly without using a metaphor.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the metaphor is a common expression in the source language or expresses a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language (that is, a passive metaphor), then express the Idea in the simplest way preferred by your language.

Then, see, one of the leaders of the synagogue, named Jairus, came, and when he saw him, **fell at his feet**. (Mark 5:22 ULT)

Then one of the leaders of the synagogue, named Jairus, came, and when he saw him, **immediately bowed down in front of him**.

(2) If the metaphor seems to be an active metaphor, you can translate it literally **if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor in the same way to mean the same thing as in the Bible**. If you do this, be sure to test it to make sure that the language community understands it correctly.

But Jesus said to them, "He wrote this commandment to you because of your **hardness of heart**." (Mark 10:5 ULT)

It was because of your **hard hearts** that he wrote you this law.

We made no change to this one, but it must be tested to make sure that the target audience correctly understands this metaphor.

(3) If the target audience does not realize that it is a metaphor, then change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding words such as "like" or "as."

Yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we **are the clay**. You **are our potter**; and we all are the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 ULT)

And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are **like** clay. You are **like** a potter; and we all are the work of your hand.

(4) If the target audience would not know the **Image**, see Translate Unknowns for ideas on how to translate that image.

Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you **to kick against a goad**. (Acts 26:14b ULT)

Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to **kick against a pointed stick**.

(5) If the target audience would not use that **Image** for that meaning, use an image from your own culture instead. Be sure that it is an image that could have been possible in Bible times.

Yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the **clay**. You are our **potter**; and we all are the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 ULT)

"And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the **wood**. You are our **carver**; and we all are the work of your hand."

"And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the **string**. You are the **weaver**; and we all are the work of your hand."

(6) If the target audience would not know what the **Topic** is, then state the topic clearly. (However, do not do this if the original audience did not know what the topic was.)

Yahweh lives; may **my rock** be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted. (Psalm 18:46 ULT)

Yahweh lives; **He is my rock**. May he be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted.

(7) If the target audience would not know the intended similarity between the Topic and the Image, then state it clearly.

Yahweh lives; may **my rock** be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted. (Psalm 18:46 ULT)

Yahweh lives; may he be praised because he is the rock **under which I can hide from my enemies**. May the God of my salvation be exalted.

Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you **to kick against a goad**. (Acts 26:14 ULT)

Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? You **fight against me and hurt yourself like an ox that kicks against its owner's pointed stick**.

(8) If none of these strategies are satisfactory, then simply state the idea plainly without using a metaphor.

I will make you to become **fishers of men**. (Mark 1:17b ULT)

I will make you to become **people who gather men**.
Now you gather fish. I will make you **gather people**.

To learn more about specific metaphors, see Biblical Imagery — Common Patterns.

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:5](#); [1:8](#); [1:9](#); [1:10](#); [1:22](#); [2:12](#); [2:14](#); [2:15](#); [2:16](#); [Notes](#); [3:2](#); [3:3](#); [3:9](#); [3:11](#); [3:14](#); [3:15](#); [3:16](#); [3:18](#); [4:2](#); [4:3](#); [4:4](#); [4:6](#); [4:7](#); [4:10](#); [4:11](#); [4:15](#); [4:17](#); [Notes](#); [5:1](#); [5:2](#); [5:4](#); [5:5](#); [5:6](#); [5:7](#); [5:17](#); [6:3](#); [6:7](#); [6:11](#); [6:12](#); [6:13](#); [6:14](#); [6:16](#); [7:2](#); [7:3](#); [7:4](#); [8:2](#); [8:7](#); [8:9](#); [Notes](#); [9:6](#); [9:8](#); [9:10](#); [9:12](#); [Notes](#); [10:3](#); [10:4](#); [10:5](#); [10:8](#); [10:12](#); [10:13](#); [Notes](#); [11:2](#); [11:3](#); [11:9](#); [11:12](#); [11:14](#); [11:20](#); [11:28](#); [11:29](#); [12:7](#); [12:9](#); [12:15](#); [12:18](#); [12:19](#); [13:10](#))

Metonymy

Description

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which an item (either physical or abstract) is called not by its own name, but by the name of something closely associated with it. A metonym is a word or phrase used as a substitute for something that it is associated with.

This page answers the question: *What is a metonymy?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

... and **the blood** of Jesus his Son cleanses us from every sin. (1 John 1:7b ULT)

The blood represents Christ's death.

And he took **the cup** in the same way after supper, saying, "**This cup** is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (Luke 22:20 ULT)

The cup represents the wine that is in the cup.

Metonymy can be used

- as a shorter way of referring to something
- to make an abstract idea more meaningful by referring to it with the name of a physical object associated with it

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

The Bible uses metonymy very often. Speakers of some languages are not familiar with metonymy and they may not recognize it when they read it in the Bible. If they do not recognize the metonymy, they will not understand the passage or, worse yet, they will get a wrong understanding of the passage. Whenever a metonym is used, people need to be able to understand what it represents.

Examples From the Bible

The Lord God will give to him **the throne** of his father David. (Luke 1:32b ULT)

A throne represents the authority of a king. "Throne" is a metonym for "kingly authority," "kingship," or "reign." This means that God would make him become a king who would follow King David.

Then immediately his **mouth** was opened (Luke 1:64a ULT)

The mouth here represents the power to speak. This means that he was able to talk again.

Who warned you to flee from **the wrath** that is coming? (Luke 3:7b ULT)

The word "wrath" or "anger" is a metonym for "punishment." God was extremely angry with the people and, as a result, he would punish them.

Translation Strategies

If people would easily understand the metonym, consider using it. Otherwise, here are some options.

- (1) Use the metonym along with the name of the thing it represents.
- (2) Use only the name of the thing the metonym represents.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the metonym along with the name of the thing it represents.

And he took the cup in the same way after the supper, saying, “**This cup** is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.” (Luke 22:20 ULT)

He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, “**The wine in this cup** is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.”

This verse also contains a second metonym: The cup, (representing the wine it contains) also represents the new covenant made with the blood Christ shed for us.

- (2) Use the name of the thing the metonym represents.

The Lord God will give him **the throne** of his father David. (Luke 1:32b ULT)

“The Lord God will give him **the kingly authority** of his father, David.”

or:

“The Lord God will **make him king** like his ancestor, King David.”

Who warned you to flee from **the wrath** that is coming? (Luke 3:7b ULT)

“Who warned you to flee from God’s coming **punishment**?”

To learn about some common metonymies, see Biblical Imagery — Common Metonymies.

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:12](#); [1:22](#); [2:4](#); [2:17](#); [3:2](#); [3:15](#); [4:2](#); [4:6](#); [5:12](#); [5:19](#); [6:11](#); [6:12](#); [9:2](#); [9:7](#); [9:10](#); [10:2](#); [10:3](#); [10:4](#); [10:6](#); [11:18](#); [11:33](#); [12:15](#))

Parallelism

Description

Parallelism is a poetic device in which two phrases or clauses that are similar in structure or idea are used together. The following are some of the different kinds of parallelism.

- The second clause or phrase means the same as the first. This is called synonymous parallelism.
- The second clarifies or strengthens the meaning of the first.
- The second completes what is said in the first.
- The second says something that contrasts with the first, but adds to the same idea.

Parallelism is most commonly found in Old Testament poetry, such as in the books of Psalms and Proverbs. It also occurs in Greek in the New Testament, both in the four gospels and in the apostles' letters.

This article will only discuss synonymous parallelism, the kind in which the two parallel phrases mean the same thing, because that is the kind that presents a problem for translation. Note that we use the term "synonymous parallelism" for long phrases or clauses that have the same meaning. We use the term "doublet" for words or very short phrases that mean basically the same thing and are used together.

In the poetry of the original languages, synonymous parallelism has several effects:

- It shows that something is very important by saying it more than once and in more than one way.
- It helps the hearer to think more deeply about the idea by saying it in different ways.
- It makes the language more beautiful and raises it above the ordinary way of speaking.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use synonymous parallelism. They would either think it odd that someone said the same thing twice, or, since it is in the Bible, they would think that the two phrases must have some difference in meaning. For them it would be confusing, rather than beautiful. They would not understand that the repetition of the idea in different words serves to emphasize the idea.

Examples From the Bible

Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105 ULT)

Both parts of the sentence are metaphors saying that God's word teaches people how to live. That is the single idea. The words "lamp" and "light" are similar in meaning because they refer to light. The words "my feet" and "my path" are related because they refer to a person walking. Walking is a metaphor for living.

You make him to rule over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:6 ULT)

Both lines say that God made man the ruler of everything. "To rule over" is the same idea as putting things "under his feet," and "the works of your [God's] hands" is the same idea as "all things."

This page answers the question: *What is parallelism?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

Yahweh sees everything a person does
and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

The first phrase and the second phrase mean the same thing. There are three ideas that are the same between these two phrases. “Sees” corresponds to “watches,” “everything...does” corresponds to “all the paths...takes,” and “a person” corresponds to “he.”

Praise Yahweh, all you nations;
exalt him, all you peoples! (Psalm 117:1 ULT)

Both parts of this verse tell people everywhere to praise Yahweh. The words ‘Praise’ and ‘exalt’ mean the same thing. The words ‘Yahweh’ and ‘him’ refer to the same person. The terms ‘all you nations’ and ‘all you peoples’ refer to the same people.

For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people,
and he will fight in court against Israel. (Micah 6:2b ULT)

The two parts of this verse say that Yahweh has a serious disagreement with his people, Israel. These are not two different disagreements or two different groups of people.

Translation Strategies

For most kinds of parallelism, it is good to translate both of the clauses or phrases. For synonymous parallelism, it is good to translate both clauses if people in your language understand that the purpose of saying something twice is to strengthen a single idea. But if your language does not use parallelism in this way, then consider using one of the following translation strategies.

- (1) Combine the ideas of both clauses into one.
- (2) If it appears that the clauses are used together to show that what they say is really true, you could combine the ideas of both clauses into one and include words that emphasize the truth such as “truly” or “certainly.”
- (3) If it appears that the clauses are used together to intensify an idea in them, you could combine the ideas of both clauses into one and use words like “very,” “completely,” or “all.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Combine the ideas of both clauses into one.

