



unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

1 Thessalonians

Version 65

[en]

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unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

1 Thessalonians

Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the book of 1 Thessalonians

In this letter, the apostle Paul, along with Silvanus and Timothy, encourages and makes appeals to the Thessalonian church (See: [rc://en/tw/bible/names/thessalonica.md](https://en.tw/bible/names/thessalonica.md)). Paul is the spokesman for all of them, using “we” to refer to the group, but in certain places Paul speaks for himself using “I” (See [2:18](#); [3:5](#); [5:27](#)). The background story for the apostles’ activity in Thessalonica can be found in Acts 17:1-10.

Apostolic memories of the Thessalonian church (1:1-10)

- Greeting (1:1)
- Thanksgiving for the Thessalonian Christians (1:2-4)
- Examples of Thessalonian suffering (1:6-10)

Apostolic authority (2:1-16)

- Persecution of the church (2:1-13)
- Opposition to the church (2:14-16)

Timothy’s visit to Thessalonica (3:1-13)

- Reason for the visit (3:1-5)
- Report about the visit (3:6-13)

Apostolic teachings (4:1-18)

- Holiness (4:1-8)
- Christian love (4:9-12)
- Manner of the Second Coming of Christ (4:13-18)

Final teachings (5:1-28)

- Timing of the Second Coming of Christ (5:1-10)
- Final appeals and teachings (5:11-28)

Who wrote 1 Thessalonians?

Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians, writing with the agreement of Silvanus and Timothy. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Saul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, Paul traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire, telling people about Jesus. Paul wrote this letter while staying in the city of Corinth. Many scholars think 1 Thessalonians was the first letter Paul wrote of all Paul’s letters that are in the Bible.

Silvanus is also mentioned in 2 Corinthians 1:19; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Peter 5:12. “Silas,” the name used in the book of Acts, is a contracted form of Silvanus; Silas and Silvanus are considered to be the same person. Timothy was leader of the church at Ephesus (See 1 Timothy 1:1-4). Paul wrote this letter while staying in the city of Corinth with these two men. The mention of all three men in 1:1 indicates they were in Thessalonica together at some point.

What is the book of 1 Thessalonians about?

Paul wrote this letter to the church in the city of Thessalonica, after the Jews in the city forced him to leave. Ancient Thessalonica was located on the southeast coast of ancient Macedonia, and is now called Thessaloniki, located in northeast Greece. (See: [Background Information](#)). In this letter Paul said he considered his visit to them a success, even though he was forced to leave (See Acts 17:1-10).

Paul responded to the news from Timothy about the Thessalonian believers. The believers there were being persecuted. He encouraged them to continue living in a way that pleased God. He also comforted them by explaining what happens to those who die before Christ returns.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, “1 Thessalonians” or “First Thessalonians.” They may instead prefer to choose a clearer title, such as “Paul’s First Letter to the Church in Thessalonica,” or “The First Letter to the Church in Thessalonica.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Trinity

In this letter, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity finds solid support. The terms: God, Father, Son, Lord, Jesus, and Holy Spirit appear numerous times. (See: [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/kt/god\]\]](#))

The gospel

In this letter, Paul frequently refers to the apostles’ ministry of the gospel and uses different phrases to communicate the concept of God’s good news about Jesus Christ. (See: [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/kt/goodnews\]\]](#))

Prayer

Paul reassures the Thessalonians that his group of apostles frequently prays for them (See [1:2](#)). He also gives instructions about prayer (See [5:2](#)), and asks the Thessalonians to pray for them (See [5:25](#)). (See: [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/kt/pray\]\]](#))

Faith and Faithfulness

Through the letter the Thessalonians are commended for their faithfulness to God. They are reminded to trust God and remain faithful to gospel living. (See: [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/kt/faithful\]\]](#), [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/kt/faith\]\]](#))

Apostolic authority

Much of this letter is a defense of the apostles’ authority, based on their teaching and living. The term “apostles” is used in [2:6](#) to reinforce that Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy are sent by God. (See: [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/kt/apostle\]\]](#))

Second Coming of Christ

Paul wrote much in this letter about Jesus’ eventual return to Earth. When Jesus returns, he will judge all mankind. He will also rule over creation, and there will be peace everywhere.

The fate of reposed Christians

Paul made clear that those who die before Christ's return will come back to life and be with Jesus. They will not remain dead forever. Paul wrote this to encourage the Thessalonians, for some of them worried that those Christians who died would miss the great "day of the Lord" when Jesus returns.

Idolatry

The Greek and Roman cultural background in Thessalonica meant that many members of the church were former pagans who practiced some sort of idolatry (See 1:9(See: [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/other/image\]\]](#))).

Suffering

Much of this letter addresses both the sufferings of the apostles and the Thessalonian church for faithfulness to the gospel. (See: [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/other/afflict\]\]](#), [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/other/persecute\]\]](#), [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/other/suffer\]\]](#))

Sanctification

The concept of holiness is prevalent in this letter. Chapter four discusses how a Christian should practice a holy life. (See: [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/kt/sanctify\]\]](#))

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What did Paul mean by expressions like "in Christ" and "in Christ Jesus" and "in the Lord Jesus Christ" and "in God the Father" and "in the Holy Spirit"?

Paul meant to express the idea of a union between God and Christians that includes all three persons of the Trinity. Please see the introduction to the book of Romans for more details about these kinds of expressions.

What did Paul mean by expressions like "his coming" and "the coming of the Lord Jesus" and "the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ"?

Paul used "coming" in a specific way in relation to Jesus Christ to refer to the time when he will come again to earth, this time displaying his glory and power and gathering his people to himself. Depending on the nuances of your language, you may need to translate this with a special concept or word.

What did Paul mean by expressions like "the word of God" or "the word of the Lord"?

Throughout this letter, Paul uses these well-known phrases or abbreviations to refer to the gospel message.

What did Paul mean by expressions like "brothers"?

Throughout this letter, "brothers" is a metaphor that refers to all believers, including females. (See 1:4; 2:1, 9, 14, 17; 3:7; 4:1, 6, 10, 13; 5:1, 4, 12, 14, 26, 27)

“We” and “you”

In this letter, the words “we,” “us,” and “our” refer to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, unless otherwise noted. In addition, “we,” “us,” and “our” are used to convey that all three apostles are in agreement with the letter.

Major textual issues in the text of the book of First Thessalonians

When ancient manuscripts of the Bible differ, ULT puts in its text the reading that scholars consider to be the most accurate, but it puts other possibly accurate readings in footnotes. The introductions to each chapter will discuss places where the ancient manuscripts differ in significant ways, and notes will address those places again where they occur in the book. If a translation of the Bible already exists in your region, consider using the readings found in that version. If not, we recommend that you follow the readings in the ULT text. (See: [Textual Variants](#)) * “Grace and peace to you” (See [1:1](#)). Some other manuscripts read: “Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” * “but we became little children in the midst of you, as if a mother might comfort her own children” (See [2:7](#)). Some other manuscripts read, “Instead, we were as gentle among you as a mother comforting her own children.” * “Timothy, our brother and a servant of God” (See [3:2](#)). Some other manuscripts read: “Timothy, our brother and fellow worker for God.”

(See: [Textual Variants](#))

1 Thessalonians 1

1 Thessalonians 1 General Notes

Outline of 1 Thessalonians 1

Greeting (1:1)

Prayer of thanksgiving for the Thessalonian church (1:2-10)

Memory of the Thessalonians (1:2-5)

- apostolic prayers (1:2)
- work of the Thessalonians (1:2-3)
- God's election of the Thessalonians (1:4-5)

Thessalonians' example (1:6-10)

- reception of the apostles' teaching (1:6)
- examples to Macedonia and Achaia (1:7-10)
 - example of suffering (1:7)
 - preaching of the gospel (1:8)
 - turned away from idolatry to God (1:9)
 - waiting for the Second Coming of Christ (1:10)

Structure and Formatting

Verse 1 formally introduces this letter. Letters in the ancient Near East commonly had introductions of this type. Verses 2-4 give a general thanksgiving and encouragement to the Thessalonian church.

Special Concepts in this Chapter

Trinity

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are mentioned numerous times in this chapter. They are described in their identity, activity, and the union that the Christian has in them.

Hardship

Like the apostles before them, the Thessalonian church endured persecution for the sake of the gospel. The way that they responded with faith to the gospel message even in affliction and then preached that gospel to others made them examples to the churches throughout the regions of Macedonia and Achaia.

Faithfulness

Paul mentions the faithfulness of the Thessalonian church throughout this chapter. See, for example, "work of faith" in 1:3, "example to all those who believe" in 1:7, and "faith toward God" in 1:8.

1 Thessalonians 1:1

Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church (ULT)

I,} Paul, {am writing this letter}. Silas and Timothy {are with me. We are sending this letter} to {you,} the assembly of believers in the Messiah (UST)

Here some words are omitted that a sentence would need in order to be complete in many languages. Alternate translation: "We are Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, writing to the church" (See [Ellipsis](#))

Paul and Silvanus and Timothy (ULT)

I,} Paul, {am writing this letter}. Silas and Timothy {are with me (UST)

Paul is understood to be the author of this letter. Silvanus and Timothy are with him as he writes and are in agreement with what he writes. If that might not be understood in your language, you could include this information in your translation. Alternate translation: "I, Paul, together with Silvanus and Timothy, write" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Silvanus (ULT)

Silas (UST)

The name **Silvanus** is a longer form of the name **Silas**, the form of the name used for this same man in the book of Acts. You could choose to use the shorter form here as well, or you could choose to use the longer form here and include a footnote explaining that they are forms of the same name. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (ULT) who are united to God the Father and the Lord Jesus the Messiah (UST)

Here Paul speaks figuratively of the believers as though they were occupying space inside of God and Jesus. This metaphor expresses the idea that believers are spiritually united to God and Jesus. If this might be misunderstood in your language, you can express the meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternative translation: "united to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" or "sharing life with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (See: [Metaphor](#))

God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (ULT) God the Father and the Lord Jesus the Messiah (UST)

When **God** is called **Father** (See [1:3](#)), it is meant to highlight his relationship to **Jesus** as "Son" (See [1:10](#)). Here, the Old Testament title for **God**, **Lord**, is applied to **Jesus**, equating him with **God**. Be sure to accurately translate these titles in your translation. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

Grace and peace to you (ULT) May God continue to be} kind to you and make you peaceful (UST)

This phrase is a common biblical blessing formula and greeting (See Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 2 Th. 1:2; Philem. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 1:4). Use a form that people would recognize

ULT

¹ Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace and peace to you. ^[1]

UST

¹ {I,} Paul, {am writing this letter}. Silas and Timothy {are with me. We are sending this letter} to {you,} the assembly of believers in the Messiah in the city of Thessalonica, who are united to God the Father and the Lord Jesus the Messiah. {May God continue to be} kind to you and make you peaceful.

as a blessing that could be used as a greeting in your language. Alternate translation: “May God give you his grace and peace” or “I pray that God shows you favor and keeps you safe” (See: [Blessings](#))

Grace and peace to you (ULT)

May God continue to be} kind to you and make you peaceful (UST)

The words **grace** and **peace** are abstract nouns. Your language may have a particular way of expressing these concepts, such as with verbs or description words. If so, you can use them in your translation. Alternate translation: “We pray that God will treat you kindly and give you peaceful relationships.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

to you (ULT)

to you (UST)

Throughout this letter the word **you** is plural and refers to the church of Thessalonica, unless otherwise noted. (See: [Forms of You](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- Paul
- Silvanus
- peace
- Timothy
- to...church
- of the Thessalonians
- God the Father
- the Lord
- Jesus
- Christ
- Grace

Translation Words - UST

- I,} Paul, {am writing this letter
- Silas
- May God continue to be} kind
- make you peaceful
- Timothy {are with me
- We are sending this letter} to...you...the assembly of believers in the Messiah
- in the city of Thessalonica
- God the Father
- the Lord
- Jesus
- the Messiah

1 Thessalonians 1:2

We...give thanks...making (ULT) we...thank...When we do (UST)

In this verse Paul describes the apostles' prayers for the Thessalonians in two clauses. The first clause is specific, that they **give thanks to God**, and the second is general, that they are **making mention** of them. If it would be clearer in your language, you can reverse the order of the clauses, as done in the UST. (See: [Information Structure](#))

always...continually making mention of you in our prayers (ULT)

always...We pray for...very often. {When we do...you (UST)

Here the words **always** and **continually** are exaggerations that figuratively express the intensity and frequency of the prayers offered up to God by Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy for the Thessalonians. If your language would not use exaggeration in this way, use plain language and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "We regularly give thanks to God for all of you, very often making mention of you in our prayers" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- to God
- prayers

Translation Words - UST

- pray for...you
- God

ULT

² We always give thanks **to God** for all of you, continually making mention of you in our **prayers**,

UST

² We **pray for** you very often. {When we do,} we always thank **God** for **you** all.

1 Thessalonians 1:3

remembering your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ before our God and Father (ULT)

The main verb of this sentence is “we give thanks” (See 1:2). The phrase **remembering ... before our God and Father** is an idiom that also means to thank God in prayer. The apostles are **remembering** these things about the Thessalonians and thanking God for them. If it would be helpful for your readers, you could move the phrase **before our God and Father** to follow **remembering**. Alternate translation: “offering thanks for ... to our God and Father” or “gratefully mentioning to our God and Father ... Christ” (See: [Idiom](#))

work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope (ULT)

Paul uses three pairs of words in a possessive relationship here. The most likely meaning of this possessive relationship is that the second word of each pair is the motivation for the first word of the pair. Alternate translation: “work motivated by faith and labor because of love and endurance based on future promises” (See: [Possession](#))

in our Lord Jesus Christ (ULT) our Lord Jesus the Messiah {to keep his promises (UST)

The words **in our Lord Jesus Christ** is a possessive form. The relationship between **our Lord Jesus Christ** and **hope** could refer to: (1) Jesus as the object of hope. Alternate translation: “that our Lord Jesus Christ will do what he has promised” (2) Jesus as the source of hope. Alternate translation: “that comes from our Lord Jesus Christ” (See: [Possession](#))

our God and Father (ULT) We thank our...God...and Father (UST)

Here, **our God and Father** refers to the one divine person who is both God and Father. This phrase is a hendiadys, since Father further describes God. Alternate translation: “God our Father” or “our Father God” (See: [Hendiadys](#))

our (ULT) our (UST)

Here, **our** refers to Paul, Silvanus, Timothy, and the Thessalonian church. All believers are the spiritual children of God the Father through Jesus. Your language may require you to mark these forms. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [work](#)
- [labor](#)
- [of faith](#)
- [of love](#)
- [of hope](#)

ULT

³ remembering your [work of faith](#) and [labor of love](#) and steadfastness [of hope](#) in our [Lord Jesus Christ](#) before our [God and Father](#);

UST

³ We thank our [God and Father](#) for the [work that you do because you trust {in him}](#). We thank him [for the way that you energetically help people because you love {them}](#). We thank him for the way that you patiently endure [because you confidently expect our Lord Jesus the Messiah {to keep his promises}](#).

- in...Lord
- Jesus
- Christ
- God...and Father

Translation Words - UST

- God...and Father
- Lord
- Jesus
- the Messiah {to keep his promises
- for the work that...do
- for the way that you energetically help people
- because you trust...in him
- because you love...them
- because you confidently expect

1 Thessalonians 1:4

knowing (ULT)

We also thank God because} we know that (UST)

Here, **knowing** continues the simultaneous description of how the writers of this letter “give thanks” (See UST). (See: [Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship](#))

brothers loved by God (ULT)

he loves you, {our} fellow believers in the Messiah (UST)

This phrase acts as nominal adjective that describes the Thessalonian church in relational terms. They are spiritual siblings in their relationship with the writers of the letter and beloved children in their relationship with **God** the Father (See 1:3). (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

brothers (ULT)

our} fellow believers in the Messiah (UST)

Throughout this letter, **brothers** is a metaphor meaning “fellow Christians” or “fellow believers in Christ.” If your readers would not understand what **brothers** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. (See: [Metaphor](#))

brothers (ULT)

our} fellow believers in the Messiah (UST)

Although the term **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using the word here in a generic sense that includes both males and females. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” or “spiritual brothers and sisters” or “fellow believers in Christ” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

loved by God (ULT)

he loves you (UST)

If it is clearer in your language, this passive form **loved** could be changed to an active form. Alternate translation: “whom God has always loved” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

your election (ULT)

and chose you {to become his people (UST)

This phrase **your election** is the direct objective of **knowing**, and it is the beginning of a result clause. The reason why the writers of this letter know that the Thessalonians have been chosen as God’s people is found in the following verse. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

ULT

⁴ knowing, brothers loved by God, your election,

UST

⁴ {We also thank God because} we know that he loves you, {our} fellow believers in the Messiah, and chose you {to become his people}.

your election (ULT) and chose you {to become his people (UST)

Here, **election** is an abstract noun phrase. If this is unclear in your language, you could change this abstract noun to a verb form. Alternate translation: “that he chose you to belong to him,” or “that he ordained you to be his children,” or starting a new sentence, “God selected you to be his people.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [knowing](#)
- [brothers](#)
- [loved](#)
- [God](#)
- [election](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [We also thank God because} we know that](#)
- [he loves you](#)
- [he loves you](#)
- [our} fellow believers in the Messiah](#)
- [and chose you...to become his people](#)

1 Thessalonians 1:5

because (ULT)**We know that God chose you,} because (UST)**

Here, **because** is the marker of a result clause. The writers of this letter are certain of the “election” and identity of the Thessalonian church as God’s people 1:4, **because** they received the gospel message in all the ways described in verse 5. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance (ULT)

The writers of this letter use a contrasting clause to emphasize the multi-faceted effect of the gospel. Alternate translation: “our gospel preaching did not come to you as only a simple message, but even accompanied with power and the Holy Spirit and full assurance” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance (ULT)

If it is clearer in your language, you could change this extended phrase to a simultaneous clause, framed in a positive way. Alternate translation: “our gospel message was completely validated: by our words, by a display of power, by the Holy Spirit, by your own full assurance” (See: [Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship](#))

but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit

This phrase could refer to: (1) the **Holy Spirit** who gave the apostles the ability to preach the **gospel** powerfully. (2) the **Holy Spirit** who caused the preaching of the **gospel** to have a powerful effect in the Thessalonian church. Alternate translation: “but also empowered by the Holy Spirit” (3) the **Holy Spirit** demonstrated the truth of the **gospel** preaching through displays of **power**. Alternate translation: “but also with powerful signs from the Holy Spirit”

in much assurance (ULT)**He...strongly assured {us that he had chosen you (UST)**

Here, **assurance** is an abstract noun. If your language does not use the abstract noun **assurance**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. Alternate translation: “the Holy Spirit gave you full confidence” or “the Holy Spirit fully convinced you” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

just as you know what kind of men (ULT)**In the same way, you know what kind of people (UST)**

The phrase **just as you know what kind of men** is used by writers of this letter to validate the gospel message, by the example of their own conduct amongst the Thessalonian Church. Alternate translation: “you even experienced for yourself what type of men” or “you are well aware how we behaved while”

ULT

⁵ because our **gospel** did not come to you in word only, but also in **power** and in **the Holy Spirit** and in much assurance —**just as you know** what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

UST

⁵ {We know that God chose you,} because **when we told you the good news** {about Jesus}, it was not only with words, but **the Holy Spirit** also **powerfully worked** {through us}. He also strongly assured {us that he had chosen you}. **In the same way, you know** what kind of people we are, because when we were with you, everything that we did was to benefit you.

Translation Words - ULT

- gospel
- power
- the Holy Spirit
- just as
- you know

Translation Words - UST

- when we told...the good news...about Jesus
- the Holy Spirit
- powerfully worked...through us
- In the same way
- you know

1 Thessalonians 1:6

And you became imitators of us and of the Lord (ULT)
As for you, you proceeded to live as we do and as the Lord {Jesus} lived (UST)

If your language would not use a noun for the idea behind **imitators**, you could translate this with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “And all of you mimicked us and the Lord” or “And all of you copied us and the Lord” or “And all of you behaved like us and the Lord” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

you (ULT)
you (UST)

The word translated **you** is in a position that gives it special emphasis as a new topic. Use a natural way in your language to show that Paul is now going to talk about the Thessalonians. Alternate translation: “on your part, you” or “you yourselves”

of the Lord (ULT)
as the Lord {Jesus} lived (UST)

Lord here refers to Jesus, as in [1:3](#). Throughout this letter, whenever Paul uses the title **Lord**, it refers to Jesus. If it would be helpful to your readers, you can include the name here. See the UST. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

with joy of the Holy Spirit (ULT)
But even though you were suffering,} the Holy Spirit caused you to rejoice (UST)

If it is natural in your language, you may want to indicate a contrast between this phrase and the one before it. Alternate translation: “yet in spite of that, you had joy from the Holy Spirit” or “and even so, the Holy Spirit caused you to be joyful” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

the word (ULT)
the message {of the good news} (UST)

Here, **the word** figuratively represents a message that is made up of words. It refers to the same message called “our gospel” in [1:5](#). If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: “the gospel message” or “God’s message” (See: [Metonymy](#))

in much hardship (ULT)
people caused you to suffer {because you did that} (UST)

If your language would not use the abstract noun **hardship**, you could express the idea behind it with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “while you were deeply distressed” or “as people made you suffer” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

⁶ And you became [imitators](#) of us and of the [Lord](#), [having received](#) the word in much [hardship](#), with [joy of the Holy Spirit](#).

UST

⁶ As for you, you proceeded [to live as we do](#) and [as the Lord {Jesus} lived](#). [When you believed](#) the message {of the good news}, [people caused you to suffer {because you did that. But even though you were suffering,}](#) the Holy Spirit caused you to rejoice.

with joy of the Holy Spirit (ULT)

But even though you were suffering,} the Holy Spirit caused you to rejoice (UST)

If your language would not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **joy**, you could translate this with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “you rejoiced because of the Holy Spirit” or “but remaining joyful because of the Holy Spirit” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

with joy of the Holy Spirit (ULT)

But even though you were suffering,} the Holy Spirit caused you to rejoice (UST)

Paul is using the possessive form to describe a relationship between **the Holy Spirit** and **joy**. This relationship could be: (1) the Holy Spirit is the source of joy. Alternate translation: “with joy from the Holy Spirit” or “as the Holy Spirit caused you to rejoice” (2) joy is the response to having the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: “with the joy of those who belong to the Holy Spirit” or “with joy because you belong to the Holy Spirit” (See: [Possession](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [imitators](#)
- [of...Lord](#)
- [having received](#)
- [hardship](#)
- [joy](#)
- [of the Holy Spirit](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [to live as...do](#)
- [as the Lord...Jesus} lived](#)
- [When you believed](#)
- [people caused you to suffer...because you did that](#)
- [But even though you were suffering...caused you to rejoice](#)
- [the Holy Spirit](#)

1 Thessalonians 1:7

As a result (ULT)

Because (UST)

As a result indicates that what was spoken about in verse 6 caused what follows in verse 7. Use a natural way in your language to introduce verse 7 as the outcome of verse 6. Alternate translation: “Therefore” or “Because of that” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

you became an example to all those who believe in Macedonia and in Achaia (ULT)
all of the people who trust {in the Messiah} throughout the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia heard {of how you remained joyful while people made you suffer}, they wanted to also live as you do (UST)

If your language would not use the abstract noun **example**, you could express the idea behind it with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia wanted to imitate you” or “all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia started to copy how you live” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

to...those who believe (ULT)

the people who trust {in the Messiah} (UST)

Here and throughout the letter, the phrase **those who believe** refers to people who believe or trust in Jesus. If it would be helpful to your readers, you can include that information here. Alternate translation: “to ... those who trust in Jesus” or “to ... those who remain faithful to Jesus” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

The phrases **in Macedonia** and **in Achaia** mean that **those who believe** lived in any part of those provinces. Alternate translation: “throughout Macedonia and Achaia” or “throughout the regions of Macedonia and Achaia” or “across all of Macedonia and Achaia”

Translation Words - ULT

- [who believe](#)
- [Macedonia](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [who trust {in the Messiah}](#)
- [provinces of Macedonia](#)

ULT

⁷ As a result, you became an example to all those [who believe](#) in [Macedonia](#) and in Achaia.

UST

⁷ Because all of the people [who trust {in the Messiah}](#) throughout the [provinces of Macedonia](#) and Achaia heard {of how you remained joyful while people made you suffer}, they wanted to also live as you do.

1 Thessalonians 1:8

For from you the word of the Lord has been sounded out (ULT)
In fact, many people have heard you tell the message about the Lord {Jesus (UST)}

By putting **For from you** at the beginning of the sentence, Paul is emphasizing that it was the Thessalonians who have spread the word of God throughout the area. Use a natural way in your language to emphasize this. Alternate translation: “Indeed, it was from you that people heard the word of the Lord” or “Yes, you were the ones who proclaimed the word of the Lord” (See: [Information Structure](#))

For from you (ULT)
In fact, many people have heard you (UST)

This verse connects to verse 7 as an explanation of how the Thessalonian church became an example of faithfulness to God throughout Macedonia and Achaia and beyond. Use a word or phrase that introduces an explanation in your language. Alternate translation: “Certainly, from you” or “Indeed, from all of you” or “Because from you” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

the word of the Lord (ULT)
the message about the Lord {Jesus (UST)}

The phrase **the word of the Lord** figuratively refers to “the whole message of the Lord’s gospel.” Alternate translation: “the gospel message about the Lord Jesus Christ” or “the Lord’s gospel message” (See: [Metonymy](#))

has been sounded out (ULT)
tell (UST)

Here, **has been sounded out** uses a metaphor of a ringing bell or resounding instrument that can be heard from far away to describe how clearly and far the news of the Thessalonians’ faithfulness to God has spread throughout the world. If this might be misunderstood in your language, use an equivalent metaphor, or use plain language. Alternate translation: “has shone forth” or “has spread far and wide” or “has been heard” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Here, **faith** stands for the way that the Thessalonian church lived in faithful obedience to God. If this might be misunderstood in your language, use an expanded phrase. Alternate translation: “news of the way that you trust in God” or “the report about your faithfulness toward God” or “your faithful example before God” (See [Synecdoche](#))

Here, **your faith toward God has gone out** is a metaphor that pictures **faith** as something that can travel. This metaphor has the same meaning as the previous one about the sound of a bell going out. It means that the news of the Thessalonians’ faithfulness to God has spread very far. If this might be misunderstood in your language, use an equivalent metaphor, or use plain language. Alternate translation: “people have heard about your faith toward God in every place” or “news of your trust in God has been heard in every place” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁸ For from you the [word of the Lord](#) has been sounded out not only in [Macedonia](#) and in Achaia, but your [faith](#) toward [God](#) has gone out into every place. Therefore, we do not have need to say anything.

UST

⁸ In fact, many people have heard you tell the [message about the Lord {Jesus}](#). Then they also have proclaimed the message to other people who live throughout [Macedonia](#) and Achaia provinces. Even beyond that, people who live in many far-away places have heard [about how you trust in God](#). As a result, we do not need to tell people anything {about what God has done for you}.

into every place (ULT)
people who live in many far-away places (UST)

The phrase **into every place** is a hyperbole. If this might be misunderstood in your language, use plain language. Alternate translation: “all over the inhabited world” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

Therefore, we do not have need to say anything (ULT)
As a result, we do not need to tell people anything {about what God has done for you (UST)

Therefore marks what follows as the result of what came before. Because the gospel message and the faithful model of the Thessalonian church were so effective, the writers of this letter have no need to add anything to it. Use a natural way in your language to show this result relationship. Alternate translation: “This is why we have no reason to say anything more” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [word of the Lord](#)
- [of...Lord](#)
- [Macedonia](#)
- [faith](#)
- [God](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [message about the Lord {Jesus](#)
- [about the Lord...Jesus](#)
- [Macedonia](#)
- [about how you trust](#)
- [God](#)

1 Thessalonians 1:9

For (ULT)

Here, **For** is used to emphasize and explain why the writers of this letter do not need to **say anything 1:8**. Alternate translation: “Because” or “Indeed,” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

For they themselves report concerning us (ULT)

The writers of the letter use the pronoun **themselves** to emphasize at least two things: (1) These are the same people who heard about the Thessalonians’ gospel message and way of life. (2) The way the writers of this letter know that the Thessalonians’ gospel message and way of life has spread “into every place” is from the **report**. Alternate translation: “Those people who heard about the Thessalonian church tell” or “These same people proclaim” (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

**they...report (ULT)
are also telling {others} (UST)**

Alternate translation: “these same people are sending out the message” or “they themselves are proclaiming”

**what kind of reception we had with you (ULT)
about how you {warmly} welcomed us (UST)**

If your language does not use the abstract noun **reception**, you can express that idea behind it in another way. Alternate translation: “how readily you received us” or “how enthusiastically you welcomed us” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

**what kind of reception we had with you (ULT)
about how you {warmly} welcomed us (UST)**

Paul implies that the **kind of reception** they had from the Thessalonians was a good one. If that would not be understood by your readers, you could indicate it explicitly. Alternate translation: “what a good reception we had from you” or “how gladly you welcomed us” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**how you turned to God (ULT)
that you stopped...so that you could worship and obey...He is the {only} real God (UST)**

Here, the phrase **how you turned** is an idiom that simply refers to the fact that they turned, not to the manner of how they turned. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use plain language. Alternate translation: “that you turned” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁹ For **they** themselves **report** concerning us what kind of reception we had with you and how **you turned** to **God** from the **idols to serve** the **living** and **true God**

UST

⁹ These same people {who live far from you} **are also telling {others}** about how you {warmly} welcomed us. They also are telling {others} that **you stopped worshipping {non-living} statues of false gods** so that you could worship and obey **the living God. He is the {only} real God.**

you turned to God from the idols to serve the living and true God (ULT)

If it would be more natural in your language, you can combine the two phrases **to God** and **to serve the living and true God** into one phrase. Alternate translation: “you turned from serving the idols to serve the living and true God” (See: [Doublet](#))

you turned to God from the idols (ULT)

Paul speaks figuratively of the Thessalonian believers as if they had been facing toward their idols and then turned around to face toward God. He means that they no longer worship idols, but now they worship God. If this metaphor might be misunderstood in your language, use an equivalent metaphor from your culture or express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “you started worshiping God and left the idols behind” or “you abandoned the idols so that you could worship God” (See: [Metaphor](#))

to serve (ULT) worshiping (UST)

Here, **to serve** introduces a purpose clause. The reason why these people stopped worshiping idols was in order to serve God. Use a natural method of introducing a purpose clause in your language. Alternate translation: “in order to begin serving” or “for the purpose of serving” or “so that you could serve” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

from the idols to serve the living and true God (ULT)

This phrase expresses parallelism, by contrasting the deadness and falseness of idols with the living and real God. (See: [Parallelism](#))

from the idols to serve the living and true God (ULT)

By using the terms **living and true** to describe God, Paul is implying that these terms do not apply to the idols or to the gods that those idols represent. The idols themselves are made of materials that are not alive. The gods that they represent are living beings, but they are not **true** gods, because people do not owe them obedience or worship as they do to the God who created them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could include this information in the text or a footnote. Alternate translation: “from worshiping the non-living statues of false gods in order to serve the real God who is alive” or “from the dead idols in order to serve the God who lives and deserves our worship” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [they...report](#)
- [you turned](#)
- [God](#)
- [the...God](#)
- [idols](#)
- [to serve](#)
- [living](#)
- [true](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [are also telling {others](#)

- you stopped
- worshiping
- non-living} statues of false gods
- the living
- God
- God
- He is the...only} real

1 Thessalonians 1:10

and to wait for his Son from the heavens (ULT)
They} also {are telling others that you stopped
worshiping the false gods} so that you could
eagerly wait for God’s Son Jesus {to return to
earth} from heaven (UST)

The phrase **and to wait** adds a second purpose for which the Thessalonian believers stopped worshiping idols. Use a natural method for connecting this as another purpose clause in your language. Alternate translation: “and also to wait expectantly for the second coming of his Son from heaven” (See the Introduction to 1 Thessalonians, Part 2, for a discussion of the Second Coming of Christ.) (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

his Son (ULT)
God’s Son Jesus (UST)

Son is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God the Father. Alternate translation: “God’s only Son” (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

from the heavens (ULT)
to return to earth} from heaven (UST)

Here, the phrase **from the heavens** expresses the spiritual place where God is and where Jesus is currently located. It is the place from where he will return to the physical location of Earth. Make sure that your translation means this and not merely “the sky.” Alternate translation: “from the place where God is” or “from God’s realm”

whom he raised from the dead—Jesus (ULT)
As you know,} God resurrected Jesus after he died (UST)

Here, **whom** is a reference to **Son**, who is the same person as Jesus. Also, **he** and **his** refer back to God in 1:9. So, it is God who raised Jesus from the dead. You can make the subject, God, explicit in your translation if the use of the pronoun is unclear in your language. Alternate translation: “Jesus, whom God raised from the dead” or “whom God resurrected from the dead. This is Jesus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

from the dead (ULT)
after he died (UST)

Here, the phrase **the dead** is plural and a common biblical concept that refers to “dead people.” It means that Jesus physically died and was buried. If your language has a word or phrase for the place that dead people go, you could use it here. Alternate translation: “from the place where dead people are” or “from death” or “from the place where corpses are” or “from the grave” (See: [Idiom](#))

Jesus, the one rescuing us (ULT)
Jesus...and Jesus is the one who will rescue us {who believe in him (UST)

The clause **the one rescuing us** is functioning as an adjective that describes Jesus in his role as rescuer. It makes this action of rescuing to be a characteristic of Jesus or even a title: “the rescuer.” Translate this in a way that makes

ULT

¹⁰ and to wait for his **Son** from the **heavens**, whom **he raised** from the **dead** —**Jesus**, the one **rescuing** us from the **wrath** that is coming.

1:1 ^[1]

UST

¹⁰ {**They**} also {are telling others that you stopped worshiping the false gods} so that you could eagerly wait for God’s **Son Jesus** {to return to earth} from **heaven**. {As you know,} God **resurrected Jesus after he died**, and **Jesus is the one who will rescue** us {who believe in him} **at the time when God will punish people** {for their sins}.

this a description of Jesus. Alternate translation: “Jesus, our rescuer” or “Jesus, who rescues us” or “Jesus, the one who is going to rescue us” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

the one rescuing (ULT) and Jesus is the one who will rescue (UST)

Here, **rescuing** does not mean being taken away from God’s wrath after experiencing it. Instead, it means being taken away from any danger of experiencing God’s wrath. Alternate translation: “the one saving us” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

us (ULT) us {who believe in him (UST)

This is an inclusive use of **us**, including Paul, Silvanus, Timothy, and the Thessalonians—and by extension—all Christians. Your language may require you to mark these forms. Alternate translation: “all of us Christians” or “we who trust in Christ” or “all of us believers in Christ” (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

from the wrath that is coming (ULT) at the time when God will punish people {for their sins (UST)

Here, **wrath** is an abstract noun referring to the destined **coming** of God’s future and final Judgment. If it is clearer in your language, you could translate this as a verb form. Alternate translation: “from the future time when God punishes those who do not trust in him” or “when God will certainly punish those who worship idols” or “from God’s impending judgment” (See: [What is the “second coming” of Jesus?](#)) (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

the wrath that is coming (ULT) at the time when God will punish people...for their sins (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of **wrath** as though it were something that could travel and is **coming** to where people are. He means by this that in the future an event will happen when God will act wrathfully against people who have sinned and who have not trusted in Jesus to forgive their sins. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express this plainly. Alternate translation: “God’s judgment that will happen” or “when God will punish people for sin” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Son](#)
- [heavens](#)
- [he raised](#)
- [dead](#)
- [Jesus](#)
- [rescuing](#)
- [wrath](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Son Jesus](#)
- [heaven](#)
- [resurrected](#)
- [Jesus](#)
- [after he died](#)

- and Jesus is the one who will rescue
- at the time when God will punish people...for their sins

1 Thessalonians 2

1 Thessalonians 2 General Notes

Outline of 1 Thessalonians 2

Apostolic Suffering (2:1-13)
 Apostolic preaching (2:1-6)
 Apostolic conduct (2:7-9)
 Apostolic witness (2:10-3)
 Persecution of the Church (2:14-16)
 Thessalonian persecution (2:14a)
 Jewish persecution (2:14b-16)
 Paul's Desire to Visit (2:17-20)

Structure and Formatting

The first part of this chapter is a defense of their apostleship and sufferings. The second part is a recounting of the Thessalonian church's sufferings. Lastly, the apostle Paul makes known his deep desire to visit the Thessalonian church.

“We” and “You”

In this letter, the words **we** and **our** refer to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, unless otherwise noted. Throughout the letter, **we** and **our** is used to convey that all three apostles are in agreement with the letter.

Special Concepts in this Chapter

Apostolic witness

Here, Paul defends how he, Silvanus, and Timothy are God's apostles. By their preaching, conduct, and witness, they prove to be authorized messengers of Christ. (See: [\[\[rc://en/tw/bible/kt/apostle\]\]](#) and [testimony, testify, witness, eyewitness, evidence](#))

The gospel of God

The foundation of the apostolic witness is that they were “entrusted with the gospel” (See [2:4](#)). The apostles' authority makes them: “bold to speak” (See [2:2](#)), “impart” (See [2:8](#)), “preach” (See [2:9](#)), and thank God that the Thessalonian church “received the word of God” (See [2:13](#)).

The Second Coming of Christ

In this chapter is the first mention of the Second Coming of Christ in its two facets. First, Paul mentions that the persecutors of Christ's Church will be judged by using the phrase “wrath has come upon them” in [2:16](#). Next, Paul speaks of the “hope” and “joy” and “glory” for those who will “be saved” (See [2:16](#)) “in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming” (See [2:19-20](#)).

1 Thessalonians 2:1

For you yourselves know, brothers (ULT)
Our} fellow believers in the Messiah, you are well aware (UST)

Here, **For you yourselves know, brothers** functions as a chapter transition into the next topic, the apostles' suffering. You could emphasize this if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "Certainly, you are fully aware" (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

yourselves...you...know (ULT)
you are well aware...you are well aware (UST)

The words **you** and **yourselves** refer to the Thessalonian church. Paul uses this emphasis to express how well the Thessalonians understand the benefit of the apostles' previous visit. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: "you fully realize" or "you personally understand" (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

brothers (ULT)
Our} fellow believers in the Messiah (UST)

Throughout this letter, **brothers** is a metaphor meaning "fellow Christians" or "fellow believers in Christ" (See [1:4](#)). If your readers would not understand what **brothers** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. (See: [Metaphor](#))

brothers (ULT)
Our} fellow believers in the Messiah (UST)

Although the term **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using the word here in a generic sense that includes both males and females. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters" or "spiritual brothers and sisters" or "fellow believers in Christ" (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

This is an abstract noun phrase that refers to the apostles' previous visit (See "reception" in [1:9](#)). If your language does not use abstract noun phrases for this idea, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun phrase with a verb form. Alternate translation: "when we visited you" or "when you received us" or "when you welcomed us" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

our coming

Here, **our** is exclusive, referring to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy—but not to the Thessalonian church (See [1:9](#)). Your language may require you to mark this form. Alternate translation: "when we apostles came" (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

has not been in vain (ULT)
was quite productive (UST)

Here, **has not been in vain** is a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that has the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language,

ULT

¹ For you yourselves **know, brothers**, that our coming to you has not been **in vain**.

UST

¹ {**Our**} **fellow believers in the Messiah, you are well aware** that the time we spent with you was **quite productive**.

you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: “has proved quite beneficial” or “has definitely been worthwhile” or “has been very useful” (See: [Litotes](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- you...know
- brothers
- in vain

Translation Words - UST

- Our} fellow believers in the Messiah
- you are well aware
- quite productive

1 Thessalonians 2:2

This verse provides background information about what happened when Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy were in the city of Philippi (See Acts 16-17:1-10; 1:6). Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

But having previously suffered and having been shamefully treated at Philippi, just as you know, we were bold in our God (ULT)
As you know, people in the city of Philippi previously caused us to suffer and abused us, but our God made us courageous (UST)

But begins a contrasting clause emphasizing that the coming of Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy was **not in vain** 2:1. The phrase **we were bold** is an emphatic contrast to the normal response one would expect from suffering. Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy are able to respond this way because their boldness comes from God. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: “However ... God made us confident in how powerful he is” or “Instead ... God encouraged us” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

But having previously suffered and having been shamefully treated at Philippi, just as you know (ULT)
As you know, people in the city of Philippi previously caused us to suffer and abused us, but (UST)

Here, **just as you know** is meant to emphasize how well the Thessalonian church understands the apostles' suffering. If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: “But, as you are well aware that we already suffered and were badly insulted at Philippi” (See: [Information Structure](#))

having previously suffered and having been shamefully treated (ULT)
people...previously caused us to suffer and abused us (UST)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how badly the apostles suffered. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: “despite the fact that we had earlier suffered violently” or “since we already suffered being shamefully abused” (See: [Doublet](#))

the gospel of God (ULT)
his good news (UST)

This possessive phrase, **the gospel of God**, expresses how **gospel** relates to **God**. It can refer to three main ideas: (1) possession. Alternate translation: “God’s gospel” (2) source. Alternate translation: “the gospel from God” (3) association. “the gospel about God” (See: [Possession](#))

ULT

² But **having previously suffered** and having been shamefully treated at **Philippi, just as you know, we were bold** in our **God** to speak to you the **gospel of God** in much struggle.

UST

² **As you know, people in the city of Philippi previously caused us to suffer** and abused us, but our **God made us courageous** to speak **his good news** to you despite how hard we struggled {against those who tried to stop us from} speaking God’s good news to you.

in much struggle (ULT)
despite how hard we struggled {against those who tried to stop us from}
speaking God's good news to you (UST)

Here, **in much struggle** can also refer to a spiritual contest or game. If your language does not use the abstract noun **struggle**, for this idea, you could express the idea behind it in another way. Alternate translation: "although we struggled hard" or "despite how much we agonized" or "during the time we contested" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- having previously suffered
- Philippi
- just as
- you know
- we were bold
- God
- of God
- gospel

Translation Words - UST

- As
- you know
- people...previously caused us to suffer
- the city of Philippi
- God
- his
- made us courageous
- good news

1 Thessalonians 2:3

**For our exhortation was not from error, nor from impurity, nor in deceit (ULT)
Certainly, {when} we encouraged you {to believe God’s good news, we did} not {try} to convince you to believe an incorrect message. {We were} not selfishly motivated. {We did} not {try} to deceive {you with what we said (UST)**

Paul uses a repetitive series of phrases to describe why Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy had boldness to speak. This repetitive style of speaking or writing is called a “litany.” This list of phrases also defends how their message was “the gospel of God” (See 2:2). Use a form in your language that someone would use to list things that someone has done right. (See: [Litany](#))

**For our exhortation was not from error, nor from impurity, nor in deceit (ULT)
Certainly, {when} we encouraged you {to believe God’s good news, we did} not {try} to convince you to believe an incorrect message. {We were} not selfishly motivated. {We did} not {try} to deceive {you with what we said (UST)**

If your language does not use an abstract nouns **exhortation**, **error**, **impurity**, and **deceit**, you could express the idea behind them in another way. Alternate translation: “Certainly, when we appealed to you: we did not try to lead you astray, we did not speak impurely, we did not try to deceive you” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

**was not from error, nor from impurity, nor in deceit (ULT)
we did} not {try} to convince you to believe an incorrect message. {We were} not selfishly motivated. {We did} not {try} to deceive {you with what we said (UST)**

Paul uses this list of figures of speech that express a strong positive meaning by using a negative words together with words that are the opposite of the intended meaning. Here this list highlights the sincere motive and true content of the **exhortation** Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy shared with the Thessalonian church. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: “was from honest, pure, sincere motives” or “was made properly, purely, and sincerely” (See: [Litotes](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [exhortation](#)
- [error](#)
- [deceit](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [when...encouraged you...to believe God’s good news](#)
- [we did...try} to convince you to believe an incorrect message](#)

ULT

³ For our [exhortation](#) was not from [error](#), nor from impurity, nor in [deceit](#),

UST

³ Certainly, {[when](#)} we [encouraged you {to believe God’s good news, we did}](#) not {[try](#)} to convince you to believe an [incorrect message](#). {[We were](#)} not selfishly motivated. {[We did](#)} not {[try](#)} to deceive {[you with what we said](#)}.

- We did...try} to deceive...you with what we said

1 Thessalonians 2:4

but just as (ULT)
Actually...since (UST)

Here, **but just as** is meant to contrast the negative items in 2:3, and reinforce that Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy are authorized to preach the gospel. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: “it is actually true that” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

but just as we have been examined by God to be entrusted with the gospel (ULT)
Actually, we...God’s good news since he has examined us and approved that...are trustworthy (UST)

Here, **to be entrusted** expresses the result of **been examined**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: “certainly, God trusts us to proclaim the gospel because he tested and approved us” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

we have been examined by God to be entrusted with the gospel (ULT)
we...God’s good news...he has examined us and approved that...are trustworthy (UST)

The combination of these two verbs, **examined** and **entrusted**, are meant to emphasize how the apostles are authorized to preach the gospel. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “God has verified that we can be trusted to proclaim his good news” or “we have passed God’s test as faithful preachers of the gospel” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

so we speak (ULT)
speak...we...to do so (UST)

Here, **so we speak** expresses the result of having **been examined**. The reason why the apostles have confidence and authority to **speak** the gospel is because God tested and approved them. This could refer to: (1) reason for speaking. Alternate translation: “this is why we keep talking about it” (2) manner of speaking. Alternate translation: “so this is how we speak” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

we speak (ULT)
speak...we (UST)

Paul is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “we apostles keep speaking the gospel” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁴ but just as we have been examined by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing to men, but to God, the one who examines our hearts.

UST

⁴ Actually, we speak God’s good news since he has examined us and approved that we are trustworthy to do so. When we speak God’s good news, we are not {trying} to please people. Instead, {we are trying} to please God. God is the one who {constantly} examines what motivates us to speak {his good news}.

not as pleasing to men, but to God (ULT)

**When we speak God's good news, we are not {trying} to please people.
Instead, {we are trying} to please God (UST)**

Here, the word **but** contrasts **men** and **God**. Paul is indicating that **God** and **men** are different beings. Paul is also expressing the idea that the apostles' motive for speaking the **gospel** is to please **God**, and not to be **pleasing to men**. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: "not to flatter people, but to please God" (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

our hearts (ULT)

what motivates us to speak {his good news (UST)

The phrase **our hearts** is a metonym for the apostles' motives, affections, or deepest thoughts. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or use plain language. Alternate translation: "what we love" or "what we ponder" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- just as
- as
- we have been examined
- who examines
- God
- to God
- to be entrusted
- with...gospel
- hearts

Translation Words - UST

- God's good news
- since
- When we speak God's good news, we are...trying} to please people
- what motivates us to speak...his good news
- he has examined us and approved
- we are trying} to please God
- he has examined us and approved
- God is the one who...constantly} examines
- we...that...are trustworthy

1 Thessalonians 2:5

For we did not come at that time in words of flattery (ULT)
In fact, when we previously came, we did not try to please you by flattering you (UST)

Here, the phrase **For we did not come at that time** marks a transition where the apostles defend their motives by describing their previous godly conduct. Alternate translation: “Because previously when we came, it was not to flatter you” or “Certainly we never came in order to flatter you” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

not...in words of flattery...nor with a pretext for greed (ULT)

not...we did...try to please you by flattering you...We are} not greedily motivated, so we did not need to say things to try to hide how greedy we are from you (UST)

Here, Paul uses a series of negative examples in [2:5-6](#) to describe behavior that is not fitting for Christ’s apostles. This repetitive style of speaking or writing is called a “litany.” You can use a form in your language to list things that someone should not do. (See: [Litany](#))

For we did not come at that time in words of flattery (ULT)
In fact, when we previously came, we did not try to please you by flattering you (UST)

Paul places **just as you know** in a position that gives it special emphasis (See also [2:2](#)). If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: “As you are well aware, we did not previously come to flatter” (See: [Information Structure](#))

with a pretext for greed (ULT)
We are...greedily motivated, so we did not need to say things to try to hide how greedy we are from you (UST)

Here, **pretext** figuratively expresses the idea of people with greedy motives by comparing them to people wearing a mask or a disguise to cover up their evil intent. If the concept of a masking or disguising would not communicate a covering of true motives, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternate translation: “disguising greedy intent” or “trying to hide greed” (See: [Metaphor](#))

God {is} witness (ULT)
God confirms that this is true (UST)

In the phrase **God {is} witness**, Paul is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “God is our witness!” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

ULT

⁵ For we did not come at that time in words of flattery, **just as you know**, nor with a pretext **for greed**—God {is} witness—

UST

⁵ In fact, when we previously came, we did not try to please you by flattering you. **You know this is true.** {We are} not **greedily motivated**, so we did not need to say things to try to hide how greedy we are from you. **God confirms that this is true!**

God {is} witness (ULT)**God confirms that this is true (UST)**

The apostles are appealing to God to validate their gospel message and personal motives. They figuratively speak as if they are summoning God as a witness to testify on their behalf before a judge. If your readers would not understand what **God {is} witness** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternate translation: "We swear to/by God!" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- just as
- you know
- for greed
- God
- is} witness

Translation Words - UST

- You know this is true
- You know this is true
- We are...greedily motivated
- God confirms that this is true
- God confirms that this is true

1 Thessalonians 2:6

nor seeking glory from men, either from you or from others (ULT)

We did} not {hope that} people would honor {us-}not you and not others (UST)

Here Paul refers figuratively to **men** to speak of any individual person. He also refers to **from you or from others** as another way of saying “all people.” If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or use plain language. Alternate translation: “We were not looking for praise from any human being—not you or anyone else—” or “We were not hoping for any human honors from anyone” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

⁶ nor [seeking glory](#) from men, either from you or from others,

UST

⁶ {We did} not {hope that} people would honor {us-}not you and not others{-}

glory from men (ULT)
people would honor {us (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract noun **glory**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. Alternate translation: “for people to praise us” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [seeking](#)
- [glory](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [We did} not...hope that](#)
- [would honor {us](#)

1 Thessalonians 2:7

being able to be a burden as apostles of Christ (ULT)

Yet,} we could have made you submit to us, since we are the Messiah's authorized representatives (UST)

With the phrase **being able to be a burden**, Paul uses a hypothetical condition to draw attention to the divine authority of the **apostles of Christ**. Use the natural form in your language for expressing a hypothetical situation. This phrase could refer to: (1) authority of the apostles. "as Christ's apostles we have authority to force obedience" (2) rights of the apostles. Alternate translation: "as Christ's apostles, we could have burdened you by demanding financial support" (3) authority and rights of the apostles. Alternate translation: "as Christ's apostles, we have the power to demand support and submission" (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

being able to be a burden (ULT)

Yet,} we could have made you submit to us (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of the apostles as if they were a heavy weight or pack. He means that if they wanted to, they could impose their apostolic authority in a way that could seem oppressive to the Thessalonian church. If your readers would not understand what **burden** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternative translation, "although we could impose our authority" (See: [Metaphor](#))

but (ULT)

Instead (UST)

Here, **but** signals that the rest of the verse will contrast the idea of **burden**. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: "however" (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

we became little children in the midst of you (ULT)

we acted as gentle as infants while we were with you (UST)

Here, **became little children in the midst of you** is a metaphor indicating how gently the apostles treated the Thessalonian church. You could translate this with an active form, using a simile. Alternate translation: "we acted as mild as infants when we visited you" (See: [Metaphor](#))

in the midst of you (ULT)

while we were with you (UST)

Paul uses the idiom **in the midst of you** that means "spending time" or "visiting". If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: "while visiting you" or "while spending time with you" or "when we were with you" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁷ being able to be a **burden as apostles of Christ**; but we became **little children** in the midst of you, **as** if a mother might comfort {her} own **children**. ^[1]

UST

⁷ {Yet,} we could **have made you submit to us, since we are the Messiah's authorized representatives**. Instead, we acted **as gentle as infants** while we were with you. We acted {as gentle} **as a** {nurturing} mother {who} comforts her own **children**.

as if a mother might comfort {her} own children (ULT)**We acted {as gentle} as a {nurturing} mother {who} comforts her own children (UST)**

The point of this comparison is that in the same way a **mother** would gently **comfort** her **children**, so the apostles gently and affectionately nurtured the Thessalonian church (See [2:8](#)). If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison or express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "as we affectionately cared for you" (See: [Simile](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- a burden
- as
- as (2)
- apostles
- of Christ
- little children
- children

Translation Words - UST

- have made you submit to us
- since
- as (2)
- we are...authorized representatives
- the Messiah's
- as gentle as infants
- children

1 Thessalonians 2:8

Having affection for you in this manner (ULT) Since we are so fond of you (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract noun **affection**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. Alternate translation: "Because we desire you so much" or "Since we yearn for you like this" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

our} own souls (ULT) we...delighted to share} our own lives...you (UST)

Paul uses **our own souls** to speak figuratively of the apostles' bodies or their life. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "our own selves" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [gospel](#)
- [of God](#)
- [souls](#)
- [beloved](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [God's](#)
- [good news](#)
- [we...delighted to share} our own lives...you](#)
- [we started to love...so much](#)

ULT

⁸ Having affection for you in this manner, we were pleased to impart to you not only the [gospel of God](#), but also {our} own [souls](#). For you had become [beloved](#) to us.

UST

⁸ Since we are so fond of you, we delighted to share [God's good news](#) with you. Not only that, but {we} also {[delighted to share} our own lives](#) {with [you](#)}. {This is} because [we started to love you](#) {[so much](#)}.

1 Thessalonians 2:9

For (ULT) Certainly (UST)

Here the connecting word **For** emphasizes that what follows is something else important that the Thessalonian church should pay attention to. Alternate translation: “Certainly,” or “Indeed,” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

brothers (ULT) our} fellow believers (UST)

Although the term **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using the word here in a generic sense that includes both males and females. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” or “spiritual brothers and sisters” or “fellow believers in Christ” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

our labor and toil (ULT) how hard we labored (UST)

Here, **labor** and **toil** mean basically the same thing. The repetition emphasizes how hard the apostles worked. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you could combine these phrases or make them active. Alternate translation: “our toilsome labor” or “how hard we worked” (See: [Doublet](#))

night and day working (ULT) We kept working during the night and the day (UST)

This phrase further explains **our labor and toil**. If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases more clear. Alternate translation: “although working night and day” or “despite the fact that we kept working night and day” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

night and day working (ULT) We kept working during the night and the day (UST)

Here, **night and day working** is an idiom for excessive labor. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “we stayed busy working” or “we never stopped laboring” (See: [Idiom](#))

in order not to burden any of you (ULT) This was so that we would not have to ask any of you to help us financially (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of the apostles as if they were a heavy weight or pack (See note at [2:7](#)). Alternative translation, “so that none of you would have to financially support us” or “so that we would not impose on anyone” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁹ For you remember, **brothers**, our **labor** and **toil**, night and **day working** in order not **to burden** any of you, **we preached** to you the **gospel of God**.

UST

⁹ Certainly {**our**} **fellow believers**, you remember **how hard we labored**. **We kept working during the night and the day**. This was so that **we would not have to ask** any of you **to help us financially**. **Even though we were working, we {still} proclaimed God's good news to you**.

in order not (ULT)**This was so that...not (UST)**

This phrase introduces a purpose clause. Paul is stating the purpose for why the apostles worked so much. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

the gospel of God (ULT)**God's good news (UST)**

Again, the phrase **the gospel of God** is used to indicate that the apostles' message is of divine origin (See your translation at [2:2](#)). (See: [Possession](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- brothers
- labor
- working
- day
- to burden
- we preached
- gospel
- of God

Translation Words - UST

- our} fellow believers
- how hard we labored
- We kept working
- during the night and the day
- we would...have to ask...to help us financially
- Even though we were working, we {still} proclaimed
- God's
- good news

1 Thessalonians 2:10

You {are} witnesses, and {so is} God (ULT) Both you and God testify (UST)

The apostles are appealing to the Thessalonian church and God to validate their gospel message and personal motives (See also [2:5](#)). They figuratively speak as if they are summoning both the church and God as a witness to testify on their behalf before a judge. If your readers would not understand what this phrase means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternate translation: “You are our witnesses, as well as God himself” or “As well as God, you can personally testify” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁰ You {are} witnesses, and {so is} God, how [holy](#) and [righteous](#), and [blameless](#) we became toward you [who believe](#),

UST

¹⁰ Both you and [God testify](#) to how [faithfully](#), [righteously](#), and [innocently](#) we behaved toward {all of} you [who trust {in God}](#).

You {are} witnesses, and {so is} God (ULT) Both you and God testify (UST)

In this phrase, Paul is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “As well as God, you can personally testify” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

how holy and righteous, and blameless we became toward you who believe (ULT)

Paul uses a repetitive series of proofs of the apostles’ godly behavior in [2:10-12](#). This repetitive style of speaking or writing is called a “litany.” This is a list of the evidence for which the Thessalonian church and God are evoked as witnesses. Use a form in your language that someone would use to list things that someone has done right. Alternate translation: “just how [faithfully](#) and [justly](#) and [innocently](#) we conducted ourselves toward you believers in God” or “how we acted reverently, and fairly, and blamelessly while visiting the faithful” (See: [Litany](#))

You...toward you (ULT) Both you...toward {all of} you (UST)

The pronouns **You** and **you** are plural and refer to all the believers in God at Thessalonica. Your language may require you to mark this form. Alternate translation: “You all ... among all of you” (See: [Forms of ‘You’ — Singular](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [are} witnesses](#)
- [God](#)
- [holy](#)
- [righteous](#)
- [blameless](#)
- [who believe](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [God](#)
- [testify](#)
- [faithfully](#)
- [righteously](#)
- [innocently](#)

- [who trust...in God](#)

1 Thessalonians 2:11

**just as you know as each one of you (ULT)
Each and every one of you knows this
personally (UST)**

Again, Paul places **just as you know** in a position that gives it special emphasis (See also 2:2,5). It is another way of saying “you {are} witnesses” (See 2:10). Paul is appealing to the Thessalonian church’s own experience of the apostles’ godly behavior to prove their gospel message comes from God (See 2:9). Use a natural way in your language to express this emphasis. Alternate translation: “just as you each and every one of you are well aware” or “just as each one of you experienced for yourself”

ULT

¹¹ just as **you know as** each one of you, **as a father** his own **children**,

UST

¹¹ **Each and every one** of you **knows** this **personally**: {**we behaved**} **the same way** {**towards you,**} **as a father** {**behaves towards**} his own **children**.

**as a father his own children (ULT)
we behaved} the same way {towards you,} as a father {behaves towards} his
own children (UST)**

The point of Paul’s comparison is that the apostles are like fathers who model and instruct in proper behavior for their children. They see themselves as spiritual fathers to the Thessalonian church, so they nurture them in the Christian faith like a father would care for the overall well-being of his own children. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison or express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “like a father nurtures his own children” or “just as a father cares for his own children” or “like a father trains his own children” (See: [Simile](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [you know](#)
- [as](#)
- [as \(2\)](#)
- [a father](#)
- [children](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Each and every one...personally](#)
- [the same way \(2\)](#)
- [knows](#)
- [we behaved...towards you,} as a father {behaves](#)
- [towards...children](#)

1 Thessalonians 2:12

exhorting you and encouraging and testifying for you

Paul uses a repetitive series of verb forms to show how the apostles have instructed the Thessalonian church like caring fathers would teach their children. These words are meant to instill a sense of urgency. Alternate translation: “encouraging and building you up and acting as your witness” or “instructing you through appeals, encouragement, and our own personal example”

exhorting...testifying (ULT) We kept} urging...and testifying (UST)

These verbal forms also describe the apostles’ fatherly behavior toward the Thessalonian church. These forms can be expressed in a number of ways: (1) result. Alternate translation: “with the result that we kept exhorting ... testifying” (2) means. Alternate translation: “by exhorting ... testifying” (3) manner. Alternate translation: “how we kept exhorting ... testifying”

for you to walk worthily of God (ULT) that...should live the way that God wants his people to live (UST)

This phrase is a purpose clause. Paul is stating the purpose for the apostles’ appeals. He wants the Thessalonian church to live **worthy of God**. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: “that you must honor God by how you live” or “so that you would live how God desires” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

for you to walk worthily of God (ULT) that...should live the way that God wants his people to live (UST)

Paul is using the possessive form **of God** to describe how God’s people should live. Use a natural way in your language to make this explicit. Alternate translation: “to live in a way that honors God” or “to live in a way that God honors” (See: [Possession](#))

to walk (ULT) that...should live the way that...wants his people to live (UST)

Here, **to walk** is a metaphor that means “to live.” If your readers would not understand what it means **to walk** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “to habitually live” or “for you to continue to live” (See: [Metaphor](#))

who is calling you (ULT) This is because God {keeps} inviting you (UST)

This phrase gives us further information about God and describes what he is doing through the apostles’ teachings. If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases clearer. Alternate translation: “he is the one who continues to summon you” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

ULT

¹² **exhorting** you and encouraging and **testifying** for you **to walk worthily of God, who is calling** you into {his} own kingdom and **glory**.

UST

¹² {We kept} **urging** and encouraging and **testifying** that all of you **should live the way that God wants his people to live!** This is because God {keeps} **inviting** you to enter **his own glorious kingdom**.

who is calling you (ULT)**This is because God {keeps} inviting you (UST)**

Here, **who is calling you** is a parallelism that equates the apostles' **exhorting**, **encouraging**, and **testifying** with God's **calling**. See also [2:13](#). (See: [Parallelism](#))

into {his} own kingdom and glory (ULT)**to enter his own glorious kingdom (UST)**

This phrase, **into his own kingdom and glory**, expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **glory** describes what the **kingdom** is like. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use **and**. Alternate translation: "into his own glorious kingdom" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [exhorting](#)
- [testifying](#)
- [to walk](#)
- [worthily](#)
- [of God](#)
- [who is calling](#)
- [kingdom](#)
- [glory](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [We kept} urging](#)
- [and testifying](#)
- [glorious](#)
- [that...should live the way that...wants his people to live](#)
- [that...should live the way that...wants his people to live](#)
- [God](#)
- [This is because God...keeps} inviting](#)
- [his own...kingdom](#)

1 Thessalonians 2:13

And because of this, we also thank God constantly (ULT)

We also continually thank God for this reason (UST)

The phrase **And because of this** indicates that what follows are the reasons why the apostles are thankful for the Thessalonian church. If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, as in the UST, to make this explicit. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

we also thank God constantly (ULT)

We also continually thank God (UST)

This phrase uses exaggeration to emphasize the apostles' gratitude (See also 1:2). Here, **constantly** does not mean "every moment." If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language that shows intense gratitude. Alternate translation: "We ourselves habitually thank" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

we (ULT)

We also (UST)

Here Paul uses the word **we** to emphasize how thankful the apostles are. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: "we personally" or "we ourselves"

that having received the word of God, heard from us, you accepted it (ULT) you accepted God's message when we reported it to you. You did...consider it (UST)

This clause explains why the apostles are thankful. If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases more clear. See UST (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

that having received the word of God, heard from us, you accepted it (ULT) you accepted God's message when we reported it to you. You did...consider it (UST)

Paul is stressing that it is **the word of God** that the apostles reported. This is why he first mentions that the Thessalonians **received the word of God** before mentioning that they **heard** it. If this is confusing in your language, you could make the order of events clear. Alternate translation: "that when we told you God's message, you heard it, and then you accepted it" (See: [Order of Events](#))

ULT

¹³ And because of this, we also thank God constantly, that **having received the word of God**, heard from us, **you accepted it** not {as} the word of man, but **just as it truly is, the word of God**, which is also working in you **who believe**.

UST

¹³ We also continually thank God for this reason: **you accepted God's message** when we reported it to you. **You did not consider it** to be merely a human message. {You accepted} **the message as if God sent it himself. And God actually gave us the message to report!** {We} also {constantly thank God} that **for those of you who trust in him**, God is effectively changing you to live like his people should.

that (ULT)
when...reported...to you (UST)

Here, **that** marks the reasons in [2:13-14](#) for why the apostles are thankful for the Thessalonian church. Use a natural way in your language to express the reason why people should do things. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

but just as it truly is (ULT)
And God actually gave us the message to report (UST)

Paul uses this contrasting clause to strongly negate the idea that the apostles' message is of human origin. Use a natural way in your language for introducing an emphatic contrast. Alternate translation: "but in fact what it really is" (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

the word of man...the word of God (ULT)
to be merely a human message...You accepted} the message as if God sent it himself (UST)

Paul uses the phrase **the word** figuratively to represent a message that is made up of words. Here, **the word of man** refers to a message of human origin. In contrast, **the word of God** refers to the same message, called "the gospel of God" in [2:8-9](#). If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: "a human message ... God's message" (See: [Metonymy](#))

which is also working in you who believe (ULT)
We} also {constantly thank God} that for those of you who trust in him, God is effectively changing you to live like his people should (UST)

The apostles refer to God's gospel message figuratively as if it were a person or tool doing work. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "and God is energizing you faithful ones with this message" or "and God is activating this message among you who trust in him" (See: [Personification](#))

which (ULT)
God (UST)

Here, the word translated **which** could refer to **God** or **the word**. Alternate translation: "and God" or "and God's word" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

in you (ULT)
you (UST)

Here, the pronoun **you** is plural and refers to all the believers in God at Thessalonica (See [2:10](#)). Your language may require you to mark this form. Alternate translation: "among all of you" (See: [Forms of 'You' — Singular](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- God
- of God

- having received
- you accepted it
- the word
- the word of God
- just as
- truly
- who believe

Translation Words - UST

- God
- God's
- you accepted...it
- You did...consider it
- for those of you who trust in him
- message
- You accepted} the message as if God sent it himself
- And God actually gave us the message to report
- And God actually gave us the message to report

1 Thessalonians 2:14

became imitators of the churches

Verses 14-16 provide background information about how the Thessalonian church suffered persecutions similar to the Judean church. (See: [Background Information](#))

For (ULT)

For indicates that what follows is the proof of how God's message is working among the Thessalonian church. Alternate translation: "Because" or "In fact" (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

brothers (ULT)

Although the term **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using the word here in a generic sense that includes both males and females. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters" or "spiritual brothers and sisters" or "fellow believers in Christ" (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

became imitators...of the churches (ULT)

Here, **imitators** is a noun that can be translated with a verb (See [1:6](#)). Use a natural way in your language to express this idea. Alternate translation: "mimicked the churches" or "imitated the churches" or "copied the behavior of the churches"

in Christ Jesus (ULT)

Here, Paul speaks figuratively of the churches of God **in Christ Jesus** as though they were occupying space inside Jesus. This metaphor expresses the idea that believers are spiritually united to God and Jesus (See also [1:1](#)). Here, it also highlights the communion that Thessalonian believers **in Christ Jesus** have with Judean believers **in Christ Jesus** through the Holy Trinity. If this might be misunderstood in your language, you can express the meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternative translation, "who are united to Jesus Christ" or "who share life with Jesus Christ" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [brothers](#)
- [imitators](#)
- [of...churches](#)
- [of God](#)
- [Judea](#)
- [Christ Jesus](#)
- [Christ](#)
- [suffered](#)
- [just as](#)
- [Jews](#)

ULT

14 For you, [brothers](#), became [imitators](#) of the [churches of God](#) that are in [Judea](#) in [Christ Jesus](#), because the same things you also [suffered](#) from {your} own countrymen, [just as](#) they also from the [Jews](#),

UST

14-15 {Unbelieving} Jews in Judea not only killed the prophets {long ago}, but they {recently} also killed the Lord Jesus. They also severely mistreated us {apostles}. These unbelieving Jews also made the Judean believers in the Messiah suffer. Certainly, {our} fellow believers in the Messiah, you imitated those assemblies of God in Judea that are united to Jesus the Messiah by suffering the same things from your fellow countrymen. God is thoroughly displeased with these {unbelieving} Jews. They are also enemies of the whole human race!

Translation Words - UST

- brother
- Christ, Messiah
- church, Church
- God
- Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus
- Jew, Jewish
- Judea, Judah
- imitate, imitator
- like, likeminded, likeness, likewise, alike, unlike, as if
- suffer, suffering

1 Thessalonians 2:15

who have killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets and have persecuted us (ULT)

This is the specific content of the background information about the Jewish persecution of Christians. (See: [Background Information](#))

who have killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets and have persecuted us (ULT)

The whole history of the persecution of God's people is summarized in three parts: the killing of Old Testament prophets, the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, and persecution of the apostles. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or use plain language. (See: [Merism](#))

who have killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets and have persecuted us (ULT)

This list of those persecuted by the Jews is not chronological, but emphasizes the order of importance and intensity of persecution. If this is confusing in your language, you could make the order of events clear. Alternate translation: "who have killed the prophets, then the Lord Jesus, and finally persecuted us" (See: [Order of Events](#))

have persecuted us and are not pleasing to God and {are} hostile to all men (ULT)

Here, **and** indicates that the following phrase is the result of Jews' persecution. If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. To emphasize God's response toward the Jews' persecution, you could begin a new sentence with God as the subject. Alternate translation: "have persecuted us and are enemies of all people. This is why God is continually displeased" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

and are not pleasing to God and {are} hostile to all men (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. These phrases are meant to express how the Jewish persecution of Christians is the same thing as opposing God himself. If it would be clearer in your language, you can combine the phrases into one clarifying idea. Alternate translation: "and they make themselves enemies of God by how hostile they are against the Jewish and Gentile churches" (See: [Parallelism](#))

are} hostile to all men (ULT)

Paul is using the possessive form of **hostile** to describe how the persecutors of the Christian Church are characterized by a hostile attitude. Alternate translation: "characterized by being opposed to all people types" (See: [Possession](#))

ULT

¹⁵ who have killed both the [Lord Jesus](#) and the [prophets](#) and have persecuted us and are not pleasing [to God](#) and {are} hostile to all men,

UST

¹⁴⁻¹⁵ {Unbelieving} Jews in Judea not only killed the prophets {long ago}, but they {recently} also killed the Lord Jesus. They also severely mistreated us {apostles}. These unbelieving Jews also made the Judean believers in the Messiah suffer. Certainly, {our} fellow believers in the Messiah, you imitated those assemblies of God in Judea that are united to Jesus the Messiah by suffering the same things from your fellow countrymen. God is thoroughly displeased with these {unbelieving} Jews. They are also enemies of the whole human race!

are} hostile (ULT)

A word is left out here in the original that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. Since English needs it, the word **are** is added in brackets. Do what is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “are opposed” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

to all men (ULT)

Paul speaks figuratively about **all men** to refer to “all people types” or “the whole human race.” Here, **all men** refers to two parts of humanity represented by Jews (See [2:14](#)) and Gentiles (See [2:16](#)). If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or use plain language. Alternate translation: “to all people types” or “to all the nations” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

to all men (ULT)

Here, **to all men** is an exaggeration that Paul uses to express his emotions about the hostile Jews. Paul does not mean that the Jews are hostile to every individual human being. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language that shows this emphasis. Alternate translation: “toward all of humanity” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

to all men (ULT)

Although the term **men** is masculine, Paul is using the word here in a generic sense that includes both **men** and women. Alternate translation: “to all humans” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Lord](#)
- [Jesus](#)
- [prophets](#)
- [to God](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [God](#)
- [Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus](#)
- [lord, Lord, master, sir](#)
- [prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess](#)

1 Thessalonians 2:16

forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles so that they might be saved (ULT)

The unbelieving Jews keep trying to stop us from telling {God's good news to} those people who are not Jews. This is because the unbelieving Jews do not want God to save those who are not Jews (UST)

This clause gives further information for why the Gentiles are “not pleasing to God and {are} hostile to all men” (See [2:15](#)). If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases more clear. (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

**to the Gentiles (ULT)
to} those people who are not Jews (UST)**

Here, **Gentiles** refers to all the non-Christian nations in general, not one group of people. If this would be misunderstood in your language, use a more natural phrase. Alternate translation: “among the non-Jews” or “to all the nations” (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

so that they might be saved (ULT)

This is because the unbelieving Jews do not want God to save those who are not Jews (UST)

This purpose clause gives the reason why the Jews are trying to prevent the apostles from preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. Here, **to speak** expresses the way the Gentiles **might be saved**. This clause could refer to: (1) the Jews purposely trying to keep the Gentiles from salvation. Alternate translation: “to hinder the Gentiles from being saved” (2) how the speaking is for the purpose of saving the Gentiles. Alternate translation: “in order that the Gentiles can be saved” or “for the purpose of saving the nations” The clause could also refer to both ideas. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

to always fill up their sins (ULT)

These unbelieving Jews continue to sin so much that they have almost reached the limit that God will allow (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of the Jews' sins as if they fill a container. He means that these Jews sin so much and so extremely that they can never escape God's **wrath**. If your readers would not understand what it means to **to always fill up** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternate translation: “causing them to always reach the limit of their sinfulness” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁶ forbidding us to speak to the **Gentiles** so that **they might be saved**, to always **fill up** their **sins**. But the **wrath** has come upon them to the end.

UST

¹⁶ The unbelieving Jews keep trying to stop us from telling {God's good news to} those people who are not Jews. This is because the unbelieving Jews do not want God to save those who are not Jews. These unbelieving Jews **continue to sin** so much that they have almost reached the limit that God will allow. Indeed, when they least expect it, **God will punish** them at the end {of time}!

to always fill up their sins (ULT)

These unbelieving Jews continue to sin so much that they have almost reached the limit that God will allow (UST)

This result clause explains what will happen to the Jews for **forbidding** the apostles **to speak to the Gentiles**. Use a natural way in your language to indicate result. Alternate translation: “as a result, God will no longer forgive their many sins” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

But the wrath has come upon them to the end (ULT)

Indeed, when they least expect it, God will punish them at the end {of time (UST)

Paul is figuratively using the past tense in order to refer to something that will happen in the future. Paul is doing this to show that the event will certainly happen. If the use of the past tense here is confusing in your language, you could use the future tense. This phrase could refer to: (1) final judgment. Alternate translation: “In fact, final wrath will overtake them” (See also [5:9](#)) (2) certain judgment. Alternate translation: “Certainly, their punishment has finally arrived” (See: [Predictive Past](#))

But (ULT)

Indeed (UST)

Paul uses **But** to indicate that what follows is important. Here, **But** could refer to: (1) certainty. Alternate translation: “Certainly” or “In fact” (2) contrast. Alternate translation: “However” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

But the wrath has come upon them (ULT)

Indeed, when they least expect it, God will punish them (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract noun **the wrath**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [to...Gentiles](#)
- [they might be saved](#)
- [to...fill up](#)
- [sins](#)
- [wrath](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [to} those people who are not Jews](#)
- [This is because the unbelieving Jews do not want God to save those who are not Jews](#)
- [continue...that they have almost reached the limit that God will allow](#)
- [to sin](#)
- [God will punish](#)

1 Thessalonians 2:17

But we, brothers (ULT) Our} fellow believers...But (UST)

The phrase **But we, brothers** expresses that this is a contrasting phrase that switches the attention back to the apostles' relationship with the Thessalonian church. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

brothers (ULT) Our} fellow believers (UST)

Although the term **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using the word here in a generic sense that includes both males and females. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” or “spiritual brothers and sisters” or “fellow believers in Christ” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

having been separated from you (ULT) being so far away deprived {us} from...you (UST)

Since the Greek word that ULT translates as **having been separated from you** can also mean “having been orphaned from you,” Paul may be revisiting the idea where the apostles affectionately compare themselves to “little children” in [2:7](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “since we have been apart from you, we feel like orphans” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

for the time of an hour (ULT) for a short time (UST)

Here, **for the time of an hour** is an idiom that indicates a short time span. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “for short time” or “for a little while” (See: [Idiom](#))

by face, not in heart (ULT) seeing...although we were far away from you, we did not become less affectionate {towards you} (UST)

Here, **face** represents the person or physical presence, and **heart** represents the apostles' concerns, feelings, and affections. Though the apostles were not physically present in Thessalonica, they continued to care about and show concern for their relationship with the church there. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or use plain language. Alternate translation: “by distance, not in feeling” or “in person, not in affection” or “in presence, not in concern” (See: [Metonymy](#))

to see your faces, in much desire (ULT) and deeply desired to see you in person (UST)

Here, **to see your faces, in much desire** means the same thing as **by face, not in heart**. Paul says the same thing twice in slightly different ways to show how much the apostles desire to visit the Thessalonian church. Use a natural way in your language to express this idea. (See: [Parallelism](#))

ULT

¹⁷ But we, **brothers**, having been separated from you for **the time of an hour, by face**, not **in heart**, became extremely eager to see your **faces**, in much desire.

UST

¹⁷ {**Our**} **fellow believers**, being so far away deprived {us} from **seeing** you for **a short time**. But, although we were far away from you, we did not **become less affectionate {towards you}**. We became even more eager and deeply desired to see you **in person**.

in much desire (ULT) and deeply desired (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract noun **desire**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. It can also be translated as an active phrase. Alternate translation: “for which we long passionately” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

to see your faces (ULT) to see you in person (UST)

The phrase **to see your faces** is an idiom meaning **to visit**. Here, it expresses the apostles’ strong desire to personally visit and share spiritual intimacy with the Thessalonian church. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “to visit you” or “to spend quality time with you” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [brothers](#)
- [the time of an hour](#)
- [of an hour](#)
- [by face](#)
- [faces](#)
- [in heart](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Our} fellow believers](#)
- [seeing](#)
- [in person](#)
- [a short time](#)
- [a short time](#)
- [did...become less affectionate {towards you](#)

1 Thessalonians 2:18

For (ULT) **Indeed (UST)**

Here, **For** indicates that what follows is background information for why Paul had not yet visited. Alternate translation: “Indeed,” or “Certainly,” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

to come (ULT) **to visit (UST)**

Your language may say “go” rather than **come** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: “to go” or “to travel” (See: [Go and Come](#))

indeed I, Paul, both once and twice (ULT) **I, Paul, even {tried to come} two times (UST)**

In this phrase, Paul is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “I Paul personally tried to come twice” or “Indeed, I, Paul tried to go two times” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

indeed I, Paul (ULT) **I, Paul, even (UST)**

Here Paul uses the pronoun **I**, and he uses **indeed** to emphasize that he personally tried to visit the Thessalonian church. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

both once and twice (ULT) **tried to come} two times (UST)**

Here, the phrase **both once and twice** means repeatedly. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “twice” or “many times” (See: [Idiom](#))

but (ULT) **but {when we tried to come (UST)**

What follows the word **but** here is in contrast to what was expected, that Paul would visit the Thessalonian church. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: “however” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

but...hindered (ULT) **but {when we tried to come...opposed (UST)**

Since the Greek word that ULT translates as **hindered** often means “cut off” or “beat in,” Paul may be stressing the violent nature of Satan’s obstruction. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “powerfully prevented us” or “violently obstructed us” or “cut off our route” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

¹⁸ For we desired to come to you—indeed I, Paul, both once and twice—but Satan hindered us.

UST

¹⁸ Indeed, we wanted to visit you. I, Paul, even {tried to come} two times, but {when we tried to come,} Satan opposed us.

Translation Words - ULT

- Paul
- Satan

Translation Words - UST

- Paul
- Satan

1 Thessalonians 2:19

For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of boasting? Is it not even you before our Lord Jesus at his coming?

Paul uses these rhetorical questions here to emphasize why the apostles want to visit the Thessalonian church. If you would not use rhetorical questions for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

hope or joy or crown of boasting (ULT) so confident {about your trust in God. Being in your presence} also makes us joyful. {Since you are so faithful to God,} we are sure we have achieved what God wanted us to do (UST)

Here, **hope joy** and **crown** are spoken of figuratively as if they were the people in the Thessalonian church. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “Because who makes us hopeful? Who causes us to rejoice? Who gives us reason to boast victoriously?” (See: [Personification](#))

For what {is} our hope or joy or crown of boasting? Or {is it} not even you (ULT)

Some words are left out here in the original that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. Since English needs it, **is it** is added in brackets. Do what is natural in your language. (See: [Ellipsis](#))

hope or joy or crown of boasting (ULT) so confident {about your trust in God. Being in your presence} also makes us joyful. {Since you are so faithful to God,} we are sure we have achieved what God wanted us to do (UST)

Here, **hope, joy**, and **crown of boasting** are spoken of figuratively as if these concepts were the Thessalonian church. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “Because who makes us hopeful? Who causes us to rejoice? Who gives us reason to boast victoriously?” (See: [Personification](#))

crown of boasting (ULT) Since you are so faithful to God...we are sure we have achieved what God wanted us to do (UST)

Here, **crown** refers figuratively to a laurel wreath awarded to victorious athletes. The expression **crown of boasting** means a reward for victory or for having competed well. The proof of the apostles' success will ultimately be displayed at the Second Coming of Christ if the Thessalonian church remains faithful to God (See [4:13-5:11](#)). If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or use plain language. Alternate translation: “reward for victory” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

¹⁹ For what {is} our [hope](#) or [joy](#) or [crown of boasting](#)? ^[2] Or {is it} not even you before our [Lord Jesus](#) at his coming?

UST

¹⁹ We wanted to visit because we are [so confident](#) {about your trust in God. Being in your presence} also makes us joyful. {Since you are so faithful to God,} we are sure we have achieved what God wanted us to do. {Certainly, we are} also {convinced that we will all be together} in the presence of our [Lord Jesus](#) when he comes {again}!

crown of boasting (ULT)

Since you are so faithful to God...we are sure we have achieved what God wanted us to do (UST)

Paul is using this possessive form to describe either: (1) the product of boasting. Alternate translation: “crown that produces boasting” (2) the means of boasting. Alternate translation: “crown through which we boast” (See: [Possession](#))

before our Lord Jesus (ULT)

that we will all be together} in the presence of our Lord Jesus (UST)

Here, **before** refers to location or sphere, used as a substitute for “in front of” or “in the presence of.” If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or use plain language. Alternate translation: “in the presence of our Lord Jesus” or “in front of our Lord Jesus” or “in the sight of our Lord Jesus” (See: [Metonymy](#))

at his coming (ULT)

when he comes {again (UST)

Here, **his coming** is a well-known idiom in 1-2 Thessalonians for the Second Coming of Christ (See [3:13](#)) or the “Day of the Lord” (See [5:2](#)). Use a natural way in your language to emphasize this idea. Alternate translation: “at his Second Coming” or “when he arrives again” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [hope](#)
- [joy](#)
- [crown](#)
- [of boasting](#)
- [Lord](#)
- [Jesus](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [so confident {about your trust in God](#)
- [Being in your presence} also makes us joyful](#)
- [Since you are so faithful to God...we are sure we have achieved what God wanted us to do](#)
- [Since you are so faithful to God...we are sure we have achieved what God wanted us to do](#)
- [of...Lord](#)
- [Jesus](#)

1 Thessalonians 2:20

For you are our glory and joy (ULT) Because of you, we glorify {God} and rejoice (UST)

This verse means the same thing as “our hope or joy or crown of boasting” in 2:19. Paul says the same thing twice in slightly different ways to emphasize that he is genuinely pleased with the Thessalonian church. Use a natural way in your language to express this emphasis. (See: [Parallelism](#))

you (ULT)
you (UST)

Paul uses the word **you** to emphasize how the Thessalonian church’s faithfulness to God brings honor and joy to the apostles. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

For you are our glory and joy (ULT) Because of you, we glorify {God} and rejoice (UST)

Here, the Thessalonian church is figuratively compared to the abstract concepts of **glory and joy**. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “Because of you, God will honor us and make us rejoice” or “Certainly, we will become glorified and rejoice because of you!” (See: [Personification](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- glory
- joy

Translation Words - UST

- we glorify...God
- rejoice

ULT

²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.

2:7 ^[1]

2:19 ^[2] two ancient versions have a word translated as or

UST

²⁰ Because of you, we glorify {God} and rejoice!

1 Thessalonians 3

1 Thessalonians 3 General Notes

Outline of 1 Thessalonians 3

Timothy's Visit (3:1-5)
Apostolic concern (3:1-2)
Apostolic encouragement (3:3-5)
Timothy's Report (3:6-13)
Good news (3:6-10)
Apostolic prayer (3:11-13)

Structure and Formatting

The first part of this chapter recounts Timothy's visit to Thessalonica. The second part tells about his report to Paul and Silvanus at Athens. Lastly, the apostles offer a prayer on behalf of the Thessalonian church.

"We" and "You"

In this letter, the words **we** and **our** refer to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, unless otherwise noted. Throughout the letter, **we** and **our** is used to convey that all three apostles are in agreement with the letter.

Special Concepts in this Chapter

Metaphor

In this chapter, the Apostle Paul uses the phrase "stand firm" in [3:8](#) as a metaphor of faithfulness to the Gospel, and "be shaken" in [3:3](#) as the opposite of being faithful. (See: [faithful](#), [faithfulness](#), [trustworthy](#))

Use a building metaphor, the apostles pray that God will "strengthen the "hearts" of the Thessalonian church "blameless" (See [3:13](#)).

The enemy of God's people, "Satan" (See [2:18](#)) is here called "the tempter" (See [3:5](#)).

Hyperbole

Paul uses emotional and extreme language when speaking of his memory of the Thessalonian church. "Enduring it no longer," the apostles and especially Paul (See [3:1,5](#)) feel compelled to find out about the spiritual condition of the church. The intensity and duration of the apostles' prayers is described as "night and day pleading earnestly" (See [3:10](#)).

The Second Coming of Christ

Here the apostles pray that the Thessalonian church will be preserved holy when Christ comes again with all his holy ones or "saints" (See [3:13](#)).

1 Thessalonians 3:1

Therefore, enduring it no longer, we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone (ULT)
So then, when we {felt like we} could not possibly wait any longer, we thought it was appropriate for only Silas and me to stay behind in the city of Athens (UST)

This is a result clause. Paul is explaining why he sent Timothy to Thessalonica in 3:2. Alternate translation: "Because we could not restrain ourselves any longer, we thought it proper to stay behind in Athens alone" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

ULT

¹ Therefore, [enduring it](#) no longer, we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone,

UST

¹ So then, [when we {felt like we}](#) could not [possibly wait](#) any longer, [we](#) thought it was appropriate for only Silas and me to stay behind in the city of Athens.

Therefore (ULT)

So then (UST)

Here, **Therefore** indicates a return to the topic of a visit from the apostles (See [2:17-18](#)). (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

Therefore, enduring it no longer (ULT)

So then, when we {felt like...could not possibly wait any longer, we (UST)

This phrase uses extreme exaggeration to express the apostles' deep desire to visit the Thessalonian church (See [2:17](#)). The word translated **enduring** is related to the idea of keeping water out of a ship or trying to contain or holding something back. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language that communicates anxious longing. Alternate translation: "Thus, since we could not bear to wait any longer" or "Therefore, because we could not ignore these emotions" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone (ULT)

we...thought it was appropriate for only Silas and me to stay behind in the city of Athens (UST)

Here, **we** and **alone** refer to Paul and Silvanus (and perhaps Timothy), since in [3:2](#) it says, "we sent Timothy." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Silas and I thought it was good idea to remain alone in Athens" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [enduring it](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [when we {felt like...could...possibly wait...we](#)

1 Thessalonians 3:2

and (ULT) But...still (UST)

What follows the word **and** here is in contrast to Paul and Silvanus staying behind at Athens. Instead, they sent Timothy. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: “even though this was true,” or “yet” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

we sent...our (ULT) we...sent...to you...us (UST)

When Paul says **we** and **our**, he is exclusively speaking of himself and Silvanus. Your language may require you to mark these forms. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

our brother and a servant of God (ULT) He works alongside us and serves God (UST)

This phrase gives us further information about Timothy. It is meant to clarify that he is authorized by the apostles and God himself. If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases more clear. Alternate translation: “and we sent Timothy, who is our fellow worker and an authorized servant of God” or “and we sent Timothy. He is our assistant and God’s authorized servant” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

our brother and a servant of God (ULT) He works alongside us and serves God (UST)

Here, the metaphors **our brother** and **servant** refer to **Timothy** as a fellow apostle (See [2:6](#)). If your readers would not understand what **brother** or **servant** mean in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “he assists us and ministers for God in the preaching of the gospel about Christ” (See: [Metaphor](#))

and a servant of God (ULT) and serves God (UST)

Here, **servant of God** could refer to: (1) a servant in general. Alternate translation: “and a minister of God” or “and assistant to God” (2) office of deacon. Alternate translation: “and a deacon of God” or “who also serves God as a deacon” (See: [Possession](#))

in (ULT) by {proclaiming} the good news (UST)

The preposition **in** could refer to: (1) Timothy’s association with the gospel. Alternate translation: “associated with” or “partnering in” (2) the cause of the gospel. Alternate translation: “for the cause of” or “for the sake of” (3) the means of the gospel. Alternate translation: “through” or “by means of”

ULT

² and we sent Timothy, our brother and a servant of God in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and to comfort you regarding your faith, ^[1]

UST

² But, we still sent Timothy {to you}. He works alongside us and serves God by {proclaiming} the good news about the Messiah. {Silas and I sent him} in order to support and encourage you to remain faithful {to God}.

of Christ (ULT) **about the Messiah (UST)**

Paul is most likely using the possessive form to refer to **the gospel** that is “about” **Christ**. If this is not clear in your language, you could replace **of** with “about.” Alternate translation: “about Christ” or “concerning Christ” (See: [Possession](#))

to strengthen and to comfort you (ULT) **Silas and I sent him} in order to support and encourage you (UST)**

This is a purpose clause. Paul is stating the purpose for why he and Silvanus sent Timothy. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: “so that you would be confirmed and consoled” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- we sent
- Timothy
- brother
- a servant
- of God
- gospel
- of Christ
- strengthen
- to comfort
- faith

Translation Words - UST

- we...sent...to you
- Timothy
- to remain faithful...to God
- He works alongside
- serves
- God
- by...proclaiming} the good news
- about the Messiah
- to support
- encourage

1 Thessalonians 3:3

that no one be disturbed by these afflictions (ULT)

We also sent Timothy to you} so that when people afflict us {apostles}, it would not cause any of you to waver {in how you trust God (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract noun **afflictions**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. Alternate translation: “so that when you are distressed, it would not make anyone waver” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

³ that no one be disturbed by these **afflictions**. For you yourselves **know** that for this **we are appointed**.

UST

³ {We also sent Timothy to you} so that **when people afflict us {apostles}**, it would not cause any of you to waver {in how you trust God}. You are well **aware** that {God} **determined** that **people would afflict us {apostles}**.

that no one be disturbed (ULT)

We also sent Timothy to you} so that...it would not cause any of you to waver {in how you trust God (UST)

This is a purpose clause. Paul is stating the purpose for sending Timothy. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: “in order that no one would waver” or “for the purpose of keeping anyone from being deceived” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

that no one be disturbed (ULT)

We also sent Timothy to you} so that...it would not cause any of you to waver {in how you trust God (UST)

Paul is using the adjective **no one** as a noun in order to describe the Thessalonian church. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “so that no person wavers” or “in order that none of you are deceived” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

For you yourselves know (ULT)

You are well aware (UST)

Paul uses the word **yourselves** to emphasize what the apostles had previously told them about **afflictions**. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: “In fact, you know for yourselves” or “Certainly, you are well aware of the fact” (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

for this (ULT)

that (UST)

Here, **this** refers to **afflictions**. However, in this sentence the meaning is more like a condition or state of “being afflicted” regularly or continually. The pronoun is changed to be singular to agree with this unstated idea. If you readers would not understand this shift, you could change **this** to a plural pronoun or make this unstated idea explicit. Alternate translation: “for these afflictions” or “for this affliction” “for a life characterized by afflictions”(See: [Collective Nouns](#))

we are appointed (ULT)
God} determined...people would afflict us {apostles (UST)

Paul assumes that the Thessalonian church knows that it is God who **appointed** the apostles for **afflictions**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “God appointed us” or “God destined us” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

we are appointed (ULT)
God} determined...people would afflict us {apostles (UST)

Here, **we** refers exclusively to the apostles. Your language may require you to mark these forms. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- afflictions
- you...know
- we are appointed

Translation Words - UST

- when people afflict us...apostles
- are...aware
- God} determined...people would afflict us {apostles

1 Thessalonians 3:4

For even when we were with you, we were telling you in advance that we are about to suffer affliction, and it happened, just as you also know (ULT)

In fact, even while we {apostles} were visiting you, we kept warning you ahead of time. We warned you that God determined for people to afflict us {apostles}. You are well aware that this is exactly what occurred (UST)

Paul is giving background information about his previous visit. Paul reminds the Thessalonian church that what he predicted about the apostles' sufferings has come true, so they should not be tempted to doubt the apostles' authority or teaching (See [3:5,7](#)). Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: "Indeed, the last time we visited you, we kept telling you before it happened, 'We are destined to be afflicted.' You are well aware that it happened exactly as we told you" (See: [Background Information](#))

we were (ULT)

we {apostles} were (UST)

Here, **we** is exclusive of the apostles. Your language may require you to mark these forms. Alternate translation: "we apostles were" (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

For (ULT)

In fact, even (UST)

Here, **For** indicates that what follows explains and emphasizes what the Thessalonian already know about the apostles' afflictions. Alternate translation: "Certainly," (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

we were telling you in advance that we are about to suffer affliction (ULT)

we kept warning you ahead of time. We warned you that God determined for people to afflict us {apostles} (UST)

Here, **that** could either express emphasis or be a quotation marker of what the apostles said. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "we kept telling you ahead of time, 'We are destined to endure distress.'" (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

even...it happened (ULT)

In fact, even...that this is...what occurred (UST)

Here, **and it happened** is meant to emphasize Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy's apostolic credentials by verifying that their prophetic words came true. Use a natural way in your language to express this emphasis. Alternate translation: "and this is precisely what happened"

ULT

⁴ For even when we were with you, we were telling you in advance that we are about to [suffer affliction](#), and it happened, [just as](#) you also [know](#).

UST

⁴ In fact, even while we {apostles} were visiting you, we kept warning you ahead of time. We warned you that [God determined for people to afflict us {apostles}](#). [You are well aware](#) that this is [exactly](#) what occurred.

Translation Words - ULT

- to suffer affliction
- just as
- you...know

Translation Words - UST

- God determined for people to afflict us...apostles
- You are...aware
- exactly

1 Thessalonians 3:5

**Because of this, I also no longer enduring it, sent to know about your faith (ULT)
Again this is why, when I {felt like I} could not possibly wait any longer, I sent {Timothy to you. I was concerned} to learn if you were still trusting {in God (UST)**

Here Paul summarizes the story of Timothy's visit but leaves out mention of Timothy as redundant information. If it is clearer in your language, you could include mention of Timothy. Alternate translation: "Again, since I could not wait anymore, I sent Timothy to learn if you still trust in God" (See: [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))

**I also no longer enduring it, sent (ULT)
Again...when I {felt like I} could not possibly wait any longer, I sent {Timothy to you (UST)**

Paul repeats the same phrase **no longer enduring it** found in 3:1. Here, "I sent" parallels "we sent" in 3:1-2. This expresses that Paul represents the apostles who sent Timothy to Thessalonica. Use a natural way in your language to indicate this parallelism. (See: [Parallelism](#))

**I also no longer enduring it (ULT)
Again...when I {felt like I} could not possibly wait any longer (UST)**

This phrase is an exaggeration that Paul uses to express deep concern. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language that shows deep concern. See your translation at 3:1. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

**sent (ULT)
I sent {Timothy to you (UST)**

Here it is implied that Paul **sent** Timothy. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "I, Paul, sent Timothy" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**to know about your faith (ULT)
I was concerned} to learn if you were still trusting {in God (UST)**

This is a purpose clause. Paul is stating the purpose for why he **sent** Timothy. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: "so that I could learn if you remained faithful" or "in order to discern whether you still trust God" (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

ULT

⁵ Because of this, I also no longer enduring it, sent to know about your faith, lest the tempter had somehow tempted you, and our labor might have been in vain.

UST

⁵ Again this is why, when I {felt like I} could not possibly wait any longer, I sent {Timothy to you. I was concerned} to learn if you were still trusting {in God. I was concerned that} somehow Satan tempted you {to stop trusting in God. If you would have stopped trusting in God,} then all of the hard work we accomplished {among you} would have turned out to be useless!

the tempter (ULT) Satan (UST)

Here Paul uses the phrase **the tempter** as a title to identify Satan (See Matthew 4:3). The phrase means “one who tempts.” If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use a phrase. Alternate translation: “Satan, the one who tempts” (See: [Idiom](#))

lest the tempter had somehow tempted you, and (ULT) I was concerned that} somehow Satan tempted you {to stop trusting in God. If you would have stopped trusting in God,} then (UST)

Paul is using a hypothetical situation to help his readers recognize how powerful satanic temptation can be. Use the natural form in your language for expressing a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “because if Satan tempted you, I wanted to find out, and then” (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

and our labor might have been in vain (ULT) If you would have stopped trusting in God,} then all of the hard work we accomplished {among you} would have turned out to be useless (UST)

This phrase could be a result clause. Paul is stating what would be the result if the Thessalonian church let Satan tempt them to stop trusting God. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a result clause. Alternate translation: “then how hard we worked would have been worthless” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

in vain (ULT) to be useless (UST)

Here, **in vain** is an exaggeration that Paul uses to express how sad the apostles would have been if the Thessalonian church had not remained faithful to God. Paul does not really think the apostles’ **labor** is worthless. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language that shows deep disappointment. Alternate translation: “worthless” or “purposeless” or “profitless” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [enduring it](#)
- [sent](#)
- [to know about](#)
- [faith](#)
- [had...tempted](#)
- [tempter](#)
- [labor](#)
- [vain](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [when I {felt like I} could...wait](#)
- [all of the hard work we accomplished...among you](#)
- [to be useless](#)
- [I sent {Timothy to you](#)
- [I was concerned} to learn](#)

- if...were still trusting...in God
- tempted...to stop trusting in God
- Satan

1 Thessalonians 3:6

Connecting Statement:

In 3:6 Paul describes Timothy's current report about the Thessalonian church. Paul provides this background information to help his readers understand how comforted he is (See 3:7). Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Connect — Background Information](#))

But just now Timothy has come to us from you (ULT)**Timothy recently returned to Silas and me from his visit with you (UST)**

The phrase **But just now** brings Paul's narrative into the present time. Use a natural way in your language to express this emphasis. Alternate translation: "But Timothy recently returned to us from visiting you" or "But now, Timothy is back to us from his visit with you" (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

to us (ULT)**to Silas and me (UST)**

This is an exclusive use of **us**, referring to Paul and Silvanus. Your language may require you to mark these forms. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

of your faith and love (ULT)**how much you trust and love {God (UST)**

If your language does not use the abstract nouns **faith** and **love**, you could express the idea behind them in another way. Alternate translation: "that you remain faithful to God and love him" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

of your faith and love (ULT)**how much you trust and love {God (UST)**

This phrase could express a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **faith** could describe **love**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use **and**. Alternate translation: "your faithful love" or "your faithful love toward God" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

and that you always have good memories of us, longing to see us (ULT)**He also told us} that whenever you think about us, it makes you happy. {He told us} how much...desire to visit us (UST)**

This phrase could indicate a result clause. If it would be clearer in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: "and you constantly desire to visit with us, because you always remember us fondly" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

ULT

⁶ But just now **Timothy** has come to us from you and has brought to us the good news of your **faith** and **love** and that you always have **good** memories of us, longing to see us just as we also, you.

UST

⁶ **Timothy** recently returned to Silas and me from his visit with you. He told us the good news about **how much** you **trust** and **love** {God. He also told us} that whenever you think about us, **it makes you happy**. {He told us} how much you desire to visit us. We have that same desire too!

and that you always have good memories of us (ULT)

He also told us} that whenever you think about us, it makes you happy (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract noun **memories**, you could express the idea behind it in another way.
Alternate translation: "and how you always remember us fondly" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- Timothy
- of...faith
- love
- good

Translation Words - UST

- Timothy
- how much...trust
- love...God
- it makes you happy

1 Thessalonians 3:7

Because of this, brothers, we were comforted by you (ULT)

Our} fellow believers in the Messiah...God encouraged us about you. We were encouraged {when learning from Timothy} that (UST)

This phrase is a result clause. Paul is stating the result of the Timothy's good news in 3:6. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a result clause. Alternate translation: "Fellow believers in Christ, as a result of Timothy's good news about you, God consoled us" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

ULT

⁷ Because of this, [brothers, we were comforted](#) by you in all our distress and [affliction](#), by your [faith](#).

UST

⁷ {[Our](#)} [fellow believers in the Messiah](#), during the whole time people abused and [afflicted](#) us—[God encouraged us](#) about you. We were encouraged {when learning from Timothy} that you {[still](#)} [trust](#) {[in God](#)}.

in all our distress and affliction (ULT)

during the whole time people abused and afflicted us (UST)

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **distress** describes the **affliction**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use **and**. Here this phrase emphasizes how much and how intensely the apostles were persecuted. Alternate translation: "in all our abusive affliction" or "in all our violent suffering" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

in all our distress and affliction (ULT)

during the whole time people abused and afflicted us (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract nouns **distress** and **affliction**, you could express them in another way. Here, it could refer to: (1) the time of distress and affliction. Alternate translation: "during all our abuse and affliction" or "each time we violently suffered" (2) the place or way of distress and affliction. Alternate translation: "in every place the tempter violently afflicted us" or "in every way we suffered abuse" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [brothers](#)
- [we were comforted](#)
- [affliction](#)
- [faith](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Our](#)} [fellow believers in the Messiah](#)
- [afflicted](#)
- [God encouraged us](#)
- [you...still](#)} [trust...in God](#)

1 Thessalonians 3:8

**For now we live, if you yourselves stand firm in the Lord (ULT)
Indeed, we feel revived since you continue {to trust} in the Lord {Jesus (UST)}**

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: “Since you are remaining faithful to the Lord Jesus, we are now refreshed!” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

ULT

⁸ For now [we live](#), if you yourselves stand firm [in the Lord](#).

UST

⁸ Indeed, [we feel revived](#) since you continue {to trust} [in the Lord {Jesus}](#)!

**For now we live (ULT)
Indeed, we feel revived (UST)**

Here, **For now we live** is an exaggeration that Paul uses to show how thankful he is that the Thessalonians **stand firm** in the Christian faith (See [3:7](#)). Paul is not trying to say that he was dead. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language that shows thankfulness. Alternate translation (replace the comma): “O how we are now refreshed!” or “O how we now feel alive!” or “Certainly now we thrive!” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

**if you yourselves stand firm in the Lord (ULT)
since you continue {to trust} in the Lord {Jesus (UST)}**

Here, the term **stand firm** is an idiom meaning “remain faithful.” If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “when you remain faithful to the Lord” or “if you continue unwavering in your relationship with the Lord” (See: [Idiom](#))

**if you yourselves stand firm in the Lord (ULT)
since you continue {to trust} in the Lord {Jesus (UST)}**

Paul is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you can translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “since you are remaining faithful to the Lord Jesus” (See: [Connect — Factual Conditions](#))

**you yourselves stand firm in the Lord (ULT)
you continue {to trust} in the Lord {Jesus (UST)}**

Paul speaks figuratively of the Thessalonian church as though they were occupying space inside the Lord Jesus. Here, this metaphor, **in the Lord**, could express these ideas: (1) devotion to Jesus. Alternate translation: “you are really devoted to the Lord Jesus” (2) relationship with Jesus. Alternate translation: “you are truly standing firm in your relationship with the Lord Jesus” (3) union with Jesus. Alternate translation: “all of you are firmly united to the Lord Jesus” (See: [Metaphor](#))

yourselves (ULT)

you (UST)

Paul uses the word **yourselves** to emphasize his joy for the Thessalonian church's faithfulness. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternative translation: "indeed" (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- we live
- in the Lord
- the Lord

Translation Words - UST

- we feel revived
- in the Lord {Jesus
- the Lord {Jesus

1 Thessalonians 3:9

**For what thanks are we able to give back to God concerning you for all the joy in which we rejoice before our God because of you (ULT)
Indeed, we cannot thank God enough for what he has done for you! {When we pray} to our God, we abundantly rejoice because of {how much} you {trust in him (UST)}**

Paul is using a rhetorical question that continues to the end of 3:10 in order to emphasize the apostles' thankful joy for the Thessalonian church's faithfulness to God. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "We could not possibly thank God enough for what he has done for you! When we pray to our God, we greatly rejoice because of you!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁹ For what thanks are we able to give back to God concerning you for all the joy in which we rejoice before our God because of you, ^[2]

UST

⁹ Indeed, we cannot thank God enough for what he has done for you! {When we pray} to our God, we abundantly rejoice because of {how much} you {trust in him}!

**For what thanks are we able to give back to God concerning you (ULT)
Indeed, we cannot thank God enough for what he has done for you (UST)**

With the phrase **give back**, Paul speaks figuratively of the apostles as if they owe God a debt for the sake of the Thessalonian church's faithfulness. Paul means that the apostles cannot adequately express how thankful they are. If your readers would not understand what it means to **give back** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "Because, how could we possibly show how grateful we are to God for you" or "Indeed, what kind of thanksgiving for you could we give to God" (See: [Metaphor](#))

**for all the joy in which we rejoice before our God because of you (ULT)
When we pray} to our God, we abundantly rejoice because of {how much} you {trust in him (UST)**

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Since this is a rhetorical question, you could change it to a statement, and begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "Because of you, we greatly rejoice when we pray to God," (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

**for all the joy in which we rejoice (ULT)
we abundantly rejoice (UST)**

Here, **joy** and **rejoice** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how much joy the apostles have because of how faithful the Thessalonian church has been towards God. Alternate translation: "for how much we greatly rejoice" (See: [Doublet](#))

we rejoice...before our God (ULT)
we...rejoice...When we pray} to our God (UST)

Here, **before our God** is an idiom for being in the personal presence of God. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: "we rejoice in the presence of our God" (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- to God
- God
- joy
- we rejoice

Translation Words - UST

- cannot...God enough
- to...God
- abundantly
- we...rejoice

1 Thessalonians 3:10

night and day pleading earnestly (ULT) We constantly and excessively beg God (UST)

This emphatic phrase is an exaggeration that Paul uses to show how much and often the apostles pray for the Thessalonian church. Paul does not mean to say he never does anything else except pray. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language that expresses this emphasis. Alternate translation: “we never stop intensely pleading” or “we continually and fervently pray” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

to see your face (ULT) that we would be able} to see you in person (UST)

Here, the phrase **to see your face** is an idiom meaning “visit.” If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “to visit you” or “to spend time with you” (See: [Idiom](#))

your face (ULT) you in person (UST)

Paul refers figuratively to **your face** to mean the whole Thessalonian church. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or use plain language. Alternate translation: “all of you” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

and to provide what {is} lacking in your faith (ULT) We} also {desire} to help you increase how much you trust {in God (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract noun **faith**, you could express the idea behind it in another way (See also [2:17](#)). Alternate translation: “and to provide support so that you remain faithful” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- day
- pleading
- face
- in...faith

Translation Words - UST

- We constantly and
- beg God
- in person
- you trust...in God

ULT

¹⁰ night and day pleading earnestly to see your face and to provide what {is} lacking in your faith?

UST

¹⁰ We constantly and excessively beg God {that we would be able} to see you in person. {We} also {desire} to help you increase how much you trust {in God}!

1 Thessalonians 3:11

But...may...direct (ULT)
Now...that they will allow...to visit...again (UST)

Here the verb forms indicate that this is a blessing or prayer that continues through 3:13. Use a form that people would recognize as a blessing or prayer in your language. Alternate translation: "Now we pray that ... would guide" (See: [Blessings](#))

our God and Father (ULT)
we pray to God our Father (UST)

Here, **our God and Father** refers to the one divine person who is both God and Father. This phrase is a hendiadys, since Father further describes God (See also 1:3). Alternate translation: "God our Father" or "our Father God" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

himself (ULT)

Paul uses the word **himself** to distinguish **our God and Father** from **our Lord Jesus**. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this distinction. (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

our God and Father ... our Lord

It is possible that these first two uses of **our** are inclusive of the whole Christian Church. Yet, the third use of **our** exclusively refers to the apostles. So, it is most likely that **our** refers exclusively to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy in this whole verse (see also 1:9, 2:1, 3:9). Your language may require you to mark these forms. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

may...direct our way to you (ULT)
that they will allow us to visit you {again (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively about God as if he were a pilot or captain of a ship. Paul means that he wants God to allow the apostles to visit the Thessalonian church again. If your readers would not understand what **direct our way to you** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "quickly bring us to you" or "direct our voyage so that we can visit you" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [God...and Father](#)
- [Lord](#)
- [Jesus](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [we pray to God...Father](#)
- [to...Lord](#)
- [Jesus](#)

ULT

¹¹ But may our [God and Father](#) himself and our [Lord Jesus](#) direct our way to you.

UST

¹¹ Now, [we pray to God](#) our [Father](#), and to our [Lord Jesus](#), that they will allow us to visit you {again}!

1 Thessalonians 3:12

Now may the Lord make you increase and abound (ULT)

Here, **increase** and **abound** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how much the apostles want the Thessalonian church to keep increasing in their love for all people. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "May the Lord Jesus make you completely excel" or "O that the Lord Jesus would cause you to fully thrive" (See: [Doublet](#))

in love (ULT) in how much you love (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of **love** as something that can be quantified or measured. He means that he hopes the Thessalonian church will keep loving people well. If your readers would not understand what **in love** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternate translation: "in the way you love" (See: [Metaphor](#))

for one another and for all (ULT) your fellow believer...also...all people (UST)

Paul could be speaking figuratively, using these phrases in order to include the whole human race. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or use plain language. Alternate translation: "toward each and every person" or "toward the whole human race" or "toward Christians and non-Christians" (See: [Merism](#))

for all (ULT) all people (UST)

Paul could be using the adjective **all** as a noun in order to describe a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. It could refer to: (1) the whole human race. Alternate translation: "toward all humanity" (2) all Christians. Alternate translation: "for all your fellow believers in Christ" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

you...and...for...just as we (ULT)

Here, **just as we also toward you** is an emphatic phrase meant to reinforce the deep love the apostles have for the Thessalonian church (also in [3:6](#)). Use a natural way in your language to express this emphasis. Alternate translation: "in the same way that we love you"

Translation Words - ULT

- [Lord](#)
- [in love](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the Lord...Jesus](#)

ULT

¹² Now may the [Lord](#) make you increase and abound [in love](#) for one another and for all, just as we also toward you,

UST

¹² {We} pray that [the Lord](#) {[Jesus](#)} will cause you to increase more and more [in how much you love](#) your fellow believer. {We} also pray that he will cause you to excel in loving all people. This is exactly the way we love you!

- in how much you love

1 Thessalonians 3:13

to strengthen your hearts, blameless in holiness (ULT)

We pray that our Lord Jesus} will strengthen how much you desire {to love each other. We pray that our Lord Jesus} will enable you to live in a way that...faultless for those who belong to him (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract nouns **hearts** and **holiness**, you could express the ideas behind them in another way. Alternate translation: “so that how you love one another strengthens you to become resolved to live blamelessly, as is appropriate for those who belong to the Lord Jesus” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

to strengthen your hearts (ULT)

We pray that our Lord Jesus} will strengthen how much you desire {to love each other (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of the people of the Thessalonian church as if they have one heart that is like a building that can be established or supported. He means that he wants God to increase their willpower or affections so that they would remain faithful to God. If your readers would not understand what this phrase means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “to establish your affections” or “to strengthen your will” (See: [Metaphor](#))

to strengthen your hearts (ULT)

We pray that our Lord Jesus} will strengthen how much you desire {to love each other (UST)

This phrase is a purpose clause. Paul is stating the purpose for why he prays that God will increase the Thessalonian church's love for all people. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: “so that the Lord will establish your affections for him” or “in order that the Lord will strengthen your willpower” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

blameless in holiness (ULT)

We pray that our Lord Jesus} will enable you to live in a way that...faultless for those who belong to him (UST)

Here, **blameless** and **holiness** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize total sanctification. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you could combine these phrases. This phrase could refer to: (1) a condition of holiness. Alternate translation: “blameless in a condition of holiness” (2) how to become holy. Alternate translation: “blameless through holiness” (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

¹³ to strengthen your hearts, blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. Amen!

3:2 ^[1]

3:9 ^[2] with

UST

¹³ {We pray that our Lord Jesus} will strengthen how much you desire {to love each other. We pray that our Lord Jesus} will enable you to live in a way that God our Father considers faultless for those who belong to him. {We pray all of these things so that you will be ready} when our Lord Jesus comes {a second time}, bringing all those who belong to him. May it be so!

before our God and Father (ULT) God our Father considers (UST)

This phrase is an idiom for being in the personal presence of God (See 3:9). If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “in the presence of our Father God” (See: [Idiom](#))

at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints (ULT) We pray all of these things so that you will be ready} when our Lord Jesus comes {a second time}, bringing all those who belong to him (UST)

This is a reference to Zechariah 14:5 (See also 2 Thessalonians 1:7,10; Jude 14). Here it is implied that these **saints** are all those who are **blameless in holiness** and who have already died (See 4:14). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “at the time the Lord Jesus arrives along with all his holy people who have already died” or “when the Lord Jesus returns a second time with all those reposed people who belong to him” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

at the coming of our Lord Jesus (ULT) We pray all of these things so that you will be ready} when our Lord Jesus comes {a second time (UST)

Here, **at the coming of the Lord Jesus** is a well-known idiom in 1-2 Thessalonians for the Second Coming of Christ (See 2:19; 4:15) or the “Day of the Lord” 5:2). Use a natural way in your language to emphasize this idea. Alternate translation: “in the presence of our Lord Jesus at his Second Coming” or “in the sight of our Lord Jesus when he arrives again” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- to strengthen
- hearts
- blameless
- holiness
- God...and Father
- of...Lord
- Jesus
- saints
- Amen

Translation Words - UST

- We pray that our Lord Jesus} will strengthen
- how much...desire...to love each other
- Lord
- Jesus
- those who belong to him
- May it be so
- We pray that our Lord Jesus} will enable you to live in a way that...faultless
- God...Father...considers
- for those who belong to him

1 Thessalonians 4

1 Thessalonians 4 General Notes

Outline of 1 Thessalonians 4

Apostolic Teachings on Holiness (4:1-8)

Apostolic Teachings on Christian Love (4:9-12)

Reminder (4:9-10)

Keep Busy (4:11-12)

Apostolic Teachings on the Manner of the Second Coming of Christ (4:13-18)

“We” and “You”

In this letter, the words **we** and **our** refer to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, unless otherwise noted. Throughout the letter, **we** and **our** are used to convey that all three apostles are in agreement with the letter.

Special Concepts in this Chapter

Christian love

The apostles address the topic of Christian love that the Thessalonian church had previously asked about. The apostles encouraged the church that they were already loving well, and they should continue to grow in this practice. The apostles also link “brotherly love” to living in harmony with each other and minding their own business, so that they would be a good example to non-Christians (See [4:11-12](#)).

Dying before the Second Coming of Christ

The Thessalonian church was concerned about what would happen if a believer died before Christ returned. They were anxious to know whether or not those who died before Christ returned would be part of the Kingdom of God. Paul addresses that concern in [4:13-5:11](#).

The manner of the Second Coming of Christ

In [4:13-18](#), the apostles teach about the events related to the Second Coming of Christ (called “the day of the Lord” in [5:2](#)). This is so that the Thessalonians can “comfort one another with these words” (See [4:18](#)).

Important Translation Issues in this Chapter

Sexual immorality

Different cultures have different standards of sexual morality. These different cultural standards may make translating this passage difficult. Translators will have to consider the most appropriate way to communicate these sensitive issues.

The Second Coming of Christ and the Day of the Lord

All Christians believe that Jesus will return to earth to judge all people and to rule forever. As the Nicene Creed (381 A.D.) states: "I await the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come." Christ came once as Incarnate God and will return once as Resurrected Judge. However, there are various ways that Christians understand the "coming of the Lord" as explained in [4:13-5:11](#), and the "day of the Lord" in [5:2](#). Some believe they are one and the same event, but others believe them to be two separate events. Your translation should state clearly only what is clear in these verses without promoting any particular interpretation.

1 Thessalonians 4:1

So finally (ULT)

Here, **So finally** could refer to: (1) a summary of the apostles' teachings. Alternate translation: "So, in summary," (2) the remaining things to address. "So then, here is what remains for us to talk about" (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

we beg and exhort you (ULT)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how seriously the apostles want the Thessalonian church to follow their teachings. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "we are urging and appealing to you" or "we strongly urge you" (See: [Doublet](#))

in the Lord Jesus (ULT)

Paul speaks figuratively as if the apostles are occupying space inside of **the Lord Jesus**. Here, the metaphor expresses the idea that the apostles represent Jesus himself like ambassadors who possess a king's authority. If your readers would not understand what **in the Lord** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "with our authority from the Lord Jesus" (See: [Metaphor](#))

about how it is necessary for you to walk (ULT)

Here, **to walk** is a metaphor that means "to live" or "to obey" (See [2:12](#)). If your readers would not understand what it means **to walk** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "about how you must live" or "about how you are obligated to obey" (See: [Metaphor](#))

about how it is necessary for you to walk and to please God (just as also you are walking) (ULT)

Here, **to walk and to please** expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **please** describes how the Thessalonian church should **walk**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use **and**. Alternate translation: "about how you must live to please God (exactly as you live now)" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

so that you might abound even more (ULT)

This phrase is a purpose clause. Paul is stating the purpose for which apostles are begging and exhorting the Thessalonian church. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: "so that you can excel more and more" or "in order that you thrive even more" (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [brothers](#)

ULT

¹ So finally, [brothers](#), we beg and [exhort](#) you [in the Lord Jesus, just as you received](#) from us about how it is necessary for you [to walk](#) and to please [God \(just as also you are walking\)](#), so that you might abound even more.

UST

¹⁻² {Our} fellow believers in the Messiah, here is a summary {of this letter}. Since we are the spokespersons of the Lord Jesus, we urge and encourage you to keep putting into practice what we taught you. This is how it is necessary for you to live and to please God. Then you will excel even more, because you are aware of the commands the Lord Jesus told us to give you.

- exhort
- God
- in the Lord Jesus
- the Lord
- Jesus
- just as
- just as (2)
- you received
- to walk
- you are walking

Translation Words - UST

- brother
- exhort, exhortation
- God
- in Christ, in Jesus, in the Lord, in him
- Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus
- lord, Lord, master, sir
- like, likeminded, likeness, likewise, alike, unlike, as if
- like, likeminded, likeness, likewise, alike, unlike, as if (2)
- receive, welcome, taken up, acceptance
- walk, walked
- walk, walked

1 Thessalonians 4:2

through the Lord Jesus

Paul is providing this background information about the apostles' teachings during their previous visit to help readers understand what happens next. Use a natural way in your language for introducing background information. (See: [Connect — Background Information](#))

For you know what commands we gave you through the Lord Jesus (ULT)

This verse expresses that the Thessalonian church should do what the apostles previously taught them (See [4:1](#)), because these teachings are actually commands from **the Lord Jesus** himself. Use a natural way in your language to express a result clause. Alternate translation: "The reason we beg and exhort you is because you realize that when we gave commands, it was actually the Lord Jesus who taught you" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

For (ULT)

Here, **For** indicates that what follows is something else important that the Thessalonian church should pay attention to. Use a natural way in your language to express this emphasis. Alternate translation: "In fact" or "Certainly" (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

through the Lord Jesus (ULT)

Paul speaks figuratively of the **commands** that the apostles gave to the Thessalonian church as though **Jesus** personally told them to the apostles. Paul means that **Jesus** made the apostles his messengers, not that **Jesus** is a messenger of the apostles. If your readers would not understand what **through the Lord Jesus** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "through a message from the Lord Jesus" or "by order of the Lord Jesus himself" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [you know](#)
- [commands](#)
- [Lord](#)
- [Jesus](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [command, commandment](#)
- [Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus](#)
- [lord, Lord, master, sir](#)
- [know, knowledge, unknown, distinguish](#)

ULT

² For [you know](#) what [commands](#) we gave you through the [Lord Jesus](#).

UST

¹⁻² {Our} fellow believers in the Messiah, here is a summary {of this letter}. Since we are the spokespersons of the Lord Jesus, we urge and encourage you to keep putting into practice what we taught you. This is how it is necessary for you to live and to please God. Then you will excel even more, because you are aware of the commands the Lord Jesus told us to give you.

1 Thessalonians 4:3

For this is the will of God, your sanctification (ULT)
Certainly, God wills for you to live in a way that demonstrates that you completely belong to him (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract nouns **will** and **sanctification**, you could express the ideas behind them in another way. Alternate translation: “Indeed, God desires that you live like those who belong to him” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

For this is (ULT)
Certainly, God wills (UST)

Here, **For this is** indicates that this is the beginning of a section about the content of the commands from the Lord Jesus in 4:2. Use a natural way in your language to indicate the beginning of new topic. Alternate translation: “Now, this is” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

For this is the will of God (ULT)
Certainly, God wills (UST)

Here, **this** is a singular pronoun that emphasizes what **is the will of God**. Use a natural way in your language to express this emphasis. Alternate translation: “Certainly, this very thing is God’s will” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

For this is the will of God, your sanctification (ULT)
Certainly, God wills for you to live in a way that demonstrates that you completely belong to him (UST)

Here begins a list spanning through 4:3-8 that explains what **sanctification** means in this context. Use a natural way in your language to indicate the beginning of a topic.

to keep yourselves from sexual immorality (ULT)
He desires} that you refrain from committing {any} sexually immoral acts (UST)

This phrase gives us further information about what is meant by **sanctification**. Paul is defining the **sanctification** God wants for his people by forbidding **sexually immorality**. If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases clearer. (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

to keep yourselves (ULT)
He desires} that you refrain (UST)

The following list of verb forms in 4:3-6 could be translated as commands (See 4:2). Here, the verb forms are likely meant to express a strong suggestion or appeal. Use a form in your language that would be used in this type of situation. Alternate translation: “you yourselves must refrain” or “you should withhold yourselves” (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#))

ULT

³ For this is **the will of God**, your **sanctification**: to keep yourselves from **sexual immorality**;

UST

³ Certainly, **God wills for you to live in a way that demonstrates that you completely belong to him**: {He desires} that you refrain **from committing {any} sexually immoral acts**.

Translation Words - ULT

- the will of God
- sanctification
- sexual immorality

Translation Words - UST

- God wills
- for you to live in a way that demonstrates that you completely belong to him
- from committing...any} sexually immoral acts

1 Thessalonians 4:4

for each of you to know to possess {his} own vessel in sanctification and honor (ULT) God wills} that each one of you only have sexual relations with his own wife. {God wills} that you treat your wives like they belong to God, and to honor them (UST)

Here Paul gives more instructions about the **sanctification** God wants for his people, by telling the Thessalonian church that every husband needs to treat his wife's body and his own body **in sanctification and honor**. If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these verses clearer. (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

ULT

⁴ for each of you to know to possess {his} own vessel in sanctification and honor,

UST

⁴ {God wills} that each one of you only have sexual relations with his own wife. {God wills} that you treat your wives like they belong to God, and to honor them.

for each of you to know to possess {his} own vessel in sanctification and honor (ULT) God wills} that each one of you only have sexual relations with his own wife. {God wills} that you treat your wives like they belong to God, and to honor them (UST)

Here, **to know to possess** refers to sexual intimacy. This is a polite way of referring to something private. If this would be misunderstood in your language, use a different polite way of referring to this or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: "God desires that you treat your wives' bodies like they belong to God and to honor them" or "each of you men must use your own body for God's holy and honorable purposes" (See: [Euphemism](#))

**for each (ULT)
each one (UST)**

Paul is using the adjective **each** as a noun in order to describe a group of men. Here it specifically is used to emphasize that every husband or man must obey this teaching. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "each and every man" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

**to possess {his} own vessel (ULT)
his own wife. {God wills} that you treat your wives (UST)**

Here Paul speaks figuratively of a person's body as if it were a container. Here, **to possess his own vessel** is a metaphor that compares sexual self-control to a proper use of a container. If your readers would not understand what this phrase means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. It could refer to: (1) a wife's body. Alternate translation: "to use his wife's body" or "to properly care for his own wife" (2) a husband's own body. Alternate translation: "to control his own body" (See: [Metaphor](#))

his} own vessel (ULT)**his own wife (UST)**

Paul is using the possessive form **his own** to express ownership. Use a natural way in your language to express ownership. Alternate translation: “the wife that belongs to you” or “your very own wife” or “the body that belongs to you”(See: [Possession](#))

in sanctification and honor (ULT)**like they belong to God, and to honor them (UST)**

This phrase could express a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **honor** tells how a husband or man must live in **sanctification**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use **and**. Alternate translation: “by honorably setting it apart for God’s purposes” (See: [Hendiadys](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- to know
- to possess
- sanctification
- honor

Translation Words - UST

- God wills} that...you only have sexual relations with
- God wills} that you treat your wives
- like they belong to God
- to honor them

1 Thessalonians 4:5

not in the passion of lust (ULT)
You must not use your wife} to lustfully gratify what you desire (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract noun phrase **in the passion of lust**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. Alternate translation: “not passionately lusting” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

not in the passion of lust (ULT)
You must not use your wife} to lustfully gratify what you desire (UST)

Here, **not in the passion of lust** contrasts with the previous phrase “in holiness and honor” (See: [4:4](#)). Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: “not passionately lusting” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

the passion of lust (ULT)
You must...use your wife} to lustfully gratify what you desire (UST)

Paul is using the possessive phrase **of lust** to describe **passion**. This genitive phrase could refer to: 1) passion characterized by lust. Alternate translation: “lustful passion” 2) the source of the passion. Alternate translation: “passion that comes from lust” (See: [Possession](#))

just as also the Gentiles who do not know God (ULT)
This is because the nations who are not God’s people live this way (UST)

This phrase gives us further information about the those who live **in the passion of lust**. If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases clearer. Alternate translation: “like the nations who remain ignorant of God act” or “exactly like all the people who have no relationship with God” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

the Gentiles (ULT)
the nations...live this way (UST)

Here, **the Gentiles** refers to all the non-Christian nations in general, not one group of people. If this would be misunderstood in your language, use a more natural phrase (See your translation at [2:16](#)). (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

who do not know God (ULT)
who are not God’s people (UST)

Here, **who do not know God** is meant to give further information about the **Gentiles**. If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases clearer. Alternate translation: “who have no relationship with God” or “who remain ignorant of God” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

ULT

⁵ not in [the passion of lust](#) (just as also the [Gentiles who do not know God](#));

UST

⁵ {[You must not use your wife} to lustfully gratify what you desire](#). This is because [the nations who are not God’s people live this way](#).

Translation Words - ULT

- the passion of lust
- Gentiles
- who do...know
- God

Translation Words - UST

- You must...use your wife) to lustfully gratify what you desire
- the nations...live this way
- who are...people
- God's

1 Thessalonians 4:6

transgress and exploit (ULT) **God also wills} that...violates...and takes advantage of (UST)**

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **exploit** describes **transgress**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use **and**. Alternate translation: “exploits by transgressing” (See: [Hendiadys](#))

transgress and exploit (ULT) **God also wills} that...violates...and takes advantage of (UST)**

Here, **transgress and exploit** speaks figuratively about adultery, by comparing it to a person who unlawfully enters someone’s property and claims it for their own. If your readers would not understand what it means to **transgress and exploit** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternative translation, “must trespass and defraud” (See: [Metaphor](#))

his brother in this matter (ULT) **the wife of} his fellow believer in the Messiah like this (UST)**

Here, **in this matter** could be speaking figuratively of adultery as if someone is intruding in another person’s business matters. If your readers would not understand what **in this matter** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “the marital matters of his fellow believer in Christ” or “the marriage relationship of another believer in Christ” or (See: [Metaphor](#))

for the Lord is an avenger concerning all these things (ULT)

This clause gives the final result for those who live “in the passion of lust” (See [4:5](#)). Use a natural way in your language to express result. This could refer to: 1) all the matters spoken of in [4:3-6](#). Alternate translation: “Certainly, the Lord Jesus will avenge all these things” 2) the sexually immoral people. Alternate translation: “This is because the Lord Jesus will punish all those people” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

just as we also forewarned you and testified (ULT) **The Lord {Jesus} will avenge exactly as we previously said and strongly warned you (UST)**

Paul provides this background information about what the apostles said in an earlier visit (See in [2:10-12](#)). Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: “This will happen just as we already told you and solemnly testified to you” (See: [Background Information](#))

ULT

⁶ that no one transgress and **exploit** his **brother** in this matter, for **the Lord is an avenger** concerning all these things, **just as** we also forewarned you and testified.

UST

⁶ {God also wills} that no one violates and **takes advantage of** {the wife of} his **fellow believer in the Messiah** like this. This is because **the Lord {Jesus} will avenge** all these {sexually immoral} acts. **The Lord {Jesus} will avenge exactly as** we previously said and strongly warned you.

just as we also forewarned you and testified (ULT)
The Lord {Jesus} will avenge exactly as we previously said and strongly warned you (UST)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize what the apostles had already told the Thessalonian church during a previous visit. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: “exactly as we also solemnly forewarned you” (See: [Doublet](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- exploit
- brother
- the Lord
- is an avenger
- just as

Translation Words - UST

- takes advantage of
- the wife of...fellow believer in the Messiah
- the Lord {Jesus}
- will avenge
- The Lord {Jesus} will avenge exactly as

1 Thessalonians 4:7

For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in sanctification (ULT)
Certainly God does not summon us {believers in the Messiah into his glorious kingdom} for the purpose of impure {living}. Instead, God wills that we live like those who belong to him (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract nouns **uncleanness** and **sanctification**, you could express the ideas behind them in other ways. Alternate translation: “We must not live impurely or act unholy, because God did not call us as his people for this purpose” or “God called us, so we must purify and set ourselves apart like those who belong to God” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in sanctification (ULT)
Certainly God does not summon us {believers in the Messiah into his glorious kingdom} for the purpose of impure {living}. Instead, God wills that we live like those who belong to him (UST)

Paul uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: “Certainly God summons us to live purely and act holy” or “Indeed, God calls us to be pure and holy” (See: [Litotes](#))

us (ULT)
us {believers in the Messiah (UST)}

Here, **us** is inclusive, referring to the apostles, the Thessalonian church, and by extension, to all Christians. Your language may require you to mark these forms. Alternate translation: “us believers in Christ” (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

but in sanctification (ULT)
Instead, God wills that we live like those who belong to him (UST)

What follows the word **but** is in contrast to **uncleanness**. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [God](#)
- [did...call](#)
- [sanctification](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [God](#)
- [does...summon...into his glorious kingdom](#)

ULT

⁷ For [God](#) did not [call](#) us to uncleanness, but in [sanctification](#).

UST

⁷ Certainly [God](#) does not [summon](#) us {believers in the Messiah [into his glorious kingdom](#)} for the purpose of impure {living}. Instead, [God wills that we live like those who belong to him](#).

- God wills that we live like those who belong to him

1 Thessalonians 4:8

Therefore (ULT)

For this very reason, {I warn each one of you. Since God has told us to say these things (UST)

This emphatic connecting word is meant to mark the end of this section prohibiting sexual immorality. Use a natural way in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: “So then” or “As you can be absolutely certain” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

the one rejecting this...but God, who gives (ULT)

if anyone {continues to} reject what we say, you...No...God himself! You are rejecting God who {continually} shares (UST)

Here God’s constant giving of the **Holy Spirit** is contrasted with the person who constantly **rejects** the apostolic teaching. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: “he who continues to reject ... but actually God himself, who continues to give” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [rejecting this](#)
- [rejects](#)
- [God](#)
- [his Holy...Spirit](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [if anyone...continues to} reject what we say, you](#)
- [you are rejecting](#)
- [God himself](#)
- [his Holy...Spirit](#)

ULT

⁸ Therefore, the one [rejecting this](#) [rejects](#) not man, but [God](#), who gives ^[1] [his Holy Spirit](#) to you ^[2]

UST

⁸ For this very reason, {I warn each one of you. Since God has told us to say these things,} [if anyone {continues to} reject what we say, you](#) are not {simply} rejecting a human being. No, [you are rejecting God himself!](#) You are rejecting God who {continually} shares [his Holy Spirit](#) with all of you!