Until now you have dealt deceitfully with me and you have spoken lies to me. (Judges 16:13, ULT)

Delilah expressed this idea twice to emphasize that she was very upset.

Until now you have deceived me with your lies.

Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

The phrase “all the paths he takes” is a metaphor for “all he does.”

Yahweh pays attention to everything a person does.

For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, and he will fight in court against Israel. (Micah 6:2 ULT)

This parallelism describes one serious disagreement that Yahweh had with one group of people. If this is unclear, the phrases can be combined:

For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, Israel.

(2) If it appears that the clauses are used together to show that what they say is really true, you could combine the ideas of both clauses into one and include words that emphasize the truth such as “truly” or “certainly.”

Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

Yahweh truly sees everything a person does.

You make him to rule over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet
(Psalm 8:6 ULT)

You have certainly made him to rule over everything that you have created.

(3) If it appears that the clauses are used together to intensify an idea in them, you could combine the ideas of both clauses into one and use words like “very,” “completely” or “all.”

Until now you have dealt deceitfully with me and you have spoken lies to me. (Judges 16:13, ULT)

All you have done is lie to me.

Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

Yahweh sees absolutely everything that a person does.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Personification](#)

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:3](#); [6:16](#); [10:12](#); [12:21](#))

Personification

Description

Personification is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of something as if it could do things that animals or people can do. People often do this because it makes it easier to talk about things that we cannot see:

Such as wisdom:

Does not Wisdom call out? (Proverbs 8:1a ULT)

Or sin:

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT)

People also use personification because it is sometimes easier to talk about people's relationships with non-human things such as wealth as if they were relationships between people.

You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24b ULT)

In each case, the purpose of the personification is to highlight a certain characteristic of the non-human thing. As in metaphor, the reader needs to think of the way that the thing is like a certain kind of person.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some languages do not use personification.
- Some languages use personification only in certain situations.

Examples From the Bible

You cannot **serve** God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24b ULT)

Jesus speaks of wealth as if it were a master whom people might serve. Loving money and basing one's decisions on it is like serving it as a slave would serve his master.

Does not Wisdom **call** out? Does not Understanding **raise her voice**? (Proverbs 8:1 ULT)

The author speaks of wisdom and understanding as if they were woman who calls out to teach people. This means that they are not something hidden, but something obvious that people should pay attention to.

Translation Strategies

If the personification would be understood clearly, consider using it. If it would not be understood, here are some other ways for translating it.

- (1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.
- (2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as "like" or "as" to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.
- (3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

This page answers the question: *What is personification?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — God speaks of sin as if it were a wild animal that is waiting for the chance to attack. This shows how dangerous sin is. An additional phrase can be added to make this danger clear.

Sin is at your door, **waiting to attack you**.

(2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as “like” or “as” to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — This can be translated with the word “as.”

Sin is crouching at the door, **just as a wild animal does as it waits to attack a person..**

(3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

Even the **winds and the sea obey him**. (Matthew 8:27b ULT) — The men speak of the “wind and the sea” as if they are able to hear and obey Jesus, just as people can. This could also be translated without the idea of obedience by speaking of Jesus controlling them.

He even **controls the winds and the sea**.

NOTE: We have broadened our definition of “personification” to include “zoomorphism” (speaking of other things as if they had animal characteristics) and “anthropomorphism” (speaking of non-human things as if they had human characteristics) because the translation strategies for them are the same.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-apostrophe\]\]](#)
[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bita-part1\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:12](#); [3:6](#); [4:12](#); [8:2](#))

Rhetorical Question

A rhetorical question is a question that a speaker asks when he is more interested in expressing his attitude about something than in getting information about it. Speakers use rhetorical questions to express deep emotion or to encourage hearers to think deeply about something. The Bible contains many rhetorical questions, often to express surprise, to rebuke or scold the hearer, or to teach. Speakers of some languages use rhetorical questions for other purposes as well.

This page answers the question: *What are rhetorical questions and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentencetypes\]\]](#)

Description

A rhetorical question is a question that strongly expresses the speaker's attitude toward something. Often the speaker is not looking for information at all. Or, if he is asking for information, it is not usually the information that the question appears to ask for. The speaker is more interested in expressing his attitude than in getting information.

But those who stood by said, **“Are you insulting the high priest of God?”** (Acts 23:4 ULT)

The people who asked Paul this question were not asking if he was insulting God's high priest. Rather, they used this question to accuse Paul of insulting the high priest.

The Bible contains many rhetorical questions. These rhetorical questions might be used for the purposes: of expressing attitudes or feelings, rebuking people, teaching something by reminding people of something they know and encouraging them to apply it to something new, or introducing something they want to talk about.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some languages do not use rhetorical questions; for them a question is always a request for information.
- Some languages use rhetorical questions, but for purposes that are different or more limited than in the Bible.
- Because of these differences between languages, some readers might misunderstand the purpose of a rhetorical question in the Bible.

Examples From the Bible

Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel? (1 Kings 21:7b ULT)

Jezebel used the question above to remind King Ahab of something he already knew: he still ruled the kingdom of Israel. The rhetorical question made her point more strongly than if she had merely stated it, because it forced Ahab to admit the point himself. She did this in order to rebuke him for being unwilling to take over a poor man's property. She was implying that, since he was the king of Israel, he had the power to take the man's property.

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULT)

God used the question above to remind his people of something they already knew: a young woman would never forget her jewelry or a bride forget her veils. He then rebuked his people for forgetting him who is so much greater than those things.

Why did I not die when I came out from the womb? (Job 3:11a ULT)

Job used the question above to show deep emotion. This rhetorical question expresses how sad he was that he did not die as soon as he was born. He wished that he had not lived.

And how has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord would come to me? (Luke 1:43 ULT)

Elizabeth used the question above to show how surprised and happy she was that the mother of her Lord came to her.

Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULT)

Jesus used the question above to remind the people of something they already knew: a good father would never give his son something bad to eat. By introducing this point, Jesus could go on to teach them about God with his next rhetorical question:

Therefore, if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him? (Matthew 7:11 ULT)

Jesus used this question to teach the people in an emphatic way that God gives good things to those who ask him.

What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed that a man took and threw into his garden ... (Luke 13:18b-19a ULT)

Jesus used the question above to introduce what he was going to talk about. He was about to compare the kingdom of God to something. In this case, he compared the kingdom of God to a mustard seed.

Translation Strategies

In order to translate a rhetorical question accurately, first be sure that the question you are translating truly is a rhetorical question and is not an information question. Ask yourself, "Does the person asking the question already know the answer to the question?" If so, it is a rhetorical question. Or, if no one answers the question, did the person who asked it expect to receive an answer? If not, it is a rhetorical question.

When you are sure that the question is rhetorical, then be sure that you understand the purpose for the rhetorical question. Is it to encourage or rebuke or shame the hearer? Is it to bring up a new topic? Is it to do something else?

When you know the purpose of the rhetorical question, then think of the most natural way to express that purpose in the target language. It might be as a question, or a statement, or an exclamation.

If using the rhetorical question would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing so. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Add the answer after the question.
- (2) Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.
- (3) Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.
- (4) Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Add the answer after the question.

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULT)

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? **Of course not!** Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!

Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULT)

Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he will give him a stone? **None of you would do that!**

(2) Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.

What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed. (Luke 13:18-19a ULT)

This is what the kingdom of God is like. It is like a mustard seed ...

Are you insulting the high priest of God? (Acts 23:4b ULT) (Acts 23:4 ULT)

You should not insult God's high priest!

Why did I not die when I came out from the womb? (Job 3:11a ULT)

I wish I had died when I came out from the womb!

And how has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (Luke 1:43 ULT)

How wonderful it is that the mother of my Lord has come to me!

(3) Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.

Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel? (1 Kings 21:7b ULT)

You still rule the kingdom of Israel, **do you not?**

(4) Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULT)

If your son asks you for a loaf of bread, **would you give him a stone?**

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULT)

What virgin would forget her jewelry, and what bride would forget her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1 General Notes](#); [1:17](#); [2:2](#); [2:16](#); [3:1](#); [3:8](#); [Notes](#); [6:14](#); [6:15](#); [6:16](#); [10:7](#); [Notes](#); [11:7](#); [11:11](#); [11:22](#); [11:23](#); [11:29](#); [Notes](#); [12:13](#); [12:15](#); [12:17](#); [12:18](#); [12:19](#))

Synecdoche

Description

Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a speaker uses a part of something to refer to the whole thing, or uses the whole to refer to a part.

■ **My soul** magnifies the Lord. (Luke 1:46b ULT)

Mary was very happy about what the Lord was doing, so she said “my soul,” which means the inner, emotional part of herself, to refer to her whole self.

■ So **the Pharisees** said to him, “Look, why are they doing that which is not lawful?” (Mark 2:24a ULT)

The Pharisees who were standing there did not all say the same words at the same time. Instead, it is more likely that one man representing the group said those words.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some readers may not recognize the synecdoche and thus misunderstand the words as a literal statement.
- Some readers may realize that they are not to understand the words literally, but they may not know what the meaning is.

Example From the Bible

■ Then I looked on all the deeds that **my hands** had accomplished. (Ecclesiastes 2:11a ULT)

“My hands” is a synecdoche for the whole person because clearly the arms and the rest of the body and the mind were also involved in the person’s accomplishments. The hands are chosen to represent the person because they are the parts of the body most directly involved in the work.

Translation Strategies

If the synecdoche would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

(1) State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

■ **“My soul** magnifies the Lord.” (Luke 1:46b ULT)

■ **“I** magnify the Lord.”

So **the Pharisees** said to him ... (Mark 2:24a ULT)

■ **A representative of the Pharisees** said to him ...