1 Thessalonians 4:9

**But concerning brotherly love (ULT)
Now, {about your question...how fellow
believers in the Messiah should act
affectionately toward each other (UST)**

This phrase implies that the apostles are answering a specific question previously asked by the Thessalonian church. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “Now, related to your question about how to love fellow believers in Christ” or “Now, about your question referring to Christian relationships” or “Now, about your question related to Christian friendships” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**brotherly love (ULT)
fellow believers in the Messiah should act affectionately toward each other
(UST)**

If your language does not use the abstract noun phrase **brotherly love**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. Alternate translation: “how to affectionately care for fellow believers in Christ” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

**you have no need {for us} to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by
God to love one another (ULT)
there is {really} no need {for anyone} to write to {remind} you...This is
because it is certain that you have already learned what God teaches, “love
each other (UST)**

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: “because God himself teaches you that you should love each other, you do not need us to write to you” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

**you have no need {for us} to write to you (ULT)
there is {really} no need {for anyone} to write to {remind} you (UST)**

Here, **no need** is an exaggeration that Paul uses to show how successfully the Thessalonian church is practicing Christian love. Paul knows that they still have things to learn about loving fellow believers in Christ. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language. Alternate translation: “we feel no need to write to you” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

**no need {for us} (ULT)
there is {really} no need (UST)**

A word is left out here in the original that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. Since English needs it, **for us** is added in brackets. Do what is natural in your language. (See: [Ellipsis](#))

ULT

⁹ But concerning [brotherly love](#), you have ^[3] no need {for us} to write to you, for you yourselves are [taught by God to love](#) one another.

UST

⁹ Now, {about your question,} there is {really} no need {for anyone} to write to {remind} you how [fellow believers in the Messiah should act affectionately toward each other](#). This is because it is certain that you [have already learned what God teaches](#), “love each other.”

for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another (ULT)
This is because it is certain that you have already learned what God teaches,
“love each other (UST)

This clause could refer to: (1) the content of God’s teaching. Alternate translation: “because it is God himself who teaches you: love each other” (2) the manner of God’s teaching. Alternate translation: “indeed, it is God who teaches you how to love each other” (3) the purpose of God’s teaching. Alternate translation: “the reason why God teaches you is so that you would love each other” Use a natural way in your language for expressing this idea.

for you yourselves are taught by God (ULT)
This is because it is certain that you have already learned what God teaches
(UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of the Thessalonian church as though God himself were physically present as their teacher. Paul means that the Thessalonian church already has been taught **to love one another** through the words of Jesus (See John 13:34; 15:12, 17) by the apostles. If your readers would not understand what it means to be **taught by God** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “because you have learned well what God teaches,” or “since this is what God teaches you to do,” (See: [Metaphor](#))

yourselves (ULT)
it is certain that (UST)

Paul uses the word **yourselves** to emphasize that the Thessalonian church is doing what God teaches. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: “personally” (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [brotherly love](#)
- [to love](#)
- [taught by God](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [fellow believers in the Messiah should act affectionately toward each other](#)
- [love](#)
- [have already learned what God teaches](#)

1 Thessalonians 4:10

**For indeed, you do this to all the brothers who {are} in all Macedonia (ULT)
Certainly you are {already} acting lovingly to all the fellow believers in the Messiah who live throughout Macedonia (UST)**

Paul provides this background information to show another aspect of how the Thessalonian church “became an example” to the churches in Macedonia and Achaia (See [1:7-8](#)). Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: “Certainly, you habitually show love to all your fellow believers in Christ throughout the region of Macedonia” or “In fact, you are doing just that to all the fellow Christians throughout the province of Macedonia” (See: [Background Information](#))

**For indeed (ULT)
Certainly...already (UST)**

Here, **For indeed** indicates that what follows is an example of how the Thessalonian church shows Christian love. Use a natural way in your language to indicate this emphasis. (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

**you do this (ULT)
you are...acting lovingly (UST)**

What is implied here is that **this** refers back to the phrase “to love” in [4:9](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**But we exhort you, brothers (ULT)
Yet, our fellow believers in the Messiah, we {want to} urge all of you (UST)**

Speaking of what the apostles **exhort** the Thessalonian church to do, Paul uses a repetitive series of five verb forms that continues into [4:11](#). This repetitive style of speaking or writing is called a “litany.” Use a form in your language that someone would use to list things that someone is urged to do. Alternate translation: “Now, fellow believers in Christ, we are urging you” or “But, fellow Christians, we strongly encourage you” (See: [Litany](#))

**But (ULT)
Yet (UST)**

Here, **But** indicates that what follows are numerous exhortations. Use a natural way in your language to express this emphasis. Alternate translation: “However” or “Certainly” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [brothers](#)
- [brothers](#)
- [Macedonia](#)
- [we exhort](#)

ULT

¹⁰ For indeed, you do this to all the [brothers](#) who {are} in all [Macedonia](#). But [we exhort](#) you, [brothers](#), to abound even more

UST

¹⁰ Certainly you are {already} acting lovingly to [all the fellow believers in the Messiah](#) who live throughout [Macedonia](#). Yet, [our fellow believers in the Messiah](#), [we {want to} urge](#) all of you to excel in loving {each other} even more!

Translation Words - UST

- all the fellow believers in the Messiah
- our fellow believers in the Messiah
- Macedonia
- we {want to} urge

1 Thessalonians 4:11

and to strive to live quietly and to perform your own things and to work with your own hands (ULT)

We} also {urge you} to aspire to live peacefully. {We urge you} to keep busy with your own matters. {We urge you} to focus on working to earn what you need to live (UST)

Paul is figuratively describing peaceful communal living by using this combination of ideas. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or use plain language. Alternate translation: “and seek to lovingly honor others: by living quietly and tending to your own business and focusing on doing your own work” (See: [Metonymy](#))

and to strive to live quietly (ULT)

We} also {urge you} to aspire to live peacefully (UST)

These phrases continue the apostles’ exhortations. Here, the phrases translated **and to strive to live quietly** could refer to: (1) phrases that complement each other. Alternate translation: “and to aspire to live quietly” (2) phrases that express separate ideas. Alternate translation: “and seek to lovingly honor others, to live quietly,” Use a natural way in your language to emphasize this.

to perform your own things (ULT)

We urge you} to keep busy with...your own matters (UST)

Here, **to perform your own things** implies that the Thessalonian church should tend to their own concerns. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “to tend to your own business” or “to focus on your own tasks” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

to work with your own hands (ULT)

We urge you} to focus on working...to earn what you need to live (UST)

Here, **to work with your own hands** is an idiom meaning “earn what you need to live.” If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “to work hard to earn what you need” or “to labor to pay for your expenses” (See: [Idiom](#))

just as we commanded you (ULT)

Do what we already commanded you (UST)

This phrase and the following verse signal the end of this larger section of teaching about how to live in Christian community (See [4:1,2](#) for the same wording). Here, **just as we commanded** also expresses that what the apostles teach is the same as being “taught by God” (See [4:9](#)). If this would not be understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases clearer. Alternate translation as a new sentence: “This is what we already commanded you to do” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

ULT

¹¹ and to strive **to live quietly** and to perform your own things and **to work** with your own **hands**, **just as we commanded** you,

UST

¹¹ {We} also {urge you} to **aspire to live peacefully**. {We urge you} to keep busy with your own matters. {We urge you} **to focus on working to earn what you need to live**. **Do what we already commanded** you.

Translation Words - ULT

- to live quietly
- to work
- with...hands
- just as
- we commanded

Translation Words - UST

- aspire to live peacefully
- We urge you} to focus on working
- to earn what you need to live
- Do what we...commanded
- already

1 Thessalonians 4:12

so that (ULT)**We urge you to do these things,} so that (UST)**

Here, **so that** could introduce a purpose clause. Paul could be stating the purpose for the apostles' exhortation in [4:10](#). Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: "in order that" (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

so that you may walk (ULT)**We urge you to do these things,} so that you can set a good example (UST)**

Here, **so that you may walk** could be a result clause. It is possible that this phrase refers to both purpose and result. If there is a way to indicate this in your language, you could express this dual meaning. Alternate translation: "as a result you now live" or "then you will live" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

you may walk properly (ULT)**you can set a good example...by how modestly you live (UST)**

Here, **to walk** is a metaphor that means "to live" or "behave." If your readers would not understand what it means **to walk** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "you would live appropriately" or "you would live nobly" or "you would behave modestly" (See: [Metaphor](#))

before those outside (ULT)**toward those who do not believe in the Messiah (UST)**

Paul speaks figuratively of these people as if they were physically located outside of an area. He means that they are not part of the Christian community. If your readers would not understand what "before those outside" means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "in the presence of non-Christians" or "in front of those who do not trust in Christ" (See: [Metaphor](#))

and may have need of nothing (ULT)**Then you would not have to depend {on others} to provide what you need {to live (UST)**

This is a purpose clause. Paul is stating the purpose for the apostles' exhortation in [4:10](#). Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: "and so that you would not need anything" or "and then you can be self-sufficient" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [you may walk](#)

ULT

¹² so that [you may walk](#) properly before those outside and may have need of nothing.

UST

¹² {We urge you to do these things,} so that [you can set a good example](#) toward those who do not believe in the Messiah {by how modestly you live.} Then you would not have to depend {on others} to provide what you need {to live}.

Translation Words - UST

- you can set a good example

1 Thessalonians 4:13

Now (ULT)**Also (UST)**

Here, **Now** is a connecting word that signals the beginning of an extended section in [4:13-5:11](#) about the Second Coming of Christ (See chapter and book introduction)(See also 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; 2:3-12). If our language has a special section marker, you could use it here. (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

Now we do not want you to be uninformed (ULT)**Also...we want you to be aware (UST)**

Paul uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: "We want you to know for certain" or "Now we desire to clarify" (See: [Litotes](#))

concerning (ULT)**about {what will happen to} believers in the Messiah (UST)**

Here, **concerning** implies that the apostles are answering another specific question previously asked by the Thessalonian church (See [4:9](#)). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "as it relates to your question about" or "concerning your question about" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

those who are asleep (ULT)**who are dead (UST)**

Here, **those who are asleep** is a euphemism for death that continues through [5:10](#). In this specific context, it refers to those human souls who are awaiting the reunion of their bodies at the Second Coming of Christ (See [4:16-17](#)). You could either use a similar euphemism for death in your language or say this in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "those who are already dead" or "those who have died" (See: [Euphemism](#))

so that you may not grieve (ULT)**You should not be...They are deeply sad (UST)**

Here, **so that you may not grieve** is a purpose clause. Paul is stating the purpose for why he does not want the Thessalonian church to remain ignorant about the destiny of their loved ones **who are asleep**. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: "so that you would not sorrow" (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

just as also the rest (ULT)

Paul is using the adjective phrase **the rest** as a noun in order to describe a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "like the rest of people" or "in the same way as the rest of humanity" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

ULT

¹³ Now we do not want you to be uninformed, [brothers](#), concerning those [who are asleep](#), so that you may not grieve [just as](#) also the rest who have no [hope](#).

UST

¹³ Also, [{our} fellow believers in the Messiah](#), we want you to be aware about [{what will happen to} believers in the Messiah who are dead](#). You should not be [like](#) the rest of humanity, which does not believe in the Messiah. They are deeply sad [because they do not confidently expect that people will resurrect after death](#).

**who have no hope (ULT)
because they do not confidently expect that people will resurrect after death (UST)**

Here Paul assumes that his readers will know that **hope** refers to salvation at the final resurrection (See [1:3](#); [2:19](#); [4:16](#); [5:8](#)). Previously **hope** was associated with the Second Coming of Christ in [2:19](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “who possess no confidence of life after death” or “who possess no assurance of life after death” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**who have no hope (ULT)
because they do not confidently expect that people will resurrect after death (UST)**

If your language does not use the abstract noun **hope**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. Alternate translation: “who are not confident of life after death” “who are not sure about life after death” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [brothers](#)
- [who are asleep](#)
- [just as](#)
- [hope](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [our} fellow believers in the Messiah](#)
- [who are dead](#)
- [like](#)
- [because they do...confidently expect that people will resurrect after death](#)

1 Thessalonians 4:14

**For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again (ULT)
Certainly, we {apostles} are convinced that Jesus died and resurrected (UST)**

Paul is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he actually means that it is true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think what the apostles are saying is not certain, then you can translate their words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “As we certainly believe that Jesus died and resurrected” (See: [Connect — Factual Conditions](#))

we believe that Jesus died and rose again (ULT)

we {apostles} are convinced that Jesus died and resurrected (UST)

Here it is assumed that the Thessalonian church knows the apostolic teaching that **Jesus died and rose again**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “we apostles trust—as you already know—that Jesus died and rose again” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

we believe (ULT)

we {apostles} are convinced (UST)

Although **we believe** could be inclusive of the Thessalonian church (and by extension all Christians), it is most likely exclusive, referring to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy. The previous use in [4:11](#) and subsequent uses (See “we say” in [4:15](#)) are clearly referring to the apostles. Here, it mostly likely is a reference to their authoritative teaching. Your language may require you to mark these forms. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

so...God (ULT)

This is why...Then God (UST)

This phrase could refer to: (1) result. Alternate translation: “then God” (2) manner. Alternate translation: “this is the way God” or “this is how God” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

**God will...bring with him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus (ULT)
the dead people who are united to Jesus. Then God will send them back with Jesus {when he returns to earth again (UST)**

Paul is using the possessive form. Here, **through Jesus** could refer to: (1) being united to Jesus’ resurrection power **through** death. Alternate translation: “God will bring back with Jesus those who are united to him in death” (2) those who God will also bring back again **through** Jesus. Alternate translation: “it is through Jesus that God will bring back the dead people who are with him” (See: [Possession](#))

ULT

¹⁴ For if **we believe** that **Jesus died** and **rose again**, so **God** will also bring with him those **who have fallen asleep** through **Jesus**.

UST

¹⁴ Certainly, **we {apostles} are convinced** that **Jesus died** and **resurrected**. This is why we also are convinced that **God** will {resurrect} **the dead people who are united to Jesus**. Then **God** will send them back with **Jesus** {when he returns to earth again}.

him (ULT) **with Jesus...when he returns to earth again (UST)**

Here Paul implies that **him** refers to **Jesus**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- we believe
- Jesus
- Jesus
- died
- rose again
- God
- who have fallen asleep

Translation Words - UST

- we {apostles} are convinced
- Jesus
- who are united to Jesus
- died
- resurrected
- the dead people
- Then God

1 Thessalonians 4:15

For this we say to you by the word of the Lord (ULT)
In fact, what we {apostles} are now telling you is a message from the Lord {Jesus himself (UST)}

This clause indicates that what follows is something else important that the Thessalonian church should pay attention to (See also [1:8](#) for **the word of the Lord**). Alternate translation: “Certainly, what we now say to you is the Lord Jesus’ message” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

by the word of the Lord (ULT)
is a message from the Lord {Jesus himself (UST)}

The phrase **the word of the Lord** figuratively refers to “the whole message of the Lord’s gospel.” If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or use plain language. Here, **word** could refer to: (1) the authority of the message. Alternate translation: “because the Lord Jesus authorized our message” (2) the means of the message. Alternate translation: “with a message from the Lord Jesus” (See: [Metonymy](#))

of the Lord, that we (ULT)
from the Lord {Jesus himself}. When...and then we {believers in the Messiah} who are still alive (UST)

Here, **that** indicates that the rest of the verse is the content of **the word of the Lord**. You could indicate this by changing the punctuation or some other natural way in your language. Alternate translation: “of the Lord: we” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

we say...we who are alive (ULT)
we {apostles} are...telling...and then we {believers in the Messiah} who are still alive (UST)

When Paul says **we say**, he is speaking of himself, Silvanus, and Timothy, so **we** would be exclusive. However, when Paul says **we who are alive**, since he seems to be referring to all Christians, **we who are alive** would be inclusive. Your language may require you to mark these forms. Alternate translation: “we apostles say ... all of us believers in Christ who are still alive” (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

who are left behind (ULT)
and then we...believers in the Messiah} who are still alive (UST)

This phrase gives us further information about **we who are alive**. It is not making a distinction between **who are left behind** and **we who are alive**. If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases clearer. Alternate translation: “and survive” or “and remain here” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

ULT

¹⁵ For this we say to you by **the word of the Lord**, that we **who are alive**, who are left behind until the coming of the **Lord**, may certainly not go before those **who have fallen asleep**.

UST

¹⁵ In fact, what we {apostles} are now telling you **is a message from the Lord {Jesus himself}**. When the **Lord {Jesus} comes again**{, **all believers in the Messiah will greet him**}. First, those {**believers in the Messiah**} who have {**already**} died will certainly greet him, and then we {**believers in the Messiah**} who are still alive.

until the coming of the Lord (ULT)
the Lord {Jesus} comes again{, all believers in the Messiah will greet him (UST)

Here, **coming of the Lord** is a well-known idiom in 1-2 Thessalonians for the Second Coming of Christ [3:13](#) or the “Day of the **Lord**” [5:2](#). If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “until the Lord Jesus returns” or “for the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus” (See: [Idiom](#))

may certainly not go before those who have fallen asleep (ULT)
First, those {believers in the Messiah} who have {already} died will certainly greet him (UST)

Here, the phrase translated **certainly not** is a strong prohibition meaning “never.” If this double negative would be misunderstood in your language, you could translate it as a positive statement as in the UST. Alternate translation: “will never precede those who are dead” or “are not permitted to come before those who have already died” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the word of the Lord](#)
- [of the Lord](#)
- [of...Lord \(2\)](#)
- [who are alive](#)
- [who have fallen asleep](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [is a message...from the Lord {Jesus himself](#)
- [from the Lord {Jesus himself](#)
- [the Lord...Jesus} comes again...all believers in the Messiah will greet him \(2\)](#)
- [First, those...believers in the Messiah} who have...already} died](#)
- [and then we...believers in the Messiah} who are still alive](#)

1 Thessalonians 4:16

For (ULT) This is how (UST)

Here, **For** indicates that following events are related to the Second Coming. Use a natural way in your language to indicate this. Alternately translation: “Certainly,” or “Indeed,” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

For the Lord himself, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with a trumpet of God, will descend from heaven (ULT) This is how} the Lord {Jesus} will come down from heaven: the Lord {Jesus} himself will personally give the command {for all to resurrect}. The chief angel will shout. God’s trumpet will blast (UST)

In this verse, Paul is describing events that happen at the same time **the Lord will descend from heaven**. He emphasizes the order of events by listing them prior to the main verb. If it is clearer in your language, you could place the main verb before the accompanying actions. You can also make this clear in your translation with an appropriate connecting word or phrase. Alternate translation: “Certainly, the Lord Jesus himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, and with the archangel’s voice, and with God’s trumpet” (See: [Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship](#))

the Lord himself (ULT) Lord {Jesus...the...himself...personally} (UST)

Paul uses the word **himself** to emphasize that the Lord Jesus will come back in person. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: “the Lord Jesus will come back personally” or “the very person, the Lord Jesus” (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

of the archangel (ULT) The chief angel (UST)

See Jude 9 for the only other use of this word in the Bible.

a trumpet of God (ULT) will...God’s...trumpet...blast (UST)

Paul is using the possessive form to describe **a trumpet** that is related to God. Here, **trumpet of God** could refer to: (1) a trumpet that God commands to be blown. Alternate translation: “a trumpet that God orders to be blown” (2) a trumpet that belongs to God. Alternate translation: “God’s trumpet” (See: [Possession](#))

ULT

¹⁶ For the **Lord** himself, with a shout, with **the voice of the archangel** and with **a trumpet of God**, will descend from **heaven**, and the **dead in Christ will rise** first.

UST

¹⁶ {This is how} the **Lord {Jesus}** will come down from **heaven**: the Lord {Jesus} himself will personally give the command {for all to resurrect}. **The chief angel will shout. God’s trumpet will blast.** Then {all} **the dead who are united to the Messiah will be** the first to **resurrect {from the earth}**.

will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first (ULT)
the...come down from heaven...Lord {Jesus...will...Then {all} the dead who are
united to the Messiah will be the first to resurrect {from the earth (UST)

The first main verb **descend** is listed after the events that describe it. This is to show contrast with the second verb **rise**. After the **Lord** Jesus comes down from **heaven**, the **dead** Christians will resurrect from the earth. Paul makes two opposite statements, in similar ways, to emphasis the dramatic nature of the Lord's Second Coming. Use a natural way in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: "will come down from heaven, but the first to resurrect from the earth will be the dead people who are united to Christ" (See: [Parallelism](#))

and (ULT)
Then (UST)

The word **and** indicates that the event the story will now relate came after the event it has just described. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: "and then after that," or "and afterward," (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#))

the dead (ULT)
all} the dead (UST)

Paul assumes that the Thessalonian church knows that **the dead** are the same as "those who are asleep" in [4:13-15](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. See how you translated "fallen asleep" in [4:13-15](#) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

in Christ (ULT)
who are united to the Messiah (UST)

Here Paul speaks figuratively about **the dead** as though they were occupying space inside **Christ**. This metaphor expresses the idea that believers are spiritually united to **Christ** (See also [2:14](#)). Here, it also highlights the communion that living Thessalonian believers **in Christ** have with the believers **in Christ** who have died. If this might be misunderstood in your language, you can express the meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternative translation: "who are united to Jesus Christ" or "who share life with Jesus Christ" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- Lord
- the voice
- of the archangel
- a trumpet
- of God
- heaven
- dead
- in Christ
- will rise

Translation Words - UST

- Lord {Jesus
- heaven
- The chief angel

- will...shout
- God's
- will...trumpet...blast
- all} the dead
- who are united to the Messiah
- will be...to resurrect {from the earth

1 Thessalonians 4:17

Then (ULT) After that (UST)

Here, **Then** indicates that the events the story will now relate came after the event it has just described. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: “After that,” or “Afterward,” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#))

we who are alive (ULT) all of us believers in the Messiah who are... alive (UST)

Though **we who are alive** could be exclusive of the apostles (See note for the same phrase at [4:15](#)), the universal content of this section implies that all Christians are in view, so **we** would be inclusive. Your language may require you to mark these forms. Alternate translation: “all of us believers in Christ who remain alive” (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

together with them (ULT) Both groups of believers in the Messiah will meet together (UST)

Here, Paul refers to “the dead in Christ” (See [4:16](#)) as **them**. If this is confusing in your language, you could make the reference explicit. Alternate translation: “together with the dead in Christ (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

together with them (ULT) Both groups of believers in the Messiah will meet together (UST)

Here, **together with them** could refer to: (1) a simultaneous event. You can make this clear in your translation with an appropriate connecting word or phrase. Alternate translation: “with them at the same time” (2) association with the “dead in Christ.” Alternate translation: “along with the dead in Christ” (3) both event and association. Alternate translation: “at the same time together with the dead in Christ” (See: [Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship](#))

will be caught up...in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (ULT) God will snatch up...so that we can meet the Lord {Jesus} in the air...on the clouds (UST)

Here it is assumed that Paul is referring to the words of the angels at Jesus’ Ascension in [Acts 1:9-11] (acts/01/09.md), as a fulfillment of the prophecy in [Daniel 7:13-14](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could provide a footnote or reference. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

to meet (ULT) so that we can meet (UST)

Here, **to meet** is a purpose clause. Paul is stating the purpose for why living believers **will be caught up together** with “the dead in Christ.” Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: “in order to encounter” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

ULT

¹⁷ Then we [who are alive](#), who are left behind, [will be caught up](#) together with them in the clouds to meet the [Lord](#) in the air, and in this way we will always be with [the Lord](#).

UST

¹⁷ After that, [God will snatch up all of us believers in the Messiah who are still alive](#) on earth so that we can meet the [Lord {Jesus}](#) in the air. Both groups of believers in the Messiah will meet together on the clouds. This is how we will remain together with [the Lord {Jesus}](#) forever!

in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (ULT)
so that we can meet the Lord {Jesus} in the air...on the clouds (UST)

Here, **clouds** and **air** could be considered symbolic language representing God's presence and the spiritual realm (See Exodus 19; Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 17; 21; Ephesians 2:2). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "to spiritually encounter the Lord Jesus" (See: [Symbolic Language](#))

and in this way (ULT)
This is how (UST)

This clause is meant to signal the end of the events related to the Second Coming. You can use the natural form in your language for expressing the conclusion of a story. (See: [End of Story](#))

and in this way (ULT)
This is how (UST)

This clause also indicates the result of the meeting with **the Lord**. Use a natural way in your language to indicate result. Alternate translation: "and then" or "as a result" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

with the Lord (ULT)
together with the Lord {Jesus} (UST)

Here, **with the Lord** parallels **together with them** to express union with Christ as communion with his people. Use a natural way in your language to indicate this emphasis. (See: [Parallelism](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [who are alive](#)
- [will be caught up](#)
- [Lord](#)
- [the Lord](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [God will snatch up](#)
- [all of us believers in the Messiah who are...alive](#)
- [Lord {Jesus}](#)
- [the Lord {Jesus}](#)

1 Thessalonians 4:18

Therefore, comfort (ULT)

As a result, you must encourage (UST)

This is a result clause. Use a natural way in your language to indicate result. Alternate translation: “So then, keep encouraging” or “Because of this, you must comfort” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

comfort (ULT)

you must encourage (UST)

This is an imperative, but it communicates an appeal rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates an appeal. Alternate translation: “you should encourage” or “please continue to comfort (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#))

one another (ULT)

each other (UST)

The pronoun **one another** refers to the Thessalonian church. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could make it explicit. Alternate translation: “each fellow member of your church” or “your fellow Thessalonian believers in Christ” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

with these words (ULT)

with this message (UST)

Here, **with these words** could refer to “we will always be with the Lord” in [4:17](#) or figuratively to all that has been said in [4:13-17](#). Alternate translation: “by reminding each other of our message” or “with these promises” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [comfort](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [you must encourage](#)

ULT

¹⁸ Therefore, [comfort](#) one another with these words.

4:8 ^[1] some ancient manuscripts read

4:8 ^[2] some ancient manuscripts read

4:9 ^[3] but the best manuscripts read

UST

¹⁸ As a result, [you must encourage](#) each other with this message!

1 Thessalonians 5

1 Thessalonians 5 General Notes

Outline of 1 Thessalonians 5

Apostolic Teachings on the Second Coming of Christ (5:1-10)

Timing (5:1-3)

Preparation (5:4-8)

God's plan (5:9-10)

Final Instructions (5:11-28)

Final Commands (5:11-22)

Final Prayer (5:23-24)

Final Appeals (5:25-27)

Final blessing (5:25-27)

Structure and Formatting

Paul concludes his letter in a way that was typical of letters in the ancient Near East.

“We” and “You”

In this letter, the words **we** and **our** refer to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, unless otherwise noted. Throughout the letter, **we** and **our** are used to convey that all three apostles are in agreement with the letter.

Special Concepts in this Chapter

Idiom

Day of the Lord

The “day of the Lord” is an idiom for the time of final salvation for God’s people and final judgment for God’s enemies. “Day” is metaphorical for a time period. Thus, the exact time of the coming “day of the Lord” will be a surprise to the world. The simile “like a thief in the night” refers to this surprise timing. Because of this, Christians must prepare for the coming of the Lord by living with faith, hope and love [5:8](#) toward God and others. (See: [day of the Lord](#), [day of Yahweh](#))

Simile

Like a thief

The simile “like a thief in the night” refers to this surprise timing. Because of this, Christians must prepare for the coming of the Lord by living with faith, hope, and love [5:8](#) toward God and others. (See: [Simile](#))

Metaphor

Day and night, light and darkness

The apostles use many metaphors throughout [5:1-11](#). “Night,” “darkness,” “drunk,” “sleep” are all metaphors about spiritual ignorance or lack of readiness. “Day,” “light,” “sober,” “watch” are all metaphors about spiritual awareness and readiness.

Armor

Here, the apostles use a military metaphor to urge the Thessalonian church to be ready for Christ’s Second Coming at “the day of the Lord.” Just as soldiers must always be armed and ready to fight, so the Christian must live prepared for Christ’s return. Faithfulness and love are compared to a breastplate, and the hope of salvation is likened to a helmet [5:8](#).

Prophecy

Those who “despise prophecies” in [5:20](#) are said to “quench the Spirit.” This is a metaphor for trying to hinder the Holy Spirit’s guidance in the Church. All prophecies are to be examined and tested to determine if they adhere to apostolic teaching [5:21](#). All prophecies that are proven to agree with apostolic teaching, are to be retained as good [5:21-22](#).

Submission to Christian leadership

The apostles link the well-being and spiritual safety of the Thessalonian church to obedience to their leaders. Christian leaders are to be given recognition and loving respect by the church [5:12-13](#).

Holy Kiss

This refers to the ancient practice of exchanging a kiss of peace on the cheek during the liturgy. Different cultures have different standards of appropriate physical contact. These different cultural standards may make translating this passage difficult. Translators will have to consider the most appropriate way to communicate this sensitive issue [5:26](#).

1 Thessalonians 5:1

Now concerning the times and the seasons (ULT)

Now I want you to be aware of the timing of our Lord's return to earth...about the specific time {of our Lord's return (UST)

Here, **Now concerning** signals a change in subject (See also [4:9](#)). This phrase implies that the apostles are answering a specific question previously asked by the Thessalonian church about the timing of "the coming of the Lord" and how the church should prepare for it. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Now, about your question related to the exact timing of the Lord's return" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the times and the seasons (ULT) the specific time {of our Lord's return (UST)

Here, **the times and the seasons** is an idiom referring to a specific point in time or a time period. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. This phrase could refer to: (1) a specific point in time. Alternate translation: "the appointed time when Jesus returns" or "the fixed time when Jesus returns" (See [Acts 1:7](#) for this exact phrase referring to the same thing). (2) a specific amount of time. Alternate translation: "how long it will take for the Lord Jesus to return" or "when the Lord Jesus will return" (See: [Idiom](#))

you have no need {for us} to write to you (ULT) we do not {really} need to write {anything} to you (UST)

Here words are left out in the original that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. Since English needs it, **for us** is added in brackets. Do what is natural in your language. (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [times](#)
- [seasons](#)
- [brothers](#)
- [to write](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Our fellow believers in the Messiah](#)
- [to write {anything}](#)
- [the specific time...of our Lord's return](#)
- [the specific time...of our Lord's return](#)

ULT

¹ Now concerning the [times](#) and the [seasons](#), [brothers](#), you have no need {for us} [to write](#) to you.

UST

¹ {Now I want you to be aware of the timing of our Lord's return to earth} [Our fellow believers in the Messiah](#), we do not {really} need [to write {anything}](#) to you about [the specific time {of our Lord's return}](#).

1 Thessalonians 5:2

perfectly well

This verse begins an extended list of contrasting similes that continues through 5:8. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use equivalent comparisons or express these meanings in a non-figurative way. (See: [Simile](#))

For you yourselves know perfectly well (ULT) This is because you yourselves already know accurately (UST)

The words **For**, **yourselves**, and **perfectly** emphasize how clearly the Thessalonian church should understand when and how the Lord's Second Coming will happen. Use a natural way in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: "In fact, it is certain that you recognize accurately" or "You are certainly well aware of this fact" or "Indeed, you know precisely" (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

For (ULT) This is because (UST)

Here, **For** begins a reason clause that explains why the Thessalonian church has "no need that anything be written" to them about the timing and manner of the Lord's Second Coming (See 5:1). Alternate translation: "In fact," or "Certainly;" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

the day of the Lord (ULT) about the time when...the Lord {Jesus...will come back (UST)

Here, **the day of the Lord** is an idiom that refers to the Old Testament concept of the time of God's final judgment. The context of this passage makes it clear that **the day of the Lord** is synonymous with "the coming of the Lord" Jesus in 4:15. (See also [Acts 2:20](#); [1 Corinthians 5:5](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:2](#); [2 Peter 3:10](#)). Use a natural way in your language to emphasize this idea. Alternate translation; "the time when the Lord Jesus returns again to earth" or "the time when the Lord Jesus will finally judge" (See: [Idiom](#))

comes in this manner—like a thief in the night (ULT) You also know that he will come {unexpectedly}, like when a robber comes at night (UST)

The point of this comparison is that, just like a thief at night comes unexpectedly, the way Jesus will return is unexpected and the timing of his return is unknown. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison or express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "is going to come as unexpectedly as a robber at night" or "is going to come so surprisingly-like when a thief breaks in at night" or "is going to happen like this—all of a sudden" (See: [Simile](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- you...know
- the day
- the day of the Lord
- like

ULT

² For you yourselves **know** perfectly well that **the day of the Lord** comes in this manner—**like a thief** in the night.

UST

² This is because you yourselves **already know** accurately **about the time when the Lord {Jesus} will come back**. You also know that he will come {unexpectedly}, **like when a robber comes** at night.

- a thief

Translation Words - UST

- you...already know
- about the time when...will come back
- about the time when...the Lord {Jesus...will come back
- like when a robber comes
- like when a robber comes

1 Thessalonians 5:3

**When they may say, “Peace and safety (ULT)
The Lord Jesus} will come at a time when
people are saying, “{We are} safe and secure
(UST)**

Paul is using a hypothetical situation to express the suddenness of the “the day of the Lord.” Use the natural form in your language for expressing a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “Whenever they might say, ‘Everything is safe and sound,’” or “At a time when people are saying, ‘All is well,’” (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

**then (ULT)
Then (UST)**

Here what follows the word **then** is in contrast to the **Peace and safety** these people expected to last. Instead, **sudden destruction comes** on them. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

**then sudden destruction comes on them (ULT)
Then, suddenly, God will overwhelm and destroy them (UST)**

Here, **sudden destruction** parallels the idea of terror that accompanies a sudden attack by “a thief in the night” (See [5:2](#)). If it would be clearer in your language, you could make this idea explicit. Alternate translation: “then sudden calamity strikes” or “then immediate destruction looms over them” (See: [Parallelism](#))

**sudden destruction comes on them like birth pains to the one having in the
womb, and they will certainly not escape (ULT)
suddenly, God will overwhelm and destroy them! It will be similar to when a
pregnant woman cannot escape being overwhelmed by labor pains. In the
same way, those people can never escape {when God destroys (UST)**

Here, **sudden** describes the unexpected timing of **birth pains** , and **certainly not escape** describes the nature of **destruction**. Paul says similar things with these phrases to show that God’s final judgment will be a total surprise and complete ruin for unbelievers. Use a natural way in your language to emphasize these ideas. (See: [Parallelism](#))

**like birth pains to the one having in the womb, and they will certainly not
escape (ULT)
It will be similar to when a pregnant woman cannot escape being
overwhelmed by labor pains. In the same way, those people can never escape
{when God destroys (UST)**

The point of this comparison is that, just like a pregnant woman suddenly experiences labor pains, God’s final judgment will come suddenly and be inescapable. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison or express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “just as suddenly as labor pains seize a pregnant woman—these people can never escape God’s destruction” (See: [Simile](#))

ULT

³ When they may say, “Peace and safety,” then sudden destruction comes on them like birth pains to the one having in the womb, and they will certainly not escape.

UST

³ {The Lord Jesus} will come at a time when people are saying, “{We are} safe and secure!” Then, suddenly, God will overwhelm and destroy them! It will be similar to when a pregnant woman cannot escape being overwhelmed by labor pains. In the same way, those people can never escape {when God destroys}!

to the one having in the womb (ULT) when a pregnant woman (UST)

Here, **having in the womb** is an idiom meaning “pregnant.” If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “do for a woman in late pregnancy” (See: [Idiom](#))

they will certainly not escape (ULT) those people can never escape {when God destroys (UST)

Here, **certainly not** is a strong prohibition meaning “never” (See [4:15](#)). If this double negative would be misunderstood in your language, you could translate it as a positive statement. Alternate translation: “they will never escape” or “there is no way to possibly escape” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Peace](#)
- [like](#)
- [the womb](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [We are} safe](#)
- [It will be similar to](#)
- [when a pregnant woman](#)

1 Thessalonians 5:4

But you (ULT)
However...you (UST)

Here what follows the words **But you** is in contrast to the “sudden destruction” of the people in 5:3. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: “Certainly you” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

are not in darkness (ULT)
are not people who are unaware of what will happen, like when people are in the darkness (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of these people as if they actually live in place without light. He means that they are unaware or unprepared for the Lord’s return because they are living sinfully. If your readers would not understand what it means to be **in darkness** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternate translation: “are not unprepared” or “are not living sinfully” (See: [Metaphor](#))

so that the day might overtake you like a thief (ULT)
This is why, when the Lord Jesus returns to earth to punish the people who do not belong to him, he will not surprise you as if he were a thief (UST)

This is a result clause. Use a natural way in your language to indicate result. Alternate translation: “causing you to be like people such as those surprised by a robber. You are ready for the time when the Lord Jesus will return” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

the day (ULT)
when the Lord Jesus returns to earth...not...he will...surprise (UST)

Here, Paul speaks figuratively about the idiom “the **day** of the Lord” in 5:2, by contrasting **the day** with **darkness**. He means that because the Thessalonian church is not unaware of “the **day** of the Lord,” they will not be unprepared, like people who live **in darkness**. If your readers would not understand what **the day** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternative translation, “the day of the Lord” (See: [Metaphor](#))

so that the day might overtake you like a thief (ULT)
This is why, when the Lord Jesus returns to earth to punish the people who do not belong to him, he will not surprise you as if he were a thief (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of “the **day** of the Lord” as if it were a thief who surprises a person. He means that “the **day** of the Lord” will come suddenly for those who are unprepared (See “sudden destruction” in 5:3). If your readers would not understand what this phrase means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternative translation: “making you unprepared, like when a robber breaks in at night” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁴ But you, **brothers**, are not in **darkness**, so that the **day might overtake you like a thief**.

UST

⁴ However, {our} fellow believers in the **Messiah**, you are not people **who are unaware of what will happen, like when people are in the darkness**. This is why, **when the Lord Jesus returns to earth to punish the people who do not belong to him, he will not surprise you as if he were a thief**.

Translation Words - ULT

- brothers
- darkness
- day
- might overtake
- like
- a thief

Translation Words - UST

- our} fellow believers in the Messiah
- who are unaware of what will happen, like when people are in the darkness
- when the Lord Jesus returns to earth...not...he will...surprise
- to punish the people who do...belong to him...not
- as if
- he were a thief

1 Thessalonians 5:5

For you are all sons of the light and sons of the day

Here, **sons of the light** means basically the same thing as **sons of the day**. Also, **of the night** means basically the same thing as **of the darkness**. The repetition is used to emphasize how **light** characterizes **day** and how **darkness** characterizes **night**. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: “Certainly, all of you are ready for Christ’s Second Coming. None of us are unprepared” (See: [Doublet](#))

For you are all sons of the light and sons of the day (ULT)

Since} you are all God’s children, {you should live ready for Jesus to return to earth}, like people who are in the light or awake during day are aware of what is happening (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of the Thessalonian church as if the **light** and **day** were their physical parents. He means that the Thessalonian church members are God’s spiritual children who are characterized by spiritual readiness. If your readers would not understand what it means to be **sons of the light and sons of the day** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “This is because all of you who belong to God are ready for Christ’s coming” (See: [Metaphor](#))

For (ULT) Since (UST)

Here, **For** begins a reason clause that explains why the Thessalonian church will escape God’s judgment on “the **day** of the Lord” (See [5:2](#)). Alternate translation: “Because in fact” or “Certainly” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

all...you...are (ULT) you are all...you are all...you are all (UST)

Paul is using the adjective **all** as a noun in order to describe the whole Thessalonian church. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “you Thessalonians are all” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

We are not of the night, nor of the darkness (ULT) We are not {Satan’s children,} who live unaware of what will happen, like people at night or in the darkness {who cannot perceive as well (UST)

Again, Paul speaks figuratively of these people as if they actually live in a place without light. He means that they are unaware or unprepared for the Lord’s return because they are living sinfully (See [5:4](#)). If your readers would not understand what it means to be **of the night** or **of the darkness** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternate translation: “We are not unprepared like those at night or those who live in

ULT

⁵ For you are all **sons of the light** and **sons of the day**. We are not of the night, nor **of the darkness**;

UST

⁵ {Since} you are all **God’s children**, {you should live ready for Jesus to return to earth}, like people who are in the light or awake during day are aware of what is happening. We are not {Satan’s children,} **who live unaware of what will happen, like people at night or in the darkness** {who cannot perceive as well}.

the darkness," or "We are not characterized by being spiritually ignorant" or "We do not live like those who are characterized by sinful activities" (See: [Metaphor](#))

We are (ULT)

We are (UST)

In [5:5-10](#), **We** is inclusive of all Christians. Your language may require you to mark these forms. Alternate translation: "We believers in Christ are" (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

of the night, nor of the darkness (ULT)

Satan's children,} who live unaware of what will happen, like people at night or in the darkness {who cannot perceive as well (UST)

Paul is using the possessive form to describe people who are characterized by spiritual ignorance or who live sinfully. This means that they will not be prepared at "**the day** of the Lord." If this is not clear in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: "characterized by being spiritually unprepared and living sinfully" (See: [Possession](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [sons](#)
- [sons \(2\)](#)
- [of the light](#)
- [of the day](#)
- [of the darkness](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [God's children...you should live ready for Jesus to return to earth...like people who are in the light or awake during day are aware of what is happening](#)
- [God's children...you should live ready for Jesus to return to earth...like people who are in the light or awake during day are aware of what is happening](#)
- [who live unaware of what will happen, like people at night or in the darkness...who cannot perceive as well](#)
- [God's children, {you should live ready for Jesus to return to earth}, like people who are in the light or awake during day are aware of what is happening](#)
- [God's children...you should live ready for Jesus to return to earth...like people who are in the light or awake during day are aware of what is happening \(2\)](#)

1 Thessalonians 5:6

so then (ULT)**So, this is why, {as God’s children, we must live ready for what will happen (UST)**

Here, **so then** emphatically introduces a result clause. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a result clause. Alternate translation: “therefore” or “as a result” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

we should not sleep as the rest (ULT)**We must} not live unaware of what will happen like the rest of humanity, who are just like people who are sleeping (UST)**

Here Paul speaks figuratively about the people “of the night” and “of the darkness” are if they are sleeping. He means that they are unaware or unprepared for the Lord’s return because they are living sinfully (See notes for “darkness” at 5:4-5). If your readers would not understand what it means to **sleep** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternate translation: “we must not be unprepared like non-Christians” or “let us not be like the rest of humanity, who are not aware that Jesus is coming back” (See: [Metaphor](#))

we should not sleep...we should keep watch and be sober (ULT)**We must} not live unaware of what will happen...we must stay alert and remain attentive, {expecting Jesus to return to earth (UST)**

Here, the verb forms **sleep**, **keep watch**, and **be sober** could also refer to: (1) commands. Alternate translation: “we must not sleep ... we must keep watch and be sober” (2) appeals. Alternate translation: “let us not sleep ... let us keep watch and let us be sober” (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#))

the rest (ULT)**the rest of humanity, who are just like people who are sleeping (UST)**

Paul is using the adjective **the rest** as a noun in order to describe those who are unprepared for Christ’s return. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “like others who are not ready for the Lord Jesus to return” or “like the rest of humanity” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

but (ULT)**Instead (UST)**

Here, what follows the word **but** is in contrast to **the rest** who **sleep**. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation (starting a new sentence): “On the contrary,” or “Instead,” or “Rather,” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

ULT

⁶ so then, **we should** not **sleep as** the rest, but **we should keep watch** and be sober.

UST

⁶ So, this is why, {as God’s children, we must live ready for what will happen. **We must}** not **live unaware of what will happen like** the rest of humanity, who are just like people who are sleeping. Instead, **we must stay alert** and remain attentive, {expecting Jesus to return to earth}.

we should keep watch and be sober (ULT)
we must stay alert and remain attentive, {expecting Jesus to return to earth (UST)}

Here, Paul speaks figuratively of Christians as if they are watch guards. He means that they should be aware and be prepared for the Lord's return by living as God's people should live. If your readers would not understand what it means to **keep watch** or **be sober** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternate translation: "instead, we must stay spiritually alert and prepared" (See: [Metaphor](#))

we should keep watch and be sober (ULT)
we must stay alert and remain attentive, {expecting Jesus to return to earth (UST)}

These verbs express a similar idea by using two words connected with **and**. The verb **be sober** tells how Christians should **keep watch**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use **and**. Alternate translation: "we should remain calmly alert" or "let us remain soberly awake" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [we should...sleep](#)
- [as](#)
- [we should keep watch](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [We must...live unaware of what will happen](#)
- [like](#)
- [we must stay alert](#)

1 Thessalonians 5:7

For those who are sleeping sleep at night, and those who are getting drunk get drunk at night (ULT)

It is well known that when people are unaware of what will happen, it is {usually} at night, when they are sleeping. And when people get drunk, they are not ready for what will happen. They {usually} get drunk at night, {when they cannot perceive things as well (UST)

These two phrases convey similar ideas by repeating the same verb forms twice. Paul says the same thing twice, in different ways, to show that **sleeping** and **getting drunk** are states of being that make people unaware or unprepared. If saying the same thing twice might be confusing for your readers, you can condense each phrase. Alternate translation: "Certainly, people sleep at night, and people get drunk at night" (See: [Parallelism](#))

For (ULT)

It is well known that when people (UST)

Here, **For** begins a reason clause that explains why the Thessalonian church should "not sleep" or be unprepared for the Lord's return (See [5:6](#)). Alternate translation: "Because in fact," or "Certainly," (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

For those who are sleeping sleep at night (ULT)

It is well known that when people are unaware of what will happen, it is {usually} at night, when they are sleeping (UST)

Here again, like in [5:6](#), Paul speaks figuratively as if these people are actually sleeping, or it is night time. He means that these people are spiritually unprepared or unaware or even sinful (See also notes at [5:2,4](#)). If your readers would not understand what **sleep** and **night** mean in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "Those who are sleeping are unaware" or "Certainly those who are asleep are unprepared" (See: [Metaphor](#))

those who are getting drunk get drunk at night (ULT)

when people get drunk, they are not ready for what will happen. They {usually} get drunk at night, {when they cannot perceive things as well (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively as if these people are actually drunk, or it is night time. He means that these people are spiritually unprepared or unaware or sinful. If your readers would not understand what **getting drunk** or **night** mean in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "those who are drunk are unprepared" or "those who are drunk are unaware" or "those who drink too much alcohol tend to drink at night" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁷ For those [who are sleeping sleep](#) at night, and those [who are getting drunk get drunk](#) at night.

UST

⁷ It is well known that when people [are unaware of what will happen, it is {usually} at night, when they are sleeping](#). And [when people get drunk, they are not ready for what will happen](#). They [{usually} get drunk](#) at night, [{when they cannot perceive things as well}](#).

Translation Words - ULT

- who are sleeping
- sleep
- who are getting drunk
- get drunk

Translation Words - UST

- when they are sleeping
- are unaware of what will happen, it is {usually
- when people get drunk, they are not ready for what will happen
- They {usually} get drunk

1 Thessalonians 5:8

But (ULT)

But {we who are ready for the Lord Jesus to return to earth do not live unaware of what will happen like these people (UST)

What follows the word **But** here is in contrast to “getting drunk” at “night” in 5:7. Instead, Christians are characterized by the activities of **the day** and staying **sober** (See 5:5–6). Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: “However” or “Instead” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

we...should stay sober (ULT)

we...we must remain attentive (UST)

Here, **should stay sober** could refer to: (1) a command. Alternate translation: “we ... must stay sober” (2) an appeal. Alternate translation: “let us ... stay sober” (See your translation at 5:6). (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#))

But we, being of the day (ULT)

But {we who are ready for the Lord Jesus to return to earth do not live unaware of what will happen like these people. Since} we are ready (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of Christians as if they are actually a part of the day time. He means that they are characterized by spiritual readiness for the Lord’s return. If your readers would not understand what it means to be **of the day** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “Now, because we are ready for Christ’s coming, we” or “Since we are characterized by being ready, we” (See: [Metaphor](#))

having put on the breastplate of faith and of love, and a helmet—the hope of salvation (ULT)

We must fully arm ourselves {like soldiers}. Faithful love {towards God should cover our chests} like a breastplate. Being confident {that God} will save us {should fully protect our heads} like a helmet (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of Christians as if they are soldiers. He means that just as a soldier must equip himself with armor in order to be ready to fight, so Christians must prepare themselves for the Second Coming of Christ with the spiritual protection of **faith**, **love**, and **hope** (See also [Ephesians 6:10-18,23](#)). If your readers would not understand what these phrases mean in this context, you could use equivalent metaphors from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. (See: [Metaphor](#))

of faith and of love...of salvation (ULT)

Faithful love {towards God...that God} will save us (UST)

Paul uses the possessive form to describe things that are characterized by **faith** and **hope** and **love**. You could turn these phrases into similes if it would be clearer in your language. (See: [Possession](#))

ULT

⁸ But we, being **of the day**, should stay sober; **having put on the breastplate of faith** and **of love**, and a helmet—the **hope of salvation**.

UST

⁸ But {we who are ready for the Lord Jesus to return to earth do not live unaware of what will happen like these people. **Since**} we **are ready**, we must remain attentive. **We must fully arm ourselves {like soldiers}**. **Faithful love {towards God should cover our chests} like a breastplate**. **Being confident {that God} will save us {should fully protect our heads} like a helmet**.

Translation Words - ULT

- of the day
- having put on
- the breastplate
- of faith
- of love
- the hope
- of salvation

Translation Words - UST

- Since...are ready
- that God} will save us
- We must fully arm ourselves {like soldiers
- Faithful love...towards God
- Faithful love {towards God
- should cover our chests} like a breastplate
- Being confident

1 Thessalonians 5:9

**For God did not appoint us to wrath (ULT)
Since {we are his people,} God did not destine
that he would punish us {for our sins (UST)**

Here, **wrath** refers to God's future and final Judgment (See your translation of **wrath** at 1:10, 2:16). (See also [What is the "second coming" of Jesus?](#)). If your language does not use the abstract noun **wrath**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. "Certainly, God did not destine that he would punish us" or "Indeed, God did not determine that he would judge us" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

**For (ULT)
Since {we are his people (UST)**

Here, **For** begins a reason clause that explains why the Thessalonian church should have "the hope of salvation" (See 5:8). Use a natural way in your language to express this emphasis. Alternate translation: "Certainly" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

**to...to obtain (ULT)
that he would punish...for our sins...would preserve and save us (UST)**

Here, **to ... to** introduces two purpose clauses. Paul is stating the purpose or goal for which God **appointed** the two types of people described in 5:3-8). Use a natural way in your language for introducing purpose clauses. Alternate translation: "for the purpose of ... in order to" (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

**but (ULT)
Instead, he destined that (UST)**

What follows the word **but** here is in contrast to **wrath**. Here Paul emphasizes that God's true people will not experience his final punishment. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: "but actually" or "but instead" (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

**to obtain salvation (ULT)
would preserve and save us (UST)**

Here, the phrase translated **to obtain salvation** is a possessive form that Paul uses to indicate that **salvation** is something that belongs to God's people. If this is not clear in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: "for the possessing of salvation" or "for the acquiring of salvation" (See: [Possession](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- God
- wrath
- salvation
- Lord
- Jesus
- Christ

ULT

⁹ For God did not appoint us to **wrath**, but to obtain **salvation** through our Lord Jesus Christ,

UST

⁹ Since {we are his people,} God did not destine **that he would punish us {for our sins}**. Instead, he destined that our Lord, Jesus the Messiah, would preserve and save us.

Translation Words - UST

- God
- that he would punish...for our sins
- Lord
- Jesus
- the Messiah
- would preserve and save us

1 Thessalonians 5:10

the one who died for us (ULT)

Jesus died in our place (UST)

Here, **the one who died for us** gives us further information about what “salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” is (See 5:9). Paul means that God gives the guarantee that Christians will “obtain salvation,” because Jesus **died for us**. If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases clearer. Alternate translation: “who died on our behalf” or “who died for our sake” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

so that...we would live together with him

(ULT)

so that...we would live {forever} with him (UST)

This is a purpose clause. Paul is stating why Jesus **died for us**. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: “in order that ... we could live together with him” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

whether we might be awake or asleep (ULT)

This is true,} whether we are alive or dead {when he returns to earth (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of these people as if they were physically **awake or asleep**. He means that they are “alive or dead” (See 4:14–17). If your readers would not understand what it means to be **awake or asleep** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “whether we are living or even if we are dead” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [who died](#)
- [asleep](#)
- [we would live](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Jesus died](#)
- [we would live {forever}](#)
- [dead {when he returns to earth}](#)

ULT

¹⁰ the one [who died](#) for us so that, whether we might be awake or [asleep](#), [we would live](#) together with him.

UST

¹⁰ [Jesus died](#) in our place so that [we would live {forever}](#) with him. {This is true,} whether we are alive or [dead {when he returns to earth}](#).

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Therefore (ULT) Since this is true (UST)

Here, **Therefore** indicates the conclusion of this section about timing of “the day of the Lord,” and connects to the manner of Christ’s return in 4:14–18 by again using the same phrase, **comfort one another**. (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

Therefore, comfort (ULT) Since this is true...encourage (UST)

Therefore begins a result clause. Paul explains how the Thessalonian church should respond to the fact that Jesus died so that Christians can “obtain salvation” (See 5:9). Alternate translation: “This is why you should encourage” or “As a result, you must comfort” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

Therefore, comfort one another and build up one the one (ULT) Since this is true...encourage and support each and every one {of your fellow believers in the Messiah (UST)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how much Paul wants the Thessalonian church to encourage and support each other. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: “As a result, continue to be supportive of what each person needs” or “This is why you must supportively console each other with this message” (See: [Doublet](#))

comfort...build up (ULT) encourage...support (UST)

These verbs are imperatives but could communicate an appeal rather than a command. You could use a form in your language that communicates an urgent request or appeal. Alternate translation: “we apostles urge you to comfort ... build up” (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#))

build up (ULT) support (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of the Thessalonian church as if they were a building that can be constructed. He means that they should mutually support one another in the Christian life. If your readers would not understand what it means to **build up** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “keep supporting” or “continue to confirm” (See: [Metaphor](#))

one the one (ULT) each and every one...of your fellow believers in the Messiah (UST)

Here, the term **one the one** is an idiom meaning “each and every one” or “each one.” If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “each one” or “one another” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

¹¹ Therefore, [comfort](#) one another and build up one the one, [just as](#) also you are doing.

UST

¹¹ Since this is true, [continue to habitually encourage](#) and support each and every one {of your fellow believers in the Messiah}!

and...just as...you are doing (ULT) **continue to habitually...and (UST)**

Here Paul uses the emphatic phrase **just as also you are doing** to encourage the Thessalonian church to continue their practice of mutually supporting each other. Use a natural way in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: "exactly as you have been doing"

Translation Words - ULT

- [comfort](#)
- [just as](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [continue to habitually](#)
- [encourage](#)

1 Thessalonians 5:12

Now (ULT) Finally (UST)

Here, **Now** indicates that what follows is the final section of instructions from the apostles. Alternate translation: “Lastly” or “Indeed” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

those who are laboring among you and leading you in the Lord and admonishing you (ULT)
your spiritual leaders who work hard among you, in the same way you would give recognition to the Lord {Jesus}. You should also give them recognition because they continually warn and instruct you {about living like believers in the Messiah should (UST)}

This clause expresses different functions for the same group of leaders. It is not making a distinction between **those who are laboring among you** and **leading you** and **admonishing you**. If this is not understood in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases more clear. Alternate translation: “your leaders who are working among you and guiding you in the Lord and training you” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

in the Lord (ULT)
in the same way you would give recognition to the Lord {Jesus (UST)}

Paul speaks figuratively as if the leaders of the church at Thessalonica were occupying space inside of **the Lord**. Here, the metaphor expresses the idea that these men represent Jesus himself in their leadership role in the Thessalonian church (See also [4:1](#)). If your readers would not understand what **in the Lord** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul’s meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “with authority from the Lord Jesus” or “as spokespersons for the Lord Jesus” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [brothers](#)
- [to acknowledge](#)
- [who are laboring](#)
- [in the Lord](#)
- [the Lord](#)
- [admonishing](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [our} fellow believers in the Messiah](#)
- [give recognition to](#)
- [who work hard](#)
- [in the same way you would give recognition to the Lord...Jesus](#)

ULT

¹² Now we ask you, [brothers](#), to [acknowledge](#) those [who are laboring](#) among you and leading you [in the Lord](#) and [admonishing](#) you,

UST

¹² Finally, [{our} fellow believers in the Messiah](#), we request that you [give recognition to](#) your spiritual leaders [who work hard](#) among you, [in the same way you would give recognition to the Lord {Jesus}](#). You should also give them recognition [because they continually warn and instruct](#) you [{about living like believers in the Messiah should}](#).

- in the same way you would give recognition to the Lord {Jesus
- because they continually warn and instruct...about living like believers in the Messiah should

1 Thessalonians 5:13

and to regard them highly in love because of their work (ULT)

Because {of how hard} they work {for you,} we also request {that} you abundantly love your spiritual leaders by being considerate of them (UST)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: “and because of their work on your behalf, we also ask you to lovingly show them the utmost consideration” or “and since they work so hard for you, we also urge you to show them the highest honor out of love” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

in love (ULT)
you...love (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively as if the Thessalonian church is occupying space inside of **love**. He is describing how they should show honor to their leaders. If your readers would not understand what **in love** means in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Here, **in love** could refer to: (1) the means of love. Alternate translation: “by loving them” (2) the basis for love. Alternate translation: “on the basis of your love for them” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Be at peace among yourselves (ULT)
We also urge} that you keep living peacefully with each other (UST)

Here is the first of 17 final appeals in [5:13-26](#) that the apostles give the Thessalonian church. **Be at peace** is an imperative, but here it could be an urgent request rather than a command. Use a natural way in your language to communicate an appeal or urgent request. Alternate translation: “We urge you to continue to live peacefully with your leaders” (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [love](#)
- [work](#)
- [Be at peace](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [how hard} they work {for...you](#)
- [you...love](#)
- [We also urge} that you keep living peacefully](#)

ULT

¹³ and to regard them highly in [love](#) because of their [work](#). [Be at peace](#) among yourselves.

UST

¹³ Because [{of how hard} they work {for you,}](#) we also request [{that} you](#) abundantly [love](#) your spiritual leaders by being considerate of them. [{We also urge} that you keep living peacefully](#) with each other.

1 Thessalonians 5:14

to regard them highly in love because of their work

Paul uses a repetitive series of imperative sentences in 5:14-22 to urge the Thessalonian church to show practical love to one another. This repetitive style of speaking or writing is called a “litany.” Use a form in your language that someone would use to list things that someone should do. (See: [Litany](#))

Now we exhort you, brothers (ULT) Our} fellow believers in the Messiah, we now urge that you (UST)

This phrase signals the apostles’ final appeals to the Thessalonian church. Since there are 14 commands in this section 5:14-22, you could use a marker from your language to indicate this final section. Alternate translation: “Finally, we urge you, fellow believers in Christ” See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

brothers (ULT) Our} fellow believers in the Messiah (UST)

Here the idiom **brothers** could refer to: (1) the whole Thessalonian church including the leaders. Alternate translation: “our fellow believers in Christ” (2) the leaders of the Thessalonian church. Alternate translation: “fellow leaders of Christ’s church” (See: [Idiom](#))

toward all (ULT) with every one {of your fellow believers in the Messiah (UST)

Paul is using the adjective **all** as a noun in order to describe the Thessalonian church. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “toward all your fellow believers in Christ” or “with the whole Thessalonian church” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [we exhort](#)
- [brothers](#)
- [Admonish](#)
- [be patient](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Our} fellow believers in the Messiah](#)
- [we...urge that](#)
- [warn and instruct](#)
- [We {also} urge that you live patiently](#)

ULT

¹⁴ Now [we exhort](#) you, [brothers](#): [Admonish](#) the disorderly, encourage the discouraged, help the weak, [be patient](#) toward all.

UST

¹⁴ {[Our](#)} [fellow believers in the Messiah](#), we now [urge that](#) you [warn and instruct](#) those who live inappropriately. We {[also](#)} urge that you cheer up those who are discouraged. We {[also](#)} urge that you support those who are weak. [We](#) {[also](#)} [urge that you live patiently](#) with every one {of your fellow believers in the Messiah}.

1 Thessalonians 5:15

See that (ULT) make sure that (UST)

Here, **See that** is an idiom used to command attention. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: "Be certain that" (See: [Idiom](#))

would pay back evil for evil to anyone (ULT) treats you badly...you do...treat them badly in return (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of **evil** as if it were goods or money that could be exchanged. He means that if a someone treats you badly, you should not respond in the same way. If your readers would not understand what it means to **pay back evil for evil** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "treats anyone wrongly because they treated you wrongly" (See: [Metaphor](#))

but (ULT) Instead (UST)

Here what follows the word **but** is in contrast to repaying **evil for evil**. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: "and instead," (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

always (ULT) whenever {you can} (UST)

Here, **always** could be using exaggeration to express emphasis. Paul means that the Thessalonian church should make it a habit to **pursue what is good**. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language that expresses this emphasis. Alternate translation: "make every effort to" or "constantly" or "habitually" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

both for one another and for all (ULT) every {fellow believer in the Messiah} (UST)

Here, **both for one another and for all** is used to emphasize groups of people. In this context, the phrase could refer to: (1) the Thessalonian church and all believers in Christ. Alternate translation (remove preceding comma): "for your church at Thessalonica and for all believers in Christ" (2) the Thessalonian church and the whole human race (See how you translated this phrase in [3:12](#)). Alternate translation (remove preceding comma): "for everyone" or "for each and every person" (See: [Merism](#))

all (ULT) every...fellow believer in the Messiah (UST)

Paul could be using the adjective **all** as a noun in order to describe a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Here it could refer to: (1) all Christians. Alternate translation: "all your fellow believers in Christ" (2) the whole human race. Alternate translation: "all humanity" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

ULT

¹⁵ See that no one would pay back **evil** for **evil** to anyone, but always pursue what is **good**, both for one another and for all.

UST

¹⁵ If someone **treats you badly**, make sure that **you do** not **treat** them **badly in return**. Instead, whenever {you can,} actively look for ways to **kindly** treat every {fellow believer in the Messiah}.

Translation Words - ULT

- evil
- evil
- good

Translation Words - UST

- treats you badly
- you do...treat...badly in return
- kindly

1 Thessalonians 5:16

always (ULT)

all the time (UST)

Here, **always** could be using exaggeration to express emphasis. Paul could mean that the Thessalonian church should make it a habit to **rejoice**. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language that expresses this emphasis. Alternate translation: “constantly” or “habitually” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Rejoice](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Be joyful](#)

ULT

¹⁶ [Rejoice](#) always.

UST

¹⁶ [Be joyful](#) all the time!

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Pray without ceasing (ULT)

Constantly pray (UST)

Here, **without ceasing** could be using exaggeration to express emphasis. Paul could mean that the Thessalonian church should make it a habit to **pray**. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language that expresses this emphasis. Alternate translation: "Continue to pray" or "Keep praying regularly" or "Retain a prayerful state of mind" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

¹⁷ Pray without ceasing.

UST

¹⁷ Constantly pray!

Translation Words - ULT

- Pray

Translation Words - UST

- pray

1 Thessalonians 5:18

In everything (ULT) in every situation (UST)

Paul is using the adjective **everything** as a noun in order to describe a situation or time. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Here, **In everything** could refer to: (1) a situation or circumstance. Alternate translation: "In every circumstance" or "No matter what happens" (2) time. Alternate translation: "At every time" or "At every moment" (3) both a situation and time. Alternate translation: "In every circumstance and moment" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

ULT

¹⁸ In everything give thanks, for this {is} [the will of God in Christ Jesus](#) for you.

UST

¹⁸ Keep giving thanks to God in every situation! Indeed, [God desires](#) for all of you [who are united to Jesus](#) the Messiah to do all these things.

In everything give thanks (ULT) Keep giving thanks to God in every situation (UST)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "Continue to give thanks in everything" or "Keep giving thanks all the time" (See: [Information Structure](#))

In everything give thanks, for this {is} the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (ULT) Keep giving thanks to God in every situation! Indeed, God desires for all of you who are united to Jesus the Messiah to do all these things (UST)

Here, **for** begins a reason clause. Paul is telling the Thessalonian church the reason why they should "rejoice," "pray," and **give thanks** in [5:16-18](#)). If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: "Give thanks in everything, because all these things are what God desires for those who are united to Christ Jesus" or "Because this is God's will for you who are united to Christ Jesus, you must give thanks in everything" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

for this {is} the will of God (ULT) Indeed, God desires...to do all these things (UST)

Here, **this** is a singular pronoun that could refer to: (1) all the commands in [5:14-18](#) Alternate translation: "because all these things are what God desires" (2) **give thanks**. Alternate translation: "for in fact, this is God's will" or "for certainly, this thing is God's will" (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

this {is} (ULT) to do all these things (UST)

A word is left out here in the original that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. Since English needs it, **is** is added in brackets. Do what is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "this is" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (ULT)
God desires for all of you who are united to Jesus the Messiah (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract noun phrase **the will of God in Christ Jesus for you**, you could express the idea in another way. Alternate translation: “how God desires people to live who are united to Christ Jesus” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

in Christ Jesus for you (ULT)
for all of you who are united to Jesus the Messiah (UST)

Here, Paul speaks figuratively of **the will of God** as though it were occupying space inside **Christ Jesus**. This metaphor means that the way God desires his people to live is inseparable from being united to **Christ Jesus** (See also [2:14](#)). If this might be misunderstood in your language, you can express the meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternative translation, “for those of you who are united to Jesus Christ” or “for all of you who share life with Jesus Christ” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the will of God](#)
- [in Christ Jesus](#)
- [Jesus](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [God desires](#)
- [who are united to Jesus the Messiah](#)
- [Jesus](#)

1 Thessalonians 5:19

Do not quench the Spirit (ULT)
Do not {try to stop} the {Holy} Spirit {from working among you. That would be like someone trying to} extinguish {a fire (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of **the Holy Spirit** as if he is fire that can be extinguished. Paul means that the Thessalonian church must not hinder the work of the Holy **Spirit**, especially by despising prophecies (See 5:20). If your readers would not understand what it means to **quench** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "Do not extinguish the Spirit" or "Do not reject the Spirit" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁹ Do not **quench** the **Spirit**.

UST

¹⁹ Do not {**try to stop**} the {**Holy**} **Spirit** {**from working among you. That would be like someone trying to} extinguish {a fire}!**

Do not quench (ULT)
Do not {try to stop...from working among you. That would be like someone trying to} extinguish {a fire (UST)

Paul uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: "Continue to kindle" or "Be fervent in" or "Keep working along with" (See: [Litotes](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Do...quench](#)
- [Spirit](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Do...try to stop...from working among you. That would be like someone trying to} extinguish {a fire](#)
- [the...Holy} Spirit](#)

1 Thessalonians 5:20

Do not despise (ULT)

In other words,} do not scorn (UST)

Paul uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you could express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: "Readily accept" or "Cherish" (See: [Litotes](#))

Do not despise prophecies (ULT)

In other words,} do not scorn prophecies {that the Holy Spirit gives to other believers in the Messiah (UST)

The two phrases in [5:19-20](#) could refer to the same thing. Paul could be saying the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to correct how the Thessalonian church viewed prophecy. He means that the Holy Spirit is the source of true prophecy (See [2 Peter 1:21](#)), so they should not "quench the Spirit" by rejecting all prophecies. You could use a natural way in your language to emphasize this. Alternate translation: "Do not continue to despise prophetic messages from the Holy Spirit" (See: [Parallelism](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [prophecies](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [prophecies {that the Holy Spirit gives to other believers in the Messiah](#)

ULT

²⁰ Do not despise [prophecies](#).

UST

²⁰ {In other words,} do not scorn [prophecies {that the Holy Spirit gives to other believers in the Messiah}](#)!

1 Thessalonians 5:21

Test all things. Hold fast to what {is} good (ULT)

Instead,} keep evaluating all {of the prophecies and} retain {only} those that prove to be excellent (UST)

This could mean: (1) Paul is beginning a general list of things that the Thessalonians should **Test** and **Hold fast** if they are **good**. (2) Paul is continuing to refer to the prophecies in the previous verse, and he wants the Thessalonians to **Test** those and **Hold fast** to the prophecies that are truly from God.

ULT

²¹ Test all things. ^[1] Hold fast to what {is} good.

UST

²¹ {Instead,} keep evaluating all {of the prophecies and} retain {only} those that prove to be excellent.

Test all things (ULT)

Instead,} keep evaluating all {of the prophecies (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively as if the Thessalonians could make **all things** pass a test. This could mean: (1) they should examine everything they hear and do to make sure it conforms to what honors God. Alternate translation: "Carefully examine everything you hear and do" (2) they should examine and approve prophecies to determine whether or not they are genuinely from the Holy Spirit (See 2:4 for a similar context). Alternate translation: "examine and approve all prophecies" (See: [Metaphor](#))

all things (ULT)

Instead...all {of the prophecies (UST)

Here, **all things** is an adjectival phrase. Depending on whether you decided this is a new list or a continuation of verse 20, this could mean: (1) Alternate translation: "everything you hear and do" (2) Alternate translation: "all prophecies" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

Hold fast to what {is} good (ULT)

and} retain {only} those that prove to be excellent (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively of **good** things as if they were objects that someone could hold tightly in his hands. He means that the Thessalonian church should only believe and practice things that prove to be from the Holy Spirit. If your readers would not understand what it means to **hold fast to what {is} good** in this context, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express Paul's meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "Keep only the valid things" or "Retain what is from the Spirit" (See: [Metaphor](#))

what {is} good (ULT)

only...excellent (UST)

A word is left out here in the original that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. Since English needs it, **is** is added in brackets. Do what is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "what is good" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- Test
- good

Translation Words - UST

- keep evaluating
- only...excellent

1 Thessalonians 5:22

all appearance of evil (ULT) any thing...that appears to be wicked (UST)

Here, **evil** is spoken of figuratively as though it were a person who could be seen. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “anything clearly wicked” or “all that is obviously evil” (See: [Personification](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [of evil](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [to be wicked](#)

ULT

²² Stay away from all appearance [of evil](#).

UST

²² Refrain from any thing that appears [to be wicked!](#)

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify (ULT)

In summary, we pray that God will personally make you live like people who completely belong to him. God is the one who gives his people peace (UST)

Here, the verb forms indicate that this is a blessing or prayer (See also 3:11–13). Use a form that people would recognize as a blessing or prayer in your language. Alternate translation: “Now we pray that God himself, who gives peace, would sanctify” (See: [Blessings](#))

may...sanctify you completely, and...your entire spirit, and soul, and body...

blamelessly...may...be kept (ULT)

we pray that...will...make you live like people who completely belong to him...completely innocent...We also pray that God will preserve you (UST)

These two clauses mean the same thing. Paul says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to show how much he wants God to preserve the Thessalonian church as his people. If saying the same thing twice might be confusing for your readers, you can combine the phrases into one. Alternate translation: “may ... fully preserve you as his people to the end, and may every part of you be protected” or “may ... completely preserve each and every one of you” (See: [Parallelism](#))

the God of peace (ULT)

God...God is the one who gives his people peace (UST)

Here Paul uses the possessive form **the God of peace**, which is a title for God found in the New Testament (See Romans 15:33; 16:20; Philippians 4:9; Hebrews 13:20). If this is not clear in your language, you could make it explicit. In this context, **the God of peace** could refer to: (1) who God is. Alternate translation: “the God who is characterized by peace” (2) what God does. Alternate translation: “the God who gives peace” (3) Both. (See: [Possession](#))

himself (ULT)

personally (UST)

Paul uses the word **himself** to emphasize the urgency of the apostles’ prayer or blessing by drawing attention to **God**, who is the only one who can sanctify and keep the Christian person blameless. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

**your entire spirit, and soul, and body...blamelessly...may...be kept (ULT)
completely...innocent...We also pray that God will preserve you (UST)**

If it would be more natural in your language, you could say **be kept** with an active form, and you could emphasize who did the action. Alternate translation: “may God keep you completely blameless” or “may God make your whole life sinless” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

²³ Now may the [God of peace](#) himself [sanctify](#) you completely, and may your entire [spirit](#), and [soul](#), and [body](#) be kept [blamelessly](#) at the coming of our [Lord Jesus Christ](#).

UST

²³ In summary, [we pray that God](#) will personally [make you live like people who completely belong to him. God is the one who gives his people peace](#). We also pray that God will preserve you [completely innocent](#) for the time when our [Lord Jesus the Messiah](#) arrives on earth again.

your entire spirit, and soul, and body (ULT) completely (UST)

Paul speaks figuratively, using these three aspects of the human person in order to represent the whole human being. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or use plain language. Alternate translation: “your whole being” or “your whole life” (See: [Merism](#))

at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (ULT) for the time when our Lord Jesus the Messiah arrives on earth again (UST)

Here, **coming of the Lord** is a well-known idiom in 1-2 Thessalonians for the Second Coming of Christ (See [4:15](#)) or the “Day of the **Lord**” in [5:2](#). If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “when our Lord Jesus Christ comes back to earth again” or “at the arrival of our Lord Jesus Christ” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- God
- of peace
- may...sanctify
- spirit
- soul
- body
- blamelessly
- of...Lord
- Jesus
- Christ

Translation Words - UST

- we pray that...will...make you live like people who completely belong to him
- God
- the Messiah
- God is the one who gives his people peace
- completely
- completely
- completely
- innocent
- Lord
- Jesus

1 Thessalonians 5:24

Faithful {is} he who calls you, who will also do it (ULT)

The faithful God {continually} summons all of you {to live like those who completely belong to him. So, you can be certain that} he will also do {whatever is necessary for you to be able to live like those who completely belong to him (UST)

Here, **who will also do it** expresses the result of God's faithfulness. If it would be misunderstood in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: "Because God is faithful, he will also preserve you sanctified" or "Since God is trustworthy, he will also completely sanctify you" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

Faithful {is} he who calls you (ULT)

The faithful God {continually} summons all of you {to live like those who completely belong to him (UST)

Here it is implied that **he** refers to "the God of peace" in [5:23](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Faithful is God who calls you" or "The God who continues to summon you is faithful" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Faithful {is} he (ULT)

The faithful God {continually} summons...to live like those who completely belong to him (UST)

A word is left out here in the original that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. Since English needs it, **is** is added in brackets. Do what is natural in your language. (See: [Ellipsis](#))

is} he who calls you, who will also do it (ULT)

continually} summons all of you {to live like those who completely belong to him. So, you can be certain that} he will also do {whatever is necessary for you to be able to live like those who completely belong to him (UST)

The pronouns **he** and **who** refer to "the God of peace" in [5:23](#). Use a natural way in your language to make this explicit. Alternate translation: "is God who calls you, so he will also do it" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

Faithful {is} he (ULT)

The faithful God {continually} summons...to live like those who completely belong to him (UST)

A word is left out here in the original that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. Since English needs it, **is** is added in brackets. Do what is natural in your language. (See: [Ellipsis](#))

ULT

²⁴ Faithful {is} he who calls you, who will also do it.

UST

²⁴ The faithful God {continually} summons all of you {to live like those who completely belong to him. So, you can be certain that} he will also do {whatever is necessary for you to be able to live like those who completely belong to him}.

Translation Words - ULT

- Faithful
- who calls

Translation Words - UST

- The faithful God
- continually} summons...to live like those who completely belong to him

1 Thessalonians 5:25

pray also for us (ULT)
we also ask that you keep praying for me, for Silas, and for Timothy (UST)

Here, **pray** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request or appeal rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a polite request or appeal. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clearer. Alternate translation: “we ask you to pray” or “please pray for us” (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#))

us (ULT)
for me, for Silas, and for Timothy (UST)

Here, **us** refers exclusively to the apostles. Your language may require you to mark these forms. Alternate translation: “us apostles” (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Brothers](#)
- [pray](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Our} fellow believers in the Messiah](#)
- [we...ask that you keep praying](#)

ULT

²⁵ [Brothers](#), [pray](#) also for us.

UST

²⁵ [{Our} fellow believers in the Messiah](#), we also [ask that you keep praying](#) for me, for Silas, and for Timothy!

1 Thessalonians 5:26

Greet (ULT)

When you meet together {for worship...greet (UST)

Here, **Greet** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. Alternate translation: "Make it your habit to greet" or "Make it your practice to greet" (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#))

all the brothers (ULT)

each of your fellow believers in the Messiah (UST)

Here, **all the brothers** is an idiom that refers to the whole Thessalonian church—and by extension—all Christians. Alternate translation: "all believers in Christ" or "all Christians" (See: [Idiom](#))

with a holy kiss (ULT)

affectionately...in a way that is appropriate for those who belong to God (UST)

This action was an expression of Christian affection in this culture. It showed the unity of those who belong to Christ. If there is a gesture with similar meaning in your culture, you could consider using it here in your translation. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [brothers](#)
- [holy](#)
- [a...kiss](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [affectionately...in a way that is appropriate for](#)
- [your fellow believers in the Messiah](#)
- [those who belong to God](#)

ULT

²⁶ Greet all the [brothers](#) with a [holy kiss](#).

UST

²⁶ When you meet together {for worship}, [affectionately](#) greet each of [your fellow believers in the Messiah in a way that is appropriate for those who belong to God](#).

1 Thessalonians 5:27

I solemnly charge you by the Lord to have this letter read (ULT)

I want you to swear an oath to the Lord {Jesus}, that you will read this letter (UST)

The phrase **I solemnly charge you by the Lord** is an oath formula. Use a natural way in your language to express an oath. Alternate translation: “You must make a vow to the Lord that you will read this letter” or “I put you under oath to the Lord that this letter must be read” (See: [Oath Formulas](#))

**to have this letter read (ULT)
that you will read this letter (UST)**

It is assumed that this letter would be read out loud by someone in the local church. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “to have this letter read aloud” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**to have this letter read (ULT)
that you will read this letter (UST)**

If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “to make sure you read this letter out loud” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**to all the brothers (ULT)
to all the believers in the Messiah {among you (UST)**

Here, **all the brothers** is an idiom that refers to the whole Thessalonian church—and by extension—all Christians (See [5:26](#). Alternate translation: “to the whole church at Thessalonica” (See: [Idiom](#)))

Translation Words - ULT

- [I solemnly charge](#)
- [by...Lord](#)
- [letter](#)
- [to...brothers](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [I want...to swear an oath to](#)
- [Lord {Jesus](#)
- [letter](#)
- [believers in the Messiah {among you](#)

ULT

²⁷ [I solemnly charge](#) you by the [Lord](#) to have this [letter](#) read to all the [brothers](#).
^[2]

UST

²⁷ [I want you to swear an oath to the Lord {Jesus}](#), that you will read this [letter](#) to all the [believers in the Messiah {among you}](#)!

1 Thessalonians 5:28

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you (ULT)

May our Lord Jesus the Messiah {continue to} act kindly toward all of you (UST)

This is a blessing and greeting formula. Use a form that people would recognize as a blessing that could be used as a greeting in your language. Alternate translation: “May our Lord Jesus Christ show you how kind he is” or “May the favor of the Lord Jesus Christ be among you all” or “I pray that the Lord Jesus Christ will favor all of you” (See: [Blessings](#))

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you (ULT)

May our Lord Jesus the Messiah {continue to} act kindly toward all of you (UST)

If your language does not use the abstract noun **grace**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. Alternate translation: “May our Lord Jesus Christ always show you how kind he is” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

be with you (ULT)
toward all of you (UST)

Many ancient manuscripts add “Amen” (See: [Textual Variants](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [grace](#)
- [of...Lord](#)
- [Jesus](#)
- [Christ](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Lord](#)
- [Jesus](#)
- [the Messiah](#)
- [May...continue to} act kindly](#)

ULT

²⁸ The [grace](#) of our [Lord Jesus Christ](#) be with you. ^[3]

5:21 ^[1] many ancient manuscripts read

5:27 ^[2]

5:28 ^[3]

UST

²⁸ May our [Lord Jesus the Messiah](#) {[continue to](#)} [act kindly](#) toward all of you!



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Version 32

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: 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1:4; 1:5; 1:6; 1:7; 1:9; 1:10; 2:1; 2:2; 2:3; 2:6; 2:8; 2:16; 2:17; 3:3; 3:6; 3:7; 3:10; 3:13; 4:3; 4:5; 4:7; 4:9; 4:13; 5:9; 5:18; 5:28)

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:4](#); [5:23](#); [5:27](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#); [1:6](#); [1:7](#); [1:9](#); [1:10](#); [2:4](#); [2:17](#); [2:18](#); [3:1](#); [3:3](#); [3:5](#); [3:13](#); [4:9](#); [4:10](#); [4:11](#); [4:13](#); [4:14](#); [4:16](#); [4:17](#); [5:1](#); [5:24](#); [5:27](#))

Background Information

Description

When people tell a story, they normally tell the events in the order that they happened. This sequence of events makes up the storyline. The storyline is full of action verbs that move the story along in time. But sometimes a writer may take a break from the storyline and give some information to help his listeners understand the story better. This type of information is called background information. The background information might be about things that happened before the events he has already told about, or it might explain something in the story, or it might be about something that would happen much later in the story.

This page answers the question: *What is background information, and how can I show that some information is background information?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Order of Events](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro]]

Example — The bolded phrases in the story below are all background information.

Peter and John went on a hunting trip because **their village was going to have a feast the next day. Peter was the best hunter in the village. He once killed three wild pigs in one day!** They walked for hours through low bushes until they heard a wild pig. The pig ran, but they managed to shoot the pig and kill it. Then they tied up its legs with some rope **they had brought with them** and carried it home on a pole. When they brought it to the village, Peter's cousin saw the pig and realized that it was his own pig. Peter had mistakenly killed his cousin's pig.

Background information often tells about something that had happened earlier or something that would happen much later. Examples of these are: "their village was going to have a feast the next day," "He once killed three wild pigs in one day," and "that they had brought with them."

Often background information uses "be" verbs like "was" and "were," rather than action verbs. Examples of these are "their village was going to have a feast the next day," and "Peter **was** the best hunter in the village."

Background information can also be marked with words that tell the reader that this information is not part of the event line of the story. In this story, some of these words are "because," "once," and "had."

A writer may use background information:

- to help their listeners be interested in the story
- to help their listeners understand something in the story
- to help the listeners understand why something is important in the story
- to tell the setting of a story
 - > * Setting includes:
 - > * where the story takes place
 - > * when the story takes place
 - > * who is present when the story begins
 - > * what is happening when the story begins

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Languages have different ways of marking background information and storyline information.
- You (the translator) need to know the order of the events in the Bible, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.
- You will need to translate the story in a way that marks the background information in a way that your own readers will understand the order of events, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.

Examples From the Bible

Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram **was 86 years old** when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:15-16 ULT)

The first sentence tells about two events. Hagar gave birth and Abraham named his son. The second sentence is background information about how old Abram was when those things happened.

And Jesus himself **was beginning about 30 years old**. He **was the son** (as it was assumed) of Joseph, of Heli, (Luke 3:23 ULT)

The verses before this tell about when Jesus was baptized. This sentence introduces background information about Jesus' age and ancestors. The story resumes in chapter 4 where it tells about Jesus going to the wilderness.

Then **it happened on a Sabbath** that he **was going through the grain fields**, and his disciples **were picking and eating the heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands**. But some of the Pharisees said ... (Luke 6:1-2a ULT)

These verses give the setting of the story. The events took place in a grain field on the Sabbath day. Jesus, his disciples, and some Pharisees were there, and Jesus' disciples were picking heads of grain and eating them. The main action in the story starts with the phrase, "But some of the Pharisees said"

Translation Strategies

To keep translations clear and natural you will need to study how people tell stories in your language. Observe how your language marks background information. You may need to write down some stories in order to study this. Observe what kinds of verbs your language uses for background information and what kinds of words or other markers signal that something is background information. Do these same things when you translate, so that your translation is clear and natural and people can understand it easily.

- (1) Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information.
- (2) Reorder the information so that earlier events are mentioned first. (This is not always possible when the background information is very long.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information. The examples below explain how this was done in the ULT English translations.

And Jesus himself **was** beginning about 30 years old. He **was** the son (as it was assumed) of Joseph, of Heli. (Luke 3:23 ULT)

As here, English sometimes uses the word "and" to show that there is some kind of change in the story. The verb "was" shows that it is background information.

Therefore, also exhorting many other things, he preached the good news to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, having been rebuked by him concerning Herodias, the wife of his brother, and **concerning all the evil things that Herod had done**, added even this to them all: He locked John up in prison. (Luke 3:18-20 ULT)

The bolded phrase happened before John rebuked Herod. In English, the helping verb "had" in "had done" shows that Herod did those things before John rebuked him.

- (2) Reorder the information so that earlier events are mentioned first.

Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.
Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULT)

"When Abram was 86 years old, Hagar gave birth to his son, and Abram named his son Ishmael."

Therefore, also exhorting many other things, he preached the good news to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, having been rebuked by him concerning Herodias, the wife of his brother, and **concerning all the evil things that Herod had done,** added even this to them all: He locked John up in prison. (Luke 3:18-20 ULT)

The translation below reorders John's rebuke and Herod's actions.

"Now Herod the tetrarch married his brother's wife, Herodias, and **he did many other evil things,** so John rebuked him. But then Herod did another very evil thing. He had John locked up in prison."

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Connecting Words and Phrases](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-newevent]]

(Go back to: [Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 2:2](#); [2:14](#); [2:15](#); [3:4](#); [4:6](#); [4:10](#))

Blessings

Description

Blessings are short sayings that people use to ask God to do something good for another person. In the Bible, the person saying the blessing speaks or writes directly to the person who will receive the blessing. The person who says the blessing does not directly speak to God, but it is understood that God is the one who will do the good thing mentioned. It is also understood that God hears the blessing, whether he is mentioned by name or not.

This page answers the question: *What are blessings, and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-poetry\]\]](#)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Each language has its own ways of saying blessings. There are many blessings in the Bible. They need to be translated in the way that people say blessings in your language, so that people recognize them as blessings and understand what one person wants God to do for another.

Examples From the Bible

In the Bible, people often said a blessing when they met someone or when they were leaving someone or sending someone off.

In the book of Ruth, when Boaz meets his workers in the fields, he greets them with a blessing:

Then behold, Boaz coming from Bethlehem! And he said to the reapers, “Yahweh be with you.” And they said to him, “May Yahweh bless you.” (Ruth 2:4 ULT)

Similarly, when Rebekah leaves her family, they say farewell with a blessing:

They blessed Rebekah, and said to her, “Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them.” (Genesis 24:60 ULT)

In a similar way, the writers of letters in the New Testament often wrote a blessing at the beginning of their letters as well as at the end. Here are examples from the beginning and end of Paul’s second letter to Timothy:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. (2 Tim 1:2 ULT)
The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

Translation Strategies

Find out how people say blessings in your language. Collect a list of common blessings, noting the form of the verb, the use of certain words, and the words that are not used in a blessing but would normally be in a sentence. Also find out what differences there might be between blessings that people use when they are speaking to each other and when they are writing to each other.

If translating a blessing literally would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing that. If not, here are some options:

Add a verb if that is natural in your language.

Mention God as the subject of a blessing if that is natural in your language.

Translate the blessing in a form that is natural and clear in your language.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add a verb if that is natural in your language.

▮ The Lord with your spirit. The grace with you. (2 Tim 4:22, literal from the Greek)

In the Greek of this verse, there is no verb 'be.' However, in blessings in English, it is natural to use a verb. The idea that the 'grace' from God will be or remain with the person is implied in Greek.

The Lord **be** with your spirit. Grace **be** with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

(2) Mention God as the subject of a blessing if that is natural in your language.

If people expect a blessing to refer to God in your language, you might have to provide 'God' as the subject or as the source of the blessing. In Greek and Hebrew, usually God is not explicitly mentioned in the blessing, but it is implied that God is the one acting to show his kindness to the person being addressed.

▮ The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

The Lord be with your spirit. **May God give** grace to you.

▮ They blessed Rebekah, and said to her, "Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them." (Genesis 24:60 ULT)

They blessed Rebekah, and said to her, "Our sister, may **God grant that** you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may **God empower** your descendants **to** possess the gate of those who hate them."

(3) Translate the blessing in a form that is natural and clear in your language.

Here are some ideas for ways that people might say a blessing in their language.

▮ The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

May the Lord be with your spirit. May God cause his grace to be with you.

May you have God's presence with you. May you experience grace from God.

▮ "Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them." (Genesis 24:60 ULT)

"Our sister, we pray to God that you may be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and appeal to him that your descendants may possess the gate of those who hate them."

"Our sister, by God's power you will be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and your descendants will possess the gate of those who hate them."

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#); [3:11](#); [5:23](#); [5:28](#))

Collective Nouns

Description

This page answers the question: *What are collective nouns and how can I translate them?*

A collective noun is a singular noun that refers to a group of something. Examples: a **family**, **clan**, or **tribe** is a group of people who are related to each other; a **flock** is a group of birds or sheep; a **fleet** is a group of ships; and an **army** is a group of soldiers.

Many collective nouns are used exclusively as a singular replacement for a group as in the examples above. Frequently in the Bible the name of an ancestor is used, through a process of metonymy, as a collective noun referencing the group of his descendants. In the Bible, sometimes the singular noun will take a singular verb form, other times it will take a plural verb form. This may depend on how the author is thinking about the group, or whether the action is being done as a group or as individuals.

Reason This is a Translation Issue

There are several issues that require care when translating collective nouns. Further care is needed because the language you are translating into may not use collective nouns in the same way as the language you are translating from. Issues include:

The source language may have a collective noun for a group that the target language does not and vice-versa. You may have to translate a collective noun with a plural noun in your language, or you may need to translate a plural noun with a collective noun in your language.

Subject-verb agreement. Different languages or dialects may have different rules about using singular or plural verbs with collective nouns.

Examples (from Wikipedia):

- a singular noun with a singular verb: The team *is* in the dressing room.
- a singular noun with a plural verb which is correct in British, but not American, English: The team *are* fighting among themselves. The team *have* finished the project.

Pronoun agreement. Similar to the previous, care needs to be taken to use the correct pronoun plurality and possibly gender or noun class to agree with the number/gender/class of the noun used. See the biblical examples below.

Clarity of referent. Especially if there is a mismatch in your translation between the verb and noun or pronoun concerning any of the factors above, readers may be confused about who or what is being referenced.

Examples from the Bible

And Joab and all the **army** which was with him arrived (2 Samuel 3:23a ULT)

The word in bold is written in singular form in both Hebrew and English, but it refers to a group of warriors that fight together.

and though the **flock** is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls. (Habakkuk 3:17b ULT)

The word in bold is singular and refers to a group of sheep.

And he went out again beside the sea, and all the **crowd** was coming to him, and he was teaching **them**. (Mark 2:13 ULT)

Note in this example that the noun is singular but the pronoun is plural. This may or may not be allowed or natural in your language.

Do not let **your heart** be troubled. **You** believe in God; believe also in me. (John 14:1 ULT)

In this verse, the words translated “your” and “you” are plural, referring to many people. The word “heart” is singular in form, but it refers to all of their hearts as a group.

And he shall take the **hair** of the head of his separation. And he shall put **it** on the fire that is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. (Num 6:18b ULT)

The word **hair** is singular, but it refers to many hairs, not just one.

And Pharaoh said, “Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **Israel** go.” (Exodus 5:2 ULT)

Here, “Israel” is singular, but means “the Israelites” by metonymy.

Translation Strategies

If your language has a collective (singular) noun that refers to the same group as referenced by the collective noun in the source text, then translate the word using that term. If not, here are some strategies to consider:

- (1) Translate the collective noun with a plural noun.
- (2) Add a plural word to the collective noun so that you can use a plural verb and pronouns.
- (3) Use a phrase to describe the group that the collective noun references. A useful strategy here can be to use a general collective noun that refers to a group of people or things.
- (4) If your language uses a collective noun for something that is a plural noun in the source language, you can translate the plural noun as a collective noun and, if necessary, change the form of the verb and any pronouns so that they agree with the singular noun.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate the collective noun with a plural noun.

And Pharaoh said, “Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **Israel** go.” (Exodus 5:2 ULT)

And Pharaoh said, “Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **the Israelites** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **the Israelites** go.”

And he shall take the **hair** of the head of his separation. And he shall put **it** on the fire that is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. (Num 6:18b ULT)

And he shall take the **hairs** of the head of his separation. And he shall put **them** on the fire that is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings.

- (2) Add a plural word to the collective noun so that you can use a plural verb and pronouns.

And Joab and all the **army** which was with him arrived (2 Samuel 3:23a ULT)

And Joab and all the **army men who were** with him arrived

And he went out again beside the sea, and all the **crowd** was coming to him, and he was teaching **them**. (Mark 2:13 ULT)

And he went out again beside the sea, and all the **people of the crowd were** coming to him, and he was teaching **them**.

(3) Use a phrase to describe the group that the collective noun references. A useful strategy here can be to use a general collective noun that refers to a group of people or things.

and though the **flock** is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls. (Habakkuk 3:17b ULT)

and though the **group of sheep** is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls.

And Pharaoh said, "Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **Israel** go." (Exodus 5:2 ULT)

And Pharaoh said, "Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **the people of Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **the people of Israel** go."

(4) If your language uses a collective noun for something that is a plural noun in the source language, you can translate the plural noun as a collective noun and, if necessary, change the form of the verb and any pronouns so that they agree with the singular noun.

Now this John had his clothing from the **hairs** of a camel and a leather belt around his waist (Matthew 3:4a ULT)

Now this John had his clothing from the **hair** of a camel and a leather belt around his waist

You shall not make for yourself a carved figure nor any likeness that {is} in **the heavens** above, or that {is} in the earth beneath, or that {is} in **the waters** under the earth. (Deuteronomy 5:8 ULT)

You shall not make for yourself a carved figure nor any likeness that is in **heaven** above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in **the water** under the earth.

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:3](#); [4:3](#); [5:18](#))

Connect — Background Information

Time Relationship

Some connectors establish time relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate clauses that give background information?*

Background Clause

Description

A background clause is one that describes something that is ongoing. Then, in the same sentence, another clause indicates an event that begins to happen during that time. These events are also simultaneous events, but they have the further relationship of background event and main event because the event that is already happening serves as the background for the other event, the one that is in focus. The background event simply provides the time frame or other context for the main event or events.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages indicate a shift in time in different ways. You (the translator) need to understand how these shifts in time are indicated in the original languages in order to communicate them clearly in your own language. Background clauses often indicate a time that began long before the event that is in focus. Translators need to understand how both the source language and the target language communicate background events. Some English words that indicate background events are “now,” “when,” “while,” and “during.” Those words can also indicate simultaneous events. To tell the difference, ask yourself if all of the events seem to be equal in importance and started at about the same time. If so, they are probably simultaneous events. But if an event(s) is ongoing and another event(s) just started, then the ongoing event(s) is probably background to the other event(s). Some common phrases that indicate background events are “in those days” and “at that time.”

Examples From OBS and the Bible

When Solomon was old, he also worshiped their gods. (OBS Story 18 Frame 3)

Solomon began to worship foreign gods at a time when he was old. Being old is the background event. Worshiping other gods is the main event.

And his parents went **every year** to Jerusalem to the Feast of the Passover. And when he was 12 years old, they went up according to the custom of the feast. (Luke 2:41-42 ULT)

The first event—going to Jerusalem—is ongoing and started long ago. We know this because of the words “every year.” Going to Jerusalem is the background event. Then an event begins that started during the time “when he was twelve years old.” So the main event is the specific time Jesus and his family traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover festival **when he was twelve years old**.

And it came about that, **while** they were there, the days were fulfilled for her to give birth. (Luke 2:6 ULT)

Being in Bethlehem is the background event. The birth of the baby is the main event.

And in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—**while** Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, **during** the high priesthood of

Annas and Caiaphas—the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness.
(Luke 3:1-2 ULT)

This example begins with five background clauses (marked by commas), signalled as background by the words “while” and “during.” Then the main event happens: “the word of God came to John.”

Translation Strategies

If the way that the Background Clauses are marked is also clear in your language, then translate the Background Clauses as they are.

(1) If the connecting word does not make it clear that what follows is a Background Clause, use a connecting word that communicates this more clearly.

(2) If your language marks Background Clauses in a different way than using connecting words (such as by using different verb forms), then use that way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

And in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—**while** Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, **during** the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness.
(Luke 3:1-2 ULT)

(1) If the connecting word does not make it clear that what follows is a background clause, use a connecting word that communicates this more clearly.

It happened during the time that Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, **and during the time that** Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, **and during the time that** his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, **and during the time that** Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, **and also during the time that** Annas and Caiaphas were high priests—**that** the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

(2) If your language marks background clauses in a different way than using connecting words, such as with different verb forms, then use that way.

Pontius Pilate **was governing** Judea, and Herod **was ruling over** Galilee, and his brother Philip **was ruling over** the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias **was ruling over** Abilene, and Annas and Caiaphas **were being** high priests—the word of God **came** to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

Example of Differences in Time Relationship Connecting Words:

Category	Example
Background setting	Yahweh’s word was rare in those days ;
Background repeated	there was no frequent prophetic vision.
Introduction of main event	At that time, when Eli
Background	whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see well,
Simultaneous background	was lying down in his own bed.
Simultaneous background	The lamp of God had not yet gone out,
Simultaneous background	and Samuel was lying down to sleep in the temple of Yahweh,
Simultaneous background	where the ark of God was.
Main event	Yahweh called to Samuel,
Sequential event	who said, “Here I am.” (1 Sam 3:1-4 ULT)

In the above example, the first two lines talk about a condition that was going on for a long time. This is the general, long-term background. We know this from the phrase “in those days.” After the introduction of the main event (“At that time,”), there are several lines of simultaneous background. The first one is introduced by “when,” and then three more follow, with the last connected by “and.” The background clause introduced by “where” explains a little more about the background clause before it. Then the main event happens, followed by more events. Translators will need to think about the best way to show these relationships in their language.

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:6](#); [4:2](#))

Connect — Contrast Relationship

Logical Relationships

Some connectors establish logical relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate a contrast relationship?*

Contrast Relationship

Description

A contrast relationship is a logical relationship in which one event or item is in contrast or opposition to another.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In Scripture, many events did not happen as the people involved intended or expected them to happen. Sometimes people acted in ways that were not expected, whether good or bad. Often it was God at work, changing the events. These events were often pivotal. It is important that translators understand and communicate these contrasts. In English, contrast relationships are often indicated by the words “but,” “although,” “even though,” “though,” “yet,” or “however.”

Examples From OBS and the Bible

You tried to do evil when you sold me as a slave, **but** God used the evil for good! (Story 8 Frame 12 OBS)

Joseph’s brothers’ evil plan to sell Joseph is contrasted with God’s good plan to save many people. The word “but” marks the contrast.

For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? **Yet** I am among you as one who serves. (Luke 22:27 ULT)

Jesus contrasts the proud way that human leaders behave with the humble way that he behaves. The contrast is marked by the word “yet.”

The hill country will also be yours. **Though** it is a forest, you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders, for you will drive out the Canaanites, even **though** they have chariots of iron, and even **though** they are strong. (Joshua 17:18 ULT)

It was unexpected that the Israelites, who had been slaves in Egypt, would be able to conquer and lay claim to the promised land.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses contrast relationships in the same way as in the text, then use them as they are.

(1) If the contrast relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.

(2) If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the contrast relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.

(3) If your language shows a contrast relationship in a different way, then use that way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the contrast relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.

For who is greater, the one who reclines at table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? **Yet** I am among you as one who serves. (Luke 22:27 ULT)

For who is greater, the one who reclines at table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? **Unlike that person**, I am among you as one who serves.

(2) If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the contrast relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.

The hill country will also be yours. **Though** it is a forest, you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders, for you will drive out the Canaanites, even **though** they have chariots of iron, and even **though** they are strong. (Joshua 17:18 ULT)

The hill country will also be yours. It is a forest, **but** you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders. They have chariots of iron, and they are strong, **but** you will drive out the Canaanites.

(3) If your language shows a contrast relationship in a different way, then use that way.

[David] found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. **However**, Solomon built the house for him. **But** the Most High does not live in houses made with hands. (Acts 7:46-48a ULT)

[David] found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. **But** it was, Solomon, **not David**, who built the house for God. **Even though Solomon built him a house**, the Most High does not live in houses made with hands.

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:5](#); [1:6](#); [2:2](#); [2:4](#); [2:7](#); [2:13](#); [2:17](#); [2:18](#); [3:2](#); [4:5](#); [4:7](#); [4:8](#); [5:3](#); [5:4](#); [5:6](#); [5:8](#); [5:9](#); [5:15](#))

Connect — Factual Conditions

Conditional Relationships

This page answers the question: *How can I translate factual conditions?*

Conditional connectors connect two clauses to indicate that one of them will happen when the other one happens. In English, the most common way to connect conditional clauses is with the words, “if ... then.” Often, however, the word “then” is not stated.

Factual Conditions

Description

A Factual Condition is a condition that sounds hypothetical but is already certain or true in the speaker’s mind. In English, a sentence containing a Factual Condition can use the words “even though,” “since,” or “this being the case” to indicate that it is a factual condition and not a hypothetical condition.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not state something as a condition if it is certain or true. Translators from these languages may misunderstand the original languages and think that the condition is uncertain. This would lead to mistakes in their translations. Even if the translators understand that the condition is certain or true, the readers may misunderstand it. In this case, it would be best to translate it as a statement of fact rather than as a conditional statement.

Examples From OBS and the Bible

“**If** Yahweh is God, worship him!” (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long will you keep changing your mind? **If Yahweh is God**, follow him. But if Baal is God, then follow him.” Yet the people did not answer him a word. (1 Kings 18:21 ULT)

This sentence has the same construction as a hypothetical condition. The condition is “if Yahweh is God.” If that is true, then the Israelites should worship Yahweh. But the prophet Elijah does not question whether or not Yahweh is God. In fact, he is so certain that Yahweh is God that later in the passage he pours water all over his sacrifice. He is confident that God is real and that he will burn even an offering that is completely wet. Over and over again, the prophets taught that Yahweh is God, so the people should worship him. The people did not worship Yahweh, however, even though He is God. By putting the statement or instruction into the form of a Factual Condition, Elijah is trying to get the Israelites to understand more clearly what they should do.

“A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. **If** I, then, am a father, where is my honor? **If** I am a master, where is the reverence for me?” says Yahweh of hosts to you priests, who despise my name. (Malachi 1:6 ULT)

Yahweh has said that he is a father and a master to Israel, so even though this sounds like a hypothetical condition because it begins with “if,” it is not hypothetical. This verse begins with the proverb that a son honors his father. Everyone knows that is right. But the Israelites are not honoring Yahweh. The other proverb in the verse says that a servant honors his master. Everyone knows that is right. But the Israelites are not honoring Yahweh, so it seems that he is not their master. But Yahweh is the master. Yahweh uses the form of a hypothetical condition to demonstrate that the Israelites are wrong. The second part of the condition that should occur naturally is not happening, even though the conditional statement is true.

Translation Strategies

If using the form of a hypothetical condition is confusing or would make the reader think that the speaker doubts what he is saying in the first part of the sentence, then use a statement instead. Words such as “since” or “you know that ...” or “it is true that ...” can be helpful to make the meaning clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

“**If** Yahweh is God, worship him!” (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

“**It is true that** Yahweh is God, so worship him!”

“A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. **If** I, then, am a father, where is my honor? **If** I am a master, where is the reverence for me?” says Yahweh of hosts to you priests, who despise my name. (Malachi 1:6 ULT)

“A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. **Since** I, then, am a father, where is my honor? **Since** I am a master, where is the reverence for me?”

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:8](#); [4:14](#))

Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

Logical Relationships

Some connectors establish logical relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate a goal (purpose) relationship?*

Goal (or Purpose) Relationship

Description

A Goal Relationship is a logical relationship in which the second event is the purpose or goal of the first event. In order for something to be a goal relationship, someone must do the first event with the intention that it will cause the second event.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In Scripture, the goal or purpose may be stated either first or second. But in some languages, the goal or purpose must always occur in the same position (either first or second) in order for that logical relationship to be understood. You (the translator) need to understand the relationship between the two parts and communicate those accurately in your language. This may require changing the order of the two events. It may also require specific words to indicate that one is the goal or purpose of the other. Words commonly used to indicate a goal relationship in English are “in order to,” “in order that” or “so that.” It is important that the translator recognize the words that signal a goal relationship and translate that relationship in a natural way.

Examples From OBS and the Bible

She became angry and falsely accused Joseph **so that he was arrested and sent to prison.**
(Story 8 Frame 5 OBS)

The goal or purpose of the woman’s false accusation was to get Joseph arrested and sent to prison.

Meanwhile Gideon, his son, was threshing out wheat at the winepress **in order to hide from the presence of Midian.** (Judges 6:11b ULT)

Here the prepositional phrase begins with “in order to.”

Now if I have found favor in your eyes, show me your ways **so that I may know you and continue to find favor in your eyes.** Remember that this nation is your people. (Exodus 33:13 ULT)

Moses wants God to show him God’s ways for the goal or purpose of Moses knowing God and continuing to find favor with God.

Even be sure to pull some out from the bundles for her and leave it **for her to glean,** and do not rebuke her! (Ruth 2:16 ULT)

The goal or purpose of Boaz instructing the men to pull out the grain from their bundles and leave it was for Ruth to gather (glean) it.

The shepherds said to each other, “Let us indeed go over as far as Bethlehem, **and let us see this thing that has happened,** which the Lord has made known to us.” (Luke 2:15 ULT)

The purpose of going to Bethlehem was to see the thing that had happened. Here the purpose is not marked and might be misunderstood.

“... if you want **to enter into life**, keep the commandments.” (Matthew 19:17b ULT)

The goal of keeping the commandments is to enter into life.

Do not turn from it to the right or to the left **so that you may be wise** in everything in which you walk. (Joshua 1:7c ULT)

The purpose of not turning away from the instructions that Moses gave to the Israelites was so that they would be wise.

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **and take over his inheritance**.’ So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. (Matt 21:38-39 ULT)

The purpose of the vine growers killing the heir was so they could take his inheritance. They state both events as a plan, joining them only with “and.” Then the word “so” marks the reporting of the first event, but the second event (the goal or purpose) is not stated.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses Goal or Purpose relationships in the same way as in the text, then use them as they are.

- (1) If the construction of the Goal statement is unclear, change it to one that is more clear.
- (2) If the order of the statements makes the Goal statement unclear or confusing for the reader, then change the order.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the construction of the goal statement is unclear, change it to one that is more clear.

“Even be sure to pull some out from the bundles for her and leave it **for her to glean**, and do not rebuke her!” (Ruth 2:16 ULT)

“Even be sure to pull some out from the bundles for her and leave it **so that she can glean it**, and do not rebuke her!”

The shepherds said to each other, “Let us indeed go over as far as Bethlehem, **and let us see this thing that has happened**, which the Lord has made known to us.” (Luke 2:15 ULT)

The shepherds said to each other, “Let us indeed go over as far as Bethlehem **so that we can see this thing that has happened**, which the Lord has made known to us.”

- (2) If the order of the statements makes the goal statement unclear or confusing for the reader, then change the order.

“... if you want **to enter into life**, keep the commandments.” (Matthew 19:17b ULT)

“... keep the commandments if you want **to enter into life**.” or: “... keep the commandments **so that you can enter into life**.”

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **and take over his inheritance.**' So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. (Matt 21:38-39 ULT)

(1) and (2)

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **and take over his inheritance.**' So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. (Matt 21:38-39 ULT)

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **so that we can take over his inheritance.**' So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him **so that they could take over his inheritance.**

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#); [1:10](#); [2:9](#); [2:12](#); [2:16](#); [3:2](#); [3:3](#); [3:5](#); [3:13](#); [4:1](#); [4:12](#); [4:13](#); [4:17](#); [5:9](#); [5:10](#))

Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Logical Relationships

Some connectors establish logical relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the reason-result relationship?*

Reason-and-Result Relationships

Description

A reason-and-result relationship is a logical relationship in which one event is the **reason** or cause for another event. The second event, then, is the **result** of the first event.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

A reason-and-result relationship can look forward — “I did Y because I wanted X to happen.” But usually it is looking backward — “X happened, and so I did Y.” Also, it is possible to state the reason either before or after the result. Many languages have a preferred order for the reason and the result, and it will be confusing for the reader if they are in the opposite order. Common words used to indicate a reason-and-result relationship in English are “because,” “so,” “therefore,” and “for.” Some of these words can also be used to indicate a goal relationship, so translators need to be aware of the difference between a goal relationship and a reason-and-result relationship. It is necessary for translators to understand how the two events are connected, and then communicate them clearly in their language.

If the reason and result are stated in different verses, it is still possible to put them in a different order. If you change the order of the verses, then put the verse numbers together at the beginning of the group of verses that were rearranged like this: 1-2. This is called a Verse Bridge.

Examples From OBS and the Bible

The Jews were amazed, **because** Saul had tried to kill believers, and now he believed in Jesus!
(Story 46 Frame 6 OBS)

The **reason** is the change in Saul — that he had tried to kill people who believed in Jesus, and now he himself believed in Jesus. The **result** is that the Jews were amazed. “Because” connects the two ideas and indicates that what follows it is a reason.

Behold, a great storm arose on the sea, **so that** the boat was covered with the waves.
(Matthew 8:24a ULT)

The **reason** is the great storm, and the **result** is that the boat was covered with the waves. The two events are connected by “so that.” Notice that the term “so that” often indicates a goal relationship, but here the relationship is reason-and-result. This is because the sea cannot think and therefore does not have a goal.

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, **because** in it he rested from all his work which he had done in his creation. (Genesis 2:3 ULT)

The **result** is that God blessed and sanctified the seventh day. The **reason** is because he rested on the seventh day from his work.

“Blessed are the poor, **for** yours is the kingdom of God.” (Luke 6:20b ULT)

The **result** is that the poor are blessed. The **reason** is that the kingdom of God is theirs.

But he raised up in their place their sons that Joshua circumcised, being uncircumcised, **because** they had not been circumcised on the way. (Joshua 5:7 ULT)

The **result** is that Joshua circumcised the boys and men who had been born in the wilderness. The **reason** was that they had not been circumcised while they were journeying.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses reason-and-result relationships in the same way as in the text, then use them as they are.

- (1) If the order of the clauses is confusing for the reader, then change the order.
- (2) If the relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a more clear connecting word.
- (3) If it is more clear to put a connecting word in the clause that does not have one, then do so.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, **because** in it he rested from all his work which he had done in his creation. (Genesis 2:3 ULT)

(1) God rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done in his creation. **That is why** he blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.

Blessed are the poor, **for** yours is the kingdom of God. (Luke 6:20 ULT)

- (1) The kingdom of God belongs to you who are poor. **Therefore**, the poor are blessed.
- (2) Blessed are the poor, **because** yours is the kingdom of God.
- (3) **The reason that** the poor are blessed **is because** yours is the kingdom of God.

Behold, a great storm arose on the sea, **so that** the boat was covered with the waves. (Matthew 8:24a ULT)

- (1) Behold, the boat was covered with the waves **because** a great storm arose on the sea.
- (2) Behold, a great storm arose on the sea, **with the result that** the boat was covered with the waves.
- (3) Behold, **because** a great storm arose on the sea, the boat was covered with the waves.

Since he was not able to find out anything for certain because of the noise, he ordered that he be brought into the fortress. (Acts 21:34b ULT)

- (1) The captain ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress, **because** he could not tell anything because of all the noise.
- (2) **Because** the captain could not tell anything because of all the noise, he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress.
- (3) The captain could not tell anything because of all the noise, **so** he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress.

(Go back to: 1 Thessalonians 1:4; 1:5; 1:7; 1:8; 2:4; 2:13; 2:15; 2:16; 3:1; 3:5; 3:6; 3:7; 3:8; 3:9; 4:2; 4:6; 4:9; 4:12; 4:14; 4:17; 4:18; 5:2; 5:4; 5:5; 5:6; 5:7; 5:9; 5:11; 5:13; 5:18; 5:24)

Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Time Relationships

Some connectors establish time relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate clauses with a sequential time relationship?*

Sequential Clause

Description

A sequential clause is a time relation that connects two events in which one happens and then the other happens.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages indicate sequences of events in different ways; some use ordering, some use connecting words, some even use relative tense (Relative tense is a tense that refers to a time in relation to a reference point in the context.) Connecting words that may indicate sequence are words such as “then,” “later,” “after,” “afterward,” “before,” “first,” and “when.” Translators need to be certain that they communicate the order of the events in a way that is natural in their language. This may require ordering clauses differently than in the original languages.

Examples From OBS and the Bible

When Joseph came to his brothers, they kidnapped him and sold him to some slave traders. (OBS Story 8 Frame 2)

First Joseph came to his brothers, and then they kidnapped and sold him. We know this because of the connecting word “**when**.” The translator needs to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

It was as sweet as honey in my mouth, but **after** I ate it, my stomach became bitter. (Revelation 10:10b ULT)

The event of the first clause occurs first, and the event of the last clause occurs later. We know this because of the connecting word “**after**.” The translator needs to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

For **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate (Isaiah 7:16 ULT)

The event of the first clause occurs after the event of the second clause. First the land they dread will be desolate, and then the child will know to refuse evil and choose good. We know this because of the connecting word “**before**.” However, stating the clauses in this order may communicate the wrong order of events in your language. The translator may have to change the order so that the clauses come in the order that they happen. Or it may be possible to keep the order of the original language text and mark the ordering of sequence so that it is clear to the readers. You (the translator) need to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

Then Mary arose in those days **and** quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah, **and** she entered into the house of Zechariah **and** greeted Elizabeth. (Luke 1:39-40 ULT)

Here the general connector “**and**” connects four events. These are sequential events—each happens after the one before it. We know this because that is the only way that these events would happen. So in English, the general

connector “and” is enough to make the sequence clear for events such as these. You will need to decide if this also communicates this sequence clearly and correctly in your language.

Translation Strategies

If the sequence of events is clear in your language, then translate the sequence as it is.

- (1) If the connecting word is not clear, use a connecting word that communicates the sequence more clearly.
- (2) If the clauses are in an order that makes the sequence unclear, put the clauses in an order that is more clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the connecting word is not clear, use a connecting word that communicates the sequence more clearly.

Then Mary arose in those days **and** quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah, **and** she entered into the house of Zechariah **and** greeted Elizabeth. (Luke 1:39-40 ULT)

Then Mary arose in those days. **Then** she quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah. **Then** she entered into the house of Zechariah, **and then** she greeted Elizabeth.

For **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate (Isaiah 7:16 ULT)

For the time will come when the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, **but even before that time**, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate.

- (2) If the clauses are in an order that makes the sequence unclear, put the clauses in an order that is more clear.

For the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good.

For more about sequences of events, see [Sequence of Events](#).

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:16](#); [4:17](#))

Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Time Relationships

Some connectors establish time relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate clauses with a simultaneous time relationship?*

Simultaneous Clause

Description

A simultaneous clause is a time relationship that connects two or more events that occur at the same time.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages indicate in many different ways that events occur simultaneously. These ways may vary based on whether or not something is causing the events to occur simultaneously. Connecting words that may indicate simultaneous events are words such as “while,” “as,” and “during.” Often the Bible does not state a relationship between the events but simply says they occurred at the same time. It is important that you (the translator) know when a time relationship is implied and when it is not implied so that you can communicate it clearly. A simultaneous clause communicates that events happened at the same time but it does not indicate that one event caused the other. That would be a reason-and-result relationship.

Examples From OBS and the Bible

Joseph served his master well, **and** God blessed Joseph. (OBS Story 8 Frame 4)

Two events happened while Joseph was a slave to a wealthy government official: Joseph served well, and God blessed Joseph. There is no indication of a reason-and-result (cause and effect) relationship between the two, or that the first event happened, and then the second event happened.

But in truth I say to you that there were many widows in Israel **during** the days of Elijah. (Luke 4:25b ULT)

The connecting word “**during**” tells us clearly that two things happened at the same time, but one event did not cause the other.

And the people were waiting for Zechariah, **and** they were wondering at his delaying in the temple. (Luke 1:21 ULT)

The people were both waiting and wondering at the same time. The general connector “**and**” indicates this.

While they were looking intensely into heaven **as** he was going up, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing. (Acts 1:10 ULT)

Three events happened at the same time — the disciples looking, Jesus going up, and two men standing. The connector words “**while**” and “**as**” tell us this.

Translation Strategies

If the way that the simultaneous clauses are marked also is clear in your language, then translate the simultaneous clauses as they are.

- (1) If the connecting word does not make it clear that the simultaneous clauses are happening at the same time, use a connecting word that communicates this more clearly.
- (2) If it is not clear which clause the simultaneous clause is connected to, and that they are happening at the same time, mark all of the clauses with a connecting word.
- (3) If your language marks events as simultaneous in a different way than using connecting words, then use that way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

Below, each Bible verse will be restated in three different ways, according to the translation strategies in the list above. Each restatement will have the same number as the translation strategy that it is using.

And the people were waiting for Zechariah, **and** they were wondering at his delaying in the temple. (Luke 1:21 ULT)

- (1) Now **while** the people were waiting for Zechariah, they were wondering at his delaying in the temple.
- (2) Now **while** the people were waiting for Zechariah, they were **also** wondering at his delaying in the temple.
- (3) Now the people were waiting for Zechariah, wondering at his delaying in the temple.

While they were looking intently into heaven **as** he was going up, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing. (Acts 1:10 ULT)

- (1) And **during the time** they were looking intently into heaven **while** he was going up, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing.
- (2) And **while** they were looking intently into heaven **as** he was going up, suddenly, **at that same time** two men stood by them in white clothing.
- (3) They were looking intently into heaven; he was going up **when** they saw two men standing by them in white clothing.

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:4](#); [1:5](#); [4:16](#); [4:17](#))

Connecting Words and Phrases

Description

This page answers the question: *How do connecting words work to join parts of the text in different ways?*

As humans, we write our thoughts in phrases and sentences. We usually want to communicate a series of thoughts that are connected to each other in different ways. **Connecting words and phrases** show how these thoughts are related to each other. For example, we can show how the following thoughts are related by using the Connecting Words in bold type:

- It was raining, **so** I opened my umbrella.
- It was raining, **but** I did not have an umbrella. **So** I got very wet.

Connecting words or phrases can connect phrases or clauses within a sentence. They can connect sentences to each other. They can also connect entire chunks to one another in order to show how the chunk before relates to the chunk after the connecting word. Very often, the connecting words that connect entire chunks to one another are either conjunctions or adverbs.

It was raining, but I did not have an umbrella, so I got very wet.

Now I must change my clothes. Then I will drink a cup of hot tea and warm myself by the fire.

In the above example, the word **now** connects the two short chunks of text, showing the relationship between them. The speaker must change his clothes, drink hot tea, and warm himself because of something that happened earlier (that is, he got wet in the rain).

Sometimes people might not use a connecting word because they expect the context to help the readers understand the relationship between the thoughts. Some languages do not use connecting words as much as other languages do. They might say:

- It was raining. I did not have an umbrella. I got very wet.

You (the translator) will need to use the method that is most natural and clear in the target language. But in general, using connecting words whenever possible helps the reader to understand the ideas in the Bible most clearly.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- You need to understand the relationship between paragraphs, between sentences, and between parts of sentences in the Bible, and how connecting words and phrases can help you to understand the relationship between the thoughts that they are connecting.
- Each language has its own ways of showing how thoughts are related.
- You need to know how to help readers understand the relationship between the thoughts in a way that is natural in your language.

Translation Principles

- You need to translate in a way that readers can understand the same relationship between thoughts that the original readers would have understood.
- Whether or not a connecting word is used is not as important as readers being able to understand the relationship between the ideas.

The Different Types of Connections

Listed below are different types of connections between ideas or events. These different types of connections can be indicated by using different connecting words. When we write or translate something, it is important to use the right connecting word so that these connections are clear for the reader. If you would like additional information, simply click the colored, hyperlinked word to be directed to a page containing definitions and examples for each type of connection.

- [Sequential Clause](#) — a time relationship between two events in which one happens and then the other happens.
- [Simultaneous Clause](#) — a time relationship between two or more events that occur at the same time.
- [Background Clause](#) — a time relationship in which the first clause describes a long event that is happening at the time when the beginning of the second event happens, which is described in the second clause.
- [Exceptional Relationship](#) — one clause describes a group of people or items, and the other clause excludes one or more items or people from the group.
- [Hypothetical Condition](#) — the second event will only take place if the first one takes place. Sometimes what takes place is dependent on the actions of other people.
- [Factual Condition](#) — a connection that sounds hypothetical but is already certain or true, so that the condition is guaranteed to happen.
- [Contrary-to-Fact Condition](#) — a connection that sounds hypothetical but is already certain that it is not true. See also: [Hypothetical Statements](#).
- [Goal Relationship](#) — a logical relationship in which the second event is the purpose or goal of the first.
- [Reason and Result Relationship](#) — a logical relationship in which one event is the reason for the other event, the result.
- [Contrast Relationship](#) — one item is being described as different or in opposition to another.

Examples from the Bible

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood. I did not go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me. **Instead**, I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. **Then** after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him 15 days. (Galatians 1:16b-18 ULT)

The word “instead” introduces something that contrasts with what was said before. The contrast here is between what Paul did not do and what he did do. The word “then” introduces a sequence of events. It introduces something that Paul did after he returned to Damascus.

Therefore, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments **and** teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. **But** whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULT)

The word “therefore” links this section with the section before it, signaling that the section that came before gave the reason for this section. “Therefore” usually links sections larger than one sentence. The word “and” links only two actions within the same sentence, that of breaking commandments and teaching others. In this verse the word “but” contrasts what one group of people will be called in God’s kingdom with what another group of people will be called.

We place nothing as a stumbling block in front of anyone, **so that** our ministry might not be discredited. **Instead**, we commend ourselves in everything as God’s servants. (2 Corinthians 6:3-4 ULT)

Here the words “so that” connect what follows as the reason for what came before; the reason that Paul does not place stumbling blocks is that he does not want his ministry brought into disrepute. “Instead” contrasts what Paul does (prove by his actions that he is God’s servant) with what he said he does not do (place stumbling blocks).

General Translation Strategies

See each type of Connecting Word above for specific strategies

If the way the relationship between thoughts is shown in the ULT would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, then consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Use a connecting word (even if the ULT does not use one).
- (2) Do not use a connecting word if it would be strange to use one and people would understand the right relationship between the thoughts without it.
- (3) Use a different connecting word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use a connecting word (even if the ULT does not use one).

Jesus said to them, "Come follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." Then immediately they left the nets and followed him. (Mark 1:17-18 ULT)

They followed Jesus because he told them to. Some translators may want to mark this clause with the connecting word "so."

Jesus said to them, "Come follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." **So**, immediately they left the nets and followed him.

- (2) Do not use a connecting word if it would be odd to use one, and if people would understand the right relationship between the thoughts without it.

Therefore, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments **and** teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. **But** whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULT)

Some languages would prefer not to use connecting words here because the meaning is clear without them and using them would be unnatural. They might translate like this:

Therefore, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments, teaching others to do so as well, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood. I did not go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me. **Instead**, I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. **Then** after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him 15 days. (Galatians 1:16b-18 ULT) (Galatians 1:16-18 ULT)

Some languages might not need the words "instead" or "then" here. They might translate like this:

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me. I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. After three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him 15 days.

- (3) Use a different connecting word.

Therefore, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments **and** teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. **But** whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULT)

Instead of a word like “therefore,” a language might need a phrase to indicate that there was a section before it that gave the reason for the section that follows. Also, the word “but” is used here because of the contrast between the two groups of people. But in some languages, the word “but” would show that what comes after it is surprising because of what came before it. So “and” might be clearer for those languages. They might translate like this:

Because of that, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven.
And whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:8](#); [1:9](#); [2:1](#); [2:5](#); [2:9](#); [2:14](#); [2:16](#); [2:18](#); [3:1](#); [3:4](#); [3:6](#); [4:1](#); [4:2](#); [4:3](#); [4:8](#); [4:10](#); [4:13](#); [4:15](#); [4:16](#); [5:11](#); [5:12](#); [5:14](#))

Direct and Indirect Quotations

Description

There are two kinds of quotations: direct quotations and indirect quotations.

A direct quotation occurs when someone reports what another person said from the viewpoint of that original speaker. People usually expect that this kind of quotation will represent the original speaker's exact words. In the example below, John would have said "I" when referring to himself, so the narrator, who is reporting John's words, uses the word "I" in the quotation to refer to John. To show that these are John's exact words, many languages put the words between quotation marks: "".

- John said, "I do not know at what time I will arrive."

An indirect quotation occurs when a speaker reports what someone else said, but in this case, the speaker is reporting it from his own point of view instead and not from the original person's point of view. This kind of quotation usually contains changes in pronouns, and it often includes changes in time, in word choices, and in length. In the example below, the narrator refers to John as "he" in the quotation and uses the word "would" to replace the future tense, indicated by "will."

- John said that he did not know at what time he would arrive.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In some languages, reported speech can be expressed by either direct or indirect quotations. In other languages, it is more natural to use one than the other. There may be a certain meaning implied by using one rather than the other. So for each quotation, translators need to decide whether it is best to translate it as a direct quotation or as an indirect quotation.

Examples From the Bible

The verses in the examples below contain both direct and indirect quotations. In the explanation below the verse, we have marked in bold the words that are quoted.

And he commanded him to tell no one, but, "Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."
(Luke 5:14 ULT)

- Indirect quote: He commanded him **to tell no one**,
- Direct quote: but told him, "**Go, show yourself to the priest ...**"

And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, he answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you." (Luke 17:20-21 ULT)

- Indirect quote: Being asked by the Pharisees **when the kingdom of God was coming**,
- Direct quote: he answered them and said, "**The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you.**"
- Direct quotes: Neither will they say, '**Look, here it is!**' or, '**There it is!**'

This page answers the question: *What are direct and indirect quotations?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-quotations]]

Translation Strategies

If the kind of quote used in the source text would work well in your language, consider using it. If the kind of quote used in that context is not natural for your language, follow these strategies.

- (1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.
- (2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.

And he commanded him to tell no one, but, **“Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”** (Luke 5:14 ULT)

He commanded him to tell no one, but **to go and show himself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for his cleansing according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.**

- (2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

And he commanded him **to tell no one**, but, “Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.” (Luke 5:14 ULT)

He commanded him, **“Tell no one.** But go and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_quotations.

Next we recommend you learn about:
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-quotesinquotes]]

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:4](#))

Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Description

In some languages, phrases that modify a noun can be used with the noun for two different purposes. They can either (1) distinguish the noun from other similar items, or (2) they can give more information about the noun. That information could be new to the reader, or a reminder about something the reader might already know. Other languages use modifying phrases with a noun only for distinguishing the noun from other similar things. When people who speak these languages hear a modifying phrase along with a noun, they assume that its function is to distinguish one item from another similar item.

This page answers the question: *When a phrase is used with a noun, what is the difference between phrases that distinguish the noun from others and phrases that simply inform or remind?*

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]]

Some languages use a comma to mark the difference between (1) making a distinction between similar items and (2) giving more information about an item. Without the comma, the sentence below communicates that it is making a distinction:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister who was very thankful**.
 - If her sister was usually thankful, the phrase “who was thankful” could distinguish this sister of Mary’s from another sister who was not usually thankful.

With the comma, the sentence is giving more information:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister, who was very thankful**.
 - This same phrase can be used to give us more information about Mary’s sister. It tells us about how Mary’s sister responded when Mary gave her the food. In this case it does not distinguish one sister from another sister.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Many source languages of the Bible use phrases that modify a noun both for distinguishing the noun from another similar item and also for giving more information about the noun. You (the translator) must be careful to understand which meaning the author intended in each case.
- Some languages use phrases that modify a noun only for distinguishing the noun from another similar item. When translating a phrase that is used for giving more information, translators who speak these languages will need to separate the phrase from the noun. Otherwise, people who read it or hear it will think that the phrase is meant to distinguish the noun from other similar items.

Examples From the Bible

Examples of words and phrases that are used to distinguish one item from other possible items:

(These usually do not cause any problem in translation.)

▮ The curtain is to separate **the holy place** from **the most holy place**. (Exodus 26:33b ULT)

The words “holy” and “most holy” distinguish two different places from each other and from any other place.

▮ A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to **the woman who bore him**. (Proverbs 17:25 ULT)

The phrase “who bore him” distinguishes which woman the son is bitterness to. He is not bitterness to all women, but to his mother.

Examples of words and phrases that are used to give added information or a reminder about an item:

(These are a translation issue for languages that do not use these.)

... for **your righteous judgments** are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

The word “righteous” simply reminds us that God’s judgments are righteous. It does not distinguish his righteous judgments from his unrighteous judgments, because all of his judgments are righteous.

How can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

The phrase “who is 90 years old” is the reason that Abraham did not think that Sarah could bear a son. He was not distinguishing one woman named Sarah from another woman named Sarah who was a different age, and he was not telling anyone something new about her age. He simply did not think that a woman who was that old could bear a child.

I will wipe away mankind **whom I have created** from the surface of the earth. (Genesis 6:7 ULT)

The phrase “whom I have created” is a reminder of the relationship between God and mankind. It is the reason God had the right to wipe away mankind. There is not another mankind that God did not create.

Translation Strategies

If readers would understand the purpose of a phrase with a noun, then consider keeping the phrase and the noun together. For languages that use words or phrases with a noun only to distinguish one item from another, here are some strategies for translating phrases that are used to inform or remind.

- (1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.
- (2) Use one of your language’s ways for expressing that this is just added information. It may be by adding a small word, or by changing the way the voice sounds. Sometimes changes in the voice can be shown with punctuation marks, such as parentheses or commas.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.

I hate those who serve **worthless** idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT)

By saying “worthless idols,” David was commenting about all idols and giving his reason for hating those who serve them. He was not distinguishing worthless idols from valuable idols.

>

Because idols are worthless, I hate those who serve them.

... for your **righteous** judgments are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

... for your judgments are good **because they are righteous**.

Can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

The phrase “who is 90 years old” is a reminder of Sarah’s age. It tells why Abraham was asking the question. He did not expect that a woman who was that old could bear a child.

>

Can Sarah bear a son **even when she is 90 years old**?

I will call on Yahweh, **who is worthy to be praised**. (2 Samuel 22:4a ULT) There is only one Yahweh. The phrase “who is worthy to be praised” gives a reason for calling on Yahweh.

I will call on Yahweh, because **he is worthy to be praised**

(2) Use one of your language’s ways for expressing that this is just added information.

You are my Son, **whom I love**. I am pleased with you. (Luke 3:22 ULT)

You are my Son. **I love you** and I am pleased with you.

Receiving my love, you are my Son. I am pleased with you.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Double Negatives](#)

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#); [2:9](#); [2:12](#); [2:13](#); [2:16](#); [3:2](#); [4:3](#); [4:4](#); [4:5](#); [4:11](#); [4:15](#); [5:10](#); [5:12](#))

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 “use**less**.” 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 English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one, creating a positive sentence. So, “He is not unintelligent” means “He is intelligent.”
- In some languages, such as French and Spanish, two negative words in a clause do not cancel each other to become a positive. 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 double negative creates a stronger negative statement.
- In some languages, a 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, including the languages of the Bible, a double negative can produce a stronger positive meaning than a simple positive statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” can mean “He is very intelligent.” In this case, the double negative is actually the figure of speech called [litotes](#).

Biblical Greek can do all of the above. So to translate sentences with double negatives accurately and clearly in your language, you need to know what each double negative means in the Bible and how to express the same idea in your language.

Examples From the Bible

The Greek of John 15:5 says:

χωρὶς ἐμοῦ οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν οὐδέν

Without me **not** you can do **nothing**

We cannot reproduce this double negative in the English ULT because in English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one. In English, and perhaps in your language, we need to choose only one of the negatives and say either:

Without me, you can do **nothing**.

or:

Without me, you **cannot** do anything.