Then I looked on all the deeds that **my hands** had accomplished. (Ecclesiastes 2:11a ULT)

This page answers the question: *What is a synecdoche, and how can I translate such a thing into my language?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

I looked on all the deeds that I had accomplished

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Metonymy](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bita-part2]]

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 3:6](#); [5:1](#); [7:5](#); [8:16](#))

Textual Variants

Description

Thousands of years ago, people wrote the books of the Bible. Other people then copied them by hand and translated them. They did this work very carefully, and over the years many people made thousands of copies. However, people who looked at them later saw that there were small differences between them. Some copiers accidentally left out some words, or some mistook one word for another that looked like it. Occasionally, they added words or even whole sentences, either by accident or because they wanted to explain something. Modern Bibles are translations of the old copies. Some modern Bibles include some of these sentences that were added. In the ULT, these added sentences are usually written in footnotes.

Bible scholars have read many old copies and compared them with each other. For each place in the Bible where there was a difference, they have figured out which wordings are most likely correct. The translators of the ULT based the ULT on wordings that scholars say are most likely correct. Because people who use the ULT may have access to Bibles that are based on other copies, the ULT translators have sometimes included information about some of the differences between them, either in the ULT footnotes or in the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes.

Translators are encouraged to translate the text in the ULT and to write about added sentences in footnotes, as is done in the ULT. However, if the local church really wants those sentences to be included in the main text, translators may put them in the text and include a footnote about them.

This page answers the question: *Why does the ULT have missing or added verses, and should I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-source-text\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-manuscripts\]\]](#)

Examples From the Bible

Matthew 18:10-11 ULT has a footnote about verse 11.

¹⁰ See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I say to you that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is in heaven. ¹¹ [1]

[1] Many authorities, some ancient, insert v. 11: **For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost.**

John 7:53-8:11 is not in the best earliest manuscripts. It has been included in the ULT, but it is marked off with square brackets ([]) at the beginning and end, and there is a footnote after verse 11.

53 [Then everyone went to his own house ... 11 She said, "No one, Lord." Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more."] [2]

[2] Some ancient manuscripts include John 7:53-8:11

Translation Strategies

When there is a textual variant, you may choose to follow the ULT or another version that you have access to.

- (1) Translate the verses as they are in the ULT and include the footnote that the ULT provides.
- (2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

The translation strategies are applied to Mark 7:14-16 ULT, which has a footnote about verse 16.

¹⁴ He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. ¹⁵ There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man." ¹⁶ ^[1]

^[1] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(1) Translate the verses as they are in the ULT and include the footnote that the ULT provides.

¹⁴ He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. ¹⁵ There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man." ¹⁶ ^[1]

^[1] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

¹⁴ He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. ¹⁵ There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man. ¹⁶ If any man has ears to hear, let him hear." ^[1]

^[1] Some ancient manuscripts do not include verse 16.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-chapverse\]\]](#)
[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-manuscripts\]\]](#)
[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-terms\]\]](#)
[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-original\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [Introduction to 2 Corinthians](#))

Translating Son and Father

Door43 supports Bible translations that represent these concepts when they refer to God.

Biblical Witness

“Father” and “Son” are names that God calls himself in the Bible.

The Bible shows that God called Jesus his Son:

After he was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water, and ... a voice came out of the heavens saying, **“This is my beloved Son.** I am very pleased with him.” (Matthew 3:16-17 ULT)

The Bible shows that Jesus called God his Father:

Jesus ... said, “I praise you **Father**, Lord of heaven and earth ... no one knows the **Son** except the **Father**, and no one knows the **Father** except the **Son**.” (Matthew 11:25a, 27b ULT) (See also: John 6:26-57)

Christians have found that “Father” and “Son” are the ideas that most essentially describe the eternal relationship of the First and Second Persons of the Trinity to each other. The Bible indeed refers to them in various ways, but no other terms reflect the eternal love and intimacy between these Persons, nor the interdependent eternal relationship between them.

Jesus referred to God in the following terms:

Baptize them into **the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.** (Matthew 28:19b ULT)

The intimate, loving relationship between the Father and the Son is eternal, just as they are eternal. The Father **loves** the Son. (See John 3:35-36; 5:19-20 ULT)

I love the Father, and just as the Father commanded me, thus I do. (John 14:31 ULT)

No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son. (Luke 10:22b ULT)

The terms “Father” and “Son” also communicate that the Father and the Son are of the same essence; they are both eternal God.

Jesus said, “Father, ... glorify your Son so that the Son will glorify you ... I glorified you on the earth ... Now Father, glorify me ... with the glory that **I had with you before the world was made.**” (John 17:1, 4a, 5 ULT)

But in these last days, he [God the Father] has spoken to us through a Son, whom he appointed to be the heir of all things. Through him, he also made the universe. He is the brightness of God’s glory and **the very exact representation of his being.** He holds everything together by the word of his power. (Hebrews 1:2-3a ULT)

Jesus said to him, “I have been with you for so long and you still do not know me, Philip? **Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.** How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’” (John 14:9 ULT)

This page answers the question: *Why are these concepts important in referring to God?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/guidelines-faithful\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/guidelines-sonofgod\]\]](#)

Human Relationships

Human fathers and sons are not perfect, but the Bible still uses those terms for the Father and Son, who are perfect.

Just as today, human father-son relationships during Bible times were never as loving or perfect as the relationship between Jesus and his Father. But this does not mean that the translator should avoid the concepts of father and son. The Scriptures use these terms to refer to God, the perfect Father and Son, as well as to sinful human fathers and sons. In referring to God as Father and Son, choose words in your language that are widely used to refer to a human “father” and “son.” In this way you will communicate that God the Father and God the Son are of the same divine essence (they are both God), just as a human father and son are of the same human essence (they are both human and share the same human characteristics).

Translation Strategies

(1) Think through all the possibilities within your language to translate the words “son” and “father.” Determine which words in your language best represent the divine “Son” and “Father.”

(2) If your language has more than one word for “son,” use the word that has the closest meaning to “only son” (or “first son” if necessary).

(3) If your language has more than one word for “father,” use the word that has the closest meaning to “birth father,” rather than “adoptive father.”

(See *God the Father* and *Son of God* pages in [unfoldingWord® Translation Words](#) for help translating “Father” and “Son.”)

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1:19](#))



unfoldingWord® Translation Words

Version 28

apostle, apostleship

Definition:

The “apostles” were men sent by Jesus to preach about God and his kingdom. The term “apostleship” refers to the position and authority of those who were chosen as apostles.

- The word “apostle” means “someone who is sent out for a special purpose.” The apostle has the same authority as the one who sent him.
- Jesus’ twelve closest disciples became the first apostles. Other men, such as Paul and James, also became apostles.
- By God’s power, the apostles were able to boldly preach the gospel and heal people, and were able to force demons to come out of people.

Translation Suggestions:

- The word “apostle” can also be translated with a word or phrase that means “someone who is sent out” or “sent-out one” or “person who is called to go out and preach God’s message to people.”
- It is important to translate the terms “apostle” and “disciple” in different ways.
- Also consider how this term was translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: authority, [disciple](#), James (son of Zebedee), Paul, the twelve)

Bible References:

- Jude 1:17-19
- Luke 9:12-14

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **26:10** Then Jesus chose twelve men who were called his **apostles**. The **apostles** traveled with Jesus and learned from him.
- **30:1** Jesus sent his **apostles** to preach and to teach people in many different villages.
- **38:2** Judas was one of Jesus’ **apostles**. He was in charge of the **apostles’** money bag, but he loved money and often stole from the bag.
- **43:13** The disciples devoted themselves to the **apostles’** teaching, fellowship, eating together, and prayer.
- **46:8** Then a believer named Barnabas took Saul to the **apostles** and told them how Saul had preached boldly in Damascus.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G06510, G06520, G24910, G53760, G55700

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 11 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

clean, wash

Definition:

The term “clean” generally refers either to removing dirt or stains from someone/something or to not having any dirt or stain in the first place. The term “wash” refers specifically to action of removing dirt or stains from someone/something.

- “Cleanse” is the process of making something “clean.” It could also be translated as “wash” or “purify.”
- In the Old Testament, God told the Israelites which animals he had specified as ritually “clean” and which ones were “unclean.” Only the clean animals were permitted to be used for eating or for sacrifice. In this context, the term “clean” means that the animal was acceptable to God for use as a sacrifice.
- A person who had certain skin diseases would be unclean until the skin was healed enough to no longer be contagious. Instructions for cleansing the skin had to be obeyed in order for that person to be declared “clean” again.
- Sometimes “clean” is used figuratively to refer to moral purity, meaning to be “clean” from sin.

In the Bible, the term “unclean” is used figuratively to refer to things that God declared to be unfit for his people to touch, eat, or sacrifice.

- God gave the Israelites instructions about which animals were “clean” and which ones were “unclean.” The unclean animals were not permitted to be used for eating or for sacrifice.
- People with certain skin diseases were said to be “unclean” until they were healed.
- If the Israelites touched something “unclean,” they themselves would be considered unclean for a certain period of time.
- Obeying God’s commands about not touching or eating unclean things kept the Israelites set apart for God’s service.
- This physical and ritual uncleanness was also symbolic of moral uncleanness.
- In another figurative sense, an “unclean spirit” refers to an evil spirit.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated with the common word for “clean” or “pure” (in the sense of being not dirty).
- Other ways to translate this could include, “ritually clean” or “acceptable to God.”
- “Cleanse” could be translated by “wash” or “purify.”
- Make sure that the words used for “clean” and “cleanse” can also be understood in a figurative sense.
- The term “unclean” could also be translated as “not clean” or “unfit in God’s eyes” or “physically unclean” or “defiled.”
- When referring to a demon as an unclean spirit, “unclean” could be translated as “evil” or “defiled.”
- The translation of this term should allow for spiritual uncleanness. It should be able to refer to anything that God declared as unfit for touching, eating, or sacrifice.