... in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)

This means "in order to be fruitful."

A prophet is **not without** honor (Mark 6:4 ULT)

This means "a prophet is honored."

I do **not** want you to be **ignorant**. (1 Corinthians 12:1)

This means "I want you to be knowledgeable."

Translation Strategies

If the way that the double negative is used in the Bible is natural and has the same meaning as in your language, consider using it in the same way. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

(1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is 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 negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.

(3) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a stronger negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives and add a strengthening word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is 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 negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.

χωρίς ἑμοῦ οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν οὐδέν

Without me **not** you can do **nothing** (John 15:5)

Without me, you can do **nothing**.

or:

Without me, you **cannot** do anything.

(3) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a stronger negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives and add a strengthening word.

...ἰῶτα ἐν ἧ μία κεραία **οὐ μὴ** παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου (Matthew 5:18)

...iota one or one serif **not not** may pass away from the law

...**not even** one iota or one serif may pass away from the law

or:

...**certainly no** iota or serif may pass away from the law

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:15](#); [5:3](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#); [2:2](#); [2:9](#); [3:9](#); [3:12](#); [3:13](#); [4:1](#); [4:6](#); [5:5](#); [5:11](#))

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 ?*

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 **sinners in the assembly** of the righteous. (Psalm 1:5 ULT)

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, and **sinners 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: [1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2:5; 2:10; 2:15; 2:18; 2:19; 4:9; 5:1; 5:18; 5:21; 5:24](#))

End of Story

Description

There are different types of information that may be given at the end of a story. Often this is background information. This background information is different from the actions that make up the main part of the story. A book of the Bible is often made up of many smaller stories that are part of the larger story of the book itself. For example, the story of Jesus' birth is a smaller story in the larger story of the book of Luke. Each of these stories, whether large or small, can have background information at the end of it.

This page answers the question: *What kinds of information are given at the end of a story?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)
Background Information

The following are purposes for end of story information:

- to summarize the story
- to give a comment about what happened in the story
- to connect a smaller story to the larger story it is a part of
- to tell the reader what happens to a specific character after the main part of the story ends
- to tell on-going action that continues after the main part of the story ends
- to tell what happens after the story as a result of the events that happened in the story itself

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of presenting these kinds of information. If you (the translator) do not use your language's ways of doing this, readers may not know:

- that this information is ending the story
- what the purpose of the information is
- how the information is related to the story

Translation Strategies

- Translate the particular kind of information at the end of a story the way your language expresses that kind of information.
- Translate it so that people will understand how it relates to the story it is part of.
- If possible, translate the end of the story in a way that people will know where that story ends and the next begins.

Examples From the Bible

- To summarize the story

Then the rest of the men should follow, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. **In this way it happened that all of us were brought safely to the land.** (Acts 27:44 ULT)

- To give a comment about what happened in the story

Many of those who practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of everyone. Then they counted the value of them, and found it was 50,000 pieces of silver. **So the word of the Lord was spreading and prevailing with power.** (Acts 19:19-20 ULT)

- To tell the reader what happens to a specific character after the main part of the story ends

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoiced in God my savior." **And Mary stayed with her about three months and then returned to her house.** (Luke 1:46-47, 56 ULT)

- To tell on-going action that continues after the main part of the story ends

All who those who heard it were amazed concerning the things that were spoken to them by the shepherds. **But Mary kept all the things, pondering them in her heart.** (Luke 2:18-19 ULT)

- To tell what happens after the story as a result of the events that happened in the story itself

"Woe to you, experts in the Jewish law, because you have taken away the key of knowledge; you do not enter in yourselves, and you hinder those who are entering." **After he went from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to fiercely oppose him and argued against him about many things, lying in wait to trap him in something from his mouth.** (Luke 11:52-54 ULT)

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:17](#))

Euphemism

Description

A euphemism is a mild or polite way of referring to something that is unpleasant, embarrassing, or socially unacceptable, such as death or activities usually done in private.

... they found Saul and his sons **fallen** on Mount Gilboa.
(1 Chronicles 10:8b ULT)

This means that Saul and his sons “were dead.” It is a euphemism because the important thing was not that Saul and his sons had fallen but that they were dead. Sometimes people do not like to speak directly about death because it is unpleasant.

This page answers the question: *What is a euphemism?*

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

Different languages use different euphemisms. If the target language does not use the same euphemism as in the source language, readers may not understand what it means and they may think that the writer means only what the words literally say.

Examples From the Bible

... where there was a cave. Saul went inside to **cover his feet**. (1 Samuel 24:3b ULT)

The original hearers would have understood that Saul went into the cave to use it as a toilet, but the writer wanted to avoid offending or distracting them, so **he did not say specifically** what Saul did or what he left in the cave.

But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I have not **known a man?**” (Luke 1:34 ULT)

In order **to be polite**, Mary uses a euphemism to say that she has never had sexual intercourse with a man.

Translation Strategies

If euphemism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Use a euphemism from your own culture.
- (2) State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use a euphemism from your own culture.

... where there was a cave. Saul went inside to **cover his feet**. (1 Samuel 24:3b ULT) — Some languages might use euphemisms like these:

“... where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to **dig a hole**”

“... where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to **have some time alone**”

But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I have not **known a man?**” (Luke 1:34 ULT)

But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I have not **slept with a man?**”

(2) State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

They found Saul and his sons **fallen** on Mount Gilboa. (1 Chronicles 10:8b ULT)

“They found Saul and his sons **dead** on Mount Gilboa.”

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:4](#); [4:13](#))

Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Description

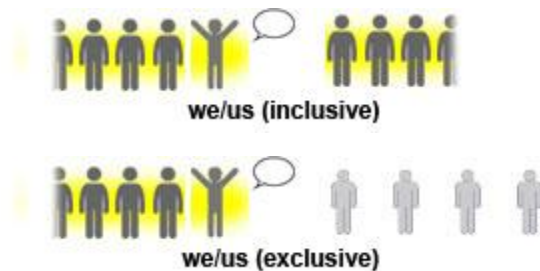
Some languages have more than one form of "we": an inclusive form that means "I and you" and an exclusive form that means "I and someone else but not you." The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also 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:

[When Masculine Words Include Women](#)

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:3](#); [1:10](#); [2:1](#); [3:2](#); [3:3](#); [3:4](#); [3:6](#); [3:11](#); [4:7](#); [4:14](#); [4:15](#); [4:17](#); [5:5](#); [5:25](#))

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.

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#))

This page answers the question: *What are the different forms of you?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Forms of 'You' — Singular](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-youdual]]

Forms of 'You' — Singular

Description

Some languages have a singular form of “you” for when the word “you” refers to just one person, and a **plural** form for when the word “you” refers to more than one person. Translators who speak one of these languages will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language. Other languages, such as English, have only one form, which people use regardless of how many people it refers to.

This page answers the question: *How do I know if the word 'you' is singular?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech\]\]](#)

[Forms of You](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. These languages all have both a singular form of “you” and a plural form of “you.” When we read the Bible in those languages, the pronouns and verb forms show us whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one. When we read the Bible in a language that does not have different forms of you, we need to look at the context to see how many people the speaker was speaking to.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators who speak a language that has distinct singular and plural forms of “you” will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language.
- Many languages also have different forms of the verb depending on whether the subject is singular or plural. So even if there is no pronoun meaning “you,” translators of these languages will need to know if the speaker was referring to one person or more than one.

Often the context will make it clear whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one. If you look at the other pronouns in the sentence, they will help you know the number of people the speaker was speaking to. Sometimes Greek and Hebrew speakers used the singular form of “you” even though they were speaking to a group of people. (See Forms of 'You' — Singular to a Crowd.)

Examples From the Bible

But he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.” But when he heard this, Jesus said to him, “One thing is still lacking to **you**. All things, as much as **you** have, sell all and distribute to the poor, and **you** will have treasure in heaven—and come, follow me.” (Luke 18:21-22 ULT)

The ruler was speaking about just himself when he said “I.” This shows us that when Jesus said “you” he was referring only to the ruler. So languages that have singular and plural forms of “you” need the singular form here.

The angel said to him, “Dress **yourself** and put on **your** sandals.” So he did that. He said to him, “Put on **your** outer garment and follow me.” (Acts 12:8 ULT)

The context makes it clear that the angel was speaking to one person and that only one person did what the the angel commanded. So languages that have singular and plural forms of “you” would need the singular form here for “yourself” and “your.” Also, if verbs have different forms for singular and plural subjects, then the verbs “dress” and “put on” need the form that indicates a singular subject.

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. For this purpose I left **you** in Crete, that **you** might set in order things not yet complete and ordain elders in every city as I directed **you**. But **you**, say what fits with sound teaching. (Titus 1:4a, 5; 2:1 ULT)

Paul wrote this letter to one person, Titus. Most of the time the word “you” in this letter refers only to Titus.

Strategies for finding out how many people “you” refers to

- (1) Look at the notes to see if they tell whether “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (2) Look at the UST to see if it says anything that would show you whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (3) If you have a Bible that is written in a language that distinguishes “you” singular from “you” plural, see which form of “you” that Bible has in that sentence.
- (4) Look at the context to see how many people the speaker was talking to and who responded.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_younum.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-youduall\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:10](#); [2:13](#))

Generic Noun Phrases

Description

Generic noun phrases refer to people or things in general rather than to specific individuals or things. This happens frequently in proverbs, because proverbs tell about things that are true about people in general.

This page answers the question: *What are generic noun phrases and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech\]\]](#)

Can **a man** walk on hot coals without scorching his feet?
So is **the man who goes in to his neighbor's wife;**
the one who touches her will not go unpunished. (Proverbs 6:28-29 ULT)

The phrases in bold above do not refer to a specific man. They refer to any man who does these things.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of showing that noun phrases refer to something in general. You (the translator) should refer to these general ideas in ways that are natural in your language.

Examples From the Bible

The **righteous person** is kept away from trouble and it comes upon **the wicked** instead. (Proverbs 11:8 ULT)

The bold phrases above do not refer to a specific person but to anyone who does what is right or anyone who is wicked.

People curse **the man who refuses to sell grain**. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

This does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who refuses to sell grain.

Yahweh gives favor to **a good man**, but he condemns **a man who makes evil plans**. (Proverbs 12:2 ULT)

The phrase "a good man" does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who is good. The phrase "a man who makes evil plans" does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who makes evil plans.

Translation Strategies

If your language can use the same wording as in the ULT to refer to people or things in general rather than to specific individuals or things, consider using the same wording. If not, here are some strategies you might use.

- (1) Use the word "the" in the noun phrase.
- (2) Use the word "a" in the noun phrase.
- (3) Use the word "any," as in "any person" or "anyone."
- (4) Use the plural form, as in "people."

(5) Use any other way that is natural in your language.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the word “the” in the noun phrase.

Yahweh gives favor to **a good man**, but he condemns **a man who makes evil plans**. (Proverbs 12:2 ULT)

“Yahweh gives favor to **the good man**, but he condemns **the man who makes evil plans**.” (Proverbs 12:2)

(2) Use the word “a” in the noun phrase.

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **a man** who refuses to sell grain.”

(3) Use the word “any,” as in “any person” or “anyone.”

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **any man** who refuses to sell grain.”

(4) Use the plural form, as in “people” (or in this sentence, “men”).

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **men** who refuse to sell grain”

(5) Use any other way that is natural in your language.

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **whoever** refuses to sell grain.”

Next we recommend you learn about:

[When Masculine Words Include Women](#)

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:16; 4:5](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 2:18](#))

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**.

Next we recommend you learn about:

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:3](#); [2:12](#); [3:6](#); [3:7](#); [3:11](#); [4:1](#); [4:4](#); [4:6](#); [5:6](#))

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 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:2](#); [1:8](#); [2:13](#); [2:15](#); [3:1](#); [3:5](#); [3:8](#); [3:10](#); [4:9](#); [5:15](#); [5:16](#); [5:17](#))

Hypothetical Situations

Consider these phrases: “If the sun stopped shining ...” “What if the sun stopped shining ...” “Suppose the sun stopped shining ...” and “If only the sun had not stopped shining.” We use such expressions to set up hypothetical situations, imagining what might have happened or what could happen in the future but probably will not. We also use them to express regret or wishes. Hypothetical expressions occur often in the Bible. You (the translator) need to translate them in a way that people will know that the event did not actually happen and so that they will understand why the event was imagined.

This page answers the question: *What is a hypothetical situation?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)

Description

Hypothetical situations are situations that are not real. They can be in the past, present, or future. Hypothetical situations in the past and present have not happened, are not happening now, and ones in the future are not expected to happen.

People sometimes tell about conditions and what would happen if those conditions were met, but they know that these things have not happened or probably will not happen. (The conditions comprise a phrase that starts with “if.”)

- If he had lived to be 100 years old, he would have seen his grandson’s grandson. (But he did not.)
- If he lived to be 100 years old, he would still be alive today. (But he is not.)
- If he lives to be 100 years old, he will see his grandson’s grandson. (But he probably will not.)

People sometimes express wishes about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- I wish he had come.
- I wish he were here.
- I wish he would come.

People sometimes express regrets about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- If only he had come.
- If only he were here.
- If only he would come.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators need to recognize the different kinds of hypothetical situations in the Bible and understand that they are unreal.
- Translators need to know their own language’s ways of talking about different kinds of hypothetical situations.

Examples From the Bible

Hypothetical Situations in the Past

“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.” (Matthew 11:21 ULT)

Here in Matthew 11:21, Jesus said that **if** the people living in the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon had been able to see the miracles that he performed, they would have repented long ago. The people of Tyre and Sidon did not actually see his miracles, and they did not repent. He said this to rebuke the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida who had seen his miracles and yet did not repent.

Martha then said to Jesus, “Lord, **if you had been here, my brother would not have died.**” (John 11:21 ULT)

Martha said this to express her wish that Jesus would have come sooner so that her brother would not have died. But Jesus did not come sooner and her brother did die.

Hypothetical Situations in the Present

And no man puts new wine into old wineskins. **But if he did do that, the new wine would burst the wineskins, and it would be spilled out, and the wineskins would be destroyed.** (Luke 5:37 ULT)

Jesus told about what would happen if a person were to put new wine into old wineskins. But no one would do that. He used this imaginary situation as an example to show that there are times when it is unwise to mix new things with old things. He did this so that people could understand why his disciples were not fasting as people traditionally did.

Jesus said to them, “What man would there be among you, who, **if he had just one sheep, and if this sheep fell into a deep hole on the Sabbath, would not grasp hold of it and lift it out?**” (Matthew 12:11 ULT)

Jesus asked the religious leaders what they would do on the Sabbath if one of their sheep fell into a hole. He was not saying that their sheep would fall into a hole. He used this imaginary situation to show them that they were wrong to judge him for healing people on the Sabbath.

Hypothetical Situation in the Future

Unless those days are shortened, no flesh would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened. (Matthew 24:22 ULT)

Jesus was talking about a future time when very bad things would happen. He told what would happen if those days of trouble were to last a long time. He did this to show how bad those days will be—so bad that if they lasted a long time, no one would be saved. But then he clarified that God will shorten those days of trouble so that the elect (those he has chosen) will be saved.

Expressing Emotion About a Hypothetical Situation

People sometimes talk about hypothetical situations in order to express regrets and wishes. Regrets are about the past and wishes are about the present and future.

The Israelites said to them, “**If only we had died by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt when we were sitting by the pots of meat and were eating bread to the full.** For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill our whole community with hunger.” (Exodus 16:3 ULT)

Here the Israelites were afraid that they would have to suffer and die of hunger in the wilderness, and so they wished that they had stayed in Egypt and died there with full stomachs. They were complaining, expressing regret that this had not happened.

I know what you have done, and that you are neither cold nor hot. **I wish that you were either cold or hot!** (Revelation 3:15 ULT)

Jesus wished that the people were either hot or cold, but they are neither. He was rebuking them, expressing anger at this.

Translation Strategies

Find out how people speaking your language show:

- that something could have happened, but did not.
- that something could be true now, but is not.
- that something could happen in the future, but will not unless something changes.
- that they wish for something, but it does not happen.
- that they regret that something did not happen.

Use your language's ways of showing these kinds of things.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_hypo.

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:7](#); [3:5](#); [5:3](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:3](#); [1:9](#); [1:10](#); [2:7](#); [2:9](#); [2:17](#); [2:18](#); [2:19](#); [3:5](#); [3:8](#); [3:9](#); [3:10](#); [3:13](#); [4:11](#); [4:15](#); [5:1](#); [5:2](#); [5:3](#); [5:11](#); [5:14](#); [5:15](#); [5:23](#); [5:26](#); [5:27](#))

Imperatives — Other Uses

Description

Imperative sentences are mainly used to express a desire or requirement that someone do something. In the Bible, sometimes imperative sentences have other uses.

This page answers the question: *What other uses are there for imperative sentences in the Bible?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentencetypes\]\]](#)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use an imperative sentence for some of the functions that they are used for in the Bible.

Examples From the Bible

Speakers often use imperative sentences to tell or ask their listeners to do something. In Genesis 26, God spoke to Isaac and told him not to go to Egypt but to live where God would tell him to live.

Now Yahweh appeared to him and said, “**Do not go down** to Egypt; **live** in the land that I tell you to live in.” (Genesis 26:2 ULT)

Sometimes imperative sentences in the Bible have other uses.

Imperatives that make things happen

God can make things happen by commanding that they happen. Jesus healed a man by commanding that the man be healed. The man could not do anything to obey the command, but Jesus caused him to be healed by commanding it. (In this context, the command “Be clean” means to “be healed” so that others around would know that it was safe to touch the man again.)

“I am willing. **Be clean.**” Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. (Matthew 8:3b ULT)

In Genesis 1, God commanded that there should be light, and by commanding it, he caused it to exist. Some languages, such as the Hebrew of the Bible, have commands that are in the third person. English does not do that, and so it must turn the third-person command into a general, second-person command, as in the ULT:

God said, “**Let there be** light,” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

Languages that have third-person commands can follow the original Hebrew, which translates into English as something like “light must be.”

Imperatives that function as blessings

In the Bible, God blesses people by using imperatives. This indicates what his will is for them.

God blessed them and said to them, “**Be fruitful**, and **multiply**. **Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **Have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:28 ULT)

Imperatives that function as conditions

An imperative sentence can also be used to tell the **condition** under which something will happen. The proverbs mainly tell about life and things that often happen. The purpose of Proverbs 4:6 below is not primarily to give a command, but to teach what people can expect to happen **if** they love wisdom.

Do not abandon wisdom and she will watch over you;
love her and she will keep you safe. (Proverbs 4:6 ULT)

The purpose of Proverbs 22:6, below, is to teach what people can expect to happen if they teach their children the way they should go.

Teach a child the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.
- (2) If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.
- (3) If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words “if” and “then.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.

Be clean. (Matthew 8:3b ULT)

“You are now clean.”
“I now cleanse you.”

God said, “**Let there be light,**” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

God said, “**There is now light**” and there was light.

God blessed them and said to them, “**Be fruitful, and multiply. Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **Have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:28 ULT)

God blessed them and said to them, “**My will for you is that you be fruitful, and multiply. Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **I want you to have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

- (2) If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.

God said, “**Let there be light,**” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

God said, ‘Let there be light,’ **so** there was light.
God said, “Light must be;” **as a result**, there was light.

(3) If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words “if” and “then.”

Teach a child the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

Translated as:

If you teach a child the way he should go,
then when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction.”

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:3](#); [4:18](#); [5:6](#); [5:8](#); [5:11](#); [5:13](#); [5:25](#); [5:26](#))

Information Structure

Description

Different languages arrange the parts of the sentence in different ways. In English, a sentence normally has the subject first, then the verb, then the object, then other modifiers, like this: Peter painted his house yesterday.

Many other languages normally put these things in a different order such as: Painted yesterday Peter his house.

Although all languages have a normal order for parts of a sentence, this order can change depending on what information the speaker or writer considers to be the most important.

Suppose that someone is answering the question, "What did Peter paint yesterday?" The person asking the question already knows all of the information in our sentence above except for the object, "his house." Therefore, that becomes the most important part of the information, and a person answering in English might say "His house is what Peter painted (yesterday)."

This puts the most important information first, which is normal for English. Many Other Languages would normally put the most important information last. In the flow of a text, the most important information is usually what the writer considers to be new information for the reader. In some languages the new information comes first, and in others it comes last.

This page answers the question: *How do languages arrange the parts of a sentence?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences\]\]](#)

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Different languages arrange the parts of a sentence in different ways. If you (the translator) copy the order of the parts of a sentence from the source, it may not make sense in your language.
- Different languages put important or new information in different places in the sentence. If you keep the important or new information in the same place that it had in the source language, it may be confusing or give the wrong message in your language.

Examples From the Bible

They all ate until they were satisfied. (Mark 6:42 ULT)

The parts of this sentence were in a different order in the original Greek source language. They were like this: And they ate all and they were satisfied.

In English, this means that the people ate everything. But the next verse says that they took up twelve baskets full of leftover pieces of food. In order for this to not be so confusing, the translators of the ULT put the parts of the sentence in the right order for English.

And the day began to end, and the twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away so that, going into the surrounding villages and countryside, they may find lodging and food, because we are here in an desolate place." (Luke 9:12 ULT)

In this verse, what the disciples say to Jesus puts the important information first, that he should send the crowd away. In languages that put the important information last, people would understand that the reason that they gave, being in an isolated place, is the most important part of their message to Jesus. They might then think that the disciples are afraid of the spirits in that place, and that sending the people to buy food is a way to protect them from the spirits. That is the wrong message.

Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers treated the false prophets in the same way. (Luke 6:26 ULT)

In this verse, the most important part of the information is first, that “woe” is coming on the people for what they are doing. The reason that supports that warning comes last. This could be confusing for people who expect the important information to come last.

Translation Strategies

- (1) Study how your language arranges the parts of a sentence, and use that order in your translation.
- (2) Study where your language puts the new or important information, and rearrange the order of information so that it follows the way it is done in your language.

Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Study how your language arranges the parts of a sentence, and use that order in your translation.

This is the verse in the original Greek order:

And he went out from there and came to the hometown his, and they followed him the disciples his. (Mark 6:1)

The ULT has put this into the normal order for English:

Now Jesus went out from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. (Mark 6:1 ULT)

- (2) Study where your language puts the new or important information and rearrange the order of information so that it follows the way it is done in your language.

And the day began to end, and the twelve came and said to him, “Send the crowd away so that, going into the surrounding villages and countryside, they may find lodging and food, because we are here in a desolate place.” (Luke 9:12 ULT)

If your language puts the important information last, you can change the order of the verse.

Now the day was about to come to an end, and the twelve came to him and said, “Because we are here in an desolate place, send the crowd away that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and food.”

Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets. (Luke 6:26 ULT)

If your language puts the important information last, you can change the order of the verse.

When all men speak well of you, which is just as people’s ancestors treated the false prophets, then woe to you!

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-order\]\]](#)
Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:2](#); [1:8](#); [2:2](#); [2:5](#); [5:18](#))

Introduction of New and Old Participants

Description

The first time that people or things are mentioned in a story, they are **new participants**. After that, whenever they are mentioned, they are **old participants**.

Now **there was a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus** ... **This man** came to Jesus at night ... Jesus replied and said to **him** ... (John 3:1, 2a, 3a)

The first bolded phrase introduces Nicodemus as a new participant. After being introduced, he is then referred to as “This man” and “him” when he has become an old participant.

This page answers the question: *Why cannot the readers of my translation understand who the author was writing about?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro]]

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In order to make your translation clear and natural, it is necessary to refer to the participants in such a way that people will know if they are new participants or participants that they have already read about. Different languages have different ways of doing this. You must follow the way that your language does this, not the way that the source language does this.

Examples From the Bible

New Participants

Often the most important new participant is introduced with a phrase that says that he existed, such as “There was a man,” as in the example below. The phrase “There was” tells us that this man existed. The word “a” in “a man” tells us that the author is speaking about him for the first time. The rest of the sentence tells where this man was from, who his family was, and what his name was.

Now there was a man from Zorah, of the families of the Danites, and his name was Manoah. (Judges 13:2a ULT)

A new participant who is not the most important participant is often introduced in relation to the more important person who was already introduced. In the example below, Manoah’s wife is simply referred to as “his wife.” This phrase shows her relationship to him.

Now there was one man from Zorah, of the families of the Danites, and his name was Manoah. **His wife** was barren and she had never given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

Sometimes a new participant is introduced simply by name because the author assumes that the readers know who the person is. In the first verse of 1 Kings, the author assumes that his readers know who King David is, so there is no need to explain who he is.

Now King David was old, he had advanced in the days, and they covered him with the garments, but it was not warm enough for him. (1 Kings 1:1 ULT)

Old Participants

A person who has already been brought into the story can be referred to with a pronoun after that. In the example below, Manoah is referred to with the pronoun “his,” and his wife is referred to with the pronoun “she.”

His **wife** was barren and **she** had never given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

Old participants can also be referred to in other ways, depending on what is happening in the story. In the example below, the story is about bearing a son, and Manoah’s wife is referred to by the noun phrase “the wife.”

The angel of Yahweh appeared to **the wife** and he said to her ... (Judges 13:3a ULT)

If the old participant has not been mentioned for a while, or if there could be confusion between participants, the author may use the participant’s name again. In the example below, Manoah is referred to by his name, which the author has not used since verse 2.

Then **Manoah** prayed to Yahweh. (Judges 13:8a ULT)

Some languages place an affix on the verb that tells something about the subject. In some of those languages, people do not always use noun phrases or pronouns for old participants when they are the subject of the sentence. The marker on the verb gives enough information for the listener to understand who the subject is. (See Verbs.)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If the participant is new, use one of your language’s ways of introducing new participants.
- (2) If it is not clear to whom a pronoun refers, use a noun phrase or name.
- (3) If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the participant is new, use one of your language’s ways of introducing new participants.

Then Joseph, who was called Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated as Son of Encouragement), a Levite from Cyprus by birth ... (Acts 4:36-37 ULT) — Starting the sentence with Joseph’s name when he has not been introduced yet might be confusing in some languages.

There was a man from Cyprus who was a Levite. His name was Joseph, and he was given the name Barnabas by the apostles (that is, being interpreted, Son of Encouragement). There was a Levite from Cyprus whose name was Joseph. The apostles gave him the name Barnabas, which means Son of encouragement.

- (2) If it is not clear who a pronoun refers to, use a noun phrase or name.

And it happened that when he was praying in a certain place, when he stopped, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.” (Luke 11:1 ULT) — Since this is the first verse in a chapter, readers might wonder who “he” refers to.

It happened when **Jesus** finished praying in a certain place, that one of his disciples said, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.”

(3) If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

Joseph's master took Joseph and put him in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and Joseph stayed there. (Genesis 39:20) — Since Joseph is the main person in the story, some languages might prefer the pronoun.

Joseph's master took **him** and put **him** in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and **he** stayed there in the prison.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Pronouns — When to Use Them](#)

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:5](#))

Litany

Description

A litany is a figure of speech in which the various components of a thing are listed in a series of very similar statements. The speaker does this to indicate that what he is saying should be understood as comprehensive and without exceptions.

This page answers the question: *What is the figure of speech called litany?*

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

Many languages do not use litanies, and readers could be confused by them. They may wonder why the speaker seems to be saying the same thing over and over again.

Examples From the Bible

Though they dig into Sheol, there my hand will take them. Though they climb up to heaven, there I will bring them down. Though they hide on the top of Carmel, there I will search and take them. Though they are hidden from my sight in the bottom of the sea, there will I give orders to the serpent, and it will bite them. Though they go into captivity, driven by their enemies before them, there will I give orders to the sword, and it will kill them. (Amos 9:2-4 ULT)

In this passage Yahweh is telling the people of Israel that when he punishes them, none of them will escape.

But you should not have looked on the day of your brother, on the day of his misfortune. And you should not have rejoiced over the sons of Judah in the day of their perishing. And you should not have made your mouth great in a day of distress. You should not have entered the gate of my people in the day of their calamity. Yes, you! You should not have looked on his evil in the day of his calamity. And you women should not have looted his wealth in the day of his calamity. And you should not have stood at the crossroads to cut down his fugitives. And you should not have delivered up his survivors in a day of distress. (Obadiah 1:12-14)

In this passage Yahweh is telling the people of Edom that they should have helped the people of Judah when they were conquered by the Babylonians.

Translation Strategies

If the litany is understood as it is in the ULT, then translate the litany as it is. If it is not understood, then try one or more of the following strategies.

- (1) Often in the Bible there will be a general statement at the beginning or end of a litany that sums up its overall meaning. You can format that statement in a way that will show that it is a summary statement that gives the meaning of the litany.
- (2) You can put each sentence of the litany on a separate line. Also, if each sentence in the litany has two parts, you can format the litany so that the equivalent parts of each sentence line up. Use this or any other type of formatting that will show that each sentence is reinforcing the same meaning.
- (3) You can eliminate words like “and,” “but,” and “or” at the beginning of sentences so that it will be clearer that the component parts of the litany are all being listed in a row.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) combined with (3):

Often in the Bible there will be a general statement at the beginning or end of a litany that sums up its overall meaning. You can format that statement in a way that will show that it is a summary statement that gives the meaning of the litany;

You can eliminate words like “and,” “but,” and “or” at the beginning of sentences so that it will be clearer that the component parts of the litany are all being listed in a row.

You did nothing to help the Israelites when strangers carried away their wealth. They conquered all the cities of Judah, and they even plundered Jerusalem. And you were just as bad as those foreigners, because you did nothing to help:

You should not have looked on the day of your brother, on the day of his misfortune. You should not have rejoiced over the sons of Judah in the day of their perishing. You should not have made your mouth great in a day of distress. You should not have entered the gate of my people in the day of their calamity. Yes, you! You should not have looked on his evil in the day of his calamity. You women should not have looted his wealth in the day of his calamity. You should not have stood at the crossroads to cut down his fugitives. You should not have delivered up his survivors in a day of distress. (Obadiah 1:11-14)

In the above example, verse 11 provides the summary and meaning for the litany that follows in verses 12-14.

(1) combined with (2):

Often in the Bible there will be a general statement at the beginning or end of a litany that sums up its overall meaning. You can format that statement in a way that will show that it is a summary statement that gives the meaning of the litany;

You can put each sentence of the litany on a separate line. Also, if each sentence in the litany has two parts, you can format the litany so that the equivalent parts of each sentence line up. Use this or any other type of formatting that will show that each sentence is reinforcing the same meaning.

Not one of them will get away, not one of them will escape:

Though they dig into Sheol,	there my hand will take them.
Though they climb up to heaven,	there I will bring them down.
Though they hide on the top of Carmel,	there I will search and take them.
Though they are hidden from my sight in the bottom of the sea,	there will I give orders to the serpent, and it will bite them.
Though they go into captivity, driven by their enemies before them,	there will I give orders to the sword, and it will kill them.

(Amos 9:1b-4 ULT)

In the above example, the sentence before the litany explains its overall meaning. That sentence can be placed as an introduction. The second half of each sentence can be formatted in a descending staircase pattern as above, or

lined up evenly like the first half of each sentence, or in another way. Use whatever format best shows that these sentences are all communicating the same truth, that it is not possible to escape from God.

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:3](#); [2:5](#); [2:10](#); [4:10](#); [5:14](#))

Litotes

Description

Litotes is a figure of speech in which the speaker expresses a strong positive meaning by negating a word or phrase that means the opposite of the meaning that he intends. For example, someone could intend to communicate that something is extremely good by describing it as "not bad." The difference between a litotes and a **double negative** is that a litotes heightens the positive meaning beyond what a plain positive statement would do, and a double negative does not. In the example above, the literal meaning of "not bad," taken as a plain double negative, would be "acceptable" or even "good." But if the speaker intended it as a litotes, then the meaning is "very good" or "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: [1 Thessalonians 2:1](#); [2:3](#); [4:7](#); [4:13](#); [5:19](#); [5:20](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 2:15](#); [3:12](#); [5:15](#); [5:23](#))

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:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

[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: 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1:4; 1:8; 1:9; 1:10; 2:1; 2:5; 2:7; 2:8; 2:9; 2:10; 2:12; 2:14; 2:16; 3:2; 3:8; 3:9; 3:11; 3:12; 3:13; 4:1; 4:2; 4:4; 4:6; 4:9; 4:12; 4:16; 5:4; 5:5; 5:6; 5:7; 5:8; 5:10; 5:11; 5:12; 5:13; 5:15; 5:18; 5:19; 5:21)

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:6](#); [1:8](#); [2:4](#); [2:13](#); [2:17](#); [2:19](#); [4:11](#); [4:15](#))

Nominal Adjectives

Description

In some languages an adjective can be used to refer to a class of things that the adjective describes. When it does, it acts like a noun. For example, the word “rich” is an adjective. Here are two sentences that show that “rich” is an adjective.

The rich man had huge numbers of flocks and herds. (2 Samuel 12:2 ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes before the word “man” and describes “man.”

He will not be rich; his wealth will not last. (Job 15:29a ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes after the verb “be” and describes “He.”

Here is a sentence that shows that “rich” can also function as a noun.

The rich must not give more than the half shekel, and **the poor** must not give less. (Exodus 30:15b ULT)

In Exodus 30:15, the word “rich” acts as a noun in the phrase “the rich,” and it refers to rich people. The word “poor” also acts as a noun and refers to poor people.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Many times in the Bible adjectives are used as nouns to describe a group of people.
- Some languages do not use adjectives in this way.
- Readers of these languages may think that the text is talking about one particular person when it is really talking about the group of people whom the adjective describes.

Examples From the Bible

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)

“The righteous” here are people who are righteous, not one particular righteous person.

Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)

“The meek” here are all people who are meek, not one particular meek person.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses adjectives as nouns to refer to a class of people, consider using the adjectives in this way. If it would sound strange, or if the meaning would be unclear or wrong, here is another option:

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate adjectives that act like nouns?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **righteous people**.

Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)

Blessed are **people who are meek**.

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:4](#); [3:3](#); [3:12](#); [4:4](#); [4:13](#); [5:5](#); [5:6](#); [5:14](#); [5:15](#); [5:18](#); [5:21](#))

Oath Formulas

Description

This is the placeholder for an article about oath formulas in biblical literature. This article is still being developed.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate oath formulas into my language?*

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue:

Text

Examples From the Bible

Text

Translation Strategies

Text

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

Text

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:27](#))

Order of Events

Description

In the Bible, events are not always told in the order in which they occurred. Sometimes the author wanted to discuss something that happened at an earlier time than the event that he just talked about. This can be confusing to the reader.

This page answers the question: *Why are some events not listed in the order they happened, and how do I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs]]

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers might think that the events happened in the order that they are told. It is important to help them understand the correct order of events.

Examples From the Bible

He even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

This could sound like John baptized Jesus after John was locked up in prison, but John baptized Jesus before John was locked up in prison.

Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them. But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

This could sound like Joshua gave the order not to shout after the army had already started their march, but he had given that order before they started marching.

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

This sounds like a person must first open the scroll and then break its seals, but the seals that lock the scroll must be broken before the scroll can be unrolled.

Translation Strategies

(1) If your language uses phrases or time words to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using one of them.

(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that. (See the section on "Aspect" of Verbs.)

(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occurred, consider reordering the events so they are in that order. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6). (See Verse Bridges.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language uses phrases, time words or tenses to show that an event happened before the one just mentioned, consider using one of them.

20 he even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

20 But then Herod ... had John locked up in prison. 21 **Before John was put in prison**, while all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus also was baptized.

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

Who is worthy to open the scroll **after** breaking its seals?

(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that.

Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets 10 But Joshua **had commanded** the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout."

(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occur, consider reordering the events. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6).

8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

8,10 Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout." Then just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets...

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_events.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Background Information](#)

[Connecting Words and Phrases](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-newevent\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-versebridge\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:13](#); [2:15](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#); [2:12](#); [2:15](#); [2:17](#); [2:20](#); [3:5](#); [4:16](#); [4:17](#); [5:3](#); [5:7](#); [5:20](#); [5:23](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 2:13](#); [2:19](#); [2:20](#); [5:22](#))

Possession

Description

In English, the grammatical form that commonly indicates possession is also used to indicate a variety of relationships between people and objects or people and other people. In English, that grammatical relationship is shown by using the word “of,” by using **an apostrophe and the letter “s”**, or by using a **possessive pronoun**. The following examples are different ways to indicate that my grandfather owns a house.

- the house **of** my grandfather
- my grandfather **'s** house
- **his** house

Possession is used in Hebrew, Greek, and English for a variety of situations. Here are a few common situations that it is used for.

- Ownership — Someone owns something.
 - The clothes of me - my clothes — The clothes that I own
- Social Relationship — Someone has some kind of social relationship with another.
 - The mother of John — John's mother - the woman who gave birth to John, or the woman who cared for John
 - A teacher of Israel - Israel's teacher — a person who teaches Israel
- Association — A particular thing is associated with a particular person, place, or thing.
 - The sickness of David - David's sickness — the sickness that David is experiencing
 - the fear of the Lord — the fear that is appropriate for a human being to have when relating to the Lord
- Contents — Something has something in it.
 - a bag of clothes — a bag that has clothes in it, or a bag that is full of clothes
- Part and whole: One thing is part of another.
 - my head — the head that is part of my body
 - the roof of a house — the roof that is part of a house

In some languages there is a special form of possession, termed **inalienable possession**. This form of possession is used for things that cannot be removed from you, as opposed to things you could lose. In the examples above, *my head* and *my mother* are examples of inalienable possession (at least in some languages), while *my clothes* or *my teacher* would be alienably possessed. What may be considered alienable vs. inalienable may differ by language.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- You (the translator) need to understand the relationship between two ideas represented by the two nouns when one is in the grammatical relationship of possessing the other.
- Some languages do not use grammatical possession for all of the situations that your source text Bible might use it for.

Examples From the Bible

Ownership — In the example below, the son owned the money.

▮ The younger son ... wasted his wealth by living recklessly. (Luke 15:13b)

This page answers the question: *What is possession and how can I translate phrases that show it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences\]\]](#)

Social Relationship — In the example below, the disciples were people who learned from John.

Then **the disciples of John** came to him. (Matthew 9:14a ULT)

Association — In the example below, the gospel is the message associated with Paul because he preaches it.

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, from the seed of David, according to **my gospel**, (2 Timothy 2:8 ULT)

Material — In the example below, the material used for making the crowns was gold.

On their heads were something like **crowns of gold**. (Revelation 9:7b)

Contents — In the example below, the cup has water in it.

For whoever gives you **a cup of water** to drink ... will not lose his reward. (Mark 9:41 ULT)

Part of a whole — In the example below, the door was a part of the palace.

But Uriah slept at **the door of the king's palace**. (2 Samuel 11:9a ULT)

Part of a group — In the example below, “us” refers to the whole group and “each one” refers to the individual members.

Now to **each one of us** grace has been given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Ephesians 4:7 ULT)

Events and Possession

Sometimes one or both of the nouns is an abstract noun that refers to an event or action. In the examples below, the abstract nouns are in **bold** print. These are just some of the relationships that are possible between two nouns when one of them refers to an event.

Subject — Sometimes the word after “of” tells who would do the action named by the first noun. In the example below, **John baptized people**.

The **baptism of John**, was it from heaven or from men? Answer me. (Mark 11:30)

In the example below, **Christ loves us**.

Who will separate us from the **love of Christ**? (Romans 8:35)

Object — Sometimes the word after “of” tells who or what something would happen to. In the example below, **people love money**.

For the **love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil. (1 Timothy 6:10a ULT)

Instrument — Sometimes the word after “of” tells how something would happen. In the example below, God would **punish people by sending enemies to attack them with swords**.

Then be afraid of the sword, because wrath brings **the punishment of the sword**. (Job 19:29a ULT)

Representation — In the example below, John was baptizing people who were repenting of their sins. They were being baptized to show that they were repenting. Their **baptism represented their repentance**.

John came, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching **a baptism of repentance** for the forgiveness of sins. (Mark 1:4 ULT)

Strategies for learning what the relationship is between the two nouns

- (1) Read the surrounding verses to see if they help you to understand the relationship between the two nouns.
- (2) Read the verse in the UST. Sometimes it shows the relationship clearly.
- (3) See what the notes say about it.

Translation Strategies

If possession would be a natural way to show a particular relationship between two nouns, consider using it. If it would be strange or hard to understand, consider these.

- (1) Use an adjective to show that one noun describes the other.
- (2) Use a verb to show how the two are related.
- (3) If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use an adjective to show that one noun describes the other.

On their heads were something like **crowns of gold**. (Revelation 9:7b)

“On their heads were **gold crowns**”

- (2) Use a verb to show how the two are related.

Whoever gives you **a cup of water** to drink ... will not lose his reward. (Mark 9:41 ULT)

Whoever gives you a **cup that has water in it** to drink ... will not lose his reward.

Wealth is worthless on **the day of wrath**. (Proverbs 11:4a ULT)

Wealth is worthless on **the day when God shows his wrath**.

or:

Wealth is worthless on the **day when God punishes people because of his wrath**.

- (3) If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb. (In the example below, there are two possession relationships, “punishment of Yahweh” and “your God.”)

Notice that I am not speaking to your children, who have not known or seen **the punishment of Yahweh your God**. (Deuteronomy 11:2a ULT)

Notice that I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen **how Yahweh, the God whom you worship, punished the people of Egypt**.

You will only observe and see the **punishment of the wicked**. (Psalms 91:8 ULT)

You will only observe and see **how Yahweh punishes the wicked**.

You will receive **the gift of the Holy Spirit**. (Acts 2:38b ULT)

|| You will receive the **Holy Spirit, whom God will give to you.**

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:3](#); [1:6](#); [2:2](#); [2:9](#); [2:12](#); [2:15](#); [2:19](#); [3:2](#); [4:4](#); [4:5](#); [4:14](#); [4:16](#); [5:5](#); [5:8](#); [5:9](#); [5:23](#))

Predictive Past

Description

The predictive past is a figure of speech that uses the past tense to refer to things that will happen in the future. This is sometimes done in prophecy to show that the event will certainly happen. It is also called the prophetic perfect.

Therefore my people have gone into captivity for lack of understanding; their honored leaders go hungry, and their common people have nothing to drink. (Isaiah 5:13 ULT)

In the example above, the people of Israel had not yet gone into captivity, but God spoke of their going into captivity as if it had already happened because he had decided that they certainly would go into captivity.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue:

Readers who are not aware of the past tense being used in prophecy to refer to future events may find it confusing.

Examples From the Bible

Now Jericho was tightly closed because of the sons of Israel. No one went out and no one came in. Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:1-2 ULT)

For to us a child has been born, to us a son has been given; and the rule will be on his shoulder. (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)

In the examples above, God spoke of things that would happen in the future as if they had already happened.

But even Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them, saying, "Look! The Lord came with thousands and thousands of his holy ones." (Jude 1:14 ULT)

Enoch was speaking of something that would happen in the future, but he used the past tense when he said "the Lord came."

Translation Strategies

If the past tense would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.
- (2) If it refers to something in the immediate future, use a form that would show that.
- (3) Some languages may use the present tense to show that something will happen very soon.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.

This page answers the question: *What is the predictive past?*

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-verbs]]

For to us a child **has been born**, to us a son **has been given**. (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)

For to us a child **will be born**, to us a son **will be given**.

(2) If it refers to something that would happen very soon, use a form that shows that.

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:2 ULT)

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I **am about to deliver** over to you Jericho, its king, and its powerful soldiers."

(3) Some languages may use the present tense to show that something will happen very soon.

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:2 ULT)

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I **am delivering** over to you Jericho, its king, and its powerful soldiers."

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:16](#))

Pronouns — When to Use Them

Description

When we talk or write, we use pronouns to refer to people or things without always having to repeat the noun or name. Usually, the first time we refer to someone in a story, we use a descriptive phrase or a name. The next time we might refer to that person with a simple noun or by name. After that we might refer to him simply with a pronoun as long as we think that our listeners will be able to understand easily to whom the pronoun refers.

This page answers the question: *How do I decide whether or not to use a pronoun?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences]]

Now there was **a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. **This man** came to Jesus at night. Jesus replied and said to **him** ... (John 3:1, 2a, 3a ULT)

In John 3, Nicodemus is first referred to with noun phrases and his name. Then he is referred to with the noun phrase “this man.” Then he is referred to with the pronoun “him.”

Each language has its rules and exceptions to this usual way of referring to people and things.

- In some languages, the first time something is referred to in a paragraph or chapter, it is referred to with a noun rather than a pronoun.
- The main character is the person whom a story is about. In some languages, after a main character is introduced in a story, he is usually referred to with a pronoun. Some languages have special pronouns that refer only to the main character.
- In some languages, marking on the verb helps people know who the subject is. (See Verbs.) In some of these languages, listeners rely on this marking to help them understand who the subject is. Speakers will use a pronoun, noun phrase, or proper name only when they want either to emphasize or to clarify who the subject is.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- If translators use a pronoun at the wrong time for their language, readers might not know about whom the writer is talking.
- If translators too frequently refer to a main character by name, listeners of some languages might not realize that the person is a main character, or they might think that there is a new character with the same name.
- If translators use pronouns, nouns, or names at the wrong time, people might think that there is some special emphasis on the person or thing to which it refers.

Examples From the Bible

The example below occurs at the beginning of a chapter. In some languages it might not be clear to whom the pronouns refer.

Then Jesus entered into the synagogue again, and there was a man who had a withered hand. Some people watched **him** closely to see if **he** would heal **him** on the Sabbath so that they might accuse **him**. (Mark 3:1-2 ULT)

In the example below, two men are named in the first sentence. It might not be clear whom “he” in the second sentence refers to.

Now after some days had passed, **King Agrippa** and Bernice came down to Caesarea to pay their respects to **Festus**. After **he** had been there for many days, Festus presented to the king the things concerning Paul. (Acts 25:13-14)

Jesus is the main character of the book of Matthew, but in the verses below he is referred to four times by name. This may lead speakers of some languages to think that Jesus is not the main character. Or it might lead them to think that there is more than one person named Jesus in this story. Or it might lead them to think that there is some kind of emphasis on him, even though there is no emphasis.

At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **Jesus**, “See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath.” But **Jesus** said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?” Then **Jesus** left from there and went into their synagogue. (Matthew 12:1-3,9 ULT)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If it would not be clear to your readers to whom or to what a pronoun refers, use a name or a noun.
- (2) If repeating a noun or name would lead people to think that a main character is not a main character, or that the writer is talking about more than one person with that name, or that there is some kind of emphasis on someone when there is no emphasis, use a pronoun instead.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If it would not be clear to your readers to whom or to what a pronoun refers, use a name or a noun.

Again **he** walked into the synagogue, and a man with a withered hand was there. Some Pharisees watched **him** to see if **he** would heal the man on the Sabbath. (Mark 3:1-2)

Again **Jesus** walked into the synagogue, and a man with a withered hand was there. Some Pharisees watched **Jesus** to see if **he** would heal the man on the Sabbath.

- (2) If repeating a noun or name would lead people to think that a main character is not a main character, or that the writer is talking about more than one person with that name, or that there is some kind of emphasis on someone when there is no emphasis, use a pronoun instead.

At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **Jesus**, “See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath.” But **Jesus** said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?” Then **Jesus** left from there and went into their synagogue. (Matthew 12:1-3,9 ULT)

This may be translated as:

At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **him**, “See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath.” But **he** said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?” Then **he** left from there and went into their synagogue.

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#); [2:13](#); [4:17](#); [4:18](#); [5:24](#))

Reflexive Pronouns

Description

All languages have ways of showing that the same person fills two different roles in a sentence. English does this by using reflexive pronouns. These are pronouns that refer to someone or something that has already been mentioned in a sentence. In English the reflexive pronouns are: “myself,” “yourself,” “himself,” “herself,” “itself,” “ourselves,” “yourselves,” and “themselves.” Other languages may have other ways to show this.

This page answers the question: *What are reflexive pronouns?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences]]

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Languages have different ways of showing that the same person fills two different roles in a sentence. For those languages, translators will need to know how to translate the English reflexive pronouns.
- The reflexive pronouns in English also have other functions.

Uses of Reflexive Pronouns

- To show that the same person or things fills two different roles in a sentence
- To emphasize a person or thing in the sentence
- To show that someone did something alone
- To show that someone or something was alone

Examples From the Bible

Reflexive pronouns are used to show the same person or thing fills two different roles in a sentence.

If **I** should testify about **myself**, my testimony would not be true. (John 5:31 ULT)

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and **many** went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to purify **themselves**. (John 11:55 ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to emphasize a person or thing in the sentence.

Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were. (John 4:2 ULT)

So they left the crowd, taking Jesus with them, just as he was, in the boat. There also were other boats with him. Then a violent windstorm arose and the waves were breaking into the boat so that the boat was already full of water. But **Jesus himself** was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. (Mark 4:36-38a ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to show that someone did something alone.

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain **by himself**. (John 6:15 ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to show that someone or something was alone.

He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. **It** was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place **by itself**. (John 20:6b-7 ULT)

Translation Strategies

If a reflexive pronoun would have the same function in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other strategies.

- (1) In some languages people put something on the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject.
- (2) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a special place in the sentence.
- (3) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it.
- (4) In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like “alone.”
- (5) In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) In some languages people modify the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject.

If I should testify about **myself** alone, my testimony would not be true. (John 5:31)

“If I should **self-testify** alone, my testimony would not be true.”

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to **purify themselves**. (John 11:55)

“Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out from country before the Passover in order to **self-purify**.”

- (2) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a special place in the sentence.

He himself took our sickness and bore our diseases. (Matthew 8:17 ULT)

“**It was he who** took our sickness and bore our diseases.”

Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were. (John 4:2)

“**It was not Jesus who** was baptizing, but his disciples were.”

- (3) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it. English adds the reflexive pronoun.

But Jesus said this to test Philip, for he **himself** knew what he was going to do. (John 6:6)

- (4) In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like “alone.”

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain **by himself**. (John 6:15)

“When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again **alone** up the mountain.”

- (5) In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place **by itself**. (John 20:6b-7 ULT)

“He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up and lying **in its own place.**”

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#); [2:1](#); [2:18](#); [2:20](#); [3:3](#); [3:8](#); [3:11](#); [4:9](#); [4:16](#); [5:2](#); [5:23](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 2:19](#); [3:9](#))

Simile

Description

A simile is a comparison of two things that are not normally thought to be similar. The simile focuses on a particular trait the two items have in common, and it includes the words “like,” “as,” or “than.”

This page answers the question: *What is a simile?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were troubled and discouraged, **like sheep not having a shepherd**. (Matthew 9:36)

Jesus compared the crowds of people to sheep without a shepherd. Sheep grow frightened when they do not have a good shepherd to lead them in safe places. The crowds were like that because they did not have good religious leaders.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**, so be as wise **as the serpents** and harmless **as the doves**. (Matthew 10:16 ULT)

Jesus compared his disciples to sheep and their enemies to wolves. Wolves attack sheep; Jesus’ enemies would attack his disciples.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper **than any two-edged sword**. (Hebrews 4:12a ULT)

God’s word is compared to a two-edged sword. A two-edged sword is a weapon that can easily cut through a person’s flesh. God’s word is very effective in showing what is in a person’s heart and thoughts.

Purposes of Simile

- A simile can teach about something that is unknown by showing how it is similar to something that is known.
- A simile can emphasize a particular trait, sometimes in a way that gets people’s attention.
- Similes help form a picture in the mind or help the reader experience what he is reading about more fully.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People may not know how the two items are similar.
- People may not be familiar with both of the items being compared.

Examples From the Bible

Suffer hardship with me, **as a good soldier** of Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 2:3 ULT)

In this simile, Paul compares suffering with what soldiers endure, and he encourages Timothy to follow their example.

Just as the lightning flashing from a place under the sky shines to another place under the sky, so will the Son of Man be. (Luke 17:24b ULT)

This verse does not tell how the Son of Man will be like the lightning. But in context we can understand from the verses before it that just as lighting flashes suddenly and everyone can see it, the Son of Man will come suddenly and everyone will be able to see him. No one will have to be told about it.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the correct meaning of a simile, consider using it. If they would not, here are some strategies you can use:

- (1) If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.
- (2) If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible. If you use this strategy, you may want to put the original item in a footnote.
- (3) Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**. (Matthew 10:16a ULT) — This compares the danger that Jesus' disciples would be in with the danger that sheep are in when they are surrounded by wolves.

See, I send **you out among wicked people** and you will be in danger from them **as sheep are in danger when they are among wolves**.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper **than any two-edged sword**. (Hebrews 4:12a ULT)

For the word of God is living and active and **more powerful than a very sharp two-edged sword**.

- (2) If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible. If you use this strategy, you may want to put the original item in a footnote.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**, (Matthew 10:16a ULT) — If people do not know what sheep and wolves are, or that wolves kill and eat sheep, you could use some other animal that kills another.

See, I send you out **as chickens in the midst of wild dogs**.

How often did I long to gather your children together, just **as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings**, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37b ULT)

How often I wanted to gather your children together, **as a mother closely watches over her infants**, but you refused!

If you have faith **as a grain of mustard** ... (Matthew 17:20)

If you have faith even as small **as a tiny seed**,

- (3) Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**. (Matthew 10:16a ULT)

See, I send you out among **people who will want to harm you**.

How often did I long to gather your children together, just **as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings**, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37b ULT)

How often I wanted to **protect you**, but you refused!

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Metaphor](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bita-part1]]

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:7](#); [2:11](#); [Notes](#); [5:2](#); [5:3](#))

Symbolic Action

Description

A symbolic action is something that someone does in order to express a certain idea. For example, in some cultures people nod their heads up and down to mean “yes” or turn their heads from side to side to mean “no.” Symbolic actions do not mean the same things in all cultures. In the Bible, sometimes people perform symbolic actions and sometimes they only refer to the symbolic action.

This page answers the question: *What is a symbolic action and how do I translate it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-unknown]]

Examples of symbolic actions

- In some cultures people shake hands when they meet to show that they are willing to be friendly.
- In some cultures people bow when they meet to show respect to each other.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

An action may have a meaning in one culture and a different meaning or no meaning at all in another culture. For example, in some cultures raising the eyebrows means “I am surprised” or “What did you say?” In other cultures it means “yes.”

In the Bible, people did things that had certain meanings in their culture. When we read the Bible, we might not understand what someone meant if we interpret the action based on what it means in our own culture today.

You (the translator) need to understand what people in the Bible meant when they used symbolic actions. If an action does not mean the same thing in your own culture, then you need to figure out how to translate what the action meant.

Examples From the Bible

And behold, a man came whose name was Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And **falling at the feet of Jesus**, he begged him to come to his house. (Luke 8:41 ULT)

Meaning of symbolic action: He did this to show great respect to Jesus.

Look, I am standing at the door and am knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and will eat with him, and he with me. (Revelation 3:20 ULT)

Meaning of symbolic action: When people wanted someone to welcome them into their home, they stood at the door and knocked on it.

Translation Strategies

If people would correctly understand what a symbolic action meant to the people in the Bible, consider using it. If not, here are some strategies for translating it.

- (1) Tell what the person did and why he did it.
- (2) Do not tell what the person did, but tell what he meant.

(3) Use an action from your own culture that has the same meaning. Do this only in poetry, parables, and sermons. Do not do this when there actually was a person who did a specific action.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Tell what the person did and why he did it.

And **falling at the feet of Jesus** (Luke 8:41 ULT)

Jairus fell down at Jesus' feet in order to show that he greatly respected him.

Look, I am **standing at the door and am knocking**. (Revelation 3:20 ULT)

Look, I stand at the door and knock on it, asking you to let me in.

(2) Do not tell what the person did, but tell what he meant.

And **falling at the feet of Jesus** (Luke 8:41 ULT)

Jairus showed Jesus great respect.

Look, I am **standing at the door and am knocking**. (Revelation 3:20 ULT)

Look, I stand at the door and ask you to let me in.

(3) Use an action from your own culture that has the same meaning.

And **falling at the feet of Jesus** (Luke 8:41 ULT) — Since Jairus actually did this, you should not substitute an action from your own culture.

Look, I am **standing at the door and am knocking**. (Revelation 3:20 ULT) — Jesus was not standing at a real door. Rather he was speaking about wanting to have a relationship with people. So in cultures where it is polite to clear one's throat when wanting to be let into a house, you could use that.

Look, I stand at the door and clear my throat.

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:26](#))

Symbolic Language

Description

Symbolic language in speech and writing is the use of symbols to represent other things, other events, etc. In the Bible it occurs most in prophecy and poetry, especially in visions and dreams about things that will happen in the future. Though people may not immediately know the meaning of a symbol, it is important to keep the symbol in the translation.

This page answers the question: *What is symbolic language and how do I translate it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)

█ Eat this scroll; then go speak to the house of Israel. (Ezekiel 3:1 ULT)

This was in a dream. Eating the scroll is a symbol of Ezekiel reading and understanding well what was written on the scroll, and accepting these words from God into himself.

Purposes of Symbolism

- One purpose of symbolism is to help people understand the importance or severity of an event by putting it in other, very dramatic terms.
- Another purpose of symbolism is to tell some people about something while hiding the true meaning from others who do not understand the symbolism.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

People who read the Bible today may find it hard to recognize that the language is symbolic, and they may not know what the symbol stands for.

Translation Principles

- When symbolic language is used, it is important to keep the symbol in the translation.
- It is also important not to explain the symbol more than the original speaker or writer did, since he may not have wanted everyone living then to be able to understand it easily.

Examples From the Bible

█ After this I saw in my visions of the night **a fourth animal**, terrifying, frightening, and very strong. It had **large iron teeth**; it devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled underfoot what was left. It was different from the other animals, and it had **ten horns**. (Daniel 7:7 ULT)

The meaning of the bolded symbols is explained in Daniel 7:23-24 as shown below. The animals represent kingdoms, iron teeth represent a powerful army, and the horns represent powerful leaders.

█ This is what that person said, 'As for the fourth animal, it will be **a fourth kingdom** on earth that will be different from all the other kingdoms. It will devour the whole earth, and it will trample it down and break it into pieces. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom **ten kings** will arise, and another will arise after them. He will be different from the previous ones, and he will conquer the three kings.' (Daniel 7:23-24 ULT)

█ I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me, and as I turned I saw **seven golden lampstands**. In the middle of the lampstands there was one like a son of man ... He had **seven**

stars in his right hand and **a sword with two sharp edges** was coming out of his mouth. As for the hidden meaning about the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: **The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches**, and **the seven lampstands are the seven churches**. (Revelation 1:12-13a, 16a, 20 ULT)

This passage explains the meaning of the seven lampstands and the seven stars. The two-edged sword represents God's word and judgment.

Translation Strategies

- (1) Translate the text with the symbols. Often the speaker or author explains the meaning later in the passage.
- (2) Translate the text with the symbols. Then explain the symbols in footnotes.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate the text with the symbols. Often the speaker or author explains the meaning later in the passage.

This is what that person said, 'As for the fourth animal, it will be **a fourth kingdom** on earth that will be different from all the other kingdoms. It will devour the whole earth, and it will trample it down and break it into pieces. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom **ten kings** will arise, and another will arise after them. He will be different from the previous ones, and he will conquer the three kings.' (Daniel 7:23-24 ULT)

- (2) Translate the text with the symbols. Then explain the symbols in footnotes.

After this I saw in my visions of the night **a fourth animal**, terrifying, frightening, and very strong. It had **large iron teeth**; it devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled underfoot what was left. It was different from the other animals, and it had **ten horns**. (Daniel 7:7 ULT)

After this I saw in my dream at night a fourth animal, ¹ terrifying, frightening, and very strong. It had large iron teeth; ² it devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled underfoot what was left. It was different from the other animals, and it had ten horns. ³

The footnotes would look like:

[1] The animal is a symbol for a kingdom.

[2] The iron teeth is a symbol for the kingdom's powerful army.

[3] The horns are a symbol of powerful kings.

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:17](#))

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/bit-part2]]

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:8](#); [2:6](#); [2:15](#); [3:10](#); [4:18](#))

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 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:28](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1:10](#))

When Masculine Words Include Women

In the Bible, sometimes the words “men,” “brothers,” and “sons” refer only to men. At other times, those words include both men and women. In those places where the writer meant both men and women, you (the translator) need to translate it in a way that does not limit the meaning to men.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate “brother” or “he” when it could refer to anyone, male or female?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

[Generic Noun Phrases](#)

Description

In some languages a word that normally refers to men can also be used in a more general way to refer to both men and women. For example, the Bible sometimes says “brothers” when it refers to both brothers and sisters.

Also in some languages, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can be used in a more general way for any person if it is not important whether the person is a man or a woman. In the example below, the pronoun is “his,” but it is not limited to males.

A wise son makes **his** father rejoice
but a foolish son brings grief to **his** mother. (Proverbs 10:1 ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- In some cultures words like “man,” “brother,” and “son” can only be used to refer to men. If those words are used in a translation in a more general way, people will think that what is being said does not apply to women.
- In some cultures, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can only refer to men. If a masculine pronoun is used, people will think that what is said does not apply to women.

Translation Principles

When a statement applies to both men and women, translate it in such a way that people will be able to understand that it applies to both.

Examples From the Bible

Now we want you to know, **brothers**, the grace of God that has been given to the churches of Macedonia. (2 Corinthians 8:1 ULT)

This verse is addressing the believers in Corinth, not only men, but **men and women**.

Then said Jesus to his disciples, “If anyone wants to follow me, **he** must deny **himself**, take up **his** cross, and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24 ULT)

Jesus was not speaking only of men, but of **men and women**.

Caution: Sometimes masculine words are used specifically to refer to men. Do not use words that would lead people to think that they include women. The words below are specifically about men.

Moses said, ‘If **someone** dies, not having children, **his brother** must marry **his** wife and have children for **his brother**.’ (Matthew 22:24 ULT)

Translation Strategies

If people would understand that that masculine words like “man,” “brother,” and “he” can include women, then consider using them. Otherwise, here are some ways for translating those words when they include women.

- (1) Use a noun that can be used for both men and women.
- (2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.
- (3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use nouns that can be used for both men and women.

The wise **man** dies just like the fool dies. (Ecclesiastes 2:16b ULT)

“The wise **person** dies just like the fool dies.”
 “Wise **people** die just like fools die.”

- (2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.

For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia. (2 Corinthians 1:8) — Paul was writing this letter to both men and women.

“For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers and sisters**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia.”

- (3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

“If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.”
 (Matthew 16:24 ULT)

English speakers can change the masculine singular pronouns, “he,” “himself,” and “his” to plural pronouns that do not mark gender, “they,” “themselves,” and “their” in order to show that it applies to all people, not just men.

>

“If **people** want to follow me, **they** must deny **themselves**, take up **their** cross, and follow me.”

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:4](#); [2:1](#); [2:9](#); [2:14](#); [2:15](#); [2:17](#))



unfoldingWord® Translation Words

Version 35

acknowledge, admit, admitted

Facts:

The term “acknowledge” means to give proper recognition to something or someone.

- To acknowledge God also involves acting in a way that shows that what he says is true.
- People who acknowledge God will show it by obeying him, which brings glory to his name.
- To acknowledge something means to believe that it is true, with actions and words that confirm that.

Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of acknowledging that something is true, “acknowledge” could be translated as “admit” or “declare” or “confess to be true” or “believe.”
- When referring to acknowledging a person, this term could be translated as “accept” or “recognize the value of” or “tell others that (the person) is faithful.”
- In the context of acknowledging God, this could be translated as “believe and obey God” or “declare who God is” or “tell other people about how great God is” or “confess that what God says and does is true.”

(See also: obey, [glory](#), [save](#))

Bible References:

- Daniel 11:38-39
- Jeremiah 9:4-6
- Job 34:26-28
- Leviticus 22:32
- Psalm 29:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3045, H3046, H5046, H5234, H6942, G14920, G19210, G36700

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:12](#))

admonish, warned, aware

Definition:

The term “admonish” means to firmly warn or advise someone.

- Usually “admonish” means to advise someone not to do something.
- In the body of Christ, believers are taught to admonish each other to avoid sin and to live holy lives.
- The word “admonish” could be translated as “encourage not to sin” or “urge someone to not sin.”

Bible References:

- Nehemiah 9:32-34

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2094, H5749, G35600, G38670, G55370

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:12](#); [5:14](#))

afflict, affliction, distress

Definition:

The term “afflict” means to cause someone distress or suffering. An “affliction” is the disease, emotional grief, or other disaster that results from this.

- Sometimes God afflicted his people with sickness or other hardships with the intention for them to repent of their sins and turn back to him.
- God caused afflictions or plagues to come on the people of Egypt because their king refused to obey God.
- To “be afflicted with” means to suffer from some kind of distress, such as a disease, persecution, or emotional grief.
- In some Old Testament contexts, the idea of “afflicting oneself” or “afflicting one’s soul” means to abstain from eating food.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “afflict” someone could be translated as “cause someone to experience troubles” or “cause someone to suffer” or “cause suffering to come.”
- A phrase like “afflict someone with leprosy” could be translated as “cause someone to be sick with leprosy.”
- When a disease or disaster is sent to “afflict” people or animals, this could be translated as “cause suffering to.”
- Depending on the context, the term “affliction” could be translated as “calamity” or “sickness” or “suffering” or “great distress.”
- The phrase “afflicted with” could also be translated as “suffering from” or “sick with.”

(See also: leprosy, plague, [suffer](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Thessalonians 1:6
- Amos 5:12
- Colossians 1:24
- Exodus 22:22-24
- Genesis 12:17-20
- Genesis 15:12-13
- Genesis 29:32

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H3013, H3905, H3906, H6031, H6039, H6040, H6041, H6862, H6869, H6887, H7451, H7489, G23460, G23470, G38040

(Go back to: [Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 3:3](#); [3:7](#))

amen, truly

Definition:

The term “amen” is a word used to emphasize or call attention to what a person has said. It is often used at the end of a prayer. Sometimes it is translated as “truly.”

- When used at the end of a prayer, “amen” communicates agreement with the prayer or expresses a desire that the prayer be fulfilled.
- In his teaching, Jesus used “amen” to emphasize the truth of what he said. He often followed that by “and I say to you” to introduce another teaching that related to the previous teaching.
- When Jesus uses “amen” this way, some English versions (and the ULT) translate this as “verily” or “truly.”
- Another word meaning “truly” is sometimes translated as “surely” or “certainly” and is also used to emphasize what the speaker is saying.

Translation Suggestions:

- Consider whether the target language has a special word or phrase that is used to emphasize something that has been said.
- When used at the end of a prayer or to confirm something, “amen” could be translated as “let it be so” or “may this happen” or “that is true.”
- When Jesus says, “truly I tell you,” this could also be translated as “Yes, I tell you sincerely” or “That is true, and I also tell you.”
- The phrase “truly, truly I tell you” could be translated as “I tell you this very sincerely” or “I tell you this very earnestly” or “what I am telling you is true.”

(See also: [fulfill](#), [true](#))

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 27:15
- John 5:19
- Jude 1:24-25
- Matthew 26:33-35
- Philemon 1:23-25
- Revelation 22:20-21

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0543, G02810

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:13](#))

ancestor, father, fathered, forefather, grandfather

Definition:

The term “father” refers to a person’s male parent.

- The terms “father” and “forefather” are often used to refer to a male ancestor(s) of a certain person or people group. This could also be translated a “ancestor” or “ancestral father.”
- The expression “the father of” can figuratively refer to a person who is the leader a group of related people or the source of something. For example, in Genesis 4 “the father of all who live in tents” could mean, “the first clan leader of the first people who ever lived in tents.”
- The apostle Paul figuratively called himself the “father” of those he had helped to become Christians through sharing the gospel with them.

Translation Suggestions

- When talking about a father and his literal son, this term should be translated using the usual term to refer to a father in the language.
- “God the Father” should also be translated using the usual, common word for “father.”
- When referring to forefathers, this term could be translated as “ancestors” or “ancestral fathers.”
- When Paul refers to himself figuratively as a father to believers in Christ, this could be translated as “spiritual father” or “father in Christ.”
- Sometimes the word “father” can be translated as “clan leader,” depending on the context.
- The phrase “father of all lies” could be translated as “source of all lies” or “the one from whom all lies come.”

(See also: [God the Father](#), [son](#), [Son of God](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 7:2
- Acts 7:32
- Acts 7:45
- Acts 22:3
- Genesis 31:30
- Genesis 31:42
- Genesis 31:53
- Hebrews 7:4-6
- John 4:12
- Joshua 24:3-4
- Malachi 3:7
- Mark 10:7-9
- Matthew 1:7
- Matthew 3:9
- Matthew 10:21
- Matthew 18:14
- Romans 4:12

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0001, H0002, H0025, H0369, H0539, H1121, H1730, H1733, H2524, H3205, H3490, H4940, H5971, H7223, G05400, G10800, G37370, G39620, G39640, G39660, G39670, G39700, G39710, G39950, G42450, G42690, G46130

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:11](#))

angel, archangel

Definition:

An angel is a powerful spirit being whom God created. Angels exist to serve God by doing whatever he tells them to do. The term “archangel” refers to the angel who rules or leads all the other angels.

- The word “angel” literally means “messenger.”
- The term “archangel” literally means “chief messenger.” The only angel referred to in the Bible as an “archangel” is Michael.
- In the Bible, angels gave messages to people from God. These messages included instructions about what God wanted the people to do.
- Angels also told people about events that were going to happen in the future or events that had already happened.
- Angels have God’s authority as his representatives and sometimes in the Bible they spoke as if God himself was speaking.
- Other ways that angels serve God are by protecting and strengthening people.
- A special phrase, “angel of Yahweh,” has more than one possible meaning: (1) It may mean “angel who represents Yahweh” or “messenger who serves Yahweh.” (2) It may refer to Yahweh himself, who looked like an angel as he talked to a person. Either one of these meanings would explain the angel’s use of “I” as if Yahweh himself was talking.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “angel” could include “messenger from God” or “God’s heavenly servant” or “God’s spirit messenger.”
- The term “archangel” could be translated as “chief angel” or “head ruling angel” or “leader of the angels.”
- Also consider how these terms are translated in a national language or another local language.
- The phrase “angel of Yahweh” should be translated using the words for “angel” and “Yahweh.” This will allow for different interpretations of that phrase. Possible translations could include “angel from Yahweh” or “angel sent by Yahweh” or “Yahweh, who looked like an angel.”

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: chief, head, messenger, Michael, ruler, [servant](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 24:16
- Acts 10:3-6
- Acts 12:23
- Colossians 2:18-19
- Genesis 48:16
- Luke 2:13
- Mark 8:38
- Matthew 13:50
- Revelation 1:20
- Zechariah 1:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **2:12** God placed large, powerful **angels** at the entrance to the garden to keep anyone from eating the fruit of the tree of life.
- **22:3** The **angel** responded to Zechariah, "I was sent by God to bring you this good news."
- **23:6** Suddenly, a shining **angel** appeared to them (the shepherds), and they were terrified. The **angel** said, "Do not be afraid, because I have some good news for you."
- **23:7** Suddenly, the skies were filled with **angels** praising God.
- **25:8** Then **angels** came and took care of Jesus.
- **38:12** Jesus was very troubled and his sweat was like drops of blood. God sent an **angel** to strengthen him.
- **38:15** "I could ask the Father for an army of **angels** to defend me."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0047, H0430, H4397, H4398, H8136, G00320, G07430, G24650

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:16](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 2 General Notes; 2:7](#))

appoint, appointed

Definition:

The terms “appoint” and “appointed” refer to choosing someone to fulfill a specific task or role.

- To “be appointed” can also refer to being “chosen” to receive something, as in “appointed to eternal life.” That people were “appointed to eternal life” means they were chosen to receive eternal life.
- The phrase “appointed time” refers to God’s “chosen time” or “planned time” for something to happen.
- The word “appoint” may also mean to “command” or “assign” someone to do something.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “appoint” could include “choose” or “assign” or “formally choose” or “designate.”
- The term “appointed” could be translated as “assigned” or “planned” or “specifically chose.”
- The phrase “be appointed” could also be translated as “be chosen.”

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 8:11
- Acts 3:20
- Acts 6:2
- Acts 13:48
- Genesis 41:33-34
- Numbers 3:9-10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0561, H0977, H2163, H2296, H2706, H2708, H2710, H3198, H3245, H3259, H3677, H3983, H4150, H4151, H4152, H4483, H4487, H4662, H5324, H5344, H5414, H5567, H5975, H6310, H6485, H6565, H6635, H6680, H6923, H6942, H6966, H7760, H7896, G03220, G06060, G12990, G13030, G19350, G25250, G27490, G42870, G42960, G43840, G49290, G50210, G50870

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:3](#))

asleep, fall asleep, sleep, sleeper, sleepless

Definition:

These terms can have figurative meanings relating to death.

- To “sleep” or “be asleep” can be a metaphor meaning to “be dead.” (See: Metaphor)
- The expression “fall asleep” means start sleeping, or, figuratively, die.
- To “sleep with one’s fathers” means to die, as one’s ancestors have, or to be dead, as one’s ancestors are.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “fall asleep” could be translated as to “suddenly become asleep” or to “start sleeping” or to “die,” depending on its meaning.
- Note: It is especially important to keep the figurative expression in contexts where the audience did not understand the meaning. For example, when Jesus told his disciples that Lazarus was “sleeping” they thought he meant that Lazarus was just sleeping naturally. In this context, it would not make sense to translate this as “he died.”
- Some project languages may have a different expression for death or dying which could be used if the expressions “sleep” and “asleep” do not make sense.

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:27-29
- 1 Thessalonians 4:14
- Acts 7:60
- Daniel 12:2
- Psalms 44:23
- Romans 13:11

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1957, H3462, H3463, H7290, H7901, H8139, H8142, H8153, H8639, G08790, G18520, G18530, G25180, G28370, G52580

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:13](#); [4:14](#); [4:15](#); [5:6](#); [5:7](#); [5:10](#))

avenge, avenger, revenge, vengeance

Definition:

To “avenge” or “take revenge” or “execute vengeance” is to punish someone in order to pay him back for the harm he did. The act of avenging or taking revenge is “vengeance.”

- Usually “avenge” implies an intent to see justice done or to right a wrong,
- When referring to people, the expression “take revenge” or “get revenge” usually involves wanting to get back at the person who did the harm.
- When God “takes vengeance” or “executes vengeance,” he is acting in righteousness because he is punishing sin and rebellion.

Translation Suggestions:

- The expression to “avenge” could also be translated as to “right a wrong” or to “get justice for.”
- When referring to human beings, to “take revenge” could be translated as “pay back” or “hurt in order to punish” or “get back at.”
- Depending on the context, “vengeance” could be translated as “punishment” or “punishment of sin” or “payment for wrongs done.” If a word meaning “retaliation” is used, this would apply to human beings only.
- When God says, “take my vengeance,” this could be translated by “punish them for wrongs done against me” or “cause bad things to happen because they have sinned against me.”
- When referring to God’s vengeance, make sure it is clear that God is right in his punishment of sin.

(See also: punish, just, [righteous](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 24:12-13
- Ezekiel 25:15
- Isaiah 47:3-5
- Leviticus 19:17-18
- Psalms 18:47
- Romans 12:19

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1350, H3467, H5358, H5359, H5360, H8199, G15560, G15570, G15580, G37090

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:6](#))

bear, bearer, carry

Facts:

The term “bear” literally means “carry” something. There are also many figurative uses of this term.

- When speaking of a woman who will bear a child, this means “give birth to” a child.
- To “bear a burden” means to “experience difficult things.” These difficult things could include physical or emotional suffering.
- A common expression in the Bible is “bear fruit,” which means “produce fruit” or “have fruit.”
- The expression “bear witness” means “testify” or “report what one has seen or experienced.”
- The statement that “a son will not bear the iniquity of his father” means that he “will not be held responsible for” or “will not be punished for” his father’s sins.
- In general, this term could be translated as “carry” or “be responsible for” or “produce” or “have” or “endure,” depending on the context.

(Translation suggestions: [Translate Names](#))

(See also: [burden](#), Elisha, endure, fruit, iniquity, [report](#), sheep, [strength](#), [testimony](#), [testimony](#))

Bible References:

- Lamentations 3:27

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2232, H3201, H3205, H5375, H5445, H5449, H6030, H6509, H6779, G01420, G04300, G09410, G10800, G16270, G25920, G31400, G41600, G47220, G48280, G50410, G50880, G53420, G54090, G55760

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:1](#); [3:5](#))

believe, believer, belief, unbeliever, unbelief

Definition:

The terms “believe” and “believe in” are closely related, but have slightly different meanings:

1. believe

- To believe something is to accept or trust that it is true.
- To believe someone is to acknowledge that what that person has said is true.

2. believe in

- To “believe in” someone means to “trust in” that person. It means to trust that the person is who he says he is, that he always speaks the truth, and that he will do what he has promised to do.
- When a person truly believes in something, he will act in such a way that shows that belief.
- The phrase “have faith in” usually has the same meaning as “believe in.”
- To “believe in Jesus” means to believe that he is the Son of God, that he is God himself who also became human and who died as a sacrifice to pay for our sins. It means to trust him as Savior and live in a way that honors him.

3. believer

In the Bible, the term “believer” refers to someone who believes in and relies on Jesus Christ as Savior.

- The term “believer” literally means “person who believes.”
- The term “Christian” eventually came to be the main title for believers because it indicates that they believe in Christ and obey his teachings.

4. unbelief

The term “unbelief” refers to not believing something or someone.

- In the Bible, “unbelief” refers to not believing in or not trusting in Jesus as one’s Savior.
- A person who does not believe in Jesus is called an “unbeliever.”

Translation Suggestions:

- To “believe” could be translated as to “know to be true” or “know to be right.”
- To “believe in” could be translated as “trust completely” or “trust and obey” or “completely rely on and follow.”
- Some translations may prefer to say “believer in Jesus” or “believer in Christ.”
- This term could also be translated by a word or phrase that means “person who trusts in Jesus” or “someone who knows Jesus and lives for him.”
- Other ways to translate “believer” could be “follower of Jesus” or “person who knows and obeys Jesus.”
- The term “believer” is a general term for any believer in Christ, while “disciple” and “apostle” were used more specifically for people who knew Jesus while he was alive. It is best to translate these terms in different ways, in order to keep them distinct.
- Other ways to translate “unbelief” could include “lack of faith” or “not believing.”

- The term “unbeliever” could be translated as “person who does not believe in Jesus” or “someone who does not trust in Jesus as Savior.”

(See also: [believe](#), [apostle](#), Christian, disciple, [faith](#), [trust](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 15:6
- Genesis 45:26
- Job 9:16-18
- Habakkuk 1:5-7
- Mark 6:4-6
- Mark 1:14-15
- Luke 9:41
- John 1:12
- Acts 6:5
- Acts 9:42
- Acts 28:23-24
- Romans 3:3
- 1 Corinthians 6:1
- 1 Corinthians 9:5
- 2 Corinthians 6:15
- Hebrews 3:12
- 1 John 3:23

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:4** Noah warned the people about the coming flood and told them to turn to God, but they did not **believe** him.
- **4:8** Abram **believed** God's promise. God declared that Abram was righteous because he **believed** God's promise.
- **11:2** God provided a way to save the firstborn of anyone who **believed in** him.
- **11:6** But the Egyptians did not **believe** God or obey his commands.
- **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. Do you **believe** this?”
- **43:1** After Jesus returned to heaven, the disciples stayed in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded them to do. The **believers** there constantly gathered together to pray.
- **43:3** While the **believers** were all together, suddenly the house where they were was filled with a sound like a strong wind. Then something that looked like flames of fire appeared over the heads of all the **believers**.
- **43:13** Every day, more people became **believers**.
- **46:6** That day many people in Jerusalem started persecuting the followers of Jesus, so the **believers** fled to other places. But in spite of this, they preached about Jesus everywhere they went.
- **46:1** Saul was the young man who guarded the robes of the men who killed Stephen. He did not believe in Jesus, so he persecuted the **believers**.
- **46:9** Some **believers** who fled from the persecution in Jerusalem went far away to the city of Antioch and preached about Jesus.
- **46:9** It was at Antioch that **believers** in Jesus were first called “Christians.”
- **47:14** They also wrote many letters to encourage and teach the **believers** in the churches.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0539, H0540, G05430, G05440, G05690, G05700, G05710, G39820, G41000, G41020, G41030, G41350

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:7](#); [2:10](#); [2:13](#); [4:14](#))

beloved

Definition:

The term “beloved” is an expression of affection that describes someone who is loved and dear to someone else.

- The term “beloved” literally means “loved (one)” or “(who is) loved.”
- God refers to Jesus as his “beloved Son.”
- In their letters to Christian churches, the apostles frequently address their fellow believers as “beloved.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “loved” or “loved one” or “well-loved,” or “very dear.”
- In the context of talking about a close friend, this could be translated as “my dear friend” or “my close friend.” In English it is natural to say “my dear friend, Paul” or “Paul, who is my dear friend.” Other languages may find it more natural to order this in a different way.
- Note that the word “beloved” comes from the word for God’s love, which is unconditional, unselfish, and sacrificial.

(See also: [love](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 4:14
- 1 John 3:2
- 1 John 4:7
- Mark 1:11
- Mark 12:6
- Revelation 20:9
- Romans 16:8
- Song of Songs 1:14

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0157, H1730, H2532, H3033, H3039, H4261, G00250, G00270, G52070

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:8](#))

blameless

Definition:

The term “blameless” literally means “without blame.” It is used to refer to a person who obeys God wholeheartedly, but it does not mean that the person is sinless.

- Abraham and Noah were considered blameless before God.
- A person who has a reputation for being “blameless” behaves in a way that honors God.
- According to one verse, a person who is blameless is “one who fears God and turns away from evil.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This could also be translated as “with no fault to his character” or “completely obedient to God” or “avoiding sin” or “keeping away from evil.”

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:10
- 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13
- 2 Peter 3:14
- Colossians 1:22
- Genesis 17:1-2
- Philippians 2:15
- Philippians 3:6

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5352, H5355, H8535, G02730, G02740, G02980, G02990, G03380, G04100, G04230

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:10](#); [3:13](#); [5:23](#))

boast, boastful

Definition:

The term “boast” means to talk proudly about something or someone. Often it means to brag about oneself.

- Someone who is “boastful” talks about himself in a proud way.
- God rebuked the Israelites for “boasting in” their idols. They arrogantly worshiped false gods instead of the true God.
- The Bible also talks about people boasting in such things as their wealth, their strength, their fruitful fields, and their laws. This means that they were proud about these things and did not acknowledge that God is the one who provided these things.
- God urged the Israelites to instead “boast” or be proud about the fact that they know him.
- The apostle Paul also talks about boasting in the Lord, which means being glad and thankful to God for all he has done for them.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “boast” could include “brag” or “talk proudly” or “be proud.”
- The term “boastful” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “full of prideful talk” or “prideful” or “talking proudly about oneself.”
- In the context of boasting in or about knowing God, this could be translated as “take pride in” or “exalt in” or “be very glad about” or “give thanks to God about.”
- Some languages have two words for “pride”: one that is negative, with the meaning of being arrogant, and the other that is positive, with the meaning of taking pride in one’s work, family, or country.

Translation Suggestions:

(See also: proud)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 20:11
- 2 Timothy 3:1-4
- James 3:14
- James 4:15-17
- Psalms 44:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1984, H3235, H6286, G02120, G02130, G17400, G26200, G27440, G27450, G27460, G31660

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:19](#))

body

Definition:

The term “body” refers to the physical body of a person or animal. This term is also used figuratively to refer to an object or to a group consisting of individual members.

- Often the term “body” refers to a dead person or animal. Sometimes this is referred to as a “dead body” or a “corpse.”
- When Jesus said to the disciples at his last Passover meal, “This (bread) is my body,” he was referring to his physical body that would be “broken” (killed) to pay for their sins.
- In the Bible, Christians as a group are referred to as the “body of Christ.”
- Just as a physical body has many parts, the “body of Christ” has many individual members.
- Each individual believer has a special function in the body of Christ to help the whole group work together to serve God and bring him glory.
- Jesus is also referred to as the “head” (leader) of the “body” of his believers. Just as a person’s head tells his body what to do, so Jesus is the one who guides and directs Christians as members of his “body.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The best way to translate this term would be with the word that is most commonly used to refer to a physical body in the project language. Make sure that the word used is not an offensive term.
- When referring collectively to believers, for some languages it may be more natural and accurate to say “spiritual body of Christ.”
- When Jesus says, “This is my body,” it is best to translate this literally, with a note to explain it if needed.
- Some languages may have a separate word when referring to a dead body, such as “corpse” for a person or “carcass” for an animal. Make sure the word used to translate this makes sense in the context and is acceptable.

(See also: head, [hand](#); [face](#); loins; righthand; tongue)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 10:12
- 1 Corinthians 5:5
- Ephesians 4:4
- Judges 14:8
- Numbers 6:6-8
- Psalm 31:9
- Romans 12:5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0990, H1320, H1460, H1465, H1472, H1480, H1655, H3409, H4191, H5038, H5085, H5315, H6106, H6297, H7607, G44300, G49540, G49830, G55590

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:23](#))

bold, boldness, emboldened

Definition:

These terms all refer to having courage and confidence to speak the truth and do the right thing even when it is difficult or dangerous.

- A “bold” person is not afraid to say and do what is good and right, including defending people who are being mistreated. This could be translated as “courageous” or “fearless.”
- In the New Testament, the disciples continued to “boldly” preach about Christ in public places, in spite of the danger of being put in jail or killed. This could be translated as “confidently” or “with strong courage” or “courageously.”
- The “boldness” of these early disciples in speaking the good news of Christ’s redeeming death on the cross resulted in the gospel being spread throughout Israel and nearby countries and finally, to the rest of the world. “Boldness” could also be translated as “confident courage.”

(See also: confidence, [good news](#), redeem)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:28
- 1 Thessalonians 2:1-2
- 2 Corinthians 3:12-13
- Acts 4:13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0982, H5797, G06620, G22920, G36180, G39540, G39550, G51110, G51120

(**Go back to:** [1 Thessalonians 2:2](#))

breastplate, breastpiece

Definition:

The term “breastplate” refers to a piece of armor covering the front of the chest to protect a soldier during battle. The term “breastpiece” refers to a special piece of clothing that the Israelite high priest wore over the front part of his chest.

- A “breastplate” used by a soldier could be made of wood, metal, or animal skin. It was made to prevent arrows, spears, or swords from piercing the chest of the soldier.
- The “breastpiece” worn by the Israelite high priest was made of cloth and had valuable gems attached to it. The priest wore this when he was performing his duties of service to God in the temple.
- Other ways to translate the term “breastplate” could include “metal protective chest covering” or “armor piece protecting the chest.”
- The term “breastpiece” could be translated with a word that means “priestly clothing covering the chest” or “priestly garment piece” or “front piece of priest’s clothing.”

(See also: armor, high priest, pierce, priest, temple, warrior)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:8
- Exodus 39:14-16
- Isaiah 59:17
- Revelation 9:7-9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2833, H8302, G23820

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:8](#))

brother

Definition:

The term “brother” refers to a male sibling who shares at least one biological parent.

- In the Old Testament, the term “brothers” is also used as a general reference to relatives or associates, such as members of the same tribe, clan, occupation, or people group. When used in this way, the term can refer to both men and women.
- In the New Testament, the apostles often use the term “brothers” to refer to fellow Christians, including both men and women.
- A few times in the New Testament, the apostles used the term “sister” when referring specifically to a fellow Christian who was a woman, or to emphasize that both men and women are being included. For example, James emphasizes that he is talking about all believers when he refers to “a brother or sister who is in need of food or clothing.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term with the literal word that is used in the target language to refer to a natural or biological brother, unless this would give wrong meaning.
- In the Old Testament especially, when “brothers” is used very generally to refer to members of the same family, clan, or people group, possible translations could include “relatives” or “clan members” or “fellow Israelites.”
- In the context of referring to a fellow believer in Christ, this term could be translated as “brother in Christ” or “spiritual brother.”
- If both males and females are being referred to and “brother” would give a wrong meaning, then a more general kinship term could be used that would include both males and females.
- Other ways to translate this term so that it refers to both male and female believers could be “fellow believers” or “Christian brothers and sisters.”
- Make sure to check the context to determine whether only men are being referred to, or whether both men and women are included.

(See also: [apostle](#), [God the Father](#), [sister](#), [spirit](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 7:26
- Genesis 29:10
- Leviticus 19:17
- Nehemiah 3:1
- Philippians 4:21
- Revelation 1:9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0251, H0252, H0264, H1730, H2992, H2993, H2994, H7453, G00800, G00810, G23850, G24550, G25000, G46130, G53600, G55690

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:4](#); [2:1](#); [2:9](#); [2:14](#); [2:17](#); [3:2](#); [3:7](#); [4:1](#); [4:6](#); [4:10](#); [4:13](#); [5:1](#); [5:4](#); [5:12](#); [5:14](#); [5:25](#); [5:26](#); [5:27](#))

burden, load, heavy, hard work, hard labor, utterances

Definition:

A burden is a heavy load. It literally refers to a physical load such as a work animal would carry. The term “burden” also has several figurative meanings:

- A burden can refer to a difficult duty or important responsibility that a person has to do. He is said to be “bearing” or “carrying” a “heavy burden.”
- A cruel leader may put difficult burdens on the people he is ruling, for example by forcing them to pay large amounts of taxes.
- A person who does not want to be a burden to someone does not want to cause that other person any trouble.
- The guilt of a person’s sin is a burden to him.
- The “burden of the Lord” is a figurative way of referring to a “message from God” that a prophet must deliver to God’s people.
- The term “burden” can be translated by “responsibility” or “duty” or “heavy load” or “message,” depending on the context.

Bible References:

- 2 Thessalonians 3:6-9
- Galatians 6:1-2
- Galatians 6:3
- Genesis 49:15
- Matthew 11:30
- Matthew 23:4

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2960, H3053, H4614, H4853, H4864, H5445, H5447, H5448, H5449, H5450, H6006, G00040, G09160, G09220, G23470, G25990, G26550, G54130

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:7](#); [2:9](#))

call, call out

Definition:

The terms “call” and “call out” usually mean to speak loudly, but the term “call” can also mean to name or summon a person. There are also some other meanings.

- To “call out” to someone means to shout, to announce, or to proclaim. It can also mean to ask someone for help, especially God.
- Often in the Bible, “call” has a meaning of “summon” or “command to come” or “request to come.”
- God calls people to come to him and be his people. This is their “calling.”
- When God “calls” people, it means that God has appointed or chosen people to be his children, to be his servants and proclaimers of his message of salvation through Jesus.
- This term is also used in the context of naming someone. For example, “His name is called John,” means “He is named John” or “His name is John.”
- To be “called by the name of” means that someone is given the name of someone else. God says that he has called his people by his name.
- A different expression, “I have called you by name” means that God has specifically chosen that person.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “call” could be translated by a word that means “summon,” which includes the idea of being intentional or purposeful in calling.
- The expression “call out to you” could be translated as “ask you for help” or “pray to you urgently.”
- When the Bible says that God has “called” us to be his servants, this could be translated as “specially chose us” or “appointed us” to be his servants.
- “You must call his name” can also be translated as “you must name him.”
- “His name is called” could also be translated as “his name is” or “he is named.”
- To “call out” could be translated as “say loudly” or “shout” or “say with a loud voice.” Make sure the translation of this does not sound like the person is angry.
- The expression “your calling” could be translated as “your purpose” or “God’s purpose for you” or “God’s special work for you.”
- To “call on the name of the Lord” could be translated as “seek the Lord and depend on him” or “trust in the Lord and obey him.”
- To “call for” something could be translated by “demand” or “ask for” or “command.”
- The expression “you are called by my name” could be translated as “I have given you my name, showing that you belong to me.”
- When God says, “I have called you by name,” this could be translated as “I know you and have chosen you.”

(See also: [pray](#), cry)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:24
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- 2 Timothy 1:9
- Ephesians 4:1
- Galatians 1:15
- Matthew 2:15
- Philippians 3:14

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0559, H2199, H4744, H6817, H7121, H7123, H7769, H7773, G01540, G03630, G14580, G15280, G19410, G19510, G20280, G20460, G25640, G28210, G28220, G28400, G29190, G30040, G31060, G33330, G33430, G36030, G36860, G36870, G43160, G43410, G43770, G47790, G48670, G54550, G55370, G55810

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:12](#); [4:7](#); [5:24](#))

caught up

Definition:

The term "caught up" often refers to God taking a person up to heaven in a sudden, miraculous way.

- The phrase "caught up with" refers to coming up to someone after hurrying to reach him. A term with a similar meaning is "overtake."
- The apostle Paul talked about being "caught up" to the third heaven. This could also be translated as "taken up."
- Paul said that when Christ comes back, Christians will be "caught up" together to meet him in the air.
- The figurative expression, "my sins have caught up with me" could be translated as "I am receiving the consequences of my sin" or "because of my sin I am suffering" or "my sin is causing me trouble."

(see: miracle, [overtake](#), [suffer](#), trouble)

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 12:1-2
- Acts 8:39-40

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1692, G07260

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:17](#))

children, child, offspring

Definition:

The term “child” (plural “children”) refers to the offspring of a man and woman. The term is often used more generally to refer to anyone who is young in age and is not yet a fully grown adult. The term “offspring” is a general reference to the biological descendants of people or animals.

- In the Bible, disciples or followers are sometimes called “children.”
- Often the term “children” is used to refer to a person’s descendants.
- Often in the Bible, “offspring” has the same meaning as “children” or “descendants.”
- The term “seed” is sometimes used figuratively to refer to offspring.
- The phrase “children of” can refer to being characterized by something. Some examples of this would be:
 - children of the light
 - children of obedience
 - children of the devil
- This term can also refer to the Church. For example, sometimes the New Testament refers to people who believe in Jesus as “children of God.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “children” could be translated as “descendants” when it is referring to a person’s great-grandchildren or great-great-grandchildren, etc.
- Depending on the context, “children of” could be translated as “people who have the characteristics of” or “people who behave like.”
- If possible, the phrase, “children of God” should be translated literally since an important biblical theme is that God is our heavenly Father. A possible translation alternate would be, “people who belong to God” or “God’s spiritual children.”
- When Jesus calls his disciples “children,” this could also be translated as “dear friends” or “my beloved disciples.”
- When Paul and John refer to believers in Jesus as “children,” this could also be translated as “dear fellow believers.”
- The phrase, “children of the promise” could be translated as “people who have received what God promised them.”

(See also: descendant, seed, promise, [son](#), [spirit](#), [believe](#), [beloved](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:28
- 3 John 1:4
- Galatians 4:19
- Genesis 45:11
- Joshua 8:34-35
- Nehemiah 5:5
- Acts 17:29
- Exodus 13:11-13
- Genesis 24:7
- Isaiah 41:8-9
- Job 5:25
- Luke 3:7
- Matthew 12:34

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1069, H1121, H1123, H1129, H1323, H1397, H1580, H2029, H2030, H2056, H2138, H2145, H2233, H2945, H3173, H3205, H3206, H3208, H3211, H3243, H3490, H4392, H5209, H5271, H5288, H5290, H5759, H5764, H5768, H5953, H6185, H6363, H6529, H6631, H7908, H7909, H7921, G07300, G08150, G10250, G10640, G10810, G10850, G14710, G34390, G35150, G35160, G38080, G38120, G38130, G38160, G50400, G50410, G50420, G50430, G50440, G52060, G52070, G53880

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:7](#); [2:11](#))

chosen, choose, chosen people, Chosen One, elect

Definition:

The term “the elect” literally means “chosen ones” or “chosen people” and refers to those whom God has appointed or selected to be his people. “Chosen One” or “Chosen One of God” is a title that refers to Jesus, who is the chosen Messiah.

- The term “choose” means to select something or someone or to decide something. It is often used to refer to God appointing people to belong to him and to serve him.
- To be “chosen” means to be “selected” or “appointed” to be or do something.
- God chose people to be holy, to be set apart by him for the purpose of bearing good spiritual fruit. That is why they are called “the chosen (ones)” or “the elect.”
- The term “chosen one” is sometimes used in the Bible to refer to certain people such as Moses and King David whom God had appointed as leaders over his people. It is also used to refer to the nation of Israel as God’s chosen people.
- The phrase “the elect” is an older term that literally means “the chosen ones” or “the chosen people.” This phrase in the original language is plural when referring to believers in Christ.
- In older English Bible versions, the term “elect” is used in both the Old and New Testaments to translate the word for “chosen one(s).” More modern versions use “elect” only in the New Testament, to refer to people who have been saved by God through faith in Jesus. Elsewhere in the Bible text, they translate this word more literally as “chosen ones.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate “elect” with a word or phrase that means “chosen ones” or “chosen people.” This could also be translated as “people whom God chose” or “the ones God appointed to be his people.”
- The phrase “who were chosen” could also be translated as “who were appointed” or “who were selected” or “whom God chose.”
- “I chose you” could be translated as “I appointed you” or “I selected you.”
- In reference to Jesus, “Chosen One” could also be translated as “God’s chosen One” or “God’s specially appointed Messiah” or “the One God appointed (to save people).”

(See also: [appoint](#), [Christ](#))

Bible References:

- 2 John 1:1
- Colossians 3:12
- Ephesians 1:3-4
- Isaiah 65:22-23
- Luke 18:7
- Matthew 24:19-22
- Romans 8:33

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0970, H0972, H0977, H1262, H1305, H4005, H6901, G01380, G01400, G15860, G15880, G15890, G19510, G37240, G44000, G44010, G47580, G48990, G55000

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:4](#))

Christ, Messiah

Facts:

The terms "Messiah" and "Christ" mean "Anointed One" and refer to Jesus, God's Son.

- Both "Messiah" and "Christ" are used in the New Testament to refer to God's Son, whom God the Father appointed to rule as king over his people, and to save them from sin and death.
- In the Old Testament, the prophets wrote prophecies about the Messiah hundreds of years before he came to earth.
- Often a word meaning "anointed (one)" is used in the Old Testament to refer to the Messiah who would come.
- Jesus fulfilled many of these prophecies and did many miraculous works that proves he is the Messiah; the rest of these prophecies will be fulfilled when he returns.
- The word "Christ" is often used as a title, as in "the Christ" and "Christ Jesus."
- "Christ" also came to be used as part of his name, as in "Jesus Christ."

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated using its meaning, "the Anointed One" or "God's Anointed Savior."
- Many languages use a transliterated word that looks or sounds like "Christ" or "Messiah." (See: How to Translate Unknowns)
- The transliterated word could be followed by the definition of the term as in, "Christ, the Anointed One."
- Be consistent in how this is translated throughout the Bible so that it is clear that the same term is being referred to.
- Make sure the translations of "Messiah" and "Christ" work well in contexts where both terms occur in the same verse (such as John 1:41).

(See also: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Son of God](#), David, [Jesus](#), anoint)

Bible References:

- 1 John 5:1-3
- Acts 2:35
- Acts 5:40-42
- John 1:40-42
- John 3:27-28
- John 4:25
- Luke 2:10-12
- Matthew 1:16

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:7** The **Messiah** was God's Chosen One who would save the people of the world from sin.
- **17:8** As it happened, the Israelites would have to wait a long time before the **Messiah** came, almost 1,000 years.
- **21:1** From the very beginning, God planned to send the **Messiah**.
- **21:4** God promised King David that the **Messiah** would be one of David's own descendants.
- **21:5** The **Messiah** would start the New Covenant.
- **21:6** God's prophets also said that the **Messiah** would be a prophet, a priest, and a king.

- **21:9** The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the **Messiah** would be born from a virgin.
- **43:7** "But God raised him to life again to fulfill the prophecy which says, 'You will not let your **Holy One** rot in the grave.'"
- **43:9** "But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both Lord and **Messiah!**"
- **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."
- **46:6** Saul reasoned with the Jews, proving that Jesus was the **Messiah**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4899, G33230, G55470

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#); [1:3](#); [2:7](#); [2:14](#); [3:2](#); [5:9](#); [5:23](#); [5:28](#))

church, Church

Definition:

In the New Testament, the term “church” refers to all people who believe in Jesus. Sometimes “church” refers to a part of that larger group who regularly met together in a certain place, such as the “church at Ephesus.”

- This term literally refers to an assembly or congregation of people who were “called out” of the general population to meet together for a special purpose.
- Often the believers in a particular city would meet together in someone’s home to pray together and to hear and discuss scripture. These local churches were given the name of the city such as the “church at Ephesus.”
- In the Bible, “church” does not refer to a building.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “church” could be translated as a “gathering together” or “assembly” or “congregation” or “ones who meet together.”
- The word or phrase that is used to translate this term should also be able to refer to all believers, not just one small group.
- Make sure that the translation of “church” does not just refer to a building.
- The term used to translate “assembly” in the Old Testament could also be used to translate this term.
- Also consider how it is translated in a local or national Bible translation. (See: How to Translate Unknowns.)

(See also: assembly, [believe](#), Christian)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:12
- 1 Thessalonians 2:14
- 1 Timothy 3:5
- Acts 9:31
- Acts 14:23
- Acts 15:41
- Colossians 4:15
- Ephesians 5:23
- Matthew 16:18
- Philippians 4:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **43:12** About 3,000 people believed what Peter said and became disciples of Jesus. They were baptized and became part of the **church** at Jerusalem.
- **46:9** Most of the people in Antioch were not Jews, but for the first time, very many of them also became believers. Barnabas and Saul went there to teach these new believers more about Jesus and to strengthen the **church**.
- **46:10** So the **church** in Antioch prayed for Barnabas and Saul and placed their hands on them. Then they sent them off to preach the good news of Jesus in many other places.
- **47:13** The good news of 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. The **Church** has been growing.

Word Data:

- Strong's: G15770

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2:14](#))

clothe, clothed, clothes, clothing, unclothed, garments

Definition:

When used figuratively in the Bible, “clothed with” means to be endowed or equipped with something. To “clothe” oneself with something means to seek to have a certain character quality.

- In the same way that clothing is external to your body and is visible to all, when you are “clothed” with a certain character quality, others can readily see it. To “clothe yourself with kindness” means to let your actions be so characterized by kindness that it is easily seen by everyone.
- To be “clothed with power from on high” means to have power given to you.
- This term is also used to express negative experiences, such as “clothed with shame” or “clothed with terror.”

Translation Suggestions:

- If possible, it is best to keep the literal figure of speech, “clothe yourselves with.” Another way to translate this could be “put on” if this refers to putting on clothes.
- If that does not give the correct meaning, other ways to translate “clothed with” could be “showing” or “manifesting” or “filled with” or “having the quality of.”
- The term “clothe yourself with” could also be translated as “cover yourself with” or “behave in a way that shows.”

Bible References:

- Luke 24:49

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0899, H3680, H3736, H3830, H3847, H3848, H4055, H4374, H5497, H8008, H8071, H8516, G02940, G14630, G15620, G17370, G17420, G17460, G19020, G20660, G22240, G24390, G24400, G40160, G47490, G55090

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:8](#))

comfort, comforts, comforter, uncomforted

Definition:

The terms “comfort” and “comforter” refer to helping someone who is suffering physical or emotional pain.

- A person who comforts someone is called a “comforter.”
- In the Old Testament, the term “comfort” is used to describe how God is kind and loving to his people and helps them when they are suffering.
- In the New Testament, it says that God will comfort his people through the Holy Spirit. Those who receive the comfort are then enabled to give the same comfort to others who are suffering.
- The expression “comforter of Israel” referred to the Messiah who would come to rescue his people.
- Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as the “Comforter” who helps believers in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “comfort” could also be translated as “ease the pain of” or “help (someone) overcome grief” or “encourage” or “console.”
- A phrase such as “our comfort” could be translated as “our encouragement” or “our consoling of (someone)” or “our help in times of grieving.”
- The term “comforter” could be translated as “person who comforts” or “someone who helps ease pain” or “person who encourages.”
- When the Holy Spirit is called “the Comforter” this could also be translated as “the Encourager” or “the Helper” or “the One who helps and guides.”
- The phrase “comforter of Israel” could be translated as “the Messiah, who comforts Israel.”
- An expression like, “they have no comforter” could also be translated as “No one has comforted them” or “There is no one to encourage or help them.”

(See also: encourage, [Holy Spirit](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:8-11
- 2 Corinthians 1:4
- 2 Samuel 10:1-3
- Acts 20:11-12

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2505, H5150, H5162, H5165, H5564, H8575, G03020, G38700, G38740, G38750, G38880, G38900, G39310

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:2](#); [3:7](#); [4:18](#); [5:11](#))

command, commandment

Definition:

The term "command" means to order someone to do something. The term "commandment" refers to the thing that a person is commanded to do.

- The term "commandment" sometimes refers to certain commands of God which are more formal and permanent, such as the "Ten Commandments."
- A command can be positive ("Honor your parents") or negative ("Do not steal").
- To "take command" means to "take control" or "take charge" of something or someone.

Translation Suggestions

- It is best to translate this term differently from the term, "law." Also compare with the definitions of "decree" and "statute."
- Some translators may prefer to translate "command" and "commandment" with the same word in their language.
- Others may prefer to use a special word for commandment that refers to lasting, formal commands that God has made.

(See decree, statute, law, Ten Commandments)

Bible References:

- Luke 1:6
- Matthew 1:24
- Matthew 22:38
- Matthew 28:20
- Numbers 1:17-19
- Romans 7:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0559, H0560, H0565, H1296, H1696, H1697, H1881, H2706, H2708, H2710, H2941, H2942, H2951, H3027, H3982, H3983, H4406, H4662, H4687, H4929, H4931, H4941, H5057, H5713, H5749, H6213, H6310, H6346, H6490, H6673, H6680, H7101, H7218, H7227, H7262, H7761, H7970, H8269, G12630, G12910, G12960, G12970, G12990, G16900, G17780, G17810, G17850, G20030, G20040, G20080, G20360, G27530, G30560, G37260, G38520, G38530, G43670, G44830, G44870, G55060

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:2](#); [4:11](#))

crown, crowned

Definition:

A crown is a decorative, circular headpiece worn on the head of rulers such as kings and queens. The term to “crown” means to put a crown on someone’s head; figuratively it means, to “honor.”

- Crowns are usually made of gold or silver, and are embedded with precious gems such as emeralds and rubies.
- A crown was intended to be a symbol of a king’s power and wealth.
- By contrast, the crown made of thorn branches that the Roman soldiers placed on Jesus’ head was meant to mock him and hurt him.
- In ancient times, winners of athletic contests would be awarded a crown made out of olive branches. The apostle Paul mentions this crown in his second letter to Timothy.
- Used figuratively, to “crown” means to honor someone. We honor God by obeying him and praising him to others. This is like putting a crown on him and acknowledging that he is King.
- Pauls calls fellow believers his “joy and crown.” In this expression, “crown” is used figuratively to mean that Paul has been greatly blessed and honored by how these believers have remained faithful in serving God.
- When used figuratively, “crown” could be translated as “prize” or “honor” or “reward.”
- The figurative use of to “crown” could be translated as to “honor” or to “decorate.”
- If a person is “crowned” this could be translated as “a crown was put on his head.”
- The expression, “he was crowned with glory and honor” could be translated as “glory and honor were bestowed on him” or “he was given glory and honor” or “he was endowed with glory and honor.”

(See also: [glory](#), king, olive)

Bible References:

- John 19:3
- Lamentations 5:16
- Matthew 27:29
- Philippians 4:1
- Psalms 21:3
- Revelation 3:11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3803, H3804, H5145, H5849, H5850, H6936, G12380, G47350, G47370

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:19](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 5:4](#); [5:5](#))

day

Definition:

The term "day" generally refers to the time it takes for the alternating periods of light and darkness in the sky to complete one cycle (that is, 24 hours). However, in the Bible the same term is often used to refer to a shorter period of time (such as the time between sunrise and sunset) or a longer period of time that is often not specified.

- "Day" is sometimes used in contrast to "night." In these cases, the term refers to the period of time when the sky is light.
- The term may also refer to a specific point in time, such as "today."
- Sometimes the term "day" is used figuratively to refer to a longer period of time, such as the "day of Yahweh" or "last days." Some languages will use a different expression to translate these figurative uses or will translate "day" non-figuratively.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term literally as "day" or "daytime" using the word in your language that refers to the part of the day when there is light.
- Other translations of "day" could include "daytime," "time," "season," "occasion" or "event," depending on the context.

(See also: [time](#), judgment day, last day)

Bible References:

- Acts 20:6
- Daniel 10:4
- Ezra 6:15
- Ezra 6:19
- Matthew 9:15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3117, H3118, H6242, G22500

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:9](#); [3:10](#); [5:2](#); [5:4](#); [5:5](#); [5:8](#))

day of the Lord, day of Yahweh

Description:

The Old Testament term “day of Yahweh” is used to refer to a specific time(s) when God would punish people for their sin.

- The New Testament term “day of the Lord” usually refers to the day or time when the Lord Jesus will come back to judge people at the end of time.
- This final, future time of judgment and resurrection is also sometimes referred to as the “last day.” This time will begin when the Lord Jesus comes back to judge sinners and will permanently establish his rule.
- The word “day” in these phrases may sometimes refer to a literal day or it may refer to a “time” or “occasion” that is longer than a day.
- Sometimes the punishment is referred to as a “pouring out of God’s wrath” upon those who do not believe.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “day of Yahweh” could include “time of Yahweh” or “time when Yahweh will punish his enemies” or “time of Yahweh’s wrath.”
- Other ways to translate “day of the Lord” could include “time of the Lord’s judgment” or “time when the Lord Jesus will return to judge people.”

(See also: [day](#), judgment day, [Lord](#), resurrection, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:5
- 1 Thessalonians 5:2
- 2 Peter 3:10
- 2 Thessalonians 2:2
- Acts 2:20-21
- Philippians 1:9-11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3068, H3117, G22500, G29620

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5 General Notes; 5:2](#))

deceive, lie, deception, illusions

Definition:

The term "deceive" means to cause someone to believe something that is not true, often by telling a "lie." The act of deceiving someone is called "lying," "deceit," or "deception."

- Someone who causes others to believe something false is a "deceiver." For example, Satan is called a "deceiver." The evil spirits that he controls are also deceivers.
- To "lie" is to say something that is not true.
- A person, action, or message that is not truthful can be described as "deceptive."
- The terms "deceit" and "deception" have the same meaning, but there are some small differences in how they are used.
- The descriptive terms "deceitful" and "deceptive" have the same meaning and are used in the same contexts.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate "deceive" could include "lie to" or "cause to have a false belief" or "cause someone to think something that is not true."
- The term "deceived" could also be translated as "caused to think something false" or "lied to" or "tricked" or "fooled" or "misled."
- "Deceiver" could be translated as "liar" or "one who misleads" or "someone who deceives."
- Depending on the context, the terms "deception" or "deceit" could be translated with a word or phrase that means "falsehood" or "lying" or "trickery" or "dishonesty."
- The terms "deceptive" or "deceitful" could be translated as "untruthful" or "misleading" or "lying" to describe a person who speaks or acts in a way that causes other people to believe things that are not true.

(See also: [true](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:8
- 1 Timothy 2:14
- 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4
- Genesis 3:12-13
- Genesis 31:26-28
- Leviticus 19:11-12
- Matthew 27:64
- Micah 6:11

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0898, H2048, H3577, H3584, H3868, H4123, H4820, H4860, H5230, H5377, H5558, H6121, H6231, H6601, H7411, H7423, H7683, H7686, H7952, H8267, H8496, H8582, H8591, H8649, G05380, G05390, G13860, G13870, G13880, G18180, G38840, G41050, G41060, G41080, G54220, G54230

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:3](#))

deliver, hand over, turn over, release, rescue

Definition:

To “deliver” someone means to rescue that person. The term “deliverer” refers to someone who rescues or frees people from slavery, oppression, or other dangers. The term “deliverance” refers to what happens when someone rescues or frees people from slavery, oppression, or other dangers.

- In the Old Testament, God appointed deliverers to protect the Israelites by leading them in battle against other people groups who came to attack them.
- These deliverers were also called “judges” and the Old Testament book of Judges records the time in history when these judges were governing Israel.
- God is also called a “deliverer.” Throughout the history of Israel, he delivered or rescued his people from their enemies.
- The term “deliver over to” or “deliver up to” has a very different meaning of handing or turning someone over to an enemy, such as when Judas delivered Jesus over to the Jewish leaders.

Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of helping people escape from their enemies, the term “deliver” can be translated as “rescue” or “liberate” or “save.”
- When it means to deliver someone over to the enemy, “deliver over” can be translated as “betray to” or “hand over” or “give over.”
- The word “deliverer” can also be translated as “rescuer” or “liberator.”
- When the term “deliverer” refers to the judges who led Israel, it could also be translated as “governor” or “judge” or “leader.”

(See also: judge, [save](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 1:10
- Acts 7:35
- Galatians 1:4
- Judges 10:12

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **16:3** Then God provided a **deliverer** who rescued them from their enemies and brought peace to the land.
- **16:16** They (Israel) finally asked God for help again, and God sent them another **deliverer**.
- **16:17** Over many years, God sent many **deliverers** who saved the Israelites from their enemies.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1350, H2020, H2502, H3205, H3444, H3467, H4042, H4422, H4672, H5337, H5414, H5462, H6299, H6403, H6413, H6475, H6561, H7725, H7804, H8199, G03250, G05250, G06290, G10800, G13250, G15600, G16590, G18070, G19290, G26730, G30860, G38600, G45060, G49910, G50880, G54830

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#); [4:14](#); [4:16](#); [5:10](#))

drunk, drunkard

Facts:

The term "drunk" means to be intoxicated from drinking too much of an alcoholic beverage.

- A "drunkard" is a person who is often drunk. This kind of person could also be referred to as an "alcoholic."
- The Bible tells believers not to be drunk with alcoholic drinks, but to be controlled by God's Holy Spirit.
- The Bible teaches that drunkenness is unwise and influences a person to sin in other ways.
- Other ways to translate "drunk" could include "inebriated" or "intoxicated" or "having too much alcohol" or "filled with fermented drink."

(See also: wine)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:11-13
- 1 Samuel 25:36
- Jeremiah 13:13
- Luke 7:34
- Luke 21:34
- Proverbs 23:19-21

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5433, H7301, H7910, H7937, H7941, H7943, H8354, H8358, G31780, G31820, G31830, G31840, G36300, G36320

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:7](#))

envy, covet

Definition:

The term “envy” refers to being jealous of someone because of what that person possesses or because of that person’s admirable qualities. The term “covet” means to strongly desire to have something.

- Envy is normally a negative feeling of resentment because of another person’s success, good fortune, or possessions.
- Coveting is a strong desire to have someone else’s property, or even someone else’s spouse.

(See also: jealous)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
- 1 Peter 2:1
- Exodus 20:17
- Mark 7:20-23
- Proverbs 3:31-32
- Romans 1:29

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0183, H1214, H1215, H2530, H3415, H5869, H7065, H7068, G08660, G19370, G22050, G22060, G37130, G37880, G41230, G41240, G41900, G53540, G53550, G53660

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:5](#))

epistle, letter

Definition:

A letter is a written message sent to a person or group of persons who are usually a distance away from the writer. An epistle is a special type of letter, often written in a more formal style, for a special purpose, such as teaching.

- In New Testament times, epistles and other types of letters were written on parchment made from animal skins or on papyrus made from plant fibers.
- The New Testament epistles from Paul, John, James, Jude, and Peter were letters of instruction that they wrote to encourage, exhort, and teach the early Christians in various cities throughout the Roman Empire.
- Ways to translate this term could include “written message” or “written down words” or “writing.”

(See also: encourage, [exhort](#), [teach](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:27
- 2 Thessalonians 2:15
- Acts 9:1-2
- Acts 28:21-22

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0104, H0107, H3791, H4385, H5406, H5407, H5612, G11210, G19920

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:27](#))

evil, wicked, unpleasant

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “evil” can refer either to the concept of moral wickedness or emotional unpleasantness. The context will usually make it clear which meaning is intended in the specific instance of the term.

- While “evil” may describe a person’s character, “wicked” may refer more to a person’s behavior. However, both terms are very similar in meaning.
- The term “wickedness” refers to the state of being that exists when people do wicked things.
- The results of evil are clearly shown in how people mistreat others by killing, stealing, slandering and being cruel and unkind.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the terms “evil” and “wicked” can be translated as “bad” or “sinful” or “immoral.”
- Other ways to translate these could include “not good” or “not righteous” or “not moral.”
- Make sure the words or phrases that are used to translate these terms fit the context that is natural in the target language.

(See also: disobey, [sin](#), [good](#), [righteous](#), demon)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 24:11
- 1 Timothy 6:10
- 3 John 1:10
- Genesis 2:17
- Genesis 6:5-6
- Job 1:1
- Job 8:20
- Judges 9:57
- Luke 6:22-23
- Matthew 7:11-12
- Proverbs 3:7
- Psalms 22:16-17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **2:4** “God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand good and **evil** like he does.”
- **3:1** After a long time, many people were living in the world. They had become very **wicked** and violent.
- **3:2** But Noah found favor with God. He was a righteous man living among **wicked** people.
- **4:2** God saw that if they all kept working together to do **evil**, they could do many more sinful things.
- **8:12** “You tried to do **evil** when you sold me as a slave, but God used the **evil** for good!”
- **14:2** They (Canaanites) worshiped false gods and did many **evil** things.
- **17:1** But then he (Saul) became a **wicked** man who did not obey God, so God chose a different man who would one day be king in his place.
- **18:11** In the new kingdom of Israel, all the kings were **evil**.
- **29:8** The king was so angry that he threw the **wicked** servant into prison until he could pay back all of his debt.
- **45:2** They said, “We heard him (Stephen) speak **evil** things about Moses and God!”

- **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: H0205, H0605, H1100, H1681, H1942, H2154, H2162, H2254, H2617, H3399, H3415, H4209, H4849, H5753, H5766, H5767, H5999, H6001, H6090, H7451, H7455, H7489, H7561, H7562, H7563, H7564, G00920, G01130, G04590, G09320, G09870, G09880, G14260, G25490, G25510, G25540, G25550, G25560, G25570, G25590, G25600, G26350, G26360, G41510, G41890, G41900, G41910, G53370

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:15](#); [5:22](#))

exhort, exhortation

Definition:

The term “exhort” means to strongly encourage and urge someone to do what is right. Such encouragement is called “exhortation.”

- The purpose of exhortation is to persuade other people to avoid sin and follow God’s will.
- The New Testament teaches Christians to exhort each other in love, not harshly or abruptly.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “exhort” could also be translated as “strongly urge” or “persuade” or “advise.”
- Make sure the translation of this term does not imply that the exhorter is angry. The term should convey strength and seriousness, but should not refer to angry speech.
- In most contexts, the term “exhort” should be translated differently than “encourage,” which means to inspire, reassure, or comfort someone.
- Usually this term will also be translated differently from “admonish,” which means to warn or correct someone for his wrong behavior.

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:3-4
- 1 Thessalonians 2:12
- 1 Timothy 5:2
- Luke 3:18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G38670, G38700, G38740, G43890

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:3](#); [2:12](#); [4:1](#); [4:10](#); [5:14](#); [5:27](#))

face, facial

Definition:

The word “face” literally refers to the front part of a person’s head. This term also has several figurative meanings in the Bible.

- In the Bible, the term “face” is often used figuratively to mean a person’s presence, the front of an object, or the surface of something.
- When referring to a person, the term “face” is often used figuratively to mean the action of seeing, which can represent that person’s knowledge, perception, notice, attention, or judgment.
- In a physical sense, to “face” someone or something means to look in the direction of that person or thing.
- To “face each other” means to “look directly at each other.”
- Being “face to face” means that two people are seeing each other in person, at a close distance.
- When Jesus “steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,” it means that he very firmly decided to go.
- To “set one’s face against” people or a city means to firmly decide to no longer support, or to reject that city or person.
- The expression “face of the land” refers to the surface of the earth and often is a general reference to the whole earth. For example, a “famine covering the face of the earth” refers to a widespread famine affecting many people living on earth.
- The figurative expression “do not hide your face from your people” means “do not reject your people” or “do not desert your people” or “do not stop taking care of your people.”

Translation Suggestions:

- If possible, it is best to keep the expression or use an expression in the project language that has a similar meaning.
- The term to “face” could be translated as to “turn toward” or to “look at directly” or to “look at the face of.”
- The expression “face to face” could be translated as “up close” or “right in front of” or “in the presence of.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “before his face” could be translated as “ahead of him” or “in front of him” or “before him” or “in his presence.”
- The expression “set his face toward” could be translated as “began traveling toward” or “firmly made up his mind to go to.”
- The expression “hide his face from” could be translated as “turn away from” or “stop helping or protecting” or “reject.”
- To “set his face against” a city or people could be translated as “look at with anger and condemn” or “refuse to accept” or “decide to reject” or “condemn and reject” or “pass judgment on.”
- The expression “say it to their face” could be translated as “say it to them directly” or “say it to them in their presence” or “say it to them in person.”
- The expression “on the face of the land” could also be translated as “throughout the land” or “over the whole land” or “living throughout the land.”

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 5:4
- Genesis 33:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0600, H0639, H5869, H6440, H8389, G37990, G43830, G47500

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:17](#); [3:10](#))

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: [Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:3](#); [1:8](#); [3:2](#); [3:5](#); [3:6](#); [3:7](#); [3:10](#); [5:8](#))

faithful, faithfulness, trustworthy

Definition:

To be “faithful” to God means to consistently live according to God’s teachings. It means to be loyal to him by obeying him. The state or condition of being faithful is “faithfulness.”

- A person who is faithful can be trusted to always keep his promises and to always fulfill his responsibilities to other people.
- A faithful person perseveres in doing a task, even when it is long and difficult.
- Faithfulness to God is the consistent practice of doing what God wants us to do.

Translation Suggestions:

- In many contexts, “faithful” can be translated as “loyal” or “dedicated” or “dependable.”
- In other contexts, “faithful” can be translated by a word or phrase that means “continuing to believe” or “persevering in believing and obeying God.”
- Ways that “faithfulness” could be translated could include “persevering in believing” or “loyalty” or “trustworthiness” or “believing and obeying God.”

(See also: [believe](#), [faith](#), [believe](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 24:49
- Leviticus 26:40
- Numbers 12:7
- Joshua 2:14
- Judges 2:16-17
- 1 Samuel 2:9
- Psalm 12:1
- Proverbs 11:12-13
- Isaiah 1:26
- Jeremiah 9:7-9
- Hosea 5:7
- Luke 12:46
- Luke 16:10
- Colossians 1:7
- 1 Thessalonians 5:24
- 3 John 1:5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:5** Even in prison, Joseph remained **faithful** to God, and God blessed him.
- **14:12** Even so, God was still **faithful** to His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- **15:13** The people promised to remain **faithful** to God and follow his laws.
- **17:9** David ruled with justice and **faithfulness** for many years, and God blessed him. However, toward the end of his life he sinned terribly against God.
- **35:12** “The older son said to his father, ‘All these years I have worked **faithfully** for you!’”
- **49:17** But God is **faithful** and says that if you confess your sins, he will forgive you.
- **50:4** “If you remain **faithful** to me to the end, then God will save you.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0529, H0530, H0539, H0540, H0571, H0898, H2181, H4603, H4604, H4820, G05690, G05710, G41030

(**Go back to:** [Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 3 General Notes](#); [5:24](#))

fulfill, fulfilled, carried out

Definition:

The term “fulfill” means to complete or accomplish something that was expected.

- When a prophecy is fulfilled, it means that God causes to happen what was predicted in the prophecy.
- If a person fulfills a promise or a vow, it means that he does what he has promised to do.
- To fulfill a responsibility means to do the task that was assigned or required.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “fulfill” could be translated as “accomplish” or “complete” or “cause to happen” or “obey” or “perform.”
- The phrase “has been fulfilled” could also be translated as “has come true” or “has happened” or “has taken place.”
- Ways to translate “fulfill,” as in “fulfill your ministry,” could include “complete” or “perform” or “practice” or “serve other people as God has called you to do.”

(See also: [prophet](#), [Christ](#), minister, [call](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 2:27
- Acts 3:17-18
- Leviticus 22:17-19
- Luke 4:21
- Matthew 1:22-23
- Matthew 5:17
- Psalms 116:12-15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **24:4** John **fulfilled** what the prophets said, “See I send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way.”
- **40:3** The soldiers gambled for Jesus’ clothing. When they did this, they **fulfilled** a prophecy that said, “They divided my garments among them, and gambled for my clothing.”
- **42:7** Jesus said, “I told you that everything written about me in God’s word must be **fulfilled**.”
- **43:5** “This **fulfills** the prophecy made by the prophet Joel in which God said, ‘In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit.’”
- **43:7** “This **fulfills** the prophecy which says, ‘You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.’”
- **44:5** “Although you did not understand what you were doing, God used your actions to **fulfill** the prophecies that the Messiah would suffer and die.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1214, H5487, G10960, G41380

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:16](#))

Gentile

Facts:

The term “Gentile” refers to anyone who is not a Jew. Gentiles are people who are not descendants of Jacob.

- In the Bible, the term “uncircumcised” is also used figuratively to refer to Gentiles because many of them did not circumcise their male children as the Israelites did.
- Because God chose the Jews to be his special people, they thought of the Gentiles as outsiders who could never be God’s people.
- The Jews were also called “Israelites” or “Hebrews” at different times in history. They referred to anyone else as a “Gentile.”
- Gentile could also be translated as “not a Jew” or “non-Jewish” or “not an Israelite” (Old Testament) or “non-Jew.”
- Traditionally, Jews would neither eat with nor associate with Gentiles, which at first caused problems within the early church.

(See also: Israel, Jacob, [Jew](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 9:13-16
- Acts 14:5-7
- Galatians 2:16
- Luke 2:32
- Matthew 5:47
- Matthew 6:5-7
- Romans 11:25

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1471, G14820, G14840, G16720

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:16; 4:5](#))

glory, glorious, glorify

Definition:

The term “glory” is a general term for a family of concepts including value, worth, importance, honor, splendor, or majesty. The term “glorify” means to ascribe glory to someone or something, or to show or tell how glorious something or someone is.

- In the Bible, the term “glory” is especially used to describe God, who is more valuable, more worthy, more important, more honorable, more splendid, and more majestic than anyone or anything in the universe. Everything about his character reveals his glory.
- People can glorify God by telling about the wonderful things he has done. They can also glorify God by living in accordance with God’s character, because doing so shows to others his value, worth, importance, honor, splendor, and majesty.
- The expression to “glory in” means to boast about or take pride in something.

Old Testament

- The specific phrase “the glory of Yahweh” in the Old Testament usually refers to some perceptible manifestation of Yahweh’s presence in a particular location.

New Testament

- God the Father will glorify God the Son by revealing to all people the full extent of how glorious Jesus is.
- Everyone who believes in Christ will be glorified with him. This use of the term “glorify” carries a unique meaning. It means that when people who believe in Christ are raised to life, they will be changed physically to be like Jesus as he appeared after his resurrection.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “glory” could include “splendor” or “majesty” or “awesome greatness” or “extreme value.”
- The term “glorious” could be translated as “full of glory” or “extremely valuable” or “brightly shining” or “awesomely majestic.”
- The expression “give glory to God” could be translated as “honor God’s greatness” or “praise God because of his splendor” or “tell others how great God is.”
- The expression “glory in” could also be translated as “praise” or “take pride in” or “boast about” or “take pleasure in.”
- “Glorify” could also be translated as “give glory to” or “bring glory to” or “cause to appear great.”
- The phrase “glorify God” could also be translated as “praise God” or “talk about God’s greatness” or “show how great God is” or “honor God (by obeying him).”
- The term “be glorified” could also be translated as “be shown to be very great” or “be praised” or “be exalted.”

(See also: [honor](#), majesty, exalt, obey, praise)

Bible References:

- Exodus 24:17
- Numbers 14:9-10
- Isaiah 35:2

- Luke 18:43
- Luke 2:9
- John 12:28
- Acts 3:13-14
- Acts 7:1-3
- Romans 8:17
- 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
- Philippians 2:14-16
- Philippians 4:19
- Colossians 3:1-4
- 1 Thessalonians 2:5
- James 2:1-4
- 1 Peter 4:15-16
- Revelation 15:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **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!”
- **25:6** Then Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and all their **glory** and said, “I will give you all this if you bow down and worship me.”
- **37:1** When Jesus heard this news, he said, “This sickness will not end in death, but it is for the **glory** of God.”
- **37:8** Jesus responded, “Did I not tell you that you would see God’s **glory** if you believe in me?”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0117, H0142, H0155, H0215, H1342, H1921, H1926, H1935, H1984, H3367, H3513, H3519, H3520, H6286, H6643, H7623, H8597, G13910, G13920, G17400, G17410, G27440, G48880

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:6](#); [2:12](#); [2:20](#))

God

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “God” refers to the eternal being who created the universe out of nothing. God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God’s personal name is “Yahweh.”

- God has always existed; he existed before anything else existed, and he will continue to exist forever.
- He is the only true God and has authority over everything in the universe.
- God is perfectly righteous, infinitely wise, holy, sinless, just, merciful, and loving.
- He is a covenant-keeping God, who always fulfills his promises.
- People were created to worship God and he is the only one they should worship.
- God revealed his name as “Yahweh,” which means “he is” or “I am” or “the One who (always) exists.”
- The Bible also teaches about false “gods,” which are nonliving idols that people wrongly worship.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “God” could include “Deity” or “Creator” or “Supreme Being” or “Supreme Creator” or “Infinite Sovereign Lord” or “Eternal Supreme Being.”
- Consider how God is referred to in a local or national language. There may also already be a word for “God” in the language being translated. If so, it is important to make sure that this word fits the characteristics of the one true God as described above.
- Many languages capitalize the first letter of the word for the one true God, to distinguish it from the word for a false god. Another way to make this distinction would be to use different terms for “God” and “god.”
NOTE: In the biblical text, when a person who does not worship Yahweh speaks about Yahweh and uses the word “god,” it is acceptable to render the term without a capital letter in reference to Yahweh (see Jonah 1:6, 3:9).
- The phrase “I will be their God and they will be my people” could also be translated as “I, God, will rule over these people and they will worship me.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: create, [false god](#), [God the Father](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [false god](#), [Son of God](#), Yahweh)

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:7
- 1 Samuel 10:7-8
- 1 Timothy 4:10
- Colossians 1:16
- Deuteronomy 29:14-16
- Ezra 3:1-2
- Genesis 1:2
- Hosea 4:11-12
- Isaiah 36:6-7
- James 2:20
- Jeremiah 5:5
- John 1:3
- Joshua 3:9-11
- Lamentations 3:43
- Micah 4:5
- Philippians 2:6
- Proverbs 24:12

- Psalms 47:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:1 God** created the universe and everything in it in six days.
- **1:15 God** made man and woman in his own image.
- **5:3** "I am **God** Almighty. I will make a covenant with you."
- **9:14 God** said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am Yahweh, the **God** of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"
- **10:2** Through these plagues, **God** showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's gods.
- **16:1** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the true **God**.
- **22:7** "You, my son, will be called the prophet of the **Most High God** who will prepare the people to receive the Messiah!"
- **24:9** There is only one **God**. But John heard **God** the Father speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.
- **25:7** "Worship only the Lord your **God** and only serve him."
- **28:1** "There is only one who is good, and that is **God**."
- **49:9** But **God** loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with **God** forever.
- **50:16** But some day **God** will create a new heaven and a new earth that will be perfect.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0136, H0305, H0410, H0426, H0430, H0433, H2486, H2623, H3068, H3069, H3863, H4136, H6697, G01120, G05160, G09320, G09350, G10960, G11400, G20980, G21240, G21280, G21500, G21520, G21530, G22990, G23040, G23050, G23120, G23130, G23140, G23150, G23160, G23170, G23180, G23190, G23200, G33610, G37850, G41510, G52070, G53770, G54630, G55370, G55380

(Go back to: [Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:2](#); [1:4](#); [1:8](#); [1:9](#); [2:2](#); [2:4](#); [2:5](#); [2:8](#); [2:9](#); [2:10](#); [2:12](#); [2:13](#); [2:14](#); [2:15](#); [3:2](#); [3:9](#); [4:1](#); [4:5](#); [4:7](#); [4:8](#); [4:14](#); [4:16](#); [5:9](#); [5:23](#))

God the Father, heavenly Father, Father

Facts:

The terms "God the Father" and "heavenly Father" refer to Yahweh, the one true God. Another term with the same meaning is "Father," used most often when Jesus was referring to him.