(See also: defile, demon, [holy](#), sacrifice)

Bible References:

- Genesis 7:2
- Genesis 7:8
- Deuteronomy 12:15
- Psalms 51:7
- Proverbs 20:30
- Ezekiel 24:13
- Matthew 23:27

- Luke 5:13
- Acts 8:7
- Acts 10:27-29
- Colossians 3:5
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- James 4:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1249, H1252, H1305, H2134, H2135, H2141, H2398, H2548, H2834, H2889, H2890, H2891, H2893, H2930, H2931, H2932, H3001, H3722, H5079, H5352, H5355, H5356, H6172, H6565, H6663, H6945, H7137, H8552, H8562, G01670, G01690, G25110, G25120, G25130, G28390, G28400, G33940, G36890

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 7 General Notes](#))

covenant

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “covenant” refers to a formal, binding agreement between two parties that one or both parties must fulfill.

- This agreement can be between individuals, between groups of people, or between God and people.
- When people make a covenant with each other, they promise that they will do something, and they must do it.
- Examples of human covenants include marriage covenants, business agreements, and treaties between countries.
- Throughout the Bible, God made several different covenants with his people.
- In some of the covenants, God promised to fulfill his part without conditions. For example, when God established his covenant with mankind promising to never destroy the earth again with a worldwide flood, this promise had no conditions for people to fulfill.
- In other covenants, God promised to fulfill his part only if the people obeyed him and fulfilled their part of the covenant.

The term “new covenant” refers to the commitment or agreement God made with his people through the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus.

- God’s “new covenant” was explained in the part of the Bible called the “New Testament.”
- This new covenant is in contrast to the “old” or “former” covenant that God had made with the Israelites in Old Testament times.
- The new covenant is better than the old one because it is based on the sacrifice of Jesus, which completely atoned for people’s sins forever. The sacrifices made under the old covenant did not do this.
- God writes the new covenant on the hearts of those who become believers in Jesus. This causes them to want to obey God and to begin to live holy lives.
- The new covenant will be completely fulfilled in the end times when God establishes his reign on earth. Everything will once again be very good, as it was when God first created the world.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate this term could include, “binding agreement” or “formal commitment” or “pledge” or “contract.”
- Some languages may have different words for covenant depending on whether one party or both parties have made a promise they must keep. If the covenant is one-sided, it could be translated as “promise” or “pledge.”
- Make sure the translation of this term does not sound like people proposed the covenant. In all cases of covenants between God and people, it was God who initiated the covenant.
- The term “new covenant” could be translated as “new formal agreement” or “new pact” or “new contract.”
- The word “new” in these expressions has the meaning of “fresh” or “new kind of” or “another.”

(See also: [covenant](#), promise)

Bible References:

- Genesis 9:12
- Genesis 17:7
- Genesis 31:44
- Exodus 34:10-11
- Joshua 24:24-26

- 2 Samuel 23:5
- 2 Kings 18:11-12
- Mark 14:24
- Luke 1:73
- Luke 22:20
- Acts 7:8
- 1 Corinthians 11:25-26
- 2 Corinthians 3:6
- Galatians 3:17-18
- Hebrews 12:24

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:9** Then God made a **covenant** with Abram. A **covenant** is an agreement between two parties.
- **5:4** "I will make Ishmael a great nation, too, but my **covenant** will be with Isaac."
- **6:4** After a long time, Abraham died and all of the promises that God had made to him in the **covenant** were passed on to Isaac.
- **7:10** "The **covenant** promises God had promised to Abraham and then to Isaac now passed on to Jacob."
- **13:2** God said to Moses and the people of Israel, "If you will obey my voice and keep my **covenant**, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."
- **13:4** Then God gave them the **covenant** and said, "I am Yahweh, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other gods."
- **15:13** Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the **covenant** that God had made with the Israelites at Sinai.
- **21:5** Through the prophet Jeremiah, God promised that he would make a **New Covenant**, but not like the covenant God made with Israel at Sinai. In the **New Covenant**, God would write his law on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would forgive their sins. The Messiah would start the **New Covenant**.
- **21:14** Through the Messiah's death and resurrection, God would accomplish his plan to save sinners and start the **New Covenant**.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the **New Covenant** that is poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Do this to remember me every time you drink it."
- **48:11** But God has now made a **New Covenant** that is available to everyone. Because of this **New Covenant**, anyone from any people group can become part of God's people by believing in Jesus.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1285, H2319, H3772, G08020, G12420, G49340

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 3 General Notes](#))

darkness

Definition:

The term “darkness” literally means an absence of light. There are also several figurative meanings of this term:

- As a metaphor, “darkness” means “impurity” or “evil” or “spiritual blindness.”
- It also refers to anything related to sin and moral corruption.
- The expression “dominion of darkness” refers to all that is evil and ruled by Satan.
- The term “darkness” can also be used as a metaphor for death. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- People who do not know God are said to be “living in darkness,” which means they do not understand or practice righteousness.
- God is light (righteousness) and the darkness (evil) cannot overcome that light.
- The place of punishment for those who reject God is sometimes referred to as “outer darkness.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term literally, with a word in the project language that refers to the absence of light. This could also be a term that refers to the darkness of a room with no light or to the time of day when there is no light.
- For the figurative uses, it is also important to keep the image of darkness in contrast to light, as a way to describe evil and deception in contrast to goodness and truth.
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could be, “darkness of night” (as opposed to “light of day”) or “not seeing anything, like at night” or “evil, like a dark place”.

(See also: corrupt, dominion, kingdom, [light](#), redeem, [righteous](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:6
- 1 John 2:8
- 1 Thessalonians 5:5
- 2 Samuel 22:12
- Colossians 1:13
- Isaiah 5:30
- Jeremiah 13:16
- Joshua 24:7
- Matthew 8:12

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0652, H0653, H2816, H2821, H2822, H2825, H3990, H3991, H4285, H5890, H6205, G22170, G46520, G46530, G46550, G46560

([Go back to: 2 Corinthians 6 General Notes; Notes](#))

die, dead, deadly, death

Definition:

The term “death” refers to being physically dead instead of alive.

1. Physical death

- To “die” means to stop living. Death is the end of physical life.
- The expression “put to death” refers to killing or murdering someone, especially when a king or other ruler gives an order for someone to be killed.

2. Eternal death

- Eternal death is the separation of a person from God.
- This is the kind of death that happened to Adam when he sinned and disobeyed God. His relationship with God was broken. He became ashamed and tried to hide from God.
- This same kind of death happens to every person, because we sin. But God gives us eternal life when we have faith in Jesus Christ.

Translation Suggestions:

- To translate this term, it is best to use the everyday, natural word or expression in the target language that refers to death.
- In some languages, to “die” may be expressed as to “not live.” The term “dead” may be translated as “not alive” or “not having any life” or “not living.”
- Many languages use figurative expressions to describe death, such as to “pass away” in English. However, in the Bible it is best to use the most direct term for death that is used in everyday language.
- In the Bible, eternal life and eternal death are often compared to physical life and physical death. It is important in a translation to use the same word or phrase for both physical death and eternal death.
- In some languages it may be more clear to say “eternal death” when the context requires that meaning. Some translators may also feel it is best to say “physical death” in contexts where it is being contrasted to spiritual death.
- The expression “the dead” is a nominal adjective that refers to people who have died. Some languages will translate this as “dead people” or “people who have died.” (See: nominal adjective)
- The expression “put to death” could also be translated as “kill” or “murder” or “execute.”

(See also: believe, [faith](#), [life](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 15:21
- 1 Thessalonians 4:17
- Acts 10:42
- Acts 14:19
- Colossians 2:15
- Colossians 2:20
- Genesis 2:15-17
- Genesis 34:27
- Matthew 16:28
- Romans 5:10

- Romans 5:12
- Romans 6:10

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:11** God told Adam that he could eat from any tree in the garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If he ate from this tree, he would **die**.
- **2:11** "Then you will **die**, and your body will return to dirt."
- **7:10** Then Isaac **died**, and Jacob and Esau buried him.
- **37:5** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he **dies**. Everyone who believes in me will never **die**."
- **40:8** Through his **death**, Jesus opened a way for people to come to God.
- **43:7** "Although Jesus **died**, God raised him from the dead."
- **48:2** Because they sinned, everyone on earth gets sick and everyone **dies**.
- **50:17** He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or **death**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0006, H1478, H1826, H1934, H2491, H4191, H4192, H4193, H4194, H4463, H5038, H5315, H6297, H6757, H7496, H7523, H8045, H8546, H8552, G03360, G03370, G05200, G05990, G06150, G06220, G16340, G19350, G20790, G22530, G22860, G22870, G22880, G22890, G23480, G28370, G29660, G34980, G34990, G35000, G44300, G48800, G48810, G50530, G50540

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 4 General Notes](#))

disciple

Definition:

The term “disciple” refers to a person who spends much time with a teacher, learning from that teacher’s character and teaching.

- The people who followed Jesus around, listening to his teachings and obeying them, were called his “disciples.”
- John the Baptist also had disciples.
- During Jesus’ ministry, there were many disciples who followed him and heard his teachings.
- Jesus chose twelve disciples to be his closest followers; these men became known as his “apostles.”
- Jesus’ twelve apostles continued to be known as his “disciples” or “the 12.”
- Just before Jesus went up to heaven, he commanded his disciples to teach other people about how to become Jesus’ disciples, too.
- Anyone who believes in Jesus and obeys his teachings is called a disciple of Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “disciple” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “follower” or “student” or “pupil” or “learner.”
- Make sure that the translation of this term does not refer only to a student who learns in a classroom.
- The translation of this term should also be different from the translation of “apostle.”

(See also: [apostle](#), believe, Jesus, John (the Baptist), the twelve)

Bible References:

- Acts 6:1
- Acts 9:26-27
- Acts 11:26
- Acts 14:22
- John 13:23
- Luke 6:40
- Matthew 11:3
- Matthew 26:33-35
- Matthew 27:64

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **30:8** He (Jesus) gave the pieces to his **disciples** to give to the people. The **disciples** kept passing out the food, and it never ran out!
- **38:1** About three years after Jesus first began preaching and teaching publicly, Jesus told his **disciples** that he wanted to celebrate this Passover with them in Jerusalem, and that he would be killed there.
- **38:11** Then Jesus went with his **disciples** to a place called Gethsemane. Jesus told his **disciples** to pray that they would not enter into temptation.
- **42:10** Jesus said to his **disciples**, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. So go, make **disciples** of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3928, G31000, G31010, G31020

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 13 General Notes](#))

eternity, everlasting, eternal, forever

Definition:

The terms “everlasting” and “eternal” have very similar meanings and refer to something that will always exist or that lasts forever.