- God exists as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each one is fully God, and yet they are only one God. This is a mystery that mere humans cannot fully understand.
- God the Father sent God the Son (Jesus) into the world and he sends the Holy Spirit to his people.
- Anyone who believes in God the Son becomes a child of God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit comes to live in that person. This is another mystery that human beings cannot fully understand.

Translation Suggestions:

- In translating the phrase "God the Father," it is best to translate "Father" with the same word that the language naturally uses to refer to a human father.
- The term "heavenly Father" could be translated by "Father who lives in heaven" or "Father God who lives in heaven" or "God our Father from heaven."
- Usually "Father" is capitalized when it, refers to God.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [ancestor](#), [God](#), [heaven](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Jesus](#), [Son of God](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 8:4-6
- 1 John 2:1
- 1 John 2:23
- 1 John 3:1
- Colossians 1:1-3
- Ephesians 5:18-21
- Luke 10:22
- Matthew 5:16
- Matthew 23:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **24:9** There is only one God. But John heard **God the Father** speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.
- **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."
- **40:7** Then Jesus cried out, "It is finished! **Father**, I give my spirit into your hands."
- **42:10** "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."
- **43:8** "Jesus is now exalted to the right hand of **God the Father**."
- **50:10** "Then the righteous ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of **God their Father**."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0001, H0002, G39620

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#); [1:3](#); [3:11](#); [3:13](#))

god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry

Definition:

A false god is something that people worship instead of the one true God. The term “goddess” refers specifically to a female false god.

- These false gods or goddesses do not exist. Yahweh is the only God.
- People sometimes make objects into idols to worship as symbols of their false gods.
- In the Bible, God’s people frequently turned away from obeying him in order to worship false gods.
- Demons often deceive people into believing that the false gods and idols they worship have power.
- Baal, Dagon, and Molech were three of the many false gods that were worshiped by people in Bible times.
- Asherah and Artemis (Diana) were two of the goddesses that ancient peoples worshiped.

An idol is an object that people make so they can worship it. Something is described as “idolatrous” if it involves giving honor to something other than the one true God.

- People make idols to represent the false gods that they worship.
- These false gods do not exist; there is no God besides Yahweh.
- Sometimes demons work through an idol to make it seem like it has power, even though it does not.
- Idols are often made of valuable materials like gold, silver, bronze, or expensive wood.
- An “idolatrous kingdom” means a “kingdom of people who worship idols” or a “kingdom of people who worship earthly things.”
- The term “idolatrous figure” is another word for a “carved image” or an “idol.”

Translation Suggestions:

- There may already be a word for “god” or “false god” in the language or in a nearby language.
- The term “idol” could be used to refer to false gods.
- In English, a lower case “g” is used to refer to false gods, and upper case “G” is used to refer to the one true God. Other languages also do that.
- Another option would be to use a completely different word to refer to the false gods.
- Some languages may add a word to specify whether the false god is described as male or female.

(See also: [God](#), Asherah, Baal, Molech, demon, [image](#), kingdom, worship)

Bible References:

- Genesis 35:2
- Exodus 32:1
- Psalms 31:6
- Psalms 81:8-10
- Isaiah 44:20
- Acts 7:41
- Acts 7:43
- Acts 15:20
- Acts 19:27
- Romans 2:22
- Galatians 4:8-9
- Galatians 5:19-21
- Colossians 3:5
- 1 Thessalonians 1:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **10:2** Through these plagues, God showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's **gods**.
- **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**."
- **14:2** They (Canaanites) worshiped false **gods** and did many evil things.
- **16:1** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite **gods** instead of Yahweh, the true God.
- **18:13** But most of Judah's kings were evil, corrupt, and they worshiped idols. Some of the kings even sacrificed their children to false **gods**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H0367, H0410, H0426, H0430, H0457, H1322, H1544, H1892, H2553, H3649, H4656, H4906, H5236, H5566, H6089, H6090, H6091, H6456, H6459, H6673, H6736, H6754, H7723, H8163, H8251, H8267, H8441, H8655, G14930, G14940, G14950, G14960, G14970, G22990, G27120

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#))

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: [Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:5](#); [2:2](#); [2:4](#); [2:8](#); [2:9](#); [3:2](#))

good, right, pleasant, better, best

Definition:

The term “good” generally refers to a positive evaluation of the quality of something or someone, often in a moral or emotional sense. However, the term conveys various nuances throughout the Bible depending on the context.

- Something that is “good” could be emotionally pleasant, morally right, excellent, helpful, suitable, or profitable.
- In the Bible, the general meaning of “good” is often contrasted with “evil.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The general term for “good” in the target language should be used wherever this general meaning is accurate and natural, especially in contexts where it is contrasted to evil.
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “kind” or “excellent” or “pleasing to God” or “righteous” or “morally upright” or “profitable.”
- “Good land” could be translated as “fertile land” or “productive land”; a “good crop” could be translated as a “plentiful harvest” or “large amount of crops.”
- The phrase “do good to” means to do something that benefits others and could be translated as “be kind to” or “help” or “benefit” someone or “cause someone to prosper.”
- To “do good on the Sabbath” means to “do things that help others on the Sabbath.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the term “goodness” could include “blessing” or “kindness” or “moral perfection” or “righteousness” or “purity.”

(See also: [righteous](#), prosper, [evil](#))

Bible References:

- Galatians 5:22-24
- Genesis 1:12
- Genesis 2:9
- Genesis 2:17
- James 3:13
- Romans 2:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:4** God saw that what he had created was **good**.
- **1:11** God planted the tree of the knowledge of **good** and evil.
- **1:12** Then God said, “It is not **good** for man to be alone.”
- **2:4** “God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand **good** and evil like he does.”
- **8:12** “You tried to do evil when you sold me as a slave, but God used the evil for **good!**”
- **14:15** Joshua was a **good** leader because he trusted and obeyed God.
- **18:13** Some of these kings were **good** men who ruled justly and worshiped God.
- **28:1** “**Good** teacher, what must I do to have eternal life?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me ‘**good**?’ There is only one who is **good**, and that is God.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0117, H0145, H0155, H0202, H0239, H0410, H1580, H1926, H1935, H2532, H2617, H2623, H2869, H2895, H2896, H2898, H3190, H3191, H3276, H3474, H3788, H3966, H4261, H4399, H5232, H5750, H6287, H6643, H6743, H7075, H7368, H7399, H7443, H7999, H8231, H8232, H8233, H8389, H8458, G00140, G00150, G00180, G00190, G05150, G07440, G08650, G09790, G13800, G20950, G20970, G21060, G21070, G21080, G21090, G21140, G21150, G21330, G21400, G21620, G21630, G21740, G22930, G25650, G25670, G25700, G25730, G28870, G29860, G31400, G36170, G37760, G41470, G46320, G46740, G48510, G52230, G52240, G53580, G55420, G55430, G55440

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:6](#); [5:15](#); [5:21](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#); [5:28](#))

hand

Definition:

The word “hand” refers to the part of the body at the end of the arm. This term is often used figuratively to refer to a person’s power, control, or action, whether it be in reference to God or in reference to a human person.

Some of the various uses of the term “hand” include the following:

- The term “hand” can be used figuratively to refer to the position of being “beside” a person, an object, or a location.
- To “lay a hand on” means to “harm.” To “save from the hand of” means to prevent someone from being harmed by another person.
- The position of being “on the right hand” means “on the right side” or “to the right.”
- The expression “by the hand of” someone means “by” or “through” the action of that person. For example, the phrase “by the hand of the Lord” means that God caused something to happen.
- Expressions such as “hand over to” or “deliver into the hands of” refer to causing someone to be under the control or power of someone else.
- The term “laying on of hands” can refer to placing a hand on a person in order to dedicate that person to God’s service, to pray for healing, or to ask God to bless that person.
- When Paul says “written by my hand,” it means that he himself wrote that part of the letter rather than speaking it to someone else to write down.

Translation Suggestions

- These expressions and other figures of speech could be translated using other figurative expressions that have the same meaning. Or the meaning could be translated using direct, literal language (see examples above).
- The expression “handed him the scroll” could also be translated as “gave him the scroll” or “put the scroll in his hand.” It was not given to him permanently, but just for the purpose of using it at that time.
- An expression such as “delivered them into the hands of their enemies” or “handed them over to their enemies,” could be translated as “allowed their enemies to conquer them” or “caused them to be captured by their enemies” or “empowered their enemies to gain control over them.”
- To “die by the hand of” could be translated as “be killed by.”
- The expression “on the right hand of” could be translated as “on the right side of.”
- In regard to Jesus being “seated at the right hand of God,” if this does not communicate in the language that it refers to a position of high honor and equal authority, a different expression with that meaning could be used. Or a short explanation could be added: “on the right side of God, in the position of highest authority.”

(See also: [power](#), right hand, [honor](#), bless)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:25
- Acts 8:17
- Acts 11:21
- Genesis 9:5
- Genesis 14:20
- John 3:35
- Mark 7:32
- Matthew 6:3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2026, H2651, H2947, H2948, H3027, H3028, H3225, H3231, H3233, H3709, H7126, H7138, H8040, H8042, H8168, G07100, G11880, G14480, G14510, G21760, G29020, G40840, G44740, G54950, G54960, G54970

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:11](#))

heart

Definition:

The term “heart” refers to the internal bodily organ that pumps blood throughout the body in people and animals. However, in the Bible the term “heart” is often used figuratively to refer to a person’s thoughts, emotions, desires, or will.

- To have a “hard heart” is a common expression that means a person stubbornly refuses to obey God.
- The expressions “with all my heart” or “with my whole heart” mean to do something with complete sincerity, commitment, or willingness, holding nothing back.
- The expression “take it to heart” means to treat something seriously and apply it to one’s life.
- The term “brokenhearted” describes a person who is very sad. That person has been deeply hurt emotionally.

Translation Suggestions

- Some languages use a different body part such as “stomach” or “liver” to refer to these ideas.
- Other languages may use one word to express some of these concepts and another word to express others.
- If “heart” or other body part does not have this meaning, some languages may need to express this literally with terms such as “thoughts” or “emotions” or “desires.”
- Depending on the context, “with all my heart” or “with my whole heart” could be translated as “with all my energy” or “with complete dedication” or “completely” or “with total commitment.”
- The expression “take it to heart” could be translated as “treat it seriously” or “carefully think about it.”
- The expression “hard-hearted” could also be translated as “stubbornly rebellious” or “refusing to obey” or “continually disobeying God.”
- Ways to translate “brokenhearted” could include “very sad” or “feeling deeply hurt.”

(See also: hard)

Bible References:

- 1 John 3:17
- 1 Thessalonians 2:4
- 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15
- Acts 8:22
- Acts 15:9
- Luke 8:15
- Mark 2:6
- Matthew 5:8
- Matthew 22:37

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1079, H2436, H2504, H2910, H3519, H3629, H3820, H3821, H3823, H3824, H3825, H3826, H4578, H5315, H5640, H7130, H7307, H7356, H7907, G06740, G12820, G12710, G21330, G25880, G25890, G46410, G46980, G55900

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:4](#); [2:17](#); [3:13](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#); [4:16](#))

Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit

Facts:

These terms all refer to the Holy Spirit, who is God. The one true God exists eternally as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit is also referred to as “the Spirit” and “Spirit of Yahweh” and “Spirit of truth.”
- Because the Holy Spirit is God, he is absolutely holy, infinitely pure, and morally perfect in all his nature and in everything he does.
- Along with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit was active in creating the world.
- When God’s Son, Jesus, returned to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit to his people to lead them, teach them, comfort them, and enable them to do God’s will.
- The Holy Spirit guided Jesus and he guides those who believe in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could simply be translated with the words used to translate “holy” and “spirit.”
- Ways to translate this term could also include “Pure Spirit” or “Spirit who is Holy” or “God the Spirit.”

(See also: [holy](#), [spirit](#), [God](#), [Lord](#), [God the Father](#), [Son of God](#), [gift](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 10:10
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8
- Acts 8:17
- Galatians 5:25
- Genesis 1:1-2
- Isaiah 63:10
- Job 33:4
- Matthew 12:31
- Matthew 28:18-19
- Psalms 51:10-11

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:1** But **God’s Spirit** was there over the water.
- **24:8** When Jesus came up out of the water after being baptized, **the Spirit of God** appeared in the form of a dove and came down and rested on him.
- **26:1** After overcoming Satan’s temptations, Jesus returned in the power of **the Holy Spirit** to the region of Galilee where he lived.
- **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.”
- **42:10** “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.”
- **43:3** They were all filled with the **Holy Spirit** and they began to speak in other languages.
- **43:8** “And Jesus has sent the **Holy Spirit** just as he promised he would do. The **Holy Spirit** is causing the things that you are now seeing and hearing.”
- **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. Then he will also give you the gift of the **Holy Spirit.**”
- **45:1** He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the **Holy Spirit** and of wisdom.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3068, H6944, H7307, G00400, G41510

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:5](#); [1:6](#); [4:8](#); [5:19](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 2:10](#); [3:13](#); [4:4](#); [4:7](#); [5:26](#))

honor

Definition:

The terms "honor" and to "honor" refer to giving someone respect, esteem, or reverence.

- Honor is usually given to someone who is of higher status and importance, such as a king or God.
- God instructs Christians to honor others.
- Children are instructed to honor their parents in ways that include respecting them and obeying them.
- The terms "honor" and "glory" are often used together, especially when referring to Jesus. These may be two different ways of referring to the same thing.
- Ways of honoring God include thanking and praising him, and showing him respect by obeying him and living in a way that shows how great he is.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate "honor" could include "respect" or "esteem" or "high regard."
- The term to "honor" could be translated as to "show special respect to" or to "cause to be praised" or to "show high regard for" or to "highly value."

(See also: dishonor, [glory](#), [glory](#), praise)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 2:8
- Acts 19:17
- John 4:44
- John 12:26
- Mark 6:4
- Matthew 15:6

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1420, H1921, H1922, H1923, H1926, H1927, H1935, H2082, H2142, H3366, H3367, H3368, H3372, H3373, H3374, H3444, H3513, H3519, H3655, H3678, H5081, H5375, H5457, H6213, H6286, H6437, H6942, H6944, H6965, H7236, H7613, H7812, H8597, H8416, G08200, G13910, G13920, G17840, G21510, G25700, G31700, G44110, G45860, G50910, G50920, G50930, G53990

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:4](#))

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 a, “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: [1 Thessalonians 1:3](#); [2:19](#); [4:13](#); [5:8](#))

hour

Definition:

In addition to being used to refer to when or how long something took place, the term “hour” is also used in several figurative ways:

- Sometimes “hour” refers to a regular, scheduled time to do something, such as the “hour of prayer.”
- When the text says that the “hour had come” for Jesus to suffer and be put to death, this means that it was the appointed time for this to happen—the time that God had selected long ago.
- The term “hour” is also used to mean “at that moment” or “right then.”
- When the text talks about the “hour” being late, this means that it was late in the day, when the sun would soon be setting.

Translation Suggestions:

- When used figuratively, the term “hour” can be translated as “time” or “moment” or “appointed time.”
- The phrase “in that very hour” or “the same hour” could be translated as “at that moment” or “at that time” or “immediately” or “right then.”
- The expression “the hour was late” could be translated as “it was late in the day” or “it would soon be getting dark” or “it was late afternoon.”

(See also: hour)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 15:30
- Acts 10:30
- Mark 14:35

Word Data:

- Strong's: G56100

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:17](#))

image, carved image, cast metal images, figure, carved figure, statue

Definition:

These terms are all used to refer to idols that have been made for worshiping a false god. In the context of worshiping idols, the term “image” is a shortened form of “carved image.”

- A “carved image” or “carved figure” is a wooden object that has been made to look like an animal, person, or thing.
- A “cast metal figure” is an object or statue created by melting metal and pouring it into a mold that is in the shape of an object, animal, or person.
- These wooden and metal objects were used in the worship of false gods.
- The term “image” when referring to an idol could either refer to a wooden or metal idol.

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to an idol, the term “image” could also be translated as “statue” or “engraved idol” or “carved religious object.”
- It may be more clear in some languages to always use a descriptive word with this term, such as “carved image” or “cast metal figure,” even in places where only the term “image” or “figure” is in the original text.
- Make sure it is clear that this term is different than the term used to refer to being in the image of God.

(See also: [false god](#), [God](#), [false god](#), [image of God](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 14:9-10
- Acts 7:43
- Isaiah 21:8-9
- Matthew 22:21
- Romans 1:23

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0457, H1544, H2553, H4541, H4676, H4853, H4906, H5257, H5262, H5566, H6091, H6456, H6459, H6754, H6755, H6816, H8403, H8544, H8655, G15040, G51790

([Go back to: Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#))

imitate, imitator

Definition:

The terms “imitate” and “imitator” refers to copying someone else by acting exactly like that person does.

- Christians are taught to imitate Jesus Christ by obeying God and loving others, just as Jesus did.
- The apostle Paul told the early church to imitate him, just as he imitated Christ.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “imitate” could be translated as “do the same things as” or “follow his example.”
- The expression “be imitators of God” could be translated as “be people who act like God does” or “be people who do the kinds of things God does.”
- “You became imitators of us” could be translated as “You followed our example” or “You are doing the same kinds of godly things that you saw us do.”

Bible References:

- 3 John 1:11
- Matthew 23:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0310, H6213, G10960, G25960, G34010, G34020, G41600

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:6](#); [2:14](#))

in Christ, in Jesus, in the Lord, in him

Definition:

The phrase “in Christ” and related terms refer to the state or condition of being in relationship with Jesus Christ through faith in him.

- Other related terms include “in Christ Jesus, in Jesus Christ, in the Lord Jesus, in the Lord Jesus Christ.”
- Possible meanings for the term “in Christ” could include “because you belong to Christ” or “through the relationship you have with Christ” or “based on your faith in Christ.”
- These related terms all have the same meaning of being in a state of believing in Jesus and being his disciple.
- Note: Sometimes the word “in” belongs with the verb. For example, “share in Christ” means to “share in” the benefits that come from knowing Christ. To “glory in” Christ means to be glad and give praise to God for who Jesus is and what he has done. To “believe in” Christ means to trust him as Savior and know him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “in Christ” and “in the Lord” (and related phrases) could include:
 - “who belong to Christ”
 - “because you believe in Christ”
 - “because Christ has saved us”
 - “in service to the Lord”
 - “relying on the Lord”
 - “because of what the Lord has done.”
- People who “believe in” Christ or who “have faith in” Christ believe what Jesus taught and are trusting him to save them because of his sacrifice on the cross that paid the penalty for their sins. Some languages may have one word that translates verbs like “believe in” or “share in” or “trust in.”

(See also: [Christ](#), [Lord](#), [Jesus](#), [believe](#), [faith](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:5
- 2 Corinthians 2:17
- 2 Timothy 1:1
- Galatians 1:22
- Galatians 2:17
- Philemon 1:6
- Revelation 1:10
- Romans 9:1

Word Data:

- Strong's: G15190, G29620, G55470

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:8](#); [4:1](#); [4:16](#); [5:12](#); [5:18](#))

it is written

Definition:

The phrase “as it is written” or “what is written” occurs frequently in the New Testament and usually refers to commands or prophecies that were written in the Hebrew scriptures.

- Sometimes “as it is written” refers to what was written in the Law of Moses.
- Other times it is a quote from what one of the prophets wrote in the Old Testament.
- This could be translated “as it is written in the Law of Moses” or “as the prophets wrote long ago” or “what it says in God’s laws that Moses wrote down long ago”.
- Another option is to keep “It is written” and give a footnote that explains what this means.

(See also: [command](#), [law](#), [prophet](#), [word of God](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 5:13-15
- Acts 13:29
- Exodus 32:15-16
- John 21:25
- Luke 3:4
- Mark 9:12
- Matthew 4:6
- Revelation 1:3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3789, G11250

([Go back to: 1 Thessalonians 5:1](#))

Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus

Facts:

Jesus is God's Son. The name "Jesus" means "Yahweh saves." The term "Christ" is a title that means "anointed one" and is another word for Messiah.

- The two names are often combined as "Jesus Christ" or "Christ Jesus." These names emphasize that God's Son is the Messiah, who came to save people from being punished eternally for their sins.
- In a miraculous way, the Holy Spirit caused the eternal Son of God to be born as a human being. His mother was told by an angel to call him "Jesus" because he was destined to save people from their sins.
- Jesus did many miracles that revealed that he is God and that he is the Christ, or the Messiah.

Translation Suggestions:

- In many languages "Jesus" and "Christ" are spelled in a way that keeps the sounds or spelling as close to the original as possible. For example, "Jesucristo," "Jezus Christus," "Yesus Kristus", and "Hesukristo" are some of the ways that these names are translated into different languages.
- For the term "Christ," some translators may prefer to use only some form of the term "Messiah" throughout.
- Also consider how these names are spelled in a nearby local or national language.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Christ, God, God the Father](#), high priest, [kingdom of God](#), Mary, Savior, [Son of God](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 6:11
- 1 John 2:2
- 1 John 4:15
- 1 Timothy 1:2
- 2 Peter 1:2
- 2 Thessalonians 2:15
- 2 Timothy 1:10
- Acts 2:23
- Acts 5:30
- Acts 10:36
- Hebrews 9:14
- Hebrews 10:22
- Luke 24:20
- Matthew 1:21
- Matthew 4:3
- Philippians 2:5
- Philippians 2:10
- Philippians 4:21-23
- Revelation 1:6

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **22:4** The angel said, "You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You are to name him **Jesus** and he will be the Messiah."
- **23:2** "Name him **Jesus** (which means, 'Yahweh saves'), because he will save the people from their sins."

- **24:7** So John baptized him (Jesus), even though **Jesus** had never sinned.
- **24:9** There is only one God. But John heard God the Father speak, and saw **Jesus** the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized **Jesus**.
- **25:8** **Jesus** did not give in to Satan's temptations, so Satan left him.
- **26:8** Then **Jesus** went throughout the region of Galilee, and large crowds came to him. They brought many people who were sick or handicapped, including those who could not see, walk, hear, or speak, and **Jesus** healed them.
- **31:3** Then **Jesus** finished praying and went to the disciples. He walked on top of the water across the lake toward their boat!
- **38:2** He (Judas) knew that the Jewish leaders denied that **Jesus** was the Messiah and that they were plotting to kill him.
- **40:8** Through his death, **Jesus** opened a way for people to come to God.
- **42:11** Then **Jesus** was taken up to heaven, and a cloud hid him from their sight. **Jesus** sat down at the right hand of God to rule over all things.
- **50:17** **Jesus** and his people will live on the new earth, and he will reign forever over everything that exists. He will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or death. **Jesus** will rule his kingdom with peace and justice, and he will be with his people forever.

Word Data:

- Strong's: G24240, G55470

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#); [1:3](#); [1:10](#); [2:14](#); [2:15](#); [2:19](#); [3:11](#); [3:13](#); [4:1](#); [4:2](#); [4:14](#); [5:9](#); [5:18](#); [5:23](#); [5:28](#))

Jew, Jewish

Facts:

Jews are people who are descendants of Abraham's grandson Jacob. The word "Jew" comes from the word "Judah."

- People began to call the Israelites "Jews" after they returned to Judah from their exile in Babylon.
- Jesus the Messiah was Jewish. However, the Jewish religious leaders rejected Jesus and demanded that he be killed.

(See also: Abraham, Jacob, Israel, Babylon, Jewish leaders)

Bible References:

- Acts 2:5
- Acts 10:28
- Acts 14:5-7
- Colossians 3:11
- John 2:14
- Matthew 28:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **20:11** The Israelites were now called **Jews** and most of them had lived their whole lives in Babylon.
- **20:12** So, after seventy years in exile, a small group of **Jews** returned to the city of Jerusalem in Judah.
- **37:10** Many of the **Jews** believed in Jesus because of this miracle.
- **37:11** But the religious leaders of the **Jews** were jealous, so they gathered together to plan how they could kill Jesus and Lazarus.
- **40:2** Pilate commanded that they write, "King of the **Jews**" on a sign and put it on the cross above Jesus' head.
- **46:6** Right away, Saul began preaching to the **Jews** in Damascus, saying, "Jesus is the Son of God!"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3054, H3061, H3062, H3064, H3066, G24500, G24510, G24520, G24530, G24540

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:14](#))

joy, joyful, rejoice, glad

Definition:

joy

The term “joy” refers to a feeling of delight or deep satisfaction. The related term “joyful” describes a person who feels very glad and is full of deep happiness.

- A person feels joy when he has a deep sense that what he is experiencing is very good.
- God is the one who gives true joy to people.
- Having joy does not depend on pleasant circumstances. God can give people joy even when very difficult things are happening in their lives.
- Sometimes places are described as joyful, such as houses or cities. This means that the people who live there are joyful.

rejoice

The term “rejoice” means to be full of joy and gladness.

- This term often refers to being very happy about the good things that God has done.
- It could be translated as “be very happy” or “be very glad” or “be full of joy.”
- When Mary said “my soul rejoices in God my Savior,” she meant “God my Savior has made me very happy” or “I feel so joyful because of what God my Savior has done for me.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “joy” could also be translated as “gladness” or “delight” or “great happiness.”
- The phrase, “be joyful” could be translated as “rejoice” or “be very glad” or it could be translated “be very happy in God’s goodness.”
- A person who is joyful could be described as “very happy” or “delighted” or “deeply glad.”
- A phrase such as “make a joyful shout” could be translated as “shout in a way that shows you are very happy.”
- A “joyful city” or “joyful house” could be translated as “city where joyful people live” or “house full of joyful people” or “city whose people are very happy.” (See: [metonymy](#))

Bible References:

- Nehemiah 8:10
- Psalm 48:2
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- Jeremiah 15:15-16
- Matthew 2:9-10
- Luke 15:7
- Luke 19:37-38
- John 3:29
- Acts 16:32-34
- Romans 5:1-2
- Romans 15:30-32
- Galatians 5:23
- Philippians 4:10-13

- 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16
- Philemon 1:4-7
- James 1:2
- 3 John 1:1-4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **33:7** "The rocky ground is a person who hears God's word and accepts it with **joy**."
- **34:4** "The kingdom of God is also like hidden treasure that someone hid in a field.. Another man found the treasure and then buried it again. He was so filled with **joy**, that he went and sold everything he had and used the money to buy that field."
- **41:7** The women were full of fear and great **joy**. They ran to tell the disciples the good news.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1523, H1524, H1525, H2302, H2304, H2305, H2654, H2898, H4885, H5937, H5947, H5965, H5970, H6342, H6670, H7440, H7442, H7444, H7445, H7797, H7832, H8055, H8056, H8057, H8342, H8643, G00200, G00210, G21650, G21670, G27440, G46400, G47960, G49130, G54630, G54790

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:6](#); [2:19](#); [2:20](#); [3:9](#); [5:16](#))

Judea, Judah

Facts:

The term "Judea" refers to an area of land in ancient Israel. It is sometimes used in a narrow sense and other times in a broad sense.

- Sometimes "Judea" is used in a narrow sense to refer only to the province located in the southern part of ancient Israel just west of the Dead Sea. Some translations call this province "Judah."
- Other times "Judea" has a broad sense and refers to all the provinces of ancient Israel, including Galilee, Samaria, Perea, Idumea and Judea (Judah).
- If translators want to make the distinction clear, the broad sense of Judea could be translated as "Judea Country" and the narrow sense could be translated as "Judea Province," or "Judah Province" since this is the part of ancient Israel where the tribe of Judah had originally lived.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: Galilee, Edom, Judah, Judah, Samaria)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:14
- Acts 2:9
- Acts 9:32
- Acts 12:19
- John 3:22-24
- Luke 1:5
- Luke 4:44
- Luke 5:17
- Mark 10:1-4
- Matthew 2:1
- Matthew 2:5
- Matthew 2:22-23
- Matthew 3:1-3
- Matthew 19:1

Word Data:

- Strong's: G24530

([Go back to: 1 Thessalonians 2:14](#))

kingdom of God, kingdom of heaven

Definition:

The terms “kingdom of God” and “kingdom of heaven” both refer to God’s rule and authority over his people and over all creation.

- The Jews often used the term “heaven” to refer to God, to avoid saying his name directly. (See: [metonymy](#))
- In the New Testament book that Matthew wrote, he referred to God’s kingdom as “the kingdom of heaven,” probably because he was writing primarily for a Jewish audience.
- The kingdom of God refers to God ruling people spiritually as well as ruling over the physical world.
- The Old Testament prophets said that God would send the Messiah to rule with righteousness. Jesus, the Son of God, is the Messiah who will rule over God’s kingdom forever.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “kingdom of God” can be translated as “God’s rule (as king)” or “when God reigns as king” or “God’s rule over everything.”
- The term “kingdom of heaven” could also be translated as “God’s rule from heaven as king” or “God in heaven reigning” or “heaven’s reign” or “heaven ruling over everything.” If it is not possible to translate this simply and clearly, the phrase “kingdom of God” could be translated instead.
- Some translators may prefer to capitalize “Heaven” to show that it refers to God. Others may include a note in the text, such as “kingdom of heaven (that is, ‘kingdom of God’).”
- A footnote at the bottom of the page of a printed Bible may also be used to explain the meaning of “heaven” in this expression.

(See also: [God](#), [heaven](#), king, kingdom, King of the Jews, reign)

Bible References:

- 2 Thessalonians 1:5
- Acts 8:12-13
- Acts 28:23
- Colossians 4:11
- John 3:3
- Luke 7:28
- Luke 10:9
- Luke 12:31-32
- Matthew 3:2
- Matthew 4:17
- Matthew 5:10
- Romans 14:17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **24:2** He (John) preached to them, saying, “Repent, for the **kingdom of God** is near!”
- **28:6** Then Jesus said to his disciples, “It is extremely hard for rich people to enter into the **kingdom of God**! Yes, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the **kingdom of God**.”
- **29:2** Jesus said, “The **kingdom of God** is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.”
- **34:1** Jesus told many other stories about the **kingdom of God**. For example, he said, “The **kingdom of God** is like a mustard seed that someone planted in his field.”

- **34:3** Jesus told another story, "The **kingdom of God** is like yeast that a woman mixes into some bread dough until it spreads throughout the dough."
- **34:4** "The **kingdom of God** is also like hidden treasure that someone hid in a field.. Another man found the treasure and then buried it again."
- **34:5** "The **kingdom of God** is also like a perfect pearl of great value."
- **42:9** He proved to his disciples in many ways that he was alive, and he taught them about the **kingdom of God**.
- **49:5** Jesus said that the **kingdom of God** is more valuable than anything else in the world.
- **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."

Word Data:

- Strong's: G09320, G23160, G37720

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:12](#))

kiss

Definition:

A kiss is an action in which one person puts his lips to another person's lips or face. This term can also be used figuratively.

- Some cultures kiss each other on the cheek as a form of greeting or to say goodbye.
- A kiss can communicate deep love between two people, such as a husband and wife.
- The expression to "kiss someone farewell" means to say goodbye with a kiss.
- Sometimes the word "kiss" is used to mean "say goodbye to." When Elisha said to Elijah, "Let me first go and kiss my father and mother," he wanted to say goodbye to his parents before leaving them to follow Elijah.

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:25-28
- Genesis 27:26-27
- Genesis 29:11
- Genesis 31:28
- Genesis 45:15
- Genesis 48:10
- Luke 22:48
- Mark 14:45
- Matthew 26:48

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5390, H5401, G27050, G53680, G53700

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:26](#))

know, knowledge, unknown, distinguish

Definition:

The term “know” and “knowledge” means generally to understand something or someone. It can also mean to be aware of a fact or to be familiar with a person. The expression “to make known” means to tell information.

- The term “knowledge” refers to information that people know. It can apply to knowing physical concepts or abstract concepts.
- To “know about” God means to understand facts about him because of what he has revealed to us.
- To “know” God means to have a relationship with him. This also applies to knowing people.
- To know God’s will means to be aware of what he has commanded, or to understand what he wants a person to do.
- To “know the Law” means to be aware of what God has commanded or to understand what God has instructed in the laws he gave to Moses.
- Sometimes “knowledge” is used as a synonym for “wisdom,” which includes living in a way that is pleasing to God.
- The “knowledge of God” is sometimes used as a synonym for the “fear of Yahweh.”
- When used of a man and a woman to “know” is often an euphemism that refers to having sexual intercourse.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “know” could include “understand” or “be familiar with” or “be aware of” or “be acquainted with” or “be in relationship with.”
- In the context of understanding the difference between two things, the term is usually translated as “distinguish.” When used in this way, the term is often followed by the preposition “between.”
- Some languages have two different words for “know,” one for knowing facts and one for knowing a person and having a relationship with him.
- The term “make known” could be translated as “cause people to know” or “reveal” or “tell about” or “explain.”
- To “know about” something could be translated as “be aware of” or “be familiar with.”
- The expression “know how to” means to understand the process or method of getting something done. It could also be translated as “be able to” or “have the skill to.”
- The term “knowledge” could also be translated as “what is known” or “wisdom” or “understanding,” depending on the context.

(See also: law, reveal, understand, wise)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 2:12-13
- 1 Samuel 17:46
- 2 Corinthians 2:15
- 2 Peter 1:3-4
- Deuteronomy 4:39-40
- Genesis 19:5
- Luke 1:77

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1843, H1844, H1847, H1875, H3045, H3046, H4093, H4486, H5046, H5234, H5475, H5869, G00500, G00560, G10970, G11070, G11080, G14920, G19210, G19220, G19870, G24670, G25890, G42670, G48940

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:4](#); [1:5](#); [2:1](#); [2:2](#); [2:5](#); [2:11](#); [3:3](#); [3:4](#); [3:5](#); [4:2](#); [4:4](#); [4:5](#); [5:2](#))

labor, laborer, work, hard work

Definition:

The term "labor" refers to doing hard work of any kind.

- In general, labor is any task which uses energy. It is often implied that the task is difficult.
- A laborer is a person who does any type of labor.
- In English, the word "labor" is also used for part of the process of giving birth. Other languages may have a completely different word for this.
- Ways to translate "labor" could include "work" or "hard work" or "difficult work" or to "work hard."

(See also: hard, labor pains)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:9
- 1 Thessalonians 3:5
- Galatians 4:10-11
- James 5:4
- John 4:38
- Luke 10:2
- Matthew 10:10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3018, H3021, H3022, H3205, H4522, H4639, H5447, H5450, H5647, H5656, H5998, H5999, H6001, H6089, H6468, H6635, G00750, G20380, G20400, G20410, G28720, G28730, G48660, G49040

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:3](#); [2:9](#); [3:5](#); [4:11](#); [5:12](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#); [3:8](#); [4:11](#); [4:15](#); [4:17](#); [5:10](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 5:5](#))

like, likeminded, likeness, likewise, alike, unlike, as if

Definition:

The terms "like" and "likeness" refer to something being the same as, or similar to, something else.

- The word "like" is also often used in a figurative expressions called a "simile" in which something is compared to something else, usually highlighting a shared characteristic. For example, "his clothes shined like the sun" and "the voice boomed like thunder." (See: [Simile](#))
- To "be like" or "sound like" or "look like" something or someone means to have qualities that are similar to the thing or person being compared to.
- People were created in God's "likeness," that is, in his "image." It means that they have qualities or characteristics that are "like" or "similar to" qualities that God has, such as the ability to think, feel, and communicate.
- To have "the likeness of" something or someone means to have characteristics that look like that thing or person.

Translation Suggestions

- In some contexts, the expression "the likeness of" could be translated as "what looked like" or "what appeared to be."
- The expression "in the likeness of his death" could be translated as "sharing in the experience of his death" or "as if experiencing his death with him."
- The expression "in the likeness of sinful flesh" could be translated as "being like a sinful human being" or to "be a human being." Make sure the translation of this expression does not sound like Jesus was sinful.
- "In his own likeness" could also be translated as to "be like him" or "having many of the same qualities that he has."
- The expression "the likeness of an image of perishable man, of birds, of four-footed beasts and of creeping things" could be translated as "idols made to look like perishable humans, or animals, such as birds, beasts, and small, crawling things."

(See also: [beast](#), [flesh](#), [image of God](#), [image](#), [perish](#))

Bible References:

- Ezekiel 1:5
- Mark 8:24
- Matthew 17:2
- Matthew 18:3
- Psalms 73:5
- Revelation 1:12-13

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1823, H8403, H8544, G15030, G15040, G25090, G25310, G25960, G36640, G36650, G36660, G36670, G36680, G36690, G36970, G48330, G51080, G56130, G56150, G56160, G56180, G56190

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:5](#); [2:2](#); [2:4](#); [2:5](#); [2:7](#); [2:11](#); [2:13](#); [2:14](#); [3:4](#); [4:1](#); [4:6](#); [4:11](#); [4:13](#); [5:2](#); [5:3](#); [5:4](#); [5:6](#); [5:11](#))

lord, Lord, master, sir

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “lord” generally refers to someone who has ownership or authority over other people. In the Bible, however, the term is used to address many different kinds of people, including God.

- This word is sometimes translated as “master” when addressing Jesus or when referring to someone who owns slaves.
- Some English versions translate this as “sir” in contexts where someone is politely addressing someone of higher status.

When “Lord” is capitalized, it is a title that refers to God. (Note, however, that when it is used as a form of addressing someone or it occurs at the beginning of a sentence it may be capitalized and have the meaning of “sir” or “master.”)

- In the Old Testament, this term is also used in expressions such as “Lord God Almighty” or “Lord Yahweh” or “Yahweh our Lord.”
- In the New Testament, the apostles used this term in expressions such as “Lord Jesus” and “Lord Jesus Christ,” which communicate that Jesus is God.
- The term “Lord” in the New Testament is also used alone as a direct reference to God, especially in quotations from the Old Testament. For example, the Old Testament text has “Blessed is he who comes in the name of Yahweh” and the New Testament text has “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”
- In the ULT and UST, the title “Lord” is only used to translate the actual Hebrew and Greek words that mean “Lord.” It is never used as a translation of God’s name (Yahweh), as is done in many translations.
- Some languages translate “Lord” as “Master” or “Ruler” or some other term that communicates ownership or supreme rule.
- In the appropriate contexts, many translations capitalize the first letter of this term to make it clear to the reader that this is a title referring to God.
- For places in the New Testament where there is a quote from the Old Testament, the term “Lord God” could be used to make it clear that this is a reference to God.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term can be translated with the equivalent of “master” when it refers to a person who owns slaves. It can also be used by a servant to address the person he works for.
- When it refers to Jesus, if the context shows that the speaker sees him as a religious teacher, it can be translated with a respectful address for a religious teacher, such as “master.”
- If the person addressing Jesus does not know him, “lord” could be translated with a respectful form of address such as “sir.” This translation would also be used for other contexts in which a polite form of address to a man is called for.
- When referring to God the Father or to Jesus, this term is considered a title, written as “Lord” (capitalized) in English.

(See also: [God](#), [Jesus](#), ruler, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- Genesis 39:2
- Joshua 3:9-11
- Psalms 86:15-17
- Jeremiah 27:4
- Lamentations 2:2

- Ezekiel 18:29
- Daniel 9:9
- Daniel 9:17-19
- Malachi 3:1
- Matthew 7:21-23
- Luke 1:30-33
- Luke 16:13
- Romans 6:23
- Ephesians 6:9
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Colossians 3:23
- Hebrews 12:14
- James 2:1
- 1 Peter 1:3
- Jude 1:5
- Revelation 15:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:5** But Jesus replied to Satan by quoting from the Scriptures. He said, "In God's word, he commands his people, 'Do not test the **Lord** your God.'"
- **25:7** Jesus replied, "Get away from me, Satan! In God's word he commands his people, 'Worship only the **Lord** your God and only serve him.'"
- **26:3** This is the year of the **Lord's** favor.
- **27:2** The law expert replied that God's law says, "Love the **Lord** your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind."
- **31:5** Then Peter said to Jesus, "**Master**, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water"
- **43:9** "But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both **Lord** and Messiah!"
- **47:3** By means of this demon she predicted the future for people, she made a lot of money for her **masters** as a fortuneteller.
- **47:11** Paul answered, "Believe in Jesus, the **Master**, and you and your family will be saved."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0113, H0136, H1167, H1376, H4756, H7980, H8323, G02030, G06340, G09620, G12030, G29620

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#); [1:3](#); [1:6](#); [1:8](#); [2:15](#); [2:19](#); [3:8](#); [3:11](#); [3:12](#); [3:13](#); [4:1](#); [4:2](#); [4:6](#); [4:15](#); [4:16](#); [4:17](#); [5:9](#); [5:12](#); [5:23](#); [5:27](#); [5:28](#))

love, beloved

Definition:

To love another person is to care for that person and do things that will benefit him. There are different meanings for "love" some languages may express using different words:

The kind of love that comes from God is focused on the good of others even when it doesn't benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do. God himself is love and is the source of true love.

- Jesus showed this kind of love by sacrificing his life in order to rescue us from sin and death. He also taught his followers to love others sacrificially.
- When people love others with this kind of love, they act in ways that show they are thinking of what will cause the others to thrive. This kind of love especially includes forgiving others.
- In the ULT, the word "love" refers to this kind of sacrificial love, unless a Translation Note indicates a different meaning.

Another word in the New Testament refers to brotherly love, or love for a friend or family member.

- This term refers to natural human love between friends or relatives.
- The term can also be used in such contexts as, "They love to sit in the most important seats at a banquet." This means that they "like very much" or "greatly desire" to do that.

The word "love" can also refer to romantic love between a man and a woman.

Translation Suggestions:

- Unless indicated otherwise in a Translation Note, the word "love" in the ULT refers to the kind of sacrificial love that comes from God.
- Some languages may have a special word for the kind of unselfish, sacrificial love that God has. Ways to translate this might include, "devoted, faithful caring" or "care for unselfishly" or "love from God." Make sure that the word used to translate God's love can include giving up one's own interests to benefit others and loving others no matter what they do.
- Sometimes the English word "love" describes the deep caring that people have for friends and family members. Some languages might translate this with a word or phrase that means "like very much" or "care for" or "have strong affection for."
- In contexts where the word "love" is used to express a strong preference for something, this could be translated by "strongly prefer" or "like very much" or "greatly desire."
- Some languages may also have a separate word that refers to romantic or sexual love between a husband and wife.
- Many languages must express "love" as an action. So for example, they might translate "love is patient, love is kind" as, "when a person loves someone, he is patient with him and kind to him."

(See also: covenant, [death](#), sacrifice, [save](#), [sin](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 13:7
- 1 John 3:2
- 1 Thessalonians 4:10
- Galatians 5:23
- Genesis 29:18
- Isaiah 56:6
- Jeremiah 2:2

- John 3:16
- Matthew 10:37
- Nehemiah 9:32-34
- Philippians 1:9
- Song of Songs 1:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:2** The law expert replied that God's law says, "**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. And **love** your neighbor as yourself."
- **33:8** "The thorny ground is a person who hears God's word, but, as time passes, the cares, riches, and pleasures of life choke out his **love** for God."
- **36:5** As Peter was talking, a bright cloud came down on top of them and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son whom I **love**."
- **39:10** "Everyone who **loves** the truth listens to me."
- **47:1** She (Lydia) **loved** and worshiped God.
- **48:1** When God created the world, everything was perfect. There was no sin. Adam and Eve **loved** each other, and they **loved** God.
- **49:3** He (Jesus) taught that you need to **love** other people the same way you love yourself.
- **49:4** He (Jesus) also taught that you need to **love** God more than you **love** anything else, including your wealth.
- **49:7** Jesus taught that God **loves** sinners very much.
- **49:9** But God **loved** everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.
- **49:13** God **loves** you and wants you to believe in Jesus so he can have a close relationship with you.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0157, H0158, H0159, H0160, H2245, H2617, H2836, H3039, H4261, H5689, H5690, H5691, H7355, H7356, H7453, H7474, G00250, G00260, G53600, G53610, G53620, G53630, G53650, G53670, G53680, G53690, G53770, G53810, G53820, G53830, G53880

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:3](#); [1:4](#); [3:6](#); [3:12](#); [4:9](#); [5:8](#); [5:13](#))

lust, lustful, passions, desires

Definition:

Lust is a very strong desire, usually in the context of wanting something sinful or immoral. To lust is to have lust.

- In the Bible, “lust” usually referred to sexual desire for someone other than one’s own spouse.
- Sometimes this term was used in a figurative sense to refer to worshiping idols.
- Depending on the context, “lust” could be translated as “wrong desire” or “strong desire” or “wrongful sexual desire” or “strong immoral desire” or to “strongly desire to sin.”
- The phrase to “lust after” could be translated as to “wrongly desire” or to “think immorally about” or to “immorally desire.”

(See also: adultery, [false god](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:16
- 2 Timothy 2:22
- Galatians 5:16
- Galatians 5:19-21
- Genesis 39:7-9
- Matthew 5:28

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0183, H0185, H0310, H1730, H2181, H2183, H2530, H5178, H5375, H5689, H5691, H5869, H7843, G07660, G19370, G19390, G22370, G37150, G38060

(**Go back to:** [1 Thessalonians 4:5](#))

Macedonia

Facts:

In New Testament times, Macedonia was a Roman province located just north of ancient Greece.

- Some important Macedonian cities mentioned in the Bible were Berea, Philippi and Thessalonica.
- Through a vision, God told Paul to preach the gospel to the people in Macedonia.
- Paul and his coworkers went to Macedonia and taught the people there about Jesus and helped the new believers to grow in their faith.
- In the Bible there are letters that Paul wrote to the believers in the Macedonian cities of Philippi and Thessalonica.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [believe](#), Berea, [faith](#), [good news](#), Greece, [Philippi](#), [Thessalonica](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7
- 1 Thessalonians 4:10
- 1 Timothy 1:3-4
- Acts 16:10
- Acts 20:1-3
- Philippians 4:14-17

Word Data:

- Strong's: G31090, G31100

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:7](#); [1:8](#); [4:10](#))

overtake

Definition:

The term “overtake” and “overtook” refer to gaining control over someone or something. It usually includes the idea of catching up to something after pursuing it.

- When military troops “overtake” an enemy, it means they defeat that enemy in battle.
- When a predator overtakes its prey, it means that it pursues and catches its prey.
- If a curse “overtakes” someone, it means that whatever was said in that curse happens to the person
- If blessings “overtake” people, it means that those people experience those blessings.
- Depending on the context, “overtake” could be translated as “conquer” or “capture” or “defeat” or “catch up to” or “completely affect.”
- The past action “overtook” can be translated as “caught up to” or “came alongside of” or “conquered” or “defeated” or “caused harm to.”
- When used in a warning that darkness or punishment or terrors will overtake people because of their sin, it means that those people will experience these negative things if they don’t repent.
- The phrase “My words have overtaken your fathers” means that the teachings that Yahweh gave to their ancestors will now cause the ancestors to receive punishment because they failed to obey those teachings.

(See also: bless, curse, prey, punish)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 25:4-5
- John 12:35

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0579, H0935, H1692, H4672, H5066, H5381, G26380, G29830

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:4](#))

patient, patience, impatient

Definition:

The terms “patient” and “patience” refer to persevering through difficult circumstances. Often patience involves waiting.

- When people are patient with someone, it means they are loving that person and forgiving whatever faults that person has.
- The Bible teaches God’s people to be patient when facing difficulties and to be patient with each other.
- Because of his mercy, God is patient with people, even though they are sinners who deserve to be punished.

(See also: endure, forgive, persevere)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 3:20
- 2 Peter 3:8-9
- Hebrews 6:11-12
- Matthew 18:28-29
- Psalms 37:7
- Revelation 2:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0750, H0753, H2342, H3811, H6960, H7114, G04200, G04630, G19330, G31140, G31150, G31160, G52780, G52810

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:14](#))

Paul, Saul

Facts:

Paul was a leader of the early church who was sent by Jesus to take the good news to many other people groups.

- Paul was a Jew who was born in the Roman city of Tarsus, and was therefore also a Roman citizen.
- Paul was originally called by his Jewish name, Saul.
- Saul became a Jewish religious leader and arrested Jews who became Christians because he thought they were dishonoring God by believing in Jesus.
- Jesus revealed himself to Saul in a blinding light and told him to stop hurting Christians.
- Saul believed in Jesus and began teaching his fellow Jews about him.
- Later, God sent Saul to teach non-Jewish people about Jesus and started churches in different cities and provinces of the Roman empire. At this time he started being called by the Roman name "Paul."
- Paul also wrote letters to encourage and teach Christians in the churches in these cities. Several of these letters are in the New Testament.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: christian, jewish leaders, rome)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 1:3
- Acts 8:3
- Acts 9:26
- Acts 13:10
- Galatians 1:1
- Philemon 1:8

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **45:6** A young man named **Saul** agreed with the people who killed Stephen and guarded their robes while they threw stones at him.
- **46:1** **Saul** was the young man who guarded the robes of the men who killed Stephen. He did not believe in Jesus, so he persecuted the believers.
- **46:2** While **Saul** was on his way to Damascus, a bright light from heaven shone all around him, and he fell to the ground. **Saul** heard someone say, "**Saul! Saul!** Why do you persecute me?"
- **46:5** So Ananias went to **Saul**, placed his hands on him, and said, "Jesus who appeared to you on your way here, sent me to you so that you can regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." **Saul** immediately was able to see again, and Ananias baptized him.
- **46:6** Right away, **Saul** began preaching to the Jews in Damascus, saying, "Jesus is the Son of God!"
- **46:9** Barnabas and **Saul** went there (Antioch) to teach these new believers more about Jesus and to strengthen the church.
- **47:1** As **Saul** traveled throughout the Roman Empire, he began to use his Roman name, "**Paul.**"
- **47:14** **Paul** and other Christian leaders traveled to many cities, preaching and teaching people the good news about Jesus.

Word Data:

- Strong's: G39720, G45690

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2:18](#))

peace, peaceful, peacemakers

Definition:

The term “peace” refers to a state of being or a feeling of having no conflict, anxiety, or fearfulness. A person who is “peaceful” feels calm and assured of being safe and secure.

- In the Old Testament, the term “peace” often means a general sense of a person’s welfare, wellness, or wholeness.
- “Peace” can also refer to a time when people groups or countries are not at war with each other. These people are said to have “peaceful relations.”
- To “make peace” with a person or a group of people means to take actions to cause fighting to stop.
- A “peacemaker” is someone who does and says things to influence people to live at peace with each other.
- To be “at peace” with other people means being in a state of not fighting against those people.
- A good or right relationship between God and people happens when God saves people from their sin. This is called having “peace with God.”
- The greeting “grace and peace” was used by the apostles in their letters to their fellow believers as a blessing.
- The term “peace” can also refer to being in a good relationship with other people or with God.

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3
- Acts 7:26
- Colossians 1:18-20
- Colossians 3:15
- Galatians 5:23
- Luke 7:50
- Luke 12:51
- Mark 4:39
- Matthew 5:9
- Matthew 10:13

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **15:6** God had commanded the Israelites not to make a **peace** treaty with any of the people groups in Canaan.
- **15:12** Then God gave Israel **peace** along all its borders.
- **16:3** Then God provided a deliverer who rescued them from their enemies and brought **peace** to the land.
- **21:13** He (Messiah) would die to receive the punishment for other people’s sin. His punishment would bring **peace** between God and people.
- **48:14** David was the king of Israel, but Jesus is the king of the entire universe! He will come again and rule his kingdom with justice and **peace**, forever.
- **50:17** Jesus will rule his kingdom with **peace** and justice, and he will be with his people forever.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5117, H7961, H7962, H7965, H7999, H8001, H8002, H8003, H8252, G02690, G15140, G15150, G15160, G15170, G15180, G22720

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#); [5:3](#); [5:13](#); [5:23](#))

persecute

Definition:

The terms “persecute” and “persecution” refer to continually treating a person or a certain group of people in a harsh way that causes harm to them.

- Persecution can be against one person or many people and usually involves repeated, persistent attacks.
- The Israelites were persecuted by many different people groups Who attacked them, captured them, and stole things from them.
- People often persecute other people who have different religious beliefs or who are weaker.
- The Jewish religious leaders persecuted Jesus because they did not like what he was teaching.
- After Jesus went back to heaven, the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman government persecuted his followers.
- The term “persecute” could also be translated as “keep oppressing” or “treat harshly” or “continually mistreat.”
- Ways to translate “persecution” could include, “harsh mistreatment” or “oppression” or “persistent hurtful treatment”

(See also: Christian, [church](#), oppress, Rome)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:52
- Acts 13:50
- Galatians 1:13-14
- John 5:16-18
- Mark 10:30
- Matthew 5:10
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Matthew 10:22
- Matthew 13:20-21
- Philippians 3:6

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **33:7** “The rocky ground is a person who hears God’s word and accepts it with joy. But when he experiences hardship or **persecution**, he falls away.”
- **45:6** That day many people in Jerusalem started **persecuting** the followers of Jesus, so the believers fled to other places.
- **46:2** Saul heard someone say, “Saul! Saul! Why do you **persecute** me?” Saul asked, “Who are you, Master?” Jesus replied to him, “I am Jesus. You are **persecuting** me!”
- **46:4** But Ananias said, “Master, I have heard how this man has **persecuted** the believers.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1814, H7291, H7852, G13750, G13760, G13770, G15590, G23470

(Go back to: [Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#))

Philippi, Philippians

Facts:

Philippi was a major city and Roman colony located in Macedonia in the northern part of ancient Greece. People in Philippi were called Philippians.

- Paul and Silas traveled to Philippi to preach about Jesus to the people there.
- While in Philippi, Paul and Silas were arrested, but God miraculously freed them.
- The New Testament book of Philippians is a letter that the apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in the church at Philippi.
- Note that this is a different city from Caesarea Philippi which was located in northeastern Israel near Mount Hermon.

(See also: Caesarea, Christian, [church](#), [Macedonia](#), [Paul](#), [Silas](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:1-2
- Acts 16:11
- Matthew 16:13-16
- Philippians 1:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **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 next day the leaders of the city released Paul and Silas from prison and asked them to leave **Philippi**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: G53740, G53750

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:2](#))

plea, plead, please, beg, implore

Facts:

The terms “plead” and “pleading” refer to urgently asking someone to do something. A “plea” is an urgent request.

- Pleading often implies that the person feels in very great need or strongly desires help.
- People can plead or make an urgent appeal to God for mercy or to ask him to grant something, either for themselves or someone else.
- Other ways to translate this could include “beg” or “implore” or “urgently ask.”
- The term “plea” could also be translated as “urgent request” or “strong urging.”
- Make sure it is clear in the context that this term does not refer to begging for money.

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 8:3-5
- Judges 6:31
- Luke 4:39
- Proverbs 18:17

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1777, H2603, H3198, H4941, H4994, H6279, H6293, H6664, H6419, H7378, H7379, H7775, H8199, H8467, H8469, G11890, G17930, G20650, G38700

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:10](#))

possess, possessed, possession, dispossess

Facts:

The terms “possess” and “possession” usually refer to owning something. They can also mean to gain control over something or occupy an area of land.

- In the Old Testament, this term is often used in the context of “possessing” or “taking possession of” an area of land.
- When Yahweh commanded the Israelites to “possess” the land of Canaan, it meant that they should go into the land and live there. This involved first conquering the Canaanite peoples who were living on that land.
- Yahweh told the Israelites that he had given them the land of Canaan as “their possession.” This could also be translated as “their rightful place to live.”
- The people of Israel were also called Yahweh’s “special possession.” This means that they belonged to him as his people whom he had specifically called to worship and serve him.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “possess” could also be translated as “own” or “have” or “have charge over.”
- The phrase “take possession of” could be translated as “take control of” or “occupy” or “live on,” depending on the context.
- When referring to things that people own, “possessions” could be translated as “belongings” or “property” or “owned things” or “things they owned.”
- When Yahweh calls the Israelites, “my special possession” this could also be translated as “my special people” or “people who belong to me” or “my people whom I love and rule.”
- The sentence, “they will become their possession” when referring to land, means “they will occupy the land” or “the land will belong to them.”
- The expression, “found in his possession” could be translated as “that he was holding” or “that he had with him.”
- The phrase “as your possession” could also be translated as “as something that belongs to you” or “as a place where your people will live.”
- The phrase, “in his possession” could be translated as “that he owned” or “which belonged to him.”

(See also: Canaan, worship, inherit)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 6:70
- 1 Kings 9:17-19
- Acts 2:45
- Deuteronomy 4:5-6
- Genesis 31:36-37
- Matthew 13:44

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0270, H0272, H0834, H2505, H2631, H3027, H3423, H3424, H3425, H3426, H4180, H4181, H4672, H4735, H4736, H5157, H5159, H5459, H7069, G11390, G21920, G26970, G27220, G29320, G29330, G29350, G40470, G52240, G55640

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:4](#))

power, powerful, powerfully

Definition:

The term “power” refers to the ability to do things or make things happen, often using great strength. “Powers” refers to people or spirits who have great ability to cause things to happen.

- The “power of God” refers to God’s ability to do everything, especially things that are not possible for people to do.
- God has complete power over everything that he has created.
- God gives his people power to do what he wants, so that when they heal people or do other miracles, they do this by the power of God.
- Because Jesus and the Holy Spirit are also God, they have this same power.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “power” could also be translated as “ability” or “strength” or “energy” or “ability to do miracles” or “control.”
- Possible ways to translate the term “powers” could include “powerful beings” or “controlling spirits” or “those who control others.”

(See also: [strength](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Jesus](#), [miracle](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 1:5
- Colossians 1:11-12
- Genesis 31:29
- Jeremiah 18:21
- Jude 1:25
- Judges 2:18
- Luke 1:17
- Luke 4:14
- Matthew 26:64
- Philippians 3:21
- Psalm 80:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **22:5** The angel explained, “The Holy Spirit will come to you, and the **power** of God will overshadow you. So the baby will be holy, the Son of God.”
- **26:1** After overcoming Satan’s temptations, Jesus returned in the **power** of the Holy Spirit to the region of Galilee where he lived.
- **32:15** Immediately Jesus realized that **power** had gone out from him.
- **42:11** Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, he told his disciples, “Stay in Jerusalem until my Father gives you **power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you.”
- **43:6** “Men of Israel, Jesus was a man who did many mighty signs and wonders by the **power** of God, as you have seen and already know.”
- **44:8** Peter answered them, “This man stands before you healed by the **power** of Jesus the Messiah.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0410, H1369, H1370, H2220, H2393, H2428, H2429, H2632, H3027, H3028, H3581, H4475, H4910, H5794, H5797, H5808, H6184, H7786, H7980, H7981, H7983, H7989, H8280, H8592, H8633, G14110, G14150, G17540, G17560, G18490, G18500, G21590, G24780, G24790, G29040, G31680

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:5](#))

pray, prayer

Definition:

The terms “pray” and “prayer” refer to talking with God. These terms are also used to refer to people trying to talk to a false god.

- People can pray silently, talking to God with their thoughts, or they can pray aloud, speaking to God with their voice. Sometimes prayers are written down, such as when David wrote his prayers in the Book of Psalms.
- Prayer can include asking God for mercy, for help with a problem, and for wisdom in making decisions.
- Often people ask God to heal people who are sick or who need his help in other ways.
- People also thank and praise God when they are praying to him.
- Praying includes confessing our sins to God and asking him to forgive us.
- Talking to God is sometimes called “communing” with him as our spirit communicates with his spirit, sharing our emotions and enjoying his presence.
- This term could be translated as “talking to God” or “communicating with God.” The translation of this term should be able to include praying that is silent.

(See also: [false god](#), forgive, praise)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 3:9
- Acts 8:24
- Acts 14:26
- Colossians 4:4
- John 17:9
- Luke 11:1
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Matthew 14:22-24

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **6:5** Isaac **prayed** for Rebekah, and God allowed her to get pregnant with twins.
- **13:12** But Moses **prayed** for them, and God listened to his **prayer** and did not destroy them.
- **19:8** Then the prophets of Baal **prayed** to Baal, “Hear us, O Baal!”
- **21:7** Priests also **prayed** to God for the people.
- **38:11** Jesus told his disciples to **pray** that they would not enter into temptation.
- **43:13** The disciples continually listened to the teaching of the apostles, spent time together, ate together, and **prayed** with each other.
- **49:18** God tells you to **pray**, to study his word, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H0577, H1156, H2470, H3863, H3908, H4994, H6279, H6293, H6419, H6739, H7592, H7878, H7879, H7881, H8034, H8605, G01540, G11620, G11890, G17830, G20650, G21710, G21720, G38700, G43350, G43360

(Go back to: [Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:2](#); [5:17](#); [5:25](#))

preach, preaching, preacher, proclaim, proclamation

Definition:

To “preach” means to speak to a group of people, teaching them about God and urging them to obey him. To “proclaim” means to announce or declare something publicly and boldly.

- Often preaching is done by one person to a large group of people. It is usually spoken, not written.
- “Preaching” and “teaching” are similar, but are not exactly the same.
- “Preaching” mainly refers to publicly proclaiming spiritual or moral truth, and urging the audience to respond. “Teaching” is a term that emphasizes instruction, that is, giving people information or teaching them how to do something.
- The term “preach” is usually used with the word “gospel.”
- What a person has preached to others can also be referred to in general as his “teachings.”
- Often in the Bible, “proclaim” means to announce publicly something that God has commanded, or to tell others about God and how great he is.
- In the New Testament, the apostles proclaimed the good news about Jesus to many people in many different cities and regions.
- The term “proclaim” can also be used for decrees made by kings or for denouncing evil in a public way.
- Other ways to translate “proclaim” could include “announce” or “openly preach” or “publicly declare.”
- The term “proclamation” could also be translated as “announcement” or “public preaching.”

(See also: [declare](#), [good news](#), [Jesus](#), [kingdom of God](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 4:1-2
- Acts 8:4-5
- Acts 10:42-43
- Acts 14:21-22
- Acts 20:25
- Luke 4:42
- Matthew 3:1-3
- Matthew 4:17
- Matthew 12:41
- Matthew 24:14
- Acts 9:20-22
- Acts 13:38-39
- Jonah 3:1-3
- Luke 4:18-19
- Mark 1:14-15
- Matthew 10:26

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **24:2** He (John) **preached** to them, saying, “Repent, for the Kingdom of God is near!”
- **30:1** Jesus sent his apostles to **preach** and to teach people in many different villages.
- **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.
- **45:6** But in spite of this, they **preached** about Jesus everywhere they went.
- **45:7** He (Philip) went to Samaria where he preached about Jesus and many people were saved.
- **46:6** Right away, Saul began **preaching** to the Jews in Damascus, saying, “Jesus is the Son of God!”
- **46:10** Then they sent them off to **preach** the good news of Jesus in many other places.

- **47:14** Paul and other Christian leaders traveled to many cities, **preaching** and teaching people the good news about Jesus.
- **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."

Word Data:

- Strong's:
 - preach: H1319, H7121, H7150, G12290, G20970, G26050, G27820, G27830, G27840, G29800, G42830
 - proclaim: H1319, H1696, H1697, H2199, H3045, H3745, H4161, H5046, H5608, H6963, H7121, H7440, H8085, G51800, G59100, G12290, G18610, G20970, G26050, G27820, G27840, G29800, G31420, G41350

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:9](#))

prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess

Definition:

A “prophet” is a man who speaks God’s messages to people. A woman who does this is called a “prophetess.”

- Often prophets warned people to turn away from their sins and obey God.
- A “prophecy” is the message that the prophet speaks. To “prophesy” means to speak God’s messages.
- Often the message of a prophecy was about something that would happen in the future.
- Many prophecies in the Old Testament have already been fulfilled.
- In the Bible the collection of books written by prophets are sometimes referred to as “the prophets.”
- For example the phrase, “the law and the prophets” is a way of referring to all the Hebrew scriptures, which are also known as the “Old Testament.”
- An older term for a prophet was “seer” or “someone who sees.”
- Sometimes the term “seer” refers to a false prophet or to someone who practices divination.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “prophet” could be translated as “God’s spokesman” or “man who speaks for God” or “man who speaks God’s messages.”
- A “seer” could be translated as “person who sees visions” or “man who sees the future from God.”
- The term “prophetess” could be translated as “spokeswoman for God” or “woman who speaks for God” or “woman who speaks God’s messages.”
- Ways to translate “prophecy” could include, “message from God” or “prophet message.”
- The term “prophesy” could be translated as “speak words from God” or “tell God’s message.”
- The figurative expression, “law and the prophets” could also be translated as “the books of the law and of the prophets” or “everything written about God and his people, including God’s laws and what his prophets preached.” (See: [synecdoche](#))
- When referring to a prophet (or seer) of a false god, it may be necessary to translate this as “false prophet (seer)” or “prophet (seer) of a false god” or “prophet of Baal,” for example.

(See also: Baal, divination, [false god](#), false prophet, [fulfill](#), law, vision)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16
- Acts 3:25
- John 1:43-45
- Malachi 4:4-6
- Matthew 1:23
- Matthew 2:18
- Matthew 5:17
- Psalm 51:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **12:12** When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they trusted in God and believed that Moses was a **prophet** of God.
- **17:13** God was very angry about what David had done, so he sent the **prophet** Nathan to tell David how evil his sin was.
- **19:1** Throughout the history of the Israelites, God sent them **prophets**. The **prophets** heard messages from God and then told the people God’s messages.

- **19:6** All the people of the entire kingdom of Israel, including the 450 **prophets** of Baal, came to Mount Carmel.
- **19:17** Most of the time, the people did not obey God. They often mistreated the **prophets** and sometimes even killed them.
- **21:9** The **prophet** Isaiah **prophesied** that the Messiah would be born from a virgin.
- **43:5** "This fulfills the **prophecy** made by the **prophet** Joel in which God said, 'In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit.'"
- **43:7** "This fulfills the **prophecy** which says, 'You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.'"
- **48:12** Moses was a great **prophet** who proclaimed the word of God. But Jesus is the greatest **prophet** of all. He is the Word of God.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2372, H2374, H4853, H5012, H5013, H5016, H5017, H5029, H5030, H5031, H5197, G24950, G43940, G43950, G43960, G43970, G43980, G55780

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:15; 5:20](#))

quench, quenched, unquenchable

Definition:

The term “quench” means to put out or stop something that is demanding to be satisfied.

- This term is usually used in the context of quenching thirst and means to stop being thirsty by drinking something.
- It can also be used to refer to putting out a fire.
- Both thirst and fire are quenched with water.
- Paul uses the term “quench” in a figurative way when he instructs believers to not “quench the Holy Spirit.” This means to not discourage people from allowing the Holy Spirit from produce his fruits and gifts in them. Quenching the Holy Spirit means preventing the Holy Spirit from freely manifesting his power and work in people..

(See also: fruit, gift, [Holy Spirit](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:19
- Ezekiel 20:47
- Isaiah 1:31
- Jeremiah 21:12

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1846, H3518, H7665, G07620, G45700

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:19](#))

raise, rise, lift, get up, stir up,

Definition:

raise, raise up

In general, the word “raise” means to “lift up” or “make higher.”

- The phrase “raise up” sometimes means to cause something to come into being or to appear. It can also mean to appoint someone to do something.
- Sometimes “raise up” means to “restore” or “rebuild.”
- “Raise” has a specialized meaning in the phrase “raise from the dead.” It means to cause a dead person to become alive again.
- Sometimes “raise up” means to “exalt” someone or something.

rise, arise

To “rise” or “arise” means to “go up” or “get up.” The terms “risen,” “rose,” and “arose” express past action.

- When a person gets up to go somewhere, this is sometimes expressed as “he arose and went” or “he rose up and went.”
- If something “arises” it means it “happens” or “begins to happen.”
- Jesus predicted that he would “rise from the dead.” Three days after Jesus died, the angel said, “He has risen!”

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “raise” or “raise up” could be translated as “lift up” or “make higher.”
- To “raise up” could also be translated as to “cause to appear” or to “appoint” or to “bring into existence.”
- To “raise up the strength of your enemies” could be translated as “cause your enemies to be very strong.”
- The phrase “raise someone from the dead” could be translated as “cause someone to return from death to life” or “cause someone to come back to life.”
- Depending on the context, “raise up” could also be translated as “provide” or to “appoint” or to “cause to have” or “build up” or “rebuild” or “repair.”
- The phrase “arose and went” could be translated as “got up and went” or “went.”
- Depending on the context, the term “arose” could also be translated as “began” or “started up” or “got up” or “stood up.”

(See also: resurrection, [appoint](#), exalt)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 6:41
- 2 Samuel 7:12
- Acts 10:40
- Colossians 3:1
- Deuteronomy 13:1-3
- Jeremiah 6:1
- Judges 2:18
- Luke 7:22
- Matthew 20:19

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:14** The prophets foretold that the Messiah would die and that God would also **raise** him from the dead.
- **41:5** "Jesus is not here. He has **risen** from the dead, just like he said he would!"
- **43:7** "Although Jesus died, God **raised** him from the dead. This fulfills the prophecy which says, 'You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.' We are witnesses to the fact that God **raised** Jesus to life again."
- **44:5** "You killed the author of life, but God **raised** him from the dead."
- **44:8** Peter answered them, "This man stands before you healed by the power of Jesus the Messiah. You crucified Jesus, but God **raised** him to life again!"
- **48:4** This meant that Satan would kill the Messiah, but God would **raise** him to life again, and then the Messiah will crush the power of Satan forever.
- **49:2** He (Jesus) walked on water, calmed storms, healed many sick people, drove out demons, **raised** the dead to life, and turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food for over 5,000 people.
- **49:12** You must believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that he died on the cross instead of you, and that God **raised** him to life again.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2210, H2224, H5549, H5782, H5927, H5975, H6965, H6966, H6974, H7613, G03050, G03860, G03930, G04500, G10960, G13260, G14530, G15250, G18170, G18250, G18920, G19990, G48910

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#); [4:14](#); [4:16](#))

receive, welcome, taken up, acceptance

Definition:

The term “receive” generally means to get or accept something that is given, offered, or presented.

- To “receive” can also mean to suffer or experience something, as in “he received punishment for what he did.”
- There is also a special sense in which we can “receive” a person. For example, to “receive” guests or visitors means to welcome them and treat them with honor in order to build a relationship with them.
- To “receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” means we are given the Holy Spirit and welcome him to work in and through our lives.
- To “receive Jesus” means to accept God’s offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- When a blind person “receives his sight” means that God has healed him and enabled him to see.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “receive” could be translated as “accept” or “welcome” or “experience” or “be given.”
- The expression “you will receive power” could be translated as “you will be given power” or “God will give you power” or “power will be given to you (by God)” or “God will cause the Holy Spirit to work powerfully in you.”
- The phrase “received his sight” could be translated as “was able to see” or “became able to see again” or “was healed by God so that he was able to see.”

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), [Jesus](#), [lord](#), [save](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 5:9
- 1 Thessalonians 1:6
- 1 Thessalonians 4:1
- Acts 8:15
- Jeremiah 32:33
- Luke 9:5
- Malachi 3:10-12
- Psalms 49:14-15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **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. His punishment would bring peace between God and people.
- **45:5** As Stephen was dying, he cried out, “Jesus, **receive** my spirit.”
- **49:6** He (Jesus) taught that some people will receive him and be saved, but others will not.
- **49:10** When Jesus died on the cross, he **received** your punishment.
- **49:13** God will save everyone who believes in Jesus and **receives** him as their Master.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3557, H3947, H6901, H6902, H8254, G03080, G03240, G03530, G03540, G05680, G05880, G06180, G11830, G12090, G15230, G16530, G19260, G28650, G29830, G30280, G33350, G33360, G35490, G38580, G38800, G43270, G43550, G43560, G46870, G52640, G55620

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:6](#); [2:13](#); [4:1](#))

reject, rejected, rejection

Definition:

To “reject” someone or something means to refuse to accept that person or thing.

- The term “reject” can also mean to “refuse to believe in” something.
- To reject God also means to refuse to obey him.
- When the Israelites rejected Moses’ leadership, it means that they were rebelling against his authority. They did not want to obey him.
- The Israelites showed that they were rejecting God when they worshiped false gods.
- The term “push away” is the literal meaning of this word. Other languages may have a similar expression that means to reject or refuse to believe someone or something.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “reject” could also be translated by “not accept” or “stop helping” or “refuse to obey” or “stop obeying.”
- In the expression “stone that the builders rejected,” the term “rejected” could be translated as “refused to use” or “did not accept” or “threw away” or “got rid of as worthless.”
- In the context of people who rejected God’s commandments, rejected could be translated as “refused to obey” his commands or “stubbornly chose to not accept” God’s laws.

(See also: [command](#), disobey, obey, stiff-necked)

Bible References:

- Galatians 4:12-14
- Hosea 4:6-7
- Isaiah 41:9
- John 12:48-50
- Mark 7:9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0947, H0959, H2186, H2310, H3988, H5006, H5034, H5186, H5203, H5307, H5541, H5800, G01140, G04830, G05500, G05790, G05800, G05930, G06830, G07200, G16090, G38680

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:8](#))

report, reported, tell, reputation

Definition:

The term to “report” means to tell people about something that happened, often giving details about that event. A “report” is what is told, and can be spoken or written.

- “Report” could also be translated as “tell” or “explain” or “tell the details of.”
- The expression “Report this to no one” could be translated as “Don’t talk about this with anyone” or “Don’t tell anyone about this.”
- Ways to translate “a report” could include “an explanation” or “a story” or “a detailed account,” depending on the context.

Bible References:

- Acts 5:22-23
- John 12:38
- Luke 5:15
- Luke 8:34-35
- Matthew 28:15

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1681, H1696, H1697, H5046, H7725, H8034, H8052, H8085, H8088, H8089, G01890, G01910, G03120, G05180, G09870, G12250, G13100, G18340, G20360, G21630, G30040, G30560, G31400, G33770

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 2:10](#))

saint

Definition:

The term “saints” literally means “holy ones” and refers to believers in Jesus.

- Later in church history, a person known for his good works was given the title “saint,” but that was not how this term was used during New Testament times.
- Believers in Jesus are saints or holy ones, not because of what they have done, but rather because of their faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ. He is the one who makes them holy.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “saints” could include “holy ones” or “holy people” or “holy believers in Jesus” or “set apart ones.”
- Be careful not to use a term that refers to people of only one Christian group.

(See also: [holy](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 5:10
- 2 Corinthians 9:12-15
- Revelation 16:6
- Revelation 20:9-10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2623, H6918, H6922, G00400

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:13](#))

sanctify, sanctification

Definition:

To sanctify is to set apart or to make holy. Sanctification is the process of being made holy.

- In the Old Testament, certain people and things were sanctified, or set apart, for service to God.
- The New Testament teaches that God sanctifies people who believe in Jesus. That is, he makes them holy and sets them apart to serve him.
- Believers in Jesus are also commanded to sanctify themselves to God, to be holy in everything they do.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “sanctify” can be translated as “set apart” or “make holy” or “purify.”
- When people sanctify themselves, they purify themselves and dedicate themselves to God’s service. Often the word “consecrate” is used in the Bible with this meaning.
- When its meaning is “consecrate,” this term could be translated as “dedicate someone (or something) to God’s service.”
- Depending on the context, the phrase “your sanctification” could be translated as “making you holy” or “setting you apart (for God)” or “what makes you holy.”

(See also: consecrate, [holy](#), set apart)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13
- Genesis 2:1-3
- Luke 11:2
- Matthew 6:8-10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6942, G00370, G00380

(Go back to: [Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:3](#); [5:23](#))

Satan, devil, evil one

Facts:

Although the devil is a spirit being that God created, he rebelled against God and became God's enemy. The devil is also called "Satan" and "the evil one."

- The devil hates God and all that God created because he wants to take the place of God and be worshiped as God.
- Satan tempts people to rebel against God.
- God sent his Son, Jesus, to rescue people from Satan's control.
- The name "Satan" means "adversary" or "enemy."
- The word "devil" means "accuser."

Translation Suggestions:

- The word "devil" could also be translated as "the accuser" or "the evil one" or "the king of evil spirits" or "the chief evil spirit."
- "Satan" could be translated as "Opponent" or "Adversary" or some other name that shows that he is the devil.
- These terms should be translated differently from demon and evil spirit.
- Consider how these terms are translated in a local or national language.

(See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: demon, [evil](#), [kingdom of God](#), [tempt](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 3:8
- 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20
- 1 Timothy 5:15
- Acts 13:10
- Job 1:8
- Mark 8:33
- Zechariah 3:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:1** The snake who deceived Eve was **Satan**. The promise meant that the Messiah who would come would defeat **Satan** completely.
- **25:6** Then **Satan** showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and all their glory and said, "I will give you all this if you bow down and worship me."
- **25:8** Jesus did not give in to **Satan's** temptations, so **Satan** left him.
- **33:6** So Jesus explained, "The seed is the word of God. The path is a person who hears God's word, but does not understand it, and the **devil** takes the word from him."
- **38:7** After Judas took the bread, **Satan** entered into him.
- **48:4** God promised that one of Eve's descendants would crush **Satan's** head, and **Satan** would wound his heel. This meant that **Satan** would kill the Messiah, but God would raise him to life again, and then the Messiah will crush the power of **Satan** forever.
- **49:15** God has taken you out of **Satan's** kingdom of darkness and put you into God's kingdom of light.

- **50:9** "The weeds represent the people who belong to the **evil one**. The enemy who planted the weeds represents the **devil**."
- **50:10** "When the world ends, the angels will gather together all the people who belong to the **devil** and throw them into a raging fire, where they will cry and grind their teeth in terrible suffering."
- **50:15** When Jesus returns, he will completely destroy **Satan** and his kingdom. He will throw **Satan** into hell where he will burn forever, along with everyone who chose to follow him rather than to obey God.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7700, H7854, H8163, G11390, G11400, G11410, G11420, G12280, G41900, G45660, G45670

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:18](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 2:16](#); [5:8](#); [5:9](#))

seek, search, look for

Definition:

The term “seek” means to look for something or someone. In the past tense, the verb is “sought.” This term is sometimes used figuratively, meaning to “attempt” or “make an effort” to do something or to ask for something.

- To “seek” or “look for” an opportunity to do something can mean to “try to find a time” to do it.
- To “seek Yahweh” means to “spend time and energy getting to know Yahweh and learning to obey him.”
- To “seek protection” means to “try to find a person or place that will protect you from danger.”
- To “seek justice” means to “make an effort to see that people are treated justly or fairly.”
- To “seek the truth” means to “make an effort to find out what the truth is.”
- To “seek favor” means to “urgently ask for favor” or to “do things to cause someone to help you.”

(See also: [just](#), [true](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 10:14
- Acts 17:26-27
- Hebrews 11:6
- Luke 11:9
- Psalms 27:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0579, H1156, H1239, H1243, H1245, H1556, H1875, H2470, H2603, H2658, H2664, H3289, H7125, H7592, H7836, H8446, G03270, G15670, G19340, G20520, G22120

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:6](#))

send, sent, send out

Definition:

To “send” is to cause someone or something to go somewhere. To “send out” someone is to tell that person to go on an errand or a mission.

- Often a person who is “sent out” has been appointed to do a specific task.
- Phrases like “send rain” or “send disaster” mean to “cause...to come.” This type of expression is usually used in reference to God causing these things to happen.
- The term “send” is also used in expressions such as to “send word” or to “send a message,” which means to give someone a message to tell someone else.
- To “send” someone “with” something can mean to “give” that thing “to” someone else, usually moving it some distance in order for the person to receive it.
- Jesus frequently used the phrase “the one who sent me” to refer to God the Father, who “sent” him to earth to redeem and save people. This could also be translated as “the one who commissioned me.”

(See also: [appoint](#), redeem, castout)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:33-34
- Acts 8:14-17
- John 20:21-23
- Matthew 9:37-38
- Matthew 10:5
- Matthew 10:40
- Matthew 21:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0935, H1540, H1980, H2199, H2904, H3318, H3474, H3947, H4916, H4917, H5042, H5130, H5375, H5414, H5674, H6963, H7368, H7725, H7964, H7971, H7972, H7993, H8421, H8446, G07820, G03750, G06300, G06490, G06520, G06570, G10260, G10320, G15440, G15990, G18210, G33330, G33430, G39360, G39920, G43110, G43410, G43690, G48420, G48820

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:2](#); [3:5](#))

servant, serve, slave, young man, young women

Definition:

A “servant” or “slave” refers to a person who works for (or obeys) another person, either by choice or by force. A servant was under his master's control. In the Bible, “servant” and “slave” are mostly interchangeable terms. The term “serve” generally means to do work for someone, and the concept can be applied in a wide variety of contexts.

- A slave was a kind of servant who was the property of the person he worked for. The person who bought a slave was called his “owner” or “master.” Some masters treated their slaves cruelly. Other masters treated their slaves well, like a valued member of the household. The term “slavery” means the state of being a slave.
- A person could be a slave temporarily, for instance while working to repay a debt to his owner.
- The words “young man” or “young woman” often mean “servant” or “slave.” This meaning will be discerned from context. One indicator of this situation is if the possessive is used, eg. “her young women” could be translated as “her servants” or “her slaves.”
- The term “enslave” means “to cause to be a slave” (usually by force).
- The New Testament speaks of human beings as “slaves of sin” until Jesus frees them from its control and power. When a person receives new life in Christ, he stops being a slave to sin and becomes a slave to righteousness.

Translation Suggestions

- The term “serve” can also be translated as “minister to” or “work for” or “take care of” or “obey,” depending on the context.
- The term “enslave” could be translated as “cause to not be free” or “force to serve others” or “put under the control of others.”
- The phrase “enslaved to” or “in bondage to” could be translated as “forced to be a slave of” or “forced to serve” or “under the control of.”
- To “serve God” can be translated as to “worship and obey God” or to “do the work that God has commanded.”
- In the Old Testament, God’s prophets and other people who worshiped God were often called his “servants.”
- In the New Testament, people who obeyed God through faith in Christ were often called his “servants.”
- To “serve tables” means to bring food to people who are sitting at tables, or more generally, to “distribute food.”
- In the context of a person serving guests, this term means “care for” or “serve food to” or “provide food for.” When Jesus told the disciples to “serve” the fish to the people, this could be translated as, “distribute” or “hand out” or “give.”
- People who teach others about God are said to serve both God and the ones they are teaching.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians about how they used to “serve” the old covenant. This refers to obeying the laws of Moses. Now they “serve” the new covenant. That is, because of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, believers in Jesus are enabled by the Holy Spirit to please God and live holy lives.
- Paul talks about their actions in terms of their “service” to either the old or new covenant. This could be translated as “serving” or “obeying” or “devotion to.”
- Often, when a person referred to himself as “your servant” he was showing respect to the person addressed. That person may have had higher social status, or the speaker may be showing humility. It did not mean that the person speaking was an actual servant.

(See also: [bondage](#), [works](#), [obey](#), [house](#), [lord](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 15:13
- Genesis 21:10-11
- Genesis 25:23
- Deuteronomy 24:7
- Jeremiah 30:8-9
- Matthew 4:10-11
- Matthew 6:24
- Matthew 10:24-25
- Matthew 13:27-28
- Mark 8:7-10
- Mark 9:33-35
- Luke 4:8
- Luke 12:37-38
- Luke 12:47-48
- Luke 22:26-27
- Acts 4:29-31
- Acts 6:2-4
- Acts 10:7-8
- Galatians 4:3
- Galatians 4:24-25
- Colossians 1:7-8
- Colossians 3:22-25
- 2 Timothy 2:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **6:1** When Abraham was very old and his son, Isaac, had grown to be a man, Abraham sent one of his **servants** back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, Isaac.
- **8:4** The **slave** traders sold Joseph as a **slave** to a wealthy government official.
- **9:13** "I (God) will send you (Moses) to Pharaoh so that you can bring the Israelites out of their **slavery** in Egypt."
- **19:10** Then Elijah prayed, "O Yahweh, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your **servant**."
- **29:3** "Since the **servant** could not pay the debt, the king said, 'Sell this man and his family as **slaves** to make payment on his debt.'"
- **35:6** "All my father's **servants** have plenty to eat, and yet here I am starving."
- **47:4** The **slave** girl kept yelling as they walked, "These men are servants of the Most High God."
- **50:4** Jesus also said, "A **servant** is not greater than his master."

Word Data:

- (Servant) Strong's: H0519, H5288, H5647, H5649, H5650, H5657, H7916, H8198, H8334, G12490, G14010, G14020, G23240, G34070, G34110, G36100, G38160, G49830, G52570
- (Serve) H3547, H4929, H4931, H5647, H5656, H5673, H5975, H6213, H6399, H6402, H6440, H6633, H6635, H7272, H8104, H8120, H8199, H8278, H8334, G12470, G12480, G13980, G14020, G14380, G19830, G20640, G22120, G23230, G29990, G30000, G30090, G43370, G43420, G47540, G50870, G52560
- (Enslave) H3533, G26150

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#); [3:2](#))

sexual immorality, immorality, immoral, fornication

Definition:

The term “sexual immorality” refers to sexual activity that takes place outside the marriage relationship of a man and a woman. This is against God’s plan. Older English Bible versions call this “fornication.”

- This term can refer to any kind of sexual activity that is against God’s will, including homosexual acts and pornography.
- One type of sexual immorality is adultery, which is sexual activity specifically between a married person and someone who is not that person’s spouse.
- Another type of sexual immorality is “prostitution,” which involves being paid to have sex with someone.
- This term is also used figuratively to refer to Israel’s unfaithfulness to God when they worshiped false gods.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “sexual immorality” could be translated as “immorality” as long as the correct meaning of the term is understood.
- Other ways to translate this term could include “wrong sexual acts” or “sex outside of marriage.”
- This term should be translated in a different way from the term “adultery.”
- The translation of this term’s figurative uses should retain the literal term if possible since there is a common comparison in the Bible between unfaithfulness to God and unfaithfulness in the sexual relationship.

(See also: adultery, [false god](#), prostitute, [faithful](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 15:20
- Acts 21:25-26
- Colossians 3:5-8
- Ephesians 5:3
- Genesis 38:24-26
- Hosea 4:13-14
- Matthew 5:31-32
- Matthew 19:7-9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2181, H8457, G16080, G42020, G42030

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:3](#))

Silas, Silvanus

Facts:

Silas was a leader among the believers in Jerusalem.

- The elders of the church in Jerusalem appointed Silas to go with Paul and Barnabas to take a letter to the city of Antioch.
- Silas later traveled with Paul to other cities to teach people about Jesus.
- Paul and Silas were put in jail in the city of Philippi. They sang praises to God while they were there and God released them from the jail. The jailer became a Christian as a result of their testimony.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: Antioch, Barnabas, Jerusalem, [Paul](#), [Philippi](#), prison, [testimony](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 5:12
- 1 Thessalonians 1:1
- 2 Thessalonians 1:1
- Acts 15:22

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **47:1** One day, Paul and his friend **Silas** went to the town of Philippi to proclaim the good news about Jesus.
- **47:2** She (Lydia) invited Paul and **Silas** to stay at her house, so they stayed with her and her family.
- **47:3** Paul and **Silas** often met with people at the place of prayer.
- **47:7** So the owners of the slave girl took Paul and **Silas** to the Roman authorities, who beat them and threw them into jail.
- **47:8** They put Paul and **Silas** in the most secure part of the prison and even locked up their feet.
- **47:11** The jailer trembled as he came to Paul and **Silas** and asked, "What must I do to be saved?"
- **47:13** The next day the leaders of the city released Paul and **Silas** from prison and asked them to leave Philippi. Paul and **Silas** visited Lydia and some other friends and then left the city.

Word Data:

- Strong's: G46090, G46100

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 2:16](#))

son

Definition:

The male offspring of a man and a woman is called their “son” for his entire life. He is also called a son of that man and a son of that woman. An “adopted son” is a male who has been legally placed into the position of being a son.

- The phrase “son of” can be used to identify a person’s father, mother, or an ancestor from some previous generation. This phrase is used in genealogies and many other places.
- The “sons of Israel” are usually the Israelite nation (after Genesis).
- Using “son of” to give the name of the father frequently helps distinguish people who have the same name. For example, “Azariah son of Zadok” and “Azariah son of Nathan” in 1 Kings 4, and “Azariah son of Amaziah” in 2 Kings 15 are three different men.
- The phrase “son of” can be used to associate the person with whatever person or concept comes next. The meaning is then greatly determined by context. It can be positive (eg. 2 Kings 2:16: “sons of ability”), negative (eg. 2 Samuel 7:10: “sons of wickedness”), denote membership in a group, express contempt by not naming the person (eg. “you sons of Zeruiah”), etc.

Translation Suggestions:

- In most occurrences of this term, it is best to translate “son” by the literal term in the language that is used to refer to a son.
- When translating the term “Son of God,” the project language’s common term for “son” should be used.
- Sometimes “sons” can be translated as “children,” when both males and females are being referred to. For example, “sons of God” could be translated as “children of God” since this expression also includes girls and women.

(See also: descendant, [ancestor](#), [Son of God](#), sons of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:15
- 1 Kings 13:2
- 1 Thessalonians 5:5
- Galatians 4:7
- Hosea 11:1
- Isaiah 9:6
- Matthew 3:17
- Matthew 5:9
- Matthew 8:12
- Nehemiah 10:28

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:8** God spoke to Abram and promised again that he would have a **son** and as many descendants as the stars in the sky.
- **4:9** God said, “I will give you a **son** from your own body.”
- **5:5** About a year later, when Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90, Sarah gave birth to Abraham’s **son**.
- **5:8** When they reached the place of sacrifice, Abraham tied up his **son** Isaac and laid him on an altar. He was about to kill his **son** when God said, “Stop! Do not hurt the boy! Now I know that you fear me because you did not keep your only **son** from me.”

- **9:7** When she saw the baby, she took him as her own **son**.
- **11:6** God killed every one of the Egyptians' firstborn **sons**.
- **18:1** After many years, David died, and his **son** Solomon began to rule.
- **26:4** "Is this the **son** of Joseph?" they said.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1060, H1121, H1123, H1248, H3173, H3206, H3211, H4497, H5209, H5220, G38160, G50430, G52070

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:5](#))

Son of God, the Son

Facts:

The term “Son of God” refers to Jesus, the Word of God, who came into the world as a human being. He is also often referred to as “the Son.”

- The Son of God has the same nature as God the Father, and is fully God.
- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are all of one essence.
- Unlike human sons, the Son of God has always existed.
- In the beginning, the Son of God was active in creating the world, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Because Jesus is God’s Son, he loves and obeys his Father, and his Father loves him.

Translation Suggestions:

- For the term “Son of God,” it is best to translate “Son” with the same word the language would naturally use to refer to a human son.
- Make sure the word used to translate “son” fits with the word used to translate “father” and that these words are the most natural ones used to express a true father-son relationship in the project language.
- Using a capital letter to begin “Son” may help show that this is talking about God.
- The phrase “the Son” is a shortened form of “the Son of God,” especially when it occurs in the same context as “the Father.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Christ](#), [ancestor](#), [God](#), [God the Father](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Jesus](#), [son](#), [sons of God](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 4:10
- Acts 9:20
- Colossians 1:17
- Galatians 2:20
- Hebrews 4:14
- John 3:18
- Luke 10:22
- Matthew 11:27
- Revelation 2:18
- Romans 8:29

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **22:5** The angel explained, “The Holy Spirit will come to you, and the power of God will overshadow you. So the baby will be holy, the **Son of God.**”
- **24:9** God had told John, “The Holy Spirit will come down and rest on someone you baptize. That person is **the Son of God.**”
- **31:8** The disciples were amazed. They worshiped Jesus, saying to him, “Truly, you are **the Son of God.**”
- **37:5** Martha answered, “Yes, Master! I believe you are the Messiah, the **Son of God.**”
- **42:10** “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.”
- **46:6** Right away, Saul began preaching to the Jews in Damascus, saying, “Jesus is the **Son of God!**”

- **49:9** But God loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only **Son** so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0426, H0430, H1121, H1247, G23160, G52070

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#))

soul, self, person

Definition:

The term "soul" can either refer generally to the non-physical part of a person or refer specifically to a person's awareness of themselves as a person distinct from others.

- In the Bible, the terms "soul" and "spirit" may be two different concepts, or they may be two terms that refer to the same concept.
- When a person dies, his soul leaves his body.
- In contrast to the body, the "soul" can be spoken of as the part of a person that "relates to God."
- The word "soul" is sometimes used figuratively to refer to the whole person. For example, "the soul who sins" means "the person who sins" and "my soul is tired" means "I am tired."

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "soul" could also be translated as "inner self" or "inner person."
- In some contexts, "my soul" could be translated as "I" or "me."
- Usually the phrase "the soul" can be translated as "the person" or "he" or "him," depending on the context.
- Some languages might only have one word for the concepts "soul" and "spirit."
- In Hebrews 4:12, the figurative phrase "dividing soul and spirit" could mean "deeply discerning or exposing the inner person."

(See also: [spirit](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:8
- Acts 2:27-28
- Acts 2:41
- Genesis 49:6
- Isaiah 53:10-11
- James 1:21
- Jeremiah 6:16-19
- Jonah 2:7-8
- Luke 1:47
- Matthew 22:37
- Psalms 19:7
- Revelation 20:4

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5082, H5315, H5397, G55900

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:8](#); [5:23](#))

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: [1 Thessalonians 5:23](#))

strength, strengthen, strong

Facts:

The term “strength” refers to physical, emotional, or spiritual power. To “strengthen” someone or something means to make that person or object stronger.

- “Strength” can also refer to the power to withstand some kind of opposing force.
- A person has “strength of will” if he is able to avoid sinning when tempted.
- One writer of the Psalms called Yahweh his “strength” because God helped him to be strong.
- If a physical structure like a wall or building is being “strengthened,” people are rebuilding the structure, reinforcing it with more stones or brick so that it can withstand an attack.

Translation Suggestions

- In general, the term “strengthen” can be translated as “cause to be strong” or “make more powerful.”
- In a spiritual sense, the phrase “strengthen your brothers” could also be translated as “encourage your brothers” or “help your brothers to persevere.”
- The following examples show the meaning of these terms, and therefore how they can be translated, when they are included in longer expressions.
 - “puts strength on me like a belt” means “causes me to be completely strong, like a belt that completely surrounds my waist.”
 - “in quietness and trust will be your strength” means “acting calmly and trusting in God will make you spiritually strong.”
 - “will renew their strength” means “will become stronger again.”
 - “by my strength and by my wisdom I acted” means “I have done all this because I am so strong and wise.”
 - “strengthen the wall” means “reinforce the wall” or “rebuild the wall.”
 - “I will strengthen you” means “I will cause you to be strong”
 - “in Yahweh alone are salvation and strength” means “Yahweh is the only one who saves us and strengthens us.”
 - “the rock of your strength” means “the faithful one who makes you strong”
 - “with the saving strength of his right hand” means “he strongly rescues you from trouble like someone who holds you safely with his strong hand.”
 - “of little strength” means “not very strong” or “weak.”
 - “with all my strength” means “using my best efforts” or “strongly and completely.”

(See also: [faithful](#), persevere, right hand, [save](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 18:19-21
- 2 Peter 2:11
- Luke 10:27
- Psalm 21:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0193, H0202, H0353, H0360, H0386, H0410, H0553, H0556, H1369, H1396, H2220, H2388, H2391, H2392, H2393, H2428, H3027, H3028, H3559, H3581, H3811, H3955, H4581, H5326, H5331, H5582, H5797, H5807, H5810, H5934, H5975, H6106, H6109, H6697, H6965, H7292, H7307, H8003, H8443, H8632, H8633,

G04610, G09500, G14110, G14120, G17430, G17650, G18400, G19910, G24790, G24800, G29010, G29040,
G36190, G37560, G45990, G47320, G47330, G47410

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:2](#); [3:13](#))

suffer, suffering

Definition:

The terms “suffer” and “suffering” refer to experiencing something very unpleasant, such as illness, pain, or other hardships.

- When people are persecuted or when they are sick, they suffer.
- Sometimes people suffer because of wrong things they have done; other times they suffer because of sin and disease in the world.
- Suffering can be physical, such as feeling pain or sickness. It can also be emotional, such as feeling fear, sadness, or loneliness.
- The phrase “suffer me” means “bear with me” or “hear me out” or “listen patiently.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “suffer” can be translated as “feel pain” or “endure difficulty” or “experience hardships” or “go through difficult and painful experiences.”
- Depending on the context, “suffering” could be translated as “extremely difficult circumstances” or “severe hardships” or “experiencing hardship” or “time of painful experiences.”
- The phrase “suffer thirst” could be translated as “experience thirst” or “suffer with thirst.”
- To “suffer violence” could also be translated as “undergo violence” or “be harmed by violent acts.”

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16
- 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5
- 2 Timothy 1:8
- Acts 7:11-13
- Isaiah 53:11
- Jeremiah 6:6-8
- Matthew 16:21
- Psalms 22:24
- Revelation 1:9
- Romans 5:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:13** God said, “I have seen the **suffering** of my people.”
- **38:12** Jesus prayed three times, “My Father, if it is possible, please let me not have to drink this cup of **suffering**.”
- **42:3** He (Jesus) reminded them that the prophets said the Messiah would **suffer** and be killed, but would rise again on the third day.
- **42:7** He (Jesus) said, “It was written long ago that the Messiah would **suffer**, die, and rise from the dead on the third day.”
- **44:5** “Although you did not understand what you were doing, God used your actions to fulfill the prophecies that the Messiah would **suffer** and die.”
- **46:4** God said, “I have chosen him (Saul) to declare my name to the unsaved. I will show him how much he must **suffer** for my sake.”
- **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: H0943, H1741, H1934, H4531, H5142, H5375, H5999, H6031, H6040, H6041, H6064, H6090, H6770, H6869, H6887, H7661, G00910, G09410, G09710, G22100, G23460, G23470, G25520, G25530, G25610, G38040, G39580, G43100, G47780, G47770, G48410, G50040

(Go back to: [Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 2:2](#); [2:14](#); [3:4](#))

teach, teaching, untaught

Definition:

To “teach” someone is to tell him something he doesn’t already know. It can also mean to “provide information” in general, with no reference to the person who is learning. Usually the information is given in a formal or systematic way. A person’s “teaching” is or his “teachings” are what he has taught.

- A “teacher” is someone who teaches. The past action of “teach” is “taught.”
- When Jesus was teaching, he was explaining things about God and his kingdom.
- Jesus’ disciples called him “Teacher” as a respectful form of address for someone who taught people about God.
- The information that is being taught can be shown or spoken.
- The term “doctrine” refers to a set of teachings from God about himself as well as God’s instructions about how to live. This could also be translated as “teachings from God” or “what God teaches us.”
- The phrase “what you have been taught” could also be translated as “what these people have taught you” or “what God has taught you,” depending on the context.
- Other ways to translate “teach” could include “tell” or “explain” or “instruct.”
- Often this term can be translated as “teaching people about God.”

(See also: instruct, teacher, [word of God](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 1:3
- Acts 2:40-42
- John 7:14
- Luke 4:31
- Matthew 4:23
- Psalms 32:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0502, H2094, H2449, H3045, H3046, H3256, H3384, H3925, H3948, H7919, H8150, G13170, G13210, G13220, G20850, G26050, G27270, G31000, G23120, G25670, G38110, G49940

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:9](#))

tempt, temptation

Definition:

To tempt someone is to try to get that person to do something wrong.

- A temptation is something that causes a person to want to do something wrong.
- People are tempted by their own sinful nature and by other people.
- Satan also tempts people to disobey God and to sin against God by doing wrong things.
- Satan tempted Jesus and tried to get him to do something wrong, but Jesus resisted all of Satan's temptations and never sinned.
- Someone who is "tempting God" is not trying to get him to do something wrong, but rather, is continuing in stubborn disobedience of him to the point that God must respond by punishing him. This is also called "testing God."

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "tempt" can be translated as "try to cause to sin" or "entice" or "cause a desire to sin."
- Ways to translate "temptations" could include, "things that tempt" or "things that entice someone to sin" or "things that cause desire to do something wrong."
- To "tempt God" could be translated as to "put God to the test" or to "test God" or to "try God's patience" or to "cause God to have to punish" or to "stubbornly keep disobeying God."

(See also: disobey, [Satan](#), [sin](#), [test](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 3:4-5
- Hebrews 4:15
- James 1:13
- Luke 4:2
- Luke 11:4
- Matthew 26:41

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:1** Then Satan came to Jesus and **tempted** him to sin.
- **25:8** Jesus did not give in to Satan's **temptations**, so Satan left him.
- **38:11** Jesus told his disciples to pray that they would not enter into **temptation**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0974, H4531, H5254, G05510, G15980, G39850, G39860, G39870

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 3:5](#))

test, tested, testing, testing in the fire

Definition:

The term “test” refers to a difficult or painful experience that reveals a person’s strengths and weaknesses.

- God tests people, but he does not tempt them to sin. Satan, however, tempts people to sin.
- God sometimes uses tests to expose people’s sin. A test helps a person to turn away from sin and to draw closer to God.
- Gold and other metals are tested with fire to find out how pure and strong they are. This is a picture of how God uses painful circumstances to test his people.
- To “put to the test” can mean, “challenge something or someone to prove its value.”
- In the context of putting God to the test, it means to try to make him do a miracle for us, taking advantage of his mercy.
- Jesus told Satan that it is wrong to put God to the test. He is the almighty, holy God who is above everything and everyone.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term to “test” could also be translated as, to “challenge” or to “cause to experience difficulties” or to “prove.”
- Ways to translate “a test” could be, “a challenge” or “a difficult experience.”
- To “put to the test” could be translated as to “test” or to “set up a challenge” or to “force to prove oneself.”
- In the context of testing God, this could be translated as “trying to force God to prove his love.”
- In some contexts, when God is not the subject, the term “test” can mean “tempt.”

(See also: [tempt](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 4:1
- 1 Thessalonians 5:21
- Acts 15:10
- Genesis 22:1
- Isaiah 7:13
- James 1:12
- Lamentations 3:40-43
- Malachi 3:10
- Philippians 1:10
- Psalm 26:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5254, H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G12420, G12630, G13030, G13820, G19570, G31400, G31410, G31420, G31430, G39840, G43030, G44510, G48280, G60200

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:4](#); [5:21](#))

testimony, testify, witness, eyewitness, evidence

Definition:

When a person gives “testimony” he makes a statement about something he knows, claiming that the statement is true. To “testify” is to give “testimony.”

- In some places in the Old Testament, “Testimony” refers specifically to the tablets of stone on which Yahweh wrote his ten commandments. From that use it came to refer to God’s law more broadly.
- Often a person “testifies” about something he has experienced directly.
- A witness who gives “false testimony” does not tell the truth about what happened.
- Sometimes the term “testimony” refers to a prophecy that a prophet has stated.
- In the New Testament, this term was often used to refer to how Jesus’ followers testified about the events of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

The term “witness” refers to a person who has personally experienced something that happened. Usually a witness is also someone who testifies about what they know is true. The term “eyewitness” emphasizes that the person was actually there and saw what happened.

- To “witness” something means to see it happen.
- At a trial, a witness “gives witness” or “bears witness.” This has the same meaning as “testify.”
- Witnesses are expected to tell the truth about what they have seen or heard.
- A witness who does not tell the truth about what happened is called a “false witness.” He is said to “give false witness” or to “bear false witness.”
- The expression “be a witness between” means that something or someone will be evidence that a contract has been made. The witness will make sure each person does what he has promised to do.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “testify” or “give testimony” could also be translated as “tell the facts” or “tell what was seen or heard” or “tell from personal experience” or “give evidence” or “tell what happened.”
- Ways to translate “testimony” could include, “report of what happened” or “statement of what is true” or “evidence” or “what has been said” or “prophecy.”
- Ways to translate “Testimony” could include, “the stone slabs on which I wrote my commands” or “God’s law” or “God’s commands” or “the record of the agreement between Yahweh and Israel.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony to them” could be translated as to “show them what is true” or to “prove to them what is true.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony against them” could be translated as “which will show them their sin” or “exposing their hypocrisy” or “which will prove that they are wrong.”
- To “give false testimony” could be translated as “say false things about” or “state things that are not true.”
- The term “witness” or “eyewitness” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “person seeing it” or “the one who saw it happen” or “those who saw and heard (those things).”
- Something that is “a witness” could be translated as “guarantee” or “sign of our promise” or “something that testifies that this is true.”
- The phrase “you will be my witnesses” could also be translated as “you will tell other people about me” or “you will teach people the truth that I taught you” or “you will tell people what you have seen me do and heard me teach.”
- To “witness to” could be translated as to “tell what was seen” or to “testify” or to “state what happened.”
- To “witness” something could be translated as to “see something” or to “experience something happen.”

(See also: ark of the covenant, guilt, judge, [prophet](#), [true](#))

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 31:28
- Micah 6:3
- Matthew 26:60
- Mark 1:44
- John 1:7
- John 3:33
- Acts 4:32-33
- Acts 7:44
- Acts 13:31
- Romans 1:9
- 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12
- 1 Timothy 5:19-20
- 2 Timothy 1:8
- 2 Peter 1:16-18
- 1 John 5:6-8
- 3 John 1:12
- Revelation 12:11

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **39:2** Inside the house, the Jewish leaders put Jesus on trial. They brought many **false witnesses** who lied about him.
- **39:4** The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted, "We do not need any more **witnesses**. You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your judgment?"
- **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. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all people groups everywhere. You are **witnesses** of these things."
- **43:7** "We are **witnesses** to the fact that God raised Jesus to life again."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5707, H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G02670, G12630, G19570, G26490, G31400, G31410, G31420, G31430, G31440, G43030, G48280, G49010, G55750, G55760, G55770, G60200

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2 General Notes](#); [2:5](#); [2:10](#); [2:12](#))

Thessalonica, Thessalonian

Facts:

In New Testament times, Thessalonica was the capital city of Macedonia in the ancient Roman empire. The people living in that city were called the “Thessalonians.”

- The city of Thessalonica was an important seaport and was also located along a major road that connected Rome to the eastern part of the Roman empire.
- Paul, along with Silas and Timothy, visited Thessalonica on his second missionary journey and as a result, a church was established there. Later, Paul also visited this city on his third missionary journey.
- Paul wrote two letters to the Christians in Thessalonica. These letters (1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians) are included in the New Testament.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Macedonia](#), [Paul](#), [Rome](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 1:1
- 2 Thessalonians 1:1
- 2 Timothy 4:9-10
- Acts 17:1
- Philippians 4:14-17

Word Data:

- Strong's: G23310, G23320

(Go back to: [Introduction to 1 Thessalonians](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#))

thief, rob, robber, robbery, bandits

Facts:

The term “thief” refers to a person who steals money or property from other people. The plural of “thief” is “thieves.” The term “robber” often refers to a thief who also physically harms or threatens the people he is stealing from.

- Jesus told a parable about a Samaritan man who took care of a Jewish man who had been attacked by robbers. The robbers had beaten the Jewish man and wounded him before stealing his money and clothing.
- Both thieves and robbers come suddenly to steal, when people are not expecting it. Often they use the cover of darkness to hide what they are doing.
- In a figurative sense, the New Testament describes Satan as a thief who comes to steal, kill, and destroy. This means that Satan’s plan is to try to get God’s people to stop obeying him. If he succeeded in doing this Satan would be stealing from them the good things that God has planned for them.
- Jesus compared the suddenness of his return to the suddenness of a thief coming to steal from people. Just as a thief comes at a time when people are not expecting it, so Jesus will return at a time when people do not expect it.

(See also: bless, crime, crucify, [darkness](#), destroyer, [power](#), Samaria, [Satan](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 3:10
- Luke 12:33
- Mark 14:48
- Proverbs 6:30
- Revelation 3:3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1214, H1215, H1416, H1589, H1590, H1980, H6530, H7703, G07270, G24170, G28120, G30270

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:2](#); [5:4](#))

time, untimely, date

Facts:

In the Bible the term “time” was often used figuratively to refer to a specific season or period of time when certain events took place. It has a meaning similar to “age” or “epoch” or “season.”

- “Time” can mean “occasion” in a phrase like “third time.” The phrase “many times” can mean “on many occasions.”
- Depending on the context, the term “time” could be translated as, “season” or “time period” or “moment” or “event” or “occurrence.”
- The phrase “times and seasons” is a figurative expression which states the same idea twice. This could also be translated as “certain events happening in certain time periods.” (See: [doublet](#))

(See also: [age](#), [tribulation](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 1:7
- Daniel 12:1-2
- Mark 11:11
- Matthew 8:29
- Psalms 68:28-29
- Revelation 14:15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0116, H0227, H0310, H1697, H1755, H2165, H2166, H2233, H2465, H3027, H3117, H3118, H3119, H3259, H3427, H3967, H4150, H4279, H4489, H4557, H5331, H5703, H5732, H5750, H5769, H6235, H6256, H6440, H6471, H6635, H6924, H7105, H7138, H7223, H7272, H7281, H7637, H7651, H7655, H7659, H7674, H7992, H8027, H8032, H8138, H8145, H8462, H8543, G07440, G05300, G10740, G12080, G14410, G15970, G16260, G19090, G20340, G21190, G21210, G22350, G22500, G25400, G34610, G35680, G37640, G38190, G39560, G39990, G41780, G41810, G41830, G42180, G42870, G43400, G44550, G51190, G51510, G53050, G55500, G55510, G56100

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:17](#); [5:1](#))

Timothy

Facts:

Timothy was a young man from Lystra. He later joined Paul on several missionary trips and helped shepherd new communities of believers.

- Timothy's father was a Greek, but both his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice were Jews and believers in Christ.
- The elders and Paul formally appointed Timothy for the ministry by placing their hands on him and praying for him.
- Two books in the New Testament (1 Timothy and 2 Timothy) are letters written by Paul that provide guidance to Timothy as a young leader of local churches.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [appoint](#), [believe](#), [church](#), Greek, minister)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 3:2
- 1 Timothy 1:2
- Acts 16:3
- Colossians 1:1
- Philemon 1:1
- Philippians 1:1
- Philippians 2:19

Word Data:

- Strong's: G50950

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#); [3:2](#); [3:6](#))

tribulation, distresses, trouble

Definition:

The term “tribulation” refers to a time of hardship, suffering, and distress.

- It is explained in the New Testament that Christians will endure times of persecution and other kinds of tribulation because many people in this world are opposed to Jesus’ teachings.
- The term “tribulation” could also be translated as “time of great suffering” or “deep distress” or “severe difficulties.”

(See also: earth, [teach](#), [wrath](#))

Bible References:

- Mark 4:17
- Mark 13:19
- Matthew 13:20-21
- Matthew 24:9
- Matthew 24:29
- Romans 2:9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6869, G23470, G44230

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:6](#))

true, truth

Definition:

The term "truth" refers to facts, events, and statements that correspond with reality. True facts describe the universe as it really exists. True events are events that actually happened. True statements are statements that are not false according to the real world.

- "True" things are real, genuine, actual, rightful, legitimate, and factual.
- "Truth" means understandings, beliefs, facts, or statements that are true.
- To say that a prophecy "came true" or "will come true" means that it actually happened as predicted or that it will happen that way.
- In the Bible the concept of "truth" includes the concept of acting in a way that is reliable and faithful.
- Jesus revealed God's truth in the words that he spoke.
- The Bible is truth. It teaches what is true about God and about everything he has made.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context and what is being described, the term "true" could also be translated by "real" or "factual" or "correct" or "right" or "certain" or "genuine."
- Ways to translate the term "truth" could include "what is true" or "fact" or "certainty" or "principle."
- The expression "come true" could also be translated as "actually happen" or "be fulfilled" or "happen as predicted."
- The expression "tell the truth" or "speak the truth" could also be translated as "say what is true" or "tell what really happened" or "say things that are reliable."
- To "accept the truth" could be translated as "believe what is true about God."
- In an expression such as "worship God in spirit and in truth," the expression "in truth" could also be translated by "faithfully obeying what God has taught us."

(See also: [believe](#), [faithful](#), [fulfill](#), [obey](#), [prophet](#), [understand](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:6-8
- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 2:8
- 3 John 1:8
- Acts 26:24-26
- Colossians 1:6
- Genesis 47:29-31
- James 1:18
- James 3:14
- James 5:19
- Jeremiah 4:2
- John 1:9
- John 1:16-18
- John 1:51
- John 3:31-33
- Joshua 7:19-21
- Lamentations 5:19-22
- Matthew 8:10
- Matthew 12:17
- Psalm 26:1-3

- Revelation 1:19-20
- Revelation 15:3-4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **2:4** The snake responded to the woman, "That is not **true!** You will not die."
- **14:6** Immediately Caleb and Joshua, the other two spies, said, "It is *_true_* that the people of Canaan are tall and strong, but we can certainly defeat them!"
- **16:1** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the *_true_* God.
- **31:8** They worshiped Jesus, saying to him, "**Truly**, you are the Son of God."
- **39:10** "I have come to earth to tell the **truth** about God. Everyone who loves the **truth** listens to me." Pilate said, "What is **truth?**"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0199, H0389, H0403, H0529, H0530, H0543, H0544, H0551, H0571, H0935, H3321, H3330, H6237, H6656, H6965, H7187, H7189, G02250, G02260, G02270, G02280, G02300, G11030, G33030, G34830, G36890, G41030, G41370

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#); [2:13](#))

trumpet, trumpeters

Definition:

The term “trumpet” refers to an instrument for producing music or for calling people to gather together for an announcement or meeting.

- A trumpet was commonly made from either metal, seashell, or an animal horn.
- Trumpets were most commonly blown to call people to come together for battle, and for Israel's public assemblies.
- The book of Revelation describes a scene in the end times in which angels blow their trumpets to signal the outpouring of the wrath of God on the earth.

(See also: [angel](#), assembly, earth, horn, Israel, [wrath](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 13:7-8
- 2 Kings 9:13
- Exodus 19:12-13
- Hebrews 12:19
- Matthew 6:2
- Matthew 24:31

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2689, H2690, H3104, H7782, H8619, H8643, G45360, G45370, G45380

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:16](#))

trust, trusted, trustworthy, trustworthiness

Definition:

To “trust” something or someone is to believe that the thing or person is true or dependable. That belief is also called “trust.” A “trustworthy” person is one you can trust to do and say what is right and true, and therefore one who has the quality of “trustworthiness.”

- Trust is closely related to faith. If we trust someone, we have faith in that person to do what they promised to do.
- Having trust in someone also means depending on that person.
- To “trust in” Jesus means to believe that he is God, to believe that he died on the cross to pay for our sins, and to rely on him to save us.
- A “trustworthy saying” refers to something that is said that can be counted on to be true.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “trust” could include “believe” or “have faith” or “have confidence” or “depend on.”
- The phrase “put your trust in” is very similar in meaning to “trust in.”
- The term “trustworthy” could be translated as “dependable” or “reliable” or “can always be trusted.”

(See also: [believe](#), confidence, [faith](#), [faithful](#), [true](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:22-24
- 1 Timothy 4:9
- Hosea 10:12-13
- Isaiah 31:1-2
- Nehemiah 13:13
- Psalm 31:5
- Titus 3:8

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **12:12** When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they **trusted** in God and believed that Moses was a prophet of God.
- **14:15** Joshua was a good leader because he **trusted** and obeyed God.
- **17:2** David was a humble and righteous man who **trusted** and obeyed God.
- **34:6** Then Jesus told a story about people who **trusted** in their own good deeds and despised other people.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0539, H0982, H1556, H2620, H2622, H3176, H4009, H4268, H7365, G16790, G38720, G39820, G40060, G41000, G42760

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:4](#))

turn, turn away, turn back, return

Definition:

To “turn” means to physically change direction or to cause something else to change direction.

- The term “turn” can also mean “turn around” to look behind or to face a different direction.
- To “turn back” or “turn away” means to “go back” or “go away” or “cause to go away.”
- To “turn away from” can mean to “stop” doing something or to reject someone.
- To “turn toward” someone means to look directly at that person.
- To “turn and leave” or “turn his back to leave” means to “go away.”
- To “turn back to” means to “start doing something again.”
- To “turn away from” means to “stop doing something.”
- To “turn aside” means to change direction, it often means to either stop doing right and start doing evil or the opposite.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “turn” can be translated as “change direction” or “go” or “move.”
- In some contexts, “turn” could be translated as “cause” (someone) to do something. To “turn (someone) away from” could be translated as “cause (someone) to go away” or “cause (someone) to stop.”
- The phrase “turn away from God” could be translated as “stop worshiping God.”
- The phrase “turn back to God” could be translated as “start worshiping God again.”
- When enemies “turn back,” it means they “retreat.” To “turn back the enemy” means to “cause the enemy to retreat.”
- Used figuratively, when Israel “turned to” false gods, they “started to worship” them. When they “turned away” from idols, they “stopped worshiping” them.
- When God “turned away from” his rebellious people, he “stopped protecting” or “stopped helping” them.
- The phrase “turn the hearts of the fathers to their children” could be translated as “cause fathers to care for their children again.”
- The expression “turn my honor into shame” could be translated as “cause my honor to become shame” or “dishonor me so that I am shamed” or “shame me (by doing what is evil) so that people no longer honor me.”
- “I will turn your cities into ruin” could be translated as “I will cause your cities to be destroyed” or “I will cause enemies to destroy your cities.”
- The phrase “turn into” could be translated as “become.” When Moses’ rod “turned into” a snake, it “became” a snake. It could also be translated as “changed into.”

(See also: [false god](#), leprosy, worship)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 11:2
- Acts 7:42
- Acts 11:21
- Jeremiah 36:1-3
- Luke 1:17
- Malachi 4:6
- Revelation 11:6

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0541, H2015, H2017, H2186, H2559, H3943, H4672, H4740, H4878, H5186, H5253, H5414, H5437, H5472, H5493, H5528, H5627, H5753, H6437, H7227, H7725, H7734, H7750, H7760, H7847, H8159, H8447, G03440, G03870, G04020, G06540, G06650, G08680, G12940, G15780, G16120, G16240, G19940, G31790, G33130, G33290, G33440, G33460, G47620, G51570, G52900

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#))

vain, vanity

Definition:

The terms “vain” and “vanity” describe something that is useless or extremely temporary.

- In the Old Testament, idols are sometimes described as “vain” things that are worthless and cannot do anything.
- If something is done “in vain,” it means that there the effort or action did not accomplish what was intended. The phrase “in vain” might be translated in various ways, including: “without result;” “with no result;” “for no reason;” “for no purpose,” or “with no purpose.”
- Depending on the context, the term “vain” could be translated as “empty,” “useless,” “hopeless,” “worthless,” “meaningless,” etc.

(See also: [false god](#), [worthy](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 15:1-2
- 1 Samuel 25:21-22
- 2 Peter 2:18
- Isaiah 45:19
- Jeremiah 2:29-31
- Matthew 15:9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1891, H1892, H2600, H7307, H7385, H7387, H7723, H8193, H8267, H8414, G09450, G15000, G27560, G27580, G27610, G31510, G31520, G31530, G31550

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:1](#); [3:5](#))

voice

Definition:

The term “voice” refers to audible sound that a person makes when speaking or communicating. In the Bible, the term can be used figuratively to refer to the concepts of sound, communication, and/or obedience.

Translation Suggestions

- The expression “to hear someone’s voice” can mean either “to hear someone speaking” or “to heed what someone says.”
- The Bible describes God as “speaking” and having a “voice,” even though God doesn’t have a physical body in the same way a human being does.
- The term “voice” sometimes implies the presence of a person, as in this statement: “A voice is heard in the desert saying, ‘Prepare the way of the Lord.’” This could be translated as “A person is heard calling out in the desert....” (See: [synecdoche](#))
- However, sometimes the word “voice” is used for objects that cannot literally speak, such as when David exclaims in the psalms that the heavens have a “voice” that reaches the whole earth. This means that the objects in the sky communicate something to human beings about God the Creator. (See: [metaphor](#))

(See also: [call](#), [proclaim](#), splendor.)

Bible References:

- John 5:36-38
- Luke 1:42
- Luke 9:35
- Matthew 3:17
- Matthew 12:19

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6963, H7032, H7445, H8193, G29060, G54560

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:16](#))

walk, walked

Definition:

The term “walk” is often used in a figurative sense to mean “live.”

- “Enoch walked with God” means that Enoch lived in a close relationship with God.
- To “walk by the Spirit” means to be guided by the Holy Spirit so that we do things that please and honor God.
- To “walk in” God’s commands or God’s ways means to “live in obedience to” his commands, that is, to “obey his commands” or “do his will.”
- When God says he will “walk among” his people, it means that he is living among them or closely interacting with them.
- To “walk contrary to” means to live or behave in a way that is against something or someone.
- To “walk after” means to seek or pursue someone or something. It can also mean to act in the same way as someone else.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate “walk” literally, as long as the correct meaning will be understood.
- Otherwise, figurative uses of “walk” could also be translated by “live” or “act” or “behave.”
- The phrase “walk by the Spirit” could be translated by, “live in obedience to the Holy Spirit” or “behave in a way that is pleasing to the Holy Spirit” or “do things that are pleasing to God as the Holy Spirit guides you.”
- To “walk in God’s commands” could be translated by “live by God’s commands” or “obey God’s commands.”
- The phrase “walked with God” could be translated as “lived in close relationship with God by obeying and honoring him.”

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), [honor](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:7
- 1 Kings 2:4
- Colossians 2:7
- Galatians 5:25
- Genesis 17:1
- Isaiah 2:5
- Jeremiah 13:10
- Micah 4:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1869, H1980, H1981, H3212, H4108, G17040, G40430, G41980, G47480

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:12](#); [4:1](#); [4:12](#))

watch, guard, keep, take heed, beware

Definition:

The term “watch” means to look at something very closely and carefully. It also has several figurative meanings. A “watchman” was someone whose job was to guard a city by looking carefully all around him for any danger or threat to the people in the city.

- The command to “watch your life and doctrine closely” means to be careful to live wisely and to not believe false teachings.
- To “watch out” is a warning to be careful to avoid a danger or harmful influence.
- To “watch” or “keep watch” means to always be alert and on guard against sin and evil. It can also mean to “be ready.”
- To “keep watch over” or “keep close watch” can mean to guard, protect or take care of someone or something.
- Other ways of translating “watch” could include “pay close attention to” or “be diligent” or “be very careful” or “be on guard.”
- Other words for “watchman” are “sentry” or “guard.”

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:6
- Hebrews 13:17
- Jeremiah 31:4-6
- Mark 8:15
- Mark 13:33-34
- Matthew 25:10-13

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0821, H2370, H4929, H4931, H5027, H5341, H6486, H6822, H6836, H6974, H7462, H7789, H7919, H8104, H8108, H8245, G00690, G09910, G11270, G14920, G23340, G28920, G35250, G37080, G39060, G43370, G46480, G50830, G54380

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:6](#))

will of God

Definition:

The “will of God” refers to God’s desires and plans.

- God’s will especially relates to his interactions with people and how he wants people to respond to him.
- It also refers to his plans or desires for the rest of his creation.
- The term to “will” means to “determine” or to “desire.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The “will of God” could also be translated as “what God desires” or “what God has planned” or “God’s purpose” or “what is pleasing to God.”

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:15-17
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6
- Colossians 4:12-14
- Ephesians 1:1-2
- John 5:30-32
- Mark 3:33-35
- Matthew 6:8-10
- Psalms 103:21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6310, H6634, H7522, G10120, G10130, G23070, G23080, G23090, G25960

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:3](#); [5:18](#))

womb

Definition:

The term “womb” refers to where a baby grows inside its mother.

- This is an older term that is sometimes used in order to be polite and less direct. (See: [euphemism](#))
- A more modern term for womb is “uterus.”
- Some languages use a word like “belly” to refer to a woman’s womb or uterus.
- Use a word for this in the project language that is well-known, natural, and acceptable.

Bible References:

- Genesis 25:23
- Genesis 25:24-26
- Genesis 38:27-28
- Genesis 49:25
- Luke 2:21
- Luke 11:27
- Luke 23:29
- Matthew 19:12

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0990, H4578, H7356, H7358, G10640, G28360, G33880

([Go back to: 1 Thessalonians 5:3](#))

word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, word of truth, scripture

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “word of God” refers to anything that God has communicated to people. This includes spoken and written messages. Jesus is also called “the Word of God.”

- The term “scriptures” means “writings.” It is only used in the New Testament and refers to the Hebrew scriptures, which is the Old Testament. These writings were God’s message that he had told people to write down so that many years in the future people could still read it.
- The related terms “word of Yahweh” and “word of the Lord” often refer to a specific message from God that was given to a prophet or other person in the Bible.
- Sometimes this term occurs as simply “the word” or “my word” or “your word” (when talking about God’s word).
- In the New Testament, Jesus is called “the Word” and “the Word of God.” These titles mean that Jesus fully reveals who God is, because he is God himself.

The term “word of truth” is another way of referring to “God’s word,” which is his message or teaching. It does not refer to just one word.

- God’s word of truth includes everything that God has taught people about himself, his creation, and his plan of salvation through Jesus.
- This term emphasizes the fact that what God has told us is true, faithful, and real.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “the message of Yahweh” or “God’s message” or “the teachings from God.”
- It may be more natural in some languages to make this term plural and say “God’s words” or “the words of Yahweh.”
- The expression “the word of Yahweh came” is often used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. This could be translated as “Yahweh spoke this message” or “Yahweh spoke these words.”
- The term “scripture” or “scriptures” could be translated as “the writings” or “the written message from God.” This term should be translated differently from the translation of the term “word.”
- When “word” occurs alone and it refers to God’s word, it could be translated as “the message” or “God’s word” or “the teachings.” Also consider the alternate translations suggested above.
- When the Bible refers to Jesus as “the Word,” this term could be translated as “the Message” or “the Truth.”
- “Word of truth” could be translated as “God’s true message” or “God’s word, which is true.”
- It is important for the translation of this term to include the meaning of being true.

(See also: [prophet](#), [true](#), Yahweh)

Bible References:

- Genesis 15:1
- 1 Kings 13:1
- Jeremiah 36:1-3
- Luke 8:11
- John 5:39
- Acts 6:2
- Acts 12:24
- Romans 1:2
- 2 Corinthians 6:7

- Ephesians 1:13
- 2 Timothy 3:16
- James 1:18
- James 2:8-9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:7** In **God's word** he commands his people, "Worship only the Lord your God and only serve him."
- **33:6** So Jesus explained, "The seed is the **word of God.**"
- **42:3** Then Jesus explained to them what **God's word** says about the Messiah.
- **42:7** Jesus said, "I told you that everything written about me in **God's word** must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds so they could understand **God's word.**
- **45:10** Philip also used other **scriptures** to tell him the good news of Jesus.
- **48:12** But Jesus is the greatest prophet of all. He is the **Word of God.**
- **49:18** God tells you to pray, to study his **word**, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0561, H0565, H1697, H3068, G30560, G44870

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:8](#); [2:13](#); [4:15](#))

work, works, deeds

Definition:

The term “work” refers generally either to the action of expending effort in order to accomplish something, or to the result of that action. The term “works” refers generally to actions as a whole (that is, things that have been done or that need to be done).

- In the Bible, these terms are commonly used both in reference to God and humans.
- When used in reference to God, the term “work” in the Bible often refers to God’s action of creating the universe or saving his people (either from enemies, from sin, or both).
- God’s works refer to all the things he does or has done, including creating the world, saving sinners, providing for the needs of all creation and keeping the entire universe in place.
- The works or deeds that a person does can be either good or evil.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “works” could be “deeds” or “actions” or “things that are done.”
- God’s “works” or “deeds” or the “work of his hands” could also be translated as “miracles” or “mighty acts” or “things that God does.”
- The expression “the work of God” could be translated as “the things that God is doing” or “the miracles God does” or “everything that God has accomplished.”
- The term “work” can just be the singular of “works” as in “every good work” or “every good deed.”
- When work is done for God or others, it can be translated as “service” or “ministry.”

(See also: fruit, [Holy Spirit](#), miracle)

Bible References:

- 1 John 3:12
- Acts 2:8-11
- Daniel 4:37
- Exodus 34:10-11
- Galatians 2:15-16
- James 2:17
- Matthew 16:27-28
- Micah 2:7
- Romans 3:28
- Titus 3:4-5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4399, H4566, H4567, H4611, H4659, H5949, G20410

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 5:13](#))

worthy, worth, unworthy, worthless

Definition:

The term “worthy” describes someone or something that deserves respect or honor. To “have worth” means to be valuable or important. The term “worthless” means to not have any value.

- Being worthy is related to being valuable or having importance
- To be “unworthy” means to not be deserving of any special notice.
- To not feel worthy means to feel less important than someone else or to not feel deserving of being treated with honor or kindness.
- The term “unworthy” and the term “worthless” have related, but different meanings. To be “unworthy” means to not be deserving of any honor or recognition. To be “worthless” means to not have any purpose or value.

Translation Suggestions:

- “Worthy” could be translated as “deserving” or “important” or “valuable.”
- The word “worth” could be translated as “value” or “importance.”
- The phrase to “have worth” could also be translated as to “be valuable” or to “be important.”
- The phrase “is worth more than” could be translated as “is more valuable than.”
- Depending on the context, the term, “unworthy” could also be translated as “unimportant” or “dishonorable” or “undeserving.”
- The term “worthless” could be translated as “with no value” or “with no purpose” or “worth nothing.”

(See also: [honor](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 22:4
- 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12
- Acts 13:25
- Acts 25:25-27
- Acts 26:31
- Colossians 1:9-10
- Jeremiah 8:19
- Mark 1:7
- Matthew 3:10-12
- Philippians 1:25-27

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0117, H0639, H1929, H3644, H4242, H4373, H4392, H4592, H4941, H6994, H7386, H7939, G00960, G05140, G05150, G05160, G24250, G26610, G27350

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 2:12](#))

wrath, fury

Definition:

Wrath is an intense anger that is sometimes long-lasting. The Bible describes both people and God as experiencing intense anger. When speaking about God's "wrath," make sure the word or phrase used to translate this term does not refer to a sinful fit of rage (which might be true of a human person).

- In the Bible, "wrath" often refers to God's righteous judgment of sin and punishment of people who rebel against him.
- The "wrath of God" can also refer to his judgment and punishment for sin.
- God's wrath is the righteous penalty for those who do not repent of their sin.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways this term could be translated include "intense anger" or "righteous judgment" or "anger."
- God's wrath is just and holy. When talking about God's wrath, make sure the word or phrase used to translate this term does not refer to a sinful human rage.

(See also: judge, [sin](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10
- 1 Timothy 2:8-10
- Luke 3:7
- Luke 21:23
- Matthew 3:7
- Revelation 14:10
- Romans 1:18
- Romans 5:9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0639, H2197, H2528, H2534, H2740, H3707, H3708, H5678, H7107, H7109, H7110, H7265, H7267, G23720, G37090, G39490, G39500

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#); [2:16](#); [5:9](#))

wrong, wronged, wrongdoer, mistreat, hurt, hurtful

Definition:

To “wrong” someone means to treat that person unjustly and dishonestly.

- The term “mistreat” means to act badly or roughly toward someone, causing physical or emotional harm to that person.
- The term “hurt” is more general and means to “cause someone harm in some way.” It often has the meaning of “physically injure.”
- Depending on the context, these terms could also be translated as “do wrong to” or “treat unjustly” or “cause harm to” or “treat in a harmful way” or “injure.”

Bible References:

- Acts 7:26
- Exodus 22:21
- Genesis 16:5
- Luke 6:28
- Matthew 20:13-14
- Psalms 71:13

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H0816, H2248, H2250, H2255, H2257, H2398, H2554, H2555, H3238, H3637, H4834, H5062, H5142, H5230, H5627, H5753, H5766, H5791, H5792, H5916, H6031, H6087, H6127, H6231, H6485, H6565, H6586, H7451, H7489, H7563, H7665, H7667, H7686, H8133, H8267, H8295, G00910, G00920, G00930, G00950, G02640, G08240, G09830, G09840, G15360, G16260, G16510, G17270, G19080, G25560, G25580, G25590, G26070, G30760, G30770, G37620, G41220, G51950, G51960

(Go back to: [1 Thessalonians 4:6](#))

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