- The term “eternity” refers to a state of being that has no beginning or end. It can also refer to life that never ends.
- After this present life on earth, humans will spend eternity either in heaven with God or in hell apart from God.
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” are used in the New Testament to refer to living forever with God in heaven.

The term “forever” refers to never-ending time.

- The phrase “forever and ever” has the idea of time that never ends and expresses what eternity or eternal life is like. It emphasizes that something will always happen or exist. It refers to time that never ends.
- God said that David’s throne would last “forever.” This is referred to the fact that David’s descendant Jesus will reign as king forever.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “eternal” or “everlasting” could include “unending” or “never stopping” or “always continuing.”
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” could also be translated as “life that never ends” or “life that continues without stopping” or “the raising up of our bodies to live forever.”
- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “eternity” could include “existing outside of time” or “unending life” or “life in heaven.”
- Also consider how this word is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)
- “Forever” could also be translated by “always” or “never ending.”
- The phrase “will last forever” could also be translated as “always exist” or “will never stop” or “will always continue.”
- The emphatic phrase “forever and ever” could also be translated as “for always and always” or “not ever ending” or “which never, ever ends.”
- David’s throne lasting forever could be translated as “David’s descendant will reign forever” or “a descendant of David will always be reigning.”

(See also: David, reign, [life](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 17:8
- Genesis 48:4
- Exodus 15:17
- 2 Samuel 3:28-30
- 1 Kings 2:32-33
- Job 4:20-21
- Psalms 21:4
- Isaiah 9:6-7
- Isaiah 40:27-28
- Daniel 7:18

- Luke 18:18
- Acts 13:46
- Romans 5:21
- Hebrews 6:19-20
- Hebrews 10:11-14
- 1 John 1:2
- 1 John 5:12
- Revelation 1:4-6
- Revelation 22:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:1** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit **eternal life**?”
- **28:1** One day, a rich young ruler came up to Jesus and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to have **eternal life**?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only One who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have **eternal life**, obey God’s laws.”
- **28:10** Jesus answered, “Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or property for my name’s sake, will receive 100 times more and will also receive **eternal life**.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3117, H4481, H5331, H5703, H5705, H5769, H5865, H5957, H6924, G01260, G01650, G01660, G13360

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1 General Notes](#))

faith

Definition:

In general, the term “faith” refers to a belief, trust or confidence in someone or something.

- To “have faith” in someone is to believe that what he says and does is true and trustworthy.
- To “have faith in Jesus” means to believe all of God’s teachings about Jesus. It especially means that people trust in Jesus and his sacrifice to cleanse them from their sin and to rescue them from the punishment they deserve because of their sin.
- True faith or belief in Jesus will cause a person to produce good spiritual fruits or behaviors because the Holy Spirit is living in him.
- Sometimes “faith” refers generally to all the teachings about Jesus, as in the expression “the truths of the faith.”
- In contexts such as “keep the faith” or “abandon the faith,” the term “faith” refers to the state or condition of believing all the teachings about Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, “faith” can be translated as “belief” or “conviction” or “confidence” or “trust.”
- For some languages these terms will be translated using forms of the verb “believe.” (See: [abstractnouns](#))
- The expression “keep the faith” could be translated by “keep believing in Jesus” or “continue to believe in Jesus.”
- The sentence “they must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith” could be translated by “they must keep believing all the true things about Jesus that they have been taught.”
- The expression “my true son in the faith” could be translated by something like “who is like a son to me because I taught him to believe in Jesus” or “my true spiritual son, who believes in Jesus.”

(See also: believe, faithful)

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 4:7
- Acts 6:7
- Galatians 2:20-21
- James 2:20

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **5:6** When Isaac was a young man, God tested Abraham’s **faith** by saying, “Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me.”
- **31:7** Then he (Jesus) said to Peter, “You man of little **faith**, why did you doubt?”
- **32:16** Jesus said to her, “Your **faith** has healed you. Go in peace.”
- **38:9** Then Jesus said to Peter, “Satan wants to have all of you, but I have prayed for you, Peter, that your **faith** will not fail.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0529, H0530, G16800, G36400, G41020, G60660

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 4 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

flesh

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “flesh” literally refers to the soft tissue of the physical body of a human being or animal.

- The Bible also uses the term “flesh” in a figurative way to refer to all human beings or all living creatures.
- In the New Testament, the term “flesh” is used to refer to the sinful nature of human beings. This is often used in contrast to their spiritual nature.
- The expression “own flesh and blood” refers to someone who is biologically related to another person, such as a parent, sibling, child, or grandchild.
- The expression “flesh and blood” can also refer to a person’s ancestors or descendants.
- The expression “one flesh” refers to the physical uniting of a man and woman in marriage.

Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of an animal’s body, “flesh” could be translated as “body” or “skin” or “meat.”
- When it is used to refer generally to all living creatures, this term could be translated as “living beings” or “everything that is alive.”
- When referring in general to all people, this term could be translated as “people” or “human beings” or “everyone who lives.”
- The expression “flesh and blood” could also be translated as “relatives” or “family” or “kinfolk” or “family clan.” There may be contexts where it could be translated as “ancestors” or “descendants.”
- Some languages may have an expression that is similar in meaning to “flesh and blood.”
- The expression “become one flesh” could be translated as “unite sexually” or “become as one body” or “become like one person in body and spirit.” The translation of this expression should be checked to make sure it is acceptable in the project language and culture. (See: euphemism). It should also be understood that this is figurative, and does not mean that a man and a woman who “become one flesh” literally become one person.

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:16
- 2 John 1:7
- Ephesians 6:12
- Galatians 1:16
- Genesis 2:24
- John 1:14
- Matthew 16:17
- Romans 8:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0829, H1320, H1321, H2878, H3894, H4207, H7607, H7683, G29070, G45590, G45600, G45610

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 10 General Notes](#))

good news, gospel

Definition:

The term “gospel” literally means “good news” and refers to a message or announcement that tells people something that benefits them and makes them glad.

- In the Bible, this term usually refers to the message about God’s salvation for people through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross.
- In most English Bibles, “good news” is usually translated as “gospel” and is also used in phrases such as, the “gospel of Jesus Christ,” the “gospel of God” and the “gospel of the kingdom.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Different ways to translate this term could include, “good message” or “good announcement” or “God’s message of salvation” or “the good things God teaches about Jesus.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the phrase, “good news of” could include, “good news/ message about” or “good message from” or “the good things God tells us about” or “what God says about how he saves people.”

(See also: kingdom, sacrifice, [save](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 1:5
- Acts 8:25
- Colossians 1:23
- Galatians 1:6
- Luke 8:1-3
- Mark 1:14
- Philippians 2:22
- Romans 1:3

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **23:6** The angel said, “Do not be afraid, because I have some **good news** for you. The Messiah, the Master, has been born in Bethlehem!”
- **26:3** Jesus read, “God has given me his Spirit so that I can proclaim **good news** to the poor, freedom to captives, recovery of sight for the blind, and release to the oppressed. This is the year of the Lord’s favor.”
- **45:10** Philip also used other Scriptures to tell him the **good news of Jesus**.
- **46:10** Then they sent them off to preach the **good news about Jesus** in many other places.
- **47:1** One day, Paul and his friend Silas went to the town of Philippi to proclaim the **good news about Jesus**.
- **47:13** The **good news about Jesus** kept spreading, and the Church kept growing.
- **50:1** For almost 2,000 years, more and more people around the world have been hearing the **good news about Jesus** the Messiah.
- **50:2** When Jesus was living on earth he said, “My disciples will preach the **good news** about the kingdom of God to people everywhere in the world, and then the end will come.”
- **50:3** Before he returned to heaven, Jesus told Christians to proclaim the **good news** to people who have never heard it.

Word Data:

- Strong's: G20970, G20980, G42830

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 5 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

grace, gracious

Definition:

The word “grace” refers to help or blessing that is given to someone who has not earned it. The term “gracious” describes someone who shows grace to others.

- God’s grace toward sinful human beings is a gift that is freely given.
- The concept of grace also refers to being kind and forgiving to someone who has done wrong or hurtful things.
- The expression to “find grace” is an expression that means to receive help and mercy from God. Often it includes the meaning that God is pleased with someone and helps him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways that “grace” could be translated include “divine kindness” or “God’s favor” or “God’s kindness and forgiveness for sinners” or “merciful kindness.”
- The term “gracious” could be translated as “full of grace” or “kind” or “merciful” or “mercifully kind.”
- The expression “he found grace in the eyes of God” could be translated as “he received mercy from God” or “God mercifully helped him” or “God showed his favor to him” or “God was pleased with him and helped him.”

Bible References:

- Acts 4:33
- Acts 6:8
- Acts 14:4
- Colossians 4:6
- Colossians 4:18
- Genesis 43:28-29
- James 4:7
- John 1:16
- Philippians 4:21-23
- Revelation 22:20-21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2580, H2587, H2589, H2603, H8467, G21430, G54850, G55430

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 2 General Notes](#))

heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly

Definition:

The term that is translated as “heaven” usually refers to where God lives. The same word can also mean “sky,” depending on the context.

- The term “heavens” refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars. It also includes the heavenly bodies, such as far-off planets, that we can’t directly see from the earth.
- The term “sky” refers to the blue expanse above the earth that has clouds and the air we breathe. Often the sun and moon are also said to be “up in the sky.”
- In some contexts in the Bible, the word “heaven” could refer to either the sky or the place where God lives.

Translation Suggestions:

- For “kingdom of heaven” in the book of Matthew, it is best to keep the word “heaven” since this is distinctive to Matthew’s gospel.
- The terms “heavens” or “heavenly bodies” could also be translated as “sun, moon, and stars” or “all the stars in the universe.”
- The phrase, “stars of heaven” could be translated as “stars in the sky” or “stars in the galaxy” or “stars in the universe.”

(See also: kingdom of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:22-24
- 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10
- 1 Thessalonians 4:17
- Deuteronomy 9:1
- Ephesians 6:9
- Genesis 1:1
- Genesis 7:11
- John 3:12
- John 3:27
- Matthew 5:18
- Matthew 5:46-48

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:2** They even began building a tall tower to reach **heaven**.
- **14:11** He (God) gave them bread from **heaven**, called “manna.”
- **23:7** Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels praising God, saying, “Glory to God in **heaven** and peace on earth to the people he favors!”
- **29:9** Then Jesus said, “This is what my **heavenly** Father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”
- **37:9** Then Jesus looked up to **heaven** and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me.”
- **42:11** Then Jesus went up to **heaven**, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1534, H6160, H6183, H7834, H8064, H8065, G09320, G20320, G33210, G37700, G37710, G37720

(**Go back to:** [2 Corinthians 5 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

holy, holiness, unholy, sacred

Definition:

The terms “holy” and “holiness” refer to the character of God that is totally set apart and separated from everything that is sinful and imperfect.

- Only God is absolutely holy. He makes people and things holy.
- A person who is holy belongs to God and has been set apart for the purpose of serving God and bringing him glory.
- An object that God has declared to be holy is one that he has set apart for his glory and use, such as an altar that is for the purpose of offering sacrifices to him.
- People cannot approach him unless he allows them to, because he is holy and they are merely human beings, sinful and imperfect.
- In the Old Testament, God set apart the priests as holy for special service to him. They had to be ceremonially cleansed from sin in order to approach God.
- God also set apart as holy certain places and things that belonged to him or in which he revealed himself, such as his temple.

Literally, the term “unholy” means “not holy.” It describes someone or something that does not honor God.

- This word is used to describe someone who dishonors God by rebelling against him.
- A thing that is called “unholy” could be described as being common, profane or unclean. It does not belong to God.

The term “sacred” describes something that relates to worshiping God or to the pagan worship of false gods.

- In the Old Testament, the term “sacred” was oftentimes used to describe the stone pillars and other objects used in the worship of false gods. This could also be translated as “religious.”
- “Sacred songs” and “sacred music” refer to music that was sung or played for God’s glory. This could be translated as “music for worshiping Yahweh” or “songs that praise God.”
- The phrase “sacred duties” referred to the “religious duties” or “rituals” that a priest performed to lead people in worshiping God. It could also refer to the rituals performed by a pagan priest to worship a false god.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “holy” might include “set apart for God” or “belonging to God” or “completely pure” or “perfectly sinless” or “separated from sin.”
- To “make holy” is often translated as “sanctify” in English. It could also be translated as “set apart (someone) for God’s glory.”
- Ways to translate “unholy” could include “not holy” or “not belonging to God” or “not honoring to God” or “not godly.”
- In some contexts, “unholy” could be translated as “unclean.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, consecrate, sanctify, set apart)

Bible References:

- Genesis 28:22
- 2 Kings 3:2
- Lamentations 4:1
- Ezekiel 20:18-20
- Matthew 7:6

- Mark 8:38
- Acts 7:33
- Acts 11:8
- Romans 1:2
- 2 Corinthians 12:3-5
- Colossians 1:22
- 1 Thessalonians 3:13
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- 2 Timothy 3:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:16** He (God) blessed the seventh day and made it **holy**, because on this day he rested from his work.
- **9:12** "You are standing on **holy** ground."
- **13:1** "If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a **holy** nation."
- **13:5** "Always be sure to keep the Sabbath day **holy**."
- **22:5** "So the baby will be **holy**, the Son of God."
- **50:2** As we wait for Jesus to return, God wants us to live in a way that is **holy** and that honors him.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0430, H2455, H2623, H4676, H4720, H6918, H6922, H6942, H6944, H6948, G00370, G00380, G00400, G00400, G00410, G00420, G04620, G18590, G21500, G24120, G24130, G28390, G37410, G37420

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 11 General Notes](#))

hope, hoped

Definition:

Hope is strongly desiring something to happen. Hope can imply either certainty or uncertainty regarding a future event.

- In the Bible, the term “hope” also has the meaning of “trust,” as in “my hope is in the Lord.” It refers to a sure expectation of receiving what God has promised his people.
- Sometimes the ULT translates the term in the original language as “confidence.” This happens mostly in the New Testament in situations where people who believe in Jesus as their Savior have the assurance (or confidence or hope) of receiving what God has promised.
- To have “no hope” means to have no expectation of something good happening. It means that it is actually very certain that it will not happen.

Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, the term to “hope” could also be translated as to “wish” or to “desire” or to “expect.”
- The expression “nothing to hope for” could be translated as “nothing to trust in” or “no expectation of anything good”
- To “have no hope” could be translated as “have no expectation of anything good” or “have no security” or “be sure that nothing good will happen.”
- The expression “have set your hopes on” could also be translated as “have put your confidence in” or “have been trusting in.”
- The phrase “I find hope in your Word” could also be translated as “I am confident that your Word is true” or “Your Word helps me trust in you” or “When I obey your Word, I am certain to be blessed.”
- Phrases such as “hope in” God could also be translated as, “trust in God” or “know for sure that God will do what he has promised” or “be certain that God is faithful.”

(See also: bless, confidence, good, obey, trust, word of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 29:14-15
- 1 Thessalonians 2:19
- Acts 24:14-16
- Acts 26:6
- Acts 27:20
- Colossians 1:5
- Job 11:20

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0982, H0983, H0986, H2620, H2976, H3175, H3176, H3689, H4009, H4268, H4723, H7663, H7664, H8431, H8615, G00910, G05600, G16790, G16800, G20700

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 4 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

law, law of Moses, law of Yahweh, law of God

Definition:

Most simply, the term “law” refers to a rule or instruction that should be followed. In the Bible, the term “law” is often used generally to refer to anything and everything God wants his people to obey and do. The specific term “law of Moses” refers to the commandments and instructions that God gave Moses for the Israelites to obey.

- Depending on the context, the “law” can refer to:
 - the Ten Commandments that God wrote on stone tablets for the Israelites
 - all the laws given to Moses
 - the first five books of the Old Testament
 - the entire Old Testament (also referred to as “scriptures” in the New Testament).
 - all of God’s instructions and will
- The phrase “the Law and the Prophets” is used in the New Testament to refer to the Hebrew scriptures (or “Old Testament”)

Translation Suggestions:

- These terms could be translated using the plural, “laws,” since they refer to many instructions.
- The term “law of Moses” could be translated as “the laws that God told Moses to give to the Israelites.”
- Depending on the context, “the law of Moses” could also be translated as “the law that God told to Moses” or “God’s laws that Moses wrote down” or “the laws that God told Moses to give to the Israelites.”
- Ways to translate “the law” or “law of God” or “God’s laws” could include “laws from God” or “God’s commands” or “laws that God gave” or “everything that God commands” or “all of God’s instructions.”
- The phrase “law of Yahweh” could also be translated as “Yahweh’s laws” or “laws that Yahweh said to obey” or “laws from Yahweh” or “things Yahweh commanded.”

(See also: instruct, Moses, Ten Commandments, lawful, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- Acts 15:6
- Daniel 9:13
- Exodus 28:42-43
- Ezra 7:25-26
- Galatians 2:15
- Luke 24:44
- Matthew 5:18
- Nehemiah 10:29
- Romans 3:20

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:7** God also gave many other **laws** and rules to follow. If the people obeyed these **laws**, God promised that he would bless and protect them. If they disobeyed them, God would punish them.
- **13:9** Anyone who disobeyed **God’s law** could bring an animal to the altar in front of the Tent of Meeting as a sacrifice to God.
- **15:13** Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the covenant that God had made with the Israelites at Sinai. The people promised to remain faithful to God and follow **his laws**.
- **16:1** After Joshua died, the Israelites disobeyed God and did not drive out the rest of the Canaanites or obey **God’s laws**.

- **21:5** In the New Covenant, God would write **his law** on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would forgive their sins.
- **27:1** Jesus answered, "What is written in **God's law**?"
- **28:1** Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me 'good?' There is only one who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have eternal life, obey **God's laws**."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0430, H1881, H1882, H2706, H2710, H3068, H4687, H4872, H4941, H8451, G23160, G35510, G35650

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 3 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

life, live, living, alive

Definition:

The term “life” refers to being physically alive as opposed to being physically dead.

1. Physical life

- A “life” can also refer to an individual person as in “a life was saved”.
- Sometimes the word “life” refers to the experience of living as in, “his life was enjoyable.”
- It can also refer to a person’s lifespan, as in the expression, “the end of his life.”
- The term “living” may refer to being physically alive, as in “my mother is still living.” It may also refer to dwelling somewhere as in, “they were living in the city.”
- In the Bible, the concept of “life” is often contrasted with the concept of “death.”

2. Eternal life

- A person has eternal life when he believes in Jesus. God gives that person a transformed life with the Holy Spirit living in him.
- The opposite of eternal life is eternal death, which means being separated from God and experiencing eternal punishment.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “life” can be translated as “existence” or “person” or “soul” or “being” or “experience.”
- The term “live” could be translated by “dwell” or “reside” or “exist.”
- The expression “end of his life” could be translated as “when he stopped living.”
- The expression “spared their lives” could be translated as “allowed them to live” or “did not kill them.”
- The expression “they risked their lives” could be translated as “they put themselves in danger” or “they did something that could have killed them.”
- When the Bible text talks about eternal life, the term “life” could be translated in the following ways: “eternal life” or “God making us alive in our spirits” or “new life by God’s Spirit” or “being made alive in our inner self.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “give life” could also be translated as “cause to live” or “give eternal life” or “cause to live eternally.”

(See also: [death](#), [everlasting](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 1:3
- Acts 10:42
- Genesis 2:7
- Genesis 7:22
- Hebrews 10:20
- Jeremiah 44:2
- John 1:4
- Judges 2:18
- Luke 12:23
- Matthew 7:14

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:10** So God took some dirt, formed it into a man, and breathed **life** into him.
- **3:1** After a long time, many people were *_living_* in the world.
- **8:13** When Joseph's brothers returned home and told their father, Jacob, that Joseph was still **alive**, he was very happy.
- **17:9** However, toward the end of his [David's] **life** he sinned terribly before God.
- **27:1** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal **life**?"
- **35:5** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the **Life**."
- **44:5** "You are the ones who told the Roman governor to kill Jesus. You killed the author of **life**, but God raised him from the dead."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1934, H2416, H2417, H2421, H2425, H5315, G01980, G02220, G02270, G08060, G05900

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 4 General Notes](#))

light, luminary, shine, brighten, enlighten

Definition:

The term “light” is used figuratively in various ways in the Bible. Light is often used as a metaphor for wisdom, life, righteousness, truth, or happiness.

- Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” to express that he brings God’s true message to the world and rescues people from the darkness of their sin.
- Christians are commanded to “walk in the light,” which means they should be living the way God wants them to and avoiding evil.
- The apostle John stated that “God is light” and in him there is no darkness at all.
- Jesus said that he was “the light of the world” and that his followers should shine like lights in the world by living in a way that clearly shows how great God is.
- “Walking in the light” represents living in a way that pleases God, doing what is good and right. Walking in darkness represents living in rebellion against God, doing evil things.

Translation Suggestions:

- When translating, it is important to keep the literal terms “light” and “darkness” even when they are used figuratively.
- It may be necessary to explain the comparison in the text. For example, “walk as children of light” could be translated as “live openly righteous lives, like someone who walks in bright sunlight.”
- Make sure that the translation of “light” does not refer to an object that gives light, such as a lamp. The translation of this term should refer to the light itself.

(See also: [darkness](#), wisdom, [life](#), [righteous](#), true, joy)

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:7
- 1 John 2:8
- 2 Corinthians 4:6
- Acts 26:18
- Isaiah 2:5
- John 1:5
- Matthew 5:16
- Matthew 6:23
- Nehemiah 9:12-13
- Revelation 18:23-24

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0216, H0217, H3313, H3974, H5051, H5094, H5105, H5216, H7837, G06810, G07960, G16450, G29850, G30880, G53380, G54570, G54580, G54600, G54620

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 6 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

reconcile, reconciled, reconciliation

Definition:

To “reconcile” and “reconciliation” refer to “make peace” between people who were formerly enemies of each other. “Reconciliation” is that act of making peace

- In the Bible, this term usually refer to Gods reconciling people to himself through the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ.
- Because of sin, all human beings are God’s enemies. But because of his compassionate love, God provided a way for people to be reconciled to him through Jesus.
- Through trusting in Jesus’ sacrifice as payment for their sin, people can be forgiven and have peace with God.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “reconcile” could be translated as “make peace” or “restore good relations” or “cause to be friends.”
- The term “reconciliation” could be translated as “restoring good relations” or “making peace” or “causing peaceful relating.”

(See also: peace, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 5:19
- Colossians 1:18-20
- Matthew 5:24
- Proverbs 13:17-18
- Romans 5:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2398, H3722, G06040, G12590, G24330, G26430, G26440

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 5 General Notes](#))

repent, repentance

Definition:

The terms “repent” and “repentance” refer to turning away from sin and turning back to God.

- To “repent” literally means to “change one’s mind.”
- In the Bible, “repent” usually means to turn away from a sinful, human way of thinking and acting, and to turn to God’s way of thinking and acting.
- When people truly repent of their sins, God forgives them and helps them start obeying him.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “repent” can be translated with a word or phrase that means “turn back (to God)” or “turn away from sin and toward God” or “turn toward God, away from sin.”
- Often the term “repentance” can be translated using the verb “repent.” For example, “God has given repentance to Israel” could be translated as “God has enabled Israel to repent.”
- Other ways to translate “repentance” could include “turning away from sin” or “turning to God and away from sin.”

(See also: forgive, [sin](#), turn)

Bible References:

- Acts 3:19-20
- Luke 3:3
- Luke 3:8
- Luke 5:32
- Luke 24:47
- Mark 1:14-15
- Matthew 3:3
- Matthew 3:11
- Matthew 4:17
- Romans 2:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **16:2** After many years of disobeying God and being oppressed by their enemies, the Israelites **repented** and asked God to rescue them.
- **17:13** David **repented** of his sin and God forgave him.
- **19:18** They (prophets) warned people that God would destroy them if they did not **repent**.
- **24:2** Many people came out to the wilderness to listen to John. He preached to them, saying, “**Repent**, for the kingdom of God is near!”
- **42:8** “It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to **receive** forgiveness for their sins.”
- **44:5** “So now, **repent** and turn to God so that your sins will be washed away.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5150, H5162, H5164, G02780, G33380, G33400, G33410

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 5 General Notes; Notes](#))

reveal, revealed, revelation

Definition:

The term “reveal” means to cause something to be known. A “revelation” is something that has been made known.

- God has revealed himself through everything he has created and through his communication with people by spoken and written messages.
- God also reveals himself through dreams or visions.
- When Paul said that he received the gospel by “revelation from Jesus Christ,” he means that Jesus himself explained the gospel to him.
- In the New Testament book “Revelation” is about God revealed events that will happen in the end times. He revealed them to the apostle John through visions.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “reveal” could include “make known” or “disclose” or “show clearly.”
- Depending on the context, possible ways to translate “revelation” could be “communication from God” or “things that God has revealed” or “teachings about God.” It is best to keep the meaning of “reveal” in the translation.
- The phrase “where there is no revelation” could be translated as “when God is not revealing himself to people” or “when God is not speaking to people” or “among people whom God has not communicating.”

(See also: [good news](#), [good news](#), dream, vision)

Bible References:

- Daniel 11:1-2
- Ephesians 3:5
- Galatians 1:12
- Lamentations 2:13-14
- Matthew 10:26
- Philippians 3:15
- Revelation 1:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0241, H1540, H1541, G06010, G06020, G55370

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 3 General Notes](#))

reward, prize, deserve

Definition:

The term “reward” refers to what a person receives because of something he has done, either good or bad. To “reward” someone is to give someone something he deserves. However, this is different than the concept of “wages,” which refers to payment (often money) given in exchange for work performed.

- A reward can be a good or positive thing that a person receives because he has done something well or because he has obeyed God.
- Sometimes a reward can refer to negative things that may result from bad behavior, such as the statement “the reward of the wicked.” In this context “reward” refers to the punishment or negative consequences they receive because of their sinful actions.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “reward” could be translated as “payment” or “something that is deserved” or “punishment.”
- To “reward” someone could be translated by to “repay” or to “punish” or to “give what is deserved.”
- Make sure the translation of this term does not refer to wages. A reward is not specifically about earning money as part of a job.

(See also: punish)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 32:6
- Isaiah 40:10
- Luke 6:35
- Mark 9:40-41
- Matthew 5:11-12
- Matthew 6:3-4
- Psalms 127:3-5
- Revelation 11:18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0319, H0866, H0868, H1576, H1578, H1580, H4909, H4991, H5023, H6118, H6468, H6529, H7938, H7939, H7999, G04690, G05140, G05910, G26030, G34050, G34060, G34080

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 9 General Notes](#))

righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness

Definition:

The term “righteousness” refers to God’s absolute goodness, justice, faithfulness, and love. Having these qualities makes God “righteous.” Because God is righteous, he must condemn sin.

- These terms are also often used to describe a person who obeys God and is morally good. However, because all people have sinned, no one except God is completely righteous.
- Examples of people the Bible who were called “righteous” include Noah, Job, Abraham, Zachariah, and Elisabeth.
- When people trust in Jesus to save them, God cleanses them from their sins and declares them to be righteous because of Jesus’ righteousness.

The term “unrighteous” means to be sinful and morally corrupt. “Unrighteousness” refers to sin or the condition of being sinful.

- These terms especially refer to living in a way that disobeys God’s teachings and commands.
- Unrighteous people are immoral in their thoughts and actions.
- Sometimes “the unrighteous” refers specifically to people who do not believe in Jesus.

The terms “upright” and “uprightness” refer to acting in a way that follows God’s laws.

- The meaning of these words includes the idea of standing up straight and looking directly ahead.
- A person who is “upright” is someone who obeys God’s rules and does not do things that are against his will.
- Terms such as “integrity” and “righteous” have similar meanings and are sometimes used in parallelism constructions, such as “integrity and uprightness.” (See: [parallelism](#))

Translation Suggestions:

- When it describes God, the term “righteous” could be translated as “perfectly good and just” or “always acting rightly.”
- God’s “righteousness” could also be translated as “perfect faithfulness and goodness.”
- When it describes people who are obedient to God, the term “righteous” could also be translated as “morally good” or “just” or “living a God-pleasing life.”
- The phrase “the righteous” could also be translated as “righteous people” or “God-fearing people.”
- Depending on the context, “righteousness” could also be translated with a word or phrase that means “goodness” or “being perfect before God” or “acting in a right way by obeying God” or “doing perfectly good.”
- The term “unrighteous” could simply be translated as “not righteous.”
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could include “wicked” or “immoral” or “people who rebel against God” or “sinful.”
- The phrase “the unrighteous” could be translated as “unrighteous people.”
- The term “unrighteousness” could be translated as “sin” or “evil thoughts and actions” or “wickedness.”
- If possible, it is best to translate this in a way that shows its relationship to “righteous, righteousness.”
- Ways to translate “upright” could include “acting rightly” or “one who acts rightly” or “following God’s laws” or “obedient to God” or “behaving in a way that is right.”
- The term “uprightness” could be translated as “moral purity” or “good moral conduct” or “rightness.”
- The phrase “the upright” could be translated as “people who are upright” or “upright people.”

(See also: evil, faithful, good, [holy](#), integrity, just, law, [law](#), obey, pure, [righteous](#), [sin](#), unlawful)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 19:16
- Job 1:8
- Psalms 37:30
- Psalms 49:14
- Psalms 107:42
- Ecclesiastes 12:10-11
- Isaiah 48:1-2
- Ezekiel 33:13
- Malachi 2:6
- Matthew 6:1
- Acts 3:13-14
- Romans 1:29-31
- 1 Corinthians 6:9
- Galatians 3:7
- Colossians 3:25
- 2 Thessalonians 2:10
- 2 Timothy 3:16
- 1 Peter 3:18-20
- 1 John 1:9
- 1 John 5:16-17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:2** But Noah found favor with God. He was a **righteous** man, living among wicked people.
- **4:8** God declared that Abram was **righteous** because he believed in God's promise.
- **17:2** David was a humble and **righteous** man who trusted and obeyed God.
- **23:1** Joseph, the man Mary was engaged to, was a **righteous** man.
- **50:10** Then the **righteous** ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God their Father.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H1368, H2555, H3072, H3474, H3476, H3477, H3483, H4334, H4339, H4749, H5228, H5229, H5324, H5765, H5766, H5767, H5977, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6665, H6666, H6968, H8535, H8537, H8549, H8552, G00930, G00940, G04580, G13410, G13420, G13430, G13440, G13450, G13460, G21180, G37160, G37170

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 4 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

save, saved, safe, salvation

Definition:

The term “save” refers to keeping someone from experiencing something bad or harmful. To “be safe” means to be protected from harm or danger.

- In a physical sense, people can be saved or rescued from harm, danger, or death.
- In a spiritual sense, if a person has been “saved,” then God, through Jesus’ death on the cross, has forgiven him and rescued him from being punished in hell for his sin.
- People can save or rescue people from danger, but only God can save people from being punished eternally for their sins.

The term “salvation” refers to being saved or rescued from evil and danger.

- In the Bible, “salvation” usually refers to the spiritual and eternal deliverance granted by God to those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus.
- The Bible also talks about God saving or delivering his people from their physical enemies.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “save” could include “deliver” or “keep from harm” or “take out of harm’s way” or “keep from dying.”
- In the expression “whoever would save his life,” the term “save” could also be translated as “preserve” or “protect.”
- The term “safe” could be translated as “protected from danger” or “in a place where nothing can harm.”
- The term “salvation” could also be translated using words related to “save” or “rescue,” as in “God’s saving people (from being punished for their sins)” or “God’s rescuing his people (from their enemies).”
- “God is my salvation” could be translated as “God is the one who saves me.”
- “You will draw water from the wells of salvation” could be translated as “You will be refreshed as with water because God is rescuing you.”

(See also: cross, deliver, punish, [sin](#), Savior)

Bible References:

- Genesis 49:18
- Genesis 47:25-26
- Psalms 80:3
- Jeremiah 16:19-21
- Micah 6:3-5
- Luke 2:30
- Luke 8:36-37
- Acts 4:12
- Acts 28:28
- Acts 2:21
- Romans 1:16
- Romans 10:10
- Ephesians 6:17
- Philippians 1:28
- 1 Timothy 1:15-17
- Revelation 19:1-2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:8** Moses tried to **save** his fellow Israelite.
- **11:2** God provided a way to **save** the firstborn son of anyone who believed in him.
- **12:5** Moses told the Israelites, "Stop being afraid! God will fight for you today and **save** you."
- **12:13** The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to praise God because he **saved** them from the Egyptian army.
- **16:17** This pattern repeated many times: the Israelites would sin, God would punish them, they would repent, and God would send a deliverer to **save** them.
- **44:8** "You crucified Jesus, but God raised him to life again! You rejected him, but there is no other way to be **saved** except through the power of Jesus!"
- **47:11** The jailer trembled as he came to Paul and Silas and asked, "What must I do to be **saved**?" Paul answered, "Believe in Jesus, the Master, and you and your family will be **saved**."
- **49:12** Good works cannot **save** you.
- **49:13** God will **save** everyone who believes in Jesus and receives him as their Master. But he will not **save** anyone who does not believe in him.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0983, H2421, H2502, H3444, H3467, H3468, H4190, H4422, H4931, H5338, H6308, H6403, H7682, H7951, H7965, H8104, H8199, H8668, G08030, G08040, G08060, G12950, G15080, G49820, G49910, G49920, G51980

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 1 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

Definition:

The term “sin” refers to actions, thoughts, and words that are against God’s will and laws. Sin can also refer to not doing something that God wants us to do.

- Sin includes anything we do that does not obey or please God, even things that other people don’t know about.
- Thoughts and actions that disobey God’s will are called “sinful.”
- Because Adam sinned, all human beings are born with a “sinful nature,” a nature that controls them and causes them to sin.
- A “sinner” is someone who sins, so every human being is a sinner.
- Sometimes the word “sinners” was used by religious people like the Pharisees to refer to people who didn’t keep the law as well as the Pharisees thought they should.
- The term “sinner” was also used for people who were considered to be worse sinners than other people. For example, this label was given to tax collectors and prostitutes.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “sin” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “disobedience to God” or “going against God’s will” or “evil behavior and thoughts” or “wrongdoing.”
- To “sin” could also be translated as to “disobey God” or to “do wrong.”
- Depending on the context “sinful” could be translated as “full of wrongdoing” or “wicked” or “immoral” or “evil” or “rebellious against God.”
- Depending on the context the term “sinner” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “person who sins” or “person who does wrong things” or “person who disobeys God” or “person who disobeys the law.”
- The term “sinners” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “very sinful people” or “people considered to be very sinful” or “immoral people.”
- Ways to translate “tax collectors and sinners” could include “people who collect money for the government, and other very sinful people” or “very sinful people, including (even) tax collectors.”
- Make sure the translation of this term can include sinful behavior and thoughts, even those that other people don’t see or know about.
- The term “sin” should be general, and different from the terms for “wickedness” and “evil.”

(See also: disobey, evil, [flesh](#), tax collector)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:1-3
- 1 John 1:10
- 1 John 2:2
- 2 Samuel 7:12-14
- Acts 3:19
- Daniel 9:24
- Genesis 4:7
- Hebrews 12:2
- Isaiah 53:11
- Jeremiah 18:23
- Leviticus 4:14
- Luke 15:18
- Matthew 12:31

- Romans 6:23
- Romans 8:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:15** God said, "I promise I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are **sinful** from the time they are children."
- **13:12** God was very angry with them because of their **sin** and planned to destroy them.
- **20:1** The kingdoms of Israel and Judah both **sinned** against God. They broke the covenant that God made with them at Sinai.
- **21:13** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no **sin**. He would die to receive the punishment for other people's **sin**.
- **35:1** One day, Jesus was teaching many tax collectors and other **sinner**s who had gathered to hear him.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of **sins**."
- **43:11** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your **sins**."
- **48:8** We all deserve to die for our **sins**!
- **49:17** Even though you are a Christian, you will still be tempted to **sin**. But God is faithful and says that if you confess your **sins**, he will forgive you. He will give you strength to fight against **sin**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0817, H0819, H2398, H2399, H2400, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2408, H2409, H5771, H6588, H7683, H7686, G02640, G02650, G02660, G02680, G03610, G37810, G39000, G42580

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 5 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

spirit, wind, breath

Definition:

The term “spirit” refers to the non-physical part of a person which cannot be seen. In biblical times, the concept of a person’s spirit was closely related to the concept of a person’s breath. The term can also refer to wind, that is, the movement of air in the natural world.

- The term “spirit” can refer to a being that does not have a physical body, such as an evil spirit.
- In general, the term “spiritual” describes things in the non-physical world.
- The term “spirit of” can also mean “having the characteristics of,” such as in “spirit of wisdom” or “in the spirit of Elijah.” Sometimes the Bible applies this term in the context of a person’s attitude or emotional state, such as “spirit of fear” and “spirit of jealousy.”
- Jesus said that God is a spirit.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, some ways to translate “spirit” might include “non-physical being” or “inside part” or “inner being.”
- In some contexts, the term “spirit” could be translated as “evil spirit” or “evil spirit being.”
- Sometimes the term “spirit” is used to express the feelings of a person, as in “my spirit was grieved in my inmost being.” This could also be translated as “I felt grieved in my spirit” or “I felt deeply grieved.”
- The phrase “spirit of” could be translated as “character of” or “influence of” or “attitude of” or “thinking (that is) characterized by.”
- Depending on the context, “spiritual” could be translated as “non-physical” or “from the Holy Spirit” or “God’s” or “part of the non-physical world.”
- The phrase “spiritual maturity” could be translated as “godly behavior that shows obedience to the Holy Spirit.”
- The term “spiritual gift” could be translated as “special ability that the Holy Spirit gives.”
- Sometimes this term can be translated as “wind” when referring to the simple movement of air or “breath” when referring to air movement caused by living beings.

(See also: soul, Holy Spirit, demon, breath)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:5
- 1 John 4:3
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- Acts 5:9
- Colossians 1:9
- Ephesians 4:23
- Genesis 7:21-22
- Genesis 8:1
- Isaiah 4:4
- Mark 1:23-26
- Matthew 26:41
- Philippians 1:27

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:3** Three days later, after the people had prepared themselves **spiritually**, God came down on top of Mount Sinai with thunder, lightning, smoke, and a loud trumpet blast.
- **40:7** Then Jesus cried out, "It is finished! Father, I give my **spirit** into your hands." Then he bowed his head and gave up his **spirit**.
- **45:5** As Stephen was dying, he cried out, "Jesus, receive my **spirit**."
- **48:7** All the people groups are blessed through him, because everyone who believes in Jesus is saved from sin, and becomes a **spiritual** descendant of Abraham.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0178, H1172, H5397, H7307, H7308, G41510, G41520, G41530, G53260, G54270

(Go back to: [2 Corinthians 3 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

